

**NGO Intervention and the Development of a Free Press
in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea: A Research Assessment**

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I. Introduction

This paper is a report on my research pertaining to a comparative study of the state of the media in the West African nations of Senegal, Benin, and Guinea, with an emphasis upon the contribution of Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) to the promotion of free and responsible mass media from the perspective of community empowerment and democratization. As such, it summarizes my findings and lays the ground for further field research toward a book project outlined later in the paper.

The project includes a discussion of the socio-political environment in which independent media, classical as well as new information and communication technologies (NICTs), have been emerging and contributing to the democratization of mass communication in these three countries, each of which represents a particular scenario in the broader African spectrum of media-state-society relationships. The project also includes an examination of NICTs such as the telephone, the computer, and the Internet whose digital automatic tracking (DAT) capabilities enable small- and medium-sized radio stations to affirm their independence from the state's intrusive bureaucracy while, at the same time, ascertaining their global connectedness.

The nature of the relations between radio, television, the print media, and the Internet will also be examined in an effort to determine the future of NGO-mass media interactions for the continued promotion of freer and more responsible media in an ever changing information and communication environment. This, by the same token, will help to determine the areas in which the intervention of nonprofit organizations can be more useful and how such intervention could be channeled with maximum efficiency.

Pursuant to my being granted the 2006-2007 William Diaz Nonprofit Faculty Fellowship, I began the project by focusing on electronic and print archival sources from UN-affiliated NGOs and by identifying International Nongovernmental Organizations (INGOs) particularly active in my countries of focus and in my issues of concentration. This included conversations with representatives of nonprofit organizations of expatriate Africans and with individual Americans engaged in various nonprofit endeavors, humanitarian and otherwise, in Africa. In December 2006 and January 2007, I conducted intensive interviewing and archival work in Guinea and Senegal and, in June 2007, I expanded the research to France, the origination and/or base of a sizable number of NGOs whose work is pertinent to my project. Thus stemming from my findings, the present report also purports to determine the conceptual, methodological, and historical framework of the research as it moves forward toward a book tentatively entitled *NGOs, Mass Media, and the Maturing of Civil Society in Francophone West Africa: Senegal, Benin, and Guinea*.

A. Summary of Findings

- A survey of the media landscape of Senegal, Benin, and Guinea shows a proliferation, often in a relatively short period of time, of non-state media, including private and commercial media outlets, community-based ones, religious ones, and a few university-owned ones. Although this general assessment cannot be expected to tell the whole story of media liberalization in conjunction with the democratization that these countries are undergoing, it does help to set the tone for a closer examination of the unfolding trend.

- The proliferation of community-based Nongovernmental Organizations (as opposed to that which is perceived as an invasion of foreign Development NGOs or DNGOs) reflects a deep-rooted African tradition of communal self-help and mutual support henceforth revitalized through new instruments of mobilization, sensitization, and participation such as the modern mass media.
- Also, large groups hitherto marginalized by their own states' socio-economic policies are erecting independent self-empowering communities linking members of the Diaspora to nationals at home through projects pertaining to local development.
- The nonprofit sector of global civil society has played a crucial role in the materialization of these changes and, therefore, deserves more attention from researchers interested in the socio-political transformation of the Senegalese, Beninese, and Guinean societies and states.
- It must be noted, though, that in most of the existing literature the concepts "nonprofit organization" and "Nongovernmental Organization" are dealt with in a confusing manner making the two phenomena plainly interchangeable in some instances and vaguely distinguishable in other instances. This conceptual confusion can make the researcher's task quite frustrating since organizations do not necessarily operate in the field based on academic categorization.
- In order to yield an accurate insight of the exact role of NGOs in the development of free media in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea (and in the West African region for that matter), research ought to begin with the media sector and move onto the NGO community and not the other way around. The reason for this is twofold. First, while the quantitative self-evaluations of the NGOs researched in these countries of focus provided valuable raw information, upon closer examination it became evident that their qualitative self-assessments are less than objective and balanced. Second, contrary to widely held assumptions, very few International NGOs originating in the Global North focus specifically on mass media in general in these countries, let alone on the promotion of independent mass media. This particular area of the socio-political development termed "democratic transition" represents only a peripheral component of the agenda of these DNGOs.
- Because the bulk of the emerging independent media in these countries (radio, television, the print media, and the electronic media) are commercial establishments, they logically gravitate outside the operational orbit of nonprofit organizations. However, by virtue of the fact that the independent media as such—regardless of whether they are community based, university owned, religious, or commercial—constitute altogether a fundamental pillar of the democratic transition taking place in the African context, they should all be included in a research like mine.

This requires a delicate balance which the researcher must be able to establish both in terms of methodology and analysis.

- In this delicate balance, local and national NGOs or Grassroots Organizations (GROs) as well as regional (West African) and continental (African) NGOs, must occupy center stage because they are more directly and more consistently linked to the promotion of free and responsible mass media on the continent. Nonetheless, they must share this center stage with INGOs like Reporters Without Borders, the International Press Institute (IPI), and the PANOS Institute to the extent to which the latter category actively participates in the professional training of African media agents and helps to defend their professional rights and liberties.
- Due to their precarious financial situation as self-help organizations, some GROs linked to media liberalization end up developing a pervasive dependency relationship with wealthy donors (local and foreign alike) whose interests they thenceforth take to heart. This quid pro quo has the unintended consequence of undermining the very nature of GROs and compromising their ability to foster community empowerment within their constituencies. I have observed manifestations of this phenomenon both in Benin and Guinea where GRO executives admitted having been forced by prevailing circumstances to dedicate more time and energy seeking funding from national business networks and foreign aid-channeling agencies and less time executing the programs for which the funding was sought. One perfect example of this is the Aboubacar Camara Foundation which, after being among the first organizations to obtain licenses for the creation of independent radio stations in Guinea, found itself practically begging local business groups for donations and applying frantically for grants with foreign agencies such as the USAID, and the Canadian International Development Agency (*Agence Canadienne de Développement International*—ACDI).

B. Conceptual and Historical Framework of the Research

At the outset, I contend that any comprehensive historical examination of the development of free and responsible mass media in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea must take into consideration the evolution of the modern media from the colonial era to the present, which has been distinctly different in Francophone Africa, Anglophone Africa, and Lusophone Africa, as Thierry Perret demonstrates in his insightful book *Le temps des journalistes*.¹ This approach, in turn, will help to shed light on the particularities of each of the socio-political environments having generated identifiable national political cultures inside which the Senegalese, Beninese, and Guinean media evolved respectively from the early years of independence to the present.

I further contend that the premise that there can be no free and democratic society without free and responsible mass media is being put to the test in Africa along with the argument that while the means for the fostering of a free and democratic

¹ Perret, Thierry. *Le temps des journalistes. L'invention de la presse en Afrique francophone*. Paris: Karthala, 2005.

society and that of free and responsible mass media may be borrowed from cultures in which such values have been historically enshrined, freedom and democracy as such must evolve from within in order to mature into a way of life.

This premise and this argument lie at the juncture of some of the most far-reaching changes taking place in Africa in the realm of liberalization and democratization of mass media toward community empowerment, citizen awareness and conscious political participation, and grassroots economic development. Among the catalysts of these changes are NGOs whose structural and functional autonomy from state apparatuses, it is widely assumed, gives them the unique possibility to minimize the intrigues of state bureaucracies and channel their resources and services directly to the target communities. This, in principle, makes NGOs more credible to the rest of civil society, but it also tends to put them in a collision course with the same state bureaucracies whose insecurities and resentments become more and more obvious, especially when the media are directly concerned. This is so because, as Fowler and Ndegwa point out, faced with “the growing presence and capacity of NGOs in all sectors of development and their ‘overtaking’ of states in some instances due to the states’ decreasing capacity,”² the state tends to view NGO activities that overshadow its own as a direct challenge to the “imperatives of statehood,” a concept which specialists define as the imperatives of territorial hegemony, security, autonomy, legitimacy, and revenue.³

Traditionally though, researchers dealing with NGOs in Africa tend to concentrate on humanitarian aid and rural economic advancement and pay less attention to the promotion of freedom of the media. This trend has left a gap which needs to be filled. For, even though the promotion of free and responsible mass media in Africa may not seem as vital as medical intervention against HIV/AIDS and food aid in war-torn or disaster-stricken areas, it does help to vitalize communities by providing the means of information and education that they need to truly thrive for more meaningful citizenship and self-sustaining societies.

Indeed, the promotion of free and responsible mass media along with the institution of democracy and good governance has been in the forefront of the political struggle in Africa beginning most particularly in the mid- to late-1980s, when the impact of domestic and continental problems was deepened by the changing global balance of power that triggered a widespread rejection of the single-party and/or military autocracies that had ruled most states since independence. Furthermore, with the drastic shift in global priorities by foreign lenders and donors in the post-Cold War era and the growing emphasis upon liberalization and democratization in line with the current underlying trends of globalization, African governments are increasingly, albeit slowly and reluctantly, moving away from the status of caretaker/controller to that of facilitator/supervisor in the struggle for political freedom and national development.

This period (1980s and 1990s) was dominated by the implementation of the highly controversial Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) of the Bretton Woods institutions. It was also marked by an unprecedented proliferation of NGOs. “These,”

² Alan Fowler “The Role of NGOs in Changing State-Society Relations: Perspectives from Eastern and Southern Africa” in *Development Policy Review* 9 (1): 53-84, quoted in Ndegwa, S.N., *The Two Faces of Civil Society: NGOs and Politics in Africa*, West Hartford, Conn.: Kumarian Press, 1996, West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1996, p. 21.

³ Crawford Young “The Colonial State and Its Political Legacy” in Rothchild, Donald and Naomi Chazan (Ed), *Precarious Balance: State and Society in Africa*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1988, quoted in Ndegwa, *The Two Faces of Civil Society*, p. 21.

as Paul Nugent explains, “refer to associations, of non-profit nature, which were formally distinct from the institutions of the state—both in Africa and in donor countries—as well as from the international agencies.”⁴ One of the developments to which Nugent and other scholars attribute the intensification of the involvement in the African landscape of “Northern Nongovernmental Organizations” (NNGOs), that is, NGOs originating in the industrialized Global North, is the tendency for the Bretton Woods institutions to blame African states for the crisis that plagued the continent in the 1980s and to seek other partners who were not tainted by association. Hence, as “the state was rolled back, NNGOs were invited to play a more active part in the delivery of basic services like health and education, whilst they became the recipient of significant amounts of donor funding.”⁵

According to Nugent, as NNGOs undertook this central role, they sought non-bureaucratic operational partners within Africa and, in turn, individuals and groups on the continent were quick to spot the advantages of banding together and attaching themselves to these wealthy organizations and, *par ricochet*, to the donor agencies behind them. Hence, homegrown NGOs began to develop exponentially, often in the form of nationwide associational bodies more or less connected with what the author terms grassroots organizations or GROs.⁶

Historically, the existence of private voluntary organizations dates back to the turn of the twentieth century, but, as Ndegwa and Fowler point out, their sustained involvement in relief and development work is a post-World War II phenomenon.⁷ Hence, with the purpose of helping to reconstruct war-ravaged Europe, the first NGOs were formed, namely Cooperation for American Relief Everywhere (CARE) in 1945 and the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (OXFAM) in 1948. The completion of the reconstruction of Europe having coincided with the political decolonization of Africa and Asia in the 1950s and 1960s, the actions of these NGOs shifted to development work in the newly decolonized countries, as Kanyinga indicates.⁸ However, since most of the development aid given to these countries was bilateral and since the state was considered to be the fundamental agent of national development, NGOs played only a somewhat peripheral role until the 1980s with “the emerging realization that the African state was a stumbling block to development because of its lack of accountability.”⁹ As nonprofit entities, Nongovernmental Organizations come in a large array of shapes and forms, ranging from International Nongovernmental Organizations, defined as NGOs in which membership is open to international actors,¹⁰ to national and local African NGOs broadly categorized as Southern NGOs (SNGOs). Some organizations are even identified as government controlled NGOs, called GONGOs, that is, “creations of government [...] which serve as instruments of government policy.”¹¹

⁴ Nugent, Paul. *Africa since Independence*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, p. 347.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 348.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 347.

⁷ Ndegwa, *The Two Faces of Civil Society*, p. 17.

⁸ Karuti Kanyinga “The Socio-Political Context of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Kenya,” a conference paper quoted in Ndegwa, *The Two Faces of Civil Society*, p. 17.

⁹ Ndegwa, *The Two Faces of Civil Society*, p. 17.

¹⁰ Baylis, John & Steve Smith. *The Globalization of World Politics* (Third Edition), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 775.

¹¹ Kortzen, D.C. *Getting to the Twenty-first Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda*, West Hartford: Kumarian Press, Inc., 1990, quoted in Dicklitch, Susan, *The Elusive Promise of NGOs in Africa*, London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1998, p. 5.

In an effort to alleviate the serious conceptual and typological confusion that emanates from these general categorizations, scholars have tackled NGO typology from multiple angles, from the legal and the economic/financial to the functional and the structural-operational.¹² For instance, utilizing the analytical data provided by specialists like Brett,¹³ Ndegwa,¹⁴ Nyang'oro,¹⁵ Brown and Korten,¹⁶ and Bratton,¹⁷ Dicklitch identifies three main types of NGOs, the first of which are People's Organizations (POs) or Grassroots NGOs. These are "Value-driven, self-reliant, relatively independent of outside funding or initiative."¹⁸ Korten adds that a People's Organization "serves its members [and is characterized by] democratic participation and accountability of leaders."¹⁹ The second type consists of Voluntary Organizations (VOs) which "Can be intermediary between grassroots NGOs and the state, value-driven, [with] assumed accountability of leaders."²⁰ Gap-filler NGOs, also referred to as Public Service Contractors (PSCs), constitute the third type in this categorization and are described as "Market-driven, programme adjusted to fit funding availability rather than social mission."²¹ To these Dicklitch adds Briefcase NGOs which she explains as follows: "Some of these NGOs have questionable origins and questionable objectives. The degree to which they can be classified as scams, however, varies with many entrepreneurs tapping into a growing industry." Dicklitch concludes by insisting that "Many NGOs that have recently sprung up are reflective of this desire to track down multiple sources of foreign money."²² Margaret P. Karns and Karen A. Mingst bring an additional repertoire into the spectrum comprising Antigovernmental Organizations (AGOs), Transnational NGOs (TRANGOs), Government-Regulated and Initiated NGOs (GRINGOs), Business and Industry NGOs (BINGOs), Donor-Organized NGOs (DONGOs), Donor-Dominated NGOs (DONDONGOs), ODA-Financed NGOs (ODANGOs), Flashy-Minded NGOs (FLAMINGOs—"representing rich countries"), Operational NGOs (ONGOs), Advocacy NGOs (ANGOs), Transnational Social Movements (TSMOs), and Global Social Movements (GSMs).²³

¹² Focusing on development NGOs Terje Tvedt offers interesting considerations relating to the conceptual confusion before proposing a "new definition" and a multilayer classification of NGOs. See Tvedt, *Angels of Mercy or Development Diplomats? NGOs and Foreign Aid*, Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1998, pp. 11-37.

¹³ E.A. Brett "Voluntary Agencies as Development Organizations: Theorizing the Problem of Efficiency and Accountability," in *Development and Change*, no. 24, pp. 269-303.

¹⁴ Ndegwa, *The Two Faces of Civil Society*, p. 23.

¹⁵ J.E. Nyang'oro "Development, Democracy and NGOs in Africa," in *Scandinavian Journal of Development Alternatives*, vol. XII, no. 2 and 3, June-September, p. 288.

¹⁶ L.D. Brown and D.C. Korten "Working Effectively with Nongovernmental Organizations," in Paul, S. and A. Israel (Ed), *Nongovernmental Organizations and the World Bank: Cooperation for Development*, Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 1991, pp. 44-93.

¹⁷ M. Bratton "Beyond the State: Civil society and Associational Life in Africa," in *World Politics*, vol. XLI, no.3, April, pp. 407-430.

¹⁸ D.C. Korten "The Role of Nongovernmental Organizations in Development: Changing Patterns and Perspectives," in Paul, S. and A. Israel (Ed), *Nongovernmental Organizations...*, p. 63.

¹⁹ *Idem*, p. 63.

²⁰ Dicklitch, *The Elusive Promise...*, p. 7.

²¹ L.D. Brown and D.C. Korten "Working Effectively with Nongovernmental Organizations," in Paul, S. and A. Israel (Ed), *Nongovernmental Organizations...*, p. 62.

²² Dicklitch, *The Elusive Promise...*, p. 8.

²³ Karns, Margaret P. and Karen A. Mingst. *International Organizations. The Politics and Processes of Global Governance*. London and Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004, p. 18.

In exploring the NGO endeavor in Francophone West Africa one comes to the realization that although the preceding conceptual categorization may be consistent with a number of academic approaches of the field in a global scale, it nonetheless overlooks the intricate vertical overlaps and horizontal intersections of NGOs in the pursuit of their interconnecting objectives. This is particularly so when considered from the standpoint of the GRO community animating the citizen self-empowerment movements in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea. Indeed, inside these movements the demarcation is, more often than not, blur between most of the categories offered above. A key reason to this is the fact that local GROs are faced with the dilemma of defining and pursuing distinct objectives and satisfying state legalistic conditionalities while still managing to attract funding from foreign donors the bulk of which are NNGOs.

II. Assessing the State of the Research

Scholarly research in the field of Nongovernmental Organization activity and in that of the development of mass media in post-colonial West Africa has produced an interestingly polarized body of literature.

A. On Nongovernmental Organizations

The track record of NGOs on the African continent has been mostly considered at the levels of (1) relief, (2) poverty alleviation, and (3) sustained development which correspond to short-term, medium-term, and long-term goals respectively. However, as NGO involvement in African affairs “matures” leaping from mere reactionary policies (relief) to proactive strategies (empowerment) geared toward sustainable development, including market economy-centered development and political liberalization/democratization, analysts are raising increasingly pointed questions encompassing everything from the legitimacy and accountability of NNGOs to the normative discourses surrounding SNGOs. This has been so because, in the words of Susan Dicklitch, “A realistic appraisal of what NGOs can and cannot achieve is crucial, to avoid the pitfalls and disappointments of past development efforts.” Consequently, the mounting surge “of interest in NGO activity in Africa calls for an examination of what role they actually play as opposed to what role they are expected to play in political and economic liberalization leading to democratization.”²⁴

David Lewis and Tina Wallace place the argument in the framework of a new ideological struggle for global dominance when they indicate: “The rise of NGOs in development work and humanitarian intervention throughout the late 1980s and 1990s was associated both with the increasing incidence of violent conflict and with the renewed dominance of neo-liberal economic ideas.”²⁵ The authors proceed to point out that “The promotion of liberal democratic ‘good governance’ agenda by multilateral and bilateral development donors became known as ‘new policy agenda’ within the development studies field and more widely as the ‘Washington Consensus’, because of its strong association with the Bretton Woods institutions and the United States government.”²⁶ The “New Policy Agenda” (NPA) is based on the principles which,

²⁴ Idem, p. 3.

²⁵ David Lewis and Tina Wallace “Introduction” to *New Roles and Relevance. Development NGOs and the Challenge of Change*, Lewis, David and Tina Wallace (Ed), Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2000, p. ix.

²⁶ Lewis and Wallace “Introduction”, p. ix.

according to Gore, “were an assertion of the inherent superiority of economic liberalism and the need to design an international economic order based on free markets, private property, individual incentives, and minimal ‘enabling’ role for the state.”²⁷

From the large body of scholarly works devoted to NNGOs and their relations with African NGOs, states, and civil society at large transpires a general sense of ambivalence, due in part to the fact that most NGOs, Northern and Southern alike, are somehow dependent on wealthy donors established in the Global North. On the one hand, NGOs are viewed as a revolutionary venue for the building of collective self-reliance and community empowerment. On the other hand, the NGO community is perceived to be an opaque world of self-construing bureaucracy with little, if any, democratic accountability to its constituency.

For advocates of the first point of view, NGOs stand out as vectors of liberation, political participation, and grassroots economic self-betterment among societies whose cultural traditions rest upon economic and sociopolitical communality. Nugent puts the matter in the proper historical perspective when he writes: “It is worth reminding ourselves that the rich associational life of contemporary Africa is not of recent provenance. In most African countries, there are long-established traditions of traders, women, youth and religious groups forming their own associations, often of considerable size and organizational complexity.”²⁸

In fact, with the multiplication and diversification of local associational organizations this sentiment of community empowerment and self-betterment has been gaining momentum and materializing into regional and pan-African NGOs with far-reaching purposes such as those put forward by the West & Central African Human Rights Institute (WACAHRRI): “The Institute is designed (a) to provide advanced training in human rights and development for experienced NGO leaders as well as for university and secondary school teachers, and (b) to expand human rights networking within the region.”²⁹ Furthermore, in the most contentious field of human rights and freedom of the press inter-NGO cooperation has given a new and more concrete meaning to the concepts “deterritorialization” and “global civil society” so dear to specialists of global governance. Consider as a matter of exemplification the following excerpts of a resolution passed by the Accra Conference of African Freedom of Expression Organizations.

We, the 42 members of 33 organizations participating in the Conference of African Freedom of Expression Organizations held in Accra, Ghana, from October 28 to 30, 2005, under the auspices of the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA), the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) and *Journalistes en Danger* (JED), with sponsorship from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); Concerned by the continued violation of freedom of expression across Africa; Concerned by the increasing enactment and abuse of repressive media laws in many parts of the continent; Further concerned by the killings, imprisonments and arbitrary arrests and detentions of journalists and media workers, and arbitrary suspension and closure of media outlets around the continent; Gravely concerned by the lack of response of the African Union and the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights to address these serious violations of freedom of expression... We call on the African Union

²⁷ C. Gore “The Rise and Fall of the Washington Consensus as a Paradigm for Developing Countries,” in *World Development* Vol. 28, no. 5, pp. 789-804, quoted in *New Roles and Relevance*, p. ix.

²⁸ Nugent, *Africa since Independence*, p. 347.

²⁹ “West & Central African Human Rights Institute (WACAHRRI, Ghana) a non-governmental organization,” by Media Foundation for West Africa, www.mfwaonline.org/en/updates/details.php, extracted March 18, 2007.

to: 1. strengthen the existing mechanisms of freedom of expression in Africa; 2. ensure that the current Special Rapporteur Mechanism is fully independent and is provided with the necessary resources to efficiently execute the mandate; 3. take into account freedom of expression in the peer review mechanism process under the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD); 4. urge African Union members to respect freedom of expression and to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur to address the challenges of freedom of expression across Africa; 5. urge African governments to adopt a Treaty on Freedom of Expression in Africa; 6. urge the African Union to establish as a matter of urgency the Court on Human Rights and make it operational.”³⁰

This positive assessment of NGO contribution to the maturation of civil society is corroborated in a study by Mark Robinson of the IDS Governance Group and Steven Friedman of the Center for Policy Research in South Africa. According to these authors, NGO activity has noticeably enhanced democratization and government accountability in some African countries.³¹

On the other hand, one encounters in the literature lingering skepticism often voiced not only by African critics, but also by international analysts, thus making the positive assessments by executives of their NGOs' performance appear to be little more than self-congratulatory propaganda. Hence the usage of the neologism “NGOcracy” (or the “rule of NGOs”) in African popular parlance to denote a relatively widespread distrust for NNGOs increasingly associated with what many perceive to be a policy of Western neocolonialism under the guise of global philanthropy.

While such judgment may be too harsh in view of the non-negligible initiation of a culture of self-reliance among African communities hitherto heavily reliant upon state bureaucracy, it nonetheless raises the question whether NGOs (NNGOs, national NGOs, GROs alike) are capable of operating with an optimum degree of independence toward donor agencies and governments (Western and African), and with the necessary efficiency and transparency toward the grassroots communities that they are expected to serve.

Joan Roelof is among the sternest critics of NGOs, particularly Western NGOs operating in the developing world. In an article published by Global Policy Forum she writes:

Today's NGOs are elephantine, serpentine, and Byzantine. They may be international organizations, their local affiliates, or seemingly spontaneous grassroots groups. Most funding and direction come from the wealthy nations. Often the donors form conglomerate creating mutual responsibility and considerable ambiguity. CIVICUS, a partner to promote “civil society” worldwide, is funded by, among others, American Express Foundation, Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation, Carnegie Corporation, Canadian International Development Agency, Ford Foundation, Harvard University, Oxfam, and United Nations Development Program. If the source is confusing, the message is usually clear: “democratization” strives for civil rights and elections, but it also must include an open door to foreign capital, labor contracts, resources extraction, and military training.³²

The author proceeds to argue that among the most notorious government agencies that fund NGOs for the purpose of furthering affluent nations' interests in the Third World

³⁰ “Accra Resolution,” Media Foundation for West Africa, www.mfwaonline.org/en/updates/details.php, extracted March 18, 2007.

³¹ “Civil Society, Democratization and Foreign Aid,” IDS Discussion Paper 383 by Mark Robinson and Steven Friedman, Institute of Development Studies: Brighton, England, April 2005.

³² Joan Roelof “The NED, NGOs and the Imperial Uses of Philanthropy,” in *Counter Punch*, May 14, 2006, in Global Policy Forum, www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/credib/2006/0514imperialuse.htm, pp. 1-2.

is the US National Endowment for Democracy (NED) “created by Congress in 1983 to do openly what had been CIA cold war covert activities.”³³ No wonder then the revelation of NED operations in 1967 provoked a shock, as Roelof indicates before adding, “not so much because the US was covertly funding foreign political and labor groups, but because organizations such as the National Education Association, American Newspaper Guild, American federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, and the National Student Association were secretly used as pass-throughs, and all but the top officers were unwitting.”³⁴

Beyond the emotional inclination to sensationalize all things linked to Western aid to Africa, the fundamental question is not whether classical foreign aid has failed to generate the desired economic development in the continent, nor is it whether NNGOs are capable of providing much needed resources toward the promotion of a productive civil society. The fundamental question is whether NNGOs and their donor agencies and governments are truly willing and able to help prepare African NGOs and GROs to move successfully and in a timely manner from short-term foreign sponsorship into lasting productivity and sustainable self-reliance. In other words, as a Beninese community activist put it, “Africans of my generation are not interested in a philanthropic and non-governmental perpetuation of the same dependency instigated by foreign governments from the colonial era to the present. Instead, they are interested in a mechanism by which short-term aid will lead to long-term development and independence.”³⁵ My interlocutor’s concern is corroborated by William Mclean who indicates that “too many foreign NGOs remain reluctant to step back and let African groups take over their projects or give Africans more say in sectors such as fund-raising.”³⁶ In the words of Sylvie Brunel, former head of Action Against Hunger: “Over time NGOs tend to grow of their own accord and act less in the service of the people they are meant to help. There are too many institutions. Some NGOs have become ‘little U.Ns’ with their excessive focus on logistics, fund-raising and communication.”³⁷ To this Rye Barcott, American founder of Carolina for Kibera, an NGO operating in Nairobi, adds: “The goal of all NGOs should be to transfer ownership towards the community. The generation of employment opportunities is not only important for economic development, it is vital to have legitimacy in the eyes of the community.”³⁸

It is evident that on this particular level of the debate we are dealing with the issue of legitimacy and accountability of foreign NGOs operating in Africa. As important as this issue is though, it should not overshadow that of the viability of African NGOs. A critical aspect of this latter issue is the plethoric proliferation of GROs which continue to overcrowd the national, regional, and continental nonprofit landscapes while attempting to manage a pattern of redundancy in too many areas of concentration. A telling example of this is found in Benin. In this small country of 43,483 sq. miles with about 6.5 million inhabitants (2004 est.) not fewer than 104 national NGOs and GROs were officially registered by June 2007 (it is impossible to tell how many more are yet to be registered). 25% of these show identical lists of

³³ *Idem*, p. 2.

³⁴ Roelof “The NED, NGOs and the Imperial Uses of Philanthropy,” p. 2.

³⁵ Clément Batossi, financial administrator for the City of Cotonou and community leader for the town of Takpè. Personal communications, June 2007.

³⁶ William Mclean “Foreign NGOs Map New Route to African Legitimacy,” in *Reuters*, October 9, 2005, in Global Policy Forum, www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/credib/2005/1009route.htm, p. 1.

³⁷ *Idem*, p. 2.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 2.

domains of action, namely: Promotion of agriculture; Promotion of literacy; promotion of gender equality; promotion of the arts and culture; creation of productive capabilities; creation of small businesses; creation of jobs; credit facilitation; promotion of democracy; sustainable community development; development of entrepreneurship; promotion of human rights; voter education; adult education; the environment; facilitation of financial savings; eradication of poverty; protection of disabled persons; family planning; judicial problems; physical health; children's health; HIV/AIDS; violence prevention/resolution. Upon close examination one cannot help but wonder how any one organization can effectively encompass such a lengthy and diverse list of activities and carry such activities in a balanced and efficient manner. It is worth noting that another 20% of these NGOs and GROs present a somewhat abbreviated listing of the same domains of activities.

In the final analysis, it is imperative to pay close attention to the intricate relationship between the question of the legitimacy and accountability of foreign NGOs and that of the viability of African NGOs and GROs as potential catalysts for potent changes in Africa. It is equally imperative to understand NGOs—most specifically INGOs—in the context of contemporary globalization whereby as emergent global non-state actors, NGOs interact with and challenge states and businesses—chiefly Multinational Corporations (MNCs) and Transnational Corporations (TNCs) in this case—for the power to define/redefine governance on the national and global levels. In this balance of power, competing entities belabor to preserve their respective turfs without needlessly antagonizing one another. For, as Brown et al. point out, “While businesses are oriented to private interests and governments are oriented to public interests, civil society actors [embodied in NGOs] focus on the interests of social groups within the society—including those groups disadvantaged by existing arrangements.”³⁹

One's awareness of the complexity of this fundamental issue is bound to heighten as one's research progresses in the field. The complexity becomes more evident when applied to the hopes and expectations to see NGO activities yield more tangible results in the creation of viable civil societies with free and productive flow of information and communication commensurable with the progressive transformation of media-state-society relationship in post-Cold War Africa.

B. On Mass Media and Sociopolitical Change in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea

In the field of mass media and sociopolitical change in Africa, research seems more advanced in the western and southern regions. In West Africa, Senegal and Benin rank among the most studied nations, along with Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Côte d'Ivoire. Guinea, on the other hand, remains one of the least studied, still behind countries like Guinea Bissau, Niger, Mauritania, and Gambia. The reason for this disparity is threefold. First, with Dakar having served as the colonial capital of French West Africa: “a ground, maritime, and air terminal for the whole region...through which everyone must pass in order to reach the other colonies and to return to Europe,”⁴⁰ and with modern mass media having been first introduced by French

³⁹ L. David Brown et al. “Globalization, NGOs, and Multisectoral Relations” in *Governance in a Globalizing World*, edited by Joseph S. Nye Jr. and John D. Donahue, Brookings Institution Press: Washington, D.C. 2000, p. 276.

⁴⁰ Thierry. *Le temps des journalistes...*, pp. 57-58.

missionaries and the French colonial administration, it goes without saying that Senegal was prone to have a much longer and richer media history and hence to attract more attention.

It all began with the creation of *Paris-Dakar* (which was to become French Tropical Africa's first daily newspaper in 1935) by media tycoon Charles de Breteuil who then proceeded to expand his empire eastward by creating *France-Africa* in Abidjan (1933), *Paris-Tana* in Yaounde (1936), and *Paris-Congo* in Brazzaville (1938). Built in the image of *Paris-Soir*, which Breteuil had acquired in 1930 and whose astonishing success owes to the talent of professionals such as Pierre Lazareff and Hervé Mille, these pioneering periodicals paved the way for a diverse and complex tradition of print media in the former French West Africa (*Afrique Occidentale Française*—AOF) and French Equatorial Africa (*Afrique Equatoriale Française*—AEF). The tradition rejuvenated itself over the decades and, in the aftermath of World War II, contributed to the development of anti-colonialist nationalism which resulted in the emergence of independent nation-states in Africa. Even though Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, and to a lesser degree Dahomey (the modern-day Republic of Benin) rivaled Senegal, the latter retained a lead in excellence in journalism, both intellectually and technically (opened in 1967, the CESTI of Dakar is Francophone Africa's first school of journalism, followed by the ESIJY of Yaounde in 1970).

Secondly, whereas the introduction of multiparty politics in 1975 has increased meaningful participation of the national media in the democratization process in Senegal (beginning particularly in the early 1980s), and whereas the legendary National Conference of February 1990 has taken Benin's politics and media to a fundamental turn toward community empowerment and freedom of expression, political change in Guinea has for the most part been a cycle of crises without significant departure from the status quo. Hence, despite the relatively noticeable improvements in media liberalization and diversification Guinea's media landscape is still largely seen as a hatching egg that could well be smashed anytime. The third and final reason for the gap between Guinea and the other two is that media professionalism and scholarship go hand in hand among Senegalese and Beninese specialists whereas in Guinea amateurism still plagues the field and scholarship is still very scarce. In fact, it is fair to say that the study titled *His Master's Voice: Mass Communication and Single-Party Politics in Guinea under Sékou Touré*⁴¹ published in 2005 is a pioneering work after which other comprehensive works have yet to be produced in the area of media studies. At any rate, these and other underlying reasons lend strong relevance and originality to my project of comparative exploration of the liberalization of mass media and the maturation of civil society in conjunction with NGO support and facilitation of sociopolitical change in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea.

Regarding the liberalization of mass media, it is useful to first consider the issue on the regional level and show how the process evolved in West Africa as a whole. This will provide a better appreciation of the dynamics of media liberalization in the nations under consideration in this study. Hence, it should be pointed out that the print media were the first to experience the birth of independent outlets in West Africa in the mid-1980s with the creation of the *Guardian* in Nigeria, *Wal Fadjiri* in Senegal, *L'Observateur* in Burkina Faso, and *La Gazette du Golfe* in Benin. As political change spread across the region the print media diversified further to the point that by

⁴¹ Camara, Mohamed Saliou, *His Master's Voice: Mass Communication and Single-Party Politics in Guinea under Sékou Touré*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press Inc., 2005.

February 2004 there existed 132 publications of diverse genres in Nigeria, 66 in Benin, 48 in Ghana, 46 in Guinea, 36 in Senegal, 35 in Sierra Leone and Mali each, 34 in Togo, 27 in Niger, 18 in Burkina Faso, 14 in Côte d'Ivoire, 7 in Liberia, 6 in Cape Verde and Gambia each, and 3 in Guinea Bissau.⁴²

PANOS Institute experts are quick to point out that these numbers can be misleading unless the following observations are taken into consideration. First, only a small minority of these publications appeared regularly. Second, some of them seemed to have been created around particular events such election cycles and, therefore, appeared only on such occasions. Third, most publications were marred by amateurism. Fourth, in the absence of regional calibration of the mass media all existing publications were (and still are) confined to local readerships. Finally, the number of existing publications by country reflected neither the country's degree of political liberalization (Guinea had more publications than Senegal) nor its economic strength (Niger's press by far outnumbered that of Côte d'Ivoire).⁴³

With its convenient adaptability to Africa's orality-based communication cultures and its affordability, radio has always been the most far-reaching modern mass medium on the continent. This is perhaps why its liberalization seems more expressive of an African political regime's degree of openness to freedom of expression. In West Africa, the first independent radio stations to be allowed were essentially entertainment-centered outlets with no political components in whatever information they broadcast. The so-called "radio explosion" began in the 1990s with the birth of private stations of different formats: music, sports, health, religion, youth agendas and women's issues. Only later on was general information with openly political orientation allowed.

According to the Dakar based PANOS Institute West Africa, by 2004 fourteen of the fifteen nations studied (Mauritania excluded) had a combined number of 443* private radio stations categorized as follows.⁴⁴

Country	Commercial Stations	Community -based Stations	NGO-Owned Stations	Religious Stations	University-Owned Stations	Total
Benin	9	7	7	3		26
Burkina Faso	12	10	7	16		45
Cape Verde	5					5
Cote d'Ivoire	4	4	2	6		17
Gambia	5	1				6
Ghana	26	1	1		5	33
Guinea Bissau	2	11		3		16

⁴² *Répertoire des médias en Afrique de l'Ouest*, Dakar: Institut Panos Afrique de l'Ouest, 2004, p.9.

⁴³ *Répertoire des médias...*, pp. 9-10.

⁴⁴ *Idem*, pp. 12-13.

Liberia	2	20		3		25
Mali	58	32	22	13		132
Niger	12	2				14
Nigeria	4					4
Senegal	No Data	5	6	1		50
Sierra Leone	3	3		1		7
Togo	41	3	2	11		62
Guinea	0	0	0	0	0	0

* The numbers on this chart don't add up to 443 because some of the data had not been made available to PANOS Institute West Africa when the book *Répertoire des medias...* was published.

Television remains the most state-monopolized medium in West Africa to date. In fact, when PANOS Institute West Africa was publishing its repertoire, only 21 private stations existed in the region, with Anglophone West Africa leading the flock: 8 in Nigeria, 8 in Ghana, 2 in Liberia, followed by Lusophone Africa with 2 in Cape Verde, and only 1 in the whole of Francophone Africa, namely LC2 in Benin. In addition to state protectionism over this particular medium, the scarcity of private TV stations can also be explained by the prohibitive cost of the acquisition and maintenance of the equipment, as well as that of the training of the personnel. One should also note the precariousness of the West African commercial market and an outstanding dependence on foreign programs.

From this assessment of the West African region's media liberalization debut, a leap forward onto the current situation in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea demonstrates a relative steadiness of the pattern observed so far. The following is an updated assessment of the quantitative and qualitative data as of March 2007.

Senegal

In a historical analysis of media-state-society relations in Francophone Africa, Thierry Perret argues: "If political power in Senegal was for a long time dominated by a well structured socialist party-state, political life evolved around the model of negotiation and compromise among the forces in presence. The press has found a space for freedom of expression that has remained unique in Francophone Africa."⁴⁵ However, as the author points out, only with the advent of Senghor's former prime minister, Abdou Diouf, to the presidency of the Republic of Senegal did the country begin to experience real pluralism of the press because even though President Leopold Sedar Senghor (1960-1980) showed scrupulous respect for national institutions, his regime remained, nevertheless, a form of autocratic rule. Thus, it was in the 1980s that Senegal's first

⁴⁵ Perret, *Le temps des journalistes...*, p. 90.

independent newspaper, *Le Politicien*, a satirical publication actually born in 1977 from the stubborn dedication of its founder Mam Less Dia, gained its letters of nobility and, in the process, inspired other apostles of freedom of expression. Such apostles include Babacar Touré of Sud Communication, who would create the successful bimonthly *Wal Fadjiri* in 1984, before embarking with a group of dedicated fellow journalists/writers and University of Dakar graduates on a media diversification saga responsible for the birth of *Sud Magazine* (1986), and *Sud Hebdo* (1987).

This trend led to an unprecedented explosion of daily publications, followed by the first opening of independent radio stations in 1993. Henceforth, the Diouf administration was faced with a new reality particularly marked by the steady challenge of political party publications such *Soppi* of Abdoulaye Wade's PDS. Hence, in an effort to consolidate media regulation, the government endeavored to strengthen the existing *Direction de la Communication* housed in the Ministry of Communication and responsible for the implementation of the government's national communication policies, including managing the state's financial allocations for the media. The government also restructured the Commission on National Media Accreditation (*Commission de la Carte Nationale de Press—CCNP*), also housed in the Ministry of Communication. In addition, autonomous organs of media regulation were created over the years. These include:

- The High Council of the Audiovisual (HCA) which “insures the respect for pluralism in the audiovisual media and the protection of children, secularity, and national unity in the media.”
- The Council for the Respect of Ethics and Deontology (CRED) charged with handling litigations relative to the ethical and deontological conduct of journalists.
- The Telecommunication Regulation Agency (ART) which deals principally with the allocation of telephone and telecommunication capability access to users on an individual or institutional basis.⁴⁶

As a result of these developments Senegal's independent media organizations are as follows.

Radio

Sud FM (private and commercial)
 Radio Nostalgie (partner of Radio Nostalgie Internationale)
 Walf FM (private and commercial)
 Sept FM (private and commercial)
 Radio Fass FM (private and commercial)
 Soxna FM (private and commercial)
 Radio Jeeri (community-based)
 Radio Penc Mi (community-based)
 Radio Niani FM (community-based)
 FM Santé Dakar (community-based)
 Radio Ndef Leng (community-based)

Diamano FM (private and commercial)
 Top FM (private and commercial)
 Energie FM (private and commercial)
 Teranga FM (private and commercial)
 Radio Dunyaa Vision (private and commercial)
 Radio Futurs Medias (private and commercial)
 Lamp Fall FM (private and religious)
 Radio Awagna FM (community-based)
 Radio Jiida FM (community-based)
 Radio Fagarou FM (Children's Radio)
 Radio Rurale La Côtère (community-based)
 Radio Gaynaako FM (community-based)

⁴⁶ *Répertoire des médias...*, p. 26.

Radio Fréquence Oxy-Jeunes (community-based)⁴⁷

To these independent outlets should be added the state run public network of Radio Television of Senegal (RTS) formerly Office of Radio Television of Senegal (ORTS) with its national and international channels and four regional stations, and a cohort of fledgling private satellite radios and local relays of foreign networks such Africa No 1, BBC and RFI.

Television

Télé Touba Internationale (private and commercial based in Harlem, US)

Canal Info (private and commercial based in Dakar)

In addition, Excaf Telecom MMDS networks carry foreign channels such as MTV-Europe, TV5 Afrique, MBC, TNT, RTPI, CNN, Saudi 1, ART, Trace, Infosport, Cinecinemas, RTL9, France2, France5, Planète, and Tiji.⁴⁸

Print Media

L'Actuel (daily)

L'As (daily)

Il est Midi Quotidien (daily)

La Pointe (daily)

Wal Fadjiri/L'Aurore (daily)

Le Messager (daily)

Le Matin (daily)

L'Observateur (daily)

Match (daily)

Wal' Grand-Place (daily)

Sud Quotidien (daily)

Le Populaire (daily)

Le Courrier du Jour (daily)

L'Info 7 (daily)

Le Quotidien (daily)

They Le Journal (daily)

Tract Quotidien (daily)

Le Politicien (weekly)

Le Témoin (weekly)

L'Equipe du Sénégal (weekly)

Echo Hebdo (weekly)

La Vérité (weekly)

La Source (weekly)

Le Courrier du Sud (weekly)

Le Cafard Libéré (weekly)

Le Journal de l'Economie (weekly)

Nuit et Jour (weekly)

Vive la République (weekly)

Nouvel Horizon (weekly)

Jet Set (monthly)

Le Journal "Al Yawmou" (monthly)

Nord Ouest (monthly)

Le Carrrefour Républicain (monthly)

Le Sport (monthly)

Le Diplomate (monthly)

Le Monde des Affaires (monthly)

L'Afrique Tribune (monthly)

Démocratie (monthly)

Le Tournant (monthly)

Le 221 (monthly)⁴⁹

The state run daily *Le Soleil* is the other main publication in Senegal's press, which is widely respected in the region for its professional quality and generally balanced contents. More than most Francophone African capitals, Dakar's newsstands are filled with foreign magazines and newspapers which tend to overwhelm the local press. Finally, most of the publications listed above have an online version to which ought to be added, albeit at a lesser degree, a myriad of blogs.

⁴⁷ Saidou Dia "Radio Broadcasting and New Information and Communication Technologies: Uses, Challenges and Prospects," Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), February 2003. Also see "Annuaire des organes de presse" in République du Sénégal, <http://www.gouv.sn/medias.annuaire.htm>, extracted October 14, 2007.

⁴⁸ "Annuaire des organes de presse" in République du Sénégal.

⁴⁹ Idem

Benin

The Beninese mass media have undergone a systematic structural and operational reform since the country's famous political turnabout launched through the National Conference. The reform includes the enactment of laws and bylaws governing the freedom of the press along with the establishment of national structures of watchdog agencies. These agencies include the *Maison des Médias du Bénin* (MDM), a powerful NGO defined as an apolitical, autonomous and not-for-profit organization. It was "established by the Estates General of the Beninese media, held in Cotonou 18-23 November, 2002, and is the emanation of the two professional Unions/Associations (the Union of Professionals of the Media of Benin—UPMB—and the Council of Employers of the Press and the Audiovisual—CNPA-Benin) the creation of which was decided by the Estates General. [The MDM] is the collegial and indivisible property of the associations of media professionals. It may affiliate itself with any African or international structure pursuing objectives identical and/or compatible to its own."⁵⁰ The main objectives of the MDM are to:

1. Promote solidarity among media professionals;
2. Promote the freedom of the press, pluralism and independence of the media;
3. Support the transparent flow of communication between the public and the media while serving as a pillar for the continued education and training of media professionals;
4. Strengthen the productive capabilities of the media;
5. Promote the free flow of information and exchange among journalists as well as between journalists and other communication specialists;
6. Create a space of freedom for media professionals.

Under the stewardship of the MDM, a deontological code was adopted in September 1999 which stipulates in its preamble: "The national associations of information and communication professionals affirm their willingness to perpetuate the traditions of the Beninese press's struggle for the freedom of expression and the public's right to information. They also affirm their determination to promote democratic culture in conformity with the 11 December 1990 Constitution which guarantees the freedom of the press in Benin."⁵¹ This code of 26 articles covers all the fundamental rights and duties of the media in a democratic society in the making, from professional integrity and intellectual soundness to human dignity and sensitivity, from social responsibility and protection of minors to the separation of information and publicity, and from non-incident to hatred to free access to public sources.

Another national structure devoted to the promotion of the free and responsible exercise of media professions is the High Authority of the Audiovisual and Communication (*Haute Autorité de l'Audiovisuel et de la Communication*—HAAC). HAAC is a 9 member body charged with the regulation of the exercise of media professions in Benin. "It is in principle independent of any political power, association or pressure group of any nature. Its term is limited to five years. This term is neither

⁵⁰ "La Maison des Médias" in *La Maison des Médias du Bénin*, http://www.mdm-benin.org/article.php3?id_article=1, extracted March 18, 2007.

⁵¹ "La Maison des Médias" http://www.mdm-benin.org/article.php3?id_article=6, extracted March 18, 2007.

revocable nor renewable [...] The mission of HAAC, according Articles 24, 142, and 143 of the 11 December 1990 Constitution, is to:

1. Guarantee the freedom of the press and of all means of mass communication under the law;
2. Oversee the implementation of the deontological code and the equitable access of political parties, associations, and citizens to the official means of information and communication;
3. Guarantee the equitable and appropriate utilization of the public organs of press and audiovisual communication by the institutions of the Republic, each according to its constitutional missions, and to insure the proper arbitrage of such utilization.”⁵²

And then there is the Observatory of Deontology and Ethics in Media (*Observatoire de la Déontologie et de l’Ethique dans les Médias*—ODEM). This self-regulating organization of media professionals was instituted in October 1998 by the different media associations and charged with:

1. Overseeing and evaluating the professional demeanor of journalists at work;
2. Serving as the moral authority for the media sector;
3. Enforcing the deontological rules;
4. Protecting the public’s right to free, complete, honest, and accurate information;
5. Defending the freedom of the press;
6. Encouraging professionalism in the media;
7. Insuring the security of journalists at work by guaranteeing their right to investigate freely and responsibly.

Consequently, as of March 2007, the independent mass media landscape of Benin was as follows.

Radio

Radio Star (private and commercial)	Deeman (NGO-owned)
Capp FM (Private and commercial)	Bénin Culture (NGO-owned)
Golf FM (Private and commercial)	Gerddes FM (NGO-owned)
Radio Afrique Espoir (Private/commercial)	FM Aheme (Community-based)
Couffo FM (Private and commercial)	La Voix de la Lama (Community-based)
Radio Wèkè (Private and commercial)	Radio Tonasse FM (Community-based)
Radio Adja Ouere FM Oueme (Priv/commer)	La Voix de Tado (Community-based)
Radio Planète (Private and commercial)	Cité Savalou Culture FM (Community-based)
Radio Tokpa (Private and commercial)	FM Monts Kouffe (Community-based)
Radio Carrefour (Private and commercial)	FM Alaketou (Community-based)
Océan FM (Private and commercial)	FM Noon-Sina (Community-based)
Radio Trait d’union (Private and commercial)	FM Ore Ofe (Community-based)
Royal FM (Private and commercial)	La Voix de la Vallée (Community)
Mono FM (Private and commercial)	Plateau FM (Community-based)
Synergie des Collines (Private and commercial)	Radio Mono (Community-based)
Alliance FM (Private and commercial)	Kpably FM (Community-based)
Arzeke FM (Private and commercial)	Naane Ouassa (Community-based)

⁵² “La Maison des Médias” http://www.mdmbenin.org/article.php3?id_article=16, extracted March 18, 2007.

Nord FM (Private and commercial)
 Nanto FM (Community-based)
 Radio Maranatha (Religious)
 La Voix de l'Islam (Religious)
 Radio Immaculée Conception (Religious)
 Radio Alleluia (Religious)
 Radio Illema (NGO-owned)
 Radio Solidarité FM Djougou (NGO-owned)
 Radio Sedohoun Allodalome (NGO-owned)
 Radio Sutii Dera (NGO-owned)⁵³

Radio Tuko Sari (Community-based)
 Bio Guerra FM (Community-based)
 Idahu FM (Community-based)
 Radio Gbetin (Community-based)
 FM Tonignon (Community-based)
 FM kpassé (Community-based)
 Radio Ecole APM (Community-based)
 Kandi FM (Community-based)
 Radio Dinaba FM (Community-based)

These 53 private stations coexist with the following 10 public stations which operate nationally, regionally or locally:

Radio Cotonou
 Atlantic FM
 3 S Ado
 Septentrional FM
 Station Régionale ORTB Parakou

Radio Rurale Locale de Dogbo
 Radio Rurale Locale de Ouesse
 Radio Rurale Locale de Tanguieta
 Radio Rurale Locale de Djougou/Ouaké
 Radio Rurale Locale de Banikoara

Television

LC2 Télévision (private and commercial)
 Golfe Télévision (private and commercial)
 Carrefour/TV (private and commercial)
 Canal 3 Bénin (Bell TV) (private/commercial)
 La Nationale 2 (private and commercial)⁵⁴

Sobiex (Private MMDS)
 TELCO (Private MMDS)
 TV + International (Private MMDS)
 ATVSAfrican Television Systems

Print Media

La Nation (daily)
Le Matin (daily)
Le Point au Quotidien (daily)
*Le Matinal** (daily)
Les Echos du Jour (daily)
Le Progrès (daily)
L'Aurore (daily)
*Fraternité** (daily)
Le Béninois (daily)
*Le Républicain** (daily)
L'Informateur (daily)
La Nouvelle Tribune (daily)
La Tribune de la Capitale (daily)
L'Action (daily)
L'œil du Peuple (daily)
L'Événement du Jour (daily)
Le Nokoué (daily)
Le Télégramme (daily)
Djakpata (daily)
Dunya-Info (daily)
Adjinakou (daily)

L'Actu Express (daily)
L'Engagement (daily)
La Gazette du Golfe (daily)
L'Avenir (weekly)
*La Montagne** (weekly)
Le Baobab (weekly)
*Le Municipal** (weekly)
La Croix du Bénin (weekly religious)
Le Rocher Douanier (weekly)
Bénin Espoir (weekly)
Le Choix (weekly)
Le Perroquet (weekly)
Express Foot (weekly)
Info-Trans (weekly)
Afrique Tambour (weekly)
Le Bénin Aujourd'hui (weekly)
Le Corridor (weekly)
Le Temps (bi-monthly)
L'Enjeu (bi-monthly)
Afric'Essor (bi-monthly)
Courrier d'Afrique (monthly)

⁵³ "Radio publiques, commerciales et non commerciales" in La Maison des Médias du BENIN, http://www.mdmbein.org/article.php3?id_article=12, extracted March 8, 2007.

⁵⁴ "Télévisions publiques et chaînes MMDS" in La Maison des Médias du BENIN, http://www.mdmbein.org/article.php3?id_article=13, extracted March 8, 2007.

<i>L'Indépendant</i> (daily)	<i>Emotion</i> (monthly)
<i>L'Autre Quotidien</i> (daily)	<i>Schekina</i> (monthly religious)
<i>Le Tropical</i> (daily)	<i>Amazonne du Golfe</i> (monthly)
<i>Le Challenge</i> (daily)	<i>Le Heraut</i> (monthly student newspaper)
<i>Panorama</i> (daily)	<i>Continental</i> (monthly)
<i>Depêche du Jour</i> (daily)	<i>Afrique Diagnostic</i> (monthly)
<i>Bénin Presse Info</i> (daily)	<i>La Sirène</i> (monthly)
<i>La Pyramide</i> (daily)	<i>Le Magasine de l'Entreprise*</i> (monthly)
<i>La Nouvelle Génération</i> (weekly)	<i>Sauvegarde</i> (bi-quarterly)
<i>Le Médiateur</i> (irregular)	<i>La Cloche</i> (irregular) ⁵⁵

* These publications are also available online along with *L'Araigné*.

Guinea

The first major move toward liberalization of mass media in Guinea was launched in 1986 through the Estates General of Information and Communication organized by a conglomerate of nascent pro-democratic forces. One of the key initiatives that resulted from the week-long series of workshops having punctuated the Estates General was the creation of an independent organization of journalists and other media specialists; hence, the Association of Guinean Journalists was created in 1987, though it was not legalized by the Ministry of Interior until 1988. In any case, the organization comprised only state media employees since there were not any private media outlets in the country until the enactment of the *Lois Organiques* of December 1991, a series of laws designed to regulate the liberalization/democratization process newly adopted under the 1990 Constitution or *Loi Fondamentale*. Thus, *Loi Organique* 91/05/CTRN enunciates the parameters of the liberalization of the print media, radio, television, and communication in general while *Loi Organique* 91/06/CTRN determines the status and roles of the National Communication Council (*Conseil National de la Communication*—CNC), that is, the state agency thenceforth charged with regulating media information and communication in Guinea.

Article 1 of this latter law stipulates: “The mission of [The National Communication Council] is notably to insure:

- The fair and equitable treatment of all persons relative to the access to and utilization of means of communication;
- The respect for the plural expression of thoughts and opinions in the public information and communication sector;
- The respect for the rules and regulations relative to the creation, ownership, and operation of media enterprise.”⁵⁶

Article 2 further indicates: “The National Communication Council is an organism of defense of the citizens’ rights to information. It plays a role of support and mediation in order to prevent:

- An abusive control of mass media by government;

⁵⁵ “Presse écrite” in La Maison des Médias du BENIN, http://www.mdm-benin.org/article.php3?id_article=15, extracted March 8, 2007.

⁵⁶ *Recueil des Lois Organiques de la République de Guinée*, Conakry: Nouvelle Imprimerie de Kaloum, 23 December 1991, p. 57.

- The manipulation of public opinion by anyone through mass media.”⁵⁷

In this same vein Article 5 further lays out the responsibilities of the CNC with regards to the promotion of a culture of national unity, democracy and development by stating that the CNC “Is hereby charged with:

1. Defining the appropriate ways and means for the implementation and protection of the rights and liberties pertaining to the expression of differing opinions via the public media.
2. Insuring the promotion of citizen information in the national [native] languages;
3. Insuring the promotion of the national culture in all its forms in the domains of production and propagation of national artifacts;
4. Insuring the transparent implementation of the economic rules governing the functioning of information organisms, preventing and countering the concentration of media outlets under the financial, political or ideological control and/or influence of a single proprietor;
5. Determining the parameters of elaboration, production, publication, and programming of written and audiovisual materials relative to electoral campaigns;
6. Promoting mutual understanding and confidence between the media and the public and securing amicable arbitration of conflicts relating to the freedom of expression and freedom of conscience that may oppose directors of media organizations and their employees, or the public and the media;
7. Insuring the strict observation of the norms concerning commercial publicity, and controlling the object, contents, and programming procedures of commercial publicity published or broadcast by the different media outlets;
8. Gathering in an accurate and timely manner from state administrators and media managers all the information necessary for the correct accomplishment of its missions under the present law.
9. Advising the government through the competent ministers on information and communication matters.”⁵⁸

As explained in *His Master’s Voice*, although Article 1 of *Loi Organique 91/05/CTRN* proclaims the right of Guinean citizens to create, own, and operate media of mass communication, “Only with the unwavering pressure from the newly formed Guinean Organization for the Defense of Human Rights, the independent labor unions (as opposed to the state-controlled CNTG) and the Organization of Patriot Students was the Conté regime persuaded to lift its martial grip”⁵⁹ and allow the creation of independent print media, but still not independent radio and television outlets.

With the lifting of the grip, a large flux of publications of varied formats and genres inundated the newsstands of Conakry (Guinea’s capital) and other major cities, thus highlighting the very limited effectiveness of the print media in this and other parts of Africa. Indeed, as pointed out in *His Master’s Voice*,⁶⁰ contrary to Western

⁵⁷ *Idem*, p. 57.

⁵⁸ *Recueil des Lois Organiques...*, p. 58.

⁵⁹ Camara, *His Master’s Voice...*, p. 197.

⁶⁰ *Idem*, p. 199.

media traditions, the print media are not the primordial means of communication in Africa for three reasons: (1) African cultures rely heavily on orality, thus making the written word a distant auxiliary in communication; (2) most print media are published in the colonial languages in which African literacy remains low still, and (3) only a minority of city dwellers can afford to buy the daily or weekly newspaper and follow the stories of unfolding events. This, in turn, affects quite seriously the financial health of the African independent media in general.

It is in this context that one ought to envision Guinea's particularly feeble media landscape at the eve of the country's first multiparty presidential election of December 1993.

Radio

Besides the state owned Radio Guinea—an element of Radio Television of Guinea (RTG) which comprises one national radio network and eight regional stations—only Radio Gandal, an FM station then broadcasting music exclusively a few hours at night, operated until it was violently shut down by a commando of soldiers acting on the orders of the Ministry of Interior.

Television

None, except the national RTG television station.

Print Media

<i>L'Indépendant</i>	<i>Cocorico</i>
<i>Le Lynx</i>	<i>L'Informateur Guinéen</i>
<i>L'Événement de Guinée</i>	<i>L'Union</i>
<i>Le Citoyen</i>	<i>Action Nouvelle</i>
<i>La Gazette de Guinée</i>	<i>Le Réveil</i>
<i>Horizon Express</i>	<i>Le Soleil</i>
<i>Le Témoin</i>	<i>Dahnani</i>
<i>Le Patriote</i>	<i>Kabananko</i>
<i>La Voie</i>	<i>Guinée Nouvelle</i>
<i>Match</i>	<i>La Guinée Diama</i>
<i>Conakry Tribune</i>	<i>L'Eveil Africain</i>
<i>Détective</i>	<i>Le Sphinx</i>
<i>L'Espérance</i>	

To these independent and commercial publications should be added the press of the political parties which was most active around election cycles.

<i>La Nouvelle République</i> (UNR)	<i>Syli</i> (PDG-RDA)
<i>Le Progrès</i> (PRP)	<i>La Colombe</i> (PPG)
<i>La Nation</i> (PUP, the ruling party)	<i>La Source</i> (COSALAC, a satellite of PUP) ⁶¹

Even though most of these periodicals were intended to be daily, weekly, and monthly publications, very few of them could maintain this periodicity beyond the presidential election so that by the legislative elections of July 1995 nearly one third of them had practically ceased to appear and by the following presidential election (December 2000)

⁶¹ Camara, *His Master's Voice...*, pp. 198-199.

less than one third of all the original titles were still appearing even sporadically along with newly created ones. The state-owned *Horoya* was the only daily appearing on a regular basis. Thankfully, the volatility of the print media was somewhat remedied by the emergence of independent electronic journals, managed principally by members of the Guinean Diaspora. Also, under the relentless pressure of the European Union and the International Financial Institutions, all of which had either suspended aid to Guinea or reduced it to purely humanitarian assistance, due to gross economic mismanagement, bad governance, and violation of human rights, the regime of General Lansana Conté finally ratified a long standing project of liberalization of the audiovisual sector of the mass media. As a result of these latest developments, the Guinean independent media sector has grown further as the following assessment indicates.

Radio

Since January-February 2006, a number of licenses have been issued to media groups such as the Canal SAGUI (Satellite Guinée) media corporation and to NGOs including the Aboubacar Camara Foundation and *Actualités Féminines en Guinée* (AFEG). Between March and May 2006, the following independent radio stations became operational in Conakry specializing essentially in cultural journalism supplemented by general information programs practically void of political commentary and analysis.

Radio Liberté FM (private and commercial)

Radio Nostalgie FM (a local partner of Radio Nostalgie Internationale run by Canal SAGUI)

Radio Familia FM (owned by the AFGE, a women-centered ONG created by a Canadian national)

It is worth noting that the 2005 law that allowed the existence of independent audiovisual media, known as “Free Wave Law,” prohibited the creation and/or ownership and operation of such media by religious and political organizations. Also, all independent radio broadcasting is to be limited to Conakry, thus prompting critics of the government to dub the “Free Wave Law” an “Audiovisual Apartheid Law.”

Print Media

L'Indépendant (weekly)

Le Lynx (weekly)

Nouvelle Tribune (weekly)

L'Observateur (weekly)

Le Démocrate (weekly)

Le Diplomate (weekly)

Œil du Peuple (weekly)

Le Citoyen (weekly)

Le Globe (weekly)

Guinée 58 (weekly)

La Lance (weekly)

L'Enquêteur (bi-monthly)

L'Aurore (bi-monthly)

Le Populaire (bi-monthly)

Canard Déchainé (bi-monthly)

L'Eveil (bi-monthly)

Le Dauphin (bi-monthly)

La Croisade (bi-monthly)

Le Guinéen (bi-monthly)

Les Echos de Guinée (bi-monthly)

Audace (bi-monthly)

Le Panorama (monthly)

La Chronique (monthly)

Sariya (monthly)

Monde Vérité (monthly)

Questions Réponses (monthly)

Sanakou (monthly)

Guinée Lumière (monthly)

La Nation (monthly)

Jeunesse (unknown)

Podium Magazine (unknown)

Sud Info (unknown)

Libération (unknown)

La Nouvelle Marche (unknown)

Reflets de Guinée (unknown)

Le Carrefour (unknown)

La Voix du Peuple (bi-monthly)
Le Palmarès (bi-monthly)
L'Economiste (bi-monthly)
Le Potentiel (every two months)⁶²

Le Confidentiel (unknown)
Le Sud-Economie (unknown)
Le Kogon (unknown)

Electronic Media

Aminata.com
 Guineenews.com
 Kababashir.com
 Conakryonline.com
 JMJnewsroom.com

Guineeconakry.info
 Guinee24.com
 Cafard de Guinée
 GuineaTime
 NLS Guinée⁶³

In addition to these exclusively electronic media, there is the online version of some of the major print media listed above.

C. On NGO Participation in the Liberalization of Mass Media in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea

One of the most revealing findings resulting from my research, which ranges from the study of press files and scholarly works by specialists of media, politics, and NGO activities to interviews with media professionals and NGO executives, is that in all three of my target nations, INGOs contribute most efficiently to the development of free and responsible mass media through the professional training of journalists and the protection of their civil liberties and professional rights. In fact, contrary to the widely held assumption that DNGOs/NNGOs are deeply involved in all aspects of the African development agenda, these have had but a very limited and very indirect traditional (i.e. financial and technical) connection with the process known as liberalization/democratization of the media in these three countries (and in Francophone West Africa in general). Direct intervention in and support for media liberalization is rather carried out by government agencies such as: The French *Direction Générale de la Coopération Internationale* (DGCID) and *Direction de l'Audiovisuelle Extérieure et des Techniques de Communication* (DATC), the American International Development Agency (USAID), the Canadian *Agence Canadienne de Développement International* (ACDI), the Swiss *Direction du Développement et de la Coopération* (DDC), the German *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit* (GTZ), the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), as well as international institutions including: the *Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie*, the *Fonds d'Appui aux Entreprises de la Presse Ecrite Francophone du Sud*, the World Bank Institute, and so on.

The direct involvement of DNGOs/NNGOs is found principally in the areas of training and legal protection through organized protest, the periodic publication of press releases denouncing government mistreatment of journalists, as well as other forms of global pressure upon states suspected and/or found culpable of unacceptable violation of the rights and liberties of journalists and media agents in the exercise of their profession. Such NNGOs include Reporters Without Borders (RSF), the PANOS

⁶² *Répertoire des médias...*, p. 37-45. See also "Newspapers and News Sources from Guinea" in Kidon Media Link, <http://www.kidon.com/media-link/gn.php>, extracted October 14, 2007.

⁶³ "Newspapers and News Sources from Guinea," <http://www.kidon.com/media-link/gn.php>, extracted October 14, 2007.

Institute, and the International Press Institute (IPI). In this endeavor, they work closely with local NGOs, including national associations of media professionals and non-media civil society organizations, in an effort to curbe political hindrance and legalistic harassment of media professionals by government agencies and powerful interest groups. This is actually logical and understandable since independent mass media outlets are generally private and commercial organizations. Therefore, this mode of NGO intervention is likely to impose itself as the most promising direction of long-term research in the field of nonprofit studies relative to the freedom of the media and democratization in Africa. Interestingly enough, as indicated earlier, it is regional and national NGO networks that seem to be closely connected with the promotion of media liberalization/democratization in West Africa. The most notable of such regional NGOs are the Panafrican Press Association (PPA), Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA), the African Women's Media Center (AWMC), and the African Media Development Initiative (AMDI).

Consequently, in the pursuit of the book project emanating from the present research, I will be looking attentively into the strengths and weaknesses of media-oriented NGOs including, but not limited to the following.

- The International Press Institute (IPI) whose Vienna Declaration on Public Broadcasting and whose Warsaw Declaration on News Agencies represent a true guiding light for other NGOs and international institutions working for the freedom of the press in Africa and around the world.
- Reporters without Borders whose aggressive investigative documentation of government abuses against journalists constitutes a strong challenge to dictatorships and an equally strong inspiration for journalists and Human Rights organizations promoting freedom of expression and responsible communication in Africa and around the world.
- The PANOS Institute West Africa whose scholarly documentation of media activities within the media-state-society trilogy provides invaluable resources for a rational and comprehensive appreciation of the state of affairs in the region.
- The Pan-African News Agency (PANA), a pioneer in the field of nongovernmental collect, formulation, and dissemination of information and communication at the continental level.
- Partnership for Media and Conflict Prevention in West Africa, an NGO created under the auspices of UNESCO for media actions to preempt conflicts in West Africa.
- The African Women's Media Center (AWMC) which supports African women's active participation in free and responsible media communication for democracy and development.
- The African Media Development Initiative (AMDI)

- The Panafrican Press Association (PPA)
- Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA)
- National media institutions and NGOs of Senegal, Benin, and Guinea such as these:
 - Senegal
 - The High Council of the Audiovisual (*Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel*—HCA)
 - The National Telecommunications Company (*Société Nationale des Télécommunications*—SONATEL)
 - The Council of Development Nongovernmental Organizations (*Conseil des Organisations Non-Gouvernementales d'Appui au Développement*—CONGAD)
 - The Union of Information and Social Communication Professionals (*Syndicat des Professionnels de l'Information et de la Communication Sociale*—SYNPICS)
 - The Association of Catholic Communicators of Senegal (*L'Association des Communicateurs Catholiques du Sénégal*—ACCS)
 - The African Center for Women in the Media (*Le Centre Africain pour les Femmes dans les Médias*)
 - The Union of National Radio and Television Networks of Africa (*L'Union des Radiodiffusions et Télévisions Nationales d'Afrique*—URTNA)
 - The Association of Fulani Communicators of Africa (*Association des Communicateurs Peul d'Afrique*—ACPA)
 - Benin
 - The Media House of Benin (*La Maison des Médias du Bénin*—MDMB)
 - The High Authority of the Audiovisual and Communication (*Haute Autorité de l'Audiovisuel et de la Communication*—HAAC)
 - The Observatory of Deontology and Ethics in the Media (*Observatoire de la Déontologie et de l'Ethique dans les Médias*—ODEM)
 - The National Council of Press and Audiovisual Employers (*Conseil National du Patronat de la Presse et de l'Audiovisuel*—CNPA-Bénin)
 - The Union of Media Professionals of Benin (*Union des Professionnels des Médias du Bénin*—UPMB)
 - The Union of Journalists of the Private Press of Benin (*L'Union des Journalistes de la Presse Privée du Bénin*—UJPB)
 - The Association of Journalists for Community Awakening and Decentralization (*L'Association des Journalistes pour la Décentralization et l'Eveil à la Base*)

- Guinea
 - The National Communication Council (*Le Conseil National de la Communication*—CNC)
 - The Association of Guinean Journalists (*L'Association des Journalistes de Guinée*—AJG)
 - The Guinean Branch of the International Press Union (*La Section Guinéenne de l'Union Internationale de la Presse*)
 - The Guinean Association of Independent Press Publishers (*L'Association Guinéenne des Editeurs de la Presse Indépendante*—AGEPI)
 - Women's Current Issues in Guinea (*Actualités Féminines en Guinée*—AFGE)

III. General Outline of the Book Project

As I move forward to organize my findings and pursue a more circumscribed plan for further field research, I am in a position to present the outline of the book mentioned earlier which I am currently actively drafting. First, it is worth reiterating that as the tentative title (*NGOs, Mass Media, and the Maturing of Civil Society in Francophone West Africa: Senegal, Benin, and Guinea*) indicates, this project comprises three main components: (1) NGOs in the field of nonprofit activity in the target countries, (2) the liberalization/democratization of mass media, and (3) the development and maturation of civil society. This substantial expansion of my original topic (“NGO Intervention and the Development of a Free Press in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea”) has been dictated by my preliminary findings. Indeed, even though a narrow focus on the press would still yield useful knowledge on the correlation of nonprofit activity and the promotion of democracy in West Africa, a more inclusive study integrating the dynamics of civil society and sociopolitical change will undoubtedly be a far more valuable addition to the body of knowledge being constructed in this area.

Part One: NGOs and the Nonprofit Endeavor in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea

I will first explore the issue of the conceptual equivalence between NGOs and nonprofit organizations, namely whether the two are unequivocally interchangeable or if there are normative, structural and/or operational nuances of which to be aware. If so, what are these, and how ought they to be dealt with in a study such as this? This will enable me to focus the analysis on the track record of NGO/nonprofit activity in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea. My analysis will consider NGOs both horizontally (i.e. through their different fields of activity) and vertically (i.e. from international NGOs to domestic NGOs and down to local GROs) in a effort to determine the extent of their contribution to the creation of the prevailing sociopolitical environment in which the liberalization of mass media and the maturing of civil society is taking place. Additionally, I will analyze the working relations that transpire among Organizations within each category, between categories and, ultimately, between the NGO community and government agencies. This will provide a comprehensive understanding of the progress being made by nonprofit organizations as well as the challenges that they face due to the redundancy observed within the NGO community and due to impertinent bureaucratic interference from government agencies. From this

broad perspective, it will be then methodologically suitable to narrow the discussion down to the other two key areas of the project, namely the liberalization/democratization of the media, and the development and maturing of civil society.

Part Two: The Contribution of NGOs to the Liberalization of Mass Media in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea

The prime focus here will be upon local NGOs by virtue of the fact that they are the ones that are most directly and most consistently linked to the birthing of independent (community-based) mass media and, logically, they are the ones that should capture the attention of international nonprofit organizations concerned with the furtherance of freedom of the press in this part of the world. Next are the regional and international NGOs particularly concerned with the training of media agents (journalists, technicians, and publicists), for with the exponential multiplication of independent media outlets, there is an equally exponential proliferation of practices that are incompatible with the professional, legal, and ethical values of free and responsible mass media in a nascent democracy. Such practices include shady deals bordering on outright bribery between media organizations, on the one hand, politicians and business circles, on the other, resulting in the publication or broadcasting of information of questionable integrity. Such practices also include different forms of defamation, such as libeling and slander which journalists have committed either by zeal or by ignorance (cases have been widely reported in Guinea and Benin and less so in Senegal).

According to Léonard Vincent, the African Bureau chief for Reporters Without Borders, these practices are more frequently observed in the press of opposition parties where improper personal attacks and fallacious public criticism are often mistaken for free and fair democratic debate. Vincent goes on to deplore the level of amateurism that plagues Africa's emerging independent media, particularly in the NICTs and most specifically on the World Wide Web. In this global sphere of instantaneous information and communication, African correspondents of online news outlets too often behave like ordinary bloggers whereby opinions and news are confused and emotional utterances are mistaken for objective expert analyses. This interviewee then concludes by pointing out that such unprofessional behavior not only lends its exhibitors to all sorts of retaliatory actions, but it also exposes professional journalists with respectable reputation to frivolous legalistic actions on the part of government agencies.⁶⁴

I will conclude this part of the work by examining the challenging issue of the true independence of "independent mass media" that rely essentially on NGOs for their very existence. Indeed, with these media depending heavily on local organizations, themselves dependent upon institutions and organizations of the Global North for sustained funding, professional training, technical equipment, ready made audiovisual programs, access to satellite networks and so on, it is worthwhile to wonder how pervasive this dependence is, and how it affects the efficacy of the same media. In the broader sense of the inquiry, one is inclined to question whether NGOs, through their role as new conveyers of development aid from the Global North to the Global South, are laying the foundation for a long-term self-sufficiency in the recipient countries or perpetuating the same dependency that has prevailed from the colonial era to the

⁶⁴ Léonard Vincent, Reporters Without Borders, Interviewed in Paris in June 2007.

present. In other words, as David Hulme and Michael Edwards put it, “Whether NGOs are getting so close (in terms of interests, values, methods, priorities and other factors) to Northern-government donors and, to a lesser degree, developing-country states, that important elements of their potential contribution to development have been lost or weakened.”⁶⁵

Part Three: Symbiotic Contribution of NGOs and the Liberalized Media to the Maturing of Civil Society in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea

Whatever the answer to the concerns raised above, it remains a fact that the independent/non-state media born out of the ongoing struggle known as Africa’s democratic transition have contributed and continue to contribute to the maturing of a civil society whose activities are yielding results and helping to make the transition less and less reversible. It is also a fact that a large pool of NNGOs and SNGOs are working in this area of the democratic transition by creating and/or consolidating the necessary environment for sustainable community empowerment and fruitful political participation. This is to say that while most NNGOs operating in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea are typically DNGOs and while the neo-liberal New Agenda Policy of development in the Global South tends to focalize on the economic aspect in terms of GDP and GNP, these NGOs’ endeavor is not necessarily out of the scope of these countries’ democratic transition which ought to be envisioned as a fundamental pillar of any sustainable development in the context of contemporary Africa. For, as Charles Okigbo points out, “There is no doubt that economic well-being has a place in any serious discussion of development. It is however, only one of the variables, for true development is multi-dimensional and not confined to economic growth.”⁶⁶ Further stressing the human and socio-political dimensions of the concept of sustainable development, Guinean economist Bobo Dieng adds: “Development is a network of mental and structural transformations that engender regular and sustained growth overtime. Development begins necessarily with what is called ‘organization’, with what is called ‘human being’, with what is called ‘human efficacy’ in terms of intellectual capability and professional qualifications.”⁶⁷

The symbiotic contribution of non-state media and the NGO community to the development and maturing of a broad-based civil society in Senegal, Benin, and Guinea will be discussed in this part of the work.

Part Four: Critical Assessment and Suggestions

This concluding part will consist of a recapitulative analysis of the successes and failures of the NGO/nonprofit endeavor relative to the fostering of independent mass media and a community empowering civil society geared toward a successful democratic transition in these Francophone West African nations-states. The recapitulative analysis will bring to bear key questions considered throughout the study including the following:

⁶⁵ In “Introduction” to *NGOs, States and Donors: Too Close for Comfort?* Hulme, David and Michael Edwards (Ed), New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997, p.3.

⁶⁶ Charles Okigbo “Prologue: Sustainable Development” in *Media and Sustainable Development*, Charles Okigbo (Ed), Nairobi, Kenya: African Council for Communication Education, 1995, p. 8.

⁶⁷ Camara, Mohamed Saliou, *Le pouvoir politique en Guinée sous Sékou Touré*, Paris: L’Harmattan, 2007, p. 225.

- The conceptual equivalence between NGOs and nonprofit organizations: Are the two unequivocally interchangeable or are there particular area issues in which structural and/or operational characteristics differentiate them? If so, what are those area issues and characteristics and how should they be dealt with in a study such as this?
- NNGO-SNGO/GRO interrelationships: Should NNGOs be envisaged with their African counterparts in the same institutional stratum within the global network of transnational relations?
- The issue of NGO effectiveness and accountability: (1) To whom are NNGOs accountable over their actions in Africa? How can this accountability be measured? What does it represent for their target communities? (2) How viable are African NGOs whose plethoric proliferation too often generates an atmosphere of redundancy thus adversely affecting the very core of their areas of concentration?
- The question of media liberalization and the “human right to communicate” mandate in Africa: To what extent the comparative study of Senegal, Benin, and Guinea educates the researcher and the reader on the state of affairs on the issue of respect for, and promotion of, the rights of citizens to engage in free and responsible information and communication? How is this mandate interpreted and upheld in Africa’s democratic transition and in the context of the current revolution in information and communication technology?
- The question of true independence of NGO-sponsored “independent/non-state media:” With their heavy reliance on NGOs (NNGOs and SNGOs alike) for sustained funding, professional training, technical equipment, ready made audiovisual programs, access to satellite networks and so on, can these media achieve a respectable degree of freedom and independence?
- The interrelationship of NGOs and civil society: How do the two contribute to one another’s development? How do they reinforce one another’s sociopolitical effectiveness in terms of community empowerment and democratic transition in the African context?
- NGOs and economic and socio-political dependency/independency in Africa: Are NGOs through their role as new conveyers of development aid from the Global North to the Global South laying the foundation for a long-term self-sufficiency in the recipient countries or perpetuating “the same dependency instigated by foreign governments from the colonial era to the present” that African activists vehemently decry?
- NGOs and the “New Policy Agenda” in the post-Cold War North-South relations: What is the future of the institutionalized NGO culture in the post-Cold War global promotion of democracy in an Africa noticeably marginalized by, among other things, the so-called New Policy Agenda of development aid? And finally,

what is the future of the African state in this new environment in which aggressive advocacy for the enlargement of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) seems to contrast sharply with the mounting pressure put upon the same state to play a “more active role” in the reinforcement of regional and global security?

From the answers that my further field research will provide to these and related questions, I will conclude the work with suggestions, still based upon objective findings in the field, as to how nonprofit leaders ought to re-caliber their approaches of the African world in order to maximize efficiency and minimize redundancy and failure. The suggestions shall also encompass academic considerations of new ways in which nonprofit studies could be improved in Africa so that future scholarly works will not only provide much needed intellectual understanding of the field but also have a more practical effect on the design and conduct of NGO endeavors on the continent.

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- Caleb Kolié, Information Director of Radio Familia FM, interviewed in Conakry in December 2006.
- Cheik Fantamady Condé, former sports reporter for RTG, former Director of Guinea's state-owned newspaper *Horoya*, former National Director of Communication, Executive Director of Radio FM Liberté, interviewed in Conakry in December 2006.
- Clément Batossi, financial administrator for the City of Cotonou and community leader for the town of Takpè, personal communications, Cotonou, June 2007.
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- Léonard Vincent, Chief of the Africa Bureau for Reporters Without Borders, interviewed in Paris in June 2007.
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- Souhel Hajjar, co-founder and Executive Director of the Canal SAGUI (Satellite Guinée) media corporation, founder and Executive Director of the independent Radio Nostalgie, interviewed in Conakry in December 2006.
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