

## UNDP Bhutan Media Development Strategy 2008-2010

### I. Objective

The UNDP media development strategy 2008-2010 aims to support longer-term good governance by strengthening frameworks and capacities in a new democracy to ensure an independent, pluralistic media in Bhutan. Enhancing communication and information among media, Government and civil society, it will strategically capitalize on Bhutan's unique juncture in its national development, which begins in 2008 with conducting of the first national elections and adopting of the first Constitution.

This will result in transparency and accountability for good governance from the start of the democratic process in Bhutan; deepen accurate and professional reporting to improve the quality of information available to the Bhutanese public; allow for ongoing assessments by the media and the public, including women and the poor, of Government activities; and develop citizen capacity for governance and development through strengthened community media mechanisms, with a focus on rural and vulnerable groups.

Primary beneficiaries of the project will be the Bhutanese media, through enhancement of their professional capacities enabling them to take on the role of the "fourth estate" in a vibrant democracy; and relevant Government officials (heads of agencies, parliamentarians, spokespersons, judiciary), through capacity development on open and responsive interaction with the media and better understanding of the right to official information, leading to greater transparency and accountability of the public sector. Civil society as a whole likewise will benefit, from increased community media mechanisms and improved public access to information, which is expected to have a positive impact on public participation in national affairs, particularly for women and vulnerable groups. Expected behavioural objectives include:

- Strengthened capacity of, and exchange between, media and Government to adapt an enabling regulatory and legal environment for a professional independent media in Bhutan
- Enhanced professional standards and development of print and broadcast media on good governance, to promote credible, reliable and impartial information and effectively contribute to the process of national development and democracy
- Enhanced Government capacity for open and responsible media relations and public information procedures and responsibilities
- Democratic and participatory dialogue through effective communications mechanisms between parliament and media
- Increased capacity of the independent media and empowerment of remote communities through sustainable community radio for good governance and democracy

The strategy is in accord with UNDAF Outcome 4: Institutional capacity and people's participation strengthened to ensure good governance, which addresses Millennium Development Goals 1, 3 and 8, and with CT Outcome 1: Transparency, efficiency, effectiveness, participation and accountability strengthened at all levels and CT Outcome 3: Capacity of key institutions to support parliamentary democracy strengthened. Overall, it supports MYFF Goal 2:

Fostering democratic governance. Expected outputs from the CPAP include [CT Output 1.3](#): Transparency, accountability and participation enhanced through strengthened role and capacity of the media and [CT Output 3.1](#): Enhanced capacity of three branches of Government, as well as media, in supporting effective coordination and advocacy for parliamentary democracy.

## **II. Situation Analysis**

Bhutan presents a unique *tabula rasa* on which to strengthen media development, a factor that will be crucial to the country's democratic future. Planning of media development in the country is complex yet ripe with opportunity, ensuring that the media can not only mirror society but also help shape its agenda. This is particularly applicable to deepening understanding of the right to information and the function of the news media as essential to good governance. Because not only democracy but also the Bhutanese media themselves are in a nascent stage, conventional capacity development must be combined with strategic policy support to build the institutional architecture that will promote democratic practices. The former will allow citizens to obtain more credible, reliable and impartial information, while the latter will include multi-stakeholder dialogue to foster a better understanding of, and formulate a stronger legal/regulatory framework for, freedom of the media and the right to official information.

### **2.1. Media Growth and Development**

The concept of the media as a player in the growth of a modern society began in the mid- 1980s, with the establishment of the first Bhutanese newspaper, the weekly *Kuensel*, and the radio services of the Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS). The latter still reaches by far the largest audience in the country – more than 3 in 4 Bhutanese. However, wide differences still exist between urban and rural households' access to the news media, with radio by far most common in rural areas, while TV and newspapers are more predominant in urban areas.

Initial emphasis was placed on infrastructure development and the training of media professionals. The next step was sustainability of the media as independent organizations. In 1992 His Majesty the Fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck privatized the national newspaper and broadcaster, at the same time declaring the policy of the Government "to facilitate and encourage the professional growth of the Bhutanese media, which must play an important role in all areas of development." These moves were undertaken as part of the overarching Bhutanese development philosophy of Gross National Happiness.

Television was introduced in Bhutan in 1999 and remains professionally in its infancy, with stronger long-term planning required. Three months after BBS added television, cable TV was introduced. The national broadcaster is trying to model itself as a public service broadcaster, eventually becoming financially sustainable; however, it still receives Government funding for recurrent expenditures. Many observers have said they perceive that the television service's quality and content still demands professional strengthening and stronger national news coverage.

In the late 1990s, as the ICT revolution reached the country, the electronic media also were introduced; however, while ICT usage is gaining, the Internet is yet to be used efficiently for official or business transactions. Thus, the traditional media remain far more important for Bhutan at this stage because of their greater reach. It must be noted that, with a weak resource

base, the Government has in the past sought donor funding for the Bhutanese media. UNDP and other United Nations Agencies have supported *Kuensel* and BBS; in the 1990s, Danida was one of the main supporters of the media.

The Bhutanese media already are helping to transform the outlook of Bhutanese society and the Government and may be cited as a factor in the country's embrace of globalization and economic liberalization. For example, the norms of free speech are loosening every year, even in the mainstream media, as in more open coverage of National Assembly debates. Bhutanese society also is beginning to accept and appreciate the value of open discussion, as in media forums such as *Kuensel* Online. Thus, audiences are demanding more of the media.

At the same time, Bhutan has long been shy of the media and has not traditionally had a proactive media policy, as a senior Government official conceded in the Media Impact Study 2003 for the Ministry of Information and Communication. In the same study, however, officials also noted that it often is easier to get the attention of their own bosses through the media than through direct contact.

Media coverage widened in 2004 with *Kuensel* beginning to publish twice-weekly; although many still perceive it as Government-controlled, it has been fully independent since 1999 and has an increasingly open editorial policy. Most importantly, since 2005 two private newspapers have been established, *Bhutan Times* (twice-weekly beginning November 2007) and *Bhutan Observer* (weekly). All three newspapers publish English and Dzongkha editions, and *Kuensel* also has a Nepali-language edition. Two Thimphu-based private FM radio stations, Kuzoo FM and Radio Valley, also have started up with a focus on the youth audience.

## **2.2. Government Oversight and Legal/Regulatory Environment for the Media**

Article 7 of the draft Constitution guarantees Bhutanese citizens the right to freedom of speech, opinion and expression; the right to information; and "freedom of the press, radio and television and other forms of dissemination of information, including electronic." These rights also are established as Government policy under the Ministry of Information and Communication (MOIC).

The Government's structure for oversight of the media is primarily focused on two agencies. MOIC is mandated to steer the development of the information and communication sector, including the traditional and new media and telecommunications. The Bhutan Information Communications and Media Authority (BICMA) is given regulatory authority over all media, including broadcast and electronic media, and initiates the drafting of policies, regulations and legislation for the Ministry. While BICMA is mandated to be autonomous body and independent, it is answerable to the Minister of Information and Communications; and all BICMA employees are civil servants.

In the MOIC Policy Guideline on Information Sharing 2006, it is stated that "the Royal Government recognizes information as the most valuable asset in every aspect of task (sic) each agency performs, and not to perceive information sharing as a threat to their autonomy and respond with substantial resistance.... Information should be made as widely and freely available as possible." The exception is information on national security or having "certain strategic values." The Policy Guideline does not, however, specifically address the question of sharing

information with the media, and a full and effective Freedom of Information Act has yet to be developed.

The Bhutan Information Communications and Media Act 2006 currently represents the main law with regard to rights and access to information; it repeals almost all sections of the Bhutan Telecommunications Act 1999. The Media Act 2006 outlines both the positive and negative obligations of the media. It covers many aspects of radio, ICT, newspapers, printing presses, books, films and data messages, but does not specifically refer to television, a significant gap in the broadcasting legal framework.

Given that national security provisions of many such Acts around the world are controversial, it may be useful to review and clarify Bhutan's relevant provisions. Among his broad powers under the Media Act 2006, the Minister of Information and Communications has the right, in the name of national security, to censor the media; to take over any media or ICT facility or service in the event of a "public emergency," or to intercept any communications by a media or ICT facility or service.

All media organizations have their own codes of conduct, in addition to a Code of Ethics for Journalists 2007 issued by BICMA. Even as the BICMA Code states that journalists must "report news without fear or favour, and vigorously resist undue influence from any outside forces, including advertisers, sources, story subjects, powerful individuals and special interest groups," some provisions again are subject to interpretation. These include that journalists "shall place the national interest and security above everything" and "shall refrain from reporting on anything that might ... undermine the sovereignty and integrity of the Kingdom, or breach or compromise the security of the country."

Journalists also must "guard against extended coverage of events or individuals that fail to significantly advance a story, place the event in context, or add to the public knowledge;" "refrain from using surreptitious newsgathering techniques, unless there is an overriding public interest" (this particularly covers tape recording conversations with an individual's consent); and "reveal the identity of a source ... where the law requires him to do so." The onus of demonstrating the overriding public interest is on the journalist.

In addition to the BICMA Code of Ethics, the Government also has issued separate Media Coverage of Elections Rules and Regulations in advance of the first national elections in 2008. These Rules state, "The media does not merely depict the political environment; it is the political environment itself as it shapes the perceptions that form the reality on which political action is based. Therefore, the regulation of media is essential to enhance active and information participation of citizens in elections."

Besides laying down fundamental principles of impartial and accurate coverage of election campaigns, however, the Election Commission of Bhutan permits a media agency to cover the election only upon signing of an "undertaking" with the Government. At the same time, a Media Arbitrator, chosen from public officials, also has been appointed to oversee electoral rules and provisions with regard to the media, particularly the broadcast media, and is responsible for allocation of campaign broadcasting time. Following the elections, the Media Arbitrator submits an assessment of the performance of the media to the Election Commission of Bhutan.

Bhutanese journalists have protested the signing of the “undertaking” to cover elections (“Quandary Over Media Regulations,” *Bhutan Observer*, 12 October 2007), saying that it could put “psychological pressure” on the media and categorizing it as an “unnecessary imposition.” Journalists also have complained in the same print article that having too many rules will intimidate young professionals and affect the growth of the media, and have described the breadth of the regulations as “treating the professionals unprofessionally.”

Lastly, the Penal Code of Bhutan 2004 includes among its media-related provisions laws regarding criminal defamation and libel. If defamation or libel “includes murder, armed robbery, terrorism or treason,” they are treated as fourth-degree felonies with compensation for one month to three years; otherwise, they are petty misdemeanours with similar compensation. The Penal Code also covers instances of false advertising and “computer offences,” including hacking and tampering with data, and computer pornography.

### **2.3 Media Investment and Growth**

In all Bhutanese media, the important driver that advertising represents has yet to take off. Thus, a key challenge for the media, especially the print media, is the economics of publishing in a country with a small population and limited paying power. BBS radio, for example, has very limited advertising, with many “ads” being social messages or advocacy campaigns. In another instance of economic unviability versus commercial interest, *Kuensel* reportedly sells only 150 copies of its Nepali-language edition each week, yet has been strongly encouraged to continue publishing this edition as part of its public service obligations. Even BBS-TV was, in its initial year, asked to find ways to be financially sustainable. Government and public sector corporations may need to subsidize infrastructure (see also Section 3.1), including power, telecommunications facilities and the electronic media and ICT services, which are particularly expensive.

Likewise, distribution obstacles also are formidable: It may take days or even weeks for copies of newspapers to reach remote parts of the country. In addition, all the raw material and technical expertise are imported, resulting in very high production costs. On average, nearly 95 percent of Bhutanese surveyed in 2003 spent only Nu. 100 to Nu. 500 (US\$2.50-\$12.50) on media every month, including newspapers, magazines, cable TV subscriptions and Internet service.

## **III. Media Development Challenges and Opportunities**

A small farming society in transition, Bhutan is largely an oral society, with an official literacy rate of 54 percent among its population of 690,000. Power has reached barely one-third of Bhutanese, and usage of the Internet as recently as 2003 still stood at fewer than 1 in 100 people. Moreover, the rugged terrain and scattered population make it difficult and expensive to reach remote communities, as noted in Section 2.3, particularly with limited funds and human resources.

Today the changing political scenario and the freedoms guaranteed by the new Constitution require that the media be able to function independently and responsibly, assuming the role of the “fourth estate” required in a healthy democratic system. Bhutanese media are still in their infancy, but infancy can be an advantage, allowing ample space for improvement both in terms of professional skills and subject matter knowledge. The media need to find the creativity, the

quality and the professionalism to fill their “fourth estate” role. They will need to work more effectively as the provider of public space and the vehicle in which public discourse takes place. The success of democracy in Bhutan depends upon informed debate as its lifeblood, and this, in essence, is the role that the Bhutanese media need to take on more proactively.

### **3.1 Strengthening Institutional Architecture**

Open access and the free flow of information are vital to the capacity of the media and the citizenry to contribute to good governance through the achievement of higher levels of transparency, accountability and respect for human rights. Bhutan underscores the ideal of a free, independent media in the Constitution and its current set of laws, but must be supported to better enable the media to report the real situation with regard to politics, the economy and social developments, among others.

It should be noted that Bhutan’s rank dropped in 2007 to 116<sup>th</sup> out of 169 countries in the World Press Freedom Index, developed by Reporters Without Borders. While the 2007 ranking was deprecated as “not knowing the ground realities” by the Government and Bhutanese journalists alike, it reflects a continuing international perception of the country as yet to achieve an environment fully conducive to an independent media. In 2006 Bhutan was ranked 98<sup>th</sup> in the same survey, rising a record 44 places from 2005. That rise was attributed to the appearance of the Kingdom’s first privately owned newspapers. As recently as 2002, Bhutan was rated the fifth-worst country in the world for press freedom by Reporters Without Borders.

In particular, a critical need exists for clear media policies and legislation to develop the media further in Bhutan; fortunately, because the rule of law is already institutionalized and respected in the country, Bhutan is ripe for assistance to media law review. As noted above, the Media Act 2006 and Penal Code 2004 currently are most applicable. However, relevant legislation, such as a Freedom of Information Act and “shield” laws to protect reporters and their sources, must be further developed to capitalize upon the Constitution’s guarantees of right to information and a free media.

A clear-cut broadcast policy, for public service and cable TV operators, is equally crucial and should encompass licensing, content and advertising, as well as a mandate for diversity and pluralism. Lastly, legislation also must bring clarity to the issues of national interests and sensitivities, and media organizations need clear guidelines and rationale for covering sensitive subjects like the Royal Family and national security.

Mechanisms also must be set up protect the rights of journalists to report objectively, while addressing complaints against the media. A journalists’ association/press council can serve as a neutral body to safeguard the interests of both media professionals and newsmakers, including the Government.

With regard to media investment and growth, policies should be supported to facilitate sources of funding given people’s reluctance or inability to pay for media services. This can be done through preferential business opportunities, for example, as well as through the creation of favourable conditions for Bhutanese publishing (e.g., subsidies for postage fees and other charges for newspapers or other printed material). Potential exists to raise revenue through

advertising, with further understanding required by both Government and media of the need to stimulate local advertising. At the same time, BBS, the country's sole national broadcaster thus far, has decided not to pursue an aggressive advertising policy so as not to be overtaken by commercialism. Such a policy may require subsidization, such as BBC receives in the United Kingdom or PBS in the United States (see also Section 2.3).

### **3.2 Strengthening Media Professionalism**

Broadly, the Bhutanese media need to be strengthened in terms of professional skills, outreach across the country, and specialized knowledge in the core areas of development. This will allow the media to help the public make informed choices and also assist in providing more transparency and accountability for policy and decision makers. Yet promoting human resource development with limited resources is one of the biggest challenges in Bhutan's media development.

Despite the important role of media in Bhutan, there exists a lack of specialization in journalism. Almost all journalists in Bhutan have little or no journalistic background. They join straight after their graduation and are dependent on Government fellowships for basic media trainings and specialization. Thus, Bhutanese journalists are new to the concept of parliamentary democracy and to the electoral process, and require training on how to report in an unbiased way on governance and justice, particularly on new democratic institutions such as the two-house parliament; corruption; human rights and gender equality issues, including violence against women; trade; HIV and AIDS; and the environment.

Overall, more analysis and in-depth reporting are needed to provide the information to enable Bhutanese to make more informed choices. The broadcast media in particular need to feature more debates, better-quality discussion programmes and quality opinion programmes. In short, journalists cannot be viewed as a "service" to cover events, but must be encouraged to learn and understand the issues they cover in order to provide better analysis and credible reporting that ultimately will build a more informed society.

Media practitioners themselves have expressed an eagerness for more capacity development to enable them to better understand and adhere to international standards, particularly with regard to the right to official information. It likewise is important that Bhutanese journalists and media professionals be encouraged to travel outside the country so that academic training is complemented by exposure to the global media environment. Media organizations can collaborate with journalism institutes both inside and outside the region, and the process of training trainers requires strengthening to become sustainable. Media also should be enabled to conduct their own independent reviews and evaluations to keep pace with social change.

Mixed reactions have been reported to the credibility of the media, with credibility found to be very low among the educated elite in the Media Impact Study 2003. The urban population, which has greater access to international media, reported in that study that the Bhutanese media's content was inadequate for their needs and attributed this at least in part to perceived Government control; a majority surveyed would like the media to be more proactive. A common view expressed by a focus group of *chimis* (members of the former National Assembly) is that

BBS and *Kuensel* – the only news media at that time – remained too controlled and did not portray the true state of affairs, with the rich and powerful receiving preferential treatment.

Among the rural population, meanwhile, access is limited and people feel unrepresented. Wide segments of rural dwellers indicated in the 2003 survey that they believe that media infrastructure and services must be improved, with greater frequency and coverage. Local Government officials, *gups* (village heads) and *chimis* have stated that they feel a critical need for news from the capital – and news in a timely fashion – in light of the political changes and changes in their own responsibilities. Thus, the media need to depict more rural problems, rural views and challenges.

It is generally believed by media professionals and audiences alike that radio, comparatively neglected after the introduction of television, still has not achieved its full potential both in audience numbers as well as content. Broadcasters' attention has shifted to TV news and programmes, and they concede that they unconsciously regard radio as being of secondary importance. While the urban audience is turning to other media, a great need remains to strengthen radio broadcasts to reach the rural population, which is eager for more programming. It also will be important to increase local news through regional news bureaus and stringers.

As noted above, financial restraints also impose challenges to Bhutanese media development, including limited advertising revenues, start-up capital and investors, business skills, and an understanding of audience preferences. Many media executives have little or no financial background, and as a result, difficulties arise in charging for advertising, reinvest their profits, assessing the assets, and adhering to a budget.

Meanwhile, gender policies must encourage women to join the media as professionals as a means of promoting some gender sensitivity in media productions and articles. More attempts are required to feature women in content. Producers, journalists, editors, camera crews and photographers should be trained to be sensitive to gender stereotyping. For women and youth in particular, media literacy may be considered to prepare them to make informed choices and to enable some to join the media industry.

### **3.3 Strengthening Government Capacities for Open, Responsive Interaction With the Media and Civil Society**

Even as the media themselves require strengthening for skills and standards, a parallel opportunity exists to strengthen Government skills to have open and responsive interactions with the media. The ultimate aim would be improved quality of information available to the Bhutanese public.

In a system without the tradition of a written free press, Government officials often expect the media to play more of a public relations role. (“We are a friendly watchdog. We have no bite,” one broadcast editor told the Media Impact Survey 2003, conceding that he avoids controversy to avoid “getting into trouble.”) A tendency also exists for civil servants to believe the media only should report what the sectors feel is important. It remains common in this small society for people to plead for certain news to be left out, mostly for personal reasons to “save face.”



Reporters often find it difficult to obtain important information from Government organizations. Officials are generally too intimidated, or not allowed, to talk to the press. There exist a number of sensitive areas which the media find difficult to cover, such as national security or “national interest,” which is cropping up as a control mechanism on the media. But at the same time, great confusion appears to exist between national interest, Government interest and personal interest of an official.

Bhutan’s new two-house parliament will play a particularly critical role in the advent of democracy in the country. Part of strengthening the role of parliament will be to make it more relevant, particularly in terms of meeting the demands of its legislative and oversight functions in serving the people of Bhutan. Transparency of parliamentary processes can be increased, as can citizens participation and confidence in democracy, through provision of more interactive, updated content on parliament and increasing engagement with the media. This not only can raise the visibility of parliament with media and citizens alike, but also can empower it as a custodian of principles of democracy to fulfil its constitutional mandate in a constructive manner as it tackles the major development issues facing the country.

However, many parliamentarians still lack knowledge of the right to information, as well as knowledge of Information Technology, while the media have limited facilities for covering parliament efficiently and effectively. A centralized parliamentary information unit, including an interactive website, and appropriate media facilities and networking are therefore essential as the Government strives to address the larger challenge of building new parliamentary structures.

### **3.4 Strengthening Community Media Mechanisms**

Accessible and understandable information and the means and ability to communicate are important for enabling people to participate in policy making processes and the decisions that affect their lives. Community broadcasting has enormous potential to introduce plural voices to the media sector in Bhutan, to deliver development messages, and to empower communities to take charge of their own information needs and develop appropriate formats for meeting them.

Rural Bhutanese communities in particular, including women and the poor, can be enabled to influence local and national governance policies and practices through establishment of community media – specifically, community radio owned, managed and programmed by the people it serves. Training community reporters and other media personnel can help in ensuring responses to communities’ expressed needs and priorities, as well as a balanced representation from all parts of Bhutan in feedback to the Government. With not only power but money being decentralized, a potential breeding ground for corruption exists that can be closely watched at the grassroots.

## **IV. Strategy**

An open, independent media and access to information are pivotal empowerment tools and underpin effective interventions in the area of democratic governance, which is central to sustained poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals. They are vital for strengthening decision making, accountability, transparency, participation and rule of law.

As one of the principal actors in Bhutan, UNDP can make a difference in the area of media development by using its unique relationship with Government, built on trust, legitimacy and neutrality, to broach sensitive subjects like right to information; enhancing the supply of, and facilitating demand for, information from Government and others; using its coordinating and facilitation role; and drawing on its expertise and experience in democratic governance. The organization also can act as a bridge between Government, media and civil society on right to information and communications issues. In addition, UNDP is well-placed to assist the capacity development and strengthening of both the “supply” and “demand” of information. The former can include developing capacities of communities to communicate views to policy makers via community media, while the latter includes not only strengthening the capacity of media practitioners, but also building awareness within the civil service on the importance of the right to information.

International conventions buttress UNDP’s media development activities. Most notably, Article 19 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

UNDP’s support in Bhutan will promote and protect both access to information and flows of information among constituents – Government, media and the people. While a significant range of activities could fall under the heading “media development,” UNDP will focus less on those activities that might indirectly contribute to media development, and more on those directly targeted to strengthen the media as an institution.

At the same time, media development activities will not be viewed in isolation from other areas of UNDP programmes in support of democratic governance in Bhutan, given that access to information is a crosscutting concern and of direct relevance to all UNDP governance activities. Results may be yielded in activities related to decentralization, anti-corruption and citizen participation in the policy process. The rule of law may be further institutionalized by support for an independent media that keeps a check on the judiciary, reports on the courts, and promotes a legal enabling environment suitable for press freedom. Most immediately, free and fair elections conducted through transparent processes, such as the first national elections to be held in 2008, require a media sector that gives candidates equal access and reports relevant issues in a timely, objective manner.

The UNDP strategy thus will follow a five-pronged approach to media development in Bhutan for the period 2008-2010. Resulting in mutually reinforcing activities with a significant impact over a medium-term period of time, the strategy will be based on (1) supporting an enabling legal and regulatory environment; (2) strengthening the capacities of independent and pluralist media; (3) strengthening Government capacities to deal openly and responsively with the media; (4) strengthening constituencies for media sector support; and (5) removing challenges to access and encouraging media pluralism, through development of community media mechanisms.

#### **4.1 Support to an Enabling Legal and Regulatory Environment**

For support to media development, UNDP possesses unique standing and competitive advantages in terms of access to resources that can further develop the Bhutanese legal

framework or enabling environment for independent journalism and media organizations. It is well-placed to facilitate the provision of expert advice on the right to official information, freedom of expression and media law. Capacity development exercises and media institution-building such as community radio networks will not have lasting impact where there is an ambiguous or incomplete legal and regulatory environment for independent news and public information. The provision of a functioning legal infrastructure encourages independent and pluralistic media to flourish and therefore is a precondition for good governance.

Media law review thus is a high-level goal in Bhutan, and UNDP will seize the opportunities for support clearly indicated in the above analysis, which have the potential to yield long-term structural and institutional changes. In so doing, it will help to operationalize Bhutan's constitutional commitments to the right to information and to an independent media. Because respect for an institutionalized rule of law exists in Bhutan, activities will focus on support to review of the legal and regulatory environment, and can be supported by UNDP/BDP as well as professional journalism/right to information organizations such as Article 19, ICFJ and IREX. Anticipated outcomes will include the enhanced capacities of Government bodies to implement legislation nurturing an independent media.

All this will relate to laws outlining details of media-Government inter-relationships, including an effective right to information law. A growing consensus exists worldwide that the right to information, including official information, is a crucial element of democratic, accountable, responsive governance. More than 50 countries already have freedom of information laws, with more considering them. Such laws foster democratic participation, control corruption, enhance accountability and good governance, and promote efficient information exchange between the Government and the public. In many cases, however, journalists are unaware of their rights regarding access to this information, thus inhibiting their functions of keeping the elected accountable to the electorate and of disseminating information that enables citizens to participate in a meaningful way.

Support to media laws and regulations will be undertaken to strengthen the role of the media as a conduit, a channel to connect the Government and the people, and to lessen the distance between the two. In addition, institutions as well as laws support media development, and can be instrumental in review of media law. UNDP/BDP will involve such institutions – courts, regulators such as BICMA, and the executive branch of Government – in further understanding the underlying principles of these initiatives. Coordination with UNESCO will be facilitated.

UNDP will support development of the capacity of Government, including Ministers, MOIC, the judiciary, senior civil servants and district officials on the constitutional right to official information, to promote citizens' awareness of, and ability to make better use of, this right. In parallel, capacity development of print and broadcast media professionals on the constitutional right to official information will be conducted. UNDP will facilitate the establishment of a broad-based Working Group on Media Law (parliamentarians, judiciary, Government representatives and senior civil servants, media and human rights law experts, media representatives, civil society and other stakeholders) to review and analyze existing freedom of expression and media-related legislation, media-related regulations and mandates of Government and autonomous bodies with regard to media. This will be intended to provide impetus to strengthen existing bodies, identify legal/regulatory gaps in order to meet international standards,

and draft effective new legislation, such as on right to information, a comprehensive broadcasting framework and reporter “shield” laws. Lastly, UNDP will support debates/roundtable discussions on legal frameworks and the impact on media, involving opinion makers and media.

Media law review is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition in order to create a media sector that will support democracy. Combined with self-regulation of journalists, this can be a very powerful approach to media development. UNDP will support self-regulation and accountability of the media through support to development of professional associations such as the proposed Journalists Association of Bhutan/Bhutan Press Council (see also Section 4.4).

#### **4.2 Strengthening Professional Media Capacities**

Vibrant democracy needs independent and pluralistic media. This requires independence from governmental, political or economic control, or from control of materials and infrastructure essential for the production and dissemination of media products and programmes. At the same time, there must be an end to monopolies of any kind and the existence of the greatest possible number of newspapers, periodical and broadcasting stations reflecting the widest possible range of opinions within the community.

UNDP has experience around the world in supporting journalists to understand and report on issues that affect the poor, including National Human Development Reports and Millennium Development Goal Reports. It can enhance better information flows and a greater range of communication channels in Bhutan to meet the information needs of all Bhutanese, particularly women and the poor, and to advance pro-poor perspectives in policy dialogue. Anticipated outcomes will include a measurable improvement in the quality of journalistic coverage, specifically in terms of independence and professionalism (enhanced capacities of media personnel), as well as a measurable increase in the coverage of vulnerable groups’ issues and concerns.

Although there can be any number of information sources, people basically rely on Bhutanese journalists to provide them with meaningful information and verified news. Yet Bhutanese journalists may not necessarily have the appropriate background or education to become professional journalists and are normally trained on the job. Although capacity development has inherent limits, it is critical to developing a sector that can reliably, accurately and freely report news and provide citizens with relevant information. Without trained journalists, the media will be unable to monitor Government power and promote poverty reduction. As noted above, journalism capacity development also is usefully linked with media law review, since a cadre of trained journalists who can report professionally may play an important role in shaping Government legislation.

UNDP will first focus on the upcoming national elections in 2008 and ensure that basic and advanced capacity development is provided on election reporting. This strategy is based on several points, regulated by the mandate and role of the United Nations and UNDP in rendering services for holding elections. It refers to essential experience and lessons learnt that are stated in guidelines of the United Nations Department for Political Affairs and UNDP, and are laid down in a number of resolutions of the General Assembly on strengthening the United Nations’ role in

encouraging and implementing the principle of conducting recurring and fair elections. In particular, it takes into consideration the principles and guidance outlined in the 2004 UNDP document Electoral Systems and Processes.

Based on these principles, support shall be aimed at contributing to the consolidation of good governance and democratic practices in Bhutan by providing effective strategic support to the 2008 election processes with the aim of promoting sustainable and effective institutional capacity for free and fair elections. Coordination with UNESCO will be facilitated to “deliver as one.” In addition, UNDP will facilitate the exchange of media experiences in other new democracies with journalists from outside Bhutan.

Good governance may be impeded by the blight of corruption, which is growing in Bhutan and undermines accountability for decisions as well as discourages greater participation in the decision-making process. Accurate and professional investigative reporting often is the only recourse that society has to combat corruption. Moreover, investigative reporting in itself sets off a virtuous cycle of political and media development. It addresses the problem of skills by forcing journalists to sharpen research and reporting techniques. It resolves credibility by requiring sobriety and depth in investigative reports. If audiences are constantly exposed to excellent reporting, they may develop a more discerning palate and demand more in-depth, high-impact reports that serve the public interest, thus building further support for the media as an institution.

To address the Bhutanese media’s continuing capacity gaps, UNDP will support capacity development of skills in basic reporting, news editing, news photography and picture editing among media professionals. It also will facilitate advanced capacity development in a number of specialized areas to ensure the media’s necessary investigative capacity to fulfil their functions in good governance. These will include political reporting and governance/constitutional issues; legal reporting; reporting local governance; reporting good urban governance; and reporting development issues of particular relevance to vulnerable groups and women. Specific capacity development also may be offered in radio and television journalism. Follow-up advanced capacity development on selected focus areas, for selected participants, may include mentoring, media internships in other countries, or mid-career fellowships. UNESCO as well as professional journalism organizations such as ICFJ may provide important support to this end.

To address the financial restraints that impose barriers to media development, UNDP will facilitate training in business and newsroom management to support financial operations, strengthening media abilities to manage their business operations in a cost-effective manner, attract advertisers and secure loans for investments. This will enhance financial viability for a robust media sector. In addition, it will facilitate the establishment of a media trust fund to support investment in decentralized independent and emerging media outlets, especially in districts.

In addition, UNDP will increase horizontal ties among media professionals, through facilitating the establishment of the Journalists Association of Bhutan/Press Council, as noted in Section 4.4. Through international training opportunities, as well as partnerships with international journalists and freedom of expression organizations such as ICFJ, Article 19 and IREX, it will increase professional contacts and collaboration between media companies and institutions inside and outside Bhutan.

### **4.3 Strengthening Government Capacities to Deal Openly and Responsively With Media**

Independent media are like a beacon that should be welcomed when there is nothing to hide and much to improve. Indeed, this is the concrete link between the functioning of the media and good governance – the media allow for ongoing checks and assessments by the population of the activities of government and assist in bringing public concerns and voices into the open by providing a platform for discussion. Strengthening the development of a mature information culture and a tradition of disclosure in Bhutan is critical to UNDP’s media development strategy.

UNDP can play an important role in raising awareness on rights to official information. It can do this by supporting and facilitating initiatives that sensitize Government officials on the importance of making official information available, and by working with media to promote civic education on rights and entitlements under official information legislation, thus better monitoring, for example, poverty reduction and progress in gender mainstreaming. Anticipated outcomes include measurable improvement in the range of mechanisms used to promote awareness on rights to official information.

UNDP will initially strengthen Government capacity for transparency and responsiveness in media relations through capacity development of Government heads of agencies, officials and spokespersons on open and responsive media relations and public information procedures and responsibilities with regard to national elections. Post-election, it will facilitate advanced capacity development of the same stakeholders on broader and longer-term governance issues and can provide counsel via BDP. In both instances, views of journalists will be solicited on priority information needed from Government.

UNDP also will facilitate enhancing the representation role and responsibilities of the new parliament through enabling greater transparency and accountability. In this regard, it will support capacity development for parliamentarians in interacting with and providing open and responsive information to media, as well as capacity development on computers and Internet in anticipation of establishment of a full parliamentary information unit, including an interactive website, to increase media and public understanding of, and interaction with parliamentarians. The website may include public comments to National Council and National Assembly members or e-forums for communicating with districts.

UNDP support will be provided to establishment of a media centre within the parliament to facilitate journalists’ sharing of information with their respective media outlets and to enable journalists to work more efficiently and effectively. This will be followed by support to establishment of a parliamentary press association to promote networking among specialized reporters, as well as support to civic education programmes focusing on topics related to parliamentary politics, democratization and civil society empowerment.

### **4.4 Strengthening Constituencies for Media Sector Support**

The role of the free media is to question and be sceptical, to dig beneath the surface, to take nothing at face value. Bhutan has yet to develop effective professional associations, media law and policy organizations, or media watchdogs, even as it increases the numbers of critical audience members who value the news function. Thus, “pre-positioning” of key actors who are willing to act as champions of the media sector is necessary.

UNDP activities in this regard will include support to press council development and other mechanisms for self-regulation, as noted in Section 4.1; professional networking at the national, regional and international levels, including with organizations such as Article 19, ICFJ and IREX; and civic education to help in understanding the contributions of the media to society, using information to lobby the Government, encouraging informed action and decisions, and engaging media outlets. Moreover, extending day-to-day news coverage to investigative stories also can prove important (see also Section 4.2).

#### **4.5 Removing Challenges to Access and Encouraging Media Pluralism**

The achievement of democratic governance goals requires that information be widely available. However, in the context of the MDGs, there must be special regard for the needs of those who are poor, vulnerable and frequently excluded from mainstream governance processes and institutions as a result of poor access to information and communication support. Some of these challenges can be removed or reduced as a natural byproduct of strengthening the legal enabling environment, strengthening constituencies for media sector support, and professional and Government training. Yet media pluralism is incomplete unless adequate structures to facilitate community voices at the grassroots level are assured, meeting expectations for good governance, transparency and efficiency of service deliveries.

UNDP has an important role to play in strengthening communication mechanisms that enable vulnerable groups to participate effectively in policy-making processes and public debates. There are many examples around the world where community radio has contributed to transparent administration, created a better understanding of people's needs and aspirations through voicing of their concerns, and built meaningful partnerships between development agencies and communities. Anticipated outcomes will include such strengthened mechanisms for vulnerable groups in Bhutan.

In particular, UNDP will address constraints to access of less powerful groups, especially in rural areas, by creating incentives for community radio and strengthening citizens' production skills. This will allow the airing of different viewpoints and encourage media pluralism, enabling residents of remote and disadvantaged rural areas to make informed decisions and participate fully in Bhutanese society. It also will make transparency meaningful by considering how poor and vulnerable groups in Bhutan access information and establishing relevant and appropriate mechanisms for active participation, and by empowering vulnerable groups to analyze and understand information and to act on that information through communicating views.

UNDP will facilitate the sharing of regional experiences on development of rural community radio, as well as the establishment of three community radio stations in three remote districts to support awareness and participation in localized rural development issues, oriented toward women and vulnerable groups. UNDP also will emphasize media literacy and training of youth and women on media basics in its training of community residents as announcers, producers, journalists and station managers. Organizations such as BBC World Service Trust and Radio India can be important resources in this regard. Likewise, UNDP will support establishment of a regular forum at community level where villagers and local media can interact and exchange information, as well as advanced coaching and capacity development to emphasize sustainability

for the new media outlets. This will be underpinned with support to the establishment of a community radio network with shared programming.

## **V. Plan of Action**

Based on the above analysis, the following Plan of Action can be put into place during 2008-2010 to strengthen media development in Bhutan. Activities do not, however, have to be limited to these suggestions here, but should fall within these general frameworks in accordance with the Situation Analysis and Challenges and Opportunities identified:

### **Output 1. Strengthened regulatory and legal environment to promote and independent, constructive, responsive and vibrant media in Bhutan**

#### 1.1 Support for Legal Development of the Institutional Architecture for a Free and Independent Media in Bhutan (2008-2009)

1.1.1. Capacity development of Government (Ministers, MOIC media department, judiciary, senior civil servants, district officials) on constitutional right to official information, to promote citizens' awareness of, and ability to make better use of, this right (2008)

1.1.2. Capacity development of print and broadcast media professionals on constitutional right to official information, to promote citizens' awareness of, and ability to make better use of, this right (2008)

1.1.3. Establishment of broad-based Working Group on Media Law (parliamentarians, judiciary, Government representatives and senior civil servants, media and human rights law experts, media representatives, civil society, other stakeholders) to review and analyze (1) existing freedom of expression and media-related legislation, (2) media-related regulations and (3) mandates of Government and autonomous bodies with regard to media. This will be intended to provide impetus to (1) strengthen existing bodies, (2) identify legal/regulatory gaps in order to meet international standards, and (3) draft effective new legislation such as on right to information, comprehensive broadcasting framework and reporter "shield" laws (2008-2009)

1.1.4. Support to series of debates/roundtable discussions on legal frameworks and impact on media, involving opinion makers, media (2009)

1.1.5. Advanced capacity development of Government and media on right to information through multi-stakeholder consultation on the current state of right to information in Bhutan and the way forward for further operationalizing the right to information (may include audio-visual documentation for advocacy purposes) (2009)

### **Output 2. Enhanced professional standards and development of print and broadcast media to promote credible, reliable information and effectively contribute to the process of national development, good governance and democracy**

#### 2.1 Strengthening Media Capacity to Provide Credible, Reliable and Impartial Coverage for Bhutan's First National Elections (2008)

2.1.1. Advanced training in election coverage for print and broadcast media (2008, following initial training during 2007 preparatory assistance). *This could include topics of traditional/advanced/alternative forms of opinion polling, new ways to organize talk shows related to election issues.*

#### 2.2. Developing Media Skills and Standards on Good Governance to Improve Quality of Information Available to the Bhutanese Public (2008-2010)



2.2.1. Facilitate advanced capacity development for experienced/specialized journalists from print and broadcast media on political reporting and governance/constitutional issues (post-election), to enable them to critically identify relevant issues affecting the public interest and to elicit needs, ideas and views the public regarding democracy, especially among women and the poor (2008)

2.2.2. Basic reporting and news editing capacity development for young print and broadcast media professionals, with emphasis on governance issues (2008)

2.2.3. Advanced capacity development for experienced print and broadcast media on investigative journalism, including the importance of freedom of information for investigative journalism, to enable them to conduct thorough investigations and write incisive reports that trigger institutional and policy reforms (2008)

2.2.4. Capacity development for experienced print and broadcast media on legal reporting, to enable greater transparency and accountability in application of the rule of law in Bhutan (2008)

2.2.5. Capacity development for print and broadcast media in identifying development issues of particular relevance to vulnerable groups and women (2009)

2.2.6. Capacity development for print and broadcast media on basic news photography and picture editing (2009)

2.2.7. Capacity development in specialized radio journalism (2009)

2.2.8. Capacity development in specialized television journalism (2009)

2.2.9. Capacity development for media executives in general management and financial/business strategy skills as well as increasing revenue from advertising sales and increased networking among media executives throughout the region (2009)

2.2.10. Capacity development for print and broadcast media on reporting on transparency and accountability in local governance, particularly on progress in Government effectiveness, control of corruption and regulatory quality (2010)

2.2.11. Capacity development for print and broadcast media on good urban governance, to increase public debate and discussion on the principles of urban governance (2010)

2.2.12. Follow-up advanced capacity development (on the job/mentoring/media internships outside Bhutan/mid-career fellowships) on selected focus areas (investigative/legal journalism), for selected participants (2009-2010)

### 2.3 Institutional Development of Bodies to Foster a Free and Independent Media (2008-2010)

2.3.1. Support to establishment of Journalists' Association of Bhutan/Bhutan Press Council, enabled to uphold freedom/rights of the media and highest standards of journalism, including development of an independent, representative group (media, civil society, Government) as a "media barometer" to provide regular assessments of freedom of expression issues and media performance (2008)

2.3.2. Support to establishment of media trust fund for investment in decentralized independent and emerging media outlets, especially in districts (2009-2010)

### 2.4. Support to Learning from Comparative Experiences on Democracy (2008)

2.4.1. Workshop on media experiences of new democracies, including sharing of information by, and dialogue with, journalists from outside Bhutan (particularly post-communist Europe) on the democratic transition (2008)

**Output 3. Enhanced Government capacity for open and responsive media relations and public information procedures and responsibilities**

**3.1. Strengthening Government Capacity for Transparency and Responsiveness in Media Relations (2008)**

3.1.1. Training of Government heads of agencies/ officials/spokespersons on open and responsive media relations and public information procedures and responsibilities with regard to national elections, including soliciting views of journalists on information needed (2008)

3.1.2 Advanced training of Government heads of agencies/officials/spokespersons on open and responsive public information procedures and responsibilities post-election, including soliciting views of journalists on information needed (2008)

**Output 4. Promoting Democratic and Participatory Dialogue Among Parliament, Media and Citizens by Improving Access to Parliamentary Information**

**4.1 Enhancing the Representation Role and Responsibilities of the New Parliament Through Enabling Greater Transparency and Accountability (2008-2009)**

4.1.1. Training for parliamentarians in interacting with and providing open and responsive information to media (2008)

4.1.2 Training on computers and Internet for all MPs and parliamentary staff (2008)

4.1.3. Establishment of a parliamentary information unit, including development of an interactive website and a parliamentary communications strategy, to increase public understanding of, and interaction with, parliamentarians (public comments to National Council, National Assembly members or e-forums for communicating with districts?) (2008)

4.1.4. Establishment of media centre within the parliament to facilitate journalists' sharing of information with their respective media outlets and enable journalists to work more efficiently and effectively (2008)

4.1.5. Establishment of parliamentary press association to promote networking among specialized reporters (2009)

4.1.6. Support to civic education programmes focusing on topics related to parliamentary politics, democratization and civil society empowerment (2009)

**Output 5. Development of citizen capacity for governance and development through strengthened community media mechanisms, with a focus on rural and vulnerable groups**

**5.1 Increasing the Capacity of the Independent Media and Empowering Remote Communities Through Sustainable Community Radio for Good Governance and Democracy (2009-2010)**

5.1.1. Workshop with policy makers and other stakeholders to share regional experiences on development of rural community radio (2009)

5.1.2. Facilitate establishment of 3 community radio stations in 3 remote districts to support awareness and participation in localized rural development issues, oriented toward women and vulnerable groups (2009)

5.1.3. Training of community residents, with a focus on youth and women, in media literacy and development journalism as announcers, producers, journalists and station managers (2009-2010)

5.1.4. Establish of a regular forum at community level where villagers and local media can interact and exchange information (2010)

5.1.5. Advanced coaching and training to emphasize sustainability for new media outlets (2010)

5.1.6. Establishment of community radio network with shared programming (2010)



## Annual Work Plan Budget Sheet

United Nations Development Programme Bhutan

Year: 2008

Project: Role of Independent Media in a New Democracy

| EXPECTED OUTPUTS<br>and indicators,<br>including annual<br>targets  | PLANNED ACTIVITIES<br><i>List all activities including M&amp;E<br/>to be undertaken during the year<br/>towards stated CP outputs</i>   | TIMEFRAME |    |    |    | RESPONSIBLE<br>PARTY | PLANNED BUDGET  |                       |        |
|---|---|-----------|----|----|----|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------|
|   |   | Q1        | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |                      | Source of Funds | Budget<br>Description | Amount |
| <b>Output 1.</b> Enhanced professional standards of print/broadcast media, especially among women, to provide credible, reliable and impartial news coverage on good governance and effectively contribute to the process of national development and democracy<br><br><b>Indicators:</b><br><br><b>Annual Targets:</b> | <b>Activity 1.</b> Advanced capacity development for print and broadcast media (following initial training during preparatory assistance) on coverage for Bhutan's first national elections<br><br><b>Indicator:</b><br>xx journalists trained in advanced election coverage  | X         |    |    |    |                      |                 |                       |        |
|   | <b>Activity 2.</b> Advanced capacity development for experienced/specialists journalists from print and broadcast media on political reporting and governance/constitutional issues (post-election)<br><br><b>Indicator:</b><br>xx journalists enabled to critically identify relevant good governance and legal issues affecting the public interest and to elicit needs, ideas and views from the public regarding democracy, especially among women and the poor |           | X  |    |    |                      |                 |                       |        |

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|  | <p><b>Activity 3.</b> Basic reporting and news editing capacity development for young print and broadcast media professionals, with emphasis on governance issues</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b><br/>xx journalists enabled to conduct basic reporting and news editing, with emphasis on governance issues</p>   |  | X |   |   |  |  |  |  |
|  | <p><b>Activity 4.</b> Advanced capacity development for experienced print and broadcast media on investigative journalism, including the importance of freedom of information for investigative journalism</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b><br/>xx journalists enabled to conduct thorough investigations on good governance and write incisive reports that trigger institutional and policy reforms</p> |  |   | X |   |  |  |  |  |
|  | <p><b>Activity 5.</b> Initial capacity development for experienced print and broadcast media on legal reporting</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b></p>  |  |   |   | X |  |  |  |  |

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|  | <p><b>Activity 6.</b> Support to establishment of Journalists Association of Bhutan/Bhutan Press Council, enabled to promote an independent media and provide an independent forum to discuss media performance/freedom of expression (“media barometer”)</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b><br/>Journalists’ Association of Bhutan/Bhutan Press Council established and able to uphold freedom/rights of the media and self-regulate to ensure highest standards of journalism</p> |  | X |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | <p><b>Activity 7.</b> Capacity development on comparative media experiences of other new democracies, including sharing of information by, and dialogue with, journalists from outside Bhutan (particularly post-communist Europe)</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b></p>   |  |   | X |  |  |  |  |  |
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| <p><b>Output 2.</b> Enhanced Government capacity for open and responsive media relations and public information procedures and responsibilities</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b></p> <p><b>Annual Targets:</b></p> | <p><b>Activity 1:</b> Capacity development of Government heads of agencies/officials/spokespersons on open and responsive media relations with regard to national elections</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b></p> <p><b>Activity 2:</b> Advanced capacity development of Government heads of agencies/officials/spokespersons on open and responsive public information procedures and responsibilities following the election and advent of democracy</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b></p> | X | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| <p><b>Output 3.</b> Strengthened capacity of, and exchange between, media and Government to adapt regulatory/legal environment ensuring an independent, vibrant media in Bhutan</p> | <p><b>Activity 1.</b> Joint capacity development of Government (Ministers, MOIC media department, judiciary, senior civil servants, district officials) and print and broadcast media professionals on constitutional right to (official) information, to promote citizens' awareness of, and ability to make better use of, this right</p>  | X |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p><b>Indicators:</b><br/><b>Annual Targets:</b></p>  | <p><b>Indicator:</b></p> <p><b>Activity 2.</b> Establishment of broad-based Working Group on Media Law (parliamentarians, Government representatives and senior civil servants, judiciary, media and human rights law experts, media representatives, civil society, other stakeholders) to review and analyze (1) existing freedom of expression and media-related legislation, (2) media-related regulations and (3) mandates of Government and autonomous bodies with regard to media. This will be intended to provide impetus to (1) strengthen existing bodies, (2) identify legal/regulatory gaps in order to meet international standards, and (3) draft new legislation</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b></p> <p><b>Activity 3.</b> Support to series of debates/roundtable discussions on legal frameworks and impact on media, involving opinion makers, media, civil society</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b></p> | X | X | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| <b>Output 4.</b> Effective communication mechanisms between parliament and media<br><br><b>Indicators:</b><br><br><b>Annual Targets:</b> | <b>Activity 1.</b> Capacity development for new parliamentarians in open and responsive interaction with media<br><br><b>Indicator:</b>  |  | X |   |   |  |  |  |  |
|  | <b>Activity 2.</b> Capacity development on computers and Internet for all MPs/parliamentary staff<br><br><b>Indicator:</b>   |  | X |   |   |  |  |  |  |
|  | <b>Activity 3.</b> Establishment of a parliamentary information unit, including more interactive and user-friendly website, to increase public understanding of, and interaction with, parliamentarians                      |  | X | X |   |  |  |  |  |
|  | <b>Activity 4.</b> Establishment of media centre within the parliament to facilitate journalists' sharing of information with their respective media outlets and enable journalists to work more efficiently and effectively |  |   |   | X |  |  |  |  |
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## VI. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT

### **Role of Ministry of Information and Communications: TO BE DETAILED.**

**Role of CPB:** To provide supervision and guidance for implementation and monitoring of the project and all activities, including recommendations for UNDP/Implementing Partner approval of project revisions. The CPB is the group responsible for making, on a consensus basis, management decisions for the project when guidance is required by the Project Manager. The CPB will be co-chaired by the Secretary of the Planning Commission and the United Nations Resident Coordinator. The Board will meet at least once a year in the fourth quarter to review overall progress of cCPAP/UNDAF.

**Role of the Planning Commission/Ministry of Finance:** Financial management and cash transfers will be made directly to the Implementing Partner through the Planning Commission or the Ministry of Finance prior to the start of activities. Direct cash transfer shall be requested and released for programme implementation periods not exceeding three months. Following the completion of any activity, any balance of funds shall be reprogrammed by mutual agreement between the Implementing Partner and the Agencies, or refunded. Implementing Partners, together with the united Agencies, will monitor all activities supported by cash transfers and will facilitate access to relevant financial records and personnel responsible for the administration of cash provided by the Agencies.

**Role of AWP Task Force:** At the working level, a specific AWP task force comprised of national programme managers of the Implementing Agency and relevant United Nations Agency programme officers will be formed to undertake day-to-day management and supervision of activities agreed under the AWP. The AWP task force shall conduct quarterly reviews to assess the progress of the previous quarter and determine the detailed activities and financial requirements of the next quarter.

**Role of the Project Manager:** The Project Manager has the authority to run the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the CPB, within the constraints laid down by the CPB. The Project Manager is responsible for day-to-day management and decision-making for the project. The Project Manager's prime responsibility is to ensure that the project produces the results specified in this project document, to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost. The Project Manager is appointed by the Implementing Partner.

**Role of UNDAF Thematic Group on Good Governance:** Under the overall guidance of the CPB, to identify areas of collaboration and harmonization among United Nations Agencies and other development partners, and to determine the scope and number of AWPs to be developed and signed by implementing partners and participating United Nations Agencies under the relevant UNDAF Outcome. Lead role in annual review of UNDAF Outcome.

## VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation of the project will be met through the cCPAP monitoring evaluations, to ensure effectiveness and relevance as well as efficient use of resources. In line with the United

Nations reform for harmonization and simplification, monitoring and evaluation of cCPAP/UNDAF will be conducted jointly by ExCom and Participating United Nations Agencies. Outcome evaluations and cCPAP/UNDAF annual reviews will be overseen by the CPB, supported by the UNDAF Thematic Group on Good Governance. This UNDAF Thematic Group will be responsible for monitoring achievement of relevant outputs and outcome, and for preparing an annual progress report.

The Implementing Partner, together with the Agencies, will monitor all activities supported by cash transfers and will facilitate access to relevant financial records and personnel responsible for the administration of cash provided by the Agencies. To that effect, periodic on-site reviews and spot checks of their financial records will be conducted by the Agencies or their representatives, including programmatic monitoring of activities through field visits. The UN Agencies, in consultation with the Planning Commission, will establish an annual audit plan, giving priority to audits of Implementing Partners with large amounts of cash assistance provided by the Agencies, and those whose financial management capacity needs strengthening. The Royal Audit Authority will undertake the audits of Government and non-Government Implementing Partners.

## VIII. BUDGET

To be determined.

**Comment [bw1]:** Would keep it out as this concept might need further explanation to the Allocation Commission.