Media development in transitional democratic Cambodia

This thesis is in partial fulfilment of the Masters in Communication for Development, Malmo University, Sweden

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June 2012

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ABSTRACT

Feudal kingdom, French protectorate, modern constitutional monarchy, republic, extreme socialist (Khmer Rouge) and UN mandate – these are a few of the diverse political structures Cambodia has endured and evolved through in its long history. When the Paris Peace Accords were finally signed on 23 October 1991, Cambodia took its first steps as a democratic nation. Twenty years have passed since and while remarkable progress has been made, the country has a long road to travel yet towards democracy.

The media is a powerful tool and has long been understood as an essential building block of democracy. The concept of a free, independent and plural media – as opposed to a media that acts as a propaganda machine – is just as new to Cambodia as the democratic political system it arrived with. As such, the media too has seen remarkable growth – and it too has a long road to travel yet before it can fulfil its 'watchdog' role.

This thesis explores the development of the media in transitional democratic Cambodia. It looks at how the media landscape has changed over the last 20 years (what has been the successes and failures and what are the ongoing challenges); the roles of the various stakeholders critical to the development of the media (government, media themselves and development partners); and it assesses five areas critical to the establishment of an independent and sustainable media: the space for free expression, media professionalism, plurality, business management and supporting institutions. In doing so, the link between a public sphere and good governance is emphasised, the important role of the media in state reconstruction reinforced, and the western neoliberal agenda critically explored with a view to how it may be influencing current-day Cambodian political ideology and development.

Through a series of qualitative interviews with a range of media stakeholders, the ultimate conclusion of this thesis is that the media landscape in Cambodia is diverse – with some (mostly foreign-owned and run) able to operate freely and independently, while others (most local Khmer media, particularly broadcast media) are not. While media development activities over the course of the last 20 years have been clearly beneficial to improving the quality of the media, many factors are preventing all media in Cambodia from becoming free, independent and sustainable. A lack of political will, improper legal intimidation, politicisation of the media, a lack of journalistic ethic and professionalism (among some), unsupportive institutional frameworks, media illiteracy among the broader population and little coordination of media development efforts are just some of the barriers that hinder real improvement in this critical sector.

Efforts to improve the media landscape in Cambodia must be conducted alongside other efforts to continue the transition to democracy as these efforts will – and must – overlap if Cambodia and its media are to become truly democratic.

ABBREVIATIONS

AusAID	Australian International Development Agency
AHRC	Asian Human Rights Commission
API	Advocacy Policy Institute
CAPJ	Cambodian Association for the Protection of Journalists
CCHR	Cambodian Centre for Human Rights
CCIM	Cambodian Centre for Independent Media
CCJ	Club of Cambodian Journalists
COMFREL	Committee for Free and Fair Elections
CPP	Cambodian Peoples Party
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
HRP	Human Rights Party
IMMF	Indochina Media Memorial Foundation
KAS	Konrad-Adenaur-Stiftung
KJA	Khmer Journalists Association
LICADHO	Cambodian League for the Promotion & Defence of Human Rights
MOI	Ministry of Information
MSI	Media Sustainability Index
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
OHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PRK	People's Republic of Kampuchea
RFA	Radio Free Asia
RFI	Radio France International
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SOC	State of Cambodia
SNC	Supreme National Council
SRP	Sam Rainsy Party
TAF	The Asia Foundation
TVK	National Television Kampuchea
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organisation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USIS	United States Information Service
VOA	Voice of America
WMC	Women's Media Centre

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A free, independent, diverse and well-managed media can be a strong force for change – helping to foster economic and social development by reducing poverty and promoting transparency and good governance. Noble laureate Amartya Sen claims that never in history has there been a famine in a country with a free press (2001) and Paul Collier, author of *The Bottom Billion,* said a free press is one of the few facilitating institutions that could help wrench countries out of poverty (2007). A 2012 report by the World Bank Institute and Internews argues that despite 50 years of donor assistance, global efforts to create strong and sustainable media in developing countries has made little progress (2011: 5). While recognising that the leaders of some developing countries have harnessed the potential of the media to combat poverty, corruption and conflict, there are others who have sought to manipulate the media for partisan political and economic reasons. In the worst cases, leaders have understood clearly the power of the media and used it to perpetrate terror and gross human rights violations. Across the world, including in Cambodia, many journalists do not earn a decent wage and media organisations struggle to be truly independent.

The case for media freedom and media development is clear. But have efforts in Cambodia, following the signing of the Paris Peace Accords in 1991 and the country's first democratic elections and enactment of a liberal, democratic Constitution in 1993, supported the development of a free, independent, plural and sustainable media? Have local and international efforts to develop the country's media been effective? What are the factors that hinder the proper development of Cambodia's media and how and by whom do these challenges need to be addressed?

This thesis aims to analyse efforts in Cambodia from the first days of democracy in 1991 to the present, by identifying the successes, failures, ongoing challenges and the roles and responsibilities of media stakeholders in Cambodia to enhancing the quality of journalism in the country. This thesis aims to answer the question: **Have media development activities in Cambodia, as the country transitions toward democracy, been effective in enabling the media to operate as a 'watchdog'? If so, in which ways?** In answering this question, the thesis will explore the how political transitioning over the course of the country's history may have impacted Cambodia's ability to foster democracy and a democratic media and whether key media stakeholders support strategic and sustainable development programs in regards to development of the media in Cambodia.

To answer this research question, a series of in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with the various media stakeholders in Cambodia. Initially a list of more than 50 media stakeholders was developed. They were categorised and ranked according to the length of their involvement in the media industry in Cambodia (so that those interviewed would have a knowledge of the history and development of the media), and the depth of their involvement in the sector. The list of possible interviewees was categorised as either: Government; Development Partner (UN, bilateral and NGO); and Media Industry. Furthermore, individuals who were considered 'historical media commentators' within each category were prioritised. The list continued to grow and be

re-prioritised as a literature review was conducted and as people or organisations were suggested or regularly commented on throughout interviews (for example KAS was not originally on the list of possible interviewees, but were mentioned in multiple interviews – with Pen Samitthy, Pa Ngoun Teang and Tieng Sopheak Vichea – as being a key donor partner currently).

Working in a media advisory role within the UN system in Cambodia, I was fortunate enough to have knowledge of key media actors and, in some cases, existing professional relationships with some individuals or organisations on the interviewee list. Where I did not have existing relationships with the individuals or organisations on the list, I sought advice from other contacts in the industry. Where individuals within organisations could not be identified in advance, letters requesting interviews were sent to the most senior member of the organisation, in the expectation that the most relevant spokesperson would be referred. Letters were posted to the government, bilateral and NGO contacts, which were followed up by email or phone call and interviews with UN colleagues were sought informally through email or during usual professional engagement.

Over the period of one month (ending 30 March 2012), 26 interviews were conducted (see Appendix IV for a full list and short biography of each of the interviewees) with 27 individuals (the interview with the Cambodian Centre for Human Rights involved two people. This will be counted as one interview). Only one interview from the priority list was unattainable; despite many attempts and an initial positive response to my request for an interview, the Minister of Information Khieu Kanharith was unable to be reached for an interview. However, a reasonable spread of interviews were conducted: one with Government; eight with Media Industry; and 17 with Development Partners (seven with UN; seven with NGOs; and three with bilaterals). Within these categories there were a few cross overs: four development partners (two UN, two NGO) are also formerly journalists and therefore could also be categorised as media industry; and two individuals in the media industry category could also be classified as development partners (NGOs). Categorisation however has been determined according to the foremost or current role of the individuals.

It was determined that an effective way to analyse the development of the media in Cambodia since democratisation began in the early 1990s was to use a conceptual framework that aims to measure the independence and sustainability of the media globally. Moving beyond simply ranking countries based on their level of media freedom as measured by Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders [1] , the Media Sustainability Index (MSI) aims to assess countries based on the five objectives considered to shape a media system: freedom of speech, professionalism, plurality of news, business management, and supporting institutions. The MSI therefore is founded on the theory that the media plays a vital role in any liberal, democratic state in functioning as a 'fourth estate'. The MSI assesses the progress made, including in transitioning democracies, toward the establishment of free, independent and plural media.

The MSI has never been conducted in Cambodia and while this thesis does not intend to score Cambodia according to the MSI's methodology (see Appendix III), it was

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[1] Reporters Sans Frontières

considered an appropriate conceptual framework around which to structure interview questions and conduct the analysis.

What follows this chapter is a thorough description of the situation in Cambodia following the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime, the country's early stages of transition to democracy and an analysis of the emergence and development of the media between the late 1970's and late 1990's and the legislative framework that governs the media in the country.

Chapter 3 sets the theoretical framework upon which this research is based. Concepts of a public sphere that enables democratic debate and discussion to enable informed citizenry; post-conflict media development efforts aimed at ensuring the media are a partner for progress; an exploration of the neoliberal ideological traditions and its impacts on current-day Cambodia as well as the cultural preferences and traditions that impact on Cambodian democracy and freedom of speech and the media are all explored in the chapter and will influence the subsequent research analysis.

Chapter 4 outlines the methodological approach taken – namely a series of in-depth qualitative interviews – and an explanation as to why such a methodology was chosen.

Chapter 5 provides an in-depth analysis of the issues raised throughout the interviews and is structured according to the five MSI objectives:
1. Freedom of Speech
2. Professionalism
3. Plurality of News
4. Business Management and
5. Supporting Institutions

Chapter 6 concludes the thesis, providing a brief discussion of the key findings and suggestions for how they might be interpreted, with a view to making future improvements to the media sector in Cambodia.

A list of recommendations that may help improve the media landscape in Cambodia have been developed and are found in Appendix V.

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXTUALISATION

For five golden centuries Kampuchea prospered; art and culture were rich from the 9th to 13th centuries but the Dark Ages, decades of civil war and the Khmer Rouge regime tore all that apart. When the Vietnamese liberated Cambodia from the Khmer Rouge regime's 'agrarian utopia', an estimated three million Cambodians had already lost their lives. Under the regime all Western and democratic ways of life were denounced. Religion was illegal and currency and financial institutions destroyed. Anyone who spoke a foreign language, wore glasses, or cried for their dead loved ones was executed. Academics, businessmen, bureaucrats, journalists and their families were hunted down and killed. The children of Cambodia's intelligentsia were also murdered, reportedly bashed violently against trees, their bodies dumped in mass graves, to avoid future reprisals. Others died as a result of overexertion, malnutrition and disease. By 1979, the country was a skeleton of its former glory. Skulls and bones on display at Choeng Ek[2] are a haunting reminder of the terrible suffering Cambodians inflicted on their own people.

The rest of the world remained ignorant of the devastation unfolding in the country where one quarter of the population perished; without so much as a printing press in the country by 1979, even those humanitarian workers at refugee camps on the border with Thailand were unsure what was really happening in Cambodia[3]. "Stripped of a base of professional journalists by years of civil war and emerging from the shadows of one of history's darkest regimes, Cambodia's media was in as desperate a state as the rest of the country in 1991" (Neumann, 2000: 20). Before the Khmer Rouge regime, when the country was under the rule of then-Prince Norodom Sihanouk in the 1950s and 60s, the profession flourished and press freedom thrived (Clarke, 2000: 83) but all of that changed between 1974 and 1979. Only an estimated ten Cambodian journalists working prior to 1975 survived the Khmer Rouge (Neumann, 2000:21).

"After the fall of the Khmer Rouge in January 1979, the new People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) emerged as a socialist country, controlled by its Vietnamese occupier" (Karbaum, 2011). The country was heavily dependent on foreign aid, which at that time came from the Eastern Bloc, in particular the Soviet Union[4]. "In 1989, the PRK regime – by that time renamed the State of Cambodia (SOC) – faced an economic crisis" (Karbaum, 2011). Vietnam withdrew its troops and the Soviet Union was facing serious economic problems. As a result of waning financial support, "Cambodia was on the brink of total disintegration and on the verge of becoming what would later be described as a 'failing state'. All parties (except the Khmer Rouge) were under incredible pressure to find a solution. The answer came in the form of a peace treaty, a fundamental condition for Western aid. Of course, the lure of billions of dollars made it easier for the enemies to come together and forge an agreement" (Karbaum, 2011).

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[2] The Killing Fields, 20 minutes outside of Phnom Penh
[3] According to UN Resident Coordinator Douglas Broderick who was on the Thai border assisting refugees with Catholic Relief Services at the time.
[4] There was a Cold War-related aid suspension from the West at the time.

2.1 The first days of democracy

The situation in Cambodia at that time opened the door to a 'Western-style' solution. The Agreements on a *Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict* were signed in Paris on 23 October 1991. The Agreements (otherwise known as the Paris Peace Accords) were the culmination of more than a decade of negotiations. Cambodia was represented at the Paris conference by the Supreme National Council (SNC), which was declared the authority that would represent Cambodia externally and occupy a seat at the United Nations, and was where the new Cambodian Constitution was approved. The Constitution, which was enacted in 1993, explicitly subscribes to the liberal democratic model (Article 51) including prescribing freedom of expression and press (Article 41). Ultimately, according to the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Cambodia, Surya Subedi, the Peace Accords "paved the way for political reconciliation and the establishment of a democratic Cambodia" (2011: 250).

The SNC were also committed to holding free and fair elections organized and conducted by the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) as the basis for forming a new and legitimate government. UNTAC was among the first post-Cold War peacekeeping missions, yielding "far more clout" and resources; there was roughly 20,000 foreign peacekeepers and 5,000 local staff during the 19-month mission that cost $1.6 billion (Orme, 2010: 38). Media guidelines, drafted by UNTAC's Information and Education Division, set forth an 18-point framework for free, independent and plural media as an essential cornerstone to facilitating democracy in the lead up to the 1993 election. The guidelines were drafted in 1991 and fell under Paragraph 3(f), Section D (Elections) of UNTAC's mandate: Ensuring fair access to the media, including the press, television and radio, for all political parties contesting in the election (UN, 1991). "UNTAC realised that without a free press, it would be impossible to hold a real election, but without a working press after 1991, the burden was on UNTAC to set up some kind of media in a hurry" as well as to attempt to address the communist culture of obedience and control (Neumann, 2000: 21).

As a result, the first-ever broadcast station under a UN peacekeeping mission was established: Radio UNTAC. The station was widely credited with helping to create the environment that made the 1993 election possible and led to a 95% turnout at the polls (Manuel, 2004), which was far beyond the UN's original expectations, due to the mission's mantra "your vote is secret". Radio UNTAC was successful due to its popularity, provision of credible news and information, and equal opportunity for all 20 political parties and candidates to speak on the air. The station also exposed human rights abuses, particularly against the Vietnamese minority, which no other media would touch at that time (Manuel, 2004). "It was also the first station in memory to reach almost all of Cambodia's territory" (Orme, 2010: 38). The cost of establishing Radio UNTAC (setting up the studios and transmission network and hiring and training local staff) was about $3 million, "a small expenditure in the context of a major peacekeeping mission but quite large by the standards of Cambodian media investment" (Orme, 2010: 38). The UN's efforts to encourage freedom of the press and expression during the time were well regarded; "a flourishing and free-wheeling press emerged, along with some reduction of hate language. However, state and political party media continued biased reportage, ignoring voices of opposition as well as coverage of political or ethnic violence" (Manuel, 2004). Radio was an important and strategic choice given the low literacy rate in the country and the small population of readers of newspapers outside of Phnom Penh.

When election results indicated that the rule of Prime Minister Hun Sen was over and Prince Norodom Ranarridh had won, Hun Sen "waged a vicious campaign" against the station, resulting in the deployment of Ghanaian troops with machine guns, walls of sandbags and trucks with anti-tank weapons blocking the street, to defend it (Manuel, 2004). The station survived, but closed down later that year and its equipment was shipped back to the UN Peacekeeping Office in Italy for use in other peacekeeping missions. The short-lived nature of Radio UNTAC is the operations major criticism; there was no UN effort to keep the station on the air under UN auspices, or to transform it into a nationally controlled service (as happened in East Timor in 2003), although the Constitution in theory permitted the establishment of independent broadcasters in the country (Orme, 2010 and Manuel, 2004).

Beyond Radio UNTAC efforts to improve public information in the early 90s, there was no shortage of donor and development partner support for media development projects at that time. Millions of aid dollars flooded into Cambodia in the UNTAC era, though there is much criticism that while intentions were good, short-term efforts to address the dire situation of the media was ineffective and unrealistic[5]. International efforts to develop the skills of journalists in Cambodia were led at the time by UNESCO and the Asia Foundation, with funding provided by the governments of the United States of America, Denmark, Canada, France and Australia. Efforts focused mostly on providing much-needed training to journalists, most of whom were new to the profession. Orme (2010) suggests that while several print publications and small radio outlets showed great courage and enterprise in the '90s in independent news reporting, they were exceptions to the rule. "In a country where radio remains the dominant information medium, there is a consensus among local and foreign journalists alike that the last time most Cambodians had access to professional nonpartisan national news coverage was the day before Radio UNTAC closed" (Orme, 2010: 39).

2.2 The media in post-conflict Cambodia

The democratic transition and the sense of security provided by the UN during the '90s encouraged the emergence of new publications and broadcasters (Clarke, 2000). Before '91 the media was restricted to seven Soviet-style media outlets; several bulletins for overseas Khmers and radio stations broadcast into Cambodia from Thailand run by exiled resistance groups; and a newspaper set up in a UN-run refugee camp for Cambodians on the Thai border in the late 80s. The journalists who ran the media directly after the overthrow of the Khmer Rouge, during the negotiations of the Peace Agreement, under the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) later known as the State of Cambodia (SOC) were generally new to the field though some received training (not always in journalism) in Vietnam, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (Clarke, 2000: 83). "By the time of the election in 1993 there were about 20 news organisations; a year later there were 50; and when the second election took place in 1998 about 200 were registered […] This rapid development of the news media created a need for more journalists than ever before in Cambodia" (Clarke, 2000: 83). With few means of expression available before the '90s, people from all backgrounds and political opinion took the opportunity to open newspapers and set up broadcasting stations or become

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[5] Comments made by Michael Hayes, former Publisher and Editor of the Phnom Penh Post, in an interview in 2000.

journalists themselves, though few of them had much schooling, let alone professional knowledge.

Four dominant groups of journalists emerged in the 90s; the first consisted of the ten journalists who survived the Khmer Rouge and they played a leading role in re-establishing the news media. Second, were the journalists of the PRK/SOC era who provided five chief editors and many more rank-and-file journalists from the overstaffed government and party news media. The third group had worked on the resistance radio stations or on the border camp newspaper and some became prominent opposition voices (Clarke, 2000). The final and largest group were those with no experience at all in journalism. While the situation indicated positive steps toward press freedom, the "suddenness of the surge of free expression did not allow time for the development of the ethical constraints, which have become accepted in the longer established democracies" (Clarke, 2000: 84).

Four years after the election, in 1997, a violent coup d'état ended the UN-brokered power sharing governance arrangement and Hun Sen seized control; "he has retained that power to this day under a system where most broadcast media are under direct or indirect state control, and journalists who report on corruption or otherwise challenge authorities risk harassment, censorship, imprisonment, or physical attacked, including homicide" (Orme, 2010: 39).

2.3 Focus on media training

There was little Cambodian funding available at the time to support media development activities, leaving plenty of space for foreign funders to work in the sector. "Assistance to the news media was becoming a staple of overseas aid programmes as a form of encouragement to democratic government" (Clarke, 2000: 84). Given the capacity of journalists at the time, it is no real surprise that the international community's efforts in the 90s largely involved short training courses focusing on basic journalistic skills. These courses and programmes received very positive feedback according to Clarke given their wide reach, and provision of skills taken back to newsrooms and inspiration for their work (2000: 90). Criticisms have been about the short nature of the courses, lack of recognised qualifications, lack of depth of the training (not moving much past basic journalism skills), a lack of coordination (with courses run at random on issues such as AIDS coverage and environmental reporting) and little attention paid to the prior education, qualifications and aspirations of training candidates (Lao Mong Hay, cited in Clarke, 2000: 91). "Other critics say trainers have over-emphasised freedom of the press, leading journalists to believe that anything at all can be published, including bad language and rumour. They point to this as contributing to politically related conflict and violence" (Clarke, 2000:91). Former editor of the *Phnom Penh Post*, Michael Hayes, is one of the most outspoken critics of early media training efforts, suggesting that the political nature of the media at the time meant journalists were not able or willing to use the skills they had learnt at the training "because to do so would not enable them to support their anti- or pro- agendas" (cited in Clarke, 2000: 91). The critics also agree that the biggest employers – broadcast media – encourage little more than following government events, covering anything else only because they are paid to do so (or at least, that was the case in the 90s). Due to the cost, time spent out of the office, tensions between journalists of different political factions and the short-term nature of training courses, most training throughout the 90s was conducted in-house.

Though most media training at the time came in the form of short-term courses, UNESCO advocated that media education become part of the school curriculum and that a journalism degree be established at the Royal University of Phnom Penh. A great success of UNESCO's media development efforts came in 1995 when the organisation is credited with assisting to establish the Cambodian Communication Institute (CCI), which still exists today, offering training to practicing journalists on basic skills as well as more specialized training on issues such as AIDS coverage and election reporting. UNESCO and others helped to establish the first professional media association in the country: the Khmer Journalists Association (KJA) in 1994, with funds from TAF, but as political polarisation of journalists within the KJA became more apparent, the association split and was no longer involved in training efforts.

For more detail of training efforts in the post-UNTAC period, see Appendix I. See Appendix II for a snapshot of the current media context in Cambodia.

2.4 The legal framework governing the media in Cambodia

2.4.1 Power and politics

The legal framework governing the media cannot be viewed in isolation from the broader legislative and judicial system in Cambodia. According to a 2010 report by the Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), "Cambodia still remains an authoritarian state despite it having a constitution based on liberal democracy and holding periodic elections. Liberal democracy was never a reality due to the nature of the Cambodian judicial system" (AHRR, 2010: 83). And although Articles 51, 128, 129 and 130 provide for three independent branches of government (legislative, executive and judicial), the AHRC report suggests that a lack of separation of powers means the "judiciary is expected to be under the complete control of the executive" with the outcomes of trials predetermined and little access to fair trials (84) and all state institutions subject to political and economic influence (85). Furthermore, impunity is a "major challenge to the rule of law in Cambodia" and has led to a situation where civil society "has lost trust in and respect for the legal as well as the political system" (AHRC, 2010: 86).

The Cambodian Corruption Assessment (2004) further states the "unfortunate reality that corruption has become part of everyday life in Cambodia (which has) in fact reached 'pandemic' proportions" and 'survival' corruption has become a way of life for the poor (2). The AHRC report claims the current system instils fear among the common population regarding the courts, which are seen as instruments used by the powerful to retain power; allowing corruption and bribery to become common practice to escape punishment (AHRC, 2010: 86). This system of "abysmal lawlessness" continues according to the report despite attempted by "Western reformers" who have "refused to acknowledge the actual nature of the political administration and often try to make the constitution work. Naturally nothing comes out of such efforts except frustration" (AHRC, 2010:84)

A major contributor to the state of affairs in Cambodia, according to the Cambodian Corruption Assessment (CCA) is a lack of transparency, with officials regarding "virtually all documents as privileged" requiring information to be "obtained, if at all, through an inside contact or by bribing a gatekeeper" (2004: 3). International organisations and the media face no easier access to public documents, often depending on the "discretion of

functionaries" and required to exercise caution in the use of such documents for fear of retribution if trust is betrayed (CCA, 2004: 3).

The CCA suggests the Royal Government of Cambodia "manifests many characteristics of a traditional Southeast Asian autocracy" where, among other things, power is tightly centralised and patron-client ties are well established (2004: 6). The "monolithic" regime absorbs resources and maintains power, even where factional struggles occur within the government (CCA, 2004: 6). Parliamentarians, even members of the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) have "little legitimate power", receiving a monthly salary of around $2,000, and so even where the young people when first entering ministry employment "want to be good", many are tempted to accept "opportunities" the system presents (CCA, 2004: 7).

Furthermore, a cultural tradition of respect toward elders extends to those in public office and attempts by journalists or others to even constructively criticise the government can be very unhappily received, with physical or legal retaliation in some cases.

2.4.2 Laws governing the media
The normative framework & special rapporteur
The right to freedom of expression is guaranteed in various international instruments including the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights[6]* (UDHR, which is a UN General Assembly resolution and not binding), the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[7]* (ICCPR, which was ratified by Cambodia in 1992 and imposes formal legal obligation on State Parties to respect its provisions) and three regional human rights instruments that are not binding in Cambodia but that allow authoritative interpretations to be made: the *European Convention on Human Rights[8]* (ECHR), the *African Charter on Human Rights and Peoples' Rights[9]*, and the *American Convention on Human Rights[10] (*ARTICLE 19, 2004: 3).

The efforts made in Cambodia to meet its international obligations to human rights – including freedom of expression and the media – are reported against by the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Kingdom of Cambodia[11]. The mandate of the special rapporteur, currently Professor Surya Subedi, is derived from two sources: the Peace Accords and the annual decisions of the UN Human Rights Council[12]. The Special Rapporteur is appointed and empowered to exercise powers under the UN Charter.

Professor Subedi, the AHRC and media commentators agree that the Cambodian media enjoy relative freedom overall, particularly when comparing the current situation with the bleak media environment of the 70s, 80s and early 90s and also when comparing to the media in neighbouring countries such as China, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam and Singapore. Others, including LICADHO, disagree strongly, suggesting instead that

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[6] Article 19
[7] Article 19
[8] Article 10
[9] Article 9
[10] Article 13
[11] Prior to 2008 this role was called the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Human Rights in Cambodia (SRSG)
[12] Formerly the Human Rights Commission

"Cambodia does not have a free media in the true sense of the word. Freedom of expression in law requires freedom of expression in practice. And maintaining freedom of expression requires the proper investigation of abuses when they occur" (2000: 1)

Professor Subedi argues that while journalists in Cambodia "do not routinely face prison sentences for their professional activities, serious restrictions continue to limit press freedom and freedom of expression. The legal offensive mounted by the government against government critics, including leaders of the opposition, has raised serious questions about the process of reform and democratisation in Cambodia. There seems to be no proper interpretation of the UNTAC criminal provisions on defamation and disinformation allowing for a proper balance between safeguarding private reputation, on the one hand, and making public information concerning matters of public interest on the other. There has been disproportionate use of the law regarding defamation and disinformation against journalists, human rights activists and political leaders" (2011: 252)

The Constitution

The Cambodian Corruption Assessment suggests "the situation would be less dire if the press would freely exercise its oversight function" (2004: 2). However, legislation does exist that provides at least in theory (if not always in practice) a good framework for the media in Cambodia. Article 31 of the Cambodian Constitution provides that Cambodia "shall recognise and respect human rights as stipulated in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the covenants and conventions related to human rights". Article 41 provides that all citizens have "freedom of expression, press, publication and assembly" but it also provides that "no one shall exercise this right to infringe upon the rights of others, to affect the food traditions of the society, to violate public law and order and national security".

The Press Law

Furthermore, constitutional media protections are contained in the *Cambodian Law on the Press* (Press Law). The press law went through several drafts as it passed between the government, journalists and foreign experts before a compromise version was finally passed in 1995. A review of the press law by ARTICLE 19, shows that the law contains some "very positive provisions, including a guarantee of the 'freedom of the press and freedom of publication', consistent with constitutional protections (Article 1); a categorical assurance that the confidentiality of sources is protected (Article 2); a prohibition on 'pre-publication censorship' (Article 3); and a guarantee that no person shall face criminal liability for the expression of opinions (Article 20)" (2004: 2). And commentators have suggested that the press law gave Cambodia "one of the most liberal legal frameworks in the region" (Edman, 2000: 8). Articles 6 and 7 of the law govern the responsibilities of journalists, including their right to establish independent associations and code of ethics; Article 10 provides the rights for retraction and reply and protection to journalists against charges of libel unless a charge of "malicious intent" can be proven, which inherently suggests according to ARTICLE 19 that "public figures should recognise that they may be subject to scrutiny and critical comment by the press" (2004: 11).

However, the law includes some provisions that are "plainly intended to regulate or control the press" (ARTICLE 19, 2004: 2). Vague and broad terminology is included in

various articles that can "have the potential for restricting expression which should be protected" (ARTICLE 19, 2004: 2). ARTICLE 19 has made a series of recommendations regarding the press law. These include but are not limited to: that certain provisions in the law that do not relate specifically to the press be repealed for danger that "including such provisions in a media-specific law is that they give the misleading, and sometimes false, impression that it is appropriate to treat the press, and journalists in particular, differently from other citizens with regard to what they may say or request, from whom and so on" (2004: 5); that the law should not contain any content restrictions[13] (2004: 6) which includes restrictions resulting from inclusion of vague or broad terms such as "political stability", "good customs" and "curse words"; that articles that prescribe how journalists' associations are to be governed be repealed; that defamation and libel provisions be repealed and provided for in a law of general application; that the Ministry of Information grant all registration requests to the media upon receipt of registration information.

Although Article 5 of the Press Law recognises the "right of access to information in government-held records", this is subject to a number of exceptions, including where the release of requested information would cause harm to national security. The article stipulates that requests should be clear and made in writing and that responses must be provided within 30 days and denials accompanied by reasons (ARTICLE 19, 2004: 15). ARTICLE 19 argues that this right is "held by everyone, not just members of the media" and a dedicated law should govern that freedom of information.

The Penal Code

Cambodia's new Penal Code came into force in December 2010, superseding the UNTAC Criminal Code. Despite having a Press Law, the UNTAC Criminal Code and now the Penal Code are often used to prosecute the media, which is a clear contradiction of the Press Law's stipulations that "no person shall be arrested or subject to criminal charges as a result of expression of opinion". Under the Penal Code, defamation is a crime "despite the Prime Minister's assurances, back in 2006, of the government's intent to decriminalize the offense" (LICADHO, 2011: 10). The charge carries a fine of 10 million riel (US $2,500) and allows for incarceration if the fine cannot be paid. "The new Penal Code also does not provide for any of the defences to defamation required under the ICCPR Article 19" (LICADHO, 2011: 10). Other inclusions in the Penal Code that concern LICADHO and other human rights NGOs and media commentators, are crimes against insult, incitement to commit a felony (or criminal incitement), incitement to discriminate, offence against state authorities, intimidation of a public official, malicious denunciation, and instigation. Freedom of expression activists and journalists have loudly criticised the Penal Code. A statement issued by a group of 40 Cambodian journalists in 2011 stated: "the threat from incitement will drive newsmakers to be fearful and discouraged from performing their professional roles…There is less and less freedom for the news" (LICADHO, 2011: 15). though the government have justified the law and convictions made according to it, saying "Before, using the argument of 'freedom of expression' and opposition party status, some people could insult anybody or any institution. This is not the case now" (Khieu Kanharith, Minister for Information, cited in LICADHO, 2011: 15).

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[13] Articles 11 – 16 place restrictions on content

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 The Public Sphere & Democratic Governance

Jürgen Habermas first posited the concept of the public sphere in 1962 as having its origins in the 17th and 18th centuries during European Enlightenment. He argued that a public sphere involved open discussion of relevant social issues allowing for informed public debate and examination. Deane argued that Habermas' concept "presupposed freedoms of speech and assembly, a free press, and the right to freely participate in political debate and decision making (2005: 177). The importance of a public sphere to expose "issues of public policy and concern to public debate" (Deane, 2005: 178) has been expanded on by many other authors and academics, perhaps most notably by Noble Prize winner Amartya Sen who suggests that famines and other preventable disasters rarely or never occur in democratic states (with functioning public spheres). As such, Deane argues, the need for free and plural media – and its role in ensuring good governance and transparency in decision making – is a major factor in the development policies of bilateral and multilateral institutions (2005: 178). Of particular note is the World Bank's Communication for Governance and Accountability Program (CommGAP), which has for many years included media development as a key part of governance reforms efforts. In a 2011 World Bank CommGAP report it is suggested that "development discourse has increasingly taken note of the role of an independent media sector in supporting good governance" (Kalathil, 2001:1). The role of the media in facilitating a public sphere has been well elaborated on. Kalathil says the media would ideally perform multiple roles: "It provides accurate news and information to the public. It facilitates public debate and discussion on a wide range of issues, and sometimes sets the agenda for such debate. It holds powerful state and non-state interests accountable, servicing as a watchdog for the public interest. In essence, an independent media sector is a key factor in good governance" (2011: 3). Media has the potential to encourage democratic development by giving "people a voice, acting as a balance and watchdog to potential government misconduct" argues Graves (2007: 20).

Similar to Thompson's call for a 'reinvention of publicness' and a public-private dichotomy (1995), Deane argues that there is an emerging kind of public sphere due to the changing communication and media landscape, driven in part by advances in information and communication technology, whereby information becomes impossible to control (2005: 182) and most notably, making it difficult for governments to control. Many liberal thinkers such as Jon Stuart Mill argued for a free press and its ability to cultivate public life beyond the state – operating as a 'fourth estate' or a watchdog press. "The liberty to express thoughts and opinions in public, however uncomfortable they may be for established authorities, is a vital feature of a modern democratic order" – though Thompson admits this is not characteristic of all political regimes (1995: 238).

Which leads to the theories posited by Allen and Stremlau and others regarding the role of the media in post-conflict and transitional societies. Mortensen argues that post-conflict reconstruction efforts must not ignore the media: "Peace requires an open and independent media. Long-term stability must be based on public support, which needs to

build on information not ignorance, and information has to be transmitted with authority and credibility" (2005: 7). This is due in part to the power of the media, and as Thompson (1995) suggests, the ability of the media to render power visible in news ways and on an unprecedented scale. Stroehlein (2009), among others, points to Radio Mille Collines in Rwanda and the role it played in driving genocide through hate propaganda as evidence of the power media can hold, particularly in periods of vulnerability.

3.2 The Media in Peace-building & State Reconstruction

Himelfarb and Chabalowski, in discussing the important role of the media during peace-building operations, suggest that it is essential to recognise "the media's reach is but a first step in harnessing its power as a potential peace-builder. Care must be taken to prepare media accordingly for the different roles it can play as information provider, watchdog, mobilizer and promoter, among others" and goes on to suggest that this must be done in a strategic manner in consultation with policymakers and peace-building media practitioners (2008). Though Cambodia is no longer in its peace-building phase, this thesis aims to evaluate the media in part during the early democratic, peace-building days of the 90s, and it will be important to (albeit briefly) reflect on how the media was harnessed, if at all, as a tool for peace-building during that time.
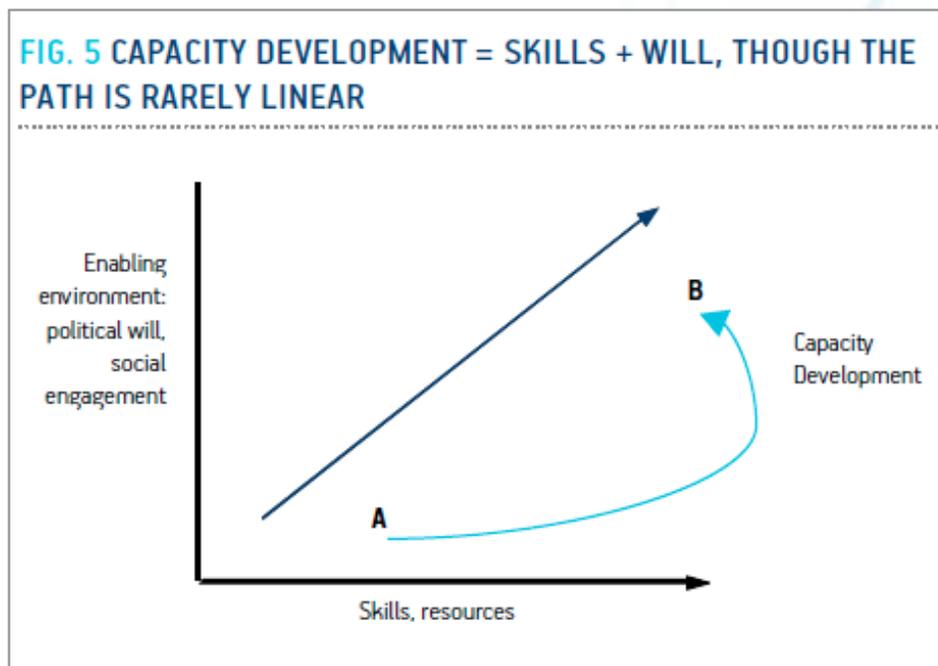
UNESCO (2008) suggests that a media framework and practice, which contributes to overarching goals of free expression, good governance and human development, must be carefully considered. "This is a particularly acute concern in new or restored democracies whose media systems have been warped or shattered by oppression, corruption or the effects of war and under-development" (2008: 4). UNESCO go on to argue that independent media alone is not sufficient to strengthen good governance and promoting human rights, and rather that media must be free and independent *and* access to such media must be widespread and this may require improved media literacy among the broader population (2008). Furthermore, "a mature media cannot exist in isolation; there needs to be a supportive environment – a firm legal basis, a transparent financial basis, responsible authorities to interact with and cultural understanding of 'fair' and 'factual' reporting" (Mortensen, 2007:7). Furthermore, there is an interdependent relationship between the media and other institutions, and "robust institutions are needed and their development must be give equal, if not greater, weight than that of media freedom. Together they provide a mutually-reinforcing system of checks and balances" (Mortensen, 2007: 10). Although Cambodia has had a liberal democratic Constitution in place for 20 years, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Cambodia, Professor Surya Subedi suggests that "democratisation has not yet fully taken root in the country" (2011: 250). As such Cambodia is still transitioning toward democracy and its media, along with other institutions that support a democracy, is still in need of development. As Allen and Stremlau suggest, post-conflict societies, and certainly in Cambodia in the 80s and early 90s, "tend to lack institutions mechanisms for a kind of sudden transition to market democracy" and attempts to rush development and transition can "hinder attempts toward long-term peace" (2005: 221).

Allen and Stremlau (2005) argue there is little consensus on what peace-building media policy should consist of, and Nelson and Susman-Pèna (2011) suggest that despite $645 million spent by donors on international development media projects globally in 2010, efforts are random and haphazard, poorly coordinated with broader reforms and

are rarely led by the countries themselves that receive assistance. Allen and Stremlau (2005) and Mortensen (2007) provide some allowance for this, admitting that circumstances vary from one country context to the next and argue for a new approach to media policy in countries emerging from conflict. Importantly, part of Allen and Stremlau's suggested new approach to media development includes an awareness of the impact that liberal ideologies has had on the way media policies are constructed, notably, around the experience and impressions of rich countries rather than reflecting local realities (2005: 229). Mortensen too suggests that it would not be possible to use an ideological perspective to inform media development policy consistently in every instance (2007: 22). Allen and Stremlau argue that "the tendency of journalists and human right organisations to ignore the local realities and rather push their own 'international justice' agenda may be counter-productive" and that despite the "rhetoric about promoting freedom of expression, the situation on the ground is often muddled, contradictory and sometimes hypocritical" (2005: 230).

Nelson and Susman-Pèna argue that for media development efforts to be successful political will is an essential requirement: "capacity development requires an approach that is country-led and driven by local people who are determined to make change happen in their local environment" (2011: 15). Building the capacity of the media can be demonstrated through the diagram below:

Figure 1: Building media capacity

FIG. 5 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT = SKILLS + WILL, THOUGH THE PATH IS RARELY LINEAR

Enabling environment: political will, social engagement

B

Capacity Development

A

Skills, resources

Source: World Bank Institute & Internews

They argue that "media development cannot be undertaken in isolation, and efforts to address political will and the supporting environment must be done *simultaneously* with the efforts to increase skills and resources to ensure that those new resources are put to effective use" (Nelson and Susman-Pèna, 2011: 15). Problematically though, less time is spent addressing the enabling environment given that it is more costly, time-consuming and complicated: "such interventions generally require a longer and more

comprehensive engagement not only the with media, but also with a broader cross-section of political leaders, civil society institutions, and other stakeholders who affect the environment in which the media operates" (Nelson and Susman-Pèna, 2011: 15).

3.3 Neoliberalism & Democracy

Allen and Stremlau examined the UN mission in Cambodia and suggested that "economic liberalisation has promoted growing inequalities between cities and countryside while political liberalisation has exacerbated factionalism[14]" (2005: 221). It is certainly relevant to explore how Cambodia, after 20 years of relative peace and stability is now able to consolidate and move more concretely toward democratic reform. In particular, it is worth considering how the neoliberalist agenda of the Paris Peace Accord negotiation, the UNTAC period and early and continuing development efforts have and are contributing to Cambodia's democratisation.

Springer (2009), in his research on Cambodia, suggests that "neoliberalisation is a foremost causal factor in Cambodia's inability to consolidate democracy, and further explains why authoritarianism remains the principal mode of governance among the country's ruling elite" (138). Furthermore, he argues that "order and stability preserve an economic system that serves to maintain the power and privilege of indigenous elites at the expense of the poor, which in turn entrenches patron-client relations as neoliberalism positions elites to informally control markets and material rewards" (2009: 139). Springer is particularly critical of democratic origins in Cambodia, claiming: "in line with a fundamentalist orthodoxy that ensures that democracy is only extended to the realm of the political, as a preordained economic system remains insulated from popular concern, the architects of UNTAC made certain that neoliberalism, an ideology derived from a very different context in the post-Keynesian west, was a requirement of Cambodia's post-transitional government" (2009: 143). He goes on to posit that while strong states are able to legitimate their actions without recourse to violence in listening to and addressing their citizens' concerns and demands – "that is, through the very practice of democracy" – whereas weak states, without having a policy that prioritises the needs of the populace, takes an authoritarian stance, "resorting to violence to regain its footing when citizens begin to make their demands known in the spaces of the public" (Springer, 2009: 148). Springer argues that in a neoliberal state, "accountability has a lacunate quality" since there is a lack of public consultation and reduced access to social provisions for the poor and as a result, a weak government that seeks to retain power, fears unmediated public spaces "as penetrating criticisms will inevitably arise to extend unseen in strong, accountable, democratic regimes" and therefore will "attempt to create and enforce an orderly public space (as taking) precedence over the allowance of democracy as public space" (2009: 148-9).

Ultimately the problem, Springer argues is that "empowering the people entails the simultaneous disempowerment of those who currently occupy a privileged position in society and as such powerful elites will try to impede any movement toward a from below vision of democracy and development, a view that is captured by and made possible through the unmediated caption of public space" (2009: 155). He argues that "elections are held to confer a semblance of legitimacy, but democratic empowerment

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[14] The coup d'état occurred just two years after Allen and Stremlau published their paper, following which the Cambodian People's Party consolidated its power.

through processes such as policy orientation and decision making in the allocation of resources is never advanced" (2009: 155). Additionally, he claims donors and the international community have done little to promote true democracy in the country, preferring instead to "lend support to an unpopular and authoritarian leader in the name of order and stability (read business interests and capital) over the potential for genuine democratic awakening" (2009: 149). Neoliberalism, Springer argues, has become a corollary of stability and therefore does not open itself to the values of democracy (randomness, messiness and openness), which are also elements of public space. The hope, Springer suggests, is that "through the contestation of public space, a public may begin to carve out and establish new alternative kinds of stability and order, not built on the fears of the rich, but on the needs of the poorest and most marginalised residents'" (Mitchell, 2003 cited in Springer, 2009: 156).

Regarding the support of the international community and donors, Nelson and Susman-Pèna argue that much of the media in developing countries have "failed to find an economically sustainable and independent business model" and is therefore "often financed and controlled by partisan economic or political interests" (2011: 17). They further argue that even "independently financed media is often seen as purely oppositional and biased against the power structure" and that as a result, "intervening to support such media is complex and liable to be seen as interfering in politics" and that governments of developing countries may resist or do little to engage constructively with local advocates or international organisations to improve the situation (2011: 17).

3.4 Asian v Western Models of Democracy

Asian countries including Singapore and China have maintained tight control of their media sectors. They "argue that the so-called Western model of free speech is not appropriate for their countries" and while they have allowed their media sectors to grow, there are limits on the level of open criticism of the government and offers of external support have been resisted (Nelson and Susman-Pèna, 2011: 18). Singapore's founding father, Lee Kwan Yew, claimed the "US model" was not applicable in Asia and "Chinese commentary on the media industry has focused on the shortcomings of the "Western" media (Nelson and Susman-Pèna, 2011: 18). Cambodia's Prime Minister, Hun Sen, too has been publicly critical about the Western model and at the World Press Freedom Day event in Phnom Penh in 2011, the Minister for Information, Khieu Kannarith defended criticisms of web censorship by comparing the situation in Cambodia to the more heavily censored Asian countries of Vietnam and China. However "the so-called Asian model does little to contradict the value of high-quality information for a developing country" and Nelson and Susman-Pèna argue China's media for example will need to "continue progressively opening its media sector" in order to maintain its economic growth" (2011: 18).

This concept of an Asian model of freedom of speech and the media seems somewhat at odds in Cambodia, given its liberal democratic Constitution. Mouffe (2002) argues: "there must be, at the political level, some agreement – a consensus – about which ethico-political principles are going to be the basis of our shared life. In a liberal democratic society those principles are 'liberty and equality for all' – though they will be variously interpreted" (11). However, in Cambodia there seems to be disagreement about the ethico-political principles underpinning the society. Perhaps this 'identity crisis' is a result of a neoliberal western agenda that drove the peace agreement in a country

with a long history of communist and socialist rule and no tradition of power-sharing or democratic tendencies. Alternatively, Mouffe's (2002) concept of a *demos* may be applied to explain this Asian versus Western dichotomy. To Mouffe, a *demos* is a political rather than ethnic community that creates antagonism between the 'Us' and 'Them' collective identities (2002: 12). In this case the 'Us' could be seen as the Asian model of democracy in contrast to the Western model, which prioritises freedom of speech and the media.

These theories set a framework around which the analysis of this research is based. These theories serve to inform the basis of this research (the need for a public sphere to facilitate democratic debate and participation) as well as to provide depth to the research findings (how neoliberalism and western approaches can impact on a country's own identity and development, including the development of its media). These considerations should be carried forward, throughout the analysis and may be further elaborated in the concluding chapter.

NB: It is important also to briefly note that *media development* is distinctly different from *communication for development*, which Kalathil defines as: "communication for development typically sees the media as a means to achieve broad development goals, while media development sees strengthening the media as an end in itself" (2011: 4). This thesis clearly focuses on the former. Particular differentiation between the concepts will come into play in Chapter 5: Analysis when discussing the state's approach to the media in Cambodia.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

The approach to this thesis was purely qualitative. A large-scale literature review gave depth to the thesis, informing largely the contextualisation chapter and could have provided the material from which a discourse analysis or content analysis could have been conducted. A discourse or content analysis was initially intended to be conducted to complement qualitative interviews because such an analysis would have enabled a quantitative review of semiotic and lexical choices within selected text/s, and thereby a critical investigation and analysis of "power relations in society and to formulate normative perspectives from which a critique of such relations can be made with an eye on the possibilities for social change" (Phillips and Jorgensen, 2002: 2).

However, as the objective and approach to this research was further refined and as it became clear that there was a lack of material that specifically analyses the media environment in Cambodia after 2000, it seemed that qualitative, in-depth interviews would best meet research needs. Qualitative interviews, it was decided, would facilitate a detailed observation of attitudes and opinions about the development of the media in Cambodia over the last 20 years including discussion of trends, the perceived roles and responsibilities of media stakeholders, evaluations of media development efforts and coordination as well as a mapping of perceived challenges that lay ahead for the media to become fully free, independent, plural and sustainable.

In order to reduce "perspectivalism" (Cottle et al, 1998) and provide a balance of views, ensuring credibility of this thesis, interviews were sought with the broad range of media stakeholders. Although the number of interviews on the government side is low (only one), attempts were made to interview a number of members of parliament (government and opposition), without success. The MSI conceptual framework was also chosen to assist to employ a systematic and disciplined structure to the analysis, in an attempt to ensure this research is verifiable and valid (Cottle et al, 1998).

4.1 Conceptual Framework: The Media Sustainability Index

Non-profit organisation IREX first conceived of the Media Sustainability Index (MSI) in 2000, when it launched a ranking of the media in European and Eurasian countries. The Index, developed in cooperation with USAID and other media development professionals, has evolved since then into an "important benchmark study to assess how media systems change over time and across borders". The study expanded to assess countries in the Middle East and North Africa in 2005, launched in Africa in 2007 and in East Timor that same year. The study provided an in-depth analysis of the condition for independent media in 80 countries across the world. An official assessment has never before been conducted in Cambodia.

It is necessary first to define the terms of the MSI methodology. By "sustainability" IREX refers to the ability of media to play its vital role within a liberal democratic system as the "fourth estate". Questions the Index considers includes: how sustainable is a media sector in the context of providing the public with useful, timely and objective information?

How well does it serve as a facilitator of public discussion? To measure this the MSI assesses five objectives that shape a media system: freedom of speech, professional journalism, plurality of news, business management and supporting institutions. These objectives were judged by IREX to be the most important aspects of a sustainable and professional independent media system and serve as the criteria against which countries are rated. A score is attained for each objective by rating between seven and nine indicators, which determine how well a country meets that objective.

The scoring is conducted both by a panel of local experts (drawn from the country's media outlets, NGOs, professional associations, and academic institutions and so may be editors, reporters, media managers or owners, advertising and marketing specialists, lawyers, professors or teachers, or human rights observers and comprise the various types of media represented in a country) and IREX editorial staff. Panellists score each indicator and the average of individual indicator scores within each objective determines the objective score, and the average of the five objectives determines the overall country score. Some changes were made to the methodology in the MSI's tenth year to make some terminologies clearer and reflect changes in technology.

It should also be noted that UNESCO's Media Development Indicators (MDI), established in 2008, are a very similar set of categories and indicators. Also, as with the MSI, the MDI's were created on the understanding that a holistic approach to media development was required.

See Appendix III for the full MSI methodology and scoring system.

4.2 Qualitative Interviews

Several considerations, as recommended by Cottle et al (1998), were required prior to conducting interviews. These considerations included:
- Identifying interviewees
- Designing the questions
- Framing and ordering the questions.

4.2.1 Identifying interviewees
The aim was to interview a range of key stakeholders and media experts similar to the groups normally engaged through the IREX Media Sustainability Index methodology: During the course of conducting 26 interviews, I was able to meet with representatives of print, TV and radio media (state, private and NGO-run media) media associations, as well as academics, media educators, lawyers and human rights observers. The majority of informants (17) were Cambodian nationals.

As already mentioned, a long list of media stakeholders was developed as a literature review was conducted. The list of possible interviewees continued to grow through recommendations made by colleagues in the media sector and as interviews were conducted (though by that stage most of the key or priority media stakeholders in Cambodia had been identified). The list of possible interviewees was sorted into primary (development partner, media industry, government) and secondary categories (historical media commentators, legal experts, academics, educators) and within each category,

they were ranked. Once ranked, letters, emails were sent or phone calls made to those considered essential informants. When making requests for interviews, I explained the direction of the research and explanation why their involvement was considered important.

4.2.2 Designing & ordering the questions
The use of the MSI as a conceptual framework for this research provided a good structure on which to develop interview questions. Initially a question was developed per MSI indicator. Then, to reduce time required for interviews, questions of a similar nature were combined to that there might, for example, be one question that aimed to address two or three MSI indicators. Next was to identify which questions were relevant to which category of informants. For example, questions specific to the marketing and commercial revenues of media outlets were asked only to media industry informants and not to government or development partners since it would be unlikely they would be able to answer such questions.

Once questions had been differentiated per informant category, it was necessary to prioritise the order of questions due to the fact that interviews would need to be kept where possible to an hour or less, given the time constraints of informants. Then, once interviews had been scheduled, it was necessary to individualise the intended list of questions, with respect to the experience of the informant. For example, when interviewing Mathieu at LICADHO and Ramana and Sopheap at CCHR, it was important to adjust questions to acknowledge previous and ongoing efforts of the local NGOs in the area of freedom of expression (including reports that they have published on the issue which address the media specifically). And when interviewing journalist Hang Chakra, it was essential to acknowledge and enquire about his time spent in jail for disinformation and the impact that experience had on his career. Finally, each informant was asked to briefly detail their career and work and Cambodia (particularly as it relates to media development where their work was broader than this issue alone).

4.2.3 Framing the questions
The wording of questions was an important consideration to prevent insinuation of bias or opinion on my own behalf. Questions were kept short and simple where possible – partially because most of the informants were not native English speakers. Of the 27 informants, 16 were Cambodian and nine foreign. English was not the native language for 23 of the informants although almost all were very proficient in English, with only one interview requiring a translator (which was provided by the informant).

Most questions were open-ended, allowing informants to provide detail in their responses. In some cases a simple yes or no was enough (for example to the question: "Do you consider the majority of the media in Cambodia to be independent?" to which the overwhelming majority responded "no"). While open-ended questions require far more effort to analyse, they allow the informants to explain their opinions.

4.2.4 Ethical considerations
All informants were asked if they were comfortable to be identified in this thesis. Given the sensitivity of the topic and the intimidation that some journalists and activists have faced, it was anticipated that some informants would request to be interviewed on the

basis on anonymity. Interestingly though, some informants, such as Hang Chakra, were more than happy to be identified, perhaps because of their experience of intimidation and subsequent effort to shine a light on the situation for media professionals in the country. Others were happy to discuss issues – such as the legal framework governing the media in Cambodia, and the country's political transitioning over the course of its history – but preferred to remain anonymous for their own professional reasons. Three informants requested to be consulted before the thesis was finalised to endorse their direct quotations, given their interviews had been quite open and honest and critical. These requests for anonymity and further consultation were respected, without hesitation.

Finally, it should be noted that my own professional role in the media sector in Cambodia will have, to some degree, coloured this research: from assisting to secure interviews, to enabling some interviews to be perhaps more open and honest than if I did not already have professional connections with some informants. Where informants were unknown to me, I did not disclose my professional affiliation (unless it was asked of me before, during or after the interview). Of the 26 interviews conducted, 16 were known to me and were well aware of my UN affiliation and the other ten were contacted either unaware of my UN affiliation or may not have made the connection (although four of these ten would most likely have received press releases from me in the past).

4.2.5 Validity of research
Given the research topic of this thesis, it's necessary to consider the validity of the applied research methodology. While efforts were made to ensure a balanced array of media stakeholders, only one government official was interviewed.

Additionally, the government official interviewed did not allow for the interview to be conducted in the usual way (as it was with all other interviewees); instead I had barely an opportunity to interject with questions. However, this is not to say the interview was not useful – on the contrary, as I had explained in advance my area of research and range of interviewees, the government official did address some of the issues I had hoped to ask of him.

While not all informants were asked the same questions, this has allowed for a diversity of their relevant knowledge and experience to reflect topics this research intends to analyse, namely: discussing the successes, failures and ongoing challenges and the roles and responsibilities of the various media stakeholders in Cambodia so as to enhance the quality of journalism in the country.

Overall, I believe the aims of this research have been well met through the conduct of qualitative interviews and an analysis based on the MSI conceptual framework.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

5.1 Freedom of Speech

5.1.1 Legislative framework

There is broad agreement among informants that while the Constitution is sound, there is little political will or supporting legislation to guarantee the rights enshrined within it. "*The people are still afraid to exercise their rights under the Constitution because there are no protections for all these rights. If we look at the current situation now, it seems the government is not trying to abide by the Constitution… There is a lack of political will because they are so afraid of an Arab Spring in Cambodia*" – Anonymous 8.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the Cambodian Constitution guarantees freedom of speech, but informants agree this has little impact on the governance of the media in practice. Furthermore, the 1995 Press Law was criticised by some informants as containing inappropriate or vague terminology, which impacts the ability of journalists to report freely. This has lead to a situation where, informants agree, there is widespread and structural self-censorship among the Cambodian media. "*There is a need to review and discuss some articles and provisions in the Press Law to avoid ambiguity and misinterpretation*" – Jamie, UNESCO. "*There is no clear provision to protect journalists from criminal prosecution in the existing Press Law. Cambodia is a democratic country so the Press Law should be updated to meet international standards so media can exercise their freedoms*" – Anonymous 8.

While there is disagreement among informants about whether or not a Broadcast Law[15] should be introduced, it is clear that the Press Law accounts only for the print media and as a result, broadcast media is heavily controlled. Online media, having limited reach in Cambodia, is also unregulated, though there is talk of drafting a Cyber Law. "*I have heard the government is developing an internet law. We are very concerned about this. They are already banning access to some online media (such as KI Media). This is a kind of censorship*" – Sothanarith, VOA. CCHR too are keeping a close eye on the efforts to develop a law governing the internet but say due to low internet usage in Cambodia currently, there is no immediate concern about this[16].

In addition, a new criminal law (Penal Code) is regularly used to criminally prosecute media practitioners, despite protections that should prevent this within the Press Law. While informants agree that physical attacks against the media have decreased, they also agree that legal attacks are increasing[17].

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[15] UNESCO and KAS both argue strongly for developing a Broadcast Law and are working toward this end.

[16] "*The emergence of online media allows a kind of new digital democracy in Cambodia – we can express ourselves freely online...much more than through traditional media. The government do not yet control much online media. Internet penetration is still low, so in the view of the government there is little benefit to invest in online control now*" – Sopheap, CCHR.
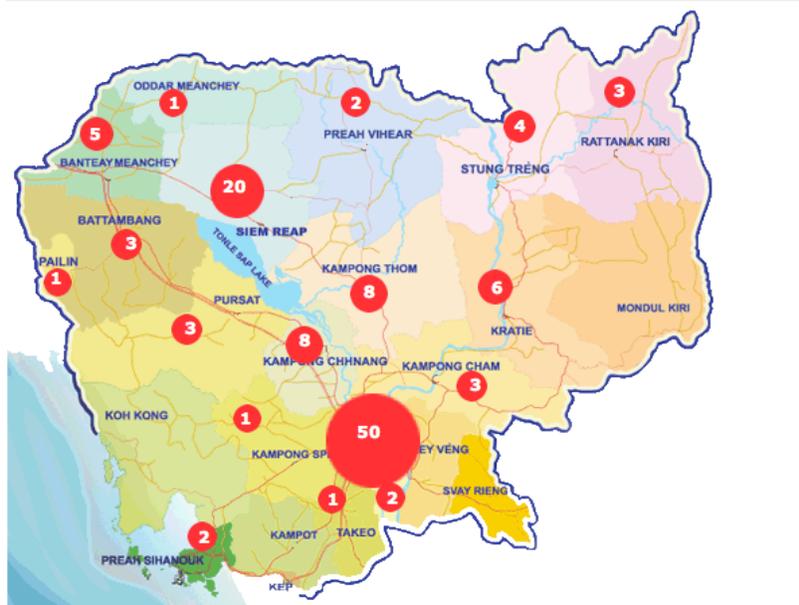
[17] "*The Criminal Code is a bad law and it was not created according to international standards*" – Anonymous 8.

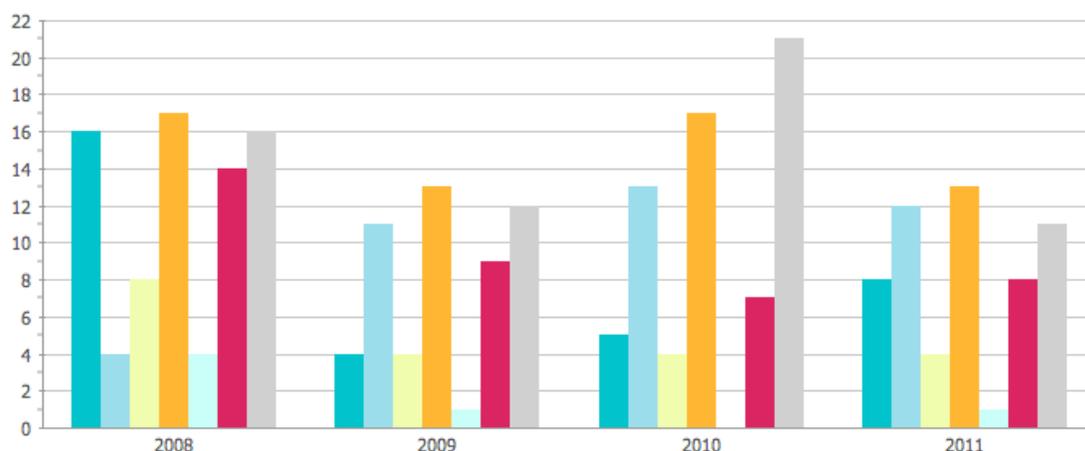**Figure 2: Journalists killed in Cambodia since 2003**

Source: CCHR 2012

Figure 3: Harassment of Cambodian Media 2008 – 2011

Source: CCHR 2012

Figure 4: Type of act of harassment against media 2008 – 2011

Type of act	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Alleged/Direct Censorship	16	4	5	8	33
Threat/ User of Civil Procedure	4	11	13	12	40
Confiscation/ Alleged Confiscation of Private Property	8	4	4	4	20
Threat/Use of Criminal Procedure	17	13	17	13	60
Harassment/ Alleged Harassment	4	1	0	1	6
Violence/Alleged Violence	14	9	7	8	38
Other	16	12	21	11	60
Total	79	54	67	53	257

Source: CCHR 2012

Ambiguities in the legal framework should support freedom of expression and the media, but instead informants agree the laws, "*frighten journalists and can scare activists from talking to the media*" (Teang, CCIM). While crimes against media professionals now have reduced, reports in the media, as well as publications by CCHR, LICADHO and others are still highly critical of the lack of judicial action taken to investigate crimes that have been committed in the past. Alleged crimes committed by the media however are actively prosecuted, according to informants. A few informants claimed that the legal framework governing the media was itself not the problem. Munthit, former journalist, said: "*In many respects the legislation itself reflects the spirit of pluralism. The problem is enforcement. Enforcement involves the law being interpreted a whim*". Interestingly, the foreign-owned media, who all agree operate more freely than Khmer media, are happy with existing legislation. Alan of the Phnom Penh Post said: "*There probably are gaps in the legislation, but there probably are in most countries. I think the media laws are sufficient for the development of the media at present in Cambodia. There will probably be a need for more laws over time as the country develops and as the media becomes more sophisticated*". Samithy, editor of the Rasmei Kampuchea and president of the

Cambodian Club of Journalists (CCJ) added that while laws governing the media are important, efforts to improve the media must continue regardless[18].

Additional to laws in place specifically to govern the media, other laws, such as the Peaceful Demonstrations Law of 2009, are criticised for attempting to curb freedom of expression rather than facilitating and enhancing democratic civil engagement: "*The government threaten protestors but use unacceptable reasons about needing to maintain public order but they don't mention that it's a way for people to express their rights. They built Freedom Parks and asked people to go there to shout. Before they could protest anywhere, but not anymore. Now they are required to seek permission to protest. People do like that they have peace and stability, but they still protest because there are issues that affect their daily lives (such as land concessions)*" – Socheata, USAID.

Some informants also call for an Access to Information or Freedom of Information law to be passed to improve government transparency and accountability and allow the media to better inform the public by playing a watchdog function. All local media professionals interviewed complained that it is difficult to get the information they need and that this leads to self-censorship. The only exception to this view came from the foreign-owned media who claim to have a very effective and good working relationship with the government[19]. Sinthay, API argued: "*How can the media exercise and write investigative articles when they have limited access to government officials and official documents? Issues are hard to verify and if they write the story, they can be sued for defamation. It's very complex and the legal system is very limited. An Access to Information law would help to improve reporting and analysis*" – Sinthay, API. Furthermore, Sinthay argued that access to information is essential to citizen participation in democratic life[20].

It's interesting to note that the legislation that should directly govern the media (Constitution and Press Law) were developed in the 90s, with either direct international community involvement (Constitution) or during the period when the international community was perhaps most relied upon - during the early transition (Press Law). It has been only in the last few years that more repressive legislation has been introduced (Penal Code, Peaceful Demonstrations Law). This could be reason to argue to expand upon Allen and Stremlau's theory by suggesting that the tendency of the international community (beyond journalists and human rights organisations) to ignore local realities and push their own 'international justice' agenda, is ultimately counter-productive.

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[18] "*We only have to change the attitude of some people and we can do better. We need to change the mindset*" – Samithy, Rasmei Kampuchea.

[19] "*There is no clear provision in the Press Law for access to information. An Access to Information law will solve this problem by holding government authorities who fail to provide information to journalists responsible before the law*" – Anonymous 8.

[20] "*Having the right to access information will enable citizens to make better decisions and to participate more fully in democratic life, including by informing their vote. When they get information, they can better participate in the country's development process. The government might think people have access to information through TV and radio, but that's not what we want. We want people to be able to ask for information, such as what is the budget of the commune council? That's why this law is important for individual citizens*" – Sinthay, API.

5.1.2 Ideology & Culture

Informants point to a cultural and political ideological dichotomy whereby the democratic concept that subjects public officials to higher standards and scrutiny is at odds with a cultural imperative in Cambodia that places those in power above public criticism. "*It is different in Cambodia than other countries. Public officials are considered by government as the most valuable people in the country. They are not held responsible for actions against the people, but the people are held accountable for cursing against the powerful*" – Anonymous 8. "*I think the government and other factions in the society agree that the western model is not fit for Khmer society. Many times the Prime Minister shows that he has his private life and that it should be respected. The concept of the public figure is very different in Cambodia. If you write something about the private life of a public figure, they will take you to court*" – Samithy, Rasmei Kampuchea. Former journalists, Munthit agreed: "*to the government, national security and stability take priority over freedom. This is pattern that exists beyond Cambodia in countries around it, like Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, Singapore and Malaysia. Cambodia's leadership are looking to those countries as examples to follow. I don't see that the Cambodian government is truly in favour of a western type of democracy, which is why it is behaving this way – putting a curb as much as possible on hostile criticism against the government. Part of the Asian culture, particularly in Cambodia, is that respect is understood in terms of cultural hierarchy and seniority and social and political status*". Munthit went on to argue that in Cambodia, people in public office do not see themselves are public figures in the sense that they are obligated to be accountable to the voting public[21].

One problem some argued is the lack of a separation of powers, corruption and lack of incentive to enter the journalistic profession. "*The executive is strong compared to the legislative and judiciary branches. In fully functioning democracies, there would be a fourth – media – but because the other three aren't working, that is why the media isn't working as it could be in a democratic society. It is not attractive to become a journalist – it can be dangerous, they are paid low salaries and sometimes the system is very corrupt*" – Anette, SIDA. Inserey, TAF agrees: "*When you talk about the media in terms of the western way, it is hard to for Cambodia and Cambodian journalists (to operate this way) because of the rule of law and the impunity that is still here*". This is played out, said Sothanarith, VOA, in the independence of the media: "*The watchdog role is critical for democracy in Cambodia. That's why the government doesn't want all media to be independent because the more democracy that exists, the harder it is to manage people*". While there is no fee to register as a media professional in Cambodia, opposition parties and opposition voices are routinely denied radio licenses, informants said. "*Granting of radio licenses is controlled by the government. All TV is controlled by the government, even if they are private. If you look at the procedure for granting radio licenses, it's not clear. No law mentioned it and so whether you get a license of keep a license depends on your relationship with the government. They must follow the government or they won't have a license. (Also) we know owners are required to renew their radio license, but it's not clear how frequently; it depends on your relationship with the government or how much you bribe the government*" – Teang, CCIM.

This illustrates the point made in the earlier chapter by Springer (2009) who argued that the trouble with the neoliberalist approach is that it encourages an elite stranglehold on

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[21] "*There is no view of being a public figure, paid by public taxes, so having a duty to be open to public criticism*" – Munthit Ker, UNDP.

power, despite this being contradictory to democratic tenants. This in turn seems to reflect no clear commitment to a liberal democratic media. Despite its constitutional commitment, it might seem that Cambodia's "ethico-political" principles are more aligned with the political ideologies of other Asian countries – most notably, China – than with a western democratic ideology.

5.2 Professionalism

While the great majority of informants agree that the professionalism of the media in Cambodia has improved significantly in the last 20 years, they also agree that there is much improvement required yet. The long-time journalists interviewed described a reasonably dire situation in the 80s and early 90s in Cambodia[22]. Before UNTAC and the Peace Accords, the anonymous informant said, media training was delivered by socialist friends of the country, such as Russia, Vietnam. "*UNTAC set forth was later became known at a pluralistic, free press which this country had virtually never known before that. UNTAC put down that (democratic) root*" – Munthit, former journalist. The problem though some said was that this new era of free expression unleashed, in some instances, an unprofessional and unethical media – illustrating the points made in the earlier chapter by Stroehlein (2000), Himelfarb and Chabalowski (2008) and Allen and Stremlau (2005) on the need in post-conflict contexts to harness the power of the media for good: "*When it all started everyone was enjoying limitless freedom of expression. You would often see an article that lashed out at the Prime Minister, calling him a pig. That's not the type of freedom we want to see. It went from one extreme to the next and it led to a period of persecution of journalists. The trend was cracking down on the press and under that climate everyone had to watch out for what they were going to write*" – Munthit, former journalist.

All agree that while all media are subject to some form of self-censorship, the print media is by and large 'freer' than broadcast media, and similarly, that foreign-owned media are offered far more freedom than local Khmer-language and state media. "*Without question broadcast media are under tight control. In a country where many people still can't read, TV and radio are the best means to inform or entertain those people. I think the government knows that well and that's why it's easier to get a licence to start a paper than to start a TV or radio station*" – Munthit, former journalist. There is agreement that even among print media, there is a vast difference between foreign-owned press and local Khmer press. An anonymous informant (11) said of his time spent as a journalist with the Phnom Penh Post that "*no one told me what I can and can't say. I was able to write freely*" and this view was reinforced by the Phnom Penh Post's Editor-in-Chief, Alan, who said: "*All Khmer papers are owned by people aligned with politicians. None of the local papers are independent. I've never been told what to do with our paper. We don't experience any censorship. Probably half the team would get up and walk out with me if we were. We are very proud of our independence. The government like us I've been told. I think this is because we play it straight, right down the middle.*" Alan says his journalists (foreign and Cambodian) always report with balance and have no problem receiving comments from government. He said be believes senior government officials and spokesmen are "media savvy" and that his

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[22] "*It was a really hard job. I had limited English. There was no journalistic language or knowledge then. We had no idea about writing investigative reports and it took us a long time to do one story*" - Anonymous 10.

paper has a good working relationship with the government's Quick Reaction Unit, but admits that lower level government officials have a lesser appreciation of media independence, and that they "*think they can manipulate the press and have stories pulled or put in*". The Khmer media strongly agree with the latter comment, stressing the difficulties they face in maintaining editorial independence, in the face of pressure from government and powerful businessmen and the fact that some lower-level government officials are afraid to speak to the media for fear of upper-level repercussions.

5.2.1 'Yellow journalism' & Ethics

In addition, much of the Khmer press is criticised for its sensationalist approach to appeal to a wider audience. Journalist, DMC graduate and blogger, Kounila calls this trend 'yellow journalism'. Kounila and other informants, criticise the publication of gruesome photos, images of alleged suspects and victims of crimes. Such unethical practices have been discussed in the past in the country, but ultimately the practice continues, with editors claiming it has a direct impact on their revenues. The solution several informants argue is a need not only to provide training to editors and journalists but that efforts are required to improve media literacy among the broader population. While Samithy, CCJ, argues that foreign-owned media are putting pressure on local Khmer-language press (who are far less financially sustainable and competitive), Vichea of DMC suggests that at least in respect of journalism ethics, foreign media set a strong example for local media[23].

Other criticisms regarding media quality include the regular practice of simply reproducing press releases, a lack in niche and investigative reporting and a prioritisation of commercial interests over reporting of social issues. Furthermore, a lack of formal education, too few training opportunities and low salaries "*discourage journalists from working harder*" Kounila argued. *"More opportunities for formal training and continued professional development for working journalists are needed to promote balanced, fair and high-quality reporting. Writing without bias and sourcing properly, for example, are core elements of journalist trainings that we support. Responsible journalism with adherence to facts and the truth plays an important role in protecting journalists*" – Jamie, UNESCO.

While many media outlets have adopted a Code of Ethics, there is no one agreed national code governing the ethical and professional conduct of journalists. This factor, combined with those mentioned above, particularly the low salaries afforded journalists, has led to a situation where the practice of 'envelope journalism' has become entrenched. One NGO actually admitted during their interview to paying fees informally to journalists. The informant argued that the small fee (around $5) was intended to cover a journalist's expenses in attending the NGO's event – such as transport costs. No other informant admitted to participating in this practice, though all agreed it is a widespread and entrenched problem, due to the fact that the profession is very poorly paid. Interviews showed that an estimated salary for journalists working at local Khmer newspapers was about $100 to $200 a month; while journalists at English papers and those who work as media officers at NGOs can earn anywhere from $500 to $800 a month. In addition, Samithy said his newspaper – and other local Khmer newspapers –

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[23] "(*Editors) say if they don't publish gruesome photos, that they cannot sell as many papers, but the Post doesn't publish these sorts of things and they are becoming the leading paper in Khmer (language)*" – Vichea, DMC

can afford to pay stringers $10 per article, including a photo, while foreign-funded outlets such as RFA pay $70-$80 for one 3-5 minutes report. This situation does not encourage investment in investigative report, Samithy said[24].

VOA's Sothanarith agrees with other informants that envelope journalism is harmful to the professionalism of the media, but admits "*most journalists cannot survive on their salaries*". This Samithy argued was one of the reasons why some local journalists accept envelope journalism, work for more than one media outlet, and why local Khmer media outlets suffer from a lack of journalists, who prefer to work for foreign-funded outlets or work as media advisors for NGOs, where they can earn better money. He argues this places greater pressure on local Khmer-language press, which cannot compete financially with foreign media.

Criticisms notwithstanding, there is an indication from respondents that the media industry in Cambodia strongly intends to become more professional. "*I have been talking with colleagues in the media and most of them would love to be more professional and as highly recognised as journalists in developed countries, but they do not know how to achieve that*" – Anonymous 10. Mathieu of LICADHO agreed: "*Journalists recognise that their platform is not as professional as they wish and they want it to improve*" but argues a threatening legal environment makes it hard for this to happen[25].

However, it is necessary to question at this point how effective the media can be in this context in facilitating a public sphere that encourages discussion and participation in civil life. Kalathil argued that independent media supports good governance, but when media can be neither fully independent nor professional, it is unlikely to be able to operate as a public sphere by bringing "issues of public policy and concern to public debate" (Deane, 2005, 178).

5.3 Plurality of News

5.3.1 Plurality of quantity & quality
While plurality exists in the sense that there are a great number of media outlets (particularly print media), this plurality does not extend to content and editorial independence. Jamie argues that "*minority groups such as the indigenous people have limited space in the local and national-level media. Indigenous people have limited access to important information - in their own languages - on issues such as education, health and environment. There is a need to create more platforms for such groups to engage and to effectively participate in public dialogue.*" While there is a small network of 'citizen journalists', they are often relatively untrained and not well supported, and Jamie argued that community media must be strengthened in Cambodia in order to

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[24] "*Local reporters do not want to do investigative reporting because it involves spending a week researching one story – so over one month they have just 4 articles and are paid only $40. So the easy way (to make money) is to report on crimes. Some journalists report 3 or 4 crime stories a day. These day to day challenges are why media organisations don't invest in investigative reporting*" – Samithy, Rasmei Kampuchea.
[25] "*Lawsuits that the government has thrown at the media makes it difficult for them to maintain enthusiasm for improving their professionalism. Hang Chakra for example faces difficulty now in trying to re-establish his paper and there are more people like him who have been intimidated and thrown in jail*" – Mathieu, LICADHO.

address this issue: "*dispersed voices are weak voices and have no power to bring about change*". This reinforces Graves (2007) theory that media has the potential to encourage democratic development when it gives people a voice; and as such, without this ability, democratic development may well be hindered in Cambodia.

5.3.2 State media & editorial independence

Other than the state media themselves, informants agree that state media in Cambodia have little or no editorial independence. When Inserey, TAF, began his career with the state news agency in the 80s he said his work was purely propaganda: "*All you needed to do was meet government officials and report about the good thing they do – there was no analytical or investigative (reporting)*". He admitted this this started to change early in the UNTAC era, but said "*even now it's not possible for journalists to report with analysis, criticism and investigation*". Most informants agree that most local media outlets or reporters themselves have political affiliations but that at least the state-run media are transparently so. Gunawadh assisted to launch the state TV station in 1983 and admits that before 93, the station was a propaganda machine[26]. However, he says a shift happened during the UNTAC transitional period, at which time he said TVK became neutral. "*Since 1991, after the Paris agreement and the beginning of a liberal system, alternative voices started. Everyone was very hungry for democracy. People were talking about wanting democracy, but they didn't know what it meant*". Ultimately Gunawadh said the media were in part to blame for the violent clashes that took place in 97. "*The fighting in Phnom Penh in 1997 was in part the fault of the media, because they did not help to reduce the tensions. They were pouring gasoline on the fire. Media plays an important role in the society. I think after the fighting, the media began to understand that we an play a role to support (peace and democracy)."*

The independence of the media, Gunawadh argued, depends on financial sustainability of media outlets. "*The state gives us the money. People would like to push TVK to become a public broadcasting system, but it's not time yet. Maybe in 10 to 15 years we will be ready, but now the government wants TVK in hand. But TVK has changed a lot. Our policy is to push our young staff to be responsible reporters, anchors and editors*." He also pointed to Equity Weekly, a weekly TV programme aired in partnership with UNDP, as an example of independent and informative news programming. Interestingly Denis of KAS suggested that a public broadcasting system might be a viable way to improve the quality of the media solution, also drawing a link between editorial independence and quality and financial sustainability.

However, Ravine of COMFREL reiterated the views of other informants arguing that "*state media is broadcast almost only for government – all coverage is positive about the Prime Minister and the ruling party; there is not too much coverage about the opposition party and only some programmes which are supported by some international donors that allow opposition parties to have a voice in the programme*". Ravine's organisation COMFREL advocates strongly for a larger (balanced) space for opposition party voices in the media. She admits that while some media in Cambodia is able to be critical of the government, opposition parties still find it difficult to register radio stations or buy airtime from private stations, as many of them are closely affiliated with government members.

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[26] "*TVK just followed the regime back then. All the media then were under the line of political parties. All media stories then were for the benefit of the political parties*" – Gunawadh, TVK.

Ravine says fair access to the media by all political parties is especially important now, given the 2012 and 2013 elections.

5.3.3 Media literacy

Munthit, former journalist said "*the trend we are seeing now is the increase in consolidation of media control by the government. There is no line between the government and the CPP. The media are not challenging authorities as any free press would do*". Samithy, CCJ, was the only informant to raise the issue of media ownership concentration specifically though others inferred this when discussing the indirect political affiliations of most media organisations. Samithy said some powerful businessmen ('okhna') own corporations that include media outlets as well as banks or telecommunications companies and other businesses. He said "*it is difficult to make these corporations independent. For example, you will never see a bad report about Cellcard or ANZ Royal bank on CTN. You will not see a bad report about big panel advertisements along the road on Bayon TV. Joint interests among this group is very strong and people have no chance to receive accurate information from them*". Problematically, some informants said, many of these powerful okhna's have close affiliations with the government. This might serve to reinforce Springer's (2009) theory that the neoliberalist agenda entrenches patron-client relations and the position of the elite by controlling markets and that this only further disempowers citizens, reducing the space for democratic participation and engagement.

Informants are divided regarding perceptions among the broader Cambodian population of media ownership and independence. Some argue that those who have received higher education and/or live in the capital are more likely to be aware of the biases that exist in the media and carefully select news sources, but since 80% of Cambodia's population live in rural areas and have limited access to newspapers or technology, some argue awareness of ownership and bias is very limited. However, all informants agreed that media literacy needs to be improved in Cambodia – and not just among rural populations. "*Media literacy is a very important issue to address in Cambodia, as this skill is not taught in high schools or universities currently. If the media assists to support democracy, citizens need to know how to use the media critically, to interpret and analyse information and to know that stories are created in certain ways to send messages. For Cambodia to advance as a strong democratic country, the citizens need to create a demand for quality media. The understanding of what quality media is and the important role that it plays as a promoter of good governance, civic participation and transparency, is key*" – Jamie, UNESCO. Munthit, former journalist, agreed and said a lack of media literacy allows some media to be unethical: "*If you have more citizenry who are well educated about the media, things would be different, but what we see now is the media sometimes taking advantage over the ignorance of the population*" by publishing graphic and sensationalist stories and not always revealing to their interviewees who they are and how images or comments will be used. Denis of KAS argued that media quality and professionalism hinges on education and improved media literacy: "*You need to have people educated and who can think critically. The key issue is balanced and investigative reporting which is still lacking.*" While KAS is the donor supporting the DMC course, Denis argues that media education should start in schools and, like the DMC course, begin to offer good quality education so as to "*establish a group of journalists who are able to communicate and write critical reports and fulfil the role the media should play*" because he argues the gap still exists between quality

(foreign) media and national media[27]. KAS is also working directly with the Cambodian government to improve their understanding of, and engagement with, the media[28], Denis said, which is interesting given another informant said the problem of media illiteracy in Cambodia extends in some cases to government officials and educated residents of the capital city. Vichea at DMC said: "*People believe what they hear and they don't know how to question the news*". An anonymous informant (10) gave an example of a story published in the Cambodia Daily bout which a government official asked 'why is the Daily such an enemy of the government?' The informant explained that when he examined the story with the government official they could see that the story had attribution and the accusation made in the story was made by a local human rights official and included a right of reply[29]. The informant, like Sinthay at API, argued that building information literacy will provide citizens with the information they need to make more informed decisions. Without improved media literacy they argue democracy is at a disadvantage. UNESCO have long advocated for the need to address media literacy while working to develop the media in new or restored democracies (2008), arguing that media literacy is critical to improving civic political participation and democratic development. Is it important then to consider the possible ramifications of media illiteracy in Cambodia. It could be argued that without public demand for professional, mature and independent media, aspects of Cambodia's former propagandist media would be 'allowed' to remain. It is also possible that media literacy will develop over time, simultaneously with other efforts to develop the media (both supportive environment and skills and resources), as Nelson and Susman-Pèna argued. However, if media literacy is not specifically addressed, it might also cause the stagnation of media development efforts. It is for this reason then that a public demand for quality information, analytical reporting and ability to discuss and debate in public forums issues of social importance, must be encouraged if Cambodia is to develop as a democracy. Public Service Broadcasting, which KAS has been advocating to establish in Cambodia, may be one way for Cambodia to begin to improve media literacy.

5.4 Business Management

According to Samithy, CCJ, a serious problem preventing the sustainability of the industry is little or no financial transparency and accountability among media organisations. He estimates that 90% of local media do not pay tax[30]. Teang, CCIM goes further to suggest that many media organisations, including his are struggling to be sustainable and find ways to turn a profit without succumbing to the interests of the government or commercial partners and maintain editorial independence. Teang hired a consultant in 2009 to assess his business: "*From that I realised there are many things we lack – a monitoring and evaluation system (though we have no capacity to do it),*

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[27] *"The key issue is balanced and investigative reporting which is still lacking"* – Denis, KAS

[28] "*There is still some fear of the media on the government side. They think the media are just trying to find out the problems of the government but the media can also be a good partner to help transfer message. The government are afraid to talk to the media sometimes*" – Denis, KAS.

[29] "*The point is that even government officials don't know how to understand the media properly… and I think the majority of the Cambodian people don't understand these issues either*" - Anonymous 10.

[30] "*There is nothing to pay (no salary tax, no income tax)… They are not real enterprises and when they are not real enterprises, they cannot develop themselves. Everything is by chance*" – Samithy, Rasmei Kampuchea.

broadcast management, a marketing strategy, capacity, business development, strategic plan development. I guess all media here still don't realise or know enough about this. These factors contribute to media content too – if you lack these capacities, you also suffer content and you cannot support your staff with reasonable salaries". Unfortunately Teang said donor funds did not seem to extend beyond training to help struggling media organisations to become more sustainable.

Munthit, former journalist, said he doubted any media organisations in Cambodia were sustainable, other than the foreign-run media. Furthermore he said financial independence did not compromise editorial independence. A few informants questioned whether the Cambodia Daily was financially independent, given the outlet started under the umbrella of an NGO and, like many of the Khmer-language newspapers, print only a few thousand copies[31]. Some argued that any local media outlets there were making a profit were doing so based almost entirely on advertising and entertainment programing and that revenues were not gained from a multitude of sources. "*Now everything is sustained through advertisement and there is little diversity in funding security for newspapers with no core subscriptions*" – Denis, KAS. Samithy said the inability of Khmer media to compete with foreign-owned and funded media was at least in part to blame for the over-commercialisation of local media. "*Foreign ownership has started to make a problem in the media industry. There is no other country is South East Asia that allows 100% ownership to foreigners. No one is talking about this. My colleagues complain: how can we survive?*"

Inserey, TAF, said the lack of financial independence and sustainable business management practices was having a direct impact on media professionalism: "*The media need to be self-sufficient and self-reliant. When you cannot make your news organisation profitable or sustainable it's hard for you to be independent. In Cambodia, even the journalists that are trying hard are not rewarded, so it deters journalists from being courageous*". Some informants, including Vichea at DMC argued that some Khmer media are profitable due to a heavy focus on advertisements: "*The top three Khmer papers are going ok because they sell advertisements – although half of their front page contains advertisements and they don't balance commercial and editorial interests*". Others argued that some who enter the media industry are interested only in making a profit and are not concerned with the quality and independence of content[32].

Interestingly, even the Phnom Penh Post do not regularly invest in market research as a means to formulate strategic plans or tailor their product to the needs and interests of their audience. By extension it is highly unlikely any of the local media outlets are investing this way.

This situation well reflects what Nelson and Susman-Pèna (2011) in the earlier chapter argued is common in developing countries: an inability to find an economically sustainable and independent business model and are therefore often financed and

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[31] "*How can a few thousand copies generate enough revenue to sustain (a business)? How much space to they have for advertisers" How many people do they employ? They salaries are not necessarily high but then there are operational costs*" – Munthit, UNDP.
[32] "*Some media just want to make a profit or want to become a secretary of state of under secretary. Often journalists go on to become (government) advisors, so they think journalism is a good (career move). This is not good. It's not about profit and power or the title of Excellency. Journalists should be responsible to the public*" – Gunawadh, TVK.

controlled by partisan or political interests. The business sustainability of media organisations, in addition to the analysis of the legal framework and lack of media literacy even among responsible authorities, shows that there does not yet exist in Cambodia a supportive environment sufficient to developing a sustainable and independent media, according to Mortensen (2007).

5.5 Supporting Institutions

5.5.1 Media & Trade Associations

No trade association yet exists to protect the interests of media owners and publishers or to provide member services, though the establishment of such an association is not prohibited by law. Samithy, CCJ said such an association is badly needed in Cambodia. He said efforts by the Phnom Penh Post publisher Bernard Krishner to establish a trade association failed due to a reluctance among publishers to join forces. Munthit, former journalist, said the resistance from publishers to unite is due to a desire to continue to carry favour with government and powerful businessmen.

Despite wide agreement that professional media associations that work to protect journalists and promote quality journalism "*are an essential part of any country where there is an active media*" (Alan, Phnom Penh Post), and while such media associations do exist in Cambodia that operate at least in theory according to that mandate, there is some argument about their effectiveness. Although the Club of Cambodian Journalists (CCJ) has by far the largest membership and most authority, between 20 and 30 media associations exist. The majority of these exist in name only: "*most of them create associations with the concept to make money through corrupt ways and to have power to be closer to the government*" – Teang, CCIM. Sothanarith, VOA agreed, adding: "*It's very hard to say if media associations have improved the situation. When a journalist was arrested recently, only two associations spoke out (CCJ and CAPJ) – the others didn't because they don't even know what their duties are*". Munthit, former journalist, said the fragmentation of associations "*plays to the advantage of the government. By being fragmented you are weak*". However, when Chakra was jailed, his case was supported by CCJ[33]. Jamie at UNESCO said journalists in the country all know each and associations are able to accomplish a lot through informal channels, and that the groups prefer to "*work with the government to promote the safety of journalists or press freedom*".

There is a divide between informants as to whether or not CCJ is effective. Anonymous 11, who is a member of a different association, said: "*I think CCJ plays an important role. They make announcements and appeal for the rights of journalists. CCJ is a powerful tool. Media associations can be important so long as they take the interests of all journalists – opposition and pro-government*". This is where some informants criticise CCJ, accusing them of being pro-government and call for an independent media association: "*There should be a mechanism that helps protect journalists, but existing associations have to balance their relations with the government. CCJ are better than others but are close with the government. They make compromises; this is not the principle*" – Teang, CCIM. Samithy, the president of CCJ, argued that because each

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[33] "*During my time in prison, CCJ came to visit and bought some food. But they could not help us very much. They also get pressure from the government. When they dare to help us, they would be blamed by the government*" – Chakra, editor.

association takes a different approach or is seen to be either pro- or anti-government, they are ineffective as a group in being able to lobby the government to act on issues such as updating the Press Law and he too argues for an independent press council. Acknowledging Nelson and Susman-Pèna's theory that media development efforts must be country-led and driven by local people, this inability in Cambodia for media associations to be politically-independent and to work together as one strong group, may be preventing them from realising their mandate to protect journalists and promote media freedom, as well as hindering the media industry from developing further.

Following a 2009 EU-funded workshop on media ethics, the Council of Journalists for the Code of Ethics (CJCE) was established with the aim of pushing to have one Code of Ethics adopted by all media in the country, and to monitor and report against ethical breaches. Several informants are directly involved in the group, who hope to lobby UNESCO for financial support.

5.5.2 Education & Training

The four-year DMC degree at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) is the only formal journalism program offered to students in Cambodia. Currently only 30 students are admitted/graduate from the program each year (chosen from an application pool of between 300 to 500 per year), though Vichea says they are hoping to double that number in the coming year, depending on funding, which at the moment comes entirely from Germany (KAS and GIZ). All informants agree there is a need for more universities to offer journalism degrees.

Most informants sang the praises of the program though were also quick to point out its limitations. UNESCO has long supported the school and its goals, Jamie said: "*DMC offers effective quality media programs. They do a good job of immersing the students to the production of print, radio and TV, and produce highly qualified students. It may be interesting to see the creation of specialised degrees in each of the mediums, and specific courses to address social issues surrounding the creation of a free, independent and pluralistic media*". Denis, KAS said he is sometimes criticised by donors about continuing support to DMC (rather than encouraging the government to financially-support the program) but that without their support the program would risk closing: "*I think it's key to keep supporting media education. If we move out now, what would happen? The government would see it as any other department and it means they might not find the right qualified trainers and be able to continue to provide the technical equipment needed. Now every year 30 more or less very qualified students are graduating and that's a success in itself*". While he admitted the quality of the program was not comparable with journalism education in Singapore and Philippines, he is confident the course is "*going in the right direction*".

The Cambodian Communication Institute (CCI) offers short training courses to working journalists and is also run at RUPP by Vichea. Along with other media outlets, Gunawadh at TVK, Alan at the Post and Teang at CCIM viewed training of reporters as a good investment. In addition to sending their staff to CCI or other training opportunities, these organisations offer their reporters in-house training and said that investment is recognised by other media outlets, which sometimes try to poach their trained staff.

5.5.3 Stakeholder engagement

Several local NGOs are very vocal in their defence of free speech and independent media in Cambodia – most notably, CCHR and LICADHO. COMFREL too have advocated strongly for responsible journalism and equitable access to the media by all political parties around elections. Other non-media organisations such as API, KAS, PACT and the TAF also play important roles to promote independent media, often through programmes aimed at promoting good governance.

Bilateral and multilateral development partners such as SIDA, Danida, OHCHR, UNESCO, UNDP and World Bank are to varying degrees previously and currently working in this area, which is in some cases dealt with under the banner of Governance and/or Human Rights.

The government too includes media development in its five-year development plan[34]. The National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) requires the Ministry of Information to expand ICT infrastructure and coverage (including of community radio); investigation of reported cases of corruption; utilisation of mass media to advocate on issues of social or behavioural change; enforcement of the Press law to uphold freedom of the press and expression and drafting of any additional legal instruments needed in this regard; and development of institutional and human resources. Despite this solid government policy framework for media development, some informants say there is a lack of political will to improving the space for free expression and the media. If this is indeed true, media development would be stifled according Nelson and Susman-Pèna (2011) who argued this factor is equally as important as skills and resources in building the capacity of the media. However, the majority of the informants asked said the duty of improving the media context depends not solely on the government, but on the range of media stakeholders, working under government leadership. "*The government alone cannot do everything. The UN alone cannot do it. NGOs alone cannot do it. We have to work together. But we all must be willing to work together. I believe the government play a major role in this. They have to give the green light and take the lead – they have the steering wheel*" – Vichea, DMC. Some informants, including Ravine at COMFREL, argued that donors and the international community have a duty to "*force the government to care about these issues*". Mathieu at LICADHO was highly critical of the donor relationship with the government, arguing that both should be more accountable to the responsibility transferred with funding to the country. Mathieu's view isn't far removed from Springer's (2009) theory that donors and the international community have done little to promote true democracy in Cambodia. Mathieu argues: "*It is overdue for donors to rethink their engagement in Cambodia. 'Behind the scenes' diplomacy is not pushing Cambodia in the right direction".* Nelson and Susman-Pèna argued that part of the reason why media development efforts are complicated is due to the fact that improvements to the enabling environment require comprehensive engagement not only with the media, but also with political leaders, civil society and other stakeholders. Possible different political, social and financial agendas and priorities are just some of the reasons why collaboration and coordination among these groups may be barriers to progress in Cambodia.

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[34] National Strategic Development Plan Update 2009-2013

5.6 Emerging themes

All informants agree that over the course of the last 20 years, since the country became constitutionally democratic, the media landscape has changed significantly. They point to a proliferation of print and broadcast media (and slowly also online media); establishment of institutions and legislation to govern the media; improving quality of reporting and professionalism of journalists; and they applaud the establishment and success of the Royal University of Phnom Penh's journalism degree at the Department of Media and Communication. "*When I was first in Cambodia in the 1980s there was absolutely nothing. The whole (media) business has sprung up since then. The media business now is in its middle stages of development – there is still some ways to go vis-à-vis freedom of the press and civil participation in the media. I think there's been good progress in terms of the quantity but the question remains about the quality of news*" – Douglas, UN Resident Coordinator.

However, they also agree that efforts are still required to make much-needed further improvements to the sector. While print media is seen to have much greater autonomy, broadcast media is considered still heavily government-controlled. Informants suggests improvements to the sector should include: more and improved journalistic education and training; more independent and analytical reporting; improved media literacy across the country; fewer, more effective and less politically-affiliated media associations; less self-censorship practiced by journalists; improved legislation and judicial practice concerning the media; further improved journalistic ethic and professionalism; and improved licensing for broadcast media.

There is broad disagreement among informants about whether or not the media in Cambodia is effective and able to fulfil its democratic watchdog role. Some have polarised and opposing views, others argue the situation is nuanced that the foreign media (English language Phnom Penh Post and Cambodia Daily, along with foreign-owned radio stations such as VOA, RFI, RFA) and some local NGO-run media outlets such as WMC and VOD, raise sensitive social issues of importance to the broader society and provide a much-needed independent voice to the media landscape. Some argue that even though some media is clearly pro-government, and some are clearly oppositional, these independent media outlets allow for a diversity of views to reach the public. Others argue that biased media should not exist at all and the fact that it does is a blight on Cambodia's democratic development. Informants agreed there is still far too little community media and not enough media tailored for and able to reach minority groups. The bottom line was that there is much work required in Cambodia before an independent, sustainable media and functioning public sphere, that supports and encourages good governance (as prescribed by Habermas, Kalathil, Deane and others in the earlier cheaper), can be in place.

Most informants agreed that in comparison to other countries in the region, Cambodia's media is quite good though some argued that such comparisons were neither advisable (given the poor view of freedom of speech in other countries in the region[35]) nor fair (given that Cambodia had to 'start from scratch' after the Khmer Rouge to develop its

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[35] "*We should bear in mind that Cambodia is in a region with China, Laos and Burma, so of course compared to them, Cambodia is not doing so bad. But we cannot only compare with these countries with very restricted media.*" – Anette, SIDA.

media[36]). Furthermore, opinions varied as to how the progresses made and challenges ahead might influence freedom of expression, the media and democracy in Cambodia in the future. Some informants said it was important to look at the ideological traditions in Cambodia and to understand that democracy is still young and takes a long time to take root in a country. "*Cambodia has been through almost every form of government: feudal kingdom, French protectorate, modern constitutional monarchy, republic, socialism (and extreme socialism under the Khmer Rouge), UN mandate and now liberal parliamentary democracy. It is not surprising that there is level of cynicism on the part of the Cambodians towards methods of government*" – James, OHCHR. Others, such as Sinthay, API, said Cambodia's ideological traditions do not support power sharing and that although UNTAC was successful in holding the first democratic election and writing Cambodia's Constitution, "*the problem was trying to integrate western and communist concepts. The ideologies are different and there was no staged approach to the transition.*[37]" One anonymous informant (10) warned against allowing an Asian ideology to prosper, saying democratic values are human values and should not be compromised: "*One risk of taking an Asian approach to democracy is that some will use that as a pretext not to be open enough. Not to be accountable enough to the people. I think this is a serious problem*"[38].

Sinthay, API and James, OHCHR, are both concerned about the future of democracy and freedom of expression in Cambodia. James said: "*In some ways the country is not going in the right direction. The democratic process faces serous challenges and limits on freedom of expression are clearly a problem.*" Sinthay said he worries the country will become more socialist before it is able to become truly democratic and a long-time journalist and trainer said that while the path to democracy has fluctuated, he is concerned about the future of democracy in Cambodia: "*We can see a trend that the ruling party is suppressing opposition and civil society voices*" - Anonymous 10. However, Sopheap at CCHR has a very different view: "*If you look at the human rights situation, including freedom of expression and press freedom, we can see the trend is improving.*" And while Douglas Broderick said he believed a country's sovereignty is being respected at the sacrifice of human rights, his view was that as Cambodia continues to strengthen economically, the rest will follow: "*So long as the economic model is good and there are jobs, I think things will move ahead in the short and medium term*". But it is exactly this perceived imperative on economic growth that concerns some informants, including Michael, Danida, who said: "*I don't think the government has a vision (for the political ideology of the country). To the extent that they have a vision for*

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[36] "*It is not sufficient to call Cambodia post-conflict because after the conflict Cambodia had to start from scratch. There were huge economic and cultural factors. So in this way Cambodia cannot be compared to other countries. I know because I was involved in training journalists, who in 1992-1993 would hardly even write Khmer. I did not have a university degree and I was training journalists – this situation called for those who know more to train those who know less*" - Anonymous 10.

[37] Sinthay, API, went on to say: "*We are still in the process of learning about democracy in Cambodia. Different people have different interpretations of what that means for us. Some people would say the media don't have much freedom and that they are supposed to operate as in the western model. Government might think the media have too many rights. It's hard to know which is right and it's hard to blame*."

[38] "*It's not about Asian or western values. It's about human values and democratic values. I think democratic values are human values and we should take into consideration what we think is in the interest of humans in general, not Asians of westerners. We are all human, belonging to the earth.*" – Anonymous 10.

Cambodia it is that economic development comes before democracy. They think that if you give too much freedom, everything will collapse". These views clearly support the theories by Allen and Stremlau (2005) and Springer (2009) regarding economic liberalisation prompting and reinforcing inequalities, and were interestingly expressed by government spokesman, Siphan: "*if we give more power to people, we will come across anarchy*". However, he also showed clear support for the media in providing information for the public interest. His interview therefore showed both an appreciation for democratic ideologies that promote information as power and a contradictory old communist view that people power leads to chaos. Anette, SIDA, wondered how Cambodia and other Asian countries with communist governments or traditions have come to that conclusion: "*The government often use the argument that 20 years is not a long time and that they ware worried about instability and just want peace. Sometimes I wonder how long they will use that argument and if there is anything that points to any correlation between democracy and instability? I heard this in China and Vietnam also, but have never managed to understand how by giving people more rights, that it would create instability. Surely it would mean only that the government would need to fight more for their votes.*"

Sopheap at CCHR suggested that the result of this contradictory ideological approach is called 'illiberal democracy', whereby people can voice their concerns and protest, but not without some intimidation [39]. Another anonymous informant (9) agreed that this dichotomy exists and suggested that perhaps "*an Asian version of democracy is needed, born out of the fact that many 'failed states' are countries where the democratic tradition has been expected to happen too quickly and has backfired*", which is exactly what Allen and Stremlau try to warn post-conflict societies from doing, should it hinder long-term peace (2005). The informant questioned the international community's intentions in Cambodia during the UNTAC period when efforts moved from peacekeeping to peace-building. She argued that at the time in Cambodia, the international community was "*trying to connect liberal democracy with peace because the west has an assumption that it will create something sustainable in the long-term. But the problem with these western assumptions is that they might not fit in countries not used to power sharing. And countries with communist histories such as Cambodia also have a culture of violence on top of this, so are vulnerable to becoming 'failed states' if pushed too hard and fast toward democracy... Some say you need peace before you can have democracy. Others say it's the other way around. But in a country that has been exposed to genocide, what would they prefer? If democracy is not moving quickly in Cambodia, it might be because the people are just happy to have peace*" (Anonymous 9). These comments draw strongly on the argument by Springer (2009) that the neoliberal foundation of democracy in Cambodia has become almost synonymous with peace and stability at the expense of progress toward democracy; while clearly also acknowledging, as Allen and Stremlau argued (2005) that the media has been key in the country's transition and will continue to play a role, regardless of the direction informants expect the country is moving in.

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[39] "*The ruling party allows some degree of freedom but restricts it in some way too*" – Sopheap, CCHR.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The media landscape in Cambodia has changed significantly since the first days of democracy in 1991. Where there was almost no media – let alone independent media. In the years following the Khmer Rouge, the industry has flourished. However, how this development has not been conducted in a strategic or coordinated way and efforts seem to be undercut by an inability to fully let go of old communist media concepts and fully embrace democratic media values. The development of the media in post-conflict and transitional societies such as Cambodia cannot be rushed (Allen and Stremlau, 2005) and these efforts must coincide with efforts to develop other institutions essential to a functioning democracy (UNESCO 2008, Nelson and Susman-Pèna, 2011). While some informants argued strongly that democratic development is not happening quickly enough in Cambodia, the markers of change are clear – for example, the economy continues to grow, poverty rates have halved and democratic elections are held regularly.

To come back to the research question, this thesis has aimed to examine: **Have media development activities in Cambodia, as the country transitions toward democracy, been effective in enabling the media to operate as a 'watchdog'? And if so, in what ways?** The answer is decidedly mixed. Some media are operating in this way by providing information communities need and want, with balance and through a critical lens. But others are not and are arguably unable to operate this way given a failing supportive environment, which should comprise a firm legal basis, financial independence, efforts to developed skills and resources, political will and social engagement (Nelson and Susman-Pèna, 2011 and Mortensen 2007). Through the analysis of interviews, this thesis has reviewed the media landscape based on five areas key to media development: freedom of expression, professionalism, plurality, business management and supporting institutions and in doing so, has identified successes, failures, ongoing challenges and the roles and responsibilities of media stakeholders in Cambodia to enhancing the quality of journalism in the country.

In answering the research question, this thesis has identified some key findings, which might also prove useful areas for future work and research:
- Efforts to improve the media landscape and ensure media can become independent and sustainable must consider all five key areas of development.
- None of these efforts will be successful if a supportive environment is not in place, including, and perhaps most importantly, greater political will.
- UNESCO, the Asia Foundation and KAS appear to be development partners with the longest-term commitment to media development in Cambodia. Other donors and development partners have shown intermittent and shorter-term support to the sector.
- Efforts to develop the media must be made in a more coordinated and strategic manner. In addition, efforts should be nationally-led and owned, though working with the support of international partners where relevant to do so.
- Self-censorship is a problem resulting from legal intimidation and punishment through the criminal system.

- Journalists in Cambodia generally want to be more professional. They must be better supported by publishers and editors who have been criticised for not encouraging or promoting ethical and quality reporting.
- Plurality in terms of quantity is not enough. A plurality of content, reflecting all social issues including those of the most marginalised, through diverse media including community media, is required.
- Many local media outlets are vulnerable to editorial bias – or are open to criticisms of bias – due to an imbalance of funding sources, with most revenues derived through advertising, which is often criticised as being provided by politically-affiliated sources.
- Media associations are forced to operate in a corrupt system that carries favour and fosters impunity and are therefore unable to independently meet their mandates.

It may well be the case that the western neoliberal agenda of development partners in the 90s in particular, but until today, is at least partially to blame for a media landscape that in part values and strives to meet western democratic 'watchdog' standards, but on the other hand, seeks to maintain some communist values such as control and censorship. This dichotomy can be seen not only in the media, but is reflected across the other areas of democratic development – such as efforts to ensure judicial independence and to encourage civic political participation. As Cambodia continues to define its ethico-political identity, development partners and the media play a crucial role. While Cambodia's sovereignty must be respected, the country's ethico-political identity must be determined by its people – not a group of political elites – and as such development partners and the media must be more effective in advocating for and providing a more effective and informed public sphere, whereby Cambodian citizens are exposed to issues of public policy, are able to participate in debate, and are able to make informed decisions. The media – independent, plural and sustainable media – remain a critical part of Cambodia's development and its power should be harnessed and supported by government and development partners alike.

Please see Appendix V for a list of Recommendations.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Training of journalists in the post-UNTAC period

Australian journalist Sue Aitkin conducted the first course for journalists in October 1991. Following her return to Australia she worked with Cambodia-based colleague Sue Downie to develop a four-week training programme aiming to deliver basic journalistic skills, which received an enthusiastic response. UNESCO quickly became the most prominent agency working in media development in Cambodia at that time, with the governments of Australia, Denmark and France the largest bilateral donors contributing at the time to their efforts. The recommendations of the UNESCO regional communications advisor in 1991 included a need for "courses for print and broadcast journalists, the development of national radio, and training for media professionals outside the news" (Clarke, 2000: 85). UNESCO's courses also covered major issues including human rights, land mines, the environment and Cambodia's cultural heritage (Clarke, 2000: 85).

Training offered by the Cambodian Communications Institute (CCI) reached the masses – in 1993 alone 37 courses were delivered, involving 590 attendees from the government news agency (Agence Khmere de Presse [AKP], previously called SPK), six broadcast stations, 22 local newspapers, five foreign news organisations, 12 government ministries and other bodies and 21 NGOs (Clarke, 2000:85). In 1998 CCI delivered 32 courses and 26 in 1999. In 2000 a year-long course was setup by a UNESCO consultant. Former journalist and CCI Director at the time, Sek Barisoth, said in 2000 that "almost every journalist in Phnom Penh" had attended one training course or another (Clarke, 2000:86).

Many other players had joined the media development efforts in Cambodia by the mid '90s, including the United States Information Service (USIS), American media organization Freedom Forum, the Friedrich Nauman Foundation, the Singapore National Union of Journalists, the Thomson Foundation of Britain, and the UNDP. Another success of CCI was its collaboration with these many development partners [40]. Meanwhile other, separate programmes were being established, including a journalism course at the Royal University of Phnom Penh in 1992 with support from the French government and UNESCO that began teaching practicing journalists in French; a desktop publishing course also at RUPP set up by American journalist Bernard Krishner [41]; and in 1993 a programme begun by the Indochina Media Memorial Foundation (IMMF) set up an office in Bangkok with the aim of training journalists in the region. The latter programme also worked in collaboration would several partners including TAF, AusAID, CIDA, DANIDA, Freedom Forum, the Japan Foundation, KAS of Germany, SIDA, UNEP and others. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) with AusAID help provided five two- to three-week courses for the state national TV station TVK between 1996 and 1998 on TV production and journalism and conducted a

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[40] According to Clarke (2000), CCI had at least fifteen local, foreign and international NGOs and government agency partners as well as private donations.
[41] Krishner went on to establish the non-profit English newspaper *The Cambodia Daily*

radio course for the Phnom Penh municipal station. Similarly, CIDA decided to concentrate on radio training, providing courses since1999 through RUPP, CCI and the Women's Media Centre. In 1995-1996 the German organisation Konrad-Adenaur[42] began funding an Australian trainer, Huw Watkin, to provide courses to journalists through AKP and the English newspaper, the *Phnom Penh Post* and to continue the work of Sue Downie to train government information officers. Watkin also produced a handbook that was provided to all working journalists. KAS suspended its support after the 1997 coup but returned in 2000. Other short-term courses have included a 1993/1994 business reporting course by the British news agency Reuter; environmental reporting and website development training by the Singaporean Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC) and a conference organised by AMIC and CCI on Media and Economic Development in 1998.

Additionally, journalists were sent overseas for further training. The Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism invited two Cambodian journalists to Manila in 1998 to learn about crisis reporting (with expenses paid by the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation); TAF was involved with selecting candidates for an annual scholarship to study journalism for a year at a university in Paris (though few of those who went appear to have gone into the profession); and the Freedom Forum provided fellowship for experienced journalists to spend a term studying in the US; Sweden and Japan have also provided some scholarships; and in 2000 two experienced journalists were sent to Columbia University to study an MA in Journalism – this was the first scholarship for a full degree.

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[42] Now called Konrad-Adenaur-Stiftung

Appendix II: Current Media Context

Source: Royal University of Phnom Penh, 'Cambodian Communication Review 2011'

Cambodian Media Snapshot 2011

This section provides a number of indicators for grasping an overall picture of the state of media in Cambodia by assembling the currently scattered information related to the Cambodian media. Existing data are both limited in quantity and challenging in currency and accuracy. What is offered here is a brief snapshot by way of presenting existing indicators from a number of sources. The sources are acknowledged here for every indicator, so that the readers can further access and evaluate their currency and accuracy.

We first present a brief set of contextual indicators for Cambodia, both socio-economic and demographic, to allow the readers to draw a contextual sketch of the country to which the media indicators are related to varying extents. Then, we provide a historical outlook on one of the most critical issues in Cambodian path toward democracy: the situation of press freedom in Cambodia. Finally, we present relevant indicators, in order, for Cambodian newspaper, magazine, radio, television, cinema and audio-visual production, the Internet, and telephone.
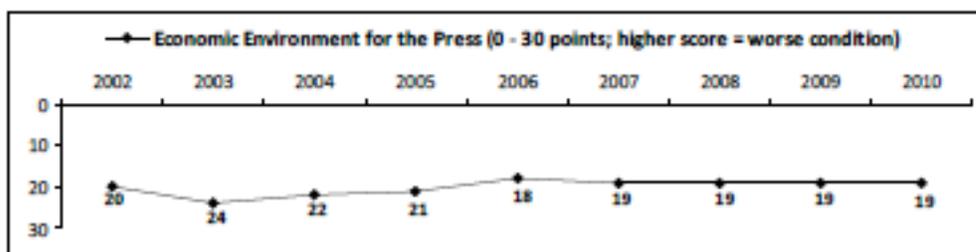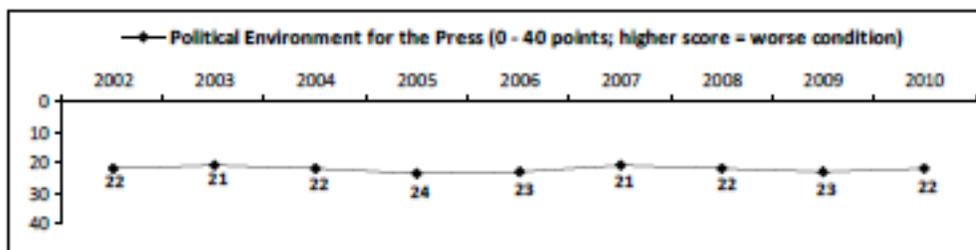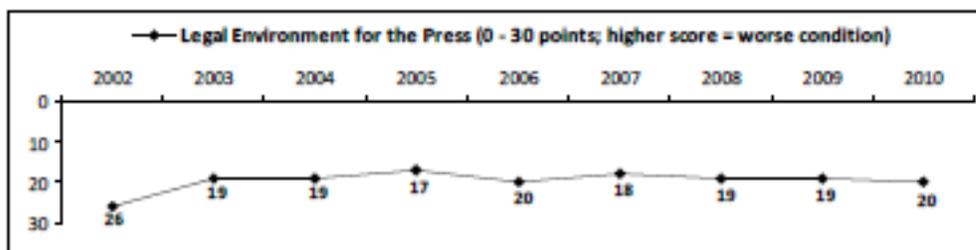
1. CONTEXTUAL COUNTRY INDICATORS

INDICATOR	FIGURE	SOURCE
Social and Economic		
Network Readiness Index 2010-11 ranking	111 of 138	World Economic Forum
Bartelsmann Transformation Index 2010 ranking	100 of 128	Bartelsmann Foundation
Bartelsmann Transformation-Democracy 2010 ranking	93 of 128	Bartelsmann Foundation
Bartelsmann Transformation-Market Economy 2010 ranking	90 of 128	Bartelsmann Foundation
Legatum Prosperity Index 2011 ranking	94 of 110 (low)	The Legatum Institute
Global Competitiveness Index 2010-2011	97 of 142	World Economic Forum
GDP per capita, 2010	US$ 830	National Institute of Statistics (2010)
Human Development Index (HDI) 2011 ranking	139 of 187	Human Development Report 2011
Higher educational institutions (countrywide), 2010	91	Ministry of Education, Youth & Sport (2011)
Higher educational institutions (Phnom Penh), 2009	39	Ministry of Education, Youth & Sport (2010)
People living on less than US$2/day (PPP), 2007	56.46%	World Bank (2011)
People living below national poverty line, 2007	30.14%	World Bank (2011)
Income share held by highest 20%, 2007	51.68%	World Bank (2011)
Income share held by lowest 20%, 2007	6.57%	World Bank (2011)
Demographic		
Total population, July 2001 estimate	14,701,717	CIA World Factbook (Jul 2011)
Urban population, 2008	2,614,027 (19.5%)	Population Census 2008
Phnom Penh population, 2009	1,519,000	CIA World Factbook (Jul 2011)
Population growth rate, 2011 estimate	1.70%	CIA World Factbook (Jul 2011)
Youth (15-19) population, 2008	31.53%	Population Census 2008
Urban youth (15-19) population, 2008	39.33%	Population Census 2008
Life expectancy at birth, 2011 estimate (M : F)	60.31 : 65.13	CIA World Factbook (Jul 2011)
Number of households (average size), 2008	2,841,897 (4.7)	Population Census 2008
Number of urban households, 2008	506,579	Population Census 2008
Adult literacy rate (countrywide), 2008	77.6%	Population Census 2008
Adult literacy rate (urban), 2008	90.4%	Population Census 2008
Adult English literacy rate, 2008	3.25%	Population Census 2008
Tertiary enrollment, 2010, % gross	10%	World Bank (2011)

2. PRESS FREEDOM

INDICATOR	FIGURE	SOURCE
Press Freedom Index 2010 ranking	128 of 178 (Difficult Situation)	Reporters Without Borders
Freedom of the Press 2010 ranking	134 of 196 (Not Free)	Freedom House
Local press-related associations[a]	29	Ministry of Information (2011)
Foreign news service representatives	12	Ministry of Information (2011)

[a] The number of functional associations has not been verified.

Historical Outlook on Press Situation (2002–2010):

Freedom of the Press (0-30: Free; 31-60: Partially Free; 61-100: Not Free)

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
68	64	63	62	61	58	60	61	61

Legal Environment for the Press (0 - 30 points; higher score = worse condition)

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
26	19	19	17	20	18	19	19	20

Political Environment for the Press (0 - 40 points; higher score = worse condition)

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
22	21	22	24	23	21	22	23	22

Economic Environment for the Press (0 - 30 points; higher score = worse condition)

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
20	24	22	21	18	19	19	19	19

Source: Freedom House

3. NEWSPAPER

INDICATOR	FIGURE	SOURCE
Registered Khmer-language newspapers[b] in Phnom Penh, 2011	396	Ministry of Information (2011)
Registered foreign-language newspapers in Phnom Penh, 2011	34	Ministry of Information (2011)

[b] The number of regularly printed and circulated newspapers is much smaller, and 'registered newspapers' are of various forms, including dailies, weeklies and monthlies, and of various qualities including tabloids and classifieds sheets. The number here includes commercial and non-commercial papers.

4. MAGAZINE

INDICATOR	FIGURE	SOURCE
Registered Khmer-language magazines[a] in Phnom Penh, 2011	200	Ministry of Information (2011)
Registered foreign-language magazines in Phnom Penh, 2011	30	Ministry of Information (2011)

5. RADIO

INDICATOR	FIGURE	SOURCE
Radio broadcasters countrywide, 2010	74 (36 in P.P.)	Ministry of Information (Nov 2010)
FM frequencies countrywide, 2010	73	Ministry of Information (Nov 2010)
AM frequencies countrywide, 2010	2	Ministry of Information (Nov 2010)
Foreign services in Khmer language, 2011	5	--
International broadcasters (in foreign languages) received in Cambodia, 2011	4	--
Commercial radio frequencies countrywide, 2010	52 (25 in P.P.)	Ministry of Information (Nov 2010)
Percentage of households owning at least a radio set, 2008	40.81%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of urban households owning at least a radio set, 2008	50.35%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of rural households owning at least a radio set, 2008	38.72%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of households owning two radio sets or more, 2008	1.48%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of urban households owning two radio sets or more, 2008	3.78%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of rural households owning two radio sets or more, 2008	0.97%	Population Census 2008

6. TELEVISION

INDICATOR	FIGURE	SOURCE
National broadcast channels, 2011[c]	10	--
Relay channels by foreign broadcasters, 2010	2	Ministry of Information (Nov, 2010)
State broadcaster, 2011	1	--
Relay stations by local broadcasters in provinces, 2010	43	Ministry of Information (Nov 2010)
Cable TV providers, 2011	2	--
Number of channels by cable TV providers, 2011	> 60	--

Direct-to-home satellite TV provider, 2011	1	--
Percentage of households owning at least a TV set, 2008	58.41%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of urban households owning at least a TV set, 2008	80.81%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of rural households owning at least a TV set, 2008	53.5%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of households owning two TV sets or more, 2008	3.18%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of urban households owning two TV sets or more, 2008	11.93%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of rural households owning two TV sets or more, 2008	1.26%	Population Census 2008

Two additional commercial broadcasters are said to start broadcasting in early 2012.

7. CINEMA & AUDIO-VISUAL PRODUCTION

INDICATOR	FIGURE	SOURCE
Production companies registered, 2010	120	Department of Film & Cultural Dissemination (2010)
Number of local films licensed for production, Jan-Nov 2011	19	Department of Film & Cultural Dissemination (2011)
Number of local films licensed for showing, Jan-Nov 2011	12	Department of Film & Cultural Dissemination (2011)
Number of karaoke video volumes licensed for production, Jan-Nov 2011	91	Department of Film & Cultural Dissemination (2011)
Number of karaoke video volumes licensed for showing, Jan-Nov 2011	122	Department of Film & Cultural Dissemination (2011)
Commercial cinemas in Phnom Penh, 2011	3	--
Cinema houses in provinces, 2010	9	[According to an in-charge official at the Dept. of Film & Cult. (2010)]

TV dramas produced by TV stations do not require licensing from the Department of Film and Cultural Dissemination, so the data are not available from the Department.

8. INTERNET

INDICATOR	FIGURE	SOURCE
Internet users in Cambodia, by June 2011	329,680	www.internetworldstats.com (accessed November 2011)
Internet users per 100 inhabitants, by June 2011	2.2	www.internetworldstats.com (accessed November 2011)
Internet users per 100 inhabitants, 2010	1.26	ITU (2011)
Internet subscriptions in Cambodia, 2009	18,000	ITU (2010)
Internet subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, 2009	0.12	ITU (2010)
Broadband subscriptions in Cambodia, 2010	35,666	ITU (2011)
Broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, 2010	0.25	ITU (2011)
Internet Service Providers (ISP) licensed, 2011	37 (16 in operation)	Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (2011)
Total domain names, by Nov 28, 2011	2,633	webhosting.info (accessed Dec 2011)
Ranking for domain names, Nov 28, 2011	117	webhosting.info (accessed Dec 2011)
Total .kh domain names, 2011	686	Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (2011)

Number of Internet cafés, 2009	229 (118 in P.P.)	Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (2010)
Number of Internet cafés, 2010 estimate	320 (120 in P.P.)	Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (2010)
Personal computer per 100 people, 2008	0.4	WB – ICT At-a-Glance (2010)
Percentage of households owning a personal computer, 2008	3.65%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of urban households owning a personal computer, 2008	15.76%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of rural households owning a personal computer, 2008	1.00%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of urban households owning two personal computers or more, 2008	2.60%	Population Census 2008

9. TELEPHONE

INDICATOR	FIGURE	SOURCE
Fixed telephone lines, 2010	358,850	ITU (2011)
	236,789	MPTC (2011)
Fixed telephone lines per 100 inhabitants, 2010	2.54	ITU (2011)
	1.71	MPTC (2011)
Mobile subscriptions, 2010	8,155,652	ITU (2011)
	6,986,057	MPTC (2011)
Mobile subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, 2010	57.65	ITU (2011)
	50.62	MPTC (2011)
Ratio of mobile subscriptions to fixed lines, 2009	22.7 : 1	ITU (2011)
Mobile operators, 2011	8	--
Mobile sets in use, by March 2010	7,115,246	Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (2010)
Desk phone sets in use, by March 2010	108,882	Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (2010)
Mobile phones per 100 persons, 2005	6.09	NIS – Statistical Year Book 2006
Mobile phones per 100 persons aged 15 and over, 2005	10.10	NIS – Statistical Year Book 2006
Percentage of households owning a telephone, 2008	1.13%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of urban households owning telephone, 2008	3.44%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of rural households owning a telephone, 2008	0.62%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of households owning at least a mobile phone, 2008	37.35%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of urban households owning at least a mobile phone, 2008	76.16%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of rural households owning at least a mobile phone, 2008	28.84%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of households owning two mobile phones or more, 2008	11.30%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of urban households owning two mobile phones or more, 2008	40.90%	Population Census 2008
Percentage of rural households owning two mobile phones or more, 2008	4.81%	Population Census 2008

Appendix III: MSI Methodology

Objective #1: Legal and social norms protect and promote free speech and access to public information.
Indicators
1. Legal and social protections of free speech exist and are enforced. 2. Licensing or registration of broadcast media protects a public interest and is fair, competitive, and apolitical. 3. Market entry and tax structure for media are fair and comparable to other industries. 4. Crimes against media professionals, citizen reporters, and media outlets are prosecuted vigorously, but occurrences of such crimes are rare. 5. The law protects the editorial independence of state or public media. 6. Libel is a civil law issue; public officials are held to higher standards, and offended parties must prove falsity and malice. 7. Public information is easily available; right of access to information is equally enforced for all media, journalists, and citizens. 8. Media outlets' access to and use of local and international news and news sources is not restricted by law. 9. Entry into the journalism profession is free and government imposes no licensing, restrictions, or special rights for journalists.

Objective #2: Journalism meets professional standards of quality.
Indicators
1. Reporting is fair, objective, and well sourced. 2. Journalists follow recognized and accepted ethical standards. 3. Journalists and editors do not practice self-censorship. 4. Journalists cover key events and issues. 5. Pay levels for journalists and other media professionals are sufficiently high to discourage corruption and retain qualified personnel within the media profession. 6. Entertainment programming does not eclipse news and information programming. 7. Technical facilities and equipment for gathering, producing, and distributing news are modern and efficient. 8. Quality niche reporting and programming exists (investigative, economics/business, local, political).

Objective #3: Multiple news sources provide citizens with reliable, objective news.
Indicators
1. Plurality of public and private news sources (e.g., print, broadcast, Internet, mobile) exists and offers multiple viewpoints. 2. Citizens' access to domestic or international media is not restricted by law, economics, or other means. 3. State of public media reflect the views of the political spectrum, are nonpartisan, and serve the public interest. 4. Independent news agencies gather and distribute news for media outlets. 5. Private media produce their own news. 6. Transparency of media ownership allows consumers to judge the objectivity of news; media ownership is not concentrated in a few conglomerates. 7. A broad spectrum of social interests are reflected and represented in the media, including minority-language information sources.

8. The media provide news coverage and information about local, national, and international issues.

Objective #4: Media are well-managed enterprises, allowing editorial independence.
Indicators
1.Media outlets operate as efficient and self-sustaining enterprises.
2. Media receive revenue from a multitude of sources.
3. Advertising agencies and related industries support an advertising market.
4.Advertising revenue as a percentage of total revenue is in line with accepted standards.
5. Government subsidies and advertising are distributed fairly, governed by law, and neither subverts editorial independence nor distorts the market.
6.Market research is used to formulate strategic plans, enhance advertising revenue, and tailor the product to the needs and interests of the audience.
7. Broadcast ratings, circulation figures, and Internet statistics are reliably and independently produced.

Objective #5: Supporting Institutions function in the professional interests of independent media
Indicators
1. Trade associations represent the interests of media owners and managers and provide member services.
2. Professional associations work to protect journalists' rights and promote quality journalism.
3. NGOs support free speech and independent media.
4. Quality journalism degree programs exist providing substantial practical experience.
5. Short-term training and in-service training institutions and programs allow journalists to upgrade skills or acquire new skills.
6. Sources of media equipment, newsprint, and printing facilities are apolitical, not monopolized, and not restricted.
7. Channels of media distribution (kiosks, transmitters, cable, Internet, mobile) are apolitical, not monopolized, and not restricted.
8. Information and communication technology infrastructure sufficiently meets the needs of media and citizens.

Scoring System
A. Indicator Scoring
Each indicator is scored using the following system:
0 = Country does not meet the indicator; government or social forces may actively oppose its implementation
1 = Country minimally meets aspects of the indicator; forces may not actively oppose its implementation, but business environment may not support it and government or profession do no fully and actively support change.
2 = Country has begun to meet many aspects of the indicator, but progress may be too recent to judge or still dependent on current government or political forces.
3 = Country meets most aspects of indicator; implementation of the indicator has occurred over several years and/or through changes in government, indicating likely sustainability.
4 = Country meets the aspects of the indicator; implementation has remained intact over multiple changes in government, economic fluctuations, changes in public opinion, and/or changing social conventions.

B. Objective and Overall Scoring

The averages of all the indicators are then averaged to obtain a single, overall score for each objective. Objective scores are averaged to provide an overall score for the country. IREX interprets the overall score as follows:

Unsustainable, Anti-Free Press (0-1): Country does not meet or only minimally meets objectives. Government and laws actively hinder free media development, professionalism is low, and media-industry activity is minimal.

Unsustainable Mixed System (1-2): Country minimally meets objectives, with segments of the legal system and government opposed to a free media system. Evident progress in free-press advocacy, increased professionalism, and new media businesses may be too recent to judge sustainability.

Near sustainability (2-3): Country has progressed in meeting multiple objectives, with legal norms, professionalism and the business environment supportive of independent media. Advances have survived changes in government and have been codified in law and practice. However, more time may be needed to ensure that change is enduring and that increased professionalism and the media business environment are sustainable.

Sustainable (3-4): Country has media that are considered generally professional, free, and sustainable, or to be approaching these objectives. Systems supporting independent media have survived multiple governments, economic fluctuations, and changes in public opinion or social conventions.

Appendix IV: List of Informants

In chronological order of interview:

Ms Jamie Lee, Communication Officer, UNESCO. Jamie is Communication Officer with the UN agency mandated to improve media systems in developing countries.

Ms Kounila Keo, Journalist, AFP and blogger. Kounila graduated from the Royal University of Phnom Penh, Department of Media and Communication with a degree in Journalism in 2010. She has worked as a journalist (part-time) for AFP for almost four years and is one Cambodia's first and well-known bloggers (www.blueladyblog.com).

Dr Pa Ngoun Teang, Director, Cambodian Centre for Independent Media. Teang was the head of the Cambodian Centre for Human Rights until the organization split and the Cambodian Centre for Independent Media in 2007. CCIM was established with the aim of enhancing democratic governance through the promotion of independent media and public participation in community administration. Teang was jailed in 2003 for defamation.

Mr Ker Munthit, former journalist. Munthit trained as a journalist in the Soviet Union from 1985 to 1991. He then worked as a journalist for 15 years (with the *Phnom Penh Post* and newswire AP) before taking a public information and media officer role in the UNDP communication unit in 2009.

Mr Pen Samitthy, Editor, Rasmei Kampuchea and President, Club of Cambodian Journalists.   Owner of the PEN Media Group, Samitthy has been in the media industry for two decades. He is the editor of the most-read Khmer newspaper *Rasmei Kampuchea*, operates two news websites (www.cen.org.kh and www.thecambodiaherald.com). Samitthy has been the President of media association Club of Cambodian Journalists since 2003.

Mr Hang Chakra, Editor, Khmer Machas Srok. Chakra has been a journalist for 20 years. He received a 2011 Hellman/Hammett grant from Human Rights Watch. The grants are awarded to journalists who have faced persecution. Chakra was sentenced to a year in jail in 2009 on charges of 'disinformation'. Chakra is the editor of the (widely considered) opposition newspaper *Khmer Machas Srok*.

Mr Neb Sinthay, Director, Advocacy and Policy Institute. API was established in 2003 to serve the long-term democratic and social development needs of Cambodia through the empowerment of people to interact with their government to protect their rights and provide for their needs. Sinthay, through API, is leading a campaign to promote access to public information and the passing of an Access to Information law.

Interviewee 8 (Anonymous). Is a Cambodian legal and human rights expert with a particular focus on media law. This person works for an international human rights organization in Cambodia.

Interviewee 9 (Anonymous). Is a foreign academic based in Cambodia who specializes peace-building and democracy. This person's own academic research has focused on Cambodia.

Interviewee 10 (Anonymous). Is a very well-known former journalist and media trainer with 20+ years of experience working with the media in Cambodia. This person how works for an NGO that focuses on citizen participation in democratic life, which includes aspects related to media capacity development.

Interviewee 11 (Anonymous). Is a former journalist and now works for a large international organization focused on good governance building in Cambodia. This person is the media liaison at his organization.

Mr Tieng Sopheak Vichea, Director, Department of Mass Communications, Royal University of Phnom Penh and Director, Cambodian Communication Institute. While Vichea was working as a research assistant for a local NGO and lecturing at the Royal University of Phnom Penh, he would often write articles for local newspapers. It was this combination of experience that found him offered the position to co-direct the Department of Media and Communication in 2001 when the school was established. After some years studying politics in the USA, Vichea returned to DMC (in 2006) and became the sole director of the school in 2007. The Cambodian Communication Institute is also based at the University and is the government-sponsored training school for working journalists.

Mr Michael Enqguist, Human Rights and Good Governance Advisor, DANIDA. DANIDA was one of the first bilateral supporters of media development efforts in post-Khmer Rouge Cambodia, supporting UNESCO to establish a media training facility. DANIDA ended their support to the media sector in 1998, but have continued to support human rights and good governance programmes. Michael's Master Thesis, published in June 2003, was called *Strengthening the People's Voice: Decentralisation Reforms in Cambodia.*

Mr Kong Sothanarith, Bureau Chief, Voice of America (Khmer). A journalist since 1995, Sothanarith has worked only for independent media including the French-language Cambodge Soir, Radio France International, Swiss news agency InfoSud. He has been with VOA for six years.

Mr Alan Parkhouse, Editor-in-Chief, The Phnom Penh Post. Alan has worked as a journalist in Cambodia for over 30 years in Australia, the UK, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. When he was first in Asia at the age of 20, he filed stories for Australia's Daily Telegraphy on war-torn Laos and Thailand. He was the first foreign Sports Editor of The Nation in Bangkok before moving to Cambodia in November 2010 as he Deputy Editor of the Phnom Penh Post. Alan became Editor-in-Chief at the Phnom Penh Post in April 2011.

Ms Sorn Ramana, Project Coordinator, The Cambodian Freedom of Expression Project and Ms Chak Sopheap, Program Director at the Cambodian Centre for Human Rights. The Cambodian Centre for Human Rights (CCHR) is a local NGO working to promote and protect democracy and respect for human rights – primarily civil and political rights. The organization is one of the most outspoken in Cambodia regarding freedom of expression and have published many reports that detail cases of

human rights abuses, including against journalists. Ramana's work focuses on freedom of expression, while Sopheap specializes in new media.

Mr Phay Siphan, Secretary of State and Spokesperson, Office of the Council of Ministers. Siphan grew up in Cambodia and survived the Pol Pot regime. He studied in the United States before returning to Cambodia. A former Senator, indirect consultant for UNDP and staffer at CCHR and a lecturer at DMC, Siphan was asked to head up the government's public information team in 2009. The Press and Quick Reaction Unit is intended to be to focal point for all media enquiries to the government.

Mr James Heenan, Deputy Representative, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Cambodia. OHCHR opened its office in Cambodia in 1993 – it is OHCHR's oldest field presence in the world. OHCHR is mandated to protect and promote human rights across the world. James is currently officer-in-charge of the Cambodia Country Office until the new Representative arrives later this year.

Ms Kong Ravine, Acting Monitoring Coordinator, Committee for Free and Fair Elections (COMFREL). COMFREL has its origins in the Task Force on Cambodia which was an independent, non-partisan local monitoring team formed in 1993 to monitor the before, during and after the first democratic election. In 1995 COMFREL was established as a permanent election-monitoring organisation. Their work now extends to advocacy around civil political awareness and improved legal frameworks; capacity building; civic/ voter education; monitoring; and media engagement. As Monitoring Coordinator, part of Ravine's role is to monitor access to the media by all political parties during elections.

Mr Mathieu Pellerin, Monitoring Consultant, Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defence of Human Rights (LICADHO). LICADHO was established in Cambodia in 1992 and is one of the most prominent human rights organisations in the country with its main office in Phnom Penh and 12 provincial offices. The organisation advocates for and monitors civil and political and economic and social rights. Mathieu has been living and working in Cambodia since 2003.

Mr Douglas Broderick, UN Resident Coordinator Cambodia. Douglas is the head of the UN system in Cambodia. His humanitarian and development career spans more than 27 years. He was first on Thai-Cambodian border in the 1980's working with Cambodian refugees for Catholic Relief Services. Douglas has worked all over the world including in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and South America. Douglas has been in Cambodia for the last four years.

Mr Khut Inserey, Senior Program Officer, Asia Foundation. Inserey was a journalist with the Kampuchea News Agency SPK from 1983 – 1992. After helping UNTAC to monitor the 1993 election he joined the US-based international NGO Asian Foundation and has spent the last 19 years working with the organisation on decentralisation, governance, media and economic development.

Mr Kem Gunawadh, Director-General, National Television Kampuchea (TVK). Gunawadh began his media career in 1979 as a clerk for Radio National Kampuchea. He was one of the pioneers of the establishment of the media in the post-Khmer Rouge

era, assisting to form TVK in 1983. Gunawadh is one of the longest-serving journalists in Cambodia.

Mr Denis Schrey, Country Representative, Konrad-Adenaur-Stiftung (KAS). KAS has been working in Cambodia since 1994, with a focus particularly on strengthening democracy, the rule of law and human rights. Media development is one of the seven strategic focuses of KAS in Cambodia. They have long-funded the DMC and support the Cambodian Club of Journalists.

Ms Anette Dahlström, Human Rights Advisor, Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). Sweden's development aid to Cambodia began in 1979. By the mid '90s, SIDA's focus moved to development cooperation and an office was established in the country. Sweden's current two-year country strategy was approved in March 2012 and includes a specific focus on Democratic Governance and Human Rights (and media freedom). Anette is SIDA's Human Rights Advisor in Cambodia.

Ms Vong Socheata, Democracy and Governance Specialist, USAID. USAID has provided over $800 million in support of Cambodia's development since 1992. The Democracy and Governance office at USAID includes a focus on Rule of Law and Human Rights. Socheata has worked for USAID for six years and is part of the Democracy and Governance team.

Appendix V: Recommendations

What follows is not to suggested to be exhaustive or form the basis of a 'solution' to meeting media development challenges in Cambodia. A holistic, coordinated and multi-stakeholder approach is required to consolidate improvements in this area and as such none of the suggestions below are expected to have any great impact on their own. Rather, they should be considered and implemented within a broader and more strategic approach to media development than is currently occurring in Cambodia.

With that caveat in place, what follows are a list of recommendations that could help improve the media context in Cambodia:

Recommendation	Responsibility
Improved coordination of media development efforts – establishment of a Technical Working Group or similar government and DP working group to improve coordination and funding to media efforts	Led by Government (MOI) with participation from all bilaterals, UN, NGOs, etc with media development interests
Implementation of an Access to Information Law, developed with thorough consultation with stakeholders	Government (Ministry of National Assembly, Senate Relations and Inspection and MOI)
Implementation of a Broadcast Law, developed with thorough consultation with stakeholders	Government (MOI)
Update the Press Law in consultation with stakeholders	Government (MOI) with stakeholders including API
A commitment by the judiciary to investigate any claims against members of the media under the relevant media laws – not as criminal complaints	Government and Judiciary
Increase infrastructural and human resource needs to allow an expansion of community media particularly in rural Cambodia, particularly in indigenous languages	This commitment is already made in part in the government's NSDP. Additional funds and support could be provided by development partners
Establishment of an independent Press Council responsible for promoting good standards of media practice, community access to information of public interest, and freedom of expression through the media. The Council would be the principal body with responsibility for responding to complaints about newspapers, magazines and associated digital outlets in Cambodia.	This process would benefit from a comparative analysis of existing Press Councils in other countries, such as Australia, to inform the development of such in Cambodia.
Implementation of one Code of Ethics for all Cambodian journalists	Press Council of Cambodia (once established)
Establishment of a Publishers/Trade Association	Publishers
Conduct an advocacy campaign to improve media awareness of legal restrictions to prevent self-censorship and improve quality of reporting	CJCE could lead the campaign, with support from development partners

Conduct a Media Literacy advocacy campaign targeting media consumers/ the general public (primary) and journalists (secondary) aimed at creating a demand for balanced, quality information and reporting and improved ethical and quality reporting	Led by government (MOI) with assistance from development partners and media associations. Possible partnership also with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.
CCI to develop and provide to all media owners/ publishers/ editors a Business Management and Marketing (including social media) course to promote sustainability and financial and editorial independence	CCI in collaboration with development partners (content) and publishers/ editors (delivery)
Improved regulation of media business practices. Media outlets required to be registered businesses, paying VAT and required to lodge financial statements to encourage transparency and business sustainability	Government and media owners
Enhance new media opportunities, such as through the use of mobile phones and access to the internet	Government (MOI, Ministry of Telecommunications, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports). Possible here to explore partnerships with private sector (eg telecommunications companies)
Media outlets and media NGOs need to begin looking at alternative sources for funding. Some such examples might include crowd-funding platforms.	Media outlets