



20 **ANNUAL REPORT**

Promoting free expression in Zimbabwe

21

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISA ZIMBABWE 2021 ANNUAL REPORT	3
CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT	3
MEDIA OPERATING CONTEXT	6
PROGRAMMES	7
INTERNET GOVERNANCE AND DIGITAL RIGHTS	7
Digital Rights Literacy Campaign in Lesotho	7
Lesotho training in pictures	8
Digital Rights Literacy Training Malawi	9
Results/Impact	10
Advocacy around the Cybersecurity and Data Protection Bill	11
Results/Impact	12
Cellphone Levy	12
Results/Impact	13
ACCESS TO INFORMATION	13
Transparency Assessment Index	13
Results/Impact	14
Covid-19 Information Platforms	14
Results/Impact	15
LITIGATION	15
Results/Impact	16
GENDER MAINSTREAMING	16
MEDIA REFORMS	17
Zimbabwe Media Practitioners Bill	18
Results/Impact	19
MEDIA SUPPORT	19
Results/Impact	20
Journalism safety and security meetings	20
Results/Impact	21
REGIONAL/INTERNATIONAL FOOTPRINTS	21
Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Submissions	22
Lesotho journalism safety and security trainings	22
Results/Impact	22
Regional Engagement on Technology, Surveillance and Data Protection	23
WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY COMMEMORATIONS	25
Results/Impact	25
BROADCASTING DIVERSITY CAMPAIGN	26
Results/Impact	26
KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS	26
MEDIA FREEDOM MONITORING	27
2021 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	28
MISA ZIMBABWE @25 COMMEMORATIONS	29
MISA ZIMBABWE 2021 PICTURE GALLERY	30



MISA Zimbabwe Chairperson - Golden Maunganidze

MISA ZIMBABWE 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Our 2021 Annual Report comes on the backdrop of significant historical events in the life and existence of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) as a regional outfit, and by extension, MISA Zimbabwe as a member of the family.

Of significance during the year under review was the 30th anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press.

The commemorations marked in the Namibian capital of Windhoek from which the Declaration derives its name, gave us immense opportunity to reflect and take stock on the milestones that have been achieved and what still needs to be done towards the realisation of the envisaged benchmarks of this historic document.

The Windhoek Declaration is critical for MISA Zimbabwe and indeed other media freedom, freedom of expression and access to information lobby and advocacy groups as it is the foundation upon which our work is built.

The Declaration is a historic document that gave birth to the World Press Freedom Day commemorations as we know them today, and the African Charter on Broadcasting, among its other benchmarks.

The 30th anniversary commemorations in Windhoek also coincided with the 25th anniversary of MISA Zimbabwe during the year under review.

On the back of these developments, MISA Zimbabwe's National Governing Council Chairperson, Golden Maunganidze, and the organisation's National Director, Tabani Moyo, were elected and appointed chairperson MISA Regional Governing Council and MISA Regional director, respectively.

In view of these momentous events, I am therefore honoured to extend our special tribute to the vision and foresight of the men and women who launched the regional MISA in 1992 to promote a free, independent, diverse and pluralistic media as envisaged in the Windhoek Declaration.

Our programming, activities and interventions during the year under review were thus anchored and hinged on our 2021 – 2025 Strategic Plan which was inspired by the vision and foresight of our forebearers as we continue to stay the course in our defence of citizens' rights to free expression, media freedom and access to information.

This requires strategic repositioning and rebranding to ensure efficient responses to emerging local, regional and global issues as pronounced in our vision and mission statements and values as an organisation.

I am therefore happy to report that through our 2021 Annual Report we will be able to showcase how we continue to endure and prevail as the lead organisation in terms of our mandate, mission, vision and values.

These emerging issues relate to free expression, access to information, media freedom, broadcasting, digital rights, safety and security of journalists, media professionalism and regional networking.

This is not to say it was success after success all the way as we also had the inevitable challenges that come with the nature of the work we are involved in.

These challenges are not unique to Zimbabwe alone, but permeate the southern African region as a whole in the wake of the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and stifling of online expression under the guise of controlling the pandemic.

The future of the media (sustainability) is also under threat in the context of the intricate challenges posed by pandemics, climate change, natural disasters, dwindling revenue and the role of big tech companies vis-à-vis the quest for supporting and defending a resilient media.

As highlighted in our 2021 State of the Media Report, the year under review was a mixed bag of progress on one hand and retrogression on the other hand in terms of the operating media environment.

Progress can be measured in the context of the gazetting of the Freedom of Information Regulations and the licensing of more community radio stations.

Commendable and encouraging steps were also taken by the government towards complying with the High Court orders in enhancing citizens' right to relevant information on the Covid-19 pandemic.

This is in line with the requisite standards for the provision of access to information on Covid-19 to ensure members of the public make informed decisions to protect themselves from the virus.

However, the clawback provisions in the Cyber and Data Protection Act promulgated at the end of 2021, risk eroding the gains made through the enactment of the Freedom of Information Act and undermine citizens' right to free expression online and ultimately access to information for informed decisions and choices.

In that regard, the government should be guided by the findings of the courts which struck down the criminal offence of publication of falsehoods (criminal defamation) to avoid costly constitutional court challenges against such provisions.

The other major issue that needs sober consideration is the Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Amendment Bill. In its current status, the Bill poses the greatest risk to Zimbabwe's democratic credentials.

The government should also seize the opportunity of the proposed Broadcasting Services Amendment Bill to come up with a democratic broadcasting regulatory framework that allows for a free, independent, diverse and sustainable broadcasting industry.

As we forge ahead with the implementation of our 2021 - 2025 Strategic Plan, we remain guided and mindful of the advice of the Chairperson of MISA Zimbabwe's Board of Trustees, Cris Chinaka, when we turned 25:

"While we are rightly celebrating yesterday's achievements, our major focus should be on tomorrow.

"The cause is simple and straightforward: to work for a media and information ecosystem that serves the greatest public interest."

Golden Maunganidze

Chairperson

MISA Zimbabwe



MEDIA OPERATING CONTEXT

The Reporters Without Borders (RSF) 2021 media freedom rankings, released in May 2021, saw Zimbabwe sliding in terms of its rankings. Zimbabwe was ranked at 130 out of 180 countries in 2021 compared to its ranking at 126 in 2020.

Namibia was the best ranked country in Africa, ranking 24th worldwide. Eswatini and the Democratic Republic of Congo were ranked at 141st and 149th, respectively.

However, based on MISA Zimbabwe's monitoring of the media operating environment during the period under review, there was a marked, if not considerable reduction in the number of violations recorded in 2021 compared to the previous year.

This points to an improved media operating environment during the year under review as will be highlighted in this report based on the violations recorded by MISA Zimbabwe.

On the positives, the RSF said access to information had improved and self-censorship had declined, but that journalists were still often attacked or arrested.

While RSF noted that new broadcasting licences had been awarded, it noted the lack of diversity in the granting of the permits.

Zimbabwe's lowest ranking was 135 out of 180 countries in 2014. The best ranking was 124 in 2016.

Meanwhile, the issue of media co-regulation remained on the agenda during the course of 2021 as engagements between policy makers, parliamentarians and media representative organisations continued on the matter.

Under co-regulation, a proposed media council as espoused in the Draft Zimbabwe Media Practitioners Bill drafted by MISA Zimbabwe under the auspices of the umbrella Media Alliance of Zimbabwe (MAZ), would be the first entry point for lodging complaints against the media while the constitutional Zimbabwe Media Commission, would be the appellant body.

"We are therefore encouraged by the open-door engagements we continue to enjoy with the Ministry of Information and the Parliament of Zimbabwe, in our quest for a democratic media environment, and more so, as we continue to consult on the outstanding issue of media regulation," said Golden Maunganidze, MISA Zimbabwe Chairperson, during a media reforms stakeholders meeting in Harare in October 2021.

During the meeting, stakeholders re-affirmed their commitment to co-regulation of the media.

Earlier in June 2021, the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Information, Media and Broadcasting Services, Honourable Sipho Mokone, had moved a [motion](#) imploring parliament to enact legislation that enhances media freedom and encourages the media to conduct their activities without fear or favour.

These sentiments were shared across the political divide as the motion on: *Information as a public good*,

moved on 15 June 2021, was supported by other legislators who urged the government to observe the provisions of the Windhoek Declaration which calls for media freedom.

Another positive development was the participation by MISA Zimbabwe and the Media Alliance of Zimbabwe (MAZ) at a high-level engagement meeting convened by the Parliament of Zimbabwe's Portfolio Committee on Information, Media and Broadcasting Services in the eastern border town of Mutare.

The meeting convened between the 9th and 12th of June 2021, among other issues, primarily focused on media co-regulation and broadcasting reforms.

It was attended by three top officials from the Ministry of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services. These included the Minister, Senator Monica Mutsvangwa, Deputy Minister Kindness Paradza, and the Permanent Secretary, Nick Mangwana.

Also in attendance was the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ) and Zimbabwe Media Commission (ZMC), represented by their Chief Executive Officers (CEOs).

PROGRAMMES

Our programming was organised into five programme areas which are:

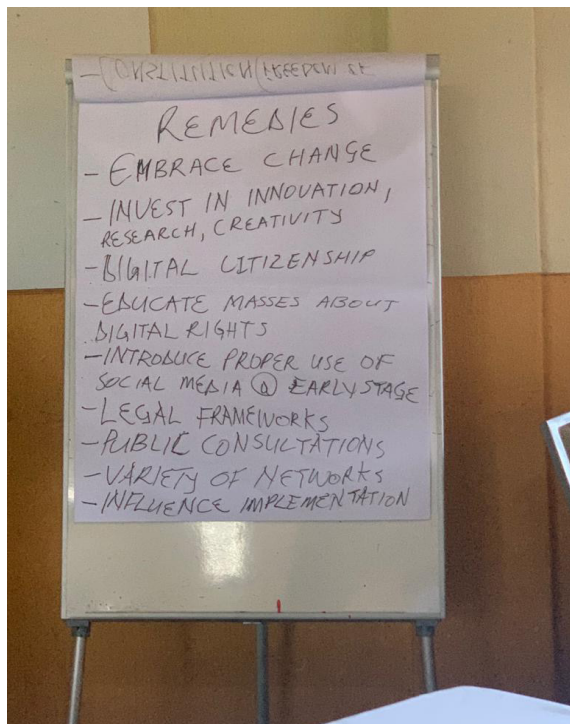
- Campaign for Freedom of Expression and the Right to Information- promotes legal reform and the introduction of new legislation to improve the protection and implementation of media freedom and the right to information.
- Media Freedom Monitoring - monitors media freedom violations and developments and issues action alerts. Provides MISA with an important advocacy platform.
- Campaign for Broadcasting Diversity-promotes an open system of broadcasting licensing, editorial independence and the introduction of a three-tier system of broadcasting comprising public, commercial and community broadcasting.
- Media Support- aims to promote and enhance media accountability and professionalism. Seeks to create awareness of the need for a code of ethics and self-regulatory bodies. Also promotes professionalism in the media through media training initiatives.
- Legal Support - Provides funds under the Media Defence Fund, for legal assistance to media practitioners and institutions with the aim of protecting freedom of expression.

INTERNET GOVERNANCE AND DIGITAL RIGHTS

DIGITAL RIGHTS LITERACY CAMPAIGN IN LESOTHO

On the 27th of July 2021, MISA Zimbabwe convened a Digital Rights Literacy Training for youths, women and people with disabilities in Lesotho. There were 15 participants in attendance.

LESOTHO TRAINING IN PICTURES



DIGITAL RIGHTS LITERACY TRAINING MALAWI

On the 23rd of September 2021, MISA Zimbabwe convened a digital rights literacy training in Lilongwe, Malawi. In attendance were representatives of women organisations, women with HIV/AIDS, youths and people with disabilities from the 12 districts across Malawi.





RESULTS/IMPACT

Some of the participants from the Malawi training, conducted information sharing meetings in their communities. They were also able to identify digital rights issues as they happened in their communities which they shared in the *WhatsApp* group.

Find below pictures of information sharing meetings that were conducted by the participants post our training.



+265 888 95 12 49

~M Kathumba



I visted Kuchombe girls youth club
club Kuchombe t/a

+265 888 95 12 49

~M Kathumba



After two days training of digital
right organized by Misa Zimbabwe

Adraft work plan for senstasion
meetings with communities

13:40

+265 888 95 12 49

~M Kathu...



Briefing Mkhumba Adc on
issues of digital right

13:40

ADVOCACY AROUND THE CYBERSECURITY AND DATA PROTECTION BILL

The Cybersecurity and Data Protection Bill was one key piece of legislation with heavy impact on digital rights. MISA Zimbabwe therefore undertook several interventions to influence the law-making process. These interventions included the following:

- Engagement with policy makers
- Letter to Parliament to send back the Bill for further public hearings
- Letter to the President to decline assenting to the then Cybersecurity and Data Protection Bill



#ContentCreatorsClampdown @ZwC... · 18h ...

As a network we are worried by the current draft of the Cyber security & Data protection bill awaiting to be signed into law. We rally behind [@misazimbabwe](#) and others calling for the bill to be sent back to parliament for further review!

[#ContentCreatorsNetworkZW](#)



Community Podium and 9 others



RESULTS/IMPACT

- The Cybersecurity and Data Protection Bill was enacted into law on the 3rd of December 2021 as the Cyber and Data Protection Act. MISA Zimbabwe produced an analysis of the Act which can be accessed on [this link](#).
- The enacted Act has progressive elements which had been advocated for by MISA Zimbabwe. For example, it has a section which specifically lays out the rights of data subjects, specification of notice periods in the event of a security breach and also an obligation on the Data Protection Authority to put in place regulations that should govern the whistleblowing system guided by principles that include fairness and lawfulness.

CELLPHONE LEVY

On the issue of internet access and affordability, MISA Zimbabwe also raised concerns with a cellphone levy of USD50.00 that was proposed in the 2022 National Budget by the Minister of Finance Professor Mthuli Ncube. This levy would have made the purchasing of mobile phones even more expensive and thus further hampering exercise of digital rights as smart phones are an enabler for access to digital tools and platforms.

MISA Zimbabwe engaged legislators on the 7th of December 2021 and raised concern over the proposed levy which contradicts the objectives of the National Development Strategy 1 aimed at promoting 100% internet penetration by 2025.

The legislators made a commitment to oppose that proposal on the basis that it contradicts the objective of promoting information as a public good, perpetuates financial exclusion for an economy that relies on mobile money and increases the inequality gap as phones are pivotal for education during the COVID 19 pandemic.

RESULTS/IMPACT

During a post -budget seminar, parliamentarians advised that such levy should be done away with hence emphasising the call for internet access and affordability.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

TRANSPARENCY ASSESSMENT INDEX

As part of its annual Transparency Assessment Index of the most open and most closed public institutions, in 2021 MISA Zimbabwe identified 10 institutions and worked with Community Based Organisations to make information requests to the public institutions. The process was monitored in line with provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

The public institutions under review were thus expected to acknowledge receipt of information requests within seven (7) days and provide a written response of the requested information within 21 working days.

Public institutions that failed to do this were deemed to have declined to provide information. Some of the dissatisfied citizens approached the Zimbabwe Media Commission for recourse as provided for by the law.

On the other hand, MISA Zimbabwe also monitored the websites of the institutions under review as well as the social media utilisation and activities of the institutions. This was particularly relevant in this Covid-19 environment as most people were working from home as part of measures to curb the spread of the virus.

Information requests is one of the tools employed by MISA Zimbabwe to promote public accountability and transparency in the administration of public resources as well as increasing citizens' agency by empowering them to demand and enjoy their rights which assists them in making informed decisions and choices.

The following public institutions were surveyed:

1. Bulawayo City Council
2. Empower Bank
3. Harare City Council

4. Lupane Local Board
5. Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Tourism and Hospitality Industry
6. Ministry of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services
7. Ministry of Health and Child Care
8. Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water and Rural Resettlement
9. Parliament of Zimbabwe
10. Zimbabwe Electoral Commission

Despite the enactment of the Freedom of Information Act, most public institutions scored badly. This could be a reflection of possible unawareness of the provisions of the new law or simply a reluctance to comply with the new law. There is need to escalate training and awareness programmes to familiarise both citizens and public institutions with the new law.

In that regard, the most secretive public institution for 2021 was the Lupane Local Board while the most open public institution was the Parliament of Zimbabwe and therefore the winner of the MISA Golden Key Award.

RESULTS/IMPACT

The transparency report emerged as an effective advocacy tool to improve the responsiveness of public institutions to information requests. For example, ZEC invited Signs of Hope for engagement following information requests that were documented in the report. The transparency report was also used as a baseline to identify training needs of public officials in the region.

These public officials were trained on how to respond and handle information requests and were furnished with various access to information tools. The transparency report was also used to engage public authorities and citizens with the Zimbabwe Media Commission. These engagements fostered interaction between the Commission and citizens. Meetings were held in Bulawayo, Lupane, Gweru and Kwekwe.

The Parliament of Zimbabwe for the second time (in 2018 and 2021) was ranked the most open public institution and recipient of the Transparency Assessment Index Golden Key award in acknowledgement of the institution's efforts to disclose information to the public.

The Clerk of Parliament, Kennedy Chokuda, during the launch of the report, said Parliament would be revamping its website to ensure it is responsive to the needs of Persons with Disabilities.

Policy makers present made pledges to improve the state of access to information, more so as it pertains to Covid-19.

COVID-19 INFORMATION PLATFORMS

In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, MISA Zimbabwe in collaboration with Chitungwiza-based group, Naiza Boom, produced a skit in response to the reported low uptake of the vaccine in the area. The dormitory town had only recorded 26,000 and 13,000 people having taken the first and second doses,

respectively.

The skit was double-barrelled as it encouraged women to get vaccinated by busting myths that the vaccine is harmful for women who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Another skit promoted accountability in use of resources on Covid-19 by interrogating the funds allocated to Covid-19 in the budget. Explainer videos were also used to explain unfamiliar concepts such as getting a booster jab, mixing vaccines and the vaccination of children.

To counter the influx of fake news and promote factual Covid information, MISA Zimbabwe under its project on promotion of access to information and protection of human rights during the Corona pandemic in Zimbabwe, the following activities were undertaken:

In March 2021, MISA Zimbabwe increased its sphere of influence by collaborating with Gender and Media Connect, a media organisation which champions the interests of women in the media, by training journalists on how to report on the Covid-19 pandemic. The World Health Organisation and *ZimFact*, a local fact-checking organisation, were also part of the training. This also resulted in MISA Zimbabwe utilising its handbook on Covid-19, *Covering Covid-19: A handbook for Journalists*, produced under this project, to train media practitioners.

Launched Covid Information Hub in April 2021 and as of 31 December 2021, more than 36 organisations contributed information and more than 20 journalists contributed stories on the portal with a reach of more than 100,000 people a month.

To demystify Covid-19 and social stigma, *Myth or Truth*, a programme targeting the virtual Zimbabwean community was launched on the Covid Info Hub facebook portal. The programme was hosted by Bernard Mpofu an investigative journalist and digital editor at the *News Hawks*, a digital investigative hub. The programme featured Dr Alex Gasasira, *World Health Organisation*, Zimbabwe country representatives, Dr Norman Mataka, *Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights*, secretary general, Josephat Chiripanyanga, a medical doctor, and Samantha Sibanda, director of *Signs of Hope Trust*.

RESULTS/IMPACT

Skits reached a combined number of 260, 000 while the explainer video reached at least 20,000 views. The skits covered a wide range of issues from gender perspectives on vaccination, mixing of vaccinations and accountability of Covid 19 resources.

In Binga and Maphisa, 18 people with various forms of disabilities were reached and interviewed. Their family members were also interviewed as part of the focus group discussions on access to information on Covid-19. A traditional leader, in Binga, Headmen Belshazzar Mudimba, was also part of the project. He pledged to convey the message on the need for more credible and reliable information on Covid -19 to the chiefs in the area.

LITIGATION

MISA Zimbabwe versus Minister of Health and Child Care and Another HC45/2021 – Access to Covid-19 related information case.

This case was an urgent application which related to the exercise of the right to access Covid- 19 related information during an intense lockdown in January 2021. The matter was filed on the 15th of January 2021 and it was heard on an urgent basis. High Court Judge, Justice Mary Dube, ruled in favour of MISA Zimbabwe and ordered the following:

- To publish and disseminate on all available platforms, in all official languages, information on the occurrence and prevalence of the then new Covid-19 Variant 501Y.V2.
- The court said if the strain was found to be existent in Zimbabwe, the two ministries must communicate the pathology of the Covid-19 virus strain 501Y.V2 as well as measures to be taken by the public in respect of this strain.
- Furthermore, the courts ordered the two ministers to communicate Covid-19 statistics per district and to include disaggregated data in terms of age, location and gender.
- To communicate Covid-19 statistics in relation to immigration and cross border travel and that such reports should include the number of returning residents received and their Covid-19 status.

RESULTS/IMPACT

In compliance with this High Court order, the Ministries of Health and Information managed, to a larger extent to comply with the order. The government, through these responsible Ministries, managed to provide extensive daily updates on the progression of Covid-19 in Zimbabwe.

The situational reports also disaggregated the data by gender, age and district with regards to new cases and also recorded new deaths. However, in terms of language used in Covid-19 updates, only 19% of the 16 official languages were used in the Ministries' Covid-19 messages.

The most prominent language was English followed by Shona and isiNdebele. The daily situational reports published by the Ministry of Health were restricted to English.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

The skits mentioned earlier, were gender sensitive as they focused on vaccination of pregnant women or those breastfeeding. While the skits encouraged them to be vaccinated based on information from WHO, the government was not committal in its pronouncements encouraging women to be vaccinated on the strength of their doctors' advice.

The skits also busted myths on vaccines and generally educated people on how to minimise the spread of Covid-19. The explainer videos focused on behavioral change as well as vaccination for children and mixing of vaccines.

The skits received positive feedback on social media after initially being targeted for abuse by antivaxxers. This cyber bullying resulted in reluctance by content producers to produce pro-vaccine content in some instances.

The skits also promoted access to information and accountability by analysing the budget allocations for Covid-19. This helped in breaking down the budget for easy understanding by citizens.

Pursuant to the mentioned initiatives, MISA Zimbabwe also produced a documentary to highlight the plight of people with disabilities in marginalised areas. The documentary highlighted the state of access

to information and challenges faced by people with disabilities in the area.

The documentary was showcased at the Disability Expo in Gweru in October. The documentary was able to reach the disability community as well as policy makers.

The documentary was also viewed by legislators who pledged to conduct a full enquiry into the state of access to information for people with disabilities in 2022. They have already put this in their 2022 Work Plans according to the respective chairpersons of the portfolio committees that participated.



Naiza Boom Comedy

02 Sep · 🌍



Makuhwa



4.3K

211 comments 77 shares 54.4K views



MEDIA REFORMS

Delegates to the Media Reforms Stakeholders Indaba convened by MISA Zimbabwe on 30 October 2021 in Harare made the following resolutions pertaining to regulation of the media and the ongoing media reform processes:

1. Regulation of the media

- a) Government should allow the industry to self-regulate.
- b) The industry is committed to the agreed compromise position of co-regulation, wherein the industry is the primary regulatory body while the constitutional Zimbabwe Media Commission serves as an appellant body.
- c) Government should take into consideration the Draft Zimbabwe Media Practitioners Bill that was

developed by the media industry after wide consultations with journalists in all the country's 10 provinces.

- d) That any attempts towards entrenchment of statutory regulation in Zimbabwe will not be accepted by the industry.

2. Law Reforms

- a) Government should move with speed in its consultations and subsequent gazetting of the Broadcasting Services Act Amendment Bill.
- b) That laws such as the proposed Cyber and Data Protection Bill which passed through parliament and awaits the President's assent, is in compliance with the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights' (ACHPR) Revised Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information. The Declaration recognises the internet as a fundamental human right.
- c) That the government should revisit its Information and Media Panel of Inquiry (IMPI) report and its recommendations towards implementation of far-reaching policy and law reforms.

3. Media Sustainability

The media is one of the industries most affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, hence the government should consider the following interventions:

- a) Merging the various fragmented pockets of media development funds and establish a media development revolving fund to re-inject capital into the struggling industry.
- b) Consider tax breaks and moratoriums for a given period of time to allow the industry to recover.
- c) Ensure transparency on the current state of the Media Development Fund.

ZIMBABWE MEDIA PRACTITIONERS BILL

Following the enactment of the Zimbabwe Media Commission Act, MISA Zimbabwe and other partners under the umbrella Media Alliance of Zimbabwe, noted that the Act did not speak to the issue of co-regulation of the media as had been earlier agreed at a multi-stakeholder engagement meeting with media practitioners and media organisations together with the policy makers.

MISA Zimbabwe was therefore tasked by the Ministry of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services to develop the draft Bill for purposes of giving effect to co-regulation of the media through resolutions made at a meeting Mutare. The Draft Bill was duly drafted and presented to the Ministry.

This Bill is critical in ensuring that media freedom is promoted through a regulatory framework where an industry-led media council is the primary regulator of the media while the Zimbabwe Media Commission plays a supportive role, including that of being an appellate body in the event of failure to resolve complaints at the primary entry point of level.

Several advocacy interventions were undertaken to support the developments around this Bill including the following:

Multi-stakeholder Engagement meeting in June 2021 in Mutare.

Feedback meetings with the Ministry of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services.

Analysis of the Zimbabwe Media Commission counter- proposed Media Governance Bill.

Countrywide consultative and feedback meetings with media practitioners in the 10 provinces in Zimbabwe.

RESULTS/IMPACT

Endorsement of co-regulation of the media by the industry's players. More than 200 signatures were garnered in support of co-regulation of the media following nationwide consultative meetings.

MEDIA SUPPORT

During the period under review MISA Zimbabwe produced a pandemic reporting handbook and trained journalists on reporting on the Covid-19 pandemic. This increased the media's understanding of pandemics and Covid-19 in particular and was key in countering fake news about the pandemic.

One of its major highlights was the buy-in from the World Health Organisation (WHO) which participated in the training. Having set the pace as the lead media training organisation on reporting on COVID-19, the Gender and Media Connect invited MISA Zimbabwe to conduct similar trainings for female journalists who were also trained with the assistance of WHO.

The training also had a journalism mentorship component under the tutelage of editors Cris Chinaka and Kholwani Nyathi of *Zimfact* and *The Standard*, respectively, which commenced in March 2021. The two seasoned journalists assisted media practitioners in coming up with informative, analytical and in-depth stories on Covid-19.



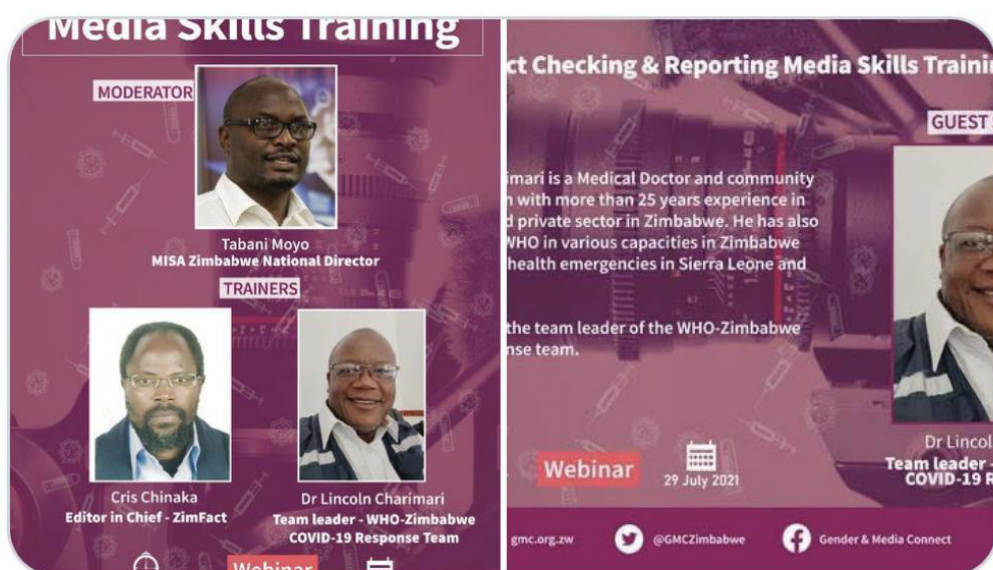
Gender & Media Connect Zimbabwe Retweeted



WHO Zimbabwe @WHO_Zimbabwe · Jul 29



#HappeningNow: A **#COVID19** Fact Checking & Reporting Media Skills Training workshop to equip journalists with the right information on **#COVID19** variants, vaccines among other issues. The workshop is coming at a time when Zimbabwe is recording an increase in **#COVID19** cases.



The Zimbabwe Idai Recovery Project (ZIRP) and 9 others



1



14



21



RESULTS/IMPACT

One of its major highlights was the buy-in from the World Health Organisation (WHO) which participated in the training. Having set the pace as the lead media training organisation on reporting on Covid-19, the Gender and Media Connect invited MISA Zimbabwe to conduct similar trainings for female journalists who were also trained with the assistance of WHO.

Following the trainings, a total of 60 stories were posted on the online portal. The portal was accessed by people from different countries which confirms its usefulness as a resource by other countries, researchers and policy makers on the Covid-19 situation in Zimbabwe.

JOURNALISM SAFETY AND SECURITY MEETINGS

1. Mutare

MISA Zimbabwe's Mutare Advocacy Committee represented by chairperson, Kenneth Matimaire, held a meeting with police in the eastern border town of Mutare during which they discussed the safety of journalists during the Covid-19 national lockdown.

The police represented by Manicaland provincial police spokesperson, Inspector Luxson Chananda, assured Matimaire of the police's support in ensuring that journalists conduct their work without

hindrance.

Inspector Chananda said a memo had been dispatched to that effect urging police officers to refrain from arresting journalists and allow them free passage to conduct their journalistic work.

2. Bulawayo

A similar meeting was held in Bulawayo with Police Commissioner Patton Mbangwa, as part of efforts to improve professional working relations between the police and the media.

According to NewZimbabwe.com, the senior police officer said the police could not single handedly accomplish its objectives without the help of the media.

“Our involvement with the media is derived from the fact that we want to engage widely so that we will be able to provide the best service to the public,” said Commissioner Mbangwa.

MISA Zimbabwe Board Member, Pamenus Tusso, stressed the importance of police and journalists working harmoniously, especially during this time of the Covid-19 pandemic.

3. Masvingo

MISA Zimbabwe’s Advocacy Committee in Masvingo led by chairperson, Passmore Kuzipa, held a meeting with Officer Commanding Masvingo Province Commissioner David Mahoya who pledged to work with the media during and after the Covid-19 lockdown.

Commissioner Mahoya said there is need for the media and the police to complement each other during the lockdown.

He noted the critical role played by the media in informing communities especially now when the country is fighting the Covid-19 pandemic.

Also in attendance was MISA Zimbabwe’s national chairperson Golden Maunganidze, and the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists (ZUJ) provincial chairperson for Masvingo, George Maponga.

RESULTS/IMPACT

Police pledged to guarantee the safety of journalists following the engagement meetings that were held during the period under review with commanders of the police in the province.

These engagements contributed to the marked reduction in the number of media freedom violations recorded during the period under review, from 52 in 2020 to 22 in 2021.

<https://cite.org.zw/byo-journalists-engage-zrp-to-enhance-working-relations/%0D%5B03/10>

<https://www.newzimbabwe.com/top-cop-calls-on-journalists-to-be-professional/>

REGIONAL/INTERNATIONAL FOOTPRINTS

MISA Zimbabwe National Director Tabani Moyo was elected into the Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD) Steering Committee (the board) at its elective Annual General Meeting held in Tirana, Albania, on 30 September 2021.

Moyo, who is also the MISA Regional Director, was elected with 17 other board members for a four-year term from 2021 to 2025. GFMD is an international network of about 200 journalism support and media development organisations, working in more than 70 countries. It is based in Brussels, Belgium.

“We thank the GFMD members for this recognition of MISA’s role as an advocacy brand that serves a multiplicity of stakeholders in the region under complex environments... despite facing numerous challenges such as the closure of our regional office in Namibia in 2015, and subsequent relocation of its offices to Zambia in 2018, and Zimbabwe in 2021, respectively.

“We are an evolving institution that continues to register recognisable impact under difficult circumstances,” said Moyo.

“We are driven by the value proposition of being the thought leader, knowledge institution and expertise organisation. I think this bears testimony to our humble efforts in living up to this commitment.

“Once again, I’m grateful to the membership for bestowing this leadership mantle on fellow steering committee members and myself for the four-year tenure of office, which, hopefully will position the media development agenda and complexities of the continent on the global stage.”

MISA is also a member of the Multi-Stakeholder Co-ordinating Team of the Southern African Development Community Internet Governance Forum (SAIGF) and also serves on the IFEX Governing Council.

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR) SUBMISSIONS

MISA Zimbabwe has made two submissions to the Third Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Zimbabwe, where it noted improvements in the legislative environment, but decried the pullback provisions in proposed new laws that have the effect of infringing on freedom of expression, such as the then Cybersecurity and Data Protection Bill. The UPR is a State-driven process, under the auspices of the Human Rights Council, which provides the opportunity for each State to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations.

<https://zimbabwe.misa.org/2021/07/22/misa-double-barrelled-submission-to-upr-on-zimbabwe/>

LESOTHO JOURNALISM SAFETY AND SECURITY TRAININGS

As highlighted earlier in this report, MISA held a safety and security training meeting in Lesotho on the 28th of July 2021. Lesotho was chosen as it is the next country that will hold elections in the region in September 2022.

The Minister of Communication, Science and Technology, Honorable Ts’unyane Rapapa, who was the guest of honour, affirmed the need to promote the safety and security of journalists and called on all stakeholders to promote media freedom. He noted that sustainable governments are those that uphold human rights and bear the fundamental responsibility to ensure that journalists are free to practise without interference. Further, he also noted the dangers that female journalists particularly face as they are sometimes asked for sexual favours in exchange for sources or in exchange for jobs in the media industry.

RESULTS/IMPACT

The Portfolio Committee in Lesotho recommended a withdrawal of the Computer Crimes and Cybersecurity Bill and that the Minister revisits the Bill and ensure that it is not an omnibus law which is

vague and difficult to implement. The Committee also recommended the withdrawal of the Communications (Subscriber Identity Module and Mobile Device Registration) Regulations, 2021, which regulations posed a grave threat to the right to privacy and freedom of expression, critical and enabling rights for media freedom as well.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT ON TECHNOLOGY, SURVEILLANCE AND DATA PROTECTION

On the 8th of October 2021, MISA Zimbabwe participated in a Regional Engagement on Technology Surveillance and Data Protection meeting which was hosted in Johannesburg, South Africa.





This meeting as captured in the pictures above, was also livestreamed on the MISA Zimbabwe Facebook Page and below are the links to the sessions:

- The sessions on Artificial Intelligence and fundamental rights in Southern Africa and Free Expression versus Hate Speech are accessible [on this link](#). The sessions reached 118 people and

had 119 views.

- The sessions on POPI Act in South Africa and Curbing Disinformation and Misinformation: A platform perspective can be accessed [on this link](#). The sessions reached 170 people and recorded 172 views.
- The sessions on Acquisition and Deployment of Surveillance tools by African governments and Metadata: Should Africa worry, are accessible [on this link](#). The sessions reached 672 people and recorded 182 views.

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Policy brief meetings with MPs drawn from the Portfolio Committee on Information, Media and Broadcasting Services, were held in Nemamwa in Masvingo, Matopos in Matabeleland South, Victoria Falls in Matabeleland North, Insukamini in Lower Gweru, Silobela in Midlands, Zvishavane in Midlands, Tsvingwe in Manicaland and Domboshawa on the outskirts of Harare.

The meetings were held on 8 May 2021.

A total of 510 participants participated in the meetings and 237 were female while 294 were youths.

MISA Zimbabwe took advantage of the World Press Freedom Day Commemorations to promote access to information by bridging the gap between media and marginalised communities and how citizens can use the media to raise their issues.

For instance, in Matopo`s, a community member said they only saw journalists if an important politician was visiting the area. This highlighted the information gap in marginalised communities.

The residents told Senator Esther Nyathi that their area had no internet access or radio access. The legislator pledged to push their concerns in parliament.

During the meetings, citizens also got feedback on the status of Bills such as the then Cybersecurity and Data Protection Bill and newly enacted laws, notably the Freedom of Information Act and Zimbabwe Media Commission Act, from MPs drawn from the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Information, Media and Broadcasting Services.

RESULTS/IMPACT

Following these meetings in May, Honourable Esther Nyathi, told a parliamentary meeting in Mutare on 10 June 2021, convened to present and brief stakeholders on the Draft Zimbabwe Media Practitioners Bill and co-regulation of the media, that there was need for more transmitters and community radio stations in Matopos.

In attendance during the Mutare meeting was the Permanent Secretary for Information, Nick Mangwana and BAZ chief executive officer, Matthias Chakanyuka. This means the concerns raised during the May 2021 MP policy brief meetings, were brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities for consideration.

She said these concerns had been raised during the MISA Zimbabwe-organised MP community visits which coincided with the World Press Freedom Day Commemorations.

Her submission also signifies growing confidence by female legislators in the relevant Portfolio Committee to also make contributions during parliamentary processes. In the past female legislators in the Committee tended to take the back seat during such meetings.

<https://www.newzimbabwe.com/forgotten-matobo-villagers-still-rely-on-school-teachers-for-current-news/>

<https://www.herald.co.zw/councils-undoing-gains-of-information-free-flow/>

Meanwhile, one of the parliamentarians that participated in the MPs policy briefs, Honourable Sipho Mokone, on 15 June 2021, moved a motion for parliament to consider Information as a public good in line with the 2021 Word Press Freedom Day universal theme.

BROADCASTING DIVERSITY CAMPAIGN

In December 2021 MISA Zimbabwe convened a broadcasting conference to discuss the state of broadcasting in Zimbabwe and lobby policy makers to create a conducive operating environment for the sector.

Deputy Minister of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services, Honourable Kindness Paradza gave an update on the media legislative reforms as it pertained to the Broadcasting Services Amendment Bill, Zimbabwe Media Practitioners Bill and the digital migration process.

RESULTS/IMPACT

The following recommendations were made at this conference as measures to continue promoting access to information and media freedom:

- Provision of adequate funding to ensure complete migration to digital television.
- Government support in the provision of STBs to allow smooth transition from analogue to digital television.
- Providing support to community radio stations for the acquisition of equipment.
- Support training on multimedia journalism.
- Ensure that media houses rethink business models including adopting a converged structure.
- Promote digital initiatives or partnerships between media houses and telecoms companies.
- Media institutions to utilise unemployed graduates to support convergence.
- Convene a stakeholder conference to discuss the IMPI report and issues around co-regulation of the media and the Media Practitioners Bill.
- To provide support towards community radio stations for their training on drafting strategic plans, financial reporting, business plans and organizational policies among others.

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

- Impact of Government's Covid-19 response on CSOs.
- Guide on relevant information for media and CSOs on Covid-19 in Zimbabwe.
- Briefing on regional and international best practices on Covid 19 responses.
- Covid-19 tracking applications and their implications on privacy.
- Covering Covid-19 – A Handbook for Journalists

Media Freedom Violations Statistics 2021

A total of 22 media workers were either arrested, charged, detained, threatened, attacked or barred in 2021. This marked a 58 % decrease in the number of media workers who were violated in 2021 when compared to the number recorded in 2020.

Collectively 28 alerts issued based on 13 incidents of media freedom violation and in some instances, a single incident would involve several journalists. In 2020 we issued 38 alerts.



2020

52 media workers were either arrested, detained, assaulted or injured during this period.



2021

22 media works were either arrested, detained, harassed, barred or threatened during this period.

Media Freedom Violations Categories

Arrested/ Denied Bail/ Detained



2020-18 cases

2021- 7 cases

Barred/Denied Accreditation



2020- 2 cases

2021- 4 cases

Assaulted / Attacked /Threatened



2020-15 cases

2021-2 cases

Cases of Media Freedom Violations

2020-38 cases

2021-14 cases



In 2021 media freedom violations occurred in the following cities or towns, Harare, Kwekwe, Masvingo, Bulawayo, Gweru and Chitungwiza.

2021 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MISA Zimbabwe National Governing Council (NGC) chairperson Golden Maunganidze was re-elected for another three-year term during the media freedom advocacy and lobby organisation's annual general meeting held in Harare on 30 October 2021.

Maunganidze beat former vice-chairperson, Rutendo Mawere, who was also contesting for the position of chairperson. Ruth Butaumocho, who served as a committee member during the previous term, was elected unopposed as vice-chairperson.

Journalists, Pamenus Tuso and Kenneth Matimaire, were elected into the NGC as committee members.

The annual general meeting ended with journalists re-affirming their commitment to co-regulation of the media as well as democratic internet governance.

This followed the convening of a workshop on the status of the media law reform processes which preceded the elective annual general meeting.

Earlier, in his report to the annual general meeting, Maunganidze, who is also MISA Regional Governing Council chairperson, said self-regulation of the media was at the “core” of securing a conducive operating environment and improving professionalism in the media sector.

He said MISA Zimbabwe thus remains firm on its position that co-regulation of the media is the way to go.

Under co-regulation, a proposed media council as espoused in the Draft Zimbabwe Media Practitioners Bill would be the first entry point for lodging complaints against the media while the constitutional Zimbabwe Media Commission, would be the appellant body.

“We are therefore encouraged by the open-door engagements we continue to enjoy with the Ministry of Information and the Parliament of Zimbabwe, in our quest for a democratic media environment, and more so, as we continue to consult on the outstanding issue of media regulation.”

Maunganidze noted the enactment of the Freedom of Information Act, licensing of the first-ever community radio stations and commercial television stations, as a step in the right direction.

He said this was the result of MISA Zimbabwe's sustained and protracted Free the Airwaves campaign that the organisation together with the Zimbabwe Association of Community Radio Stations (ZACRAS), had “incessantly” been pushing for over the years.

On the Cybersecurity and Data Protection Bill, he said:

“It is MISA Zimbabwe's strong conviction that any form of regulation of the Internet should be aimed at creating safe online spaces for the exercise and enjoyment of rights as opposed to the criminalisation of online communication under the guise of dealing with internet abuse.”

The chairperson commended the organisation's Advocacy Committees and the entire MISA Zimbabwe membership for being the lead ambassadors of the organisation.

MISA ZIMBABWE @25 COMMEMORATIONS

MISA Zimbabwe commemorated its 25th anniversary. MISA Zimbabwe registered its Deed of Trust in 1996. Since then, it has been a thought leader and at the forefront of campaigning for media freedom, freedom of expression, freeing up of the airwaves and digital rights in Zimbabwe.

To mark the event, the organisation produced a special newspaper supplement: *MISA Zimbabwe @25: Reflections on media law reforms*.

The commemorations came at a time when MISA Zimbabwe had taken over the role of coordinating the MISA Regional Secretariat, this is testament to MISA Zimbabwe's continued growth over the years.

Chairperson of MISA Zimbabwe Board of Trustees, Cris Chinaka, said:

“MISA Zimbabwe, as a national chapter and as a member of the regional collective, needs to continue playing the role that it has been critically fulfilling over the years: offering strong thought and inspiring leadership in the implementation of impactful and practical programmes in the information and media sphere.

“Other chapters in southern Africa have acknowledged this key contribution by electing the MISA Zimbabwe National Governing Council (NGC) chairperson, Golden Maunganidze, and national director, Tabani Moyo, as chairperson MISA Regional Governing Council and director MISA Regional, respectively.

“This leadership responsibility means there is a need to take stock of the past and the present, and to look ahead to the challenges of the future.”

<https://zimbabwe.misa.org/2021/12/18/25-years-on-reflections-on-media-law-reforms/>



MISA Zimbabwe National Director Tabani Moyo giving a presentation at the Africa Forum in Namibia ahead of the 2021 World Press Freedom Day Commemorations.



Minister of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services, Monica Mutsvangwa, giving remarks on the State of Press Freedom in Southern Africa Report (2019-2020) during the 2021 World Press Freedom Day Commemorations in Harare.



MISA Zimbabwe 2021 World Press Freedom Day commemorations in Harare.



2021 Regional Multistakeholder Internet Governance conference in Harare.



MISA Zimbabwe Advocacy Officer, Malvern Mkudu, discussing the importance of access to information and how MISA can assist People with Disabilities during the Disability Expo in Gweru.



Zimbabwe Media Commission, Commissioner Jasper Maphosa`s (centre), presentation during the launch of the 2021 Transparency Assessment report in Gweru. Looking on is MISA Zimbabwe National Chairperson, Golden Maunganidze (right) and Gweru Advocacy Committee chairperson Norman Dururu.



MISA Zimbabwe 2021 Annual General Meeting.



MISA Zimbabwe Internet Access and Affordability Indaba in Harare.



MISA Zimbabwe Legal and ICT Policy Officer, Nompilo Simanje, moderating the 2021 Internet Access and Affordability Indaba.



MISA Zimbabwe annual 2021 all stakeholder broadcasting conference in Harare.



Deputy Minister of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services, Honourable Kindness Paradza, making a contribution during the MISA Zimbabwe 2021 stakeholder broadcasting conference. Next to him on the right is MISA Zimbabwe National Chairperson, Golden Maunganidze.



MISA Zimbabwe training workshop held in Gweru on reporting on COVID-19 with journalists from different Provinces in Zimbabwe.

MISA ZIMBABWE SECRETARIAT

Harare, Zimbabwe

Tel/Fax: +264 242 776 165/ 746 838

Email: misa@misazim.co.zw

zimbabwe.misa.org



zimbabwe.misa.org