

MONDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2008 (16.30pm – 18.30pm)

Workshop 4 : Partnership between international Media and local organisations

VERGINA , Level -2, English, Passive France

Workshop Title: Partnership between International media operators and local organizations : gaps, misunderstandings and solutions

Workshop Coordinators

**JED (Journaliste en danger) Démocratic Republic of Congo
IPP (Panos Paris Institute), France**

Email address:

Donat M'Baya : donmbaya@yahoo.fr

Marie-Soleil Frère : msfrere@ulb.ac.be

Language: (Please mark one) English, ~~French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic~~

Workshop description:

1. What are the main points you want to raise in the workshop?

Very often, projects to support the media in Southern countries are lead by Northern based or international foreign organizations engaged in collaborations with local partners.

That relationship between the “outsiders” and the “insiders” is not always easy... For instance, Journaliste en danger (DRC) and Panos Paris have been partners for many years. This partnership has sometimes been characterized by moments of frustrations, irritation or even mistrust, but has also allowed very significant joint achievements.

This workshops aims at discussing very openly the problems we face when collaborating and how to find ways to resolve them.

For instance :

- Northern (or international) organizations tend to think that their local counterparts are very weak local organizations with reduced capacities in managing important amounts of money, and a lack of ability to fill the donors' expectations in terms of methodology (logical framework, indicators, monitoring and assessment...). They sometimes tend to act in a paternalistic way... or are perceived as such.

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- Southern partners often challenge or resent the Northern based (or international) organizations' power of decision, the fact that they impose their priorities, and that they don't always adequately understand the local contexts.
- Southern organizations sometimes feel that they are being "used" as partners by international media operators to access sources of funding while they are not always respected as real "equal partner".

2. Give some background information to the issue you want to raise.

Journaliste en Danger and IPP have been working together in DRC and the whole Central African region, for over 5 years now. They want to share their experience, talk about some tensions which occasionally arose in their relationship, and how they regularly managed to overcome these crisis thanks to mutual understanding and respect, and open on-going dialogue.

Media development in African countries, and especially in Central African countries which are still undergoing various forms of conflicts and instability, needs a real collaboration between international (and Northern based) organizations and local partners. But a real balance is not easy to establish, especially when donors' demands in terms of methodology, narrative and financial reporting require very specific skills, which was the case for the projects in which Panos Paris and JED collaborated.

3. List three key questions you want the workshop to address.

- a) How can local organizations be totally involved in the process of elaborating projects ?
- b) How can this authentic interaction in designing joint strategy can produce greatest added value in terms of capacity building for the local organization ?
- c) Should there be a "charter" or founding principles to assist the establishment of genuine relations between local and international (Northern based) organizations ? If yes, how ?

4. What would be the main desired outcome of the workshop?

- a description of the main obstacles to a "equal to equal" relationship between local and Northern based or international organizations is listed (with concrete examples)
- clues are given, experiences and examples of best practice are shared about some possible solutions to overcome those obstacles.
- some basic principles are set and can be disseminated so that every actor of this media sector can have those principles in mind from the very first phase of project conception to final assessment.

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