



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
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Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

## **Internal Oversight Service Evaluation Section**

**IOS/EVS/PI/65  
Original: English**

# **Evaluation of Public Service Broadcasting**

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Stiles Associates Inc.

*June 2006*

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**Towards an Improved Strategy of Support to Public  
Service Broadcasting**

**Evaluation  
of UNESCO's Support to  
Public Service Broadcasting  
2002-2005**

**Final Report**

*Stiles Associates Inc.*

June 2006

## Acknowledgments

We wish to thank members of the evaluation steering committee — Geoff Geurts, Wijayanand Jayaweera and Mogens Schmidt — for their helpful feedback and support throughout this assignment. We also thank Binod Agrawal, Wendy Quarry and Douglas Ward whose field work and insights have contributed immensely to this report. We gratefully acknowledge the excellent cooperation we received from UNESCO's staff and their partners worldwide, and we thank them for taking the time to respond to our questions. We have listed their names in an appendix to this report.

The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluators and not UNESCO or its partners. We alone are responsible for any errors or omissions.

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## List of Abbreviations

ABU	Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union
ASBU	Arab States Broadcasting Union
AIBD	Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development
AMIC	Asian Media Information and Communication Centre
BIA	Bakhtar Information Agency
CBA	Commonwealth Broadcasting Association
CI	Communication and Information
CIRTEF	<i>Conseil international des radios-télévisions d'expression française</i>
EBU	European Broadcasting Union
EU	European Union
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
FTP	File Transfer Protocol
IOS	Internal Oversight Service
IPDC	International Program for the Development of Communication
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
NRTA	National Radio Television Afghanistan
PSB	Public Service Broadcasting
RBM	Results-based Management
RTA	Radio and Television Afghanistan
SABA	South African Broadcasting Association
SISTER	System of Information on Strategies, Tasks and Evaluation of Results
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
URTNA	Union of National Radio and Television Organizations of Africa

## 1. Executive Summary

### ***Context and purpose of the evaluation***

This is the report of an evaluation of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) support to public service broadcasting<sup>1</sup> (PSB) between 2002 and 2005.

This, the first-ever evaluation of UNESCO's work in this area, took place as the Organization prepared its Medium Term Strategy for the period 2008-2013. Its purpose was to assess the following:

- Relevance and effectiveness of UNESCO strategies and capacity building activities to enhance PSB institutions;
- Results achieved;
- Extent of collaboration and strategic alliances built with broadcasting unions and regional broadcasting organizations, and the impact they have had on the development of PSB; and
- Sustainability of positive results.

### ***Approach and methodology***

The evaluators formed an evaluation steering committee consisting of two senior managers from UNESCO's Communication and Information (CI) sector and an evaluation specialist from the Organization's Internal Oversight Service (IOS). The committee assisted the evaluators in making decisions about the design and focus of the evaluation and the use of the information gathered for program improvement. Methodologies included structured interviews with 55 people, many of them CI sector staff from headquarters and the field, as well as representatives of the CI sector's main programming partners. The evaluators reviewed more than 100 documents and developed a case study based on UNESCO's recent experience supporting PSB in Afghanistan. The main constraints on the evaluation were a lack of baseline data and a dearth of verifiable information on results achieved.

### ***The broadcasting environment: Challenges and opportunities***

UNESCO faces many challenges within the PSB environment. Chief among them is a lack of political will on the part of many governments to move forward on PSB. The environment also presents opportunities, as governments and civil society increasingly recognize that PSB can help strengthen democratic processes, actualize human rights, educate and inform, as well as entertain.

### ***Programming and organizational strengths***

The evaluation finds UNESCO's PSB programming highly relevant to UNESCO's mandate and to the needs of its member states. PSB provides a means by which to achieve many of the objectives of UNESCO's Medium Term Strategy 2002-2007 and much of its PSB programming is responsive to requests made by governments and/or civil society organizations.

The evaluators note the following organizational strengths that make UNESCO well suited to its global leadership role in supporting PSB:

- The only UN organization with a clear mandate to support PSB;
- High degree of credibility among stakeholders;

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<sup>1</sup> Neither state-controlled nor private, UNESCO defines public service broadcasting as: services whose governing boards and structures are independent of government and commercial interests; services that have adequate funding to serve the needs and interests of the public and promote the free flow of information and ideas; and services that are directly accountable to the public.

- Instrumental in developing a vibrant international network for PSB; and
- Decentralized structure with decision making close to the ground.

Chief among UNESCO's programming and organizational strengths in relation to PSB are:

- Demonstrated capacity to coordinate support for PSB and lead major collaborative initiatives;
- Ability to complete most PSB activities on time and within budget; and
- Proven record of helping partners leverage funds with relatively small investments—usually between \$5,000 and \$10,000 per project.

### **Major achievements**

Between 2002 and 2005, UNESCO contributed to incremental progress toward PSB in a handful of countries, including Afghanistan, Cambodia, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Panama, India and Sri Lanka. It has helped to define PSB and to achieve broad consensus on criteria for PSB.

During the period under review, the CI sector sponsored many conferences, meetings, workshops and seminars, and widely distributed PSB resource materials. The evaluators determined that these activities helped raise awareness about PSB, but were unable to ascertain to what extent. Numerous non-governmental organizations (NGOs), professional associations and development agencies also contributed to raising awareness, most with initial or ongoing support from UNESCO.

The CI sector has produced and distributed excellent PSB resources and guides in recent years which stakeholders have found useful. The evaluation team notes that some of these materials, such as the *Best Practices Sourcebook* (Banerjee and Senevirantne, eds. 2005), establish standards against which public service practices can be measured.

Capacity development activities account for the bulk of the CI sector's support to PSB during the period under review. Activities included the training of hundreds of broadcast journalists, upgrading facilities, providing technical assistance, funding some exemplary PSB radio and television programming, and strengthening organizational networks and linkages. Although reliable data on results were rarely available, the evaluators concluded with reasonable assurance that many of these activities made positive contributions to building stronger capacity for PSB.

The report highlights two unexpected results achieved by UNESCO during the reporting period, namely:

- Partners, such as the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD), which UNESCO helped create, continue to support PSB without UNESCO's assistance.
- Many partners successfully leverage funds from sources in addition to UNESCO, allowing them to accomplish much more than could be done with UNESCO funds alone.

### **Major challenges**

The CI sector shares a characteristic of many organizations with broad mandates and limited resources: it is trying to do too much with too little money and too few qualified staff. As a result, the CI sector is not achieving an optimal level of success in relation to fostering PSB services, particularly in Africa. With few exceptions, Afghanistan among them, the evaluators found that the CI sector funded hundreds of small, discrete projects over the period under review, almost all with a time span of less than a year, and most directed at operational level rather than the political level where PSB decision-making rests. With its mainly *ad hoc* approach to PSB programming, UNESCO and its partners achieved many outputs, such as meetings, declarations, materials and

trained broadcasters, but not the outcomes one would expect of a well-structured, tightly focused program.

Headquarters and field staff characterize UNESCO's PSB programming as "personality-driven," meaning that it is overly dependent on the qualifications and personal interests of individuals. Headquarters staff acknowledge a dearth of PSB expertise among field staff and attribute the Organization's limited success in some regions (Africa in particular), to lack of expertise. Conversely, the success in parts of the Americas, Asia and the Pacific can be traced to staff with strong PSB backgrounds and interests.

The evaluators found UNESCO's monitoring and reporting system weak. The CI sector lacks hard data with which to track its progress in relation to PSB. Field offices do not always report on the achievement of expected results and accurate baseline data are absent. The evaluators found little evidence of Headquarters and field staff reflecting regularly on progress towards PSB outcomes. Every staff member questioned about UNESCO's System of Information on Strategies, Tasks and Evaluation of Results (SISTER) said it was cumbersome and frustrating to use. The evaluators found the information about PSB contained in SISTER to be incomplete and inconsistently results-based.

The CI sector has had productive relationships with its major PSB partners. Together they have made progress raising awareness about PSB and developing the capacity of broadcasters. However, some partners — the unions, institutes and some of the broadcasting associations — told the evaluators that they felt constrained in advocating for public broadcasting reforms owing to resistance from some of their members, state broadcasters in particular. UNESCO has missed opportunities to partner with some NGOs and other organizations within the UN family that could take a strong stance in support of PSB.

### **Lessons**

The following lessons emerged from interviews and the evaluators' review of documents.

Progress on PSB is more likely to occur:

- When there is collaboration with others
- Where there are strategic opportunities
- When UNESCO uses project funds to reward progressive policy change
- Where there are staff in the field who are committed to PSB
- When there is follow-up and follow-through on activities
- Where UNESCO has a long-term perspective

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

UNESCO has made reasonable progress since 2002 in raising awareness about PSB and strengthening PSB capacity but only incremental progress in transforming state broadcasters along PSB lines or developing new, authentic PSB services. The evaluators surmise that UNESCO will foster few, if any, new PSB services over the course of the next Medium Term Strategy unless it changes its approach.

A new, more potent strategy is needed; one that focuses more on high-level advocacy so as to generate the political will for PSB. Concentrating on fewer, larger initiatives in countries where the conditions are ripe for PSB would also appear to be a prudent use of UNESCO's resources.



**Recommendation #1:** *It is recommended that UNESCO develop a strategy for PSB that would:*

- *Support fewer, but larger and longer activities with greater opportunity for results;*
- *Concentrate resources in countries that are receptive to PSB and where the CI sector has staff with appropriate skills and experience;*
- *Focus more resources on advocacy targeted at policy makers and senior decision-makers through direct interventions and advocacy groups; and*
- *Ensure closer monitoring and improved reporting of results.*

The CI sector is in need of more powerful methods to advocate for PSB, including making better use of the potential within UNESCO itself.

**Recommendation #2:** *It is recommended that the CI sector increase efforts to persuade other sectors within UNESCO of the relevance of PSB to their objectives and the need for close collaboration on PSB across sectors.*

UNESCO could ratchet up its efforts to encourage countries to adopt PSB by combining efforts with other organizations within the UN family.

**Recommendation #3:** *It is recommended that the CI sector increase its collaboration with other UN multilateral organizations and, where feasible, use UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) to encourage governments to move towards PSB.*

The evaluators see merit in UNESCO developing more powerful tools for advocacy. One such tool, to which many stakeholders reacted favourably, is a PSB global index. Other UN organizations, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) among them, use global indexes as part of their advocacy strategies.

A PSB global index would give the CI sector a much-needed baseline against which to measure its performance. If updated every few years, a PSB global index would allow UNESCO and its partners to track their progress and decide where to focus their efforts. UNESCO could use the index to reward countries for progress. A PSB global index would give UNESCO field staff a potent resource which, when combined with a local program, could help to advance PSB.

**Recommendation #4:** *It is recommended that the CI sector conduct a study to determine the feasibility of creating a PSB global index.*

## 2. Introduction and Context

### 2.1 Background

The mandate of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations (UNESCO 1945). States that are party to UNESCO's Constitution believe in full and equal opportunities for education for all, unrestricted pursuit of objective truth, and free exchange of ideas and knowledge. UNESCO has been supporting action to promote and strengthen public service broadcasting<sup>2</sup> (PSB) worldwide for more than a decade.

UNESCO and its partners recognize the critical role that public service broadcasting plays in providing a forum for wide-ranging public debate, innovative programming not driven by market forces, and local production, particularly of an educational and cultural nature.

Within this context, UNESCO undertakes actions that are in line with the strategies set out in its program and budget documents. Chief among these documents are the Medium Term Strategy 2002-2007 and the biennial Program and Budgets 2002-2003 and 2004-2005, which feature "enhancing public service broadcasting" as a Main Line of Action. In recent years, UNESCO's work in relation to PSB has focused on:

1. Promoting editorial independence;
2. Emphasizing the transformation of state-owned broadcasting stations into independent public service stations;
3. Fostering the educational and cultural dimensions of the media;
4. Sensitizing governments and the general public to the need for public service broadcasting; and
5. Supporting the development of endogenous production capacities.

In 2002-2003, UNESCO budgeted \$640,000<sup>3</sup> for PSB. Of that, \$340,000 came from UNESCO's regular program budget and \$300,000 from extrabudgetary funds, received from national governments and donors to implement specific projects. In 2004-2005, UNESCO budgeted \$2,589,000 for the PSB Main Line of Action with approximately \$1 million coming from the regular budget and \$1.5 million from extrabudgetary funds.

### 2.2 Evaluation Purpose

This, the first evaluation of UNESCO's support to PSB, fits well with the Organization's planning cycle. It takes place as UNESCO prepares its Medium Term Strategy for the period 2008-2013. The legislative mandate for the evaluation is found in UNESCO's Approved Program and Budget for 2006 – 2007 (33C/5).

<sup>2</sup> According to the terms of reference for this evaluation, UNESCO defines public service broadcasting as: services whose governing boards and structures are independent of government and commercial interests; services that have adequate funding to serve the needs and interests of the public and promote the free flow of information and ideas; and services that are directly accountable to the public.

<sup>3</sup> All figures are in U.S. dollars unless otherwise stated.

According to the Terms of Reference for the evaluation, its purpose was to assess the following:

1. Relevance and effectiveness of UNESCO strategies and capacity building activities to enhance PSB institutions, implemented during 2002-2005;
2. Results achieved by UNESCO actions and strategies to enhance educational and cultural content in PSB institutions;
3. Extent of collaboration and strategic alliances built with broadcasting unions and regional broadcasting organizations such as the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), European Broadcasting Union (EBU), Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), South African Broadcasting Association (SABA), Union of National Radio and Television Organizations of Africa (URTNA), *Conseil international des radios-télévisions d'expression française* (CIRTEF), Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA) and Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD), and the impact these organizations have had on the development of public service broadcasting in their respective regions (organizations); and
4. Sustainability of positive results after the termination of UNESCO programs in PSB.

### 3. Approach and Methodology

#### 3.1. Approach

Stiles Associates Inc. employed a utilization-focused approach (Patton 1997) to the evaluation wherein key UNESCO managers were involved in decisions about the design and focus of the evaluation and the use of the information gathered for program improvement. For this purpose, UNESCO formed a small evaluation steering committee composed of: Wijayananda Jayaweera, Director, Communication Development Division; Mogens Schmidt, Deputy Assistant Director-General, Division for Freedom of Expression, Democracy and Peace; Geoffrey Geurts, Evaluation Specialist, Internal Oversight Service; and Mark Stiles, lead evaluator. The committee members reviewed the evaluation work plan (see Appendix A) and had the opportunity to discuss the evaluation findings and preliminary recommendations before the evaluators drafted this report

The purpose of this collaborative approach was to ensure that the evaluation produced useful information, practical recommendations and a commitment to implement changes to improve the PSB program, where needed, as UNESCO prepares its next Medium Term Strategy.

The evaluation team consisted of Mark Stiles, team leader; Cindy Weeks, senior evaluator; Binod Agrawal, senior evaluator; Wendy Quarry, senior evaluator; and Douglas Ward, former senior manager with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Dr Agrawal was based in Ahmedabad, India; Ms Quarry in Kabul, Afghanistan; and the other members of the team in Ottawa, Canada.

#### 3.2 Methodology

Stiles Associates Inc. used a combination of document review, interviews, and a case study for this evaluation.

Working from the evaluation framework in the work plan (see Appendix A), the evaluators developed a semi-structured evaluation questionnaire and selected a purposeful sample of key PSB stakeholders reflecting a reasonable geographic and South-North representation. The evaluators interviewed 55 people, in person, by telephone or by email. In-person interviews were

conducted: at UNESCO headquarters in Paris; at the February 2006 Commonwealth Broadcasting Association General Conference in Delhi, India; in Bangkok, Thailand; and in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Those interviewed included:

- 23 UNESCO staff members (10 at Headquarters in Paris, 13 at field offices);
- 12 representatives of broadcast unions, associations and research organizations;
- 9 others including project partners and broadcasters; and
- 11 stakeholders in Afghanistan (plus three UNESCO staff members counted above).

A list of people interviewed is included in Appendix B.

The evaluators reviewed more than 100 documents including background information, budgets, plans, strategies, service contracts, publications, audio-visual and related materials, reports and declarations. Key documents are listed in Appendix C.

The evaluators developed a case study based on UNESCO's recent experience in Afghanistan where it has played a role aiding the transition towards a PSB model in a post-conflict environment. The case study appears in Appendix D.

The evaluation team cross-referenced quantitative data and triangulated qualitative data to ensure that the information gathered was valid, reliable, balanced and fair.

### **3.3 Limitations**

The evaluation team faced a number of limitations in carrying out the assessment. Baseline data on the status of PSB were unavailable, making it difficult to assess UNESCO's progress in countries where it was active during the period under review. The evaluators found information on activities but relatively little verifiable data on the results achieved.

The evaluators had difficulty determining the scope of UNESCO's PSB support and getting an accurate fix on its PSB spending owing to the flexible boundaries delineating PSB from other activities, and the fact that PSB is not a distinct program within the Communication and Information (CI) sector. Field staff often cited projects financed through the International Programme for Development of Communication (IPDC) as part of UNESCO's support to PSB, despite the fact that IPDC is administered separately. In addition, PSB-related activities within IPDC are not always identified in IPDC reports or reflected consistently in PSB reports.

Three of UNESCO's 14 organizational partners for PSB did not respond to repeated requests for interviews.

Despite these limitations, the evaluation team is confident this report provides a useful overview of UNESCO's achievements and challenges in its support to PSB.

## 4. The PSB Environment

### 4.1 Challenges

UNESCO and its partners established three major criteria for public service broadcasting, namely:

1. Services whose governing boards and structures are independent of government and commercial interests;
2. Services that have guaranteed funding that is adequate to serve the needs and interests of the public and to promote the free flow of information and ideas; and
3. Services that are directly accountable to the public<sup>4</sup>.

Although most countries would agree that these criteria characterize PSB, many are reluctant to make the necessary changes to create or even approximate the conditions required to support these criteria. Some claim they do not have sufficient funds to support PSB. However, the main reason for lack of progress is the absence of political will, according to the majority of stakeholders interviewed. Politicians recognize the power of electronic media and are reluctant to support public broadcasting systems over which they have little or no control. For this reason and others, relatively few countries have created PSB entities or transformed state radio and television services along PSB lines.

[Progress towards PSB is lacking because] in some states, governments are afraid to lose control...

- Field staff member

Relatively few citizens' organizations have taken up the PSB torch even though it is generally recognized that the free flow of information and ideas is essential for healthy democracies, and that PSB complements social, economic and cultural development. However, an increasing number of donors, international financial institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have become involved in supporting PSB in recent years. Although this can be viewed as positive for UNESCO whose mandate is wide and whose resources are meager, it also poses challenges. According to some Headquarters staff, such organizations often want to be in the limelight and may wish to take credit for successful projects that are supported jointly.

*It takes about 20 years for results to show.*

- CI field staff member

The short-term nature of political life militates against the long-term measures needed for PSB. UNESCO and its partners have a steep uphill battle to get PSB on the national agendas of most developing countries. In

some, such as Thailand, Nepal and Brazil, progress towards freedom of expression in broadcast media has slipped in recent years.

Another challenge facing PSB, even in countries where PSB is well established, is the rapidly-expanding information sources available to citizens, including an increasing number of commercial broadcasting services and the Internet. Audiences tend to fragment as more choices become available. People who are exposed to high-quality commercial programming may not tolerate the kind of "talking-head" shows that characterize low-budget PSB programming. The global trend towards commercialization has put great pressure on PSB services to raise an ever-increasing portion of their operating revenues from advertising. As they compete with private

<sup>4</sup> These criteria appeared in the evaluator's terms of reference. Additional criteria can be found in *Public Service Broadcasting: A Best Practices Sourcebook* (UNESCO 2005).

broadcasters for advertising revenue, public broadcasters are under pressure to mirror the programming and editorial decision-making of the commercial broadcasters.

UNESCO is well aware of these challenges and knows that it will be a tough job to bring about change. Quoting the Assistant Director General for CI, a UNESCO field staff member said, “Sometimes our work is like pricking an elephant. At first it doesn’t feel it, but some years later it will realize that it has been pricked.”

## 4.2 Opportunities

Despite the challenges, there are opportunities for PSB today. Some experts and several of UNESCO’s field staff told the evaluators that PSB is highly relevant to many of the current themes of international development, such as governance and human rights. Some would argue that PSB is a cornerstone of democracy. Without an informed citizenry, there can be no

*[It is important] to really make specific the linkage between independent reliable information and development. Economies do achieve greater success with free and independent information which is fostered by the presence of PSB.*

-Spokesperson for a broadcasting union

responsible citizens’ participation in government and little accountability on the part of elected officials. PSB has the potential to give voice to those who are often marginalized, including women, minorities and the poor.

PSB can be used to educate and inform, as well as entertain. It can be used effectively to battle chronic diseases, such as malaria, and to combat pandemics, such as HIV/AIDS, as it is doing in South Africa. It can provide a cost-effective means of reaching rural and remote communities and vulnerable groups in developing countries.

*The world wants free elections in [country x] and sends people to watch the voting. But there is no PSB here, and the national broadcaster’s transmission only gets 320 km out from the capital. So how do the majority of the people get the information to make their decision?*

- Broadcasting association spokesperson

PSB also has the potential to foster cultural pluralism and can, as some say it has done in Canada, knit together a diverse population. In this same way, PSB can be a powerful tool for peace building, reconciliation, tolerance and understanding. For these reasons, PSB is particularly relevant to countries undergoing democratic

transition, including those in post-conflict situations. Countries in this category are numerous, with one quarter of the world’s community of nations in the midst of marked internal conflict, according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 2000).

Having outlined some characteristics of the environment for PSB, the evaluators turn next to the evaluation findings, beginning with an assessment of UNESCO’s strengths in supporting PSB.



## 5. Findings

### 5.1 Relevance

The evaluators examined relevance from two perspectives: first, the relevance of UNESCO's PSB programming in relation to its mandate and Medium Term Strategy; and second, the relevance of UNESCO's PSB programming in relation to the needs of member states.

#### 5.1.1 Relevance to UNESCO's mandate and Medium Term Strategy

UNESCO's PSB activities in the past few years have encompassed the following:

1. Enhancing the utility of PSB as an educational and cultural vehicle, especially for disadvantaged communities;
2. Promoting best PSB practices and professional standards and contributing to relevant revisions of national legislation;
3. Strengthening PSB as a gateway to information and knowledge for all;
4. Fostering the indigenous content quality and technological upgrading of public service broadcasting;
5. Encouraging innovative and creative improvements in programming to captivate larger audiences; and
6. Upholding discussions between media professionals, decision-makers, and other stakeholders on major PSB-related issues. (UNESCO Web site, [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org), accessed May 16, 2006)

How does this programming relate to UNESCO's mandate?

The link between UNESCO's PSB programming and its mandate is clear insofar as PSB is a vehicle for freedom of expression, education and cultural expression and the free exchange of ideas and knowledge. There is little doubt that PSB can be an effective medium for these purposes, particularly when it meets the UNESCO criteria outlined earlier. Countries with strong PSB services, such as Britain, Canada, South Africa, Australia, Japan and Chile, have shown how public broadcasting can be used effectively for wide-ranging debate and diverse cultural expression.

*PSB, as opposed to state broadcasting, is part of the right to freedom of expression and hence core to UNESCO's mandate.*

- Public broadcasting expert

"Collaboration among nations" is key to UNESCO's mandate. The evaluators found that most of UNESCO's support to PSB between 2002 and 2005 involved international collaboration, occasionally with other UN agencies, but more often with organizations representing broadcasters and journalists from the North and South. For example: UNESCO has sponsored training which has brought broadcasters together from many different nations; it has supported meetings and seminars that have attracted broadcasting associations and unions from around the world; and it has funded the production of guidelines and best practices in collaboration with others. UNESCO has also supported a variety of initiatives to develop PSB in post-conflict areas such as Afghanistan.

UNESCO's governing body, the General Conference, endorsed a new strategy for communication at its 25<sup>th</sup> session in 1989. It flows from UNESCO's mandate and sets a strategic direction for the CI sector.

More recently, UNESCO's Medium Term Strategy 2002-2007, commonly referred to as "31 C/4", sets out three strategic objectives for the CI sector, namely:

1. Promoting the free flow of ideas and universal access to information;
2. Promoting the expression of pluralism and cultural diversity in the media and world information networks; and
3. Access for all to information and communications technologies, especially in the public domain (UNESCO, 2000).

UNESCO's activities in support of PSB provide a means to achieve these objectives. Each strategic objective has a number of sub-objectives and expected outcomes, some of which pertain specifically to PSB. This is illustrated in Table 1 which allows readers to see at a glance the relevance of PSB within UNESCO's policy framework.

#### *5.1.2 Relevance to the needs of member states*

The evaluators found that most UNESCO-sponsored activities were relevant to the needs of recipient countries: activities are undertaken in response to requests from the governments and/or civil society organizations in these countries; field offices have control over the bulk of the funds for PSB programming; and field staff determine priorities in consultation with national governments and local organizations. UNESCO Headquarters sets strategic direction through a consultative process with member countries, but much of the decision-making with regard to individual projects is in the hands of field staff. It makes sense to have this decision-making close to the actual beneficiaries, but the evaluators were able to find neither evidence of rigorous needs assessments in relation to PSB nor many examples where PSB activities were part of a recipient country's development framework or annual development plan.

Although much of the programming is responsive, it is guided by UNESCO's country directors and staff responsible for CI. In countries where there is resistance to PSB, field staff tend to support activities aimed at raising awareness. Where countries are receptive to change, field staff often suggest assistance, such as help in formulating PSB legislation or capacity development measures they think will make a difference. Whether responsive or directed, the evaluators believe that UNESCO's PSB programming is relevant to member states, particularly so for those countries that have signed or ratified UN conventions on human rights and UNESCO declarations related to PSB.

Closely linked to relevance, the evaluators found UNESCO to have a number of organizational strengths that make it well suited for its role in supporting PSB. These are examined next.



Table 1

## UNESCO's Policy Framework as It Relates to PSB

<b>Mandate</b>		
To contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations		
<b>Communication Strategy ( 25<sup>th</sup> Session)</b>		
To encourage the free flow of information at international, as well as national, levels, to promote the wider and better balanced dissemination of information, without any obstacle to freedom of expression, and to strengthen communication capacities in order to increase their participation in the communication process.		
<b>Medium Term Strategy 2002-2007</b>		
<b>Strategic Objective 10</b>	<b>Strategic Objective 11</b>	<b>Strategic Objective 12</b>
Promoting the free flow of ideas and universal access to information	Promoting the expression of pluralism and cultural diversity in the media and world information networks	Access for all to information and communications technologies, especially in the public domain
<b>Relevant Sub-objectives</b>	<b>Relevant Sub-objectives</b>	<b>Relevant Sub-objectives</b>
Promoting freedom of expression, freedom of the press, pluralism and independence of the media	Encouraging the production and dissemination of audiovisual programmes  Promoting the diversity of content in information networks	Promoting access to information and means of communication
<b>Relevant Outcomes</b>	<b>Relevant Outcomes</b>	<b>Relevant Outcomes</b>
Progress in the application of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the media  Introduction of provisions relating to freedom of expression, freedom of the press & independence of the media into the domestic legislation of about 15 countries  Increase in the number of independent newspapers and radio or television stations, both public and private, in countries in transition and in conflict or post-conflict zones	Increase in the number of persons trained & in the number of media organizations addressing different target groups, particularly in developing countries  Adoption of national legislation concerning public service radio & television	Increase in the number of development projects focused on "infostructure", communication capacities & the volume of resources mobilized
<b>Related Activities</b>	<b>Related Activities</b>	<b>Related Activities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Production &amp; distribution of PSB guides, lessons, standards &amp; best practices</li> <li>▪ Technical assistance: broadcasting policy, legislation &amp; planning</li> <li>▪ Conferences, seminars to raise awareness about PSB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support for PSB programming &amp; digitalization</li> <li>▪ Subsidizing distribution of diverse PSB content</li> <li>▪ Training of broadcasters</li> <li>▪ Drafting of legislation</li> <li>▪ Awareness-raising and advocacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support to small projects that demonstrate PSB as a gateway to information &amp; knowledge for all</li> <li>▪ Provision of PSB equipment, infrastructure &amp; 'info-structure'</li> <li>▪ Advocacy</li> </ul>

Sources: UNESCO Web site ([www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)) and UNESCO (2002) *Medium Term Strategy 2002-2007*.

## 5.2 Organizational Strengths

*I think that UNESCO can continue to influence the international community.*  
- Public broadcasting expert

UNESCO is the only UN organization with direct responsibility to support PSB. Other UN organizations, such as the UNDP, occasionally assist projects aimed at strengthening PSB, but do not have as clear a mandate for PSB. Several

development agencies and international financial institutions have supported aspects of PSB, including The World Bank, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the European Union (EU) and the German foundation, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES). However, UNESCO is perceived by most stakeholders interviewed as the leader, in part because it has a 10-year proven record and considerable credibility, particularly in its role as an advocate for PSB. Stakeholders told the evaluators that UNESCO's credibility stems from the Organization's history of support, staff who are passionate defenders of PSB, and UNESCO's stature as a member of the UN family.

UNESCO has been successful in developing a strong international network of public service broadcasters, regulatory and legislative experts, journalists and broadcasting associations and unions. As a UN organization, its senior managers can talk directly to ministers. However, two of UNESCO's key partners raised concerns about the Organization's capacity to lead global efforts to promote PSB; one questioned UNESCO's will; the other, its limited resources.

*One of UNESCO's strengths is its system of regional offices. This brings them down to a more local level. For example, if there is a meeting of the Pacific Islands' news editors, UNESCO will likely have a representative there.*  
- Broadcasting association spokesperson

Several of UNESCO's partners identified the Organization's decentralized structure as a strength. They said that decentralization brought decision-making and resources closer to the ground. Most staff interviewed agreed with this assessment, but, as explained later, some spoke of limited PSB expertise in the field and the need for more strategic direction from Headquarters.

## 5.3 Programming and Managerial Strengths

Almost all of CI's programming in PSB, with the exception of its direct advocacy, is done through others or in collaboration with partners. The evaluators wish to highlight this and related programming and managerial strengths.

*I think coordination is one of UNESCO's strengths, and it often manages to bring together a good mix of NGOs, media, local officials, other UN bodies and the broader donor community.*  
- Public broadcasting expert

That UNESCO regularly brings together a diverse mix of organizations to discuss PSB is evidence of its coordination prowess. The organizations often include NGOs, broadcasting associations and unions, public service broadcasters, state broadcasters, private broadcasters, government representatives and experts. On occasion

during the period under review, UNESCO brought other UN organizations and donors into the mix. The global networks it has fostered are formidable.

The evaluators' review of more than 50 UNESCO service contracts reveals that most of the Organization's PSB activities were completed on time and within budget. Although some funding

recipients complained about the time it takes to receive funds, the evaluators found UNESCO's administrative systems reasonably efficient. Field staff can put service contracts together and disburse funds quickly and funding recipients are not overburdened by paper work. Reporting, though not results-based, is streamlined and lines of accountability are clear. Under UNESCO's decentralized structure, CI sector field staff report to managers in the country or region, rather than to a PSB manager at Headquarters. This makes sense from a management and accountability perspective but it means that PSB programming in the field is dependent on the skills, interests and initiatives of the field staff and their local managers. The evaluators will have more to say on this point later in the report.

The CI sector usually spends its budget fully though it often hurries to disburse funds late in the year. Managers are able to carry over until March funds that have been committed by December. This provision aids disbursements but contributes to a backlog. Late disbursements, however, do not appear to affect results significantly.

Although UNESCO's funding for individual PSB projects is relatively small (often between US \$5,000 and \$10,000), it has, on occasion, successfully leveraged funds from other sources. In Malawi, for example, UNESCO's seed money helped attract funding from the UNDP for a major media development project. UNESCO's initial investments to assess the state of broadcasting in the early post-Taliban period of Afghanistan led to a major, multi-donor initiative and a significant investment by the Italian government through a trust fund arrangement with UNESCO (see Case Study, Appendix D). UNESCO has successfully partnered with BBC World Service Trust and several NGOs to support the development of community radio in Nepal.

UNESCO has shown in Afghanistan that it can lead the international community in major collaborative initiatives to revitalize broadcasting in post-conflict countries undergoing democratic reform.

The evaluators now turn to UNESCO's major achievements.

## **5.4 Achievements**

### **5.4.1 Progress toward PSB**

How well have the CI sector and its partners done in relation to UNESCO's long-term goal of developing new public service broadcasters and strengthening existing ones, particularly in developing countries? Although it is difficult to give a definitive answer, owing largely to weak monitoring data, the evaluators have determined that UNESCO has had some modest success, having contributed to the development of PSB in a handful of countries during the period under review. This determination stems from information gleaned from stakeholders and available documentation. The data are not captured systematically in the CI sector's monitoring and reporting system. The evaluators have corroborated information from verbal sources by means of triangulation. The following outlines some of UNESCO's accomplishments in relation to this all-important goal.

Afghanistan	Assisted the development of a progressive media law that provides for an independent broadcasting regulatory body. Provided equipment and training to allow journalists to produce programs with information from the Internet and other varied sources. Rehabilitated Afghanistan's educational radio and television service by supporting new studio facilities, a distribution system, staff training and the restructuring of distance education
Cambodia	Succeeded in getting Radio FM96 to adopt guidelines for editorial independence as a requirement for media development projects supported by the International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC)
Kyrgyzstan	Assisted in developing a broadcasting law that went a considerable distance towards meeting PSB criteria
Malawi	Used high-level advocacy and some technical assistance to support government in passing a law guaranteeing state broadcasters editorial independence
Panama	Provided advocacy and technical assistance that contributed to the adoption of a new, more progressive broadcasting law
India	Provided funding and encouragement that led the state television service to provide regular broadcasts of uncensored documentaries
Sri Lanka	Succeeded in getting the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation to adopt guidelines for editorial independence as a requirement for media development projects supported by IPDC.

Although these developments appear modest, several stakeholders correctly pointed out that the task of transforming state broadcasters into public service broadcasters is a long and difficult one. Some of the experts interviewed also noted UNESCO's successes prior to 2002, such as in Indonesia where it helped transform the state broadcaster along PSB lines, albeit imperfectly.

In many other countries, CI's efforts have been ongoing for 10 years or more but the results have been incremental. For example:

- In Pakistan, UNESCO partnered with the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA) to support the development of editorial guidelines for broadcasters
- In Bangladesh, UNESCO provided support for an expert to advise on PSB legislation, and ran training programs on editorial independence
- In Sri-Lanka, UNESCO helped develop PSB guidelines to assist policy makers
- In Guatemala, UNESCO supported the creation of the first indigenous peoples' television station and the production of programs in indigenous languages

#### 5.4.2 Defining PSB

One of UNESCO's major achievements has been to define PSB. According to some experts, many countries had only a vague notion of PSB and tended to set their own criteria, some referring to state-owned and controlled broadcasting as public broadcasting. UNESCO has played a major role in bringing greater clarity to PSB, showing how PSB differs from state and private broadcasting. It has been a long process. The criteria for PSB and how it differs from state

broadcasting in particular, was outlined in *Public Broadcasting Why? How?* (World Radio and Television Council and UNESCO, 2001), a widely distributed UNESCO publication. Further elaboration is offered in a new UNESCO publication, *Public Service Broadcasting: A Best Practices Sourcebook* (Banerjee and Seneviratne, eds. 2005).

The evaluators asked field staff responsible for CI and their partners to define PSB. Most, but not all, were able to correctly recall one or two criteria, most frequently editorial independence. Although this is commendable, UNESCO must continue to educate its staff and its partners since PSB is, according to Rumphorst (1998), “more often than not misunderstood, sometimes profoundly, sometimes even intentionally” (p. 15)<sup>5</sup>.

### 5.4.3 Raising awareness

Many of the CI sector’s efforts in the period under review were directed at raising awareness of the importance of PSB and of the limitations of other models of broadcasting. Here UNESCO appears to have had considerable success, although it is difficult to measure the change and to determine what portion of it can be attributed to UNESCO.

Documents show that between 2002 and 2005, the sector completed the following activities:

- Sponsored more than a dozen meetings, workshops, conferences, seminars and other awareness-raising events;
- Published and widely distributed books, compact discs, pamphlets and related materials concerning PSB;
- Disseminated information about PSB on UNESCO’s Web site;
- Directly engaged bureaucrats and elected officials in many countries in discussions about the merits of PSB;
- Mobilized broadcasting associations, unions and NGOs to promote PSB; and
- Funded the production and arranged the distribution of some radio and television programming that exemplified PSB.

UNESCO has sponsored a number of high-level meetings, all of which were aimed at promoting PSB. The following are a few examples during the period under review.

- In collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD), UNESCO supported the Asia Media Summit which brought together about 340 decision-makers, media professionals, scholars and NGO representatives in Kuala Lumpur in May 2005.
- UNESCO sponsored a conference on promoting human rights, tolerance, multilingualism and the fight against discrimination in the media. It brought together representatives of national media, regulatory authorities, journalists and media professional associations and others in Lisbon in October 2005.
- In May 2003 UNESCO and several other partners sponsored the first Conference of Ministers responsible for information and broadcasting in Asia and the Pacific at a meeting in Bangkok. The resulting *Bangkok Declaration* called for, among other things,

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<sup>5</sup> Rumphorst notes that some languages do not have a term that corresponds to the English word, “public”, the closest translation conferring the notion of state, government or official.

full autonomy for PSB, independence of media and cultural diversity in broadcast programming.

- In July 2003, UNESCO organized a workshop entitled, Public Service Broadcasting and the Civil Society in the Arab Region, in Amman, Jordan. The resulting *Amman Declaration* recommended that national authorities in all countries of the region encourage the development of PSB by providing the necessary legal framework and financial and human resources needed and that national public broadcasters develop content addressed to all components of society, in particular children, women and youth, as a way of fulfilling their educational, cultural and social functions.
- Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) organized, with UNESCO's participation, a seminar on PSB in the Central Asian republics in February 2003, in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Participants recommended ways and means of publicizing and popularizing PSB as an independent organ of broadcasting among citizens and decision-making authorities in Central Asia.

Although no quantitative data exist to verify that UNESCO has succeeded in raising awareness, most stakeholders agree that these efforts have made a difference when taken together.

*The impact is clear in that many professional organizations now have PSB on their agendas.*  
- UNESCO field officer

When asked to name UNESCO's achievements in PSB between 2002 and 2005, a majority of those interviewed mentioned awareness-raising or a particular activity associated with it.

*UNESCO has played a role in keeping the debate on the agenda.*  
- NGO partner spokesperson

It is important to acknowledge that UNESCO has not acted alone; numerous NGOs, professional associations and development agencies have also contributed to raising awareness, sometimes in partnership with UNESCO.

#### 5.4.4 Useful resources

The CI sector has commissioned dozens of PSB resources and guides over the past 10 years, many of which have been translated into several languages to increase their distribution reach. UNESCO functions well as a clearinghouse for these and other PSB resources. The evaluators have listed below some of the best resources produced during the period under review. Several of the CI sector's partners referred to one or more of these publications when asked to identify UNESCO's major achievements. One of the evaluators, who has had a career as a public broadcasting senior manager, examined UNESCO's recent publications on PSB and concluded as follows:

*Some of the documents...are the essential workbooks and reference books for the construction and operation of public service broadcasting organizations. They probably house some western biases, because most of the examples of effective PSB are in western countries. That aside, they are timely, thorough and helpful documents. UNESCO supported publications in this field set the gold standard against which public service practices can be measured.* (D. Ward, personal correspondence, May 17, 2006)



- Banerjee, I. and Senevirantne, K., eds. (2005). *Public Service Broadcasting: A Best Practices Sourcebook*. Paris: UNESCO/AMIC. Endorsed by the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre, International Federation of Journalists, Article 19, Commonwealth Broadcasting Association and the World Radio and Television Council.
- Raine, M. (2003). *Informed Democracies, Parliamentary Broadcasts as a Public Service*. A survey across the Commonwealth countries. New Delhi: Asia-Pacific Bureau for Communication and Information, UNESCO.
- Salomon, E. (2005). *Guidelines for Broadcast Regulation*. London: Commonwealth Broadcasting Association.
- UNESCO (2004). *CBA Editorial Guidelines*. New Delhi: Asia-Pacific Bureau for Communication and Information.

Having reviewed a wealth of excellent materials on PSB, the evaluators question whether more are needed in the near future. It would appear that the CI sector could now turn its attention to other priorities.

#### 5.4.5 Capacity development

Training was among the top three most frequent responses when the evaluators asked CI's field staff and key programming partners to identify UNESCO's achievements in relation to PSB.

The sector sponsored dozens of country and regional training events during the period under review. One partner, AIBD, trained hundreds of journalists, producers and media representatives between 2002 and 2005. In the absence of documentation on systematic follow-up to assess the results of training, the evaluators cannot say with assurance that the training has led to significant changes in the workplace. Response forms completed at the end of training generally attest to the participants' satisfaction. Anecdotal information gathered by the evaluators in relation to the quality of training was generally favourable. However, an evaluation of some UNESCO-sponsored training in Afghanistan showed few positive results and little that was sustainable.

*Training has been successful because it gives [journalists and others] a platform to speak about PSB and an opportunity to say how different private and PS media are.*

- UNESCO field officer

*Rarely when training is done does UNESCO insist that recipients actually do something when they return to their work, such as write an article or develop a policy paper.*

- UNESCO headquarters staff

UNESCO has helped to develop PSB capacity in many ways in addition to training. It has, for example, offset the cost of broadcasting equipment, helped broadcasters digitalize their archives materials, supplied equipment to assist news bureaus to access and distribute information via the Internet, and funded the start-up of some community radio operations.

UNESCO has helped strengthen PSB capacity by providing technical advice. It has hired experts to assist developing countries in the drafting of broadcasting legislation, as it did in Kyrgyzstan,

Malawi and Bangladesh. UNESCO sent a CI specialist to work on PSB in Afghanistan in 2003. The specialist continued to provide technical support to Afghanistan for several years, most recently from UNESCO's Headquarters in Paris (see Case Study, Appendix D). In 2002, UNESCO sent technical advisors to Bulgaria to help that country develop broadcasting regulations and to encourage it to adopt a PSB model. In 2004-2005, the CI sector provided technical support to the national broadcasting service of Mali and Timor-Leste.

UNESCO has helped increase the participation of developing countries in international fora on PSB by covering travel and related costs. One key stakeholder told the evaluators that participation from developing countries and their degree of influence would have been much diminished without this support.

Networking and linkages, both closely linked to participation, are another important aspect of capacity development. Here, as noted earlier, UNESCO has played a leadership role in bringing together broadcasters, their professional associations and unions, NGOs, experts, academics, legislators and advocacy groups to discuss PSB issues and to encourage collaboration. In 2002-2003 alone UNESCO organized and/or supported conferences, meetings and workshops which brought together about 900 broadcasters and media professional from 80 countries to discuss PSB. Although it is difficult to measure the results of these initiatives for lack of systematic follow-up, many of UNESCO's partners say they have benefited from their involvement in these networks and continue to participate with or without UNESCO's ongoing support.

In the period under review, the CI sector supported the work of numerous organizations working on PSB issues. For example:

- World Radio and Television Council received CI funding to prepare and distribute criteria for editorial independence;
- Commonwealth Broadcasting Association received funds to compile and distribute model guidelines for PSB and to work on the development of parliamentary broadcasting among its members; and
- Asia Media Information and Communication Center received support to research and publish resource materials for PSB.

One of the CI sector's major partners, the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD), began as a UNDP-funded project implemented by UNESCO in the late 1960s. It now provides advocacy, training<sup>6</sup> and technical assistance to member countries of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and has 33 affiliate

*UNESCO's support for AIBD has strengthened AIBD's role as a catalyst in bringing together key stakeholders to examine and synthesize various components of PSB and how best to implement PSB. [UNESCO] has also enhanced AIBD's role as a major resource center...on PSB.*

- AIBD spokesperson

organizations. AIBD claims that its long association with UNESCO has strengthened its capacity to support and promote PSB among its members.

UNESCO's International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC), administered separately from the CI sector's core budget and beyond

the scope of this evaluation, is another means by which the Organization has developed PSB capacity. IPDC underwrites media projects but also seeks to develop healthy environments for the growth of free and pluralistic media in developing countries. Having spent US\$ 92 million on

<sup>6</sup> More than 14,000 people from the Asia-Pacific region have participated in AIBD training programs since its inception (AIBD web site: [www.aibd.org](http://www.aibd.org))



more than 1,100 projects in 139 developing countries since its inception in 1980, IPDC has helped foster media independence and pluralism. It has strengthened community media, radio and television organizations and national and regional news agencies.

It is a challenge to assess the outcomes of these initiatives owing to lack of reliable data on results, but there is sufficient information to suggest that many of them have made positive contributions to building stronger capacity for PSB.

#### 5.4.6 Unexpected results

Unexpected results, positive or negative, can be as important as expected results. The evaluators wish to note a few that came to their attention during interviews.

One important unexpected result is that several of UNESCO's partners, AIBD, AMIC and CBA among them, have continued to advocate for and support PSB without UNESCO's assistance. UNESCO has helped create space for these organizations within the field of PSB and can count on their continued active participation. Some of these partners have carved out a niche that UNESCO could not fill. For example, Article 19, a UK-based NGO, can and does speak out strongly when it sees abuses of freedom of speech in the media and laws that fail to live up to UN conventions on human rights or established PSB criteria.

Another indirect unexpected result is that UNESCO has often helped organizations leverage funds from other sources, allowing them to accomplish much more than would have been done with UNESCO funds alone. UNESCO's seed funding and collaborative work in Afghanistan, for example, helped leverage large sums of money from a variety of sources for revamping broadcasting in that country.

The evaluators turn now to a few areas of UNESCO's work in relation to PSB where improvement is warranted.

### 5.5 Challenges

#### 5.5.1 Strategy and focus

The evaluators believe that UNESCO is trying to do too much with too few resources and, as a result, may not be doing enough of the things that matter most. The CI sector needs a clearer strategy and a sharper focus to its PSB programming.

Several of UNESCO's partners told the evaluators that the Organization did not have a clearly articulated strategy for achieving results in relation to PSB. Some of the CI sector's own staff called for "a clearer strategy" with "clearer indicators" and "more guidance from Headquarters."

The evaluators can see that the CI sector has a general strategy, as outlined in Table 1, but not a coherent one specific to PSB. Much of CI's PSB programming is aimed at raising awareness and developing capacity. In this realm, UNESCO has achieved a good measure of success, as noted earlier, but without much demonstrable change in relation to its long-term goal of fostering PSB services. It has trained hundreds of journalists and brought scores of media managers to conferences and workshops, but with few signs of movement towards PSB upon the participants' return to their home countries. The Organization has sponsored the production of public service-oriented radio and television programming and supported community radio initiatives, but with questionable sustainability. The CI sector's activities have demonstrated the value of PSB and

likely increased the demand for PSB. But the central question remains: how to build political will for PSB? UNESCO is unlikely to increase the number and quality of PSB services unless it has a strategy more attuned to high-level advocacy.

*UNESCO should concentrate more on one central point rather than spreading its resources too thinly.*

- Media expert

*UNICEF is synonymous with kids, for example. UNESCO needs to be synonymous with PSB advocacy, but it has so many mandates to support.*

- Broadcasting association executive

When the evaluators reviewed the sector's wide array of activities under the rubric of PSB, they had difficulty identifying a focus. The boundaries of what constitutes support for PSB appear to be expanding from year to year but without a commensurate expansion of the CI's budget for PSB. With a budget of about \$1 million for PSB each year, the CI sector should be focusing on the few activities that matter most; those that have the best chance of moving decision-makers closer to PSB. Sharper focus could also mean concentrating efforts in the developing countries that are most amenable to change.

When the evaluators inquired as to what ought to be the CI sector's priority activities, "high-level advocacy" was a frequent response. However, the evaluators see that most of the CI sector's programming is directed at raising awareness and building capacity at the operational level—the managers, professionals, technical staff and their associations and unions. Several field staff recognized this shortcoming. When interviewed, some called for "more momentum at the political level", "more direct dialogue with ministers" and "more pressure on governments."

*UNESCO must be the energetic flag carrier, leader and advocate for PSB around the world, and we must jealously guard its role there. It has the greatest legitimacy to do it. [But], it should throw away the niceties and use all the ammunition it has!*

- Broadcasting union representative

### 5.5.2 Programmatic approach

Though UNESCO has a six-year Medium Term Strategy, most of the CI sector's PSB projects are small and run for less than a year. In addition, the sector supports many one-time events, such as conferences and training, where there is little or no follow-up.

Many stakeholders told the evaluators that progress towards PSB requires sustained programming with a horizon of ten years or more. Although there is still room for short-term projects, the evaluators would suggest that projects need to be part of a long-term program with clearly articulated outcomes. Under a programmatic approach, UNESCO would select countries or regions in which political conditions present a tolerable level of risk for PSB investments. In those areas, UNESCO would map out a 10-year program comprising a range of initiatives aimed at: convincing politicians of the value of PSB; creating or strengthening demand from civil society organizations; fostering a regulatory environment conducive to PSB; and assisting governments in finding ways to pay for PSB. As the program went forward, the CI sector would monitor progress, reward positive action, learn from experience and adjust its plans accordingly.

Under a programmatic approach, PSB would become an attractive vehicle by which to achieve many of UNESCO's other priorities, particularly those related to education and culture. PSB

projects could, for example, complement UNESCO's work in distance learning and cultural and linguistic diversity. This will, however, require increased coordination and collaboration among the sectors. Senior managers at UNESCO Headquarters told the evaluators that intersectoral collaboration is weak.

In short, a programmatic approach would be longer-term and less *ad hoc* than is currently the case, more closely tied to a PSB advocacy strategy, more complementary to other areas of UNESCO's mandate, and more tightly focused on the achievement of results.

### 5.5.3 Staffing

UNESCO's most important asset is its staff. Little in the way of results can be expected without qualified staff who believe in PSB, who are motivated, who know how to bring about change, and who are in place long enough to see a program through.

Some Headquarters and several field staff told the evaluators that UNESCO's PSB programming was too often "personality-driven," meaning that it was overly dependent on the qualifications and personal interests of individuals. The Afghanistan case study (see Appendix D) illustrates this point. There, PSB programming was strongest when there was a country director who had a background in communication. When he departed, programming advanced in other directions. A CI staff member in the Americas told the evaluators that he put most of his efforts into community radio, an area of personal interest, because he thought PSB was not viable.

In any organization, programming is bound to be influenced by the interests and experience of staff. Such a tendency can be mitigated by clear strategy, effective planning and good supervision. Managers can exploit this phenomenon of organizational behaviour to advantage by putting in place staff with the appropriate qualifications.

Headquarters staff acknowledged a dearth of PSB expertise among field staff and attributed the Organization's limited success in some regions (Africa in particular) to this lack of expertise.<sup>7</sup> Conversely, they attributed successes in parts of Latin America, Asia and the Pacific to staff with strong PSB backgrounds and interests.

The most important PSB work to be done in the field demands experienced staff. Advocacy is a case in point. How can UNESCO expect to persuade top decision-makers of the need for PSB if the CI staff are junior? Senior managers from headquarters can talk directly to ministers; local staff often cannot. Some field staff told the evaluators that their work in PSB would benefit from more frequent visits by Headquarters' personnel. The evaluators note that some CI managers travel frequently to developing countries, while others do not. With a mere handful of senior managers at Headquarters, all need to travel frequently in order to adequately support field staff in advancing PSB.

*When you are advocating with governments, you don't tell a small boy to talk to the prime minister about press freedom.*

- UNESCO field officer

As noted earlier, field staff responsible for CI report to local directors, not to CI managers at Headquarters. Local directors have long agendas, in keeping with UNESCO's broad mandate, and CI managers at Headquarters have no say in hiring these local directors. Although the advantages to decentralization appear to outweigh the disadvantages, there remain gaps between

<sup>7</sup>Aware of this deficiency, Headquarters has recently freed up two P-4 posts and redirected them to Africa.

Headquarters and the field regarding PSB initiatives. This area, which is beyond the scope of this evaluation, deserves further attention.

There are other factors that contribute to personality-driven programming, namely: the absence of a distinct PSB program; UNESCO's wide-ranging mandate; and limited financial resources.

#### 5.5.4 Monitoring and reporting

As noted earlier, the CI sector's system for monitoring and reporting is weak. This speaks to a larger, UNESCO-wide problem noted in other evaluations.<sup>8</sup>

The Medium Term Strategy 2002-2007 has as an outcome result, "Adoption of national legislation concerning public service radio and television." However, the sector has insufficient means of measuring its progress in relation to this and other outcomes. It has no logical framework for PSB and an inadequate framework for communication and information. The sector has no indicators corresponding to outcome statements and no systematic means of gathering information against indicators.<sup>9</sup> Generally, the sector lacks hard data with which to track its progress in relation to PSB. It would appear that field offices do not routinely report on the achievement of expected results set out in annual work plans.

The evaluators were unable to find accurate baseline data to provide a clear picture of PSB at the beginning of the Medium Term Strategy 2002-2007. Without this data, it is impossible to monitor progress effectively. CI managers are able point to the countries that have made progress towards PSB in recent years but this information does not appear to have been recorded in any systematic way. Nowhere could the evaluators find a UNESCO document describing the state of PSB in country "x" or country "y" and how the Organization has helped to bring about improvements.

The evaluators could find little evidence of Headquarters and field staff reflecting regularly on progress towards PSB outcomes. Significant programming improvements are unlikely unless all CI sector staff involved in PSB activities reflect on their work from time to time, ideally supported by robust monitoring data.

Every staff member questioned about UNESCO's System of Information on Strategies, Tasks and Evaluation of Results (SISTER) said that they found the System cumbersome and frustrating to use. The evaluators note that the information about PSB contained in SISTER is often incomplete and not in a results-based format. The way much of the information is entered into SISTER suggests to the evaluators that staff have had insufficient training in results-based management (RBM). Indicators are sometimes mistakenly referred to as results, and results are often no more than a list of completed activities. SISTER does not capture lessons nor does it include systematic risk assessment, both common features of effective RBM systems. It requires no information about unexpected results, either positive or negative. SISTER is not used effectively for either performance measurement or management decision-making. If it is not a tool for learning, its value is questionable.

<sup>8</sup> See for example, *Biennial Evaluation Report on the Activities and Results of all UNESCO Decentralized Bodies*. Internal report presented to the Executive Board, hundred and sixty-seventh session, August 2003.

<sup>9</sup> An improved logical framework would have an outcome result statement for PSB along the lines of "Increased and enhanced PSB services, particularly in developing countries." One of the indicators, which is now a results statement, could be "number of developing countries that adopt national legislation concerning public service radio and television."

The evaluators saw room to improve other aspects of reporting. A major reporting challenge is the large number of small projects funded by UNESCO each year. Herein lies a dilemma: it may not be cost-effective for UNESCO to fully train every project-implementing organization in results-based reporting. The Organization needs to arrive at a compromise, perhaps providing training in RBM for those who are implementing larger projects. As a start, UNESCO could develop some reporting guidelines and tools to help generate useful data on results.

Most service contracts are output-based and demand accountability at this level only. The evaluators found little evidence of UNESCO having rolled the outputs together and measured them against desired outcomes. For example, a UNESCO partner reports that 200 people attended a PSB conference and describes what was presented and discussed. There is evidence that the conference took place and that the partner spent the funds according to an approved budget and work plan but there is no follow-up to determine what changes came about as a result of the conference. The same applies to training and most other capacity development activities. Assessment ends at the training event with little follow-up or follow-through. This could be rectified easily by surveying participants six months or more following an event.

The monitoring of large projects could also be improved. The evaluators read through massive amounts of documentation to develop the Afghanistan case study (Appendix D). However, the quality of some of the information was poor and the data incomplete, suggesting the need to improve UNESCO's management information system. To its credit, UNESCO did conduct a mid-term evaluation of its support to educational radio and television in Afghanistan.

The evaluators found scant information dealing with UNESCO's high-level advocacy work in relation to PSB. How did UNESCO succeed in getting the governments of Kyrgyzstan and Malawi to pass progressive legislation? What were the methods used and the lessons learned from its experience in those countries? Such information is needed to assist staff with their advocacy initiatives. To date, little of this important work has been documented.

### 5.5.5 Partnerships

The evaluators were asked to answer the question: "How effective were UNESCO's partners?" "Partners" was understood to mean the key organizations with whom the CI sector collaborates, such as broadcasting associations, unions, institutes and NGOs, as outlined in Section 5 of the evaluation work plan (see Appendix A).

A majority of stakeholders thought that the UNESCO had the right mix of partners, some noting the balance between government and NGOs stakeholders. This response was not surprising, considering that most of those interviewed were representatives of the organizations with which UNESCO frequently partners.

As noted earlier, UNESCO has had a productive relationship with these partners. They have helped to raise awareness about the importance of PSB and many have helped develop PSB capacity by providing training and technical assistance and by preparing useful guides and learning resources. To UNESCO's credit, all are part of a worldwide PSB network that is likely to continue even if UNESCO were to diminish its support.

To what extent have these partners helped to bring about the fundamental changes needed to transform state broadcasters into public service broadcasters? Which ones have gone beyond raising awareness to affecting change? The unions, institutes and some of the broadcasting associations told the evaluators that they fear they could alienate their members if they push too

hard on broadcasting reforms. State broadcasters are the constituents of many of the associations, unions and institutions. This makes strong advocacy awkward for them because state broadcasters are generally among the most resistant to change, according to many of UNESCO's staff and experts interviewed.

NGOs, such as Article 19 and the International Federation of Journalists, are in a much better position to press for change, and they do. Some can push harder on certain issues than UNESCO itself. These ought to be among UNESCO's closest allies for advocacy. The evaluators believe that UNESCO could make better use of these NGOs and cultivate relationships with others, such as local journalists' associations, citizens' rights groups and civil society organizations that keep a close watch on media.

The evaluators believe that UNESCO has missed opportunities to partner with other organizations within the UN family. Where this has happened, such as in central Asia where UNESCO and the UNDP have teamed up to put PSB in UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF), it appears to have brought additional pressure to bear on host governments, according to field staff.

## 6. Lessons

The lessons outlined below have emerged from the evaluators' review of documentation and from their interviews. These lessons resonated with members of the evaluation steering committee at its April 2006 meeting.

### Lessons

Progress on PSB is more likely to occur:

- *When there is collaboration with others*
- *Where there are strategic opportunities*
- *When UNESCO uses project funds to reward progressive policy change*
- *Where there are staff in the field who are committed to PSB*
- *When there is follow-up and follow-through on activities*
- *Where UNESCO has a long-term perspective*

The case study from Afghanistan (Appendix D) supports the view that collaborative programming has the potential to achieve much more than UNESCO could do alone. Collaboration is essential for large, long-term initiatives since UNESCO has limited funds available within the CI sector's regular budget for PSB. UNESCO's collaboration with UNDP in central Asia and its positioning of PSB within the UNDAF appears to have resulted in a positive influence. This is evident in Kyrgyzstan, for example, which developed a progressive broadcasting law that brought the country closer to a PSB model.

UNESCO's recent experiences in Malawi and Afghanistan demonstrate that significant movement towards PSB is possible in countries that are undergoing democratic reform. Post-conflict and failed states in transition can be fertile grounds for PSB but sustainable reforms are difficult to achieve within UNESCO's planning cycle. UNESCO and its partners need to undertake thorough risk assessments in such countries before investing heavily.



Cambodia illustrates one of UNESCO's successful strategies for influencing change. UNESCO used IPDC funds to lever concessions from the Cambodian government. With IPDC as a carrot, UNESCO was able to persuade the government to introduce a new policy on editorial independence for broadcasters.

As noted earlier, UNESCO's greatest strength is its staff. In regions with knowledgeable and committed staff, it has had the largest volume of projects and made the most progress towards PSB. In contrast, where field officers have had little knowledge or interest in PSB, progress has been marginal.

Years of persistent follow-up and follow-through in India and Sri Lanka have helped bring these countries a little closer to PSB. The lesson from India, Sri Lanka and elsewhere is that it takes a long time to develop PSB, particularly in transforming state broadcasters into public service broadcasters.

## 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Among the greatest challenges UNESCO faces is the reluctance of many governments to move forward on PSB, mainly for lack of political will. There are, however, opportunities, particularly in states that are undergoing democratic reform. For these countries, PSB provides a means to reflect diversity, educate citizens and encourage public debate.

UNESCO has emerged, after more than 10 years of activity, as a respected global leader for PSB. Although there are more organizations and institutions involved in PSB today than ever before, the majority of UNESCO's partners think that it should continue to head the field. The evaluators agree, having noted several strengths that make it well-suited for this leadership role.

The evaluators found UNESCO's PSB programming highly relevant to the Organization's mandate and responsive to needs expressed by recipient countries. UNESCO has been successful in defining PSB and raising awareness about the importance of PSB. The evaluators note that UNESCO has produced world-class guides and related resources for PSB, some having set a gold standard for quality and utility. UNESCO has made considerable progress in developing capacity for PSB through training, technical assistance and information-sharing on effective practices. UNESCO has, however, failed to adequately determine the results of these and other PSB activities, owing mainly to a weak monitoring and reporting system.

The CI sector appears to have had marginal success in transforming state broadcasters to public service models of broadcasting, a task that is at the core of its PSB mandate. Acknowledging that such transformation takes relentless work over many years, the evaluators nevertheless believe that the CI sector could make better use of its organizational strengths and its limited resources towards this end.

When the evaluators view UNESCO's PSB programming as a whole, they conclude that the Organization is attempting to do too much with too few resources. If UNESCO continues to conduct many small, discrete projects scattered among its 191 member states, the evaluators surmise that UNESCO will foster few, if any, new PSB services over the course of the next Medium Term Strategy.

The CI sector's PSB projects are, for the most part, directed at individuals and groups that function at an operational level. Although this has helped raise awareness and build capacity, there is little evidence to suggest that it has influenced decision-making at higher levels where the fate of PSB is determined.

A more potent strategy is needed, one that focuses resources on high-level advocacy so as to generate the political will for PSB. As part of this new strategy, the Organization should invest more in local advocacy groups and less in some of its traditional partners who must serve the interests of state broadcasting organizations. Concentrating on fewer, larger projects would enhance UNESCO's opportunity to develop a more rigorous and more useful system of monitoring and reporting.

**Recommendation #1:** *It is recommended that UNESCO develop a strategy for PSB that would:*

- *Support fewer, but larger and longer activities with greater opportunity for results;*
- *Concentrate resources in countries that are receptive to PSB and where the CI sector has experienced staff with appropriate skills and experience;*
- *Focus more resources on advocacy targeted at policy makers and senior decision-makers through direct interventions and advocacy groups; and*
- *Ensure closer monitoring and improved reporting of results.*

The evaluators conclude that the CI sector is in need of more powerful methods and tools to persuade governments to adopt PSB. As a start, it could make better use of the potential within UNESCO itself. It could, for example, increase efforts to engage other sectors, such as Education, to support PSB in developing countries. First, however, the Education sector must be persuaded that PSB could help it to achieve its goals. That will require the CI sector to do more work to promote PSB within UNESCO itself.

**Recommendation #2:** *It is recommended that the CI sector increase efforts to persuade other sectors within UNESCO of the relevance of PSB to their objectives and the need for close collaboration on PSB across sectors.*

UNESCO could ratchet up its efforts to encourage countries to adopt PSB by combining efforts with other organizations within the UN family. This is occurring now but on a sporadic basis.

**Recommendation #3:** *It is recommended that the CI sector increase its collaboration with other UN multilateral organizations and, where feasible, use UN Development Assistance Frameworks to encourage governments to move towards PSB.*

UNDAFs will be helpful but evaluators see merit in UNESCO using some new and potentially more powerful tools for advocacy. One such tool, to which many stakeholders reacted favourably, is a PSB global index. No such index exists, although several international organizations, some with initial support from UNESCO, have mandates closely related to PSB monitoring<sup>10</sup>. Other

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<sup>10</sup> Reporters Without Borders monitors the state of press freedom; Index on Censorship monitors freedom of expression in targeted countries; Article 19 also monitors freedom of expression and has produced baseline information in many countries; and The World Radio and Television Council and the Swiss-based Media and Society Foundation are setting up a system to rate and electronic media's contributions to social development and democracy in every country. The Media and Society Foundation has developed



UN organizations, UNDP among them, use global indexes as part of their advocacy strategies and indexes are consistent with the UN's role in setting global standards.

A PSB global index would give the CI sector a much-needed baseline against which it could measure its performance. If it were updated every few years, a PSB global index would provide a means by which UNESCO and its partners could track their progress and decide where to focus their efforts. A global index would allow UNESCO to do keep constant peer pressure on governments, something that it is unable to do effectively now. UNESCO could use the index to reward countries for progress.

Assessments to determine the status of PSB could be conducted by expert panels, perhaps regionally and at arm's length. The entire initiative could be managed by a reputable NGO or institute.

A PSB global index would give UNESCO field staff a potent resource which, when combined with a local program, could help to advance PSB.

**Recommendation #4:** *It is recommended that the CI sector conduct a study to determine the feasibility of creating a PSB global index.*

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CERTIMEDIA, a self-evaluation methodology and tools, to assist electronic and print media to assess the quality of their management and programming, including editorial content.

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## Evaluation Work Plan

### 1. Background and Context

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) mandate is *"to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations."*<sup>11</sup> States that are party to UNESCO's Constitution believe in full and equal opportunities for education for all, unrestricted pursuit of objective truth, and free exchange of ideas and knowledge. Within its mandate, UNESCO has been supporting action to promote and strengthen public service broadcasting (PSB) worldwide for more than a decade.

Among the criteria that UNESCO and its partners use to characterize PSB are the following:

- Services whose governing boards and structures are independent of government;
- Services that have guaranteed funding that is adequate to serve the needs and interests of the public and to promote the free flow of information and ideas; and
- Services that are directly accountable to the public.

UNESCO and its partners recognize the critical role that public service broadcasting organizations play in providing a forum for wide-ranging public debate, innovative programming not driven by market forces, and local production, particularly of an educational and cultural nature.

Within this context, UNESCO undertakes actions that are in line with the strategies set out in its program and budget documents. Chief among these documents is the 2002-2007 Medium Term Strategy, and the biennial Program and Budgets 2002-2003 and 2004-2005, which feature "Enhancing public service broadcasting" as a Main Line of Action. In recent years, UNESCO's work in relation to PSB has focused on:

1. Promoting editorial independence;
2. Emphasizing the transformation of state-owned broadcasting stations into independent public service stations;
3. Fostering the educational and cultural dimensions of the media;
4. Sensitizing governments and the general public about the need for public service broadcasting; and
5. Supporting the development of endogenous production capacities.

The evaluation will take place as UNESCO prepares its Medium Term Strategy for the period 2008-2013.

### 2. Rationale and Objective of the Evaluation

UNESCO has never evaluated its support to PSB in the past and the timing of this evaluation fits well with the Organization's planning cycle. The legislative mandate for the evaluation is found in the evaluation plan in UNESCO's Approved Program and Budget for 2006 – 2007 (33C/5).

The objective of the evaluation is to assess:

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<sup>11</sup> UNESCO Constitution, 1945.

1. the relevance and effectiveness of UNESCO strategies and capacity building activities to enhance public service broadcasting institutions implemented during 2002-2005 ;
2. the results achieved by UNESCO actions and strategies to enhance educational and cultural content in public service broadcasting institutions;
3. the extent of collaboration and strategic alliances built with broadcasting unions and regional broadcasting organizations such as ABU, EBU, ASBU, SABA, URTNA, CIRTEF, CBA and AIBD and the impact they have had on the development of public service broadcasting in their respective regions (organizations); and
4. the sustainability of positive results after the termination of UNESCO programs in PSB.

### 3. Approach and Methodology

Stiles Associates Inc. will employ a utilization-focused approach (Patton 1997) to the evaluation wherein key UNESCO managers will be involved in decisions about the design and focus of the evaluation and the use of the information gathered by the evaluation team. For this purpose, UNESCO has formed a small evaluation steering committee composed of Wijayananda Jayaweera, Director, Communication Development Division; Mogens Schmidt, Deputy Assistant Director-General, Division for Freedom of Expression, Democracy and Peace; Geoffrey Geurts, Evaluation Specialist, Internal Oversight Service; and Mark Stiles, the lead evaluator. The committee members have had the opportunity to review an early draft of the evaluation framework contained in this work plan. The committee will meet again to discuss the evaluation findings and possible recommendations before the evaluators draft their final report. The evaluators will keep the committee apprised of their progress and may request their advice should they run into any major problems during the evaluation.

The purpose for this collaborative approach is to ensure that the evaluation produces useful information, practical recommendations and commitment to implementing any changes that may be necessary.

The evaluation will be forward-looking, improvement-oriented and aimed at providing useful information to assist UNESCO in planning its 2008-2013 Medium Term Strategy. The evaluation will pay particular attention to contextual issues in the field and at UNESCO Headquarters to ensure that recommendations are relevant and realistic. The evaluation will strive to identify important lessons that could help to inform future plans and to enhance results.

Stiles Associates Inc. plans to use a combination of the following methods for the evaluation:

- a. Review of relevant documentation, including background information, budgets, plans, strategies, service contracts, publications, audio-visual and other outputs, reports and declarations;
- b. Face-to-face interviews with key Headquarters staff, field staff, partners and experts;
- c. Telephone interviews or an email survey of key partners who could not be interviewed in person; and
- d. A case study of UNESCO's experience in supporting a multilateral effort to develop public broadcasting services in Afghanistan.

The consultants will cross-reference quantitative data and triangulate qualitative data to ensure that the information gathered is valid, reliable, balanced and fair. Stiles Associates Inc. will

circulate a draft of the final report to the evaluation steering committee for review and will prepare a final report incorporating feedback received.

#### 4. Evaluation Framework

Issues	Key Questions	Indicators	Data Sources
Relevance	What is the relevance of UNESCO's actions with regard to PSB in relation to needs and the Organization's mandate and medium-term strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality of needs assessments and related systems to identify needs.</li> <li>Extent to which actions were consistent with UNESCO's mandate and Medium-term Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning documents</li> <li>HQ and field staff</li> <li>Partners</li> </ul>
Results	<p>What has UNESCO achieved towards enhancing public service broadcasting through the actions of COM and FED (including field offices) and their partners?</p> <p>To what extent are these achievements sustainable?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent to which planned results were achieved</li> <li>Extent to which needs were met</li> <li># and significance of unexpected results</li> <li>Significance of results as perceived by key stakeholders</li> <li># of achievements that are likely to last without further UNESCO support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documents</li> <li>HQ and field staff</li> <li>Partners</li> <li>Experts</li> <li>Documents</li> <li>HQ and field staff</li> <li>Partners</li> <li>Experts</li> </ul>
Efficiency and organizational effectiveness	<p>How efficient and effective were UNESCO's approaches and types of interventions from headquarters and the field offices?</p> <p>How effective were UNESCO's partnerships?</p> <p>What are UNESCO's organizational strengths and constraints in carrying out its PSB mandate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># and significance of achievements in relation to each approach and type of intervention</li> <li>Extent to which planned actions were completed on time and within budget</li> <li>Strength and effectiveness of partnerships</li> <li># and nature of significant strengths</li> <li># and nature of significant constraints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documents</li> <li>HQ and field staff</li> <li>Partners</li> <li>Experts</li> <li>Action plans, budgets, performance reports and project reports</li> <li>Documents</li> <li>HQ and field staff</li> <li>Partners</li> <li>Documents</li> <li>HQ and field staff</li> <li>Partners</li> </ul>
Lessons	What lessons can be drawn from UNESCO's experience in support of PSB that may inform future plans and improve results?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports, case study</li> <li>HQ and field staff</li> <li>Partners</li> </ul>

Note: Sub-questions for each key question appear in Appendix A.

## 5. Information Sources, Methods and Timing

Sources	Sample Size	Methods	Timing
<i>HQ staff</i>	All key COM & FED staff	Face-to-face interviews, telephone follow-up	January, February
<i>Field staff</i>	All key staff active in PSB support	Delhi: face-to-face interviews Others: telephone survey	February, March
<i>Broadcasting Unions</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU)</li> <li>• European Broadcasting Union</li> <li>• Union de Radiodiffusion des Etats Arabes (ASBU)</li> <li>• URTNA (French Africa)</li> </ul>	All  Face-to-face interviews for those attending the CBA annual meeting in Delhi, Feb 16-17  Others: phone and email survey	February, March	
<i>Broadcasting Associations</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commonwealth Broadcasting Association</li> <li>• South African Broadcasting Association</li> <li>• CIRTEF</li> </ul>	All  Face-to-face interviews for those attending the CBA annual meeting in Delhi, Feb 16-17 Others: phone and email survey	February, March	
<i>Broadcasting Institutes</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development</li> <li>• Asian Media Information and Communication Centre</li> <li>• Université Radiophonique et Télévisuelle Internationale (URTI)</li> </ul>	All  Face-to-face interviews for those attending the CBA annual meeting in Delhi, Feb 16-17 Others: phone and email survey	February, March	
<i>NGOs</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Article 19</li> <li>• International Federation of Journalists</li> <li>• Asian Media Info Centre</li> <li>• World Radio and TV Council</li> </ul>	Most active  Telephone or email survey	February, March	
<i>Experts</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tony Mendel</li> <li>• Boonlert Supadhiloke</li> <li>• Gareth Price</li> </ul>	All  Telephone interviews	February, March	
<i>Documents</i> Strategies, plans, budgets, monitoring reports, print and audio visual products, declarations, conference reports	Approx 150 documents and 25 print and audio visual products	Consultants will review documents and products with the assistance of subject specialists, where necessary	January, February, March
<b>Case Study:</b> UNESCO's collaborative initiative to establish models of public broadcasting in Afghanistan.			

## 6. Tasks and Work Schedule

<b>Task</b>	<b>Team Members</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. Discuss assignment at UNESCO headquarters, meet with evaluation steering committee	<b>Stiles</b>	January 20
2. Conduct initial interviews at UNESCO headquarters	<b>Stiles</b>	January 20
3. Recruit and engage evaluation team	<b>Stiles</b>	January 25
4. Prepare and submit work plan	<b>Stiles</b> Weeks	January 25
5. Design and test evaluation instruments (questionnaires, checklists)	<b>Stiles</b> Weeks Agrawal	February 15
6. Review background documents	<b>Weeks</b> Stiles Ward Agrawal	February 15
7. Conduct face-to-face interviews with CI staff, Delhi	<b>Agrawal</b>	February 20
8. Conduct face-to-face interviews with major partners attending CBA meeting in Delhi	<b>Agrawal</b>	February 20
9. Conduct interviews with other field office staff and follow-up interviews with headquarters staff	<b>Weeks</b>	March 10
10. Interview/survey key stakeholders and experts who were not at the CBA meeting in Delhi	<b>Weeks</b> Stiles Ward	March 15
11. Prepare case study of UNESCO's support to PSB in Afghanistan and interview key stakeholders	<b>Quarry</b> Weeks	March 15
12. Compile, verify and undertake preliminary analysis of all data	<b>Stiles</b> Weeks Ward	March 31
13. Meet with evaluation steering committee at UNESCO headquarters	<b>Stiles</b> Ward	April 15
14. Draft report	<b>Stiles</b> Weeks Agrawal Quarry	May 12
15. Submit draft report to UNESCO	<b>Stiles</b>	May 15
16. Revise report incorporating feedback from UNESCO	<b>Stiles</b> Weeks	June 9
17. Submit final report to UNESCO	<b>Stiles</b>	June 12

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## **UNESCO Support to Public Service Broadcasting in Afghanistan: A Case Study**

### **1. Background**

#### **1.1 Purpose, Methodology and Constraints**

The purpose of this assessment is to draw lessons from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) recent experience in Afghanistan where it has played a significant role aiding the transition towards a Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) model in a country that has been wracked by decades of conflict. The case study focuses on the period 2002 - 2005.

#### **Methodology**

The evaluators collected data for this case study through a document review and interviews. Documents reviewed included UNESCO's System of Information on Strategies, Tasks and Evaluation of Results (SISTER) reports, project proposals, service contracts, evaluation reports, commissioned studies and plans, articles, legislation and Internet publications. The evaluators interviewed 14 people, including UNESCO staff and consultants, Afghan broadcasters, government officials and representatives of NGOs and donors. Most interviews were conducted in person, using a semi-structured guide. Some individuals were interviewed by telephone and a few by e-mail. A list of people interviewed is included in Appendix B.

#### **Evaluation constraints**

The evaluation was constrained by incomplete financial and narrative reporting. This made it challenging for the evaluators to paint a clear picture of UNESCO activities and results relating to its support of PSB in Afghanistan.

### **1.2 Context**

Three decades of civil war left Afghanistan with a fractured infrastructure and a severe shortage of skilled workers and resources. Under the Taliban, during the period 1996 - 2001, television sets were destroyed, almost all media outlets were closed, and much of the radio and television distribution infrastructure was demolished. After the fall of the Taliban in 2001, the Bonn Conference established a process for Afghanistan's political reconstruction. Soon after, UNESCO's country director arrived in Kabul to respond to immediate areas of humanitarian need within the Organization's mandate. Given his strong background in the Communication and Information (CI) sector and UNESCO's role within the UN family as the lead agency in media development, the country director took an active role in rehabilitating the Afghan media.

In December 2001, Radio and Television Afghanistan (RTA)<sup>12</sup> was the first national radio station to come back on the air. It had little equipment, a structure left over from the Soviet occupation and an over-abundance of staff (I don't know if the overstaffing was left over from the Soviets and Taliban or occurred as a result of the influx of donor money), but few with expertise.

In the following years, donors provided tens of millions of dollars to assist media development in Afghanistan. In the rush to put services in place, aid workers, without the benefit of audience

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<sup>12</sup> RTA later changed its name to National Radio Television Afghanistan (NRTA).

research, decided that radio would be the obvious place to start. This decision was based on Afghanistan's low rate of literacy, as well as the country's lack of electricity.

## 2. UNESCO Assistance

### 2.1. Coordination, Policy and Legislation

Between 2002 and 2006 UNESCO carried out a wide range of activities supporting the development of independent media in Afghanistan. This section outlines the major projects supported by UNESCO in PSB.

#### **Consultative Group on Media (2002 –2005)**

In 2002, UNESCO led the establishment of, and later acted as the secretariat for, the Consultative Group on the Media to the Ministry of Information and Culture. The objective of the Consultative Group was to coordinate the large number of NGOs and donors assisting in media development in Afghanistan. One UNESCO staff member said of this initiative, "From 2002 up to 2005 the Consultative Group has been the main arena for coordinating donors' activities, information sharing, discussing policies, lobbying, etc., in an open and participatory way, involving, besides institutional partners, also NGOs and top experts in the media field."

#### *Media Law*

In September 2002, UNESCO Kabul organized the International Seminar on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Media in Afghanistan. The final declaration of that seminar recommended transforming National Radio Television Afghanistan (NRTA) into a public service broadcaster. Following the seminar, UNESCO assisted the Ministry of Information and Culture in drafting a new media law. The law, which was promulgated by parliament in 2006, provides for independent bodies to regulate the media in Afghanistan, including an overarching regulatory body and commissions for private media, NRTA and Bakhtar Information Agency (BIA), the state news service. The mandates of these Commissions include "preserving the independence, impartiality, and professional credibility" of media organizations (Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture 2006, p. 7).

UNESCO provided other support to the Ministry of Information and Culture. For example, it funded consultants to draft budgets and key documents such as the *Technical Annex: Culture, Media and Sport* that the Afghan government presented at the Berlin Pledging Conference in April 2004.

#### *Ad-hoc Commission*

With \$100,000 in support from the Japanese Government, UNESCO is currently supporting the Ad-hoc Independent High Commission of Information and Communication in Afghanistan. The Commission is designed to provide technical advice to the Afghan government on how to operate the media regulatory body under the new media law. It will provide recommendations on the implementing regulations on issues such as the transformation of national media into PSB. A committee of international media experts is assisting the Commission.

The first meeting of the Commission was held in Paris in March 2006. A second took place in Kabul in April. Participants were required to prepare papers on specific issues related to the regulation of free and independent media.

## 2.2. Technical Assistance

### *NRTA*

In 2003 UNESCO mobilized \$1.5 million in funding from the Italian Government to support the transformation of NRTA into a public service broadcaster. The project provided for Internet access, production equipment and newsrooms in Kabul, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif and Kandahar. Journalists and technicians received training in the use of computers, Internet and English. A dedicated File Transfer Protocol system now allows news items to be sent from provincial offices to the headquarters in Kabul by Web streaming.

Through its International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) UNESCO provided \$30,000 to equip a center in NRTA to train staff in modern broadcasting techniques. The evaluators have not assessed the outcomes of this initiative for lack of information.

In 2004, UNESCO co-funded<sup>13</sup> the development of a *Position Plan: Strategy for Radio and Television Afghanistan and Bakhtar Information Agency*, for the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture. The paper examined the organizational changes and funding needed to transform NRTA into a public service broadcaster.

### **ERTV**

In the 1970s and 1980s UNESCO provided major support for Educational Radio and Television (ERTV) as a source of non-formal education, but the decades of war that followed left ERTV headquarters in ruins. In 2003, ERTV staff were working in a few borrowed rooms with outdated equipment while RTA hosted their programs. With \$2.5 million in funds from the Italian Government, UNESCO is rehabilitating ERTV's original production facilities and providing training and other assistance in restructuring the distance education system.

ERTV's building, fully renovated and equipped with computers, radio-TV production equipment and Internet access, has been operational since July 2004. UNESCO has provided a range of technical and managerial training for ERTV staff. It has also been working to develop ERTV's own terrestrial transmission system.

### **Bakhtar Information Agency (BIA)**

UNESCO assisted BIA with training, Internet connection and equipment in 2003 and 2004. A \$67,000 project through IPDC provided training for 300 journalists in advance of the September 2005 election. The IPDC project was aimed at reforming BIA into a reliable information source for all Afghan media.

The IPDC project has yet to be completed and project reports were unavailable to the evaluators when they prepared this case study. The *Position Plan*, co-funded by UNESCO, outlines a project of assistance for the transformation of BIA into a public service news agency.

### **Aïna**

In 2002, UNESCO provided small amounts of seed funding and assistance to establish a Media Centre coordinated by Aïna, an Afghan-French NGO. UNESCO support assisted the Media Centre in obtaining funding from other donors.

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<sup>13</sup> The other funding organizations included the European Commission, BBC World Service Trust, the Centre for International Migration and Development, and the German Embassy.

### 3. Assessment

#### 3.1. Relevance and Results

UNESCO's assistance to PSB in Afghanistan is highly relevant to the organization's mandate. It "contributes to peace and security" (UNESCO 1945) by supporting independent media in a post-conflict situation. Strategic objective 11 of UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy is "Promoting the expression of pluralism and cultural diversity in the media and world information networks" (UNESCO 2002, p. 2, section 164). In Afghanistan, UNESCO has contributed to achieving one of the expected outcomes for this objective, "Adoption of national legislation concerning public service radio and television" (p. 5, section 171).

Afghanistan's new media law represents "enormous progress in many areas", according to a public broadcasting expert. However, the expert expressed reservations about the independence of media governing bodies under the legislation and said there remains a need for the creation of separate PSB legislation. NRTA has been working to develop such legislation with the assistance of other donors.

UNESCO played a pivotal role in moving this agenda forward in the immediate post-conflict environment through the following measures:

- leadership in the Consultative Group on Media;
- 2002 International Seminar on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Media in Afghanistan;
- advice and support to the Ministry of Culture and Information; and
- support for the Ad-hoc Independent High Commission of Information and Communication in Afghanistan.

UNESCO's support for equipment and training at NRTA "gave NRTA a quantum leap in broadcast possibilities," according to one media expert. He saw the Internet connections as a first and essential step in moving NRTA towards PSB. It enabled journalists, for the first time, to access new ideas and produce programs with information from sources outside of government.

Several people interviewed believe UNESCO's support to NRTA has led to an increase in the quantity and, to some extent, the quality of programming provided to the Afghan public. During the *Wolesi Jirga* and Provincial Council elections in September 2005, the use of a file transfer protocol (FTP) server allowed NRTA to provide Afghans with reports of election activities from the six regions of the country throughout the day.

In other areas, small amounts of seed funding from UNESCO were instrumental in leveraging further funding for initiatives such as the Aina Media Centre. According to those interviewed, the Centre acted as the launching pad for a number of successful Afghan media outlets and was the first secure operating location in the country for several international NGOs providing media assistance.

Those interviewed for the evaluation agreed that the expertise and energy of UNESCO's country director in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2004 was the catalyst for these achievements. Between 2003 and 2004 the Kabul office also had a CI specialist on staff.

### 3.2. Sustainability

Five years after the fall of the Taliban, Afghanistan's political future is fragile and it remains a work environment fraught with high-risk. The sustainability of assistance initiatives hinges on stability and the capacity of the fledgling Afghan government to increase its control over the country. But stability and capacity development are unlikely to be achieved in the short run. Afghanistan's development will continue dependent on donor support for many years to come. However, the initial enthusiasm of donors for post-war reconstruction has now been tempered as they realize the long and arduous work needed to affect change.

The Ad-hoc Independent High Commission of Information and Communication in Afghanistan has continued UNESCO's work in supporting the development of policies, legislation and regulation needed to encourage independent media.

Staff changes in the Kabul office have left UNESCO with little expertise to carry on its key advocacy and support role in PSB. The current country director, while skilled in many areas of UNESCO's mandate, does not have a background in communication and information and has no CI specialist on staff who is resident in Kabul. The CI specialist responsible for Afghanistan is based in Tehran and visits several times a year. Several stakeholders in Kabul say UNESCO lacks the visibility it once had as an advocate for PSB.

Although NRTA has made significant progress, several of those interviewed commented that its programming and scheduling was poor and that Afghans were being drawn increasingly to the commercial radio and television that have blossomed over the past four years. The training and equipment provided by UNESCO and other donors have yet to address fundamental structural issues at NRTA such as overstaffing (approximately 2,500 employees when only about 300 are needed), low salaries and a lack of management expertise.

UNESCO followed good practices in supporting the *Position Plan: Strategy for Radio and Television Afghanistan and Bakhtar Information Agency*, which highlighted some of these structural issues. Another donor, the European Community, is currently involved in assisting the NRTA's ongoing transition into an editorially independent public service organization.

Regarding ERTV, a recent mid-term evaluation by UNESCO found the Italian-funded project woefully behind schedule, primarily owing to delays in equipment procurement<sup>14</sup>. The evaluation found that the training provided "does not appear to have had much of an impact on the production staff" (Reddy 2005, p. 9). The report concluded that ERTV lacked the qualified individuals, systems and organization needed for a successful educational broadcasting service. The evaluation called for a major restructuring of ERTV, saying that in its present state it "is not sustainable and will collapse when donor funds are withdrawn or spent" (p. 11).

Some media experts interviewed for this case study were critical of UNESCO's support for ERTV, especially its funding for an independent terrestrial transmission network when NRTA could have provided ERTV free transmission slots. They pointed out that ERTV would continue to have difficulty attracting and retaining qualified staff unless it raises pay scales from below-subsistence levels.

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<sup>14</sup> Other reasons for scheduling problems included administrative encumbrances, staff work overload, reluctance of the broadcasting authority to grant a licence, controversy over the placement of one of the transmitters, and security concerns.

Without major structural changes, ERTV does not appear to be viable. In a country as poor as Afghanistan, it is doubtful that the government could support a public service broadcasting service and an educational broadcasting service, both with separate facilities and transmission systems.

The training and equipment BIA has received has been helpful, but they are unlikely to achieve the desired results unless BIA's underlying structural problems are dealt with. UNESCO-funded training programs ran into resistance. BIA has been a government agency for 70 years and its offices are still housed in the Ministry of Information and Culture. One media expert said that while younger staff were eager to adopt new methods, older employees remained entrenched in their role as distributors of official government "news".

UNESCO co-funded the *Position Plan*, which includes a prescription for restructuring and revitalizing BIA. However, it is unclear whether other donors will step in to provide funding for major structural reforms.

### 3.3. Effectiveness and Efficiency

Between 2001 and 2004, UNESCO was effectively utilized its small program resources to provide support to initiatives to further the PSB agenda. It mobilized \$4 million of extra-budgetary funding from the Italian government and accessed funding from UNESCO's IPDC. However, the Italian-funded projects were plagued by major delays in the purchase of key equipment, owing to cumbersome procurement processes and lack of experience. Project implementation is far behind schedule as a result.

In the chaotic environment of post-war Afghanistan, much of UNESCO's technical assistance was *ad hoc* – identifying needs and moving quickly to put in place the resources needed to fill those needs. Activities were undertaken, often with little analysis or strategic planning. For example, the evaluators found no evidence that a feasibility study was carried out to assess the viability of ERTV in advance of the \$2.5 million project. Lack of consistent financial and narrative reporting outlined in the following section also points to significant weaknesses in administration.

The effectiveness of UNESCO's interventions in the area of capacity building is also questionable. UNESCO focused its support on training individuals but failed to deal with the two other more difficult elements of capacity development – the systemic and organizational capacities needed to transform NRTV, ERTV and BIA into effective and sustainable public service organizations.

### 3.4. Reporting

There are large gaps in UNESCO's reporting systems. The evaluators were able to identify in SISTER only one (\$1.5 million in assistance to NRTA) of the many initiatives related to PSB carried out between 2002 and 2005. Financial and narrative reports were incomplete. Project reports, when available, were largely lists of completed activities with little reporting on results.

### 3.5. Strategic Direction

In the immediate post-war environment, UNESCO was "enormously helpful because it had clout as a UN organization and forced people to pay attention to media issues," said one media expert. However, it tried to do a little bit of everything, rather than focusing on a few activities and



carrying them through from start to finish with maximum results. In hindsight, the country directors in Kabul could have benefited from more direction from headquarters. For example, the evaluators found no evidence of an overall strategy to guide UNESCO's efforts in Kabul. As a result, the Organization's role appears to have drifted from that of a leader in policy development related to PSB to that of a technical assistance program with limited visibility and input at the policy level.

Although UNESCO has contributed to progress, the long-term process of establishing public service broadcasting in Afghanistan has just begun. It could be argued that UNESCO's best role is one of a catalyst, coordinator and monitor, focusing on the broad policy changes needed to make PSB a reality.

#### 4. Lessons

The evaluators have derived the following lessons from UNESCO's experience in Afghanistan:

- Afghanistan's post-conflict democratic transition provided a receptive environment for significant progress toward PSB.
- Committed and knowledgeable field staff, collaboration with other organizations, and effective advocacy combine to achieve results.
- Transformation of state broadcasters to public service broadcasters, especially in a post-conflict environment, is a difficult process that requires long-term commitment.
- The lack of strategic planning at the country-level makes that long-term focus difficult.
- Progress is overly dependent on the expertise and commitment of rotational staff.

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