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GOAL18

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In the Next Issue

The 3/2019 issue of *Media Development* will explore the legacy of the 1980 MacBride Report on global communication issues in the light of developments today and how to measure social progress.

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EDITORIAL

This issue of *Media Development* goes in search of the missing UN Sustainable Development Goal that underpins all the other SDGs.

In 2012, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development took place in Brazil. Known as Rio+20, it agreed to establish an "Open Working Group" of government representatives to make a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A key question was how the SDGs would relate to or advance the earlier Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

In August 2014, the Open Working Group reported back to the UN General Assembly, setting out 17 goals for the period 2015 to 2030. Conspicuous by its absence was the essential role played by communications, with barely a mention under Goal 16, "Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms".

This happened despite many UN-related agencies and most civil society organisations having agreed at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS 2003 and 2005) and later at other fora that independent, diverse and pluralistic media, and providing affordable access to information and communication technologies are vital to today's information and knowledge societies and to sustainable development itself.

Some of the omissions in the SDGs were identified in Fackson Banda's article "Setting a media agenda in the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals" (*Media Development* 2/2015). They included:

- Acknowledging the significance of free expression as both a goal of development and a means to development.
- Ensuring press freedom both online and offline, and providing a media system on all platforms which is free, pluralistic and independent as a means to optimise the role of communications and information in development.

- Ensuring the existence and implementation of a national law and/or constitutional guarantee on the right to information.
- Ensuring the safety of journalists and tackling impunity for crimes against them by highlighting the number of journalists, media personnel and human rights defenders killed, kidnapped or disappeared, unlawfully detained and tortured, as a result of pursuing their legitimate activities.
- Strengthening an enabling environment for free, independent and pluralistic media, as a guarantee of media sustainability, including quality journalism education.

Arguably, these provisions do not go far enough and a much broader framework is required, one in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, one that enables, empowers and transforms. One that goes beyond power structures and relationships to guarantee the public voices and genuine participation of everyone – especially poor, marginalized, excluded and dispossessed people and communities. One that stresses justice, equality, democratization, and diversity because of the inalienable value attached to human dignity, mutual respect, and greater understanding.

Such a framework is offered by the concept and practice of communication rights, which call for political and social structures that strengthen the idea behind "Many Voices, One World" – the well-known title of UNESCO's MacBride Report of 1980 – and the capability of individuals and groups to communicate. They address key questions about:

- ownership and control of mass, community, and social media;
- access to new information and communication technologies;
- the right to information and knowledge;
- language rights;
- intellectual property rights and creative commons;
- net neutrality and access to the Internet;
- digital platforms, user-generated content, and digital ethics;
- government and corporate censorship and

surveillance;

• personal and data privacy.

As such, it is all the more astonishing that communication and media were not made part and parcel of every SDG or subject to an SDG of their own, since none of the SDGs can be achieved unless people are able to communicate their dreams, concerns, and needs – locally, nationally, regionally, globally. The obstacles are many: social, cultural, political, ideological, yet communication can help overcome them all.

Since communication clearly underpins sustainable development and requires equitable access to information and knowledge, to information and communication technologies, as well as plurality and diversity in the media, we have identified the missing UN Sustainable Development Goal 18: *Communication for All*.

Goal: Expand and strengthen public civic spaces through equitable and affordable access to communication technologies and platforms, media pluralism, and media diversity.

Target 1.1 By 2030, ensure the existence of spaces and resources for men and women, in particular the poor and vulnerable, to engage in transparent, informed, and democratic public dialogue and debate.

Target 1.2 By 2030, ensure the existence of regimes where creative ideas and knowledge are encouraged, can be communicated widely and freely to advance social justice and sustainable development.

Target 1.3 By 2030, ensure protection for the dignity and security of people in relation to communication processes, especially concerning

data privacy and freedom from surveillance.

Target 1.4 By 2030, ensure communication spaces for diverse cultures, cultural forms and identities at the individual and social levels.[1]

The indicators for these four targets remain to be determined. To some extent, they can be found in existing indices of political and social freedoms, such as the Social Progress Index, UNESCO's Media Development Indicators, Reporters Without Borders' World Press Freedom Index, and WACC's Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP).

SDG 18: Communication for All claims spaces and resources in the public sphere for everyone to be able to engage in transparent, informed and democratic debate. It claims unfettered access to the information and knowledge essential to democracy, empowerment, responsible citizenship and mutual accountability. It claims political, social and cultural environments that encourage the free exchange of a diversity of creative ideas, knowledge and cultural products. Last but certainly not least, Communication for All claims equality and justice. ∎

Note

1. These four targets are based on the landmark "Four Pillars" of communication rights identified by the CRIS Campaign in *Assessing Communication Rights: A Handbook* (2005). While global communications and media have changed dramatically in the intervening period, the values implicit in equality, accessibility, affordability, and diversity remain the same.

Communication is inscribed in human nature

Michael Traber

In 1999, in a landmark essay, WACC's former Director of Studies and Publications and Editor of its journal Media Development, *Fr Michael Traber, explored the philosophical basis for communication in society. In doing so, he linked the right to communicate with other social and political rights and with a democratic body politic.*

The discourse on the right to communicate seems to be gathering new momentum. One reason for this may well be that many people, at the threshold of a new millennium, experience a sense of powerlessness about the world around them. They feel subjected to war, violence and environmental degradation. They feel manipulated in what they buy and how they vote, and feel insecure in their moral judgements. They doubt whether they can still assert themselves about the world they wish to live in and bequeath to their children. They want to speak out but cannot make themselves heard.

In this situation, the discourse on communication as a right – private and public, individual and social – needs to proceed with a high degree of clarity, concentrating on the essential grounding of communication in human nature itself.

Yes, legal frameworks for the right to communicate, and the implementations of this right, are important. So are technologies that can either militate against or enhance the chances of freedom and democracy. And so are the cultural exigencies in an era of increasingly globalised mass media. Just because the right to communicate touches upon so many and such vital facets of human life, the need to find a common ground for the discourse is crucial.

The starting point is what it means to be human. Although we may first and foremost conceive of ourselves as individual persons, our very personhood depends on others. We are both individual and social beings. We then proceed to reflect on human nature as being-with-others, conditioned and orientated towards others. The uniquely human endowment of language as our social and cultural habitat, as well as the source of individual and social empowerment, demonstrates this.

Communication is, therefore, an essential human need and a fundamental social necessity. Its central core is the philosophical notion of intersubjectivity, which implies communication in freedom, equality and solidarity. Our final reflections are on communication as the life-blood of society.

Being-with-others: Intersubjectivity

One of the philosophical questions, which have occupied thinkers for centuries, is that of human authenticity. What are the essential characteristics of the human being? What distinguishes us from other mammals? What is authentically human?

Human living is different from any other in that it is essentially other-directed. We seem to be conditioned to live in a world of "we", prior to the "I" and "thou". Bernard Lonergan (1972: 57) describes this as follows:

" Just as one spontaneously raises one's arm to ward off a blow against one's head, so with the same spontaneity one reaches out to save another from falling. Perception, feeling, and bodily movement are involved, but the help given another is not deliberate but spontaneous. One adverts to it not before it occurs but while it is occurring. It is as if 'we' were members of one another prior to our distinctions of each from the others."

It has often been pointed out that humans are the only mammals who are completely dependent on other humans, first and foremost their mothers, when they are born. The very survival of babies depends on others, and not just for a few weeks but for some years. Little wonder then that the first manifestation of intersubjectivity may well be a baby's smile.

We do not learn to smile as we learn to walk, to talk, to swim, to skate. Commonly we do not think of smiling and then do it. We just do it. Again, we do not learn the meaning of smiling as we learn the meaning of words. The meaning of the smile is a discovery we make on our own, and that meaning does not seem to vary from culture to culture, as does the meaning of gestures. There is something irreducible to the smile (Lonergan, 1972: 60).

The smile expresses what a mother or father means to a baby. And throughout our lives a smile indicates what one person means to another. Its meaning is intersubjective. It spontaneously signals the 'presence of the other'. It is a primordial form of self-transcendence.

Human beings become authentic in self-transcendence. That is the very core of their being social beings. Solipsism is an inhuman abyss. And the intentional "absence of the other" is, in the words of Jean-Paul Sartre, "hell". In contrast, the highest form of self-transcendence is the self-surrender to another in love, which is "the abiding imperative of what is to be human" (Lonergan, 1985: 134). Thus by transcending oneself, one becomes oneself.

Language as self-transcendence

Plato defined the human being as "the animal that speaks" *(zoon logon echon)*. There is little point in pitting Plato against his pupil Aristotle, for whom the human being is "the animal that thinks". Both speech and reason condition each other and are dependent on each other. Except that psychologically and in the stages of human development, language comes first.

Humans speak. We speak when we are awake and we speak in our dreams. We are al-

ways speaking, even when we do not utter a single word aloud, but merely listen or read, and even when we are not particularly listening or speaking but are attending to some work or taking a rest. We are continually speaking in one way or another. We speak because speaking is natural to us. It does not first arise out of some special volition.

Humans are said to have language by nature. It is held that humans, in distinction from plants and animals, are the living being capable of speech. This statement does not mean only that, along with other faculties, humans also possess the faculty of speech. It means to say that only speech enables the human being to be the living being he or she is as a human being. It is as the one who speaks that the human being is human (Heidegger, 1971: 189).[2]

The philosophy of language is of course much older than the writings of Heidegger, who called language "the house of being". Yet language as the basis for philosophical anthropology may be one of the principal philosophical insights of the 20th century. Charles Morris' seminal work, *Foundation of a Theory of Signs* (1938), was one of the first fruits of modern semiotics. Morris (1975: 235) later said:

" Everything which is characteristically human depends on language. The human being is in a real sense the speaking animal. Speech plays the most essential – but not the only – role in the development and preservation of the human self and its aberrations, as it does in the development and maintenance of society and its aberrations."

In the current philosophy of language, reason and language are co-original. One cannot develop without the other. "Reason only advances by means of establishing communicable expressions, and language is the sole and concrete manifestation of reason" (Pasquali, 1997: 43). In the communicative act, "language becomes the basis, form and substance of intersubjectivity" *(ibid)*. Vaclav Havel (1990: 44) summarises the

meaning of language as follows:

"Words could be said to be the very source of our being, the very substance of the cosmic life form we call people. Spirit, the human soul, our self-awareness, our ability to generalise and think in concepts, to perceive the world as the world (and not just as our locality), and, lastly, our capacity to know that we will die – and living in spite of that knowledge: surely all these are mediated or actually created by words."

Human nature itself has provided tangible evidence for this view of language. Susanne K. Langer (1974) discusses in some detail the phenomenon of "wild children" or "wolf children", and the experiments with chimpanzees with respect to language learning. A number of cases of "wolf children", viz. children who grew up without human companionship, have been studied. The best attested are Peter, who was found in the fields near Hanover in 1723, Victor who was captured in Aveyron, Southern France, at the age of about 12, in 1799, and two little girls, Amala and Kamala, who were taken into human custody near Midnapur, India, in 1920.

None of these children could speak in any language; instead they had imitated the sounds of the animals among which they had lived. Amala and Kamala never managed to converse with each other, and after six years in human surroundings, Kamala, (who survived her sister) had learned about 40 words, managed to utter some three-word sentences, but only did so when she was spoken to. Apparently, small children have an optimum period of learning languages, which is lost in later life (see Langer, 1974: 122).

On the question of animal languages, Langer (1964: 33) comes to the following conclusion:

" Animal language is not language at all, and what is more important it never leads to language. Dogs that live with men learn to under-stand many verbal signals, but only as signals, in relation to their own actions. Apes that live in droves and seem to communicate fairly well, never converse. But a baby that has only half a dozen words begins to converse: 'Daddy gone'. 'Daddy come?' 'Daddy come'. Question and answer, assertion and denial, denotation and description – these are the basic uses of language. The gap between the animal and human estate is... the language line."

Language then is the common condition of the human species. We live in the house of language. No group, tribe or people has ever been found that did not have a developed language

system, regardless of the linguistic differences between them. But the aural articulation of sounds for words and sentences is only one, though the most potent, type of human language. The others are so called body languages, employing mainly touch, gestures and visual symbols as signs. Therefore, being-together as human beings requires a language to form, maintain and express being-in-relation with others, just as language enables us to "name" objects of the world around us.
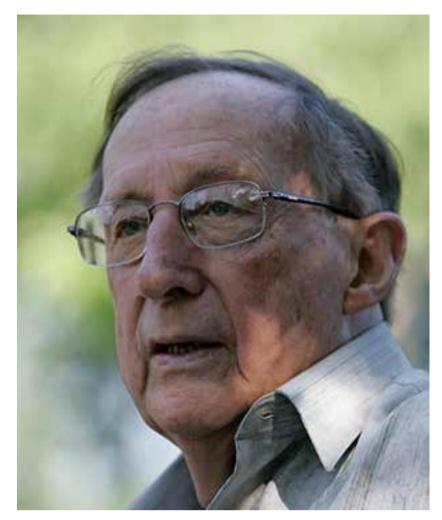
In brief then, the essence of the human being as a social being is constituted and perfected by language. Being-together-in-the-world, or being intersubjective, is realised and actualised in the self-transcendence of communication. When we are deprived of this togetherness we cannot live lives worthy of human nature. Language is thus the symbolic human construct that allows the forging and maintenance of relationships.

Communication in freedom, equality and solidarity

It is fairly easy to demonstrate that language is part of being human. Language in action, that is communication, is an individual human need – as basic as food, clothing and shelter. Basic needs are those that are essential for our existence and our very survival. They are the very preconditions of human life. Because of this, basic human needs become fundamental human rights.

While this logic is now generally acknowledged with regard to physical human needs – food/drink, shelter, clothing, perhaps in the descending order listed – the non-material human needs like language and communications are more controversial. Most people seem to survive solitary confinement, exclusion and excommunication, partly because they somehow manage to retain some sort of intentional interpersonal communication, and maintain or renegotiate a sense of belonging even though they are silenced. Being silenced never quite succeeds, because nobody can deprive us of our relational nature.

The experience of being silenced, however, reveals another existential dimension of the hu-

Fr Michael Traber SMB (1929–2006). Photo: Rey Noel Talattad.

man being, namely the need for *freedom*. What good is the house of language if we cannot converse in it freely? Language and freedom are intertwined. The gift of language is at the same time a gift of freedom. Deprivation of freedom makes genuine communication impossible, and the first sign of repression in groups and societies is the curtailment of freedom of speech.

This can be very subtle. Intimidation or the inculcation of fear, the exposure to ridicule may suppress freedom, as can the building up or maintenance of authoritarian structures that allow little or no dissent. Freedom means being part of, and thus being able to participate in, life-in-common. "The principle of freedom of expression is one that admits of no exceptions, and is applicable to people all over the world by virtue of their human dignity" (MacBride Report, 1980: 18).

" Human freedom is axiological. It needs no proof. It is part of life experience and can only be reflected on. Reflection reveals that freedom is an integral part of human nature and thus

a precondition of humans to be moral beings. Freedom makes all specifically *human* actions possible, including communications... The rationale for freedom is to become more truly human and humane. Freedom is both part of being human and becoming humane... Only in the free encounter with others can genuine freedom be experienced" (Traber, 1997: 334-335).

Humans, however, are not "born free". They are situated in existing relationships – in families and groups. Humans therefore encounter the freedom of others. True freedom accepts other freedoms unconditionally, and opens up the freedom of others. Freedom, it should be noted, is not primarily orientated towards objects but towards people. Only in the free encounter with others can genuine freedom be experienced. An intersubjective approach to the notion of freedom also establishes the rationale for the limitations of freedom, which are enshrined in the customary (and codified) laws of all societies.

These reflections lead to another dimension of communication: *equality*. We cannot communicate with others when we consider them "inferior". The master may impart information to his slave or servant, but genuine communication hardly takes place. The same is true when men consider women as "inferior" human beings. Mere information, or the sale of and access to media products, may then become substitutes for genuine communication. Communicative freedom presupposes the recognition that all human beings are of equal worth. And the more explicit equality is and becomes in human interactions, the more easily and completely communication occurs.

Equality as a philosophical concept is unconditional, but does not deny the reality of specific social identities, loyalties or preferential interests. Equality does not mean homogeneity or uniformity. Neither does it contradict the special roles and ranks which societies confer on individuals and groups of people.

But equality also implies the right not to be discriminated against because of race, ethnicity, religion, or sex and age, etc. Commenting on the 1986 *African Charter on Human and People's Rights*, which emphasises the duties of the individual towards the community, and which formalises the notion of group and collective rights, Charles Husband (1998: 139) states:

" In recognising that our individuality is contingent upon those communities of identity to which we belong we recognise our connectedness, our solidarity. Consequently, individual rights cannot be fully enjoyed, or guaranteed, in the absence of respect for the dignity, integrity, equality and liberty of those communities of identities, including our ethnic community to which we belong. And in demanding the recognition of any one of our communities... we must reciprocally recognise the legitimacy of the existence, and the integrity, of other communities, including their differences from us."

The non-recognition of such identities in public communication may lead to a "proliferation of communicative ghettos in which relatively homogenous audiences consume a narrow diet of information, entertainment and values" (Husband, 1998: 143). The inclusion in the public sphere of differentiated groups is likely to result in a heterogeneous discourse of citizens, in which social identities can be affirmed and collective interests expressed.

There is, however, another type of loyalty – often overlooked – that sustains the right to communicate, namely loyalty towards, and *solidarity* with, the weak and most vulnerable in society, like the physically or mentally ill, or the very young and very old. Solidarity further includes an active commitment to individuals and groups who have been relegated to the margins of society, like the refugees, the outcasts (for whatever reason), and the exploited and oppressed. It is not least a "solidarity with those whose freedom has been taken away, rendering them less than human" (Traber, 1997: 335). Active solidarity is one

of the "inescapable claims on one another which we cannot renounce except at the cost of our humanity" (Peukert, quoted in Christians, 1997: 7).

Our common being-in-the-world is ontologically inclusive, and morally transformative. Gross injustices, to say the least, upset and disgust us, and this sense of revulsion may spur us into action. Self-transcendence then acquires a new and ethical quality. Intersubjectivity implicitly strives for an equitable social order and, ultimately, for the "good society", as one cross-cultural study on ethical proto-norms has shown (Christians & Traber, 1997). The good society is not only a utopian projection but also the subject of concrete analysis, which is both a task of social science and of social ethics. The transformative potential of communication is summarised in the following statement:

" Communication which liberates, enables people to articulate their own needs and helps them to act together to meet those needs. It enhances their sense of dignity and underlines their right to full participation in the life of society. It aims to bring about structures in society, which are more just, more egalitarian and more conducive to the fulfilment of human rights" (WACC, 1997: 8).

The right to public communication for all
The human needs approach leads to the right to communicate for individuals. The right is meant to guarantee and implement the social nature of humans through interpersonal communication. Although it implies the right to public communication, an explicit confirmation is still called for, because it is on this level that the right to communicate is most contested.

The right to communicate publicly is foreign to the thinking of all those who have traditionally associated public communication with the political, social and cultural elite of society. The notion of public "social actors" has greatly influenced the history of the press and of all other mass media of communication. The conventional criteria for news are obsessed with the news

value of "prominence": the VIPs with political and economic power, and the "stars" of entertainment and of sports. In fact stardom is bequeathed by the media by repeated exposure; it is an invention of Hollywood that has spread from film to television and popular music. The mass media have, in the course of time, developed their own culture with its own norms. One of them is "professionalism". This does not necessarily mean training or education, but the elitist notion that only "special people", with special talents, should be journalists and broadcasters. Public communication is thus the prerogative of those who can, and do, uphold the professional norms of media culture.

Another expression of elitism is the tendency (and it is no more than that) to evince mistrust towards "common" people who may misuse the freedom and the power of public communication. This mistrust is particularly evident with respect to youth. The assumption is that political and ethical responsibility is the prerogative of members of a certain social and professional class. However, the misuses of the power of public communication in recent years have been very much in professional hands. The reporting of the war in the Persian Gulf (1991), the role radio and television played in the genocide in Rwanda (1994), and the ethnic hubris and war mongering of the media in ex-Yugoslavia (long before the conflicts erupted) are cases in point.

Advocates of the right to public information for all challenge the prerogatives of the political and professional elite. Their model of public communication is democratic rather than authoritarian. They aim at the distribution of communication power from the few to the many, from the elite to the grassroots. This right further stipulates a new role for the State, which becomes only one among several concerned parties; it embraces other institutions as well as groups and organisations – apart from individuals.

In other words, the right to communicate is very much dependent upon social structures in which public communication takes place. In brief, democracies require more than the election of

representatives to a legislative assembly in a multi-party system. Over and beyond voting and party politics, democracy requires people who can make their wishes known – in public – and who participate in the debate about the type of political processes they aspire to.

The right to communicate, however, cannot stand in isolation. It is connected to other human rights, particularly the rights to education, culture and socio-economic development. Hamelink (1998: 56) stresses the entitlement to self-empowerment:

" Among the essential conditions of people's self-empowerment are access to, and use of, the resources that enable people to express themselves, to communicate these expressions to others, to exchange ideas with others, to inform themselves about events in the world, to create and control the production of knowledge and to share the world's sources of knowledge. These resources include technical infrastructures, knowledge and skills, financial means and natural systems. Their unequal distribution among the world's people obstructs the equal entitlement to the conditions of self-empowerment and should be considered a violation of human rights."

The MacBride Report (1980: 253) says that the right to communicate is a prerequisite for other human rights. There is a direct connection between communication and all those other rights that stress participation in public affairs. Society and its institutions must enable the active participation of all in the economic, political and cultural life of the community. This is not a high minded expression of benevolence, but a demand of justice. Such participation in the field of communication is of course more than "consumer choice" or passive access to the mass media, or even the interactive chats between buddies on the Internet. The participation meant here is public dialogue about the public good. Its aim is to contribute to the debate about society, its values and priorities, and, above all, our common future. It's a dynamic and ongoing process, aimed at change and transformation.

Conclusion

So we return to the theme of intersubjectivity, or being-in-the-world-together, thus fashioning our future together. Our togetherness has a personal/private side, with its respective right, and a public responsibility, with its rights. The right to public communication pertains to public order and the public good, which are the right and responsibility of all, not just of a few.

Communication is similar to the nervous system of the human body. It is maintained by a multitude of signals originating from all parts of the body. If the nervous system or the immune system breaks down, the wellbeing of the entire body is in jeopardy. Similarly, no modern democracy can exist, let alone flourish, without a certain level of information and participation. It is thus the very body politic that depends on the right to communicate. The roles of communication, both interpersonal and public, have been aptly described in the first paragraph of Chapter 1 of the MacBride Report (1980: 3):

"Communication maintains and animates life. It is also the motor and expression of social activity and civilisation; it leads people and peoples from instinct to inspiration, through variegated processes and systems of enquiry, command and control; it creates a common pool of ideas, strengthens the feeling of togetherness… and translates thought into action, reflecting every emotion and need from the humblest tasks of human survival to supreme manifestations of creativity – or destruction. Communication integrates knowledge, organisation of power and runs a thread linking the earliest memory of man [humans] to his [their] noblest aspirations through constant striving for a better life.' As the world has advanced, the task of communication has become ever more complex and subtle – to contribute to the liberation of [hu]mankind from want, oppression and fear and to unite it in community and communion, solidarity and understanding. However, unless some basic structural changes are introduced, the potential benefits of technological and communication development will hardly be put at the disposal of the majority of [hu]mankind."[3] ∎

This article first appeared in idoc internazionale, *Vol. 30, Nos. 1 & 2, January–June 1999. Rome: IDOC.*

Notes
1. *The Journal of International Communication* (Sydney) devoted a double issue (Vol.5, Nos 1&2, 1989) to the debate on communication and human rights in the context of globalisation and cyberspace. It is guest-edited by Shalini Venturelli, and contains contributions from leaders in the field, such as Cees J. Hamelink, George Gerbner, Marc Raboy and others.
2. The translation of this passage by Heidegger has been altered to do justice to the inclusive term he uses for the human being, namely *Mensch,* not *Mann* (man). See also Martin Heidegger, *On the Way to Language,* (trans. Peter D. Hertz), New York: Harper and Row, 1971, in which the author marvels (pp. 47-54) at the Japanese word for language, *koto ha,* which literally means: the flower petals (*ha*) that flourish out of the lightening message of the graciousness that brings them forth (*koto*).
3. I am quoting unashamedly from *Many Voices, One World,* popularly known as the MacBride Report, which UNESCO long disowned. This blueprint for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) is more pertinent today than it was in 1980, when all member States of UNESCO endorsed it (with one abstention). With the hindsight of the developments in public communications in the last 20 years, the abandoning of NWICO was an act of utter folly.

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Shrinking civic space and sustainable development

Lorenzo Vargas and Philip Lee

Drawing on learnings from WACC consultations with 92 organizations and academic institutions working on communication-related issues, this article examines the United Nations' 2030 Agenda from a communication rights perspective. It argues for the missing SDG 18: Communication rights for all.

Millions of people on every continent lack access to communication platforms, are underrepresented or misrepresented in the media, have low levels of media literacy, have limited access to relevant and accurate information and knowledge, are excluded from participation in decision-making processes, and live in contexts where there is limited media freedom. These issues can be encapsulated as "communication and information poverty", a form of poverty that contributes to people's inability to make themselves heard, one of the most prevalent manifestations of poverty (Narayan et al., 2000).

Addressing these types of communication and information issues is critical in order to achieve the vision of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These issues impede people's full participation in development processes, especially for the poorest and most marginalized members of society. This belief echoes the findings of a 2013 report published by the UN Development Group on the post-2015 development agenda, which called for "putting people – their rights, aspirations and opportunities – at the centre of development" (United Nations Development Group, 2013).

Tackling communication and information poverty is not always part of development agendas. This can partly be attributed to the fact that communication and information issues are less tangible than other development priorities, such as food security or access to life-saving medication. Nevertheless, information and communication considerations must be part of development agendas as they help enable the achievement of a range of other development objectives, and can enhance the sustainability of some development outcomes, such as health-related behavioural changes (Sugg, 2016).

The 2030 United Nation's 2030 Agenda does shed light on a number of communication and information issues. For example, SDG 5 highlights the importance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as tools for women's empowerment, while SDG 9 promotes universal internet access. ICTs are also mentioned in SDG 4 and SDG 17. SDG 16 calls attention to the importance of access to public information legislation and to the imperative of protecting journalists and human rights defenders.

Integration of communication and information issues into SDG implementation

Despite a certain amount of progress, WACC and its partners believe that further integration of communication and information issues into the SDGs would have strengthened the vision of Agenda 2030. While it is clearly no longer possible to suggest changes to the SDGs, we believe that it is indeed possible to integrate communication and information issues into the implementation of programmes aimed at advancing a number of Goals.

This article, the condensed version of a more in-depth framework on communication and information poverty and the SDGs, is the result of a process that involved consultations with 92 of WACC's partners around the world. It presents a series of recommendations to address communication and information poverty in relation to SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG

9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) & SDG 17 (Partnership for Goals), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

Communication and information poverty

Communication and information poverty, a form of poverty that goes hand-in-hand with economic and social poverty, needs to be addressed in order to achieve sustainable development. Communication and information are "essential conditions for development and affect every aspect of life. [Therefore], communication and information poverty, despite being only one dimension of poverty, affects all other dimensions" (Daza et al. 2007). The drafting of this document was guided by an understanding of communication and information poverty as arising from structural deficits that prevent people from fully participating in decision-making processes about issues that affect their lives.

Key manifestations of communication and information poverty identified during the consultation process include: lack of access to communication platforms to meaningfully raise concerns about issues that affect one's life; under/misrepresentation in media content; low levels of media literacy; limited access to relevant information, including public information; exclusion from decision-making processes; restrictions to freedom of expression, association and assembly; and the absence of an independent, inclusive, and pluralistic media sector.

Communication and development

The relationship between communication and development has taken many forms over the years, though the notion of communication and information poverty has not always been at the centre of this exchange.

Two main approaches have historically shaped the role of communication in development. On the one hand is an understanding of communication as a linear process of information transmission that causes social change in terms of knowledge, attitudes and behaviours (Servaes,

2006). This understanding is connected to the view of development as modernization, which emphasizes the replication of Western paths to progress. This approach tends to overlook issues of local culture, local access to media, and people's ability to participate in decision-making.

On the other hand, there is the view that 'communication is a complex process that is linked to culture, and that is connected to global and local economic, political, and ideological structures'. This idea is conceptually linked to views of development as the empowerment of marginalized communities and challenging power relationships (ibid) (Melkote and Steeves, 2001). This approach tends to understand communication and information from a rights-based perspective, and addresses key communication and information poverty issues such as the existence of platforms for genuine participation, media literacy, and cultural and linguistic relevance.

Today, there is growing consensus that communication-based development interventions should abide by principles such as inclusion, locally driven development, gender equality, community empowerment, participation, and respect for human rights. This evolution in the field reflects the increasing acceptance of the need to address key communication and information poverty issues in order to achieve meaningful change through communication and information-based development interventions.

A rights-based view of communication

WACC and its partners believe that addressing communication and information poverty though development interventions should be done from a rights-based perspective. A rights-based approach provides development practitioners with a common lens to understand and address communication and information issues.

The right to freedom of expression, enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948), is the starting point to taking a rights based approach to communication and information. "It is regarded as a central pillar of democracy, pro-

tecting the right to call our rulers to account, vital to preventing censorship, an indispensable condition of effective and free media" (CRIS Campaign, 2005). However, power among people in any given society both enables and limits access to information and communication, which may in some cases undermine freedom of expression.

As a result, the right to freedom of expression is best guaranteed when promoted *alongside* a number of other rights. This is particularly important today, as communication ecosystems are becoming increasingly complex due to rapid technological change, different levels of access to platforms, multi-layered and often transnational media governance processes, growing dependence on digital technology, and the emergence of media as a key space to advance inclusion and social change (Couldry and Rodriguez, 2015).

Other rights that help "construct the environment in which freedom of expression may be fully consummated" include "a right to participate in one's own culture and language, to enjoy the benefits of science, to information, to education, to participation in governance, to privacy, to peaceful assembly, to the protection of one's reputation" (CRIS Campaign, 2005: 23) all of which are part of the International Bill of Rights (OHCHR, 2003). Other crucial elements include diversity of media content and ownership, press freedom, diverse and independent media, and democratic access to media.

And last, but certainly not least in today's digital age, vital questions must be addressed on the need for strong legal standards for data protection and data security; privacy; and reliable and affordable connectivity via global net neutrality. In addition, the development of artificial intelligence (AI) raises what AccessNow (2017) describes as "some of the most challenging issues of the 21st century for human rights, ethics, accountability, transparency, and innovation."

How communication and information poverty undermines the SDGs

Transforming our World: Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development is the United Nations framework for development between 2015 and 2030. It is a universal agenda, including both developed and developing countries, that seeks to balance economic growth, environmental sustainability, peace, and human development. It sets 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) dealing with a wide range of development issues.

WACC and its partners maintain that the vision of Agenda 2030 cannot be achieved unless communication and information ecosystems enable people to participate in decision-making related to sustainable development. During the consultation process that led to the drafting of this document, WACC and its partners identified SDGs 5, SDG 9, SDG 16, and SDG 17 as the Goals where the intersection with communication and information poverty is most evident.

SDG 5: Gender Equality

Agenda 2030 recognizes the importance of addressing gender inequality as a central component of achieving sustainable development. Goal 5 seeks to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; its 9 Targets and 14 indicators address critical gender issues such as discrimination against women and girls, violence against women and girls, harmful practices such as early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, women's unpaid work, women's access to economic resources, and access to sexual and reproductive health, among others.

Gender inequality is a key dimension of Communication and information poverty because gender issues affect how women and girls are represented in the media, have access to media platforms, and gain information and knowledge. Gender inequality also undermines the ability of women and girls to exercise their right to freedom of expression, which in turn prevents them from fully participating in decision-making processes about matters that affect their lives.

Four targets in particular under Goal 5 highlight the relationship between communication and information poverty and gender equality. The first being *Target 5.1. End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.*

As WACC's own research has shown (Macharia et al. 2015), women are under and misrepresented in media content, a form of discrimination that exacerbates, perpetuates, and normalizes other forms of discrimination against women and girls.

The second target under Goal 5 is *Target 5.2. Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public sphere, including trafficking and other types of exploitation*. Many women and girls around the world face violence when exercising their right to freedom of expression. This is particularly the case for women journalists, as many face gender-based violence at work according to a 2017 survey from the International Federation of Journalists (International Federation of Journalists, 2017).

The third target under Goal 5 is *Target 5.5: Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life*. The link to communication and information issues is evident as women need to have access to communication platforms and to relevant information in order to enjoy full and effective participation. The reference to equal opportunities for leadership, also reflected in indicator 5.5.2, is also important as it reinforces the need to promote women's leadership within the media sector.

The fourth target under goal 5 is *Target 5.B: Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women*. As mentioned earlier, one of the key manifestations of communication and information poverty is the limited access to communication platforms and resources. Having greater access to a mobile phone, as Indicator 5.B.1 for this Target states, would certainly help address a number of communication and information needs for many women.

Working towards the achievement of these targets is critical to help address communication and information poverty as experienced by women and girls. Nevertheless, as the 2015 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) report argues, there is significant work to be done to promote gender equality in the media and communication. Despite considerable efforts by activists, allies in the media, media training institutions and others, achieving gender equality in and through the media remains a formidable task. The GMMP's statistical evidence points to a loss of traction in narrowing media gender disparities over the past decade and regression on some indicators (Macharia et al, 2015).

At the same time, public awareness about the relationship between communication, gender, and development has grown in recent years. For example, the UNESCO-led Global Alliance for Media and Gender (GAMAG) was founded in 2013 to accelerate the implementation of recommendations on 'Women and the Media" contained in Section 'J" of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. Similarly, the 62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in 2018, had as its review theme the "Participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women".

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure & SDG 17- Partnership for the Goals

In the United Nation's 2030 Agenda SDGs 9 and 17 recognize the need to enable people everywhere to benefit from access to the internet and to mobile telephony. This represents undeniable progress from a communication and information perspective as increased access to relevant technology can help equip people with the tools to participate in the information society, have their voices heard, and contribute to the production and dissemination of knowledge. This is especially relevant as it is estimated that about 3 billion people today lack access to the internet and about 2 billion do not have access to a mobile phone.

Goal 9 highlights the issue of access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the Internet under Target 9.C-"*Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide uni-*

versal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020. For national governments, this Goal reinforces their obligation to provide universal access to basic telecommunication services to their citizens, including to those living in remote areas. It also creates an opportunity to promote more democratic models for the development and ownership of communication infrastructure, as exemplified by community-managed telecommunication company *Telecomunicaciones Indigenas Comunitarias* (TIC) in Oaxaca, Mexico.

Goal 17 focuses on the finance, technology, capacity, trade, effectiveness, monitoring issues related to the implementation of Agenda 2030. Under the "technology" Target area of this SDG, two Targets focus on internet access. Target 17.6 *-Enhance North–South, South–South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation,* Indicator 17.6.2 *Fixed Internet broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, by speed;* and "Target 17.8 *Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology,* Indicator 17.8.1 *Proportion of individuals using the Internet.* Increased access to the internet can have a significant impact on communication and information needs, especially at the grassroots level (Rey Moreno, 2017), particularly as access to services in many parts of the world is increasingly internet-mediated.

WACC and its partners believe that at a time when digital communication is becoming increasingly prevalent and policymakers in many countries are developing the digital infrastructure and governance models of the future, it is critical to move beyond the mere celebration of access in order to address more structural issues. Questions about human rights, ownership, regulation, privacy, and illegal surveillance of civil society actors must be central elements of the conversation about ICTs in development. Some of these issues have been raised by the United Nations

Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, Mr. David Kaye (2015, 2016, 2017), in his office's reports.

Furthermore, greater access to the internet and digital platforms alone will not be sufficient to contribute to sustainable development. It is essential to promote the use of these new tools in such a way that communities most often excluded achieve greater participation and that helps create the political will in public opinion to implement public policies that contribute to greater equity and inclusion. This use of digital platforms must occur within a framework of rights that help generate genuine opportunities for free and informed participation to promote true sustainable development.

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

The 2030 Agenda, within the framework of Goal 16 recognizes that democracy, good governance and the rule of law play a fundamental role in achieving sustainable development. Open and democratic access to communication and information underpins the achievement of all these objectives as it can help promote social inclusion, peaceful conflict resolution, advance the rule of law, shed light on corruption, promote trust in institutions, and enable participation. It is also directly linked to fundamental freedoms such as freedom of expression and freedom of association. A number of Targets within this goal have a direct link to communication and information issues.

Target 16.1 *Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere* is strongly linked to media and communication issues. Open and trust-based communication has the potential to help ameliorate conflict situations, promote a culture of dialogue, and advance non-violent conflict resolution. Peace-oriented media can also create spaces for meaningful exchange among perceived adversaries. Responsible and ethical media coverage of conflict can help counter hate speech, change perceptions

and behaviours, and ensure access to information on conflict prevention.

Target 16.3 *Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all* is intimately linked to information and communication issues. Media freedom, access to information, and freedom of expression is essential to keep institutions, including justice institutions, in check, as well as to promote trust in the justice system.

Target 16.5 *Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms* has a strong relationship to media freedom issues, as media outlets and investigative journalists need the necessary protection and safeguards to ensure they can carry out their work effectively. It would be difficult to reduce corruption when the media is concentrated in a few hands and journalists do not have the freedom to investigate cases of corruption.

In relation to Target 16.6 *Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels,* it is clear that freedom of information and other communication rights are essential to promote transparency and accountability within public institutions. The media must reflect the views of all sectors of society, especially the views of the most disadvantaged people in society, in order to achieve greater transparency and effectiveness within public institutions.

Target 16.7 *Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels* has multiple connections to communication and information issues. An essential element of exercising communication rights is the opportunity for people to participate in decision-making, especially in relation to issues that directly affect their lives. This requires access to information, particularly public information. People must also be able to exercise their right to freedom of expression, have access to relevant means of communication, and be guaranteed their right of reply and redress. People also have the right to participate in the "formulation and governance of the communication sphere… at the national level, but also in the context of international relations" (CRIS Campaign, 2005, pg. 42).

Target 16.10 *Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements* has numerous connections to communication and information issues. The two Indicators under this Target reflect that: Indicator 16.10.1 *Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months* and Indicator 16.10.2 *Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information.* The inclusion of this Target and Indicators in Agenda 2030 is commendable. Even as an indicator related to freedom of expression would have strengthened this Target, especially related to the reference to "fundamental freedoms", this Target is still central for all those working on addressing communication and information poverty.

Target 16.B *Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development* can also be examined from a communication and information perspective. Numerous groups in society face discrimination and other barriers in relation to communication and information. For example, many indigenous people are unable to access public information in their language, preventing them from participating in society.

In sum, the explicit references to communication and information issues within Goal 16 are limited to access to public information and to the protection of journalists and other human rights defenders. In this sense, the Goal fails to reference pivotal issues such as freedom of expression, linguistic rights, and media concentration that are strongly related to peace, justice, and strong institutions. Nevertheless, the many instances in which communication and information issues implicitly intersect with the Targets of SDG 16, as listed above, represent valuable opportunities for those working to address communication and information poverty. These intersections allow groups working in fields such as community

media, media monitoring, advocacy on access to information, participatory communication, and citizen journalism to make direct links to specific SDGs in order to highlight the importance of their work and to gain broader support for their work.

Conclusion

As the world of communication continues to change, and as serious development issues such as climate change and poverty continue to challenge us, we must remember that communication and information issues, particularly when examined from a rights-based perspective, are intrinsically connected to questions of human dignity.

In practice, this entails working together to ensure that those who suffer marginalization and exclusion, and whose voices should be at the heart of any effort to advance sustainable development, are able to participate in the decision-making processes that will ultimately affect their lives. ∎

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Social progress and its measures

Göran Bolin

In the early 20th Century, the American pragmatist philosopher John Dewey argued in his Democracy and Education that society is intrinsically linked with and embedded in its communicative forms.

Society, Dewey wrote, "not only continues to exist *by* transmission, *by* communication, but it may fairly be said to exist *in* transmission, *in* communication" (Dewey 1916/1923: 5). Without communication, hence, there can be no society. We could not develop what Raymond Williams (1962/1966) has called "our common life together" without communication, binding us together in social bonds of commonality. The highly complex and large-scale societies of today could not self-organise without the means for communication, without the knowledge of writing to preserve knowledge, and without the media as technological "extensions" of the human body (McLuhan 1964).

The means of communication that any society has at its disposal has of course varied over time, but they have always set their mark on each society in every epoch of human existence – from the early precursors of writing of the Stone Age, to the sophisticated digital communication facilities of modern society. This fact also makes it of utmost importance for modern society to reflect on its technological means of communication, how they are distributed within populations, which types of access citizens have to them, and how they should be governed. Because, without equal opportunities to communicate, and without even distribution of the access to information and abilities to making one's voice heard, there cannot be an equal and just society. Communication is thus one of the most important resources that any society disposes of. However, as we all know, in most societies this resource is unevenly distributed.

In the following, I will discuss this unevenness, how it can be mapped and measured, and what would be a way to make it more evenly spread among citizens. I will do this against the background of a chapter I have been co-authoring for the International Panel for Social Progress (IPSP), an international initiative to "rethinking society for the 21st Century". I will first say something about the background and execution of this larger project. I will then more specifically account for some of the main points in the chapter of media and communication, to which I contributed, including the recommendations, the action plan and the toolkit that we suggested. I will lastly say something about the Social Progress Index and give some suggestions on how this index could be improved.

The International Panel of Social Progress

The International Panel of Social Progress is a major intellectual initiative, led by philosopher Marc Fleurbaey from Princeton University and the director of the French Institute for Advanced Study Network, Olivier Bouin, and with a board of prominent researchers from around the word, among which Amartya Sen. In the mission statement of IPSP it says that the goal is to "harness the competence of hundreds of experts about social issues and will deliver a report addressed to all social actors, movements, organizations, politicians and decision-makers, in order to provide them with the best expertise on questions that bear on social change."

Against a general background of a weakening of the nation state, of rapid technological change (including the aligned rapidly changing power structures), of "unequal transformations in health and education outcomes, and falls in income poverty in many emerging economies, yet rising inequalities of wealth and income within countries", as well as increased tensions between religious groups (and between religious and secular groups), post-cold war tensions, etc., the

panel has sought to produce a multidisciplinary state of the art for policy-makers, governments, NGOs and other interested parties to act on.

The manifest result is a three-volume set of books, covering 22 chapters published in print and electronic form, and with preprints downloadable from the web site of IPSP. In addition, a range of articles, manifestos, etc. has been published, as well as numerous conference presentations and seminars all across the globe. Chapters covered issues such as health, economy, labour markets, democracy, war and conflict, belonging, family, etc., with chapter 13 devoted to media and communications. In that chapter there is a brief overview of access and use of media and communication technologies around the world, partly through a number of country case studies, and a discussion of regulations and legal frameworks.

Against this background policy recommendations, an action plan and a toolkit were formulated, suggesting areas of potential actions by governments and policymakers, international organisations, media corporations and the tech sector, social movements and civil society, and of citizens. This last point we deemed important in order to try to mobilise not only organised activities within e.g. NGOs, but also pointing to the importance of engaged individual citizens to exercise their civic rights and duties.

As we set out to draft the IPSP chapter 13, a clear inspiration for the work was the MacBride report, *Many Voices, One World* (UNESCO 1980), and one of the aims of was to relate the analysis of the media to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (Couldry et al. 2018a). IPSP began its work roughly at the same time as the 17 SDGs were signed by 193 countries in September 2015.

Already from the start, the IPSP had initiated a dialogue with the Social Progress Index (SPI). SPI was founded by the NGO Social Progress Imperative in 2014 as an attempt to broaden the indicators of wellbeing for countries around the world, deliberately seeking to move beyond the crude measures of GDP as indicators of a country's wellbeing, or, in their own words: "to measure social progress directly, rather than to utilize economic proxies".

Accordingly, the SPI covers the three broad areas of Basic human needs, Foundations of well-being, and Opportunities. Each of these are then broken down into four groups of indicators or "components", each component containing three to five individual "outcome indicators". One can thus find the component Access to information and communications under Foundations of well-being.

The Social Progress Index as a tool for measuring communicative commonality

The task of measuring qualitative phenomena such as happiness, well-being, joy, sadness, loneliness and social progress is, of course, an enduring problem for the social sciences, as well as for policy-makers, welfare organisations and others who are determined to increase the conditions that make the world a better place to live for as many people as possible. The ISP should therefore be seen as a welcome contribution to broadening our knowledge on societies' wellbeing. Since its launch, it has also become refined and nuanced in several respects. There are still some additional adjustments that could be made.

Chapter 13 of the IPSP thus mapped the conditions for just and fair communication around the world, highlighting sources of inequality, based on the ways in which various national media systems were organised, but also differences in technological infrastructure. The report included a number of country case studies, highlighting for example the vast differences in media systems between the highly commercialised and privately controlled broadcasting market – controlled by a handful of individuals and where boundaries between private ownership and political regulators are blurred – and the Scandinavian, public service-based systems marked by clear distinctions between media and the state, the market and civil society.

The report ended with a number of policy recommendations, an action plan and a toolkit

with recommendations. One of the things we recommended was that the key measure of "social progress" in the SPI should be adjusted to recognize *effective* media access and use (as opposed to the mere availability of technology), and communication rights. By effective access, we meant the just "distribution of media resources, even relations between spaces of connection and the design and operation of spaces that foster dialogue, free speech and respectful cultural exchange". By communication rights, we meant a subcategory to "personal rights" as measured in the SPI under the component Opportunity, alongside indicators such as Freedom of expression (Couldry et al. 2018: 174). Such resources, we argued, should be provided to citizens *without* them also being subjected to surveillance and/or them being extracted data from for commercial or other purposes.

At the time of writing the report in 2017, the component Access to Information and Communications included the three indicators: Mobile phone subscriptions, Internet users and the Press Freedom Index. However, since 2018 the SPI has changed its indicators, within the component to include also Access to online governance, and the Press Freedom Index has, due to low correlation with the other indicators, been replaced with Access to independent media, which is of course a much broader measure.

Access to online governance measures the "availability of e-participation tools on national government portal for of the following uses: e-information – provision of information on the Internet; e-consultation – organizing public consultations online; and e-decision-making – involving citizens directly in decision processes", while Access to independent media is defined as the percentage of a population that "has access to any print or broadcast media that are sometimes critical of the national government".

This is clearly an improvement of the index, but we still think that there is room for further improvement of the SPI indicators, since this measure also emphasises the citizen as a receiver of information, rather than as an actively produc-

cing subject. Effective media access, we argued, is dependent on an interrelationship between media and other closely related factors such as literacy, language, and education. This means that the availability of media has to be combined with initiatives to empower citizens through, for example, media and information literacy projects, training opportunities and education.

Importantly, such initiatives cannot be left to the market, but need to be publicly funded in order to reach relevant parts of populations, in line with what was stated in the Tunis Agenda for The Information Society (WSIS 2005). Technological means of communication and content production should also be affordable and should be freed from business models that rely on surveillance technologies. The design of media infrastructures and digital platforms also needs to be pertinent to varied language communities in order to prevent exclusion of minorities.

Conclusions

While we appreciate that "effective media access and use" is difficult to measure and that there are as yet no existing sources for this measure, we nonetheless believe that in a world of massive information overload, and with algorithmic models based on keeping media users locked to specific platforms of often light entertainment media (e.g. Facebook, YouTube), there is a need for also trying to construct indicators to measure media use as an activity. Over its relatively short existence, the SPI has already improved its measuring techniques and its combination of components and indicators, and there can thus be high hopes for the index to improve further.

If society exists in communication, as John Dewey argued, we need to consider communication as one of the basic human resources, in the same way as access to clean water and other basic human needs. This also means that the means to communicate needs to be considered a common good that all citizens should have equal access to, just as other infrastructural common goods such as railways, roads, power supply, etc. To ac-

knowledge communication and the media that facilitates communication as such a common good will be the first step towards a more just and equal society. ∎

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What do the SDGs mean for the world's Indigenous Peoples?

Dev Kumar Sunuwar

It has been over four years since the heads of states gathered at a High level Plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly in September 2015 in New York and adopted a new development framework: "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in short known as the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs).

This decade-and-half long universal political agenda comprises 17 goals and 169 associated targets, as an extension to the earlier Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which concluded in 2015. SDGs reflect some of the key human rights principles advocated by Indigenous Peoples, who therefore believe that it may be an opportunity for continuing advances, promotion and recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

"The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has given Indigenous Peoples a certain level of expectation," says Chandra Roy-Henriksen,[1] Chief of United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) Secretariat. Explaining further, she states, "As the world moves forward towards 2030, there is hope among Indigenous communities that their priorities, concerns and rights will be recognized."

An estimated 370 million Indigenous Peoples in the world, belonging to 5,000 different groups, in the 90 countries worldwide are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda with its promise to

"Leave No One Behind".[2] They make up 5% of the world's population, yet account for about 15% of the world's poorest. They lag behind on virtually every social, economic, or political indicator considered in the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is of critical importance to Indigenous Peoples. It is also imperative that Indigenous Peoples are engaged, at all levels, to ensure that we are not left behind.

While the 2030 Agenda is beneficial to all global citizens, only the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in the development, implementation, monitoring and review process of action plans and programs on sustainable development at all levels, will provide an opportunity for the fulfilment of the rights of Indigenous Peoples, as prescribed in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

SDGs: a leap from MDGs

The SGDs as an extension of the MDGs have been viewed as an opportunity to improve the situation of Indigenous Peoples worldwide. The critique of MDGs was that they did not grant enough attention to Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples were excluded from the process and were mentioned neither in the goals nor in the indicators. The SDGs were developed to address the challenges and shortcomings of the MDGs, and will directly influence the lives of millions of Indigenous Peoples.

The SDGs aim to deal with issues directly related Indigenous Peoples, such as ending poverty, ensuring human rights and inclusion for all, ensuring good governance, preventing conflict, as well as ensuring environmental sustainability.

The Indigenous Peoples' Major Group (IPMG)[3] was one among nine major groups (youth, women, trade unions, local authorities, science and technology, business and industry, farmers and NGOs) represented at the UN with an official voice and right to intervene during the deliberations among member states. IPMG was actively participating in the SDG stocktaking and negotiation process since the beginning of the process in February 2013 and concluded with the summit in September 2015.

IPMG has been facilitating the participation of key Indigenous leaders from different regions, including research and delivery of statements and position papers. IPMG states that the agenda's mainly human rights, human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination, respect for ethnicity and cultural diversity, access to justice and participatory decision-making are very positive. Indigenous leaders thus think that SDGs will provide an opportunity to remedy the historical injustices resulting from discrimination and inequalities that the Indigenous Peoples worldwide suffered for so long. Indigenous Peoples are striving to have SDG targets and indicators reflect their rights and their relationship to their lands, territories, and natural resources.

But there are also disappointments. IPMG during deliberations has consistently proposed to include Indigenous Peoples rights to self-determined development, the right to lands, territories and resources, the recognition of Indigenous knowledge, sustainable use and management of biodiversity resources, respect for Indigenous Peoples' right to Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). Despite active participation of Indigenous Peoples throughout the process, most of these concerns were not specifically reflected in the SDGs.

Indigenous Peoples' visions of development were not included in the SDGs and their collective rights were not given sufficient recognition to be consistent with the commitment in the World Conference of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) Outcome Document[4] to give "due consideration to all the rights of Indigenous Peoples in the elaboration of the Post-2015 development Agenda"[5] and also ignored the provision of UNDRIP that affirms Indigenous Peoples right to self-determined development.[6]

The SDGs also do not affirm the collective rights of Indigenous Peoples to their lands, territories, and resources. There are no specific targets

relating to Indigenous Peoples' security of land, territories and resources.

Secretary General of Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, an umbrella organization of Indigenous Peoples Organization in Asia, Gam Shimray says, "land is the only basis for continuity of identity and also of holistic development which we call self-determined development. If land is left out, we are already being left behind. That's why land is so important when we talk about SDG goals."[7]

Mother tongue media

Media and communications are essential tools to create spaces for the expression of Indigenous voices and to share stories about the diversity of cultures, languages, and histories. Information, communication, and media has a power to educate, inform, and change society. Media can include and bolster Indigenous voices, revitalize Indigenous languages, and educate Indigenous children. It also helps to identify sustainable opportunities for development and can develop respect for and the promotion and protection of Indigenous Peoples rights.

UNDRIP provisions to access and own media in their languages are one of the key rights of Indigenous Peoples. Article 16 says "Indigenous Peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own language"[8] and that states "shall take effective measures to ensure that state-owned media duly reflect Indigenous cultural diversity" and that "privately owned media… adequately reflect Indigenous cultural diversity."[9]

The role of media is well acknowledged. But we also have understand that it is only participatory communication approaches that help promote the voices of people who are often not heard or seen. The media landscape worldwide however indicates that Indigenous communities have relatively little access, voice, and participation in the mainstream media. By and large, media are owned and controlled by more socially and economically powerful groups.

In addition, language remains a major barrier, as content in Indigenous mother tongues (the first language) is limited in the mainstream media. Information and communication not available in their mother tongues prevent many Indigenous communities from accessing essential news and resources. And in many remote areas, Indigenous people, especially elders, may only speak one language, meaning that important messages broadcast in other languages in the mainstream media often do not reach this population. Thus, there is need for content production, including about SDGs, in Indigenous languages.

Today, radio stations, especially community-based radio, have been one of the most accessible platforms for Indigenous Peoples. Small, community-based radio stations may seem like an outdated mode of communication, but for many Indigenous Peoples the low cost of radio makes it the ideal tool for defending their cultures, their lands and natural resources, and their rights. Even in very poor communities lacking electricity, many people can afford a small battery-powered radio. Radio is the medium of choice in many remote areas with little other forms of communication and it is the primary source of news, information and entertainment.

In this way, Cultural Survival through its Community Media Grant Programs and Indigenous Rights Radio Program uses the power of community radio to strengthen the voices of Indigenous Peoples, their common struggles and equally to inform them about their rights, in their languages. To date, Cultural Survival in partnership with IPMG in the SDGs has also produced SDG spots in various Indigenous languages and is distributing radio content across 55 countries.

Self-determined development

Indigenous Peoples have innate social, cultural, spiritual and economic ties with their lands, territories and resources, which shape their identity and existence. The land, territories and natural resources are part of them. Indigenous Peoples nourish the forest, desert, rivers and fields which form part of their cultures. They have built their knowledge systems and sustained their lives interacting with and co-depending with the nat-

ural resources.

"But lately Indigenous Peoples have been evicted from their land, territories and natural resources in the name of hydropower dams, extractive industries, which have destroyed their land, villages, livelihoods, secrets sites, including their customary institutions," says Joan Carling, the International Focal Person for the IPMG in the SDGs. Carling further adds, "Such occurrences have caused Indigenous Peoples continuous discrimination and marginalization as an effect of economic development in many states across the world."

The plans are undoubtedly beneficial for the country's economic development. But such plans undertaken usually by multilateral development banks and private sector investors in many countries are creating suffering among Indigenous Peoples. Frequently, they are resulting in widespread human rights violations including escalating conflicts, forced displacement, and irreparable loss of traditional livelihoods and massive environmental degradation.

Often development projects operate in areas typically inhabited by Indigenous Peoples, who are often entirely dependent upon rivers and forests for their livelihoods. Thus implementation of such development projects on or near Indigenous Peoples' territories without Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) has become the most pervasive source of human rights violations and one of the greatest challenges to exercising their full and internationally recognized human rights. Indigenous communities that stand against and obstruct the work often are portrayed as "anti-development" and are often detained, tortured, or even killed. Crimes against them remain uninvestigated.

"Development and human rights are not contradictory concepts, and they should go together," says Advocate Shankar Limbu,[10] who is also secretary of the Lawyer's Association of Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples (LAHURNIP). "Indigenous Peoples are not anti-development. They are not stupid either to oppose the development works, because they also know that development works will eventually benefit them. But, if development is for people, their participation should be ensured. Their perspective of development is different, which is, self-determined, just and sustainable."

In relation to development, Indigenous Peoples demand a mechanism that requires FPIC. They simply want an inclusive partnership based on respect for their self-determined development, universal access to justice to ensure the effective protection of their collective rights against land grabbing, displacements, and destruction of cultural heritage by states and private sectors. Indigenous Peoples are the embodiment of sustainable development. Achieving SDGs means respecting and protecting of Indigenous human rights, recognizing their customary institutions, and their sustainable resource management systems, going beyond the social and environment safeguards to fully respect human rights, equitable benefit sharing, and accountability.

The previous MDGs did not overcome discrimination against Indigenous Peoples. If the SDGs really want "no one left behind", Joan Carling says "States should take concrete actions and show willingness to be abide by and implement their international obligations and commitments to ensure effective and meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples in decision making at all levels, institutional reforms and mechanism for enforcement of socio-economic development, as per the UNDRIP. Indigenous Peoples then are ready to extend cooperation in development and partnership to achieve the SDGs, on the basis of equality, equity, accountability, cultural diversity, non-discrimination and respect for human rights."[11]

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted in 2007 and signed by 144 states. It was created by Indigenous leaders for Indigenous Peoples around the world. Indigenous Peoples will continue efforts for universal development goals such as the Sustainable Development Goals to include their human rights and collective rights demands. ▪

Notes

1. Chandra Roy-Henriksen, Chief, Secretariat United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNDPFII), spoke about Indigenous Peoples and the SDGs on September 23 2016 at UN Headquarter, New York.
2. Sustainable Development Goals see more at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld
3. The Indigenous Peoples' Major Group for Sustainable Development, more find at https://www.Indigenouspeoples-sdg.org/index.php/english/who-we-are/about-the-ipmg
4. World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, see more at https://www.un.org/development/desa/Indigenouspeoples/about-us/world-conference.html
5. WCIP Outcome Document, 2014, paragraph 37.
6. UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), Article, 3, 23 and 32.
7. Gam Shimray, Secretary General of Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, an umbrella organization of Indigenous Peoples Organization in Asia while participating High-Level Political Forum in July 2017, New York, he was talking in a live discussion on Indigenous Land Rights within the SDGs.
8. ibid Article 16, 1
9. ibid Article 16, 2
10. Advocate Shankar Limbu, Secretary of the Lawyer's Association of Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples (LAHURNIP), was interviewed.
11. Joan Carling said this while interviewing on topic SDGs, what is meant for Indigenous Peoples? during Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) from 16-27 April, 2018 in UN Headquarter, New York.

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El derecho a la comunicación en relación al proceso de memoria, verdad y justicia

Gisela Cardozo, Ayelén Colosimo, Lucía Gamper, Maia Jait, Florencia Kligman, Cecilia Vázquez Lareu[1]

La lucha de los organismos de derechos humanos por el esclarecimiento histórico de los crímenes cometidos en el marco del Plan Cóndor durante las décadas de 1970 y 1980 hace de la Argentina un país reconocido internacionalmente. La Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos (APDH) es uno de los organismos históricos que comenzó su trabajo recopilando denuncias por desaparición forzada de personas y acompañando a víctimas de violaciones a los derechos humanos. Desde entonces ha tenido un rol fundamental por la memoria, la verdad y la justicia.

La memoria es una construcción social (Halbwach, 1968) que implica la elaboración del pasado desde el presente, articulándose en narrativas de memoria. Así, la construcción social de la memoria tiende un puente con las nuevas generaciones y funciona como una de las garantías de no repetición de la experiencias históricas traumáticas de nuestro pasado. La memoria como un derecho en permanente elaboración se reconstruye en constante movimiento, disputas y transformación.

Quienes llevan a cabo la tarea de comunicar tienen un rol fundamental en la transmisión y construcción de estas narrativas, contribuyendo -o no- a la garantía del derecho a la verdad. En el ejercicio de este derecho, la comunicación aporta a la consolidación, profundización y fortalecimiento democrático. La comunicación es un campo en disputa, donde entran en contradicción distintos discursos, donde también confluyen y pugnan las memorias. Por eso, el fortalecimiento de la democracia implica que exista una pluralidad de voces informativas, que permitan la divulgación de discursos hegemónicos y contrahegemónicos en un marco de respeto.

La comunicación como derecho humano no está así reflejado en los pactos y tratados internacionales; sin embargo, se reconocen dos derechos involucrados en el ejercicio y la garantía del derecho a la comunicación: el derecho a la libre expresión y el derecho a la información. Las regulaciones legales que atañen al derecho a la comunicación frecuentemente mantienen límites imprecisos y en ocasiones polémicos. La libertad de expresión debe contemplar límites éticos y responsables, que en el caso del tratamiento de temas sensibles implica, por ejemplo, respetar el dolor y la privacidad de las víctimas.

En el marco del ejercicio del derecho a la información, es necesario garantizar el compromiso con la veracidad de las fuentes y fomentar la pluralidad de voces, permitiendo de esta manera la visibilización de todos los discursos y puntos de vista que circulan en la sociedad. El acceso a la información, a su vez, se encuentra atravesado por las regulaciones relativas a la propiedad de los medios de comunicación, por lo que requiere regulaciones precisas por parte de los Estados.

El Estado es -por definición- el garante de los derechos humanos, por lo que está obligado a respetar, proteger y realizar estos derechos. El respeto al derecho a la comunicación está fuertemente relacionado con el respeto a la garantía de libertad de expresión y la protección se relaciona, por ejemplo, con las normativas y regulaciones para garantizar la pluralidad de voces. La promoción de políticas orientadas a la plur-

alidad informativa es un aspecto clave del deber estatal, que permiten los mecanismos que sustentan la democracia, la memoria y su constante reconstrucción. El Estado debe dar lugar para que las personas dedicadas a la comunicación actúen como un puente entre la información y la sociedad, haciendo posible así el ejercicio del derecho a la comunicación.

El proceso de memoria, verdad y justicia necesita de la labor periodística para ser visibilizado, alcanzando mayor participación de la población en dicho proceso, democratizando el debate y haciendo posible la construcción colectiva de la memoria. Por ello, resulta necesario fomentar, promover y asegurar el derecho a la información. Al democratizar la información, el proceso de memoria, verdad y justicia se vuelve accesible y plural.

Labor esencial de los medios informativos

Los juicios por los crímenes de lesa humanidad[2] que continúan hoy en día, son instancias que demuestran que las consecuencias del terrorismo de Estado permanecen vigentes. Estos procesos judiciales se constituyen actualmente como productores de verdad, por lo cual son aportes fundamentales a la construcción social de la memoria. La información producida en estas instancias da cuenta de su relación pasado/presente.

La apropiación de menores es un crimen que muestra claramente la permanencia del accionar del terrorismo de Estado en el presente. Se apropiaron ilegalmente cerca de 500 menores de edad durante la última dictadura cívico militar. Actualmente se considera que cerca de trescientas cincuenta personas aún no han recuperado su identidad, permanecen sin conocer su historia y sus familias no han podido restituirlas a su entorno. La labor de los medios informativos es esencial en este aspecto, no sólo para colaborar con la búsqueda sino también para estimular a aquellas personas que dudan de su identidad a acercarse a los organismos dedicados a esta tarea y poder así reconstruir sus historias.

La trasmisión del pasado a través de una comunicación responsable que logre visibilizar

las responsabilidades aún hoy silenciadas, forma parte del fortalecimiento del proceso de memoria, verdad y justicia. Para que el plan sistemático de represión clandestina se desarrollara con la magnitud y alcance que tuvo, fue necesario determinado consenso social así como un importante apoyo institucional. La combinación y el enlace de los diferentes poderes estatales y no estatales entre sí, hicieron posible la ejecución del genocidio en nuestro país. Es clave poner luz sobre la participación de los grupos económicos de poder, así como la aplicación de un plan económico neoliberal a partir de la imposición del terrorismo estatal. Aunque la responsabilidad mediática no siempre sea explicitada, los medios tuvieron un rol histórico fundamental encubriendo, facilitando y operando junto a gobiernos genocidas en distintos países.

Por otro lado, apuntar a la participación del poder judicial implica reconocer, a su vez, un accionar y una complicidad que continúan en el presente. Si al comunicar se pone el foco en el plano civil y económico, se facilita la comprensión de gran parte de los intereses que impulsaron la persecución, tortura y exterminio de manera sistemática. Cuando se comunica la participación de estos agentes, se permite la explicitación de los objetivos económicos, combatiendo los discursos que apelan a una supuesta irracionalidad de las personas que llevaron adelante los crímenes durante la dictadura.

En la actualidad, la mayor parte de las responsabilidades civiles en los crímenes de lesa humanidad no han sido juzgadas. Además, se asiste a un proceso de legitimación de los discursos negacionistas sobre el terrorismo de Estado de la última dictadura cívico-militar, fortalecidos por una avanzada de gobiernos neoliberales en los países de América Latina. Considerando el retroceso en materia de derechos humanos que estas situaciones configuran, vale la pena poner el foco en el valor que tiene el derecho a la comunicación como herramienta fundamental para garantizar el derecho a la memoria.

En los últimos años, se produjeron y reprodujeron declaraciones públicas que pusieron en duda la cantidad de personas detenidas desaparecidas, intentaron deslegitimar a los organismos de derechos humanos y se brindó visibilidad en los medios masivos de comunicación a discursos que intentan minimizar la violencia ejercida por el Estado durante la dictadura cívico-militar.

El ejercicio de la memoria es inseparable de la existencia de una comunicación plural. En Argentina, garantizar pluralidad de voces permite que la información elaborada en el proceso de memoria, verdad y justicia pueda ocupar su lugar en la agenda mediática. Mientras ésta información sea visibilizada y comunicada, la sociedad tendrá más herramientas para participar activamente de la construcción de la memoria colectiva, conocer la verdad y exigir justicia.

La consecución de los objetivos de desarrollo sostenible pareciera incompleta si no se incluye la capacidad de las personas y las comunidades para tener una voz pública. Trabajar en la defensa y garantía de la voz pública, implica centrarse en el ejercicio de los derechos a la comunicación, a la información y a la libre expresión, dando lugar a un ejercicio periodístico completo y libre de censuras, más aún en una coyuntura internacional atravesada por un proceso de fuerte retroceso en materia de derechos. ∎

Notas
1. Integrantes de equipo de investigación del proyecto "El derecho a la comunicación en relación al proceso de memoria, verdad y justicia" WACC – APDH.
2. Nos referimos a los juicios contra los delitos de lesa humanidad que ocurrieron en la última dictadura cívico militar en Argentina que siguen realizándose en nuestro país desde la reapertura de los juicios en 2003.

Queer Archive as a journey of transformation, connection and visibility

Az Causevic

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you." Maya Angelou

"When we dare to speak in a liberatory voice, we threaten even those who may initially claim to want our words. In the act of overcoming our fear of speech, of being seen as threatening, in the process of learning to speak as subjects, we participate in the global struggle to end domination. When we end our silence, when we speak in a liberated voice, our words connect us with anyone, anywhere who lives in silence." bell hooks

Since late 2011, I have been part of LGBTIQA Association Okvir, dedicated to promoting and protecting LGBTIQA human rights, identities and culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was not long until I realized that social change is closely connected to one's own growth and transformation. I also learned that one cannot deny or split fragments of one's identity and background no matter how much that history has been manipulated and used as a means of mobilization during a war. I had to unlearn myself from the beginning.

I have also come to accept this country, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Balkans region as a geopolitical knot of both life and death within the span of world wars as well as the recent one of the 1990s. Transgenerational trauma as well as the trauma of the past war have left a deep cut in the social and emotional tissue, resembling a cleft or a rupture. This is a story of political navigation through and beyond that rupture.

The dominant narratives of war are dense, thick; the imagery is nationalist, white, gender binary, manipulative – mirroring the hunger for power of those who, unscrupulously, have profited in terms of monetary, symbolic, territorial and social capital. Historical accounts are being gendered, ethnicized, univocal, built on the baseline of Us vs. Them, charged with tradition, myth and religion.

Bodies, like the stories and personal accounts of loss, trauma and grief, are commodified on the national and global market of trauma, used, mended and re-used, re-victimized and re-exploited as political points for crisis regeneration in order to support capital and wealth accumulation through division and tri-partite nation-building.

Re-representing history

Beginning with the war of the 1990s, the ethnonational leaders have heavily invested in the marginalization of human life in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Faith has been taken away. In its place, symbols of religions were erected, politicized and used as means of mobilization against one another. Communities have been shattered, while words like "co-existence" have replaced them. The consequences are heavy, the wounds deep and community resources scarce. International funds were high and presence of international bodies strong. Bosnia and Herzegovina resembles a political laboratory where a unified political will, strategy and action on the course of healing, education and economic reparation are intentionally lacking – up to now.

From the experience of our work in Okvir, a closet can hold many things. It can hold silence, a negation, a mask, as well as a normalization of the unspoken: be it sexuality, be it loss, be it desire, be it any account of human experience or

formation through storytelling of anti-militarist, feminist and lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans activists. We had to dig deep and reflect way back, so as to be able to locate ourselves today by finding our roots.

We started Queer Archive in 2017 with the support of WACC and Global Fund for Women as an initiative which records, documents, collects and makes visible personal stories, her/histories and actions of LGBT*IQA persons in BiH – with a particular focus on the 1990s war in BiH. Throughout 2017, we documented and recorded a collection of more than 40 hours of oral histories (audio and video interviews and a documentary on gender, sexuality, war and security) in which more than 50 LGBT*IQA, feminist and anti-war activists have contributed through their personal archives, stories, documents, letters, photographs and memories.

identity that was airbrushed from the normative representations of collective history. The closet, or the margin, holds heavy complexity and messy human stories of life. Some come out as gays, but don't come out as religious. Some come out as victims, but never as perpetrators. Some come out as one, but not as the other; yet, both existing at the same time. Some are in between, yet some belong to more than one space, more than one temporality and community. Through speaking we centre ourselves as subjects and we hold our story as agents.

Just as the body holds these experiences, so does the archive hold stories. As valentina pellizzer, a special friend and adviser on Queer Archive has said, "With bodies we come out and organize demonstrations, with stories in archives we click 'Enter'. In both ways, we are visible and we aim at transformation." Starting Queer Archive was as much a political as it was a personal quest. We had to locate our stories that exist at the same time and do not negate each other. We had to build a space that can hold questions and non-linear answers that collide with each other and by collusion transform each other.

With Queer Archive, we were on a mission to understand war, survival, resistance and trans-

Initially, we planned to record five interviews over a nine-month project. We were supposed to start from the war as the intersecting point. However, Queer Archive turned out to be the most challenging journey in which each perspective we discovered was followed by a multitude of angles and another set of questions. There were places to be discovered beyond our wounds, beyond the rupture. There was and there is a plurality of voices, a mended continuity in solidarity and resistance. Queer Archive, and especially the documentary movie we made, was the receptacle.

We travelled throughout the region and recorded 16 video interviews about activist engagement of LGBT*IQA persons from BiH

and the region, out of which 12 interviews were made part of the documentary movie "Red Embroidery". 400 GB of material were recorded and collected. The movie documents testimonials of LGBTIQA, feminist and anti-militarist pioneers who were active in the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia from the 1970s onward. These lesbian, gay, trans, queer, feminist and anti-militarist activists worked with women victims of war. Some of them from Serbia and Croatia worked with refugees and deserters and were detained and imprisoned themselves; while some of them were pioneers in lesbian feminist movement parallel to their anti-militarist work.

Some from Bosnia remembered lesbian activists from Germany who came to Bosnia during the war to work with women survivors of violence and rape. Some of them asked whether anti-militarism and pacifism are valid options at all during the war. Some of them did maerches and festivals banned during the 2000s or under socialist Yugoslavia. These persons and their work brought about debates, political divisions and connections within all three terrains. All of them struggled with some parts of their identities while belonging to multiple ideological and geo-political spaces. All of them testify to empathy, pain, desire, solidarity, resistance and connection.

Personal testimonies

Another segment of the Archive consist of 10 audio interviews/personal stories of LGBT*IQA persons from BiH. These stories portray LGBT*IQA relationships, connection, mutual solidarity, friendship and love formed during wartime beyond nations and beyond borders. Each personal story is in audio format, transcribed and translated from BCS to English language, and accompanied by a personal photograph the storytellers chose themselves.

In parallel with this work we got connected with Whose Knowledge? and we have generated a timeline of LGBTIQA history of 40 years where we made entries on the most important dates and events. We also wrote articles on Wikipedia, making entries on LGBTIQA activists and art-

ists from the region. This was already a third area of knowledge-building where all of the articles published survived the English Wikipedia, while in Bosnian Wikipedia they have been deleted by administrators arguing that there is no space on Wikipedia for Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian lesbian, gay and queer feminists, artists and anti-militarists.

However, writing the articles for Wikipedia resembled building a fortress – including research and collecting more than 200 notable references, including *The Guardian, New York Times* and references of our own from within the community. In the case of Bosnian Wikipedia, it turned out that references are not as important as the profile and political affiliations of knowledge gate keepers and administrators who actually hold the power. The struggle goes on.

Speaking has been proven to be "the talking cure" because as one speaks, one summons that which has been repressed, reshaped, disconnected. It is through speaking that one re-connects the fragments of self and makes a story that feels to be one's own, though painful and hard it may be. The stories and testimonials of violence, madness, war, exploitation and abuse are also on the spectrum of human behaviour and existence – just like the stories of desire, joy, friendships and community building.

As Okvir, we have taken upon ourselves the task to locate these stories and re-invent, imagine and build a frame that can hold both stories of human survival, desire and resilience, as well as stories of human atrocities and destruction in times of madness such as war. Words, images, art, stories of our own, in any form, are the connective tissue that have a transformative potential and in our own hands and in our own way we offer hope of healing, as a gift to oneself, as a gift to one another. ∎

Az Causevic (1986) born in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Queer feminist activist. Community organizer and one of co-founders of LGBTIQA Association Okvir, Sarajevo (2011-up to date). Passionate about queer spaces of love, memory and resistance. Engaged with video, graphics, sound production and design. Peer counselor. IT explorer. Poetry lover.

Conversemos de salud, desde la perspectiva de la Agenda 2030

David Morales Alba

La salud es una condición de bienestar físico, mental y social. Va más allá de la ausencia de enfermedades. Este es el concepto de la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS), una visión integral que la presenta como un aspecto que cruza tres dimensiones, es decir, atraviesa nuestras distintas actividades cotidianas: la vida.

La Agenda 2030 enfoca uno de sus 17 Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) en la salud y el bienestar. El objetivo 3 apunta a garantizar vida saludable y promover el bienestar de la población en general; un aspecto importante es la cobertura universal de la salud, basada en principios de equidad, acceso y calidad, según lo precisa la Agenda.

Este objetivo se vincula de manera directa con otros ODS: Fin de la pobreza, hambre cero, agua limpia y saneamiento. Igualmente, traza relación con la igualdad de género, la reducción de las desigualdades y con la acción por el clima. Estos vínculos revelan la dimensión integral de la salud.

La salud se vive y también se conversa, se dialoga, se comunica. El ejercicio de la comunicación es fundamental para lograr ese bienestar integral que comparte la OMS. En otras palabras, la comunicación es un derecho que garantiza el ejercicio (la defensa) de otros derechos y entre éstos se encuentra el derecho a la salud.

En los últimos años, América Latina ha registrado el desarrollo de distintas iniciativas de comunicación, promovidas por comunidades y organizaciones sociales, con el objetivo de reivindicar o defender ese derecho a la salud. Acciones de incidencia para reducir costos de medicamentos, facilitando el acceso a los tratamientos y el cambio de normas regulatorias que se convierten en barreras para acceder a los servicios de atención en salud, son dos problemáticas que la sociedad civil latinoamericana ha enfrentado con acciones de comunicación que llevan a la agenda pública sus requerimientos.

Tal como se expresó líneas arriba, la salud se conversa, se comunica, y por esa razón esta nota comparte el punto de vista de tres activistas que han adelantado en Colombia acciones de comunicación para la participación ciudadana en temas de salud.

Comunicar para defender al usuario / paciente

"El ejercicio de la comunicación permite denunciar las violaciones del derecho a la salud y se hace evidente que los servicios de salud no responden a las necesidades de la ciudadanía." Esta es la opinión de Néstor Álvarez Lara, Presidente de la Asociación Pacientes de Alto Costo, organización de base comunitaria que apoya a las personas que encuentran obstáculos y respuestas negativas para acceder a servicios de atención y a los medicamentos que requieren.

Álvarez Lara expresa que a medida que se divulgan las denuncias, se evidencia la situación que encuentran las personas en los servicios de salud y, en esta labor, la comunicación permite defender los derechos humanos y promover cambios para el bienestar de la comunidad.

Facilitar el acceso a la información es necesario

Claudia Patricia Vaca González es docente e investigadora de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia (UNAL). Ella participa en varios grupos de expertos internacionales en salud pública y desde la UNAL dirige el Centro de Pensamiento en Medicamentos, Información y Poder. El Centro de Pensamiento promueve el debate so-

bre política y regulación farmacéutica, propone políticas públicas y estrategias para el ejercicio pleno del derecho a la salud.

Claudia Vaca señala que, en temas de salud, las dinámicas de las poblaciones no se conocen o son subestimadas por los gobiernos cuando se diseñan políticas públicas que buscan responder a las necesidades y expectativas de las comunidades. Expresa que al no hacer visible la realidad de las comunidades, no se permite que instituciones académicas y organizaciones internacionales conozcan la situación real. En otras palabras, no se facilita el acceso a la información.

Desde ese contexto, ella considera que el ejercicio de la comunicación en los procesos sociales relacionados con temas de salud es un elemento clave para nutrir la formulación de políticas públicas, a la vez que facilita la participación y las veedurías ciudadanas (control social), acciones que permiten armonizar las intervenciones sociales en salud con las necesidades de la comunidad.

Agrega que en las comunidades con diversidades culturales, las acciones de comunicación se deben adelantar con la comunidad. "Se debe hacer entre pares y no desde la perspectiva de un tercero", pues esa vinculación e interacción facilita un mayor nivel de identidad y participación en el proceso social.

Entre tanto, Clemencia Mayorga, quien preside el Colegio Médico de Cundinamarca y Bogotá, afirma que uno de los mayores problemas de los servicios de salud en Colombia es la falta de comunicación efectiva con la ciudadanía para la prevención de enfermedades, así como para su participación en los procesos que buscan mejorar el acceso a la atención en salud.

¿Qué son los centros de información de medicamentos?

En la vida cotidiana, las personas reciben gran cantidad de información sobre el uso de medicamentos. La industria farmacéutica es una de las principales fuentes de información, con los sesgos propios de su actividad comercial, razón por la cual se omiten datos que puedan afectar el mercado, tal como los efectos secundarios derivados del consumo excesivo o no adecuado de un medicamento.

¿Ha comprado alguna vez aspirina en la droguería más cercana para el dolor de cabeza?

¿Sabe ud que el consumo de aspirina en altas dosis o bajas de manera continua puede generar intoxicación? Este sencillo y usual medicamento tiene efectos secundarios, pero no todas las personas conocen esa información. Esta situación se registra con muchos otros productos farmacéuticos.

Al respecto, José Julián López, director del Centro de Información de Medicamentos de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia, afirma que los centros de información de medicamentos son una opción de consulta para promover el uso correcto de esos productos. Alcanzar ese objetivo requiere comunicar, divulgar la información, permitir que llegue a las comunidades.

¿Por qué la salud se conversa, se comunica?

En la historia reciente de Colombia se han registrado tres historias de salud en las cuales la comunicación ha sido un frente de trabajo importante para el logro del propósito.

En 2008, cuatro organizaciones sociales solicitaron al Ministerio de Salud que otorgara la licencia obligatoria sobre la patente de un medicamento requerido en el tratamiento del VIH y así lograr que su precio fuera menor, facilitando el acceso a más personas. El Ministerio no escuchó el requerimiento de las organizaciones, pero éstas persistieron en su solicitud y cinco años más tarde la justicia colombiana obligó al Ministerio a incluir el medicamento en los mecanismos de control del precio, medida que el Ministerio promulgó en 2009, pero que no había implementado. El gobierno no otorgó la licencia obligatoria, pero la acción ciudadana y la difusión que se dio a la situación abrió la ruta para que el precio del medicamento se redujera significativamente.

En 2014, tres organizaciones de la sociedad civil solicitaron al Ministerio de Salud que declarara de interés público un medicamento que se utiliza -con buenos resultados- en el tratamiento de cáncer y leucemia, pero el obstáculo era su alto precio en el mercado, a la sombra de la patente que lo protege en Colombia. A través de redes sociales y otros medios digitales, se divulgó información sobre las ganancias de la empresa farmacéutica con el medicamento, el número de personas en tratamiento y los nuevos casos que se registran cada año. Dos años después (2016), el Ministerio de Salud anunció la declaratoria de interés público, decisión que abrió la puerta al producto de otras empresas farmacéuticas, con la consecuente reducción de precios.

En 2015, la Fundación IFARMA solicitó al Ministerio de Salud la declaratoria de interés público para los medicamentos que se necesitan en el tratamiento de la hepatitis C. De esa primera acción surgió la campaña de comunicación [Regálate Un Minuto](), iniciativa que en sus tres años de vigencia ha llevado información sobre el riesgo de esta enfermedad a distintos lugares del país, ha capacitado a las y los líderes sociales en las vías de infección y su prevención, y sigue insistiendo en la declaratoria de interés público.

Aunque cuatro años después, el Ministerio no ha dado respuesta a la solicitud, la campaña logró presionar la compra centralizada de medicamentos que permitió reducir los costos significativamente -aunque no es la solución pertinente para garantizar el acceso a quienes requieren el tratamiento-.

El ejercicio de la comunicación en temas de salud abre el camino para el beneficio común a gran escala y también en escenarios de acción más pequeños.

La Asociación Pacientes de Alto Costo ha fortalecido su credibilidad frente a la comunidad y a las instancias de gobierno, posicionándose como un interlocutor reconocido. Se ha logrado modificar algunas normas y disposiciones que generan barreras para acceder a los servicios de atención en salud; también se ha incidido en el acceso a medicamentos. ∎

Foto página 35: APAC.

How Israel controls Palestinian ICTs

7amleh

What follows are the summary, introduction and conclusion from "Connection Interrupted: Israel's Control of the Palestinian ICT Infrastructure and Its Impact on Digital Rights" published by 7amleh – The Arab Center for the Advancement of Social Media (December 2018).

The development of information and communications technology (ICT) has allowed for an extensive flow of information in our lives surpassing territorial constraints. However, in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), Israel has been controlling the ICT infrastructure since it began its military occupation in 1967. Although per the Oslo Accords, an Interim Agreement signed between Israel and Palestinian representatives in 1995, Israel transferred some of this control to the Palestinian Authority (PA) in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. Otherwise, Israel has retained control over critical aspects of the ICT sector making it impossible for Palestinians to develop an independent network and thereby enjoy a greater safety and flow of information.

Israel's control of the Palestinian ICT infrastructure has not only hindered its development but has also allowed Israel to conduct mass surveillance of Palestinians and restrict their access to digital rights, specifically rights to internet security, privacy and freedom of opinion and expression. ICT has changed the way we lead our lives from social networking to ecommerce, leading to significant societal changes and transformations. As the interactions between our daily lives and components of ICT continue to grow, opportunities but also risks to how we exercise our human rights emerge, and specifically to rights of privacy and freedom of expression. The components of ICT include all the infrastructure and technologies that allow for interactions in the digital world, inter alia, network equipment, telecommunications services, devices and electronics, and security software.

In this report, 7amleh - The Arab Center for the Advancement of Social Media provides information on the interaction between the ICT sector and digital rights in Palestine, by identifying Israeli restrictions imposed on the Palestinian ICT infrastructure and their implications for the enjoyment of digital rights by Palestinians. The paper focuses on how such control has allowed Israel to conduct mass surveillance of Palestinians and monitor content online, thus violating an array of human rights, both in the online and offline world.

7amleh believes that Israel's continued control of the Palestinian ICT sector greatly affects digital rights in particular, and human rights in general in the oPt, and as such calls on Israel to cease its unjustified control of the ICT sector and its illegal digital surveillance practices of the Palestinian population. Social media and ICT companies involved in dealings with Israel must also ensure that their operations in the oPt do not violate Palestinians' human rights. Further, third party states, must also ensure that their policies do not recognize or support unlawful Israeli actions that violate the rights of Palestinians and ensure that Israel meets its international legal obligations as an occupying power in the oPt.

Introduction

In today's digital lifestyle, everyone is increasingly conducting their personal and professional lives online acquiring knowledge but also sharing personal data and content, and social networking, while storing data online. Today, people rely on information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure to connect them to the world. This increased interconnectedness creates

opportunities to share information but also creates new risks and ethical dilemmas that affect human rights, particularly in regards to what is shared and with whom and how personal data is stored and accessed. Human rights online, or digital rights, are considered an extension of human rights in the digital context and the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on multiple occasions emphasized that "the same rights that people have offline must be also protected online".[1]

Since its occupation of the Palestinian territories (oPt) in 1967, Israel has controlled the Palestinian ICT infrastructure, hindering its development and Palestinians' digital rights including recent mass surveillance and monitoring of Palestinian content online. Israel's control of the Palestinian ICT infrastructure is part and parcel of its policies and practices as an occupying power controlling the oPt and as a result Palestinians are unable to develop an independent ICT sector and forced to depend on Israeli operators to provide services and encounter the repeated destruction of networks and equipment by Israel, enduring significant economic losses.

According to the Palestinian Information Technology Association (PITA), the ICT market in the West Bank and Gaza encompasses 400,000 fixed-line subscribers, 100 radio and local television stations, as well as 17 companies operating in the field of telecommunication and Internet.[2] In 2017, there were about 3,018,770 registered internet users (amounting to 60.5% of the population) in the oPt, excluding East Jerusalem,[3] with 1,600,000 users being active social media users connected to various social media platforms.[4] In the same year, there were 4,400,000 sim cards in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, 90% of which were operated by Palestinian telecom operators and the remaining 10% were operated by Israeli ones. For about 1,400,000 internet users, mobile phones are their means of accessing the Internet.

The advancement of the ICT sector and digital technology has had many positive effects on the exercise of human rights in the digital context, in particular for the right to freedom of opinion and expression, which includes the right to acquire and disseminate information, and the right to communicate. Today, various technology products allow for easier access to information and the ability to filter or even block content.[5] This has increased unlawful conduct by governments or service providers along the ICT service chain that can infringe people's digital rights and make people more vulnerable. Potential abuses resulting from the government's illegitimate use of ICT infrastructure include, inter alia, disrupting or completely shutting down systems, the misuse of information for surveillance, censoring speech, deleting or blocking data, or the forced distribution of politically motivated messages via operators' networks.[6]

During various Israeli military operations in the Gaza Strip in 2014, which resulted in appalling human losses and damages to Palestinian infrastructure, the Israeli army bombed 14 stations of the PalTel group, resulting in an estimated loss of US$32.6 million in revenue and damaged networks.[7] Israel has also targeted many Palestinians through their social media profiles. Monitoring of Palestinian profiles, which is used largely to connect with fellow Palestinians across fragmented geographical areas, has resulted in hundreds of Palestinian profiles being deleted and hundreds of Palestinians being arrested and charged with the far reaching charge of 'incitement'.[8]

Conclusion

There is a worldwide concern about the emerging challenges of the impact of the ICT sector on digital rights particularly in areas of data protection and privacy and the freedoms of expression and assembly. Within the oPt, these challenges are further heightened as a result of Israel's over 50 years long occupation, where Israeli restrictions imposed on the Palestinian ICT sector and infrastructure are part of the overall punitive nature of the Israeli occupation, which Israel must put an end to and ensure that the rights of Palestinians are upheld.

Palestine ICT in Numbers

5.6%
ICT contribution to GDP in 2012, at current prices

20-40%
The share of the Palestinian telecom market that is seized by Israeli operators.

USD 60 million
Annual loss to the PA due to unauthorized Israeli operators.

USD 80-100 million
Annual loss to Palestinian operators due to lack of 3G services.

30 Days
Time it takes to receive approval to import ICT equipment

Israeli restrictions have resulted in the dependency of Palestinian ICT companies on Israeli operators for coverage and advancement and have allowed Israel to control how Palestinian ICT companies connect to Palestinian customers within the oPt. Israel's control of ICT infrastructure in the oPt, excluding East Jerusalem, have limited its growth and allowed Israel to restrict access to information and develop means to monitor and censor Palestinians' content online. Israel utilized its control of the ICT infrastructure as another tool to oppress and control Palestinians. Israeli restrictions have violated Palestinians' digital rights to access the internet, to privacy, and to freedom of opinion and expression.

More than 25 years after the signing of the Oslo Accords, these Accords no longer provide a framework that is facilitating a final solution to the situation on the ground nor protecting human rights. Indeed, such policies and practices are best described to amount to a "digital occupation" of the Palestinian digital space.[9]

7amleh – The Arab Center for the Advancement of Social Media – joins other organizations and institutions that have repeatedly called for the independence of the Palestinian ICT sector from Israeli control, including an independent ICT infrastructure and free access to the frequency spectrum. 7amleh recognizes that the Palestinian MTIT and ICT companies relentlessly continue to try to provide services for Palestinian customers, despite imposed Israeli restrictions.

For example, in December 2016, Jawwal joined the "Humanitarian Connectivity Charter," a charter that "consists of shared principles to support improved access to communication and information for those affected by crisis in order to reduce the loss of life and positively contribute to humanitarian response," launched by the GSM Association, a trade body that represents the interests of mobile operators worldwide.[10] Jawwal has developed strategies to respond to crises particularly in the Gaza Strip.

7amleh also calls on Israel to uphold its responsibility as an occupying power towards the protected population of the oPt, to stop its illegal measures and practices targeting Palestinians through the ICT sector, and to respect and enable the exercise of Palestinians human rights, including in the digital context. Israel must en-

sure that Palestinians enjoy the opportunities afforded by the ICT sector while ensuring the protection of their human rights both in the online and offline worlds. ∎

Notes
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7amleh is a non-profit organization aimed at enabling the Palestinian and Arab civil society to effectively utilize the tools of digital advocacy through professional capacity building, defending digital rights and building influential digital media campaigns. 7amleh focuses its projects and initiatives in three key areas: 1.Training: Working withcivil society organizations, youth, grassroots and activists to strengthen skills in new media, online campaigns, and improving their digital presence. 2.Outreach & Advocacy: Participation in forums, production of publications, and joining coalitions for the protection of digital rights as human rights, including the right to Internet access, digital safety, freedom of expression and association. 3.Campaigns: Coordinating and managing advocacy and awareness campaigns, utilizing digital resources, on various issues related to Palestinian rights.

Violation of media rights in Gaza

Andalib Adwan, Sultan Naser

Even though freedom of expression and opinion are guaranteed under Palestinian Basic Law and also by International Laws and Conventions, violating this right has become a familiar occurrence in everyday Gaza.

Those who work in the journalism sector and media activists are deprived of their lawful rights to express their opinions freely and to obtain information as a result of many restrictions imposed by Israeli occupation authorities who hack accounts of activist journalists. They are also subject to investigation and/or arrest when they pass through the Bait Hanoun terminal if they are lucky enough to obtain a permit to exit Gaza through this terminal controlled completely by the Israeli occupation.

On the other hand, journalists (both males and females) are at risk of being summoned for interview at the police stations, detained by security entities in Gaza or even going to trial as is happened with journalist Hajar Harb for reportage she published in 2016 on corruption at the "treatment abroad department" in Palestinian ministry of health in Gaza.

It seems that the space for freedom of expression and sharing opinion in Gaza is rapidly shrinking. During January 2019, human rights centres recorded 18 cases of violations against journalists in the Gaza Strip, two of which are against female journalists. Separately, the Independent Committee of Human Rights has confirmed the detention and threatening of many citizens (women included) due to sharing certain opinions on social media

In addition, some armed individuals broke

into the premise of "Palestine Television" and smashed up the place and its equipment. They also damaged the premises of Palestine Voice radio station located in the same building, threatening staff members and forcing them to leave their work location.

Gaza faces a suffocating blockade imposed by Israeli occupation which affects all aspects of life. The population of the Strip also lives under the iron fist of Hamas which has been tightly controlling Gaza Strip by force of weapons since the summer of 2007. Citizens are denied their right to free expression of their opinions in public, their right to peaceful assembly to express their objections on any issue affecting their lives or adding to their burdens.

The suffering of women doubles in this reality of basic rights and freedoms violations as women are more vulnerable and more exposed in community and are considered to be the weak link in the family in case they are pursued because of their activity or publishing their opinions on social media – which are widely used in Palestine in general.

Online ruses to avoid harassment
Women and girls in Gaza Strip are generally exposed to a mixture of explicit threats and other imperceptible threats that force them to stay in the shadows and to refrain from sharing their political opinions or even their personal opinions about their feelings and viewpoints on private and public matters.

Many women were even forced to leave the Strip temporarily or permanently to escape the direct oppression and indirect threats and restrictions they face.

We see many young women using the cover of nicknames and borrowed titles on social media platforms and they put profile pictures of women or celebrities they get online. They use these accounts as their entry point to the social media world without the risk of their real identities being recognized for fear of harassment of family members, relatives or the surrounding environment of university or work.

In line with imposing more restrictions on media freedoms in Gaza, the government media office or ministry of media controlled by Hamas has, since the summer of 2007, issued a circular at the beginning of each month announcing that no female or male journalist is permitted to do any interviews or any media work within ministries and governmental institutions in Gaza without having a journalist card issued by the media office of Hamas.

Human rights activists working in Gaza Strip believe that this decision came in the aftermath of the broadcasting on "Al-Najah TV channel" of a filmed report titled "Houses of the Poor" by journalist Hajar Harb broadcast on 15 December 2018 and addressing allegations of corruption in government housing projects and which created a wide and strong debate on social media.

As soon as the government media office announced this decision, a number of meetings were conducted by working media platforms including Community Media Center (CMC) to discuss the matter and agree on how to face it. Meetings were also conducted with officials at the ministry of media that ended up with cancelling the issued circular and keeping the existing procedure in place.

The President of the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate, Dr Tahseen Al-Astal, considered the decision of the government media office in Gaza as dangerous: a violation of the right of freedom of expression and the right of access to information, citing the fact that a female journalist was not permitted to conduct interviews in one of the government ministries of Hamas in Gaza on the 24 February 2019.

Dr Al-Astal expressed his concern that the state of Palestine's ranking on the scale of journalism freedoms would be worse. He said, "The world looks at the extent to which political parties and governments interfere in the media freedoms and this decision will contribute to the regression of Palestine's level on the scale of media freedoms, and it will cause its classification as not respecting the freedom of journalism."

The case of journalist Hajar Harb is instructive. She explained, "I was suspended from work as a reporter for Al-Maseera Yemeni channel in Gaza, by Al-Manara Media Company which hosts the channel's work in Gaza Strip claiming that my reportage titled "Houses of the Poor" broadcast on Al-Najah TV Channel would damage relations between the company and community organizations as well as Palestinian political parties." Harb added, "The decision of my arbitrary dismissal was communicated to me in an immoral, humiliating way. It was sent to me in a WhatsApp message!"

Harb explained that Al-Manara Company is owned by persons close to the Hamas movement and that this decision could have had a political motivation. She pointed out that Hamas leader in Gaza Yehia Al-Sinwar has undertaken the protection of journalists and supported those who work in investigative reporting field. "I don't think the aggravations are limited to assault, pursuing and calling for interviews only. Losing our jobs is also an assault which inflects more harm than any other!" Harb said.

She also noted that during the making of "Houses of the Poor", information was intentionally hidden from her. She said, "We as investigative journalists suffer from lack of enforcement of the right to get information, and sometimes we jeopardize ourselves to get it. The decision of the governmental media office is one of the obstacles we face which limits our access to information."

Journalist Hajar Harb added, "I can't foresee what the result of my trial will be, especially that this is my sixth time appearing before the court. All I know is that I am being punished for doing investigative reporting on an issue of interest to public opinion, as if I was a criminal who had committed a crime!"

Fear of pursuit prompts self-censorship by journalists

Journalist Huda Baroud has said that as a journalist she has suffered from blocked information, as well as pressure and threats related to her work. She explained, "The recent report I published about women who were subject to rape and incest, because of which I was called for interview by security at the ministry of interior, lots of information was blocked by police administration in Gaza while I was preparing it."

She added that while working on some cases, she used to get calls from friends of hers who were activists in political parties to convey her informal messages from formal bodies that they were not satisfied with her reporting, and in some cases these messages held implicit threats oppressing freedom of expression and opinion.

Baroud said, "On the same day that my report was published I received a call from an official in the media office of the ministry of interior who asked me to appear before them as they wished to talk to me about my report, but I refused to go." She mentioned that she had published a report about the costs of a Hamas ceremony celebrating its latest anniversary while Hamas is late in paying its employees' salaries in Gaza.

Baroud pointed out that journalists in Gaza Strip had no freedom of expression or opinion to address or discuss daily matters especially those about women, emphasizing that a policy of terrorizing female and male journalists with calls for interviews and pursuit like her colleague Hajar Harb and others had shrunk the space for freedom of expression and opinion and increased self-censorship by journalists.

Baroud is concerned that she might face the same fate her husband, journalist Mohammed Othaman, when he was subjected to grievances related to his journalist work. He ended up leaving the country and emigrating to South America leaving behind his family, wife and three children. She said, "Mohammed has completed several investigative reports, the most known of which was a report on the duality of legislative council work. He was called in and accused of serving external agendas among other accusations."

She went on to say, "My husband was targeted in addition to facing a wide campaign against him, and even after he travelled some

journalists in Gaza were called in and asked officially not to contact my husband abroad." She pointed out that restrictions against journalists and depriving them of enjoying freedom of expression and opinion was the main factor behind the disintegration of her family and her husband's emigration. ∎

Editor's note: *In October 2018, Human Rights Watch published a report noting that the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Hamas authorities in Gaza routinely arrest and torture peaceful critics and opponents. As the Palestinian Authority-Hamas feud has deepened, each has targeted the other's supporters. "The fact that Israel systematically violates Palestinians' most basic rights is no reason to remain silent in the face of the systematic repression of dissent and the torture Palestinian security forces are perpetrating," said Shawan Jabarin, executive director of the Palestinian human rights organization al-Haq and a member of the Human Rights Watch Middle East and North Africa Advisory Committee.*

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Link: reportage of journalist "Hajar Harb" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k53Q7roBe_Y

Democracy for All: Beyond a crisis of imagination

CIVICUS

This article sets out the conclusions of a year-long research project led by CIVICUS, the global civil society alliance. Our consultations heard the voices of people from around 80 countries. Civil society leaders, activists and stakeholders shared 54 written contributions and provided 97 interviews, while 26 democracy dialogues – informal citizen-led discussions on challenges with and hopes for democracy – were convened in countries around the world.

In country after country, democracy is under attack. In many countries, we see democratic regression and the withdrawal of democratic freedoms. We see the rise of polarising politics and the cult of the strong-arm leader. We see right-wing populism on the march. At the same time, profound global problems such as climate change, inequality and conflict are left largely unaddressed. Everywhere around the world, people are unhappy with the limited forms of democracy they experience.

Our consultations tell us that people want more democracy, not less. In the many countries that do not have functioning institutions of representative democracy, people want them, but in countries where these exist, people want more, and demand more participatory, deliberative and direct democracy. In our consultations, people overwhelmingly expressed the view that democracy is the best form of governance, even though it presently falls far short of its potential. People

want democracy both because it enables better decisions to be taken and decision-makers held more accountable, and because there is a fundamental human need to have a voice and influence over the circumstances of our lives.

A new vision of democracy

If we are to have the kind of democracy where people have agency and their voices are heard, we believe three fundamental shifts are needed.

1. Governance defined by local needs and aspirations: We need to see democracy as a process that has participation at its heart and is open to all. We need much more local and community-level participatory democracy, including devolved and decentralised governance that allows communities to develop their own locally grounded solutions to the challenges they face. We need more deliberative democracy, through such means as citizen assemblies. We need more direct democracy, providing there are safeguards against the majoritarian abuse of power and manipulation of instruments of direct democracy by political leaders. All systems of democracy need to be open to a wide variety of viewpoints and respect the rights of minority voices to be heard.

2. Global democracy to tackle global problems: While we need more local democracy, at the same time many of the major problems of the day can only be tackled on a global scale, and we should all have a role in developing global solutions. We need genuinely international institutions, rather than intergovernmental institutions, free from the narrow calculations of national leaders. We need to be consulted on new international initiatives and have a direct say in the governance of international institutions. We need a world parliament, elected on a direct suffrage rather than along nation-state lines.

3. A democratised economy that works for all: All the institutions of democracy will count for little if our economies remain under the control of super-rich elites. We all need to have more say in economic decision-making and to have an equal say in political decision-making, rather than one that is determined by our economic

status. We need to transition to a post-growth economy focused on the better distribution of what we have and can generate for all, the provision of quality essential services that can be accessed by all, and the ability of all to participate in the management of our resources.

Key current challenges

Clearly, the present-day situation falls far short of this expansive vision of democracy. Key challenges of the day identified in our consultations include:

• **Flawed elections and governance institutions:** Various indices of democracy point to democratic decline. In many countries, elections lack substance and are performative and ceremonial. Even when elections are more free and fair, they exclude groups of people or fail to deliver adequate choice. The ability to participate and express dissent, and civil society's ability to act, are often clamped down upon around elections. Incumbents are often unfairly advantaged. Flawed elections can cause people to withdraw from participation, leaving the field open for extremist alternatives.

• **Skewed economics:** Tiny elites control our economies, and the gap between the obscenely wealthy and everyone else is increasing. Economic and political elites are tightly enmeshed, such that the super-rich are able to skew political decision-making in their favour: as economic inequality increases, policies to address inequality become less likely. Almost all of us are shut out of economic decision-making. Workplace democracy seems an impossible dream for most. Large, transnational corporations have penetrated decision-making at the international sphere too.

• **Narrow development approaches:** Approaches to development have increasingly become top-down, technocratic and oriented around mega-projects and the promotion of economic growth in ways that most benefit the wealthy. It is harder for citizens to exert democratic accountability over development projects, and corruption flourishes in the absence

of accountability, impacting on democratic freedoms. People are increasingly not asked or trusted to define their own development needs.

• **The stability and security paradigm:** Threats to national stability and security, whether real or imagined, are used to restrict democratic freedoms and suppress democratic demands. Democratic dissent is often conflated with terrorism. People are open to persuasion that their democratic freedoms can be given up for a promise of security, and worse, that the freedoms of other groups may be waived.

• **Exclusion:** While we are all excluded from economic decision-making, marginalised and minority groups are particularly so, and have long been excluded from many political systems. Now increasing political polarisation is widening divides, and right-wing populists are targeting excluded groups and encouraging their supporters to attack them. In many contexts, culture wars are being waged, framed around notions of citizenship and nationality that are deliberately exclusive rather than inclusive. These deny people the power to express their views and participate.

• **Global democratic deficits:** States that are repressing democracy at the national level are also doing so at the international level, making it harder for citizens to influence international institutions. International institutions are being attacked and weakened by right-wing populist leaders. They are also increasingly being targeted by highly conservative groups that position themselves within the civil society arena to take advantage of and skew consultation processes.

• **Democracy in civil society:** In civil society, we are being questioned about how democratic we are in practice, not least in the light of recent high-profile scandals that have exposed worrying deficits in our internal practices and posed troubling questions about how strongly we adhere to our values. Our policies may not enable those who work and volunteer for us to have a voice. We often fail to connect with citizens and understand their needs, particularly those who may not share our values and ways of seeing the world. Within the civil society sphere, democracy

is undermined by the rise of anti-rights groups.

Civil society leading the response

But the news is not all gloomy. Across the world civil society is responding and making democratic progress. Mass movements sparked apparent democratic breakthroughs by ousting corrupt and autocratic leaders in Armenia and South Korea. In West African countries such as Burkina Faso and Senegal, young people have led, mobilising creatively to stand up to autocratic rulers who tried to extend their time in office. Malaysia's ruling party was finally defeated after more than six decades of entrenched power, with civil society's campaigning against corruption and electoral abuses pivotal. In The Gambia, united civil society action helped force a longstanding dictator to accept the people's verdict. In Paraguay, attempts to change the constitution to allow the president to stand again were dropped following mass protests. In Tunisia, concerted and coalition-based civil society action prevented democratic backsliding following revolution.

The *MeToo* and *Time's Up* movements mobilised huge numbers of people, changing the debate about the status of women in societies and workplaces, not just in the USA, but around the world. In Ireland, civil society showed how citizen assemblies and referendums can advance rights with a successful campaign to change the abortion law, marking a victory for women's sexual and reproductive rights.

Away from the headlines, our contributors offered many other examples of how civil society is stepping up to make the difference. Despite civil society's many efforts, we are clearly still a long way away from our expansive vision of democracy. But there are steps we can all take that build on our responses so far.

1. Building better institutions at every level

• *Making elections more free and fair:* We can advocate for independent election management bodies, high standards of conduct and acceptance of dissent during election periods and

fairer and more proportional voting systems. We can undertake and support citizen-led election monitoring and reporting. We can challenge the exclusion of candidates and voters from marginalised groups.

• *Building greater participation:* We can model, demonstrate and call for forms of participatory, deliberative and direct democracy, such as community parliaments, citizen assemblies, referendums that arise from popular will and are geared towards extending justice and rights, online petitions and other forms of participation in decision-making enabled by social and mobile media. We can develop and deliver high-quality civic education that encourages participation and teaches people to respect and value democratic freedoms.

• *Democratising the international system:* We can advocate for international parliaments to offer oversight over global and regional institutions and demand greater civil society access to the international system. We can advocate for exemplary democratic oversight over the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and campaign to reaffirm the direct link between development and democracy as part of the SDGs. We can work with the international system to develop and propagate new and stronger international norms on elections.

2. Creating connections

• *Building alliances:* We can build stronger and broader alliances to defend and expand democracy. We can work to combine short-term and long-term, online and offline and spontaneous and organised actions. We can reach outside civil society to form alliances with independent parliaments and judicial institutions, election management bodies, the media, businesses that share our values and governments that support democratic values and freedoms.

• *Brokering unusual conversations:* We can strive to reach beyond those who agree with us and start conversations with those who don't. We can reach out to the people we normally fail to reach. We can offer disaffected citizens positive

platforms to express their views and participate. We can create spaces where polarisation can be addressed, dialogue beyond political divides fostered and reconciliation between opposing groups promoted.

Civil society leading by example

We in civil society need to take the lead in reimagining democracy, because civil society is the sphere of dialogue, innovation and reinvention. But we must lead by example in democratising ourselves and demonstrating that we adhere to exemplary transparency and accountability standards, including by making citizens the primary focus of our reporting and enabling them to participate in our decision-making. We need to experiment in and model workplace democracy and change our leadership styles to do so. We need to learn from the horizontal leadership styles of contemporary social movements and feminist movements.

We must take on these challenges and show leadership because today's events show that democracy is lacking almost everywhere, and everywhere it is fragile, even in contexts where it was believed that arguments for democratic freedoms had long been won. In response, we must step up our action and create the spaces where active citizenship is lived and becomes real. We need to think big and be bold. We need to renew, revitalise and reimagine democracy. ∎

The CIVICUS document can be found here.

Digital media and divide in Ethiopia

Tedla Desta

"There is no system!" This is the most bureaucratic and disconcerting response that most people often hear from Ethiopian government/civil service whenever they seek out services.

Ethiopia has been at the forefront of ambitious attempts to network its civil service with Information Communication Technology (ICT) in order to offer one of the most efficient and advanced services. Two mega ICT projects even by African standards have been created: the *WoredaNet* to connect district level government administrations and *Schoolnet* to connect schools across the country.

In addition, several applications and ICT systems have been introduced to modernize and professionalize the public service sector. They were grand efforts and aspirations. However, they have never come up to expectations. The network issue, the habitual interruption of the Internet connection and power outages, and reoccurring technical faults have affected the functioning of the system, hence, civil servants often respond to clients saying "Today, there is no system! Come back again when the system functions."

This problem with the ICT and digital system in Ethiopia has affected the country's mass media and especially fledgling digital media entrepreneurs. Ethiopia and the Ethiopian media are in a gradual process of digitization (conversion from analogue to digital) and digitalization i.e. the adoption and use of converted technologies by people and organizations such as the mass media. Most state organs have achieved a remarkable level of digitization within the past few years. However, what are the positives of digitalization in Ethiopia especially in relation to the opportunities available or it could create?

One of the most appealing developments in Ethiopia for the mass media in general and especially for those interested in digitalization is the recent democratic openness that has engulfed the country since the coming to power of the new Ethiopian prime minister Abiy Ahmed in April 2018. Since his assumption of power, Ethiopia has liberalized many sectors, freed detained journalists, allowed exiled opposition forces and the media to return to work. There are also several ongoing reforms geared towards opening up the democratic space in the country.

Most of the recent positive changes that have been taking place under Abiy's administration have been hailed internationally and hence, for the first time in the history of the country, the 2019 World Press Freedom Day global celebration took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1-3 May 2019. Jointly organized by UNESCO, the Government of Ethiopia and the African Union Commission, the theme was "Media for Democracy: Journalism and Elections in Times of Disinformation". The Day examined concerns such as media's role in elections, in peace and reconciliation, the safety of journalists and the growing climate of disinformation.

This is a promising time for media development and press freedom in Ethiopia as long as it becomes sustainable and the bureaucratic and controlling political culture of pre-Abiy Ahmed administration is changed at the grassroots. Before April 2018, the government owned the telecom sector, *Ethio Telecom*. This monopoly prevented the public from receiving quality connections and service, discouraged innovation and impacted the digitalization efforts of various organizations and the media. Now the new administration has decided to sell a stake in *Ethio Telecom* to the private sector and this will tremendously change the digital media sector as well as the national economy for the better bringing in international competitors and quality service providers.

According to the world statistical analysis website, *Worldometers*, the current population of Ethiopia in February 2019 is 109,168,343 mak-

ing it the second most populous country in Africa after Nigeria. Of this, 41% are youths under the age of 15. This population trend has its own pros and cons. If the country's economy cannot create more jobs and opportunities for this upcoming generation, it is likely to be a burden on the country as well as increase the number of unemployed, which in turn results in negative social, economic and political crises in the country and beyond increasing the level of inward and outward migration.

On the other hand, the population number has its advantages too and especially for digitalization ventures in that it means a wider audience or consumer basis for new media outlets. Such a large population is a large market to profit from. During the past decades, many international companies engaged in non-political and mainly industrial sectors have invested in Ethiopia aiming to reap the population dividend. With the liberalizing media and political atmosphere, now is the time for international investors interested in the digital dimensions of media development to be involved. It also means a broad range of potential candidates with varied skills to employ with optional rates of payment.

Ethiopia's booming high-tech village in Bole, Addis Abeba. Photo: Author.

Use of mobile phones

According to *Ethio Telecom* February 2019, around 40 million Ethiopians are active mobile phone users. This figure is one of the highest in Africa and one of the fastest growing subscription rates in the continent. Interestingly, travelling across the country it is easy to observe that the most common types of phones used by the people or on display in shops are smart phones. This indicates that mobile phone users also use the other digital offerings of the smart phone such as the internet and apps. This culture of mobile phone as a necessity and as a sign of modernity is beneficial to those interested in exploiting the tool for investment or work i.e. digital media.

There is a mature and "digitalized audience", which has caught up with the developed and "modern" world in terms of knowledge and information of what is going on. The gap between a well-connected Ethiopian in Ethiopia and his or her counterpart in Europe or North America in terms of the information and knowledge equity is narrowing; the credit goes to the Internet and the Open Access trend.
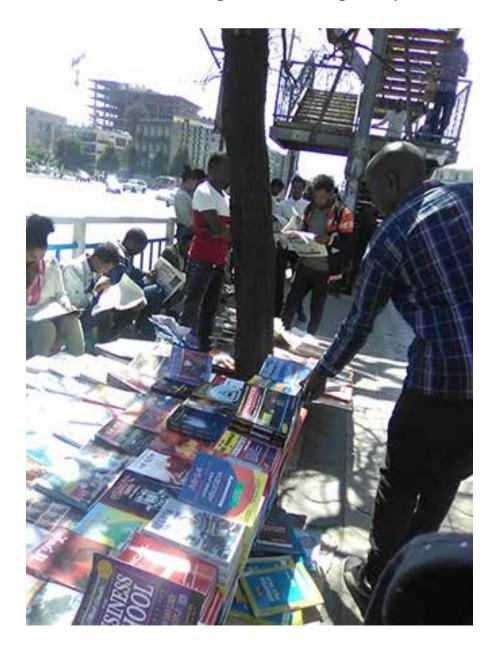
Many of the long-established African and Ethiopian media outlets are adapting and transitioning to digital developments at least in terms of delivery. Newspapers are now equally running their online and mobile content provisions. It is possible to access up-to-date African reports on Twitter, Facebook and other social media outlets both in text and in multimedia formats. They are competing with youth entrepreneurs, who are starting their own social media, website and YouTube based digital media start-ups.

The entrepreneurial spirit across the region and especially in East Africa, including Ethiopia is another opportunity. There are three major

ICT hubs or co-working spaces (iceaddis, xHub and blueSpace) for youth entrepreneurs to discover and invent newer ICT and digital devices and services. However, most of the innovations have so far been in the area of the creative media sphere such as entertainment websites, video games and software development rather than the hard or serious journalism sector for mass media and news reporting development.

Language is also likely to be an advantage because most content on the Internet has the Translate option into the local language, the official working language of the country, *Amharic.* There are computer keyboards and mobile keypads with an Amharic/Geez alphabet. Now, Chinese and European digital, satellite and telecom companies are eyeing these African and Ethiopian markets partly for the reasons given above.

Drawbacks

To understand the intricacies of the challenges within the new Ethiopian media especially the

Books and newspapers market in Arat Kilo, Addis Abeba. Some customers rent and pay per hour to read their favourite newspapers and magazines. Photo: Author.

digitalization process, diagnosing the problem with a digital divide lens is helpful.

Initially, digital divide was defined as the inequalities in access to and use of ICTs, primarily the Internet. Then the definition that explained the divide in levels came: the first-level is for those who have access to Internet and those who do not, and the second-level digital divide, which is focused on the usage of Internet or the skills based divide. The third-level states that there is a digital divide, when the access to the Internet and the skills do not lead to beneficial outcomes.

However, language asymmetries, gaps in Internet use between the old and the young, gender differences, the exclusion of the disabled and gaps in access between urban and rural areas are also examples of Internet divide. Similarly, experts distinguish between the challenges to digital media development such as training, the dominant traditional media culture and finance.

The first-level divide: according to Internet World Stats, 15.3% of the Ethiopian population had access to Internet in 2018. This means that the majority of the population does not have access to the Internet. Most media outlets are based in urban areas except a few community media outlets, located in the semi-urban and peripheries of the country. Hence, one form of the divide in Ethiopia could be between those who are in the main urban areas of the country such as the capital in Addis Abeba and media outlets located in the peripheries such as pastoralist areas. The other form of the divide is quality related. Two media institutions in an advanced urban setting such as Addis Abeba could have access to an Internet but one could have an access to the most fastest, high speed Internet access while another media house would have a 3G, slow and continuously breaking up connection.

In fact, a few Ethiopian digital media startups have complained about Internet speed and

connection. Besides, access can be a tricky notion in a developing country context because those who are not online can learn about everything that is taking place online by sharing Internet one-to-many with their colleagues and families. This is not similar to a WiFi access or sharing but a very traditional way of sharing that is similar to sharing or recycling a hot off the press purchased by one person among the family members and the neighbourhood. Nonetheless, we cannot equate such a form of access to usage.

Second-level divide is the other obstacle to the Ethiopian digitalization process and the digital media scene. Although there are a growing number of ICT and online journalism graduates coming out as technical experts and communicators, the depth of knowledge and availability of these personnel does not meet the market demand. Of all the media types, it is digital/satellite television that is mushrooming with more than a dozen YouTube-based and satellite transmitted TV channels launched within the past few years. Nevertheless, there are noticeable gaps in professional digital content as well as usage. My own research experience has shown that a very small number of Ethiopian digital journalists and online rights activists have received digital security training.

Probably, it is the *third-level divide* that we cannot definitively assess in the Ethiopian context by observation. Yet, the few digital media entrepreneurs and media outlets have reaped financial benefits from access to the Internet, where the media outlets amassed millions of Ethiopian Birr through mainly advertisement, website and YouTube clicks. The audience, of course, has become more informed and knowledgeable as it has access to several new media outlets but qualifying the positive and negative effects on the behaviour and decisions of the audience due to these new digital media can only come after thorough and robust research.

The impact of the second and the third levels of the digital divide can best be exemplified by the earlier "There is no system!" anecdote in Ethiopia. Although both the civil servant and the client have access, they cannot make use of it due to technical problems and skills gaps at the macro level to solve these issues. The access and the usage of the Internet have not led to beneficial outcomes because "The system does not work."

Despite the financial benefits so far, getting better revenue remains a problem for most East African countries such as Ethiopia. It is impossible to make payments by bankcards (especially internationally) in most African countries; hence the transactions are still conducted through the traditional banking processes or Money Transfer methods such as Western Union and Money Gram rather than credit cards.

The cost of importing digital equipment, access to the Internet and digital infrastructure are all too expensive. Digital start-up media owners I spoke to found the import tax on the tools necessary to launch their digital media outlets more expensive than the price they paid to purchase the items from abroad.

To recap, the political and regulatory regime is an opportunity rather than a challenge in Ethiopia today, but we cannot tell for how long this will continue. However, at least the first two levels of the digital divide seem to be the most evident forms in the Ethiopian digital development trend as well as issues with undercapitalization, resources, bureaucracy, training and slower acculturation to digitalization.

It is worth mentioning that digitalization is also positively affecting the country and Africa in general giving employment to journalists and IT people, helping local economies grow, creating a global citizenship that is aware of international diversities, cultures and current affairs and entertainment. ∎

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Berlin (Germany) 2019

At the 69th Berlinale (7-17 February 2019), the Ecumenical Jury appointed by INTERFILM and SIGNIS and supported by WACC, awarded its Prize in the International Competition to a modern day parable: *Gospod postoi, imeto i' e Petrunija* (God Exists, Her Name Is Petrunya) directed by Teona Strugar Mitevska (North Macedonia / Belgium / Slovenia / Croatia /

France, 2019) for its daring portrayal of the transformation of a disempowered young woman into an outspoken defender of women's rights.

When Petrunya spontaneously joins in an Orthodox Church ritual for young men by catching a cross thrown into a river by a priest, she breaks church and social traditions. Her initial refusal to return the cross unleashes her inner strength in the face of institutional conventions and reveals God within her.

In the Forum, the Jury awarded its Prize, endowed with € 2500 by the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), to *Erde* (Earth) directed by Nikolaus Geyrhalter (Austria, 2019) (still below for its depiction of the devastation of our planet by human intervention – an issue of urgent concern today.

This documentary depicts searing images of the destruction of Earth's topography and candid conversations with workers, engineers, and scientists. The jury commended the lamentation for Mother Earth spoken by an aboriginal Canadian woman at the conclusion of the film, which is an invitation to reflect on our responsibility.

In the Panorama, the Jury awarded its Prize, endowed with € 2500 by the Catholic German Bishops' Conference (DBK), to *Buoyancy* directed by Rodd Rathjen (Australia, 2019). The film is an interrogation of modern-day slavery and a uniquely harrowing coming-of-age tale. Rodd Rathjen's exquisitely crafted debut feature follows a 14-year-old rural Cambodian boy as he sets off to escape his family's poverty, but is enslaved aboard a Thai fishing trawler.

Squalor and cruelty threaten to crush his spirit, yet he finds the self-preserving courage to break the chains. By exposing brutal reality through its tightly woven narrative, this artistic call to action sheds necessary light on much-over-

looked human rights abuses at the heart of our global economy.

In addition, the Jury awarded a Commendation to the Panorama entry *Midnight Traveler* directed by Hassan Fazili (USA, Great Britain, Quatar, Canada, 2019) for its singular depiction of the refugee experience. By chronicling his family's flight from Afghanistan solely through footage from three mobile phones, Fazili's film adds urgency and immediacy to the worldwide migration crisis. His raw and endearing images, deepened by his wife and daughters' determined spirits, reveal hopeful humanity and enduring love in the midst of constant motion.

The members of the 2019 Jury were Anna Grebe, Jury President (Germany); Pamela Aleman (Canada); Micah Bucey (USA); Dominica Dipio (Uganda); Margrit Frölich (Germany); Kristine Greenaway (Canada).

Fribourg (Switzerland) 2019

At the 33rd Festival international de Films de Fribourg (15-23 March 2019), the Ecumenical Jury, appointed by INTERFILM and SIGNIS, awarded its Prize of CHF 5000, donated by the Church Aid Organisations in Switzerland "Lenten Offering" and "Bread For All", to the film *Compañeros – La noche de 12 años* (A Twelve-Year Night) directed by Álvaro Brechner, Uruguay, Spain, Argentina, France, Germany, 2018 (still right).

Motivation: A psychological struggle in which signs of hope and solidarity give the characters the strength to survive. Based on a true story, this film leads us into the heart of an existential journey through the darkness of confinement and dictatorship. A movie that subtly juggles between darkness and light.

In addition, the Jury awarded a Commendation to *Vulkan* (Volcano) directed by Roman Bondarchuk, Ukraine, Germany, Monaco, 2018.

Motivation: A parable that explores the thin line between mirages and the reality of a collapsed Ukraine. Lukas is progressively seduced by the informal anarchy of a vast and impoverished region. As enigmatic as it may seem, this beautifully elaborated film confronts us with our quest for the meaning of life.

The Members of the 2019 Jury: Jean-Luc Gadreau, France (President); Tiziana Conti, Switzerland ; Jean-Jacques Cunnac, France; Denyse F. Spörri-Müller, Switzerland. ∎