



BBC MEDIA ACTION

TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH MEDIA
AROUND THE WORLD



OUR AIM IS TO INFORM, CONNECT
AND EMPOWER PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD

www.bbcmmediaaction.org

Overview



BBC Media Action has a long history of transforming lives around the world through media. This year we have continued to focus our work on governance, health, and resilience and humanitarian response. Access to information, the heart of our work, has a powerful role to play in supporting international development in all three areas. Our projects are wide-ranging: we've enabled Tunisians to ask questions of their politicians on live TV days before their first free elections, produced an inspiring radio show made for and by the young people of Burma, and given health workers in the poorest parts of India life-saving training on their mobile phones.

To capture the essence of why the work is so important, I'll focus on our projects in one of the 24 countries in which we work, Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone is recovering from a decade of civil war. It's a country rich in natural resources and potential, but the fighting upturned the lives of a whole generation. Students were displaced from schools, families split up and livelihoods lost.

One of our most important recent projects has supported journalists to cover the trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor who was found guilty this year of aiding and abetting rebels in Sierra Leone during the civil war. Our Sierra Leonean and Liberian colleagues were the only African voices reporting from The Hague and became local heroes as they brought the story home.

More recently we launched a question and answer programme called *Tok Bot Salone* (Talk About Sierra Leone). Hassan Arouni, well known across Africa from his days at the helm of BBC World Service's *Focus On Africa*, is now part of our team. Here's how Hassan describes the programme:

"*Tok Bot Salone* is about empowering Sierra Leoneans to speak out, to talk about what's burning inside their chests. We bring together people in power, civil society activists and ordinary people."

In another project in the east of the country, we are working in partnership with local radio stations and non-governmental organisations to help boost cocoa production. As a result of the war, schools were destroyed and a generation forced to fight or to mine for diamonds. Many young farmers were left both illiterate and without the farming skills of their parents. Cocoa is a prized commodity and our project is designed to enhance skills to upgrade the quantity and quality of the cocoa produced. It combines radio drama, a magazine show with phone-ins and outreach work. Listener groups, links to a certified course affiliated to the local university and journalism training all combine to support farmers through their cocoa growing cycle.

In snapshot form, Sierra Leone provides a strong example of some of the ways media can be used to help people to take action. Projects such as these are delivered across the many countries we work in. Media is effective as it can both have impact at scale and support just one individual. Radio, especially, is an intimate medium and listeners treat our programmes like trusted friends.

We know the work we do is even more necessary than when the organisation was founded 13 years ago – and the continued support from donors and interest in our work reflect this. With the help of our donors and partners, we will continue to deliver high-quality work where it's needed most.



Caroline Nursey, Executive Director



BBC Media Action presenter, Hassan Arouni, interviews two fishermen, Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Sa'at Hissab, Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan and Libya

What: A topical debate programme, with political and public figures answering questions from a studio audience.

Why: In the aftermath of the Arab Spring, *Sa'at Hissab* gave people the chance to hold their leaders to account about the issues that matter to them. In March 2012, a year after the revolution, the programme discussed Libya's hottest topics: disarmament, transitional justice, federalism and the future of women. A satellite link-up enabled studio audiences in both Tripoli and Benghazi to ask questions at the same time. Meanwhile in an episode recorded in Minya, Egypt, the audience consisted of 240 people from all over Upper Egypt, which includes the most neglected and unsettled parts of the country.

"I was in shock: I was able to sit with officials and tell them about the problems I face daily. This never could have been possible before."
Egyptian fisherman



Who we are

To be at the heart of their own development, people need information to help them make decisions and to know their rights. But many people in developing countries lack access to useful, timely and reliable information. BBC Media Action (the new name for the BBC World Service Trust) is the BBC's international development charity. We believe in the power of media and communication to help reduce poverty and support people in understanding their rights.

For over a decade we have been working to help transform lives in some of the poorest, hardest-to-reach parts of the world. Our projects reach more than 200 million people in 24 countries where media can be used to inform, connect and empower.

The global reach and reputation of the BBC strengthen our work. But we are not funded by the licence fee. As a registered charity, grants and donations make our work possible.

Why media?

Mass media can provide information to millions of people across borders and economic, religious and ethnic divides. It can enable dialogue between people and their leaders. It can equip people with knowledge and practical skills to understand their rights and improve their health and livelihoods.

In Angola for example, one radio phone-in gave the residents of a district in the capital Luanda the chance to ask their local leaders why they had been left without electricity for 30 years. The programme prompted the government to turn the power back on, after three decades of darkness.

"If it wasn't for your presence here, we would still be without light, living in misery," said one listener.

How we work

BBC Media Action uses all forms of media, old and new – be it providing life-saving information by radio in earthquake-hit Haiti, creating a TV show where Egyptians can question their leaders, or helping train thousands of health workers by mobile phone and outreach work in rural India. Increasingly, we are working with mobile phone technology and social media to help encourage conversations, debate and learning.

All of BBC Media Action's projects respond to the needs and concerns of the people in the countries in which we work. Research is therefore central to how we plan and deliver our projects. Working in 22 languages, our research team's analysis ensures that each project is scrupulously targeted, monitored and evaluated. BBC Media Action also publishes rigorously researched reports and policy briefings on topics such as the fragile future of Afghanistan's media and how people in emergencies use media and technology to help them survive. These expert briefings help to galvanise international attention and aim to inform development policy.

Partnership is another priority: we work closely with donors, broadcast partners – including the BBC World Service – ministries and non-governmental organisations to ensure development efforts are linked up on the ground to bring lasting change.

Our focus

Health

BBC Media Action uses media and communication to help improve people's health by providing reliable information, encouraging healthy practices and helping people make informed choices. We know media is only part of the solution but we can, for example, strengthen immunisation campaigns in refugee camps with radio broadcasts about when and where people can receive treatment. Dramatic radio and TV soaps too can raise health issues about, for example, HIV prevention and treatment. Adverts are also powerful. In India, humorous adverts featuring a cough-detecting superhero encouraged testing for tuberculosis. In Cambodia, a song championing the benefits of breastfeeding led to a significant increase in women choosing to breastfeed.

Mobile Kunji, India

What: An innovative mobile phone service and toolkit for community health workers in Bihar that provides life-saving information about maternal and child health.

Aim: To provide health workers with a low-cost set of tools to engage rural families.

Why: Infant mortality rates in Bihar are some of the highest in the world; 56% of households in rural Bihar have a mobile phone.

Reach: 200,000 community health workers and 25.9 million women of child-bearing age.

"I have learned how to explain things in simple and easy language. Many times people do not listen to us but when they hear this mobile service they will understand more."

Community health worker, 33, Begusarai, Bihar



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Governance and rights

The work we do helps people, especially some of the most marginalised, to access information, have their voice heard and hold their leaders to account. In 2011-2012, our audiences across the world – from rural valleys in Nepal to some of the world's biggest city slums – asked challenging questions of over 2,500 public officials in broadcast debates.

Our work extends beyond the programmes we help produce and broadcast. In many countries where we work

journalists are undervalued and often under-trained. In the run up to elections, people need unbiased reporting to help them know their rights and make informed decisions at the ballot box.

As Zambia prepared for presidential elections in 2011, for example, we worked with journalists to help encourage balanced and fair coverage. A central focus was to support Zambia's first ever televised presidential and MP debates. After being trained by BBC Media Action, Annie Mukabe presented the debates for national broadcaster ZNBC. She says: "It wasn't biased towards one particular party. And it wasn't about who I was as a presenter, it wasn't about my cultural background. It was about getting the questions answered."

We encourage debate between political, religious and ethnic groups and work with journalists to reduce coverage that can inflame hatred and conflict. In South Sudan, we supported 200 journalists to report the country's independence in an accurate and balanced way. Our Nigerian radio drama *Story, Story* explores issues which span different ethnic groups and reaches 20 million people across Nigeria and beyond each week.

Loy9, Cambodia

What: A multimedia project including a TV drama and magazine show, a phone-in radio programme, website and live events.

Aim: To increase young people's participation in public life.

Why: Two in three people in Cambodia are under 30 years old. But young Cambodians lack an

awareness of how their country is governed: when asked, three quarters had heard of their parliament, but only one third of these knew what it does.

Reach: 2.4m a week on TV.

"I learned about voting, finding solutions to a conflict and preserving natural resources like planting trees."

18-year-old student, Kampot



Resilience and humanitarian response

In both the critical hours after natural disasters and during chronic humanitarian emergencies, BBC Media Action uses radio, TV and mobile phones to provide life-saving information about where people can find food, clean water, medical assistance and shelter. But we also strengthen people's long-term resilience to disasters and help them respond to environmental changes that may affect their health or income. We provide information and opportunities to explore how people can improve their livelihoods, use of natural resources and education.

Climate Asia

What: The largest ever research project on the experiences, knowledge and attitudes of those affected by climate change across Asia, which will inform new communication approaches for vulnerable communities in the region.

Aim: To put the everyday experiences of Asian people at the heart of responses to some of the world's greatest human and environmental challenges.

Reach: More than 30,000 people in seven countries.

"Many people don't understand the term 'climate change', or its causes, but they feel the impact."

Bangladeshi civil society representative



COLIN SPURWAY/BBC MEDIA ACTION

Boosting journalism skills

Since the early days of BBC Media Action, an important part of our work has been strengthening the media through training, encouraging public service broadcasting, and providing some infrastructural support to rebuild radio and TV stations damaged by conflict.

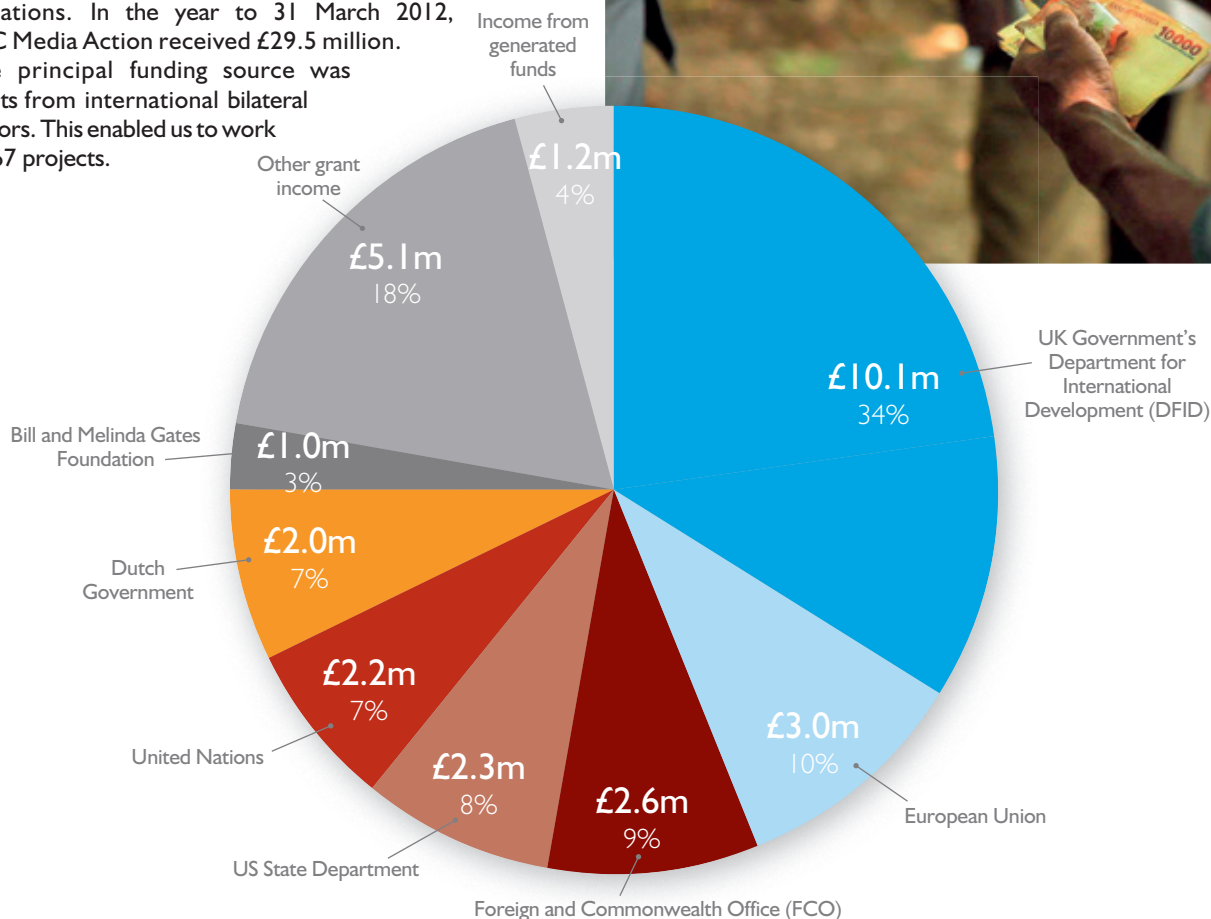
This part of our work remains a key part of what we do. We've trained thousands of journalists worldwide to produce quality content on the issues that matter locally. In 2011 alone, over 2,500 people were equipped with practical journalism skills.

BBC Media Action has an experienced network of trainers and mentors who help strengthen the media around the world. We have developed inventive ways to provide training in challenging contexts, where censorship, conflict or the remoteness of a location make face-to-face training impossible.

For instance, BBC Media Action's iLearn service offers a series of training modules that are moderated by trainers but accessed remotely online. This means that anonymity can be preserved and trainees face reduced levels of risk, while getting the training and mentoring they need.

2011-2012: Funding

BBC Media Action is legally, financially and operationally independent from the BBC. But the fundamental values of the BBC remain our guiding principles. All BBC Media Action's work is funded by external grants and donations. In the year to 31 March 2012, BBC Media Action received £29.5 million. The principal funding source was grants from international bilateral donors. This enabled us to work on 67 projects.



The Global Grant and other funding sources

In November 2011 DFID approved £90m, over five years, in a Global Grant provided to BBC Media Action. The grant will reach over 200 million people across 14 developing countries. The Global Grant joins together £9m of existing funding from DFID, with up to £81m of new funds to scale up BBC Media Action's programmes and reach. The grant enables us to extend successful formats to new countries, develop the capacity of local broadcast partners, apply systematic evaluation procedures across countries and contribute to the global evidence base on the role of media and communication in development. Funding is performance-based and measured against annual milestones. The BBC has editorial control over all broadcast outputs and some of the work is developed in local languages in partnership with the BBC World Service.

Other significant projects which continued this year include a maternal and child health project in Bihar, India, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (\$22.6m over five years).

Policy and Learning team

The expansion of our work has allowed us to develop our Policy and Learning team, whose work underpins the

design, delivery and evaluation of each of our projects. The team's impact on informing international policy has also been strengthened over the past year through expert publications, new media work, events and presentations at high-profile events.

Corporate Partnerships

As a charity, we raise funds and receive some services pro bono from our Corporate Leaders Group. BBC Media Action is grateful to these companies for their invaluable contribution and support (listed right).

The Catalyst Fund

With the help of individual donors, BBC Media Action aims to raise £2m to create the Catalyst Fund. It will enable us to develop and pilot new projects and provide the vital matched funding we need to secure large grants. Individual gifts of £15,000 or more will also enable BBC Media Action to respond more quickly to provide life-saving information in the wake of conflicts and natural disasters.

The Catalyst Fund is chaired by Dr Chai Patel CBE FRCP.

To find out how you can help support BBC Media Action, please visit www.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/support_us or email media.action@bbc.co.uk





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