

# CALL FOR PAPERS

## News Media Development and Sustainability in Africa

### International Conference

October 22-23, 2015

#### Objectives

Papers are being sought for presentation at an international conference exploring African media development and sustainability that will be held at the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, October 22-23, 2015. Best papers will be considered for publication in a special issue of *Journal of Media Business Studies*.

Aim of this international conference is to shed light on (1) how media are developing in different parts of Africa and the main constraints and enablers in this process, (2) what factors might help bridge financial and human capital gaps and strengthen long-term impact of international support on media sustainability, as well as on (3) how support to media development in Africa can be an opportunity also for western media and investors.

Free and independent information media are fundamental for both the economic and democratic development of societies. In certain African countries, where conflicts are in place, media development is mainly being supported by international donors and non-profit organizations: they provide initial investments to help stabilize countries and support their transition toward democracy or out of war. After a certain level of success is perceived, donors and organizations either lower their support or withdraw completely. The sustainability of media in the long run is therefore the biggest problem for developing democracies to solve. When looking at the five objectives that, according to the media sustainability index, are deemed to enable a media system to be independent and sustainable, the one measuring if "media are well managed, allowing editorial independence" scores the lowest for various African countries. This calls for a new approach to African journalism and media management both in terms of financial support and dedicated educational programs.

We are particularly interested in African media development (including all platforms: print, broadcast and digital media). However, submissions looking at media financing and sustainability in other developing countries are welcome as they might enlarge perspectives and allow comparative analysis. Both theoretically and empirically-based abstracts related to the workshop theme can be submitted. Suggested research topics for contributions include, but are not limited to:

- News media business best practices in African or other developing countries
- Sustainability oriented news media business models in developing countries
- Impact of different forms of investments on African news media sustainability
- Joint ventures and strategic alliances for African news media development
- Impact of international news media organizations on the news media landscape in developing countries
- Growth, support and sustainability of indigenous language media in Africa
- Managerial and organizational challenges related to media sustainability in African countries
- Human resource management within news media firms in developing countries
- Impact of new technologies on news media innovation and sustainability
- Relation between media regulation and media sustainability in Africa
- Media management academic programs and African media development

200-300 word **abstracts** are **due July 31, 2015** with **notifications of accepted proposals** on **August 10, 2015**. Full papers will be due October 1, 2015. Please send abstracts to: [cinzia.dalzotto@unine.ch](mailto:cinzia.dalzotto@unine.ch)

#### Program

- **October 22:** The academic community will present the state of the art of research on media sustainability in developing countries.
- **October 23:** International representatives of potential investors, independent media entrepreneurs and the donor community present their views and discuss possible and viable cooperative solutions to news media sustainability in Africa. Academics will contribute to the discussion and reflect on ways for integrating practitioners' needs and ideas in a future practice oriented research agenda.

**Conference Organizers** Cinzia Dal Zotto, Academy of Journalism and Media & Enterprise Institute, University of Neuchâtel, and Fondation Hirondelle ([www.hirondelle.org](http://www.hirondelle.org))

**Scientific Association Partners** International Media Management Academic Association (IMMAA) and European Media Management Association (EMMA)