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Media Status Report: Benin

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This study goes over the major conclusions of the study on the state of Benin media that was carried out for the Observatoire de la déontologie et de l'éthique dans les médias [media deontology and ethics observatory] (ODEM) by a group of four consultants, including the author of this text.

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I. AN OPEN POLITICAL CONTEXT, A FRAGILE ECONOMY

A small West African country (114,000 sq. km.) situated between Nigeria and Togo, Benin is home to more than 6 million inhabitants. The first African country to have organised a 'national conference' in February 1990, after eighteen years of a single-party regime, it has since initiated an original democratic experiment. Indeed, it has experienced a changeover of power between political parties after peaceful elections (from Mathieu Kérékou to Nicéphore Soglo and then from Soglo to Kérékou) twice (in 1991 and 1996).

Its reputation as a "political laboratory" for democracy in Africa and its stability have allowed the country to attract a large amount of outside aid and a few foreign investments. Despite a few hitches, the 2001 presidential elections did not threaten the viability of Benin's institutions. Today, Benin is one of the West African countries in which civil peace and public liberty seem best guaranteed. The active presence of civil society in the public forum and the successive changeovers of the presidency have made it impossible for any government to control or subjugate the press (¹).

This political context favoured a spectacular development of the media environment. All observers, both domestic and foreign, are impressed by the diversity and freedom of tone in Benin press. There are no taboo subjects for the men and women in the Benin media who can speak out on any subject and criticise any person or key figure, even if it means being taken to court (²).

The main obstacle to turning this socio-political success into economic development is corruption. This corruption is fed by illicit trade with Nigeria and, more generally, by the transit and re-export economy and the historically low level of civil servants' salaries.

Economically speaking, Benin is almost completely lacking in raw materials (except for a very limited offshore oil field and clinker reserves). Its main export, which was palm oil when Benin gained independence, was replaced by cotton in the 1990s. Neighbouring Nigeria inundates a large part of West Africa with local or imported manufactured goods, leaving Benin with very few possibilities for industrial development. The only progress noted recently is in the cotton sector (construction of cotton gin factories and oil mills). The Benin economy therefore relies mostly on farming (food products, cotton, palm oil, cashew nuts, and pineapples) and trade. The Port of Cotonou increased its activity heavily in the 1990s. A large amount of the products imported are re-exported towards Nigeria, Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali. In Cotonou, used vehicle imports feed a vast artisanal sector for bodywork, welding and painting.

¹ For more information, see: Emmanuel V. Adjovi, *Une élection libre en Afrique. La présidentielle de 1996 au Bénin*, Paris, Karthala, 1998.

² Granted, there are numerous libel suits but the Benin press is not confronted with the political or police harassment faced by the press in certain countries in the sub-region such as Côte-d'Ivoire and Togo.

II. A PERFECTIBLE LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Media Management Institutions

1.1 The Ministry of Culture and Communication Cut Off from Reality

Under the terms of the decree dated 14 February 2000, the mission of the Ministry of Culture and Communication is to define and implement the government communication policy. In reality, "everyone acts as if our Ministry had ceased to exist," one of this Ministry's officers observed bitterly.

Since the creation of the HAAC (Haute autorité de l'audiovisuel et de la communication [high audiovisual and communication authority]), the Ministry of Culture and Communication has lost most of its press and information prerogatives and shares the supervision of the media sector with the HAAC.

1.2 The Haute autorité de l'audiovisuel et de la communication (HAAC), an Institution with Considerable Communication Powers

The HAAC is the first African media regulation authority, officially autonomous from the government and established by a Constitution. The HAAC's first counsellors took office in July 1994. The HAAC is an independent administrative authority. It is made up of nine members: three are appointed by the President of the Republic, three by the National Assembly's Bureau, and three by media professionals. They have five-year mandates. These mandates are non-renewable and cannot be revoked.

Its president is appointed by the Head of State while the other members of the institution's Bureau (the vice-president and the two rapporteurs) are elected by their peers. Article 142 of the Constitution of 11 December 1990 invests the High Authority with the general mission of guaranteeing "the freedom of the press and all means of mass communication, in respect of the law".

The HAAC's mission also includes:

- ensuring the respect of deontology in the news and the equitable access to official information means by political parties, associations and citizens;
- guaranteeing fair and appropriate use of public press and audiovisual communication organisations by the institutions of the Republic, each in function of its constitutional missions, and when required ensure the necessary arbitration.

The HAAC decides upon the attribution of press credentials that are signed by the Minister of Culture and Communication. It attributes frequencies to radio and television stations as well as attributing ground stations.

It also monitors the authorised radio and television stations. However, it does not have staff trained for this activity and can not monitor them efficiently. All the more so since the HAAC's listening station can only record broadcasts in Cotonou and the surrounding area.

Entrusted with the promotion and protection of media deontology, the HAAC is still helpless because the applicable sanctions and disciplinary procedure must be set by a law that has not yet been passed.

Furthermore, the press and communication professionals do not want the HAAC to be in charge of deontology issues. Thus, the HAAC and the media milieu are in conflict over taking into account the decisions of the Observatoire de la déontologie et de l'éthique dans les médias [media deontology and ethics observatory] (ODEM) in award criteria for State aid to the press.

The HAAC has a diverse range of legal means for action: powers of investigation, injunction and sanction. The sanctions can be monetary or take the form of revocation or temporary suspension of authorisation.

1.3 Jurisdictional Conflicts Between the Ministry and the HAAC

Constitutional law granted the HAAC the power to suggest candidates to the Head of State for nomination as directors of public service media. However, when one of these candidates does not please a minister, he can simply issue a decree to dismiss the candidate.

Since 1997, the HAAC has managed the 300 million in funds that the government makes available to private media annually. Since 1998, however, the Ministry of Communication has been seeking to take the management of these funds from it and has tried to supplant it by having draft decrees elaborated.

2. ODEM: for Greater Respect of Deontology

The Observatoire de la déontologie et de l'éthique dans les médias [media deontology and ethics observatory] (ODEM) was launched on 3 May 1999. It is the product of professional associations. ODEM is made up of thirteen members as follows:

- 7 representatives of journalists and others of similar status
- 2 representatives of editors
- 2 representatives of audiovisual media managers
- 2 representatives of civil society

ODEM groups together professionals from both the public and private sectors-- press barons and journalists combined. The circle was even enlarged to include two members of civil society. The members have two-year mandates that can be renewed once.

ODEM's objectives are:

- ensuring that deontology and ethics rules are respected by the media;
- protecting the public's right to free, complete, honest and accurate information;
- defending press freedom;
- ensuring journalists' safety when exercising their profession and guaranteeing their right to investigate freely on all facts concerning public life;
- encouraging journalists and newspapers that show professionalism; and
- undertaking research and reflection on the evolution of the media.

ODEM led the process that resulted in the September 1999 adoption of a Code of Deontology for the Benin press. ODEM acts through communiqués to ensure that its provisions are respected: roughly thirty communiqués have been issued since November 2000. In addition, it produced a report on the respect of deontology by Benin media during the March 2001 presidential elections.

3. Media Law

3.1 Confusing Legislation and an Obsolete Law on Written Press

The press in Benin is governed by a series of scattered legislative texts and regulations in which one is easily disoriented. Sometimes, due to a confusing system of abrogation, one does not even know which norm is applicable.

The law fixes no criteria for the creation of newspapers. All that is required is a written declaration (prior to publication) on stamped paper addressed to the office of the Procureur de la

République [public prosecutor for the Republic] and to the Ministry of the Interior. The legal system is based on prior declaration.

This situation is the source of many faux pas that, at the end of the day, are not beneficial to professionals. Today, cooks, shoe repairers or even transport agents can become newspaper managing editors in the blink of an eye. This absence of legislation is a real handicap for media credibility.

The status of private news agencies and the status of press distribution services are defined nowhere, neither is that of on-line newspapers.

The copyright deposit formalities must be accomplished at least two working hours before publication. With the multiplication of daily newspapers and the necessity of distributing newspapers rapidly, this constraint is not adapted and, accordingly, newspapers are released before copyright deposit has been made.

3.2 Shortfalls in Broadcast Law

Any Beninese individual or private legal entity can apply and be authorised to create a broadcast corporation and fill the airwaves. Prior authorisation is required by law. However, broadcast law contains numerous weaknesses.

The HAAC's mission is to "ensure that newspapers are not the object of concentration so as to maintain the pluralist nature of information and communication." However, the only provision under Beninese law to limit the concentration of the media says that "no one can own more than 51% of the equity capital" of a commercial broadcast corporation. This rate cap is not sufficient on its own to avoid the ownership of several media by one person or group, giving them a dominant position in the media landscape.

In the terms and conditions signed by the HAAC and radio broadcast promoters, the effective radiated power (ERP) of their antennas must not exceed 100 watts, which only suits neighbourhood radio stations. However, in practice, only one radio station respects these specifications. The ERP of some radio stations is more than 100 times this amount.

There is no national planning for frequency bandwidths in Benin. In the UIT's frequency bandwidth maps, large cities such as Cotonou and Porto-Novo have only one frequency. In order to respond to numerous demands, the HAAC divided the frequency modulation band in order to obtain secondary frequencies from the main frequency in the GE84 Plan: 9 in Cotonou and 5 in Porto-Novo. However, the UIT has not yet been notified of these frequencies and they therefore are not protected by this organisation.

3.3 An Uneven Situation for Public Media

ORTB and ONIP: Establishments whose Status Is Clearly Defined

The Office de radiodiffusion et télévision du Bénin [Benin radio and television broadcasting office] (ORTB) and the Office national d'imprimerie et de presse [national printing and press office] (ONIP) are public establishments of social, cultural and scientific nature. The law granted them autonomy for management and administration. In reality, their Board of Directors is controlled by the government because it is made up mostly of representatives of several Ministries, plus one delegate, one representative of users and one expert personality in the field of printing and information for ONIP and in broadcasting for ORTB. All are nominated by the supervisory ministry.

At ORTB, the executive director has extensive powers. The directors of national radio broadcasting, television, and the regional station of Parakou have no autonomy of action.

b) The Agence Bénin Presse: Ambiguous Status

The legal status of the Agence Bénin presse [Benin news agency] (ABP) is not clearly defined in any legal text. For several of ABP's executives, the organisation and operations provided for by the ministerial decree of June 1999 are not appropriate for a news agency. The Agency's management contains nine departments. "It's too much for a small agency such as ours", said one of the agency's executives. Jurisdictional conflicts are numerous. In short, ABP functions as a simple technical division of the Ministry of Culture and Communication.

3.4 Repressive Criminal Law

Under media law, journalists or citizens who are prosecuted have every chance of being condemned in Benin. Indeed, they have seven days to prove the defamatory matter starting from the day they are served with the subpoena. If this deadline is not respected, they are no longer allowed to produce proof during the trial. They must then prove their good faith. However, under media law, bad faith is presumed. Journalists are therefore easily condemned.

The legislators used the law dated 30 June 1960 as the basis for the sanctions set forth in the law dated 20 August 1997. The prison sentences were maintained but the minimum fines were multiplied one-hundred-fold and the maximum fines were doubled at the least. The legislators justify these increases by the effect of time and the devaluation of the CFA franc.

III. A DENSE BUT PRECARIOUS MEDIA LANDSCAPE

1. Abundant but Changing Written Press

In Benin, more than fifteen private dailies and more than twenty private periodicals appear more or less regularly, in addition to the state daily, *La Nation* (created in 1969 under the name of *Daho-Express*) and ABP. The most visible dailies are: *Le Matinal*, *Le Matin*, *Les Echos du Jour*, *Le Point au quotidien*, *Le Progrès* and *Le Républicain*.

The written press is in perpetual movement. Newspapers drive each other off, following the events that rhythm the life of the nation. Thus, newspapers are created in pre-electoral periods and left to die as soon as the election is over. Similarly, newspapers are created and others are resurrected solely to take advantage of State aid to the press.

This constant hustle and bustle gives one a feeling of continuous renewal. However, no newspaper has managed to last and become a true press firm. In this respect, *La Croix*, the Catholic Church newspaper that first appeared in 1945, is the exception that proves the rule.

The Beninese press thus appears opportunistic. Publications are usually born according to the circumstances of the moment, improvise their deployment, and evolve in a small-time manner.

1.1 Press Firms: Great Financial Vulnerability

Most newspapers are launched without market studies, capital, organisation, or qualified human resources. Those who launch newspapers are either businessmen or politicians who seek to use the newspaper as a means of pressure or a propaganda tool.

Commercial policy is limited to supplying points of sale. Numerous managing editors do not have funds and do not know the per copy production cost for their newspaper.

With the rise in the cost of inputs, printing costs (35 and 40% of costs) carry great weight in newspapers' budgets. Despite their low level, salaries and other payments (40 to 50% of costs) are also a considerable weight. These costs are made heavier by an unfavourable tax system.

Income from sales represents approximately only 30% of newspapers turnover. Newspapers' press runs are small: around 1,500 copies for dailies. In order to satisfy advertisers or to conform to their sales figures, some newspapers only print 500, or even 300 copies. The ensemble of private daily newspapers in Benin combined has a smaller circulation than the Senegalese newspaper, *Sud Quotidien* (15,000 copies).

Distribution is a bottleneck. There is no newspaper distribution service able to distribute newspapers throughout the country. They are sold in news-stands and by street vendors, mainly in Cotonou but also in Porto-Novo. Only *Le Matinal* has regional offices in Bohicon (centre), Parakou (north) and Porto-Novo (south-east).

Advertising income represents 70 to 80% of newspapers' revenue and is necessary for their survival. Depending on the notoriety of the newspaper, a one-page advertisement brings in between 40,000 and 200,000 CFA francs--the equivalent of the sale of 200 to 1,000 copies at the unit price of 200 CFA francs. However, the extremely small advertising market is shared by a multitude of newspapers and radio stations. Furthermore, out of fear of the tax administration, businessmen are hesitant when it comes to advertising campaigns. In this difficult economic situation, public and private enterprises manage to keep a tight rein on the press through small advertising contracts.

1.2 Young Professionals Working in Difficult Conditions

Since 1990, the Benin press has registered an unprecedented inflow--in particular in the private sector--of young elements, most of whom have a solid university education (bachelors' or masters' level). The multiplication of newspapers and the opening of the private sector to television and radio have considerably increased employment opportunities.

Nevertheless, the profession suffers from a serious deficit when it comes to professional training. If, in public media, numerous journalists were trained in schools of journalism, this is not the case for private press where most journalists learned on the job. Some have learned writing techniques thanks to professional associations' activities. However, such training remains fragmented.

Since the airwaves were liberalised, women have also become more numerous in public and private media: roughly sixty women are officially registered and members of the Association des professionnelles de la communication [association of African women communication professionals] (APAC).

In the absence of a collective agreement, Beninese journalists are poorly paid. The salary for basic journalists varies between 25,000 (minimum wage) and 75,000 CFA francs, which has nothing in common with the cost of living. In some newspapers, journalists do not even receive salaries and are paid with per diems. In addition, many were hired as interns and remain interns for months or even years.

The low salary levels lead most journalists in the private press to moonlight so as to make ends meet. A 100-journalist survey carried out in August 2000 revealed that 76% have secondary activities.

Journalists do not have access to working tools and sometimes they must even buy their own notebooks. While a few newspapers have computers, journalists do not have access to them and therefore can not use Internet or e-mail.

Nevertheless, thanks to the arrival of cellular telephones, the managers in most newspapers in Cotonou negotiated cell phone subscriptions for their journalists.

1.3 Frequent Bending the Profession's Rules of Deontology

The absence of solidarity between colleagues in Beninese newspapers is noteworthy. Some do not hesitate to attack via radio stations or newspapers or denigrate their peers. This state of mind leads to the instability of managing editorial teams, as was seen in the dailies *Le Matin* and *Le Journal*.

The press in Benin is extensively corrupted by the "communiqué final" ["final communiqué"] practice: per diems that consist of envelopes or sums of money given by organisers of events to the journalists in charge of "covering" the events. Journalists fight to participate in covering events. The going rate in Cotonou is usually 5,000 CFA francs per journalist. However, given the growing number of people who claim to be journalists, this rate is falling.

Press barons and journalists also practice "consultation", which consists of being handsomely paid by politicians or businessmen to improve their images or attack political rivals. At this level, the sums are counted in hundreds of thousands. This system leads to the rapid enrichment of certain journalists. As one politician said, "The only catastrophe for the media is that journalists are becoming wealthy and newspapers are getting poorer."⁽³⁾

Certain journalists and press barons go so far as to blackmail politicians and economic practitioners. They warn them that they have explosive information and that it is up to them--and above all up to the size of the payment they make--to stop the information from being published. To do so, certain journalists tap telephones in order to record compromising information on their victims.

The other scourge of the profession is cumulating jobs as press attaché and journalist. More than half the journalists with the national television station are press attachés and are quick to produce "news stories" on the activities of their Ministry.

Finally, the diffusion of false news stories that are complete fabrications has become a common practice...

2. Open and Followed Private Radio Stations in National Languages

Until 1994, the radio landscape in Benin was made up of the national radio station that broadcast from Cotonou and the Parakou regional radio station created in 1983. Under the impetus of the Agence intergouvernementale de la Francophonie, six local rural radio stations were installed in isolated areas of the country in 1994 and 1996.

The passing of the law on the liberalisation of the audiovisual landscape, in July 1997, made it possible for radio stations to multiply. The HAAC authorised the implantation of 9 commercial and 17 non-commercial radio stations. In order to withstand the competition, the Office de radiodiffusion et télévision du Bénin [Benin radio and television broadcasting office] created a proximity FM radio station, Atlantic FM, in Cotonou in 1995. Currently, 35 radio stations are active.

With the exception of the public radio station, Atlantic FM, all proximity radio stations broadcast in the languages of the areas they cover so as to reach a mostly illiterate population. This choice of national languages makes them a success in cities and rural areas. Today, proximity radio stations have the largest audiences. The audience of a music station such as Radio Star in Cotonou grew thanks to the programme in Fon, *Assiénon*. Radio Tokpa in Cotonou is known for its flagship programme, *Waasého*. For Radio Capp-FM, it is the programme in Goun, *Etèhoutou*, that stirs up popular enthusiasm.

³ Edmond Dandjinou Adjovi, *Les entraves économiques à la liberté de la presse*, end-of-study thesis for ENA cycle II, option: press firm management, school year 1999-2000, p. 46.

In large cities, Cotonou, Parakou, Porto-Novo and Bohicon, the most popular programmes are interactive programmes produced in national languages. Since 1999, the populations have created associations or clubs of fans and sympathisers to mark their support for these radio stations.

This enthusiasm on the part of audiences for proximity radio stations can also be explained by the fact that they go further than simply giving news on agricultural or economic development, which had long been the case of the national rural radio station. They also cover social issues and produce entertainment programmes. Even better, unlike the national rural radio station, the local rural radio stations, community or associative radio stations and the commercial radio stations do not act as cogs in the government propaganda machine. They are the crucible of pluralistic expression of the country's political, social, economic, philosophic and religious sensibilities.

However, these radio stations have little resources--even if audiovisual broadcasters must prove to the HAAC that they have a certain level of financial coverage before receiving their licenses--and their managers are poorly trained to run this type of company.

Private radio stations' equipment is rudimentary. Their tape recorders are often non-professional varieties. Editing is still done manually, digital equipment is rare. Most local rural radio stations do not even have telephones. Calls are received through the sub-prefecture, the police station or friends.

Even the national radio station (ORTB) lacks means to cover events. It can only count on two vehicles that are likely to break down at any moment.

3. An Expanding Television Landscape

The Benin broadcast landscape is interesting because there is strong competition between the public television station and a private station, LC2, which is nearly its equal in terms of material and human means. Such competition is rare in West Africa.

Until now, the national television station covered only 60% of the country. The installation of three new transmitters in the north (scheduled for 2001, and funded by the national budget) should make it possible to reach a coverage rate of 80 to 85%. The quality of the signal (which had long been poor in the centre and north of Benin) was greatly improved in 2000 thanks to the rental of space on the 702 satellite that links the broadcast transmitting station in Abomey-Calavi with the transmitters in the north. However, the satellite is less "tolerant" than hertzian radio relay systems and when the quality of the signal produced by ORTB is too poor, the programmes do not get through.

The public television station's available equipment is still insufficient. There are not enough cameras to allow all the reporting teams to be in the field at one time. Digital cameras have been ordered in order to partially solve this problem.

With the liberalisation of the airwaves in 1997, Benin saw the creation of a private conventional television station, LC2. It began broadcasting in December 1997. It covers a radius of 50 km, specifically the urban agglomeration of Cotonou, Porto-Novo and Ouidah.

Three years later, LC2 broadcasts 24 hours a day and has a staff of 128 (including 48 technicians and 46 people in charge of writing and production) and impressive equipment: 20 cameras, 3 studio cameras, 4 cameras linked to a mobile control room and 6 digital editing tables.

MMDS emitters are also present with TV5 and, since 1997, frequencies have been attributed to "private MMDS operators" who rebroadcast foreign programmes received by satellite: ATVS (Jacob Akinocho), TV+ (Claude Karam) and EIT-Telco (Joseph Jebara).

Since 1995, the Centre international des radios et télévisions d'expression francophone [international centre for French-language radio and television stations] (CIRTEF) has set up a

regional post-production unit in Cotonou that welcomes the montage of series produced or co-produced by CIRTEF.

Private producers are also present: the Agence Proximités, created in November 1997, which produces mostly made-for-TV movies; and Lagunimages, a production company created by the Congolese director, Monique Phoba.

IV. MEDIA SUPPORT

1. A Tax System Unfavourable to Press Firms

On the fiscal level, newspapers are treated like ordinary enterprises. They must pay the same taxes as commercial companies. With the exception of public media who benefit from certain exemptions, customs applies standard law to media equipment, from newsprint to audiovisual consumables, and including computers.

Only "revenue from the layout, printing and sale of newspapers and periodicals, excluding advertising income" is exempt from VAT. This exemption is insignificant because newspaper sales only represent an infinitesimal share of newspapers' revenues.

2. Public Aid to the Press

Since 1997, the Benin government has allocated an annual envelope of 300 million CFA francs in public aid to the private press. This envelope is divided into two components: aid to newspapers and aid for training.

The aid eligibility criteria for newspapers are publication, respect of the law and professionalism. Newspapers must be published regularly and have at least two years of existence, have permanent and operational headquarters, and have sufficient permanent staff (five salaried Beninese journalists for dailies and private commercial radio stations), and respect deontology and ethics. The content of newspapers and programmes must be in the general interest: in addition to agency news briefs and seminar minutes, they must have published at least two in-depth articles (investigations, news stories, special reports) that aim for education, instruction, or information per week for dailies and radio and television stations and per issue for periodicals.

The aid is paid in nature to beneficiaries: equipment and other material (computer equipment, documentation, newsprint, cameras, light-weight reporting equipment, transmitting equipment, cassettes, tapes, means of transportation to cover events, etc.), subscriptions to the Agence Bénin Presse and to Internet, and coverage of management costs (telephone, electricity and water bills, printing costs). Until 2000, it could also take the form of tax rebates.

The training funded by this aid takes place either in Benin or abroad. Thus, journalists and photojournalists were sent to CESTI in Senegal for a short period (2 to 4 weeks), and press firm managers went on study voyages to Dakar or management internships in Côte d'Ivoire.

The training in Benin is mostly organised by professional associations. Each association proposes its training programme to the Commission in charge of studying the implementation modalities and conditions for government aid. The Commission arbitrates and submits proposals to the HAAC who makes the final decision.

This training takes the form of seminars, practical internships, and workshops that address journalists and photojournalists as well as editors and broadcast media directors. The trainers are almost always recruited locally from among the "elders" and the most experienced professionals.

However, despite the measures taken, the stakeholders feel almost unanimously that government aid to the press is poorly used. A managing editor summarises the situation as follows: "The 900 million CFA francs that we have received over three years have served mainly to enrich a few managing editors, organise seminars on hackneyed themes and go on holiday in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire."

3. Other Media Support

3.1 The Friedrich Ebert Foundation

The Friedrich Ebert Foundation has supported Benin media since 1995. Since 1999, its interventions in a total amount of 40 million CFA francs per year, have focused on four main areas:

- strengthening representative press institutions: it cooperates with the HAAC by supporting the organisation of internal training courses and seminars and the organisation of the first African regulation authority conferences. It supports professional organisations (associations and ODEM), mainly through equipment donations.
- strengthening media institutions' and stakeholders' ability to participate in the democratic process: support for training and the preparation of journalists to cover elections.
- strengthening journalists' professional skills by organising training seminars.
- strengthening the role of women in media: awareness-raising seminars for men and women in the media on women's contribution to development in Benin; support to strengthen journalistic skills for the production and creation of special programmes for women; contributing to better representation of women in the media and public life.

3.2 The Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie (AIF)

Through the support fund for written press in the South, AIF provides logistic support to newspapers, mainly through the purchase of computer equipment. *Le Matinal* received support for the creation of regional offices within the country; the daily *Le Progrès* was able to create a Web site.

The following newspapers received AIF support: the dailies *Le Matin*, *Les Echos du jour*, *Libertés*, *L'Œil du peuple*, *Le Progrès*; *Le Temps*, *Le Matinal*, *Le Point du quotidien*; and the periodicals *L'Avenir* and *le Télégramme*.

3.3 The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAE)

In March 2000, the MAE signed an agreement with the Benin government for the implementation of a "media sector support" project. In the amount of 500 million CFA francs, this project will cover a period of thirty-six months.

The project contains three main components:

Local Training of Press Stakeholders (244 million CFA francs):

Three media professional training plans (experienced professionals, young graduates, and basic technicians). The training will take place locally and be spread over a three-year period with pedagogical follow-up by stages and modules. It will address journalists and copyeditors. In addition to mastery of professional techniques, the training will cover specialisation in economics, local governments, agriculture and environment, politics, and culture. It will be provided by the

Ecole supérieure de journalisme [higher school of journalism] of Lille, which will rely on the Wanad Centre for local coordination.

Institutional Support in Favour of Media Regulation and Structuring: (184 million CFA francs)

These funds will make interventions on three levels possible:

- support for the Ministry of Communication and New Technologies to equip the information department's documentation centre with specialised works, carrying out studies on advertising, audiences, taxation of press firms, etc.
- support for ODEM: the purchase of computer equipment and the publication of works on media self-regulation.
- support for the HAAC: the purchase of computer equipment, training and support for the publication of reference texts.

Support for Audiovisual Production to Favour the Local Production of Short Programmes, Video Clips and 2-to-20-Minute-Long Fictional Programmes (72 million CFA francs):

The support consists of a subsidy in the amount of 40% of the overall budget (with a ceiling of 2 million CFA francs) for each audiovisual production project retained.

V. THE DYNAMIC NATURE OF PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND THE PUBLIC

The Benin press is teeming with professional organisations that bring together different categories of media professionals. The oldest is the Association des journalistes du Bénin [Benin journalists association] (AJB), created in 1966, which brings together journalists from the public press. An associative revival grew out of the wake of the wind of democratisation. Thus, the following associations were born:

- the Union des journalistes de la presse privée du Bénin [union of private press journalists of Benin] (UJPB), on 6 June 1992;
- the Association nationale des reporters d'images du Bénin [national association of image reporters of Benin] (ANARIB);
- the Association des journalistes de la presse indépendante du Bénin [association of independent press journalists of Benin];
- the Association des rédacteurs graphistes du Bénin [association of writers-graphic artists of Benin];
- the Association des distributeurs des journaux [association of newspaper distributors];
- the Association des journalistes indépendants du Bénin [association of independent journalists of Benin] (AJIB);
- the Association des professionnels de l'audiovisuel [association of audiovisual professionals]

Most associations take care of professional training for their members through the organisation of seminars and other internships and defend their members' material and moral interests.

The 1997 creation of the Association béninoise des éditeurs de presse [Benin association of press publishers] (ABEP) marked the awakening of press barons. The splitting of this association gave birth to the Fédération des éditeurs de la presse privée du Bénin [federation of private press publishers of Benin] (FEB). Then, some of the FEB members joined other media barons to create, on 8 July 2000, the Association des responsables des médias du Bénin [association of media directors of Benin] (ARME). The Fédération des radios communautaires et assimilées du Bénin

[federation of community radio stations and similar radio stations of Benin] (FERCAB) was created in November 2000.

Since 1995, specialised journalists associations, called "networks", have also been created and contribute to the specialised training of their members:

- the Amicale des journalistes culturels du Bénin [club of cultural journalists of Benin];
- the Réseau des journalistes économiques du Bénin [network of economic journalists of Benin] (Réseau-JEB);
- the Réseau des journalistes environnementalistes [network of environmentalist journalists];
- the Réseau béninois des journalistes pour la lutte contre MST/SIDA [Beninese network of journalists for the struggle against STD/AIDS];
- the Réseau des journalistes parlementaires du Bénin [network of parliamentary journalists of Benin];
- etc.

Among the public, after the birth of the Association des consommateurs de la presse écrite et de l'audiovisuel du Bénin [association of written press and audiovisual consumers of Benin] (ASCAV-Bénin), since 2000, one can witness the proliferation of listeners associations that are formed around proximity radio stations. The first, created in April 2000, was the Association des fidèles auditeurs de radios et sympathisants [association of faithful listeners and fans] (AFAS) for the private radio station Golfe-FM, the first private radio station in Benin. Then, one registered the birth of associations one after another for Radio Tokpa, Radio Carrefour, Radio Afrique Espoir, Radio Gerddes-Afrique, Radio Atlantic FM and Radio Wèkè. Listeners of other radio stations are getting ready to create associations.

Above all, these associations support their radio stations. While they make comments and observations to radio presenters and managers to improve their services, they above all participate in solidarity actions in favour of the radio stations. They also contribute to the self-control of listeners who participate live in interactive programmes broadcast in national languages. These associations create a new chain of solidarity among listeners in cities.

VI. PATHS TOWARDS ACTION

The media context in Benin seems relatively advanced in more than one area. Support for Benin media must therefore be inscribed in a logic of accompanying and deepening the dynamics underway.

This deepening covers several sectors, starting with that which can reinforce journalistic credibility and economic viability of press firms.

Better coherence in legal texts regulating this sector would facilitate the work of the media and the adoption of a tax system specific to press firms would improve their economic environment.

1. Strengthen Training for Journalists and Press Barons

We have seen that the MAE project contains a consequential training component. In our opinion, there are two priority sectors for training:

1.1 Writing Techniques and Team Leadership

Occasional short-term training seminars have not made possible a significant improvement in the editorial content of articles in the press and in radio programmes until now.

It would seem useful to organise longer training sessions--from a few months to one year--that are accompanied by practical internships with editorial teams. This would make it possible to consolidate journalists' daily use of the techniques taught by the trainers.

These training sessions should focus mainly on basic journalistic techniques for those just starting out in the field and lacking journalism training, and on reporting and investigation techniques for more experienced journalists. In addition to these editorial training sessions, it would be appropriate to add training in ethics and deontology for all, including editors-in-chief. The ensemble of training should be planned within a programme framework elaborated with the participation of journalists associations and media managers. It should also rely on local skills, in particular for the monitoring of practical internships.

Finally, training in leading editorial teams and managing human resources for editors-in-chief and managing editors--often neglected in the training proposed--would make it possible to ensure better stability among staff and more efficient use of skills within each editorial team. When combined with the other training, this could notably improve the editorial content of the media.

1.2 Press Firm Management

Training journalists alone is not enough. One must train media managers at the same time so as to offer journalists an environment favourable to the expression of their skills. Specific training sessions for press barons would allow them to acquire the indispensable enterprise management notions needed for the regularity of publication and the sustainability of their companies.

2. Improve the Economic and Legal Environment for Media

Two paths for study and possibly for action:

- the study of the creation of a tax system specific to the media could provide them with the conditions for better economic viability and greater independence vis-à-vis companies' advertising market.
- the creation of a press distribution service that covers the ensemble of large cities in the country and aims to favour wider newspaper distribution. The HAAC is considering commissioning such a study for 2002.

3. Remodel the Public Media Sector

Public media suffer from institutional rigidity that hampers their effectiveness. Can one facilitate the transition towards greater autonomy, clearly redefining the role of the media, their attributions and the means available to them? Under what conditions could they become more active within the Benin media landscape?

- **Annexes**

Annexe 1: Government Aid to Private Press in Benin

I. Distribution of Aid

- **For the year 1997**
 - Aid to newspapers: 136 million CFA francs
 - Training: 160 million CFA francs
 - Commission Operations: 4 million CFA francs

 - **For the year 1998**
 - Aid to newspapers: 148 million CFA francs
 - Training: 138,250,000 CFA francs
 - Other Uses (Commission operations, verification and control of the use of the funds allocated for the year 1997, press communiqués, report publication): 13,750,000 CFA francs

 - **For the year 1999**
 - Aid to newspapers: 145,020,000 CFA francs
 - Training: 129,990,000 CFA francs
 - Institutional Support (study for the finalisation of the private press workers collective agreement, feasibility study for the construction of the Press Centre, feasibility study for the creation of a distribution service for press firms): 18 million CFA francs
 - Commission Operations: 7 million CFA francs
- The "institutional support" component could not be implemented in 1999. The 18 million in funds was transferred to the 2000 budget.
- **For the year 2000**
 - Direct Aid to Newspapers: 117 million CFA francs (including 39 million CFA francs for written press, 39 million CFA francs for commercial broadcasting and 39 million CFA francs for non-commercial broadcasting)
 - Training: 90,500,000 CFA francs
 - Press Centre Construction Project (feasibility study, architectural study, purchase of land and launch of construction): 80 million CFA francs
 - Diagnostic of the impact on newspapers of the use of the aid during the years 1997, 1998 and 1999 (including restitution and validation workshop): 5 million CFA francs
 - Commission Operations: 7,500,000 CFA francs

II. AMOUNT OF AID RECEIVED BY THE MEDIA

1. 1997

MEDIA	TYPE	AMOUNT
Le Matin	daily	18 million
Le Citoyen	daily	15 million
Les Echos du Jour	daily	13 million
La Dépêche du Soir	daily	2 million
Le Forum de la Semaine	weekly	10 million
Tam-Tam Express	weekly	10 million
La Pyramide	periodical	5 million
Concorde	periodical	5 million
L'Enjeu	periodical	5 million
L'œil du peuple	periodical	5 million
L'Avenir	periodical	5 million
L'Essor	periodical	5 million
La Gazette du Golfe	weekly	2 million
Afrique des temps nouveaux	periodical	1 million
Le Pelican	periodical	1 million
Le Perroquet	periodical	1 million
Nouvelle Vision	periodical	1 million
Africa-Visages	periodical	1 million
La Sirène	periodical	1 million
Lalo	local rural radio station	6 million
Ouèssè	local rural radio station	6 million
Banikoara	local rural radio station	6 million
Ouaké	local rural radio station	6 million
Tanguiéta	local rural radio station	6 million

2. 1998

MEDIA	TYPE	AMOUNT
Le Matinal	daily	18 500 000 CFA francs
Le Point au quotidien	daily	16 250 000 CFA francs
Le Matin	daily	16 million CFA francs
Les Echos du Jour	daily	15 500 000 CFA francs
La Dépêche du Soir	daily	8 750 000 CFA francs
Le Citoyen	daily	5 million CFA francs
L'Avenir	periodical	6 489 000 CFA francs
Le Temps	periodical	5 417 000 CFA francs
La Région	periodical	5 363 000 CFA francs
Le Piment	periodical	4,612,000 CFA francs
L'Enjeu	periodical	4 612 000 CFA francs
La Pyramide	periodical	4 612 000 CFA francs
Africa-Visages	periodical	4 344 000 CFA francs
Le Télégramme	periodical	4 076 000 CFA francs
La Sirène	periodical	3 003 000 CFA francs
Le Label	periodical	2 472 000 CFA francs
Le Perroquet	periodical	2 million CFA francs
L'Essor	periodical	1 500 000 CFA francs
Le Pelican	periodical	1 500 000 CFA francs
broadcast media	rural radio stations and private radio stations	18 million in equipment

In 1998, private broadcast media were not yet able to meet the one-year of existence requirement. The HAAC made an exception for them by providing equipment: double tape cassette player, MDS-PC1 mini disk player, inverters, printer, computers, boxes of audio tapes, dictionaries.

The private television station, LC2, also received a small amount of aid in the form of equipment.

3. 1999

MEDIA	TYPE	AMOUNT
Les Echos du Jour	daily	11 132 000 CFA francs
L'Aurore	daily	6 343 000 CFA francs
Le Matin	daily	9 320 000 CFA francs
Le Point au quotidien	daily	8 155 000 CFA francs
Le Matinal	daily	11 391 000 CFA francs
Liberté	daily	4 660 000 CFA francs
L'œil du peuple	daily	4 142 000 CFA francs
Le Progrès	daily	9 708 000 CFA francs
La Dépêche du Soir	daily	3 888 480 CFA francs
La Pyramide	periodical	3 475 000 CFA francs
L'Avenir	periodical	3 164 000 CFA francs
Le Piment	periodical	3 917 000 CFA francs
Africa-Visages	periodical	2 111 520 CFA francs
La Région	periodical	3 315 000 CFA francs
Le Télégramme	periodical	2 290 000 CFA francs
Golfe Fm	commercial radio station	9 530 000 CFA francs
CAPP Fm	commercial radio station	12 149 000 CFA francs
Afrique Espoir	commercial radio station	12 149 000 CFA francs
La Voix de la Lama	non-commercial radio station	4 180 000 CFA francs

In 1999, special aid in the amount of 20 million CFA francs was allocated, on an exceptional basis, to private sector broadcast media.

III. TRAINING FUNDED BY THE AID

1. Outside Training in 1997

TRAINING COURSE TITLE	TRAINING STRUCTURE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	AMOUNT
Journalists training course (17 November to 21 December 1997)	ISSIC-DAKAR	30 journalists	43 million CFA francs
Photojournalists training course (17 November to 3 December 1997)	ISSIC-DAKAR	7 photojournalists	11 275 000 CFA francs
Photojournalists training course (19 January to 9 February 1998)	ISSIC-DAKAR	10 photojournalists	11 275 000 CFA francs
training course for press editors (23 February to 3 March 1998)	ISSIC-DAKAR	6 editors and managing editors	4 020 000 CFA francs
Journalists training course (23 February to 29 March 1998)	ISSIC-DAKAR	16 journalists	25 490 000 CFA francs

2. Outside Training in 1998

TRAINING COURSE TITLE	TRAINING STRUCTURE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	AMOUNT
In-company internship -first wave (28 November to 5 December 1998) -second wave (12 to 20 December 1998)	Institut des sciences et techniques de la communication (ISTC) Abidjan	ten editors (first wave) ten editors (second wave)	7 740 000 CFA francs
training and reorientation course for journalists	CESTI-DAKAR	45 journalists	36 540 000 CFA francs (travel costs not included)
continuing education and reorientation course for photojournalists	CESTI-DAKAR	6 photojournalists	4 872 000 CFA francs

For 1999, the report on training is not yet available at the HAAC.

Annexe 2: List of Radio Stations, Television Channels and Newspapers in Benin

I. PUBLIC SERVICE RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS

Télévision nationale

Director: MAMA Soumaïla

Tel.: (229) 30 06 28 - 30 18 85

01 B.P. 366 COTONOU

Radio - Cotonou (Radio Nationale)

98.2 MHz COTONOU

Director: Pelu Christophe DIOGO

Tel.: (229) 30 04 81 / 30 10 96 / 30 14 37

30 21 84

01 B.P. 366 COTONOU

Atlantic FM

92.2 MHz COTONOU

Manager: Joseph OGOUNCHI

(229) 30 20-41

01 B.P. 366 COTONOU

Radio Régionale de Parakou

92.5 MHz PARAKOU

Director: Dieudonné METOZOUNVE

Tel.: (229) 61 07 73 / 61 08 81

PARAKOU

II. ACTIVE PRIVATE RADIO STATIONS

1. Commercial Radio Stations

Radio Star

94.3 MHz COTONOU

Manager: Monsieur Marcellin ATINDEGLA

96.3 MHz Grand-Popo

08 B.P. 0769 COTONOU airport

Tel.: (229) 32 53 22/32 67 65

CAPP FM

99.6 MHz COTONOU

Manager: Monsieur Jérôme CARLOS

06 B.P. 2076 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 31 08 10 / 33 52 25

Golfe FM Magic Radio

105.7 MHz COTONOU

Manager: Monsieur Ismaël SOUMANOU

03 B.P. 1624 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 32 42 08 / 32 42 09 / 32 52 26

Radio Afrique Espoir

99.1 MHz PORTO-NOVO

Manager: Ramanou KOUFERIDJI

C/ 123 PORTO-NOVO

03 BP 203 Porto-Novo

Tel.: (229) 21 32 61

21 34 55

Fax: 21 32 63

e-mail: afespoir@intnet.bj

Radio Wêkê

107.0 MHz DJREGBE/PORTO- NOVO

Manager: Mr. Soulé Issa BADAROU

03 B.P. 2753 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 21 38 40

21 36 14

21 37 14

21 47 57

33 13 82

Fax: 21 37 14

Radio Adja Ouèrè FM Ouémé

92.6 MHz ADJA OUERE

Manager: Mr. Faisou FAGBOHOUN

100.6 MHz SAKETE

01 B.P. 1509 COTONOU

100.0 MHz PORTO-NOVO

107.6 MHz ZAGNANADO

Tel.: (229) 25 05 56

25 05 57

Radio Planète - La chaîne des Bonnes Affaires

95.7 MHz COT.

Manager: Janvier YAHOUÉDEHOU

06 B.P. 537 COTONOU Master Soft Building

Tel.: (229) 30 30 30

30 35 44

Fax: (229) 30 24 51

Radio Tokpa

104.3 MHz COTONOU

Manager: Guy KPAKPO

01 B.P. 2445 C/n° 233 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 31 45 32

31 61 32

Fax: (229) 31 64 80

Radio Carrefour

90.4 MHz BOHICON

Manager: Christophe DAVAKAN

B.P. 440 Bohicon

Tel.: (229) 51 16 06

Cell phone: 91 20 52

(229) 51 16 06 BOHICON

III. NON-COMMERCIAL RADIO STATIONS

Radio Maranatha

103.1 MHz COTONOU

Manager: Clovis KPADE

03 B.P. 4113 COTONOU

Tel.: : (229) 32 53 23

Fax: (229) 32 58 82

La Voix de l'Islam

91.2 MHz COTONOU

Manager: El Hadj Maman YARO

08 B.P. 134 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 31 51 78

31 11 34

31 47 41

Fax (229) 31 51 79

e-mail: islamben@leland.bj

Radio Immaculée Conception

101.0 MHz ALLADA

101-0 MHz COTONOU

101.0 MHz ABOMEY

101.0 MHz DASSA-ZOUME

89.1 MHz DJOUGOU

93.3 MHz PARAKOU

Manager: Father Alfonso BRUNO

B.P. 88 ALLADA

Tel.: (229) 37 10 23

Radio Iléma

104.5 MHz DASSA-ZOUME

Manager: Mr. François Sourou

OKIOH

B.P. 125 DASSA-ZOUME

Tel.: (229) 53 00 75

Fax: (229) 53 01 37

Cotonou Office

01 B.P. 3609 COTONOU

Tel.: : (229) 32 46 67

33 08 89

Radio Solidarité FM Djougou

98.1 MHz DJOUGOU

Manager: Mr. Daouda TAKPARA

B.P. 135 DJOUGOU

Tel.: (229) 80 01 95

80 11 29

Fax: (229) 80 15 63

La Voix de la Lama

103.8 MHz ALLADA

Manager: Séraphine DADY

Tel.: (229) 37 12 26

31 11 61

Gerddes FM

89.5 MHz AKPRO-MISSERETE deGerddes Africa

Manager: Alexandre DURAND

BP 16 Akpro-Misséréte

Tel.: (229) 29 01 05

Cotonou Office

01 B.P. 1258 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 33 43 33

Bénin-Culture

93.4 MHz

PORTO-NOVO of the Association pour l'institutionnalisation

de la Mémoire et de la Pensée Intellectuelle

Africaine (AIMEPIA)

Manager: Maurille AGBOKOU

BP 21 PORTO-NOVO

Tel.: (229) 22 28 83

22 64 34

Cell phone: 94 50 64

Deeman Radio

90.2 MHz

PARAKOU of the Institut Culturel BAATONU

Manager: Yagui ISSAKOU

B.P. 163 PARAKOU

Tel.: (229) 61 05 17

61 34 05

Radio Sutii Dera

88.9 MHz

NIKKI de l'Association pour le Développement

Economique et Socio-Culturel de la

Sous-préfecture de NIKKI

Manager: Seidou MAMA SIKA

B.P. 21 NIKKI

Tel.: (229) 62 62 05 (NIKKI)

(229) 62 62 25 (NIKKI)

(229) 30 36 38 (COTONOU)

Radio SEDOHOUN ALLODALOME

97.4 MHz

AGBOTAGON de Fraternité SEDOHOUN

Manager: Lucien AGBOTA

01 B.P. 1093 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 31 00 00

Cité Savalou-Culture FM

87.8 MHz

SAVALOU de l'Institut de Participation du Bénin

Manager: Georges A. GBAGUIDI

Tel.: (229) 54 05 31 SAVALOU

Cotonou Office

01 B.P. 560 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 32 46 79 COTONOU

FM Ahémé

99.6 MHz POSSOTOME

Manager: Félix Yao VITOGO

BP 66 Bopa

Tel.: (229) 43 02 68

43 00 13

FM Monts Kouffè

103.0 MHz BASSILA

Manager: Mahazou IBRAHIMA GOMINA

Tel.: (229) 80 10 68

FM Alakétou

95.8 MHz KETOU

Manager: Akim ODOUBI

Tel.: (229) 25 31 04

FM Noon-Sina

90.8 BEMBEREKE

Manager: Ali ZATO

B.P. 04 BEMBEREKE

Tel./Fax: (229) 61 02 51

FM Oré Ofé

102.1 TCHETTI

Manager: David ORE

B.P. 112 Savalou

Tel.: (229)54 02 06

IV. LOCAL RURAL RADIO STATIONS (LRRSs)

Radio Rurale Locale de Lalo

100.0 MHz LALO

Address c/o PTT Klouékanmè BP 62 Dogbo

Tel.: (229) 46 32 01

Contact: Maxime TOULASSI

Radio Rurale Locale de Banikoara

104.2 MHz BANIKOARA

Address B.P. 47 Banikoara

Tel.: : (229) 65 00 50

Contact: Mohamed ALIDOU YERIMA

Radio Rurale Locale de Ouèssè

97.7 MHz OUESSE Address: B.P. 60 Ouèssè

Contact: Guy Roger Grégoire Yacouto

Radio Rurale Locale de Tanguiéta

90.0 MHz TANGUIETA Address B.P. 49 Tanguiéta

Tel.: (229) 83 01 51

Contact: Assiakou Yodoma

Radio Rurale Locale de Ouaké

101.0 MHz OUAKE Address c/o Tel.: (229) 80 12 22

80 15 00

80 01 84

V. RADIO STATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL REPUTATIONS

Africa n°1

102.6 MHz PORTO-NOVO

Radio France Internationale (RFI)

90.0 MHz ABOMEY-CALAVI

106.1 MHz PARAKOU

BBC

101.7 MHz ABOMEY-CALAVI

VI. ACTIVE PRIVATE COMMERCIAL TELEVISION CHANNELS

1. Classical Broadcast Television

LC2

Manager: Mr. Christian LAGNIDÉ

05 B.P. 427 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 33 47 49

33 72 58

2. MMDS Television

ATVS

Manager: Mr. Jacob AKINOCHO

B.P. 7101 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 31 43 19

31 27 72

TELCO

Manager: Mr. Joseph JEBARA

01 B.P. 1241 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 31 34 98

31 26 08

TV + International

Manager: Mr. Claude KARAM

01 B.P. 2376 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 31 53 54

31 43 96

VII. DAILY NEWSPAPERS

Le Matin

Executive Director: Moïse DATO

Head of Publications: Pierre MATCHOUDO

C/54 TOKPA HOHO COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 31 10 80

31 44 39

Fax: (229) 33 42 62

Les Echos du Jour

Managing Editor: Maurice CHABI

Editor-in-Chief: Michel TCHANOU

08 B.P. 718 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 33 18 33

Fax: (229) 33 17 06

e-mail: echos@intnet.bj

La Nation

Managing Editor: Innocent ADJAHO

Editor-in-Chief: Alfred AHOUNOU

01 B.P. 1210 COTONOU

Tel.: : (229) 30 02 99

Fax: (229) 30 34 63

Web Site: <http://elodia.intnet.bj/Nation.htm>

e-mail: la.nation@elodia.intnet.bj

Le Citoyen (no longer published)

Managing Editor: Martin FABOMY

Editor-in-Chief: Hervé JOSSE

06 B.P. 723 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 33 59 33

Fax: (229) 33 59 33

e-mail: Lecitoyen@intnet.bj

La Dépêche du Soir (irregular publication)

Managing Editor: Mouléro SOTON

03 B.P. 1100 - Carré n°555 Akpakpa - COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 33 51 53

Le Point au quotidien

Managing Editor and

Editor-in-Chief: Fernando Hessou

322, rue du Renouveau

05 B.P. 934 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 32 50 55

Fax: (229) 32 25 31

Cell phone: (229) 91 69 45

92 52 87

e-mail: lepointq@leland.bj

Web Site: www.lepointauquotidien.com

Le Matinal

Executive Director: Charles TOKO

Managing Editor: Napoléon MAFORIKAN

06 B.P. 1989 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 31 49 20

Fax: (229) 31 49 19

e-mail: lematinal@h2com.com

Web Site: <http://www.h2com.com/lematinal>

Le Progrès (irregular publication)

Managing Editor: Edouard LOKO

Editor-in-Chief: Septime TOLLI

05 B.P. 708 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 32 52 73

e-mail: journaleprogres@hotmail.com

L'oeil du Peuple (occasional publication)

Managing Editor: Célestin ABISSI

Rue PTT Gbégamey Carré n°743

08 B.P. 01 31 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 30 22 07

Liberté (irregular publication)

Managing Editor: Sylvestre FOHOUNGO

03 B.P. 3555

Tel.: (229) 32 55 19

L'Aurore

Executive Director: Patrick ADJAMONSI

Managing Editor: Titus Folly

Headquarters: across from the Clinique BONI (Akpakpa)

05 B.P. 464 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 33 70 43

e-mail: laurorobenin@hotmail.com

La Cloche (occasional publication)

Executive Director: Gaspard C. KODJO

Managing Editor: Vincent METONNOU

Editor-in-Chief: Jos-Perzo ANAGO

07 B.P. 65 - Carré n°2248 Zogbo - COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 30 56 04

e-mail: laclocle@h2com.com

Bénin-Presse Info (Agence Bénin-Presse (ABP) bulletin)

Managing Editor: Yaovi HOUNKPONOU

Editor-in-Chief: Josèphe Vodounon

01 B.P. 72 or 01 B.P. 120 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 31 26 55

Le Républicain

Managing Editor: Isidore Zinsou

05 B.P. 1230 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 33 41 95

Fax (229) 33 95 24

Fraternité

Managing Editor: Malick S. Gomina

05 B.P. 907 COTONOU

Tel.: (229) 30 42 06

Fax (229) 30 73 44

Le Journal (publication ceased in April 2001)

Managing Editor: Maximin Tchibozo

Tel.: (229) 31 75 76

31 55 05

Le Béninois (irregular publication)

Managing Editor: Sylvia d'Almeida

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