



Number 37 – August 2005

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH...

1. DIARY

Great Lakes: Workshops on media and the peace processes

2. PRINT MEDIA NEWS

Burundi: Burundi has a new paper called *Kirimba*

Congo: *Santé environs*, new addition to Congolese newsstands

Chad: *L'Observateur's* director sentenced

3. TELEVISION AND RADIO NEWS

Rwanda: Eighth independent radio licensed to broadcast

4. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL FRAMEWORKS FOR THE MEDIA

Burundi: National Communication Council's new team

5. STRUCTURING AND PROFESSIONALISATION OF THE MEDIA

Burundi: Professionals get training in gender, HIV-AIDS and human rights

Rwanda: Election of new executive committee of Rwandan Journalists' Association (ARJ)

Chad: Red Cross trains Chad journalists

1. DIARY

Great Lakes: Workshops on media and the ongoing peace process

A workshop will be held in Kigali (Rwanda) on 23 August on the media and the ongoing peace process in the Great Lakes region. This meeting follows on from a similar workshop in Bujumbura (Burundi) on 12 August. A third workshop will be held in Kinshasa at the end of August.

These workshops were initiated by Panos Paris, with two main goals. First, they bring professionals together to discuss the institutional process of the International Bagamoyo Conference, which effectively integrated "the media" in the design of its projects and long term proposals. The workshops also aim to give the profession a boost, mainly in Rwanda, Burundi, and DRC, with more concrete actions, on the ground, suggested by journalists themselves as part of the Bagamoyo conference (*Peace building in the Great Lakes region: the media's commitments*, 13-15 December 2004 – Tanzania).

The workshops are split into two sessions. In the mornings are presentations by national coordinators on the development of the institutional aspects of the peace process and by media experts on current progress on proposals from the eleven states regarding the media. The afternoons are set aside for discussions on the regional and national action plans arising from Bagamoyo, led by representatives of the national follow-up committees. There is also a report on the Brussels Conference by the two committee members who attended, and a presentation of a recent publication by Panos Paris and GRIP on *Central Africa: Media and Conflicts, are they vectors of war or agents for peace?*. These workshops also aim to prepare for a meeting of Bagamoyo follow-up committee representatives to be held on the eve of the Nairobi GTT at the end of August, where the media experts' deliberations will be discussed.

The workshops receive financial support from British and Irish development funds, the CCFD and the Dutch NGO, Cordaid.

MPL / IPP

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2. PRINT MEDIA NEWS

Burundi: *Burundi gets a new paper, Kirimba*

Kirimba is the name of a new newspaper on Bujumbura's newsstands since August 1, 2005. It aims to provide quality information, serving as a reference in all areas of current affairs (the environment, politics, literature, childhood, etc.).

From 1976-1980, its director, Athanase Karayenga, a professional journalist from Burundi, successively held posts as director of the Burundi Press Agency (ABP), communication advisor to the President of the Republic and Director-General of Burundi national radio. According to Mr Karayenga, the paper intends to play a part in reconstructing the country and consolidating peace after 12 years of war.

Starting as a monthly, *Kirimba* hopes, in the longer term, to appear every two weeks, then weekly and finally, daily.

DaN / IPP

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Congo: *Santé Environs*, new addition to Congolese newsstands

Santé Environs, an independent monthly devoted to information and analysis, is the latest publication to appear in Congo. It hopes to become a forum for debate on Congo's health service.

"The body cannot be healthy without a healthy environment," said Gauderic Mambou, the paper's publication director. And this, he said, is why "it seemed essential to create a platform for information on the medical world in order to maintain support for constraints on the pharmaceutical sector - an essential ingredient of a health policy worthy of the name".

Over the years, citizens' rights to health have gradually evaporated. This new monthly hopes to become a mouthpiece for Congolese patients, informing them of their rights.

AKM / IPP

Chad: *L'Observateur's* director sentenced

A fourth journalist, Mrs Sy Koumbo Singa Gali, director of the *L'Observateur* newspaper, was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment on 15 August 2005, at a court in N'Djaména, and was fined 200,000 FCFA (300 euros) for publishing an interview with Garondé Djarma, a journalist at *L'Observateur*, who is himself serving a prison sentence. In the interview, Mr Djarma said his arrest was "a Djanjawid machination", using the term to refer to Chad Arabs. The statement was judged to "*incite tribal hatred and popular uprising*".

As soon as she had been sentenced, Mrs Sy Koumbo Singa Gali was taken to N'Djaména's prison.

This is the fourth time a journalist has been sentenced in Chad in a month, the others being Samory Ngaradoumbe, Al-Hadj Garondé Djarma and Michel Didama.

JED / MPL / IPP

3. TELEVISION AND RADIO NEWS

Rwanda: Eighth independent radio licensed to broadcast

Umucyo Community Radio is the eighth radio station that has been licensed to broadcast in Rwanda since June 12, 2005. It broadcasts mainly in three languages, *kinyarwanda*, English and French. According to its deputy director, Fulgence Vuguziga, the station will address subjects of community interest, such as reconciliation, the fight against AIDS, poverty reduction, education, etc. "*But, most of the time, it will be devoted to evangelisation*," he emphasised. "*Evangelisation will change behaviours that are currently straying from Christian values*".

Umucyo Community Radio is owned by *Christian Production Media*, a non-profit association. Broadcasting on 102.8 MHz FM, the radio station has 12 journalists and producers, with some programmes also presented by volunteers. The station is on the air from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. and, for the time being, only covers the capital, Kigali and the surrounding area.

GR / IPP

4. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL FRAMEWORKS FOR THE MÉDIA

Burundi: National Communication Council's new team

On 26 July, the National Communication Council (CNC) elected its new 11-member committee from representatives of civil society, government, state and independent press. The executive committee comprises Thaddée Siryuyumunsi (Chair), Father Emmanuel Muyehe (Vice-chair), and permanent secretary, Emmanuel Bizimana.

Emmanuel Bizimana is the only member of the previous committee to be re-elected. The new Chair is also Publications director-general of the Burundi press, while the Vice-Chair is director of the Catholic newspaper, *Ndongezi*, although he has resigned as Chair of the Burundi Press Observatory watchdog body, considered to be incompatible with his new appointment.

It will be recalled that Jean-Pierre Manda, CNC's former Chair, resigned "for personal reasons" just a few days before. His resignation came after a 12-day standoff with African Public Radio (RPA), which, on July 14, he had ordered to be taken off the air for an indefinite period. RPA was allowed to resume broadcasting on July 27 after being closed by the police on the President's orders.

DaN / IPP

5. STRUCTURING AND PROFESSIONNALISATION OF THE MEDIAS

Burundi: Professionals get training in gender, HIV-AIDS and human rights

From 11 – 15 July, the National Network of Gender and Development Trainers (Renafofed) held training sessions in Bujumbura on gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights aimed at those working in the media. According to Renafofed's president, Mrs Sabine Nsabimana, the training aimed at building the capacity of media professionals to inform the public and decision-makers on the fight against the pandemic, with a new approach based on gender and human rights.

The presidential minister responsible for the fight against AIDS, Charles Nditije, pointed out that, according to 2001 UNAIDS estimates, 8.3% of adults in Burundi between the ages of 15 - 49 years are seropositive, putting Burundi 15th in the list of countries with high rates of seropositivity. Of the 390,000 individuals estimated to have been infected, 330,000 are in this age group, more than half of them (190,000) women.

Mr Nditije called on the media professionals who were receiving the training to pass on what they had learned through an awareness raising campaign.

DaN / IPP

Rwanda: Election of new executive committee for the Rwandan Journalists' Association (ARJ)

Since the end of May, journalists from Rwanda's independent press have provoked a re-shuffle of the Rwandan Journalists' Association (ARJ) committee, outraged by its lack of dynamism.

The newly elected Chair, Safari Gaspard said that he would spare no effort to resolve the problems facing Rwanda's press. "Our first task is to rally all those journalists who have bad memories of the association and to try to speak the same language. At present, it's everyone for themselves" he said. Mr Gaspard also added that the new committee would set about finding new sponsors to help turn the association around. "There are many challenges," he said. "First of all we need to train our journalists. Some of them don't even know the basics of journalism. Financial problems are also at the root of some of the challenges facing Rwanda's press."

GR / IPP

Chad: Red Cross trains Chad journalists

From 1 – 3 August, N'Djamena hosted a series of information days and training on the activities of the Red Cross. The workshop, attended by 15 journalists from both state and independent press, aimed to raise media awareness – and in turn that of the public and political and socio-economic decision-makers – on the Red Cross's actions in the country. At the end of the workshop, a Chad Humanitarian Journalist Network (RJHT) was set up, with the aim of raising awareness of the public, the military and police, and the authorities, regarding humanitarian issues, while alerting the national and international public to humanitarian crises, helping to offset and settle them, while facilitating access of the press to humanitarian news.

The network is coordinated by Naygotimti Bambé, editor in chief of the magazine, *Tchad et Culture*.

LG / IPP

Africentr@lemedias is published monthly by the Institut Panos Paris (IPP) as part of its Pluralist media for peace and democracy programme in Central Africa. This monthly newsletter on media pluralism is prepared by journalists from the nine Central Africa countries (Burundi, Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Central African Republic (RCA), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda and Chad), with the support of CORDAID (Netherlands) and DFID (UK).

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