



# Vision for Change: Transforming Tanzanian Media

Semi-Annual Report 2024

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## Chapter 1:



### **New Leadership at the Council**

#### *A vision for Change, Resource Mobilization and Sustainability*

*MCT is constitutionally structured with effective governance mechanisms, with one of its core objectives being to promote strategic leadership to ensure sustainable institutional capacity development for realization of MCT objectives. The sustainability of MCT as an institution is therefore at the rudder of MCT leadership. To evaluate the realization of its vision for change and resource mobilization, including identifying successes and areas for improvement, please refer to, sections 1.1 and 1.2 of this chapter for a detailed explanation.*

*Similarly, among its many programmes, one of MCT's initiatives carries strategic objectives to foster sustainability of the media sector, ensuring that it can effectively fulfill its roles. To evaluate the advancements made towards ensuring the sustainability of the media sector, and to identify both achievements and areas needing improvement, section 1.3 of this chapter provides a comprehensive analysis.*



## 1.1 A Vision for Change

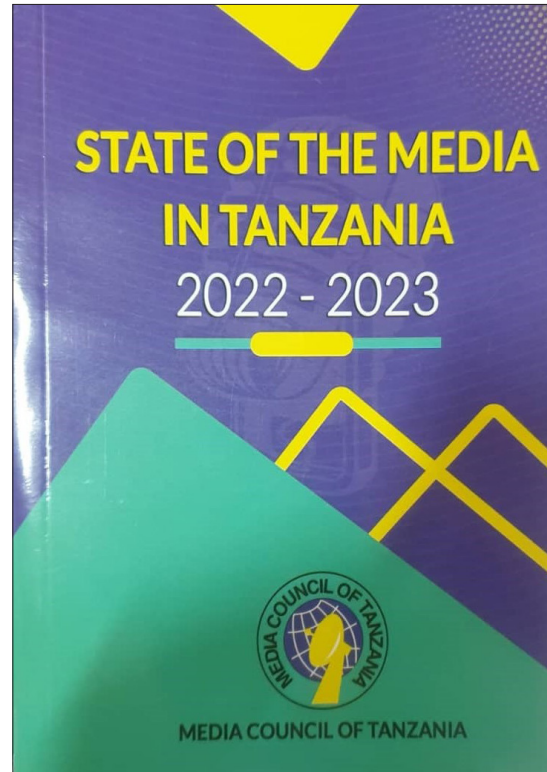
According to the State of the Media Report 2022-2023, released by the Council on 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2024, several critical areas require intervention in the media sector. These include lack of a supportive legal environment, journalists are still arrested and assaulted. Additionally, journalists continue to be denied access to information, their safety and security are frequently compromised. The report also highlights ongoing issues such as disinformation, misinformation, fake news, press violations, gender imbalance, and unethical reporting.

There are four organizations in Tanzania that share a common commitment to addressing issues related to the media in Tanzania. The mission of the Tanzania Editors' Forum is to enhance the quality of journalism in Tanzania by advocating for freedom of expression, ensuring safety and security of journalists. Mission of the Union of Tanzania Press Club (UTPC) is to strengthen the capacity of press

clubs across Tanzania, promote ethical journalism, defend the rights and safety of journalists. Mission of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Tanzania chapter is to promote and defend media freedom, freedom of expression, and access to information in Tanzania by monitoring media violations and advocating for legal reforms.

The mission of the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) is to promote and protect freedom of the media and uphold the highest professional standards and accountability among journalists and media organizations through advocacy, capacity building, self-regulation, and the resolution of disputes.

Reading the mission statements of the four aforementioned media organizations in Tanzania reveals a shared commitment to addressing key intervention areas with similar or slightly different approaches, but aiming for the same end results. These organizations primarily strive for press freedom, a supportive legal environment, quality journalism and editorial independence.



*Cover Page of the State of the Media Report 2022-2023*



A vision for change is required to address the concerns affecting the media working environment in a way that delivers impactful results through more effective, efficient and timely coordinated collaborations.

The new leadership, encompassing both the Governing Board and the Executive Secretary, joins the Council amidst the imminent establishment of the government statutory Media Council (termed Independent Media Council) through the Media Services Act of 2016. The new leadership aims to build legitimacy and credibility with the public and its members while voluntarily upholding its mandate to oversee the highest standards of journalism professionalism and promote healthier information environment in the country.

The new leadership at the Council, effective from mid January 2024 called for a vision for change, starting with the theory of change. Over the past 6 months, this leadership has been exploring, brainstorming, and engaging with various stakeholders both internally and externally, including development partners. Although work is still ongoing, here is the theory of change aimed at transforming the media sector and addressing interventions areas within the Council, media organizations, media outlets, government and other partners.

*“Strengthening the capacities, systems and resources at MCT leads to credibility and legitimacy to effectively, efficiently and timely coordinate the collaborative efforts of stakeholders and coalitions towards enabling healthier information environment for a functioning independent media system in the country for a democratic Tanzania with free, responsible and effective media.”*

There are five key steps to realize the envisioned change. From strengthening the capacities, systems and resources at MCT to a democratic Tanzania with free, responsible and effective media. To ensure performance control and guarantee the success of this change, key indicators are aligned with each step of the process. However, some assumptions have been made as important factors for success.

At a very initial step of success, four assumptions are critical;

- i) Availability of resources (financial, human and material)
- ii) Commitment to change (willing to invest time, effort and resources into the process of change)
- iii) Receptiveness to learning by the team
- iv) Support from the Governing Board for experimentation, risk-taking and adaptation to change.

Nevertheless, at the climax of the desired change, three assumptions are critical;

- i) Robust and accountable democratic institutions with effective checks and balances, separation of powers and mechanism for transparency and accountability



- ii) Appropriate regulatory framework that balances the need to protect media freedom with the need to uphold public interest and prevent abuses such as hate speech, incitement to violence and disinformation
- iii) Existence of public trust and confidence in the media as a credible source of information and acting as watchdog to expose wrongdoing and hold the power to account

(Annex 1 is attached to provide all key performance indicators and assumptions for success at each step of the theory of change)

During the reporting period, the new leadership has implemented the theory of change. Understanding that the country is preparing for local and general elections in 2024 and 2025, the Council, in collaboration with a team of media and development experts, has conceptualized and contextualized an election theory of change as outlined below.

*“Some politicians and political parties make fruitless promises during elections to voters. To hold them accountable, the Tanzanian audience needs to be empowered to make informed electoral decisions at the ballot box. This is possible if the capacities of media outlets in Tanzania are strengthened, enabling selected journalists and editors to work independently without interference from politicians and political parties, before, during and after elections.”*

During the reporting period, the theory of change was designed to promote the excellence in journalism by enhancing Election Media Monitoring and Coverage. This initiative aims to hold politicians and political parties accountable for their elections campaign promises to voters, empowering the Tanzanian audience to make informed electoral decisions.

The design of the election- specific theory of change is informed by the very first theory of change designed by MCT’s at the beginning of 2024, which was preliminarily approved by the Board in mid-February, 2024, subject to their further contextualization.

Towards the end of June, 2024, with the election agenda in mind, the Secretariat members were oriented to interlink the two theories of change. This resulted into a comprehensive approach: *“A Stronger MCT able to coordinate different election stakeholders locally, regionally and internationally, build the capacity of journalists and editors, and ultimately empowering voters to hold the politicians and political parties accountable.”*

At the end of it all, MCT is looking towards contributing to a more democratic Tanzania and just society. The key indicators among others are:

- i) Better ranking in international press freedom indices, such as the World Press Freedom index by Reporters Without Borders or the Freedom of the Press report by Freedom House.



- ii) Increased government transparency, accountability and responsiveness to public concerns.
- iii) Increased civic engagement and participation of citizens in democratic processes, including political activism, civil society organizations and public debates on issues of national importance.
- iv) Regular elections that are free from fraud, manipulation, and intimidation.

Similarly, in the past 6 months, the new leadership has developed strategies to deliver two main expected outcomes.

- i) Enabling legal and media viability environment that guarantee press freedom, safety and security of journalists, editorial independence and self-regulations.
- ii) Promoting highest journalism professional standards and accountability.

Details of key indicators, assumptions, strategies and products such as media awards & expo, media watch unit, SMR, CoRI initiative, DEFIR and ADRM which are customized to deliver the expected outcomes and trigger the impact are in *Annex 2: A power point presentation used by the new leadership to engage with the development partners in the last 6 months.*

## **1.2 A Vision for Resource Mobilization**

In mid-April 2024 the new Governing Board members and the new Executive Secretary were officially welcomed and provided with the necessary working tools during a farewell ceremony for the outgoing Governing Board members and former Executive Secretary.

In February 2024, during his first Board meeting, the new Executive Secretary informed the Board members about the balance of TZS 8 million and approximately USD 2,000 in the bank accounts, against a monthly payroll cost of about Tzs 40 million. This highlighted the critical importance and urgency of energetic financial resource mobilization to ensure organizational resilience, effectiveness, and the ability to make a meaningful and sustained impact, as described in the theory of change assumptions.

To boost the financial position at the Council, the Secretariat, following Board directives, highlighted the urgent need for institutional sustainability support under the new leadership to rescue the situation by asking Wellspring Philanthropic Fund (WPF) to make early disbursement of USD 150,000. Generously, WPF accepted and disbursed immediately.

The Council also engaged with Ford Foundation (FF) whose funds are also unrestricted. FF disbursed USD 100,000 within the reporting period which helped the Council for both running the programme



activities and administrative costs. Both WPF and FF became meaningful partners indeed to sustain the Council during the transitioning period of the new leadership.

Initially, the Council had fund balance of TZS 104.5 million from International Media Support (IMS) dedicated for project activities under the project named: *Enhancing Media Freedom, Journalists' Safety and Security in Tanzania 2023 – 2024*. The Council continued to implement the project activities after requesting a contract extension from 31st March, 2024 until 31st July, 2024. Final narrative reports were submitted for IMS review. The project awaits external audit before it is closed and IMS will disburse the remaining funds of Euro 13,234 upon clean audit report.

During the reporting period, the Council also received Euro 29,000 from Vikes for Women in the Media project. Activities are being implemented and another disbursement of Euro 7,200 from Vikes is expected in the coming period.

IMS, FF, WPF and Vikes are the four partners whose partnership agreements were signed and committed from last year (2023). The WPF agreement with MCT ends in May 2026, FF ends in April 2025, Vikes ends in August 2026, IMS ends July 2024.

It is also worth reporting that the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), a long-time partner of MCT since its establishment, is in the final stages of evaluating their support to MCT for the partnership agreement that started in 2018. The evaluation is expected to be completed by end of August, 2024. Meanwhile, the new leadership has engaged with SIDA in Tanzania and shared their vision for change moving forward.

The Council managed to secure new partnership agreement within the reporting period. US Embassy signed partnership agreement with the Council of USD 20,500 for organizing a conference on, *"The Role Of The Media In Credible Election"*. The conference was held on 30th April, 2024. Conference reports were submitted and the project is currently in closure stage. During the publicity of the conference event, International Fund for Electoral Systems (IFES) expressed interest and requested to participate by funding some of the direct costs items related to interpretation, travel and accommodation of invited participants from Zanzibar Electoral Commission.

Similarly, within the reporting period, the Council secured an agreement with American Bar Society (ABA ROLI) for USD 71,000 which is funded by United States Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL). MCT is a consortium member. The project whose main objective is to advance freedom of expression in Tanzania is being implemented.

To energize the team, the new leadership has in the last 6 months emphasized on the importance of financial resource mobilization. This focus helps to sustain daily operations, build team capacity, design and execute new ideas and products, scale up successful initiatives, respond to emerging





needs and challenges, and invest in strengthening systems, infrastructure, and monitoring and evaluation processes.

**Firstly**, The Council responded to the United Kingdom’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (“FCDO”) WAJIBIKA opportunity as part of the consortium led by Oxford Policy Management (OPM). In the same opportunity the Council also applied with Ecryos. The Consortium of MCT, OPM and others won this opportunity whose implementation will start early 2025. The period between now and early 2025, will be for familiarization and binding partnerships. MCT and Thomson Foundation of Nairobi will be leading the media component of the call where the funds set aside is about 20% of the total funding of £13,000,000 GBP to design, manage and deliver the Wajibika programme in Tanzania. The contract is initially expected to run until 31 March 2030. The initial FCDO contribution is £13,000,000 GBP. SDC is planning to provide a contribution of up to CHF 15,600,000 (approx. £14,000,000 GBP) with an anticipated funding period running to December 2031. The contract will be agreed at £13,000,000 initially but will include an option to extend by up to an additional 24 months and a total value of up to £30,000,000.



*The staff of the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) cheering together with the Council’s Executive Secretary Ernest Sungura (with a red tie) immediately after been told that they have won the Wajibika Project which will start to be implemented in 2025.*

**Secondly**, the Council responded to FCDO proposal for the Public Interest Media and Healthy Information Environments (PIMHIE) programme which MCT titled Habari ni Maisha yangu where the Council requested for about TZS 600,000,000. MCT applied this opportunity in partnership with other local firms. The Council has been informed as per email extract below: -



*“Dear Ernest and colleagues,*

*Thank you very much for your proposal for the Public Interest Media and Healthy Information Environments (PIMHIE) programme. We read your proposal with great interest but are sorry to let you know that it has not been selected to deliver the programme.*

*“Your proposal had some key strengths, including local ownership, as it would be managed by a Tanzanian organisation. However, the Call for Proposals was looking to support the media in several countries across the world, so the fact that your proposal was concentrated in Tanzania meant that it was not able to address some of the core objectives of the Call for Proposals. In future bids we also suggest that you also include a short section on safeguarding against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, as this is often part of the evaluation criteria. We hope this feedback is helpful to you in future bids. Thank you once again for your proposal and best wishes,”*

**Thirdly**, the Council responded to the European Commission’s call to Strengthen CSOs as Independent Actors of Good Governance and Development in Tanzania. MCT applied for this opportunity in collaboration with TMF and Foundation Hironnelle, focusing on Lot 1, which targeted enhancing journalists’ professional capacities. The project had a life span of three years with maximum funding of EUR 2,000,000. Unfortunately, the Council was informed by Foundation Hirondele, the lead partner that the application was not successful.

**Fourthly**, the Council responded to a US Embassy in Tanzania call on Public Campaign Around Civic Rights in April 2024, where a project proposal for Zanzibar was submitted with possibility of \$ 25,000. The Council is not yet to receive feedback.

**Fifthly**, the Council has responded to the funding opportunity from Sida HQ (Stockholm) in June 2024 with the aim of Increasing citizens’ understanding of Freedom of expression; enhance CSOs skills on media engagement, advocacy, resource mobilization and collaboration to hold government institutions to account; promoting media freedom and access to information; and enhance government institutions, judiciary and parliamentary officials understanding of civic space and the work of CSOs in contributing to development. The Council was successful in the concept note and was shortlisted for the first stage and after submitting the required information for the second stage, the Council got below quoted feedback: -

*“Thank you for your continued interest in partnering with Sida. We received 2,728 expressions of interest in the call and 1,044 organisations proceeded to the second step, where we have had to further eliminate the number of candidates. We therefore regret to inform you that your organisation has not been selected to the next step in the selection of expressions of interest.”*



**Sixthly**, the Council proactively developed a concept note for an election project. The project titled *“Enhancing Election Media Monitoring and Coverage”* aims to hold politicians and political parties accountable for their elections campaign promises to voters by empowering the Tanzanian audience to make informed electoral decisions. The project is driven by this theory of change; *“Some politicians and political parties make fruitless promises during elections to voters. To hold them accountable, the Tanzanian audience needs to be empowered to make informed electoral decisions at the ballot box. This is possible if the capacities of media outlets in Tanzania are strengthened, enabling selected journalists and editors to work independently without interference from politicians and political parties, before, during and after elections.”*

The Concept note with indicative costs of USD 6 million has been submitted to the US Embassy. The Council has requested US Embassy to organize and host a gathering of other development partners, providing the Council with an opportunity to make a formal presentation. As of the end of the reporting period, the Council was waiting for confirmation of this opportunity from the Embassy.

**Seventhly**, financial resources mobilization over the past 6 months extended beyond traditional approaches. The team explored non-traditional revenue streams by setting up grounds and creating products aligned with market demand. As part of a new fundraising model, the Council applied for a Tender for Media Training in Marine Biodiversity Reporting and Advocacy and Media Content Services contracted by USAID Heshimu Bahari Project. The tender amount is USD 250,000. Up to the end of the reporting period, the Council was waiting for feedback.

**Eighthly**, the Council has also resolved to leverage the Excellence in Journalism Awards Tanzania (EJAT) as a proactive financial resource mobilization tool. Customized sponsorship packages have been created to appeal to different sponsors. A special sales team has been tasked with visiting these sponsors on special missions to market the sponsorship packages ranging from Diamond (TZS 100 million), Tanzanite (TZS 50 million), Gold (TZS 25 million), Silver (TZS 15 million), Bronze (TZS 10 million) and Rubby (TZS 5 million). Up to the end of the reporting period, the Council had listed 44 corporates and government agencies to visit and about TZS 13 million was already mobilized. The target is to reach out to 100 institutions and mobilize TZS 1 billion whose aim is to fill the 2024 Council funding gap of 51%.

**Ninthly**, the Council has designed two magazines, *Jarida la TUZO* and *TUZO*, aimed at highlighting the achievements of the best journalists excelling in Excellence in Journalism Awards Tanzania. These magazines will also feature profiles of corporates and government agencies, showcasing their successes and contributions to societal development. The magazines will be distributed free of charge in digital format online, with a limited number of hard copies available at key locations such as the SGR train traveling from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma, select supermarkets, and shopping malls. Production costs are expected to be covered by corporate and government sponsors, with



any surplus invested in promoting quality journalism in Tanzania. Up to the end of the reporting period, the Council was drafting the editorial policy and preparing a dummy version of each magazine for registration.

**Tenthly**, during the reporting period, the Council is finalizing the procurement processes for the Consulting Unit as part of its Non-traditional Revenue Stream (NTRS). The Unit will have a task of tracking and searching for opportunities including tenders for Provision of services in communication strategies development, provision of public relations services, provision of service in creation of creative content, print/electronic and social media management, provision of services in media

training, support addressing negative publicity and reputation management, service provision on branding, offer services in event management, tracking and measuring the effectiveness of media etc. Up to the end of the reporting period, the Council was finalizing an Expression of Interest (EoI) to be uploaded in MCT website and widely circulated through mainstream media.

**Eleventhly**, during the reporting period, the Council also focused on mobilizing human resources by recruiting a new Finance and Administration Manager. It realigned roles and responsibilities by promoting some staff and relocating others from Dar es Salaam office to Zanzibar to strengthen the Zanzibar office, monitoring and evaluation functions, and resource mobilization. Additionally, the Council recruited one new support staff and upgraded the welfare of three support staff members to motivate them to continue providing essential support activities. The Council also conducted change management training supported by WPF through CBLI where the session helped to strengthen staff bond.

**Twelfthly**, during the reporting period, the Secretariat team, led by the Executive Secretary, visited the Bagamoyo land property, in the Coast region. Efforts to arrange a visit for the Governing Board members proved futile by the end of the reporting period. However, both properties in Zinga and Kimarang'ombe remain safeguarded, with land rent paid. The follow-up on the status of the proposed master plan has successfully passed all the preliminary approval stages and is now at



*Cover Page of the  
Tuzo Magazine  
2023-2024 Edition*



*The Executive Secretary of the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT), Ernest Sungura (with a truck suit) being shown the boundaries of the MCT farm by the Rajabu Ibrahimu, the MCT Zinga farm supervisor when the executive secretary made a visit on February 8, 2024 to MCT properties' (farms) located in Zinga and Kimalang'ombe District Bagamoyo, Coast region.*

the Cabinet Ministers level. It expected that when the cabinet meets, the matter will be tabled for decision. Following this, the EPZA will provide the declaration/information to release the area set aside for residents.

Similarly, terms of reference have been developed to engage a video producer who will document the property with the aim of marketing it to prospective investors.

**Thirteen**, during the reporting period, the Council lost the MCT President and Chairman of the Governing Board, retired Judge Juxon Mlay, who died on 25th May, 2024. It is the first time for MCT to have a seating president die before his tenure expires. A replacement for the MCT President will be sought before the end of 2024.



### **1.3: Media Sector's Sustainability - A Priority by Key Stakeholders**

In the past 6 months, the sustainability of the media sector was a priority topic of discussion in every conference, symposium and meeting involving media stakeholders. The most prominent event was graced by Her Excellency Samia Suluhu Hassan, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, who launched the second National Media Sector Development Symposium on 18th June, 2024 in Dar es Salaam.



*The President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Hon. Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan speaking during the Opening Ceremony of the National Media Sector Development Conference held on June 18, and 19, 2024 at Mlimani City conference hall in Dar es Salaam.*

One of the President's key directives from her speech was the ultimatum she issued to all government institutions and agencies, requiring them to pay all advertising debts to media houses before 24<sup>th</sup> December, 2024.

During the symposium, the Committee on Media Economy and Sustainability, led by Tido Mhando, presented several key recommendations. The committee highlighted significant challenges facing the Tanzanian media landscape, including declining revenues, technological changes, and insufficient investment in the sector.



*The President of the United Republic of Tanzania Hon. Samia Suluhu Hassan (left) receiving the Report from the Chairman of the Committee, Tido Mhando. President Samia established a Committee to assess the State of the economy in the Media in Tanzania Mainland and it was inaugurated during the opening ceremony of the Second National Media Sector Development Conference held on June 18, 2024 at the Mlimani City conference hall in Dar es Salaam.*



Nine recommendations were made to address the challenges as listed here.

- i) Increasing foreign ownership in media to 75% to attract more investment
- ii) Eliminating or reducing VAT and customs duties on printing paper
- iii) Ensuring media owners provide contracts and health insurance to journalists
- iv) Enhancing human resources to adapt to technological advancements
- v) Conducting research to improve media content and audience understanding
- vi) Developing alternative income sources to boost profitability
- vii) Reviewing and addressing existing government debts to media organizations
- viii) Allocating government advertising budgets to support media outlets
- ix) Increasing the budget for regulatory institutions like TCRA to enhance sector management and research.

On 4<sup>th</sup> of July, 2024 MCT launched the State of the Media Report 2022 – 2023. The report which was launched by Judge Joseph Sinde Warioba, the former Prime Minister and First Vice President of the United Republic of Tanzania made several key recommendations to enhance the sustainability of the media sector.

The report emphasized the need for the media to prioritize citizen-centric reporting over political sensationalism, urging a focus on issues directly impacting the public rather than propagandistic content. The report also called for increased investment in training and technology to help journalists navigate challenges such as misinformation and limited access to reliable information, particularly in rural areas.

At the Tanzania Editors Forum held in Dodoma on 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2024 and attended by Dotto Biteko, the Deputy Prime Minister of Tanzania, Bakari Machumu, the Managing Director of Mwananchi Communications, presented several key recommendations to support the media sector's sustainability and excellence in journalism. He highlighted the challenges posed by limited access to resources, which impact the quality and reach of journalism in the country. Machumu emphasized the importance of:

- i) **Formalization and Access to Capital:** Highlighting the need for formalizing the media sector and improving access to financial resources to support media operations.



- ii) **Market Opportunities:** Addressing the need for better market access and opportunities for media business to thrive.
- iii) **Skills Development:** Encouraging continuous professional development and skills acquisition for media practitioners to meet evolving market demand.
- iv) **Supportive Policies:** Advocating for the development of policies that support media sustainability and growth.

MCT also set the tone on 30<sup>th</sup> of April, 2024 during its conference on the Role of Media in Promoting Credible Elections as key recommendations were made to enhance media sector sustainability. Judge Joseph Sinde Warioba who was the Guest of honor emphasized the need for the media to focus on education and research, urging journalists to go beyond mere information dissemination and contribute to national development through educational content and research-based reporting.

During the World Press Freedom Day commemorations in Dodoma on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of May, 2024, key recommendations related to media sector sustainability were highlighted. The event emphasized the importance of improving the legal framework governing the media, particularly through amendments to the Media Services Act. These changes aim to enhance press freedom and support the sustainability of the media sector by addressing issues like the allocation of government advertisements and the protection of journalists' equipment from confiscation by courts.



*The Acting Programme Manager of Media Council of Tanzania (MCT), Satsuma Mwalimu (center) leading a panel discussion organized jointly between MCT and the Legal and Human Rights Center (LHRC) to discuss the economic conditions of journalists and the media in Tanzania. Other panelists are Mussa Juma, Advocate James Marenga and a veteran journalists and editor Salim Salim. The panel discussion was held on May 3, 2024 at Jakaya Kikwete Conference Center in Dodoma*

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Furthermore, the need for policies on the use of Artificial Intelligence, the establishment of a safer working environment for journalists, and the revision of the Statistics Act were also discussed as crucial for creating a supportive environment for sustainable media operations.

Nevertheless, during the annual press freedom celebration in Dar es Salaam on 30<sup>th</sup> of May, 2025, just a month after the World Press Freedom Day commemorations, the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA - TAN) made recommendations aimed at fostering a sustainable and resilient media sector in Tanzania, ensuring that it can continue to operate effectively and uphold the principles of press freedom and democracy. The recommendations included the following: -



*The National Democratic Institute (NDI) Representative representing at Freedom of Expression Annual Reflection Forum.*

- i) **Increased Funding for Media Outlets:** Emphasis was placed on the necessity for more financial support to ensure the independence and viability of media organizations.
- ii) **Support for Journalists Training:** Calls were made to enhance training programs to improve the quality of journalism, particularly in the areas of investigative reporting and digital media.
- iii) **Legal Reforms:** Advocates pushed for further amendments to restrictive media laws to create a more conducive environment for free and independent journalism.
- iv) **Strengthening Media Institutions:** There were recommendations to bolster the capacity of media councils and other regulatory bodies to better protect journalists and uphold standards.



- v) **Enhancing Collaboration:** Encouragement for increased collaboration among media stakeholders, including partnerships between local and international organizations to share resources and expertise.

Similarly, one of the CoRI members, Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) organized a symposium in Dar es Salaam on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2024. At least two main recommendations justify that media sector's sustainability was a priority to key stakeholders in Tanzania. These two recommendations were: -



*The US Ambassador to Tanzania Dr. Michael A. Battle speaking at the National Forum on Freedom of Expression & Media Laws in Tanzania in Dar es Salaam, which was organised by Tanzania Coalitions of Human Right Defenders.*

- i) **Economic Support for Media Houses:** The symposium emphasized the need for financial support mechanisms to ensure the economic viability of media houses. This includes exploring alternative funding models, such as grants and public-private partnerships.
- ii) **Enhanced Collaboration:** It was suggested that there should be greater collaboration between the government, civil society, and media organizations to create a conducive environment for sustainable media operations and to address challenges collectively.



## 1.4 Media Sustainability: The Crucial Role of Regional and International Networking and Collaborations

On 16th May, 2024, Independent media regulators from across Africa took an unprecedented step in Cape town, South Africa, by forming a new continental network aimed at strengthening press freedom and journalists' ethics and promote media sustainability. The Network of Independent Media Councils in Africa (NIMCA) affirmed the African Commission's 2019 Declaration of Principles on freedom of expression and access to information. The network will promote self-regulation as the cornerstone of a free and ethical media. It will allow members to build common approaches, deepen media freedom, bolster accountability and support sustainable journalism across the continent. NIMCA will give priorities to include developing a pan-African ethics framework, providing guidance on misinformation and new technologies like artificial intelligence, finding sustainable funding models and achieving gender parity within regulatory bodies.



On 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2024, the East Africa Press Council (EAPC) launched its strategy in Kigali, Rwanda. The strategy aims to promote and uphold journalistic standards, press freedom, and ethical media practices within the East African region.

Both NIMCA and EAPC play crucial role of regional and international networking and collaborations for self-regulations and media sustainability across the continent.

*The Executive Secretary of the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) Ernest Sungura (left) speaking with the Vice President of the Rwanda Media Commission (RMC) Rev. Uwimana Jean Piere at the meeting of the East African Press Councils (EAPC) held in Kigali, Rwanda, June 25, 2024*

## Lessons and Looking Ahead

On vision for change, it was necessary for the new leadership to immediately think about the theory of change as it provides a basis for measuring progress and evaluating impact. By defining specific indicators and benchmarks, MCT can track achievements and make data-driven decisions for the sustainability of the organization.

On resource mobilization, the team's dedication to writing proposals day and night is yielding positive results. A prime example is the WAJIBIKA programme, worth GBP 30 million over seven years, which has become the first secured programme under a consortium. The fruits of dedication towards resource mobilization are expected to materialize in the long run.

Regarding the sustainability of the media sector, the prioritization of this issue by media stakeholders, including the nation's top leadership, signifies a focus on long-term health and stability rather than immediate profits. Addressing the challenges inhibiting media sustainability is crucial to ensuring a vibrant, credible, and resilient media sector that effectively serves the public and adapts to future challenges.

Based on these lessons, MCT is committed to collaborating with all media stakeholders, including the government and policymakers, to explore practical media business models that diversify revenue streams beyond traditional advertising, and thus enhancing financial resilience.

Since a theory of change was lacking at MCT, it is important to look ahead for further internalization, conceptualization and contextualization by engaging all key stakeholders, both internally and externally. Under the new leadership, MCT aims to strengthen its monitoring, evaluation and learning functions.

Additionally, the Council is seeking increased dedication from the team and support from the Board to realize its fully-funded programme strategy (2023 - 2027). Currently, funding is more of project-based, whereas the preferred model is basket funding, which would provide more comprehensive financial stability and flexibility.

NIMCA and EAPC position MCT in fostering cooperation as prepares to bring the African Media Councils and the World to Tanzania to celebrate among others, the 30 years anniversary of self-regulations in Tanzania.

## Chapter 2:



# Empowering Press Freedom, Strengthening Legal Protection for Journalists

*Under the new leadership, the Council has realigned the expected impact towards contributing to a more democratic Tanzania and just society. This will be realized through two expected outcomes. This chapter focuses on the first outcome, which aims to create an enabling legal and media viability environment that guarantee press freedom, the safety and security of journalists, editorial independence and self-regulation.*

*One of MCT's strategic objectives is to defend and expand the perimeters of freedom of expression and media, ensuring the highest professional standards and accountability. This enables the Tanzanian media to contribute effectively to development and democratic processes, providing citizens with critical means to hold their leaders accountable. Section 2.1 of this chapter evaluates the realization of this strategic objective, highlighting successes and areas for improvement.*

*Another strategic objective of MCT is to enhance press freedom and ensure the safety and security of journalist' through networking, capacity building and documentation. Ssection 2.2 of this chapter evaluates the realization of this strategic objective detailing what went right and identifying areas for improvement.*

*Additionally, MCT has yet another strategic objective of enhancing ethical practices and conciliate between the media and the public, thus ensuring media accountability, efficacy and credibility. Section 2.3 of this chapter evaluates the realization of this strategic objective, outlining what went right and suggesting areas for improvement.*



## 2.1 The impact of media freedom, call for amendments of media laws in Tanzania

In the past 6 months, Tanzanian media demonstrated their ability to contribute effectively to development by covering significant stories of impact as a result of freedom of expression and media freedom.

Some notable investigative stories that hold the government accountable just to mention a few include the one that was published by the Citizen newspaper which caused the government to launch an investigation into child labor and illegal employment of foreign workers in tobacco farms in Kahama, Shinyanga region. The Citizen uncovered the exploitation of children and vulnerable individuals from neighboring countries like Burundi, Rwanda, and the DR Congo in the tobacco industry.

Several media outlets, including radio, TV, online platforms and newspapers, reported on the power crisis and the need for reforms, holding President Samia Suluhu Hassan accountable. In response, she directed the new TANESCO leadership to resolve the power issues within 6 months, highlighting the upcoming operationalization of the Julius Hydropower station, which is expected to significantly boost electricity supply.





The media has also covered stories of public interest in the last 6 months including stories on political and electoral reforms, launch of Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) operations which marked a significant milestone in improving the country's transportation infrastructure. The Rural Energy Agency (REA) was covered announcing that 98% of all villages in Tanzania have been successfully electrified, showcasing progress in providing essential services to rural communities.



*The President of the United Republic of Tanzania Hon. Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan (right) being briefed by the Director of Tanzania Railway Corporation (TRC) Masanja Kadogosa, shortly before the inauguration of SGR train routes, Dar es Salaam to Dodoma. The inauguration held on August 1, 2024 at the main Station in Dodoma*



*Local houses installed with electricity*



Similarly, the media covered economic developments in Zanzibar that it registered a significant current account surplus, driven primarily by growth in the tourism sector. This development highlights the economic resilience and potential of Zanzibar.



*Arrival of Tourists at Sheikh Abeid Karume International Airport.*

More in-depth and investigative stories could be covered given the freedom of the media to play its watchdog role, agenda setting and information role. Significant progress in press freedom rankings creates room for journalists to cover stories of impact.

During the World Press Freedom Day commemoration held in Dodoma on 3<sup>rd</sup> of May, 2024, the then Minister of Information, Nape Moses Nnauye, announced that Tanzania had achieved a significant improvement in the World Press Freedom Index. The country was now ranked 97<sup>th</sup> globally in the 2024 index, up from 143<sup>rd</sup> the previous year.

This improvement was attributed to the government's efforts in reforming media services legal frameworks to enhance the freedom of the press in the country. Mr Nnauye reiterated the government's commitment to ensuring a conducive environment for journalists to operate without fear of reprisal.



*The former Minister of Information Communication and Information Technology Mr. Nape Nnauye speaking at World Press Freedom Day commemoration held in Dodoma on 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 2024.*





In its efforts to realize the programme's strategic objectives, MCT focused on building the capacity for Coalition on Right to Information (CoRI) members in 2023. The improved advocacy skills of CoRI members enabled them to engage more effectively with the government and other stakeholders, advocating for a more favorable legal environment for the media.

Mr. Nnauye reaffirmed the engagement efforts between CoRI members and the government by acknowledging the critical role that a free press plays in democratic governance and development.

The fact that CoRI members, chaired by MCT, were given an opportunity by the government to co-chair in organizing and coordinating the Second National Media Sector Development Symposium, it goes without saying that improved advocacy skills is well progressing in winning the government towards more engagement rather than confrontations.

The President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Her Excellence Samia Suluhu Hassan resonated the same when delivering her opening speech at the symposium which was held on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of June, 2024. She reaffirmed her commitment to enhancing press freedom in the country. She emphasized her administration's support for the media as a crucial partner in national development and acknowledged the significant progress made in improving Tanzania's global press freedom ranking.

It is due to such engagements with the government that the media fraternity witnessed 9 out of 21 sections presented before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Governance, Constitutional and Legal Affairs, which made it to the revised Media Services Act (MSA) of 2016. CoRI produced an advocacy document that was used to extract pertinent and critical sections of MSA that was presented before the Committee.

The changes were part of a broader effort by President Samia Suluhu Hassan's administration, which responded to the advocacy of CoRI members. This initiative aimed to create a more conducive environment for journalists and media outlets. However, out of 21 contentious media laws presented by CoRI members, 12 sections remained unchanged. During this reporting period, members, through MCT, continue to engage with the government and policymakers to ensure these amendments are fully addressed.

CoRI members are of the view that these 12 sections continue to affect the media landscape by imposing heavy regulatory burdens, restricting journalistic freedom, and promoting self-censorship due to fear of legal repercussions and government interference. However, they appreciate the efforts but call for more advocacy campaigns on improving the media legal regime.



Beatrice Bandawe the Managing Editor for Nipashe daily news under the IPP media and the winner of the 2024 Laureate Editorial Leadership Award presented by Wan-IFRA Women in News, Copenhagen, Denmark has this to say; *“I thank the government for agreeing with the views of media stakeholders regarding Media Services Act 2016, which has been an obstacle to the work of journalists. What we have received is little compared to what we asked for, but we will continue to ask until we get everything,”*

Neville Meena, a senior editor and former Secretary of the Tanzania Editors’ forum (TEF) had this to say; *“we thank the government for making changes to the MSA 2016. However, there are still sections that are not media friendly. When they go to make further amendments, they should not leave them out”*.

Amended Sections	Sections Call for Amendments
<p><b>i) Reduction of penalties:</b> The fines and imprisonment terms for offences such as seditious publications were reduced. For instance, fines were adjusted to between TZS 2 million and 10 million, and imprisonment terms were reduced to a maximum of 2 years.</p> <p><b>ii) Decriminalisation of Defamation:</b> The amendments changed defamation cases from criminal to civil offenses, removing the criminal liability that previously hung over journalists and media houses.</p> <p><b>iii) Government Advertisements:</b> The responsibility for deciding where to place government advertisements was shifted away from the Director of Information Services, allowing the government more flexibility based on market demands.</p>	<p><b>i) Ministerial Powers:</b> there is a section that allows the information minister to ban publications or media outlets, thus granting the government significant control over media operations.</p> <p><b>ii) Licensing Requirements:</b> The requirement for annual licensing of newspapers continues, which could lead to the arbitrary suspension of media outlets.</p> <p><b>iii) Criminal defamation:</b> Although criminal defamation was shifted to civil, other criminal liabilities for journalists still exist.</p> <p><b>iv) Seditious Publications:</b> Sections 50 and 52 which penalize seditious publications, were not amended. These sections can impose severe penalties on journalists for content deemed seditious by the government.</p> <p><b>v) Cabinet prohibitions:</b> provisions prohibiting the publication of cabinet matters, regardless of how the information is obtained remain in force.</p> <p><b>vi) Accreditation Requirements:</b> Freelance journalists and correspondents are still required to obtain national accreditation, which limits their ability to work freely.</p> <p><b>vii) Content Control:</b> Sections that allow the government to direct private media to publish content of national importance were not altered, impacting editorial independence.</p>



Amended Sections	Sections Call for Amendments
<p><b>iv) Self-Regulation:</b> Empowering the Independent Media Council of Tanzania (IMC) to handle complaints before they could escalate to the courts.</p> <p><b>v) Ownership and Licensing:</b> Adjustments were made to ownership rules, allowing both the government and private entities to own media outlets.</p>	<p><b>viii) Social Media Restrictions:</b> Licensing requirements for social media platforms are still in place, affecting freedom of expression online.</p> <p><b>ix) Penalties and Fines:</b> While some fines were adjusted, the stringent penalties for media offenses largely remain unchanged</p> <p><b>x) Publication Regulations:</b> Rules that force media houses to adhere to specific publication regulations without clear guidelines continue to be enforced.</p> <p><b>xi) Broadcasting Directives:</b> Sections that direct how private media must handle certain broadcasts were not amended, which can lead to government interference in media operations.</p> <p><b>xii) Equipment confiscation:</b> Although the courts' power to confiscate media equipment was reduced, other regulatory mechanism that can limit media operations still remain.</p>

## Lessons and Looking Ahead

Lessons in the last 6 months shows that media outlets and individual journalists can uncover stories of public interest, enabling the public to make informed choices or decisions, given more freedom of the media.

A request from the Ministry of Information, Communications and Information Technologies for MCT, through CoRI, to take a co-chairing role in the preparation of the Second National Media Sector Development Symposium, which was held on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of June, 2024, and a subsequent invitation from the same ministry for the MCT Executive Secretary to join two other experts in reviewing the Information and Broadcasting Policy 2003 gave a positive signal. These and other several engagements have brought the Council closer to the government, strengthening its credibility and legitimacy not only with the government, but also with development partners, and most importantly, the public.



MCT is looking ahead to strengthen collaborative efforts with CoRI members for increased engagement with the government and policymakers. This strategic move aims to advocate for changes in policy and media laws that currently limit media freedom.

## **2.2: Journalists Safety: Persistent Challenges in Securing Press Freedom**

In the past 6 months, some journalists in Tanzania have faced some threats and harassment, highlighting ongoing challenges to press freedom. In the last 18 months up to end of June, 2024 the MCT database has recorded 41 press violations. Out of the 41, 34% of press violations happened between January and end of June, 2024. During the reporting period, all incidents involved arrests of journalists. This marks a shift from the previous leading violation, which was the denial of access to information, to a new trend of arrests.

Thanks to MCT's efforts in training young lawyers and creating a pool of 55 lawyers across Tanzania, continuous legal support is being provided during media incidents of media and freedom of expression violations, as well as in strategic and public interest litigation. Advocate Paul Bomani from Mwanza, who provided support to a journalist arrested and taken to court in Mwanza, is one such example of the positive impact of these initiatives.

Some CoRI members including Coalitions of Human Rights Defenders, Union of Tanzania Press Clubs and Tanzania Editors' forums released statements to summon the perpetrators of press violations.

During the last 6 months, MCT has provided legal and psychological support to Nine (9) journalists who have faced violations through their job. Eight (8) were male and one (1) was a female journalist (Dinna Maningo from Tarime-Mara). The support is jointly done between MCT, UTPC and other partners through the National Safety and Security Mechanism.

### **Lessons and Looking Ahead**

The key lesson is that while there have been some positive changes under President Samia Suluhu Hassan, significant issues with safety and security of journalists and government response to violations persist in Tanzania. In all cases, the police are the leading perpetrators. Journalists are still arrested and assaulted while online netizens continue to face challenges related to laws governing cyberspace.

MCT is looking ahead to strengthening its media monitoring mechanism and systems and tracking press violations, thereafter, make public announcements quarterly to draw attention and hold the perpetrators accountable.

Also, MCT with CoRI members will table a schedule of amendments of the Information and



Broadcasting policy 2003 to the Ministry of Information, Communication and Information Technologies for their consideration as they draft a new policy. In addition, MCT will engage media experts to write Op-Ed pieces challenging the government's stance that the amendment of the remaining 12 sections in the Media Services Act 2016 can only be undertaken after the completion of the new Information and Broadcasting Policy of 2003. There are several evidences where laws were enacted without policy changes.

### **2.3: Embracing Self-Regulation: Success Stories in Effective Mediation**

As MCT approaches its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of self-regulation next year, a major landmark in Africa, it continued to offer alternative dispute resolutions services regarding media conduct over the past 6 months. This milestone underscores the ongoing progress of self-regulation in Tanzania, which must be embraced.

In the past 6 months, 3 complaints were submitted, processed and resolved. The complaints involved;

#### **Abdalla Shangazi vs East Africa Television**

Abdalla Shangazi, the Mlalo Member of Parliament complained about the story published on EATV online which he claimed it was not only false but was also published without giving him a right to respond, thus damaging his reputation and lowering his standing among members society, including his electorates.

MCT reached both parties and scheduled a mediation session, but the complainant withdrew at a later stage. The case was closed.

#### **Mantra Tanzania Limited vs Jamhuri Newspaper**

Mantra was complaining against an allegedly defamatory article published on Jamhuri newspaper with ISSN No. 1821-8156 issue No. 623 of September 11, 2023 with a title "*Mantra inayochimba Uranium Kitanzini*"

According to their complaint, FB Attorneys states that *Jamhuri Newspaper* published a defamatory statement claiming that Mantra's former employees had become impotent and were suffering from skin diseases.

After a series of correspondences between the two parties, the mediation session was scheduled on June 14, 2024, chaired by Executive Secretary Ernest Sungura. Following the meeting, both parties agreed to resolve the issue. In their June 25 – July 1, 2024 issue, Jamhuri published a story allowing Mantra to clarify the previously published allegations.

MCT followed up with Mantra for feedback, and they confirmed their satisfaction, leading to the case being closed.



### **ELCT vs Mwanahalisi Newspaper**

The complaint concerns a story published by Mwanahalisi, which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) claimed the story was false and damaged the image of the church. The story appeared in Mwanahalisi newspaper issue ISSN 1821-5432 No. 443 of February 15-21, 2024. The complaint was directed to the Director of Information Services Department, with MCT copied for information.

Similarly, in the past 6 months, prompt responses to unethical and unprofessional reporting have been effective, with some media outlets' editors expressing appreciation for MCT's daily media monitoring role. Instead of merely being reactive to complaints brought by complainants, MCT has been proactive in identifying and addressing issues.

One notable instance involved a rapid response to a story in Nipashe newspaper that identified a victim of sexual abuse. MCT promptly contacted the news editor, who promised to adhere to journalism ethics. This proactive approach was among 9 appreciated rapid responses during the reporting period.

Since March, 2024, MCT's media monitoring has demonstrated that Nipashe has become a role model in ethically reporting on victims of sexual abuse.

On 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2024, the Government Spokesperson and Director of Information Services (MAELEZO), Mobhare Matinyi, acknowledged the significant role of the MCT in arbitration and mediation. He emphasized that the MCT's efforts in promoting professionalism, ethics and accountability within the media are crucial for thriving democracy like Tanzania. He was speaking at the MCT's organized conference in Dodoma on the Role of the Media in Fostering Transparent and Accountable Electoral Processes in Tanzania, particularly in preparation for the upcoming local council elections towards the end of 2024 and the general elections slated for next year.

### **Lessons and Looking Ahead**

The fact that a prominent member of the parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania, who is also the leader of the majority CCM members of parliament, decided to bring his case to the Council, demonstrates the trust in the media self-regulation model, despite the establishment of the Independent Media Council by the Media Services Act of 2016.

MCT is committed to strengthening its systems, resources, and policies to enhance the Council's capacity and make it stronger than ever. This will help build public trust, credibility, legitimacy, and relevance amidst establishment of the so-called "Independent Media Council".

## Chapter 3:



### **Elevating Journalism, Promoting Professional Standards and Accountability**

*The Council under the new leadership has realigned the expected impact towards contributing to a more democratic Tanzania and just society to be realized through two expected outcomes. This chapter focusses on the second outcome, which is about promoting highest journalism professional standards and accountability.*

*One of MCT's programme strategic objectives is to proactively foster media quality and promote excellence in journalism by ensuring the highest standards, professionalism and accountability. State of the Media Report (SMR), The Dar es Salaam Declaration on Editorial Freedom, Independence and Responsibility (DEFIR) and The Excellence in Journalism Awards Tanzania (EJAT) are tools which set standards for excellence in journalism. To evaluate realization of the strategic objective, section 3.1 of this chapter explains what went right and shows room for improvement.*

*One of the key cross-cutting issues to all MCT's strategic objectives is gender equality and inclusivity. The Council developed the Gender in media policy which governs the conduct and practice of all media practitioners, media owners and publishers, media institutions and Council's members. To evaluate realization of the Council's inclusive policies, section 3.2 of this chapter explains what went right and room for improvement.*



### **3.1: Standards tools for excellence in journalism**

During the last 6 months, MCT prepared and released a report on the State of the Media in Tanzania, covering the period 2022 and 2023. The main objective of the report was to assess the positive developments in the media landscape in Tanzania that need enhancement and to expose the factors hindering the attainment of vibrant media space in Tanzania, which require intervention by stakeholders.

The report covered areas such as:

- i) legal, regulatory and policy regime
- ii) Press freedom violations
- iii) Media investments and ownership
- iv) Sustainability and viability
- v) Media development support
- vi) Media training and professionalism
- vii) Gender in media and coverage of disadvantaged groups
- viii) How media covered public interest issues.

1020 copies of the report were printed and have started to be distributed and an online version is available on a weblink; <https://online.fliphtml5.com/llcjx/ryen/#p=1>

Based on the key research findings, the report made some key recommendations which foster media quality and promote excellence in journalism by ensuring the highest standards, professionalism and accountability. Some of such recommendations are:

- i) **Improving Journalist Training:** The report emphasizes the need for continuous training and capacity building programs for journalists to enhance their skills and adapt to new media trends. This includes training in digital journalism and multimedia skills to keep pace with technological advancements.
- ii) **Enhancing Ethical Standards:** The report calls for stricter adherence to journalistic ethics and standards to improve the credibility and professionalism of the media ethics.
- iii) **Promoting Investigative Journalism:** The report advocates for more support and resources for investigative journalism to uncover and report on critical issues affecting society





During the reporting period, on the other hand, the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Editorial Freedom, Independence and Responsibility (DEFIR) was popularized by organizing one conference at School of Journalism and Mass Communication (SJMC). The conference was attended by 94 participants in which females were 63 and male participants 31. Total of 68 personalities appended their signatures, confirming their commitment to uphold its values.

Follow up on progress of DEFIR Course Outline was conducted to seven heads of department from Universities and Schools of journalism of Universities of Dar es Salaam School of Journalism and Mass Communication (SJMC), Tumaini University Dar es Salaam College (TUDARCo now DarTU), Iringa University College (IUco), St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT), Muslim University of Morogoro (MUM), Teofilo Mihanji University (TEKU) and Open University of Tanzania (OUT).

80% of these schools and Universities have managed to incorporate DEFIR in their course programs. For example, at Muslim University of Morogoro (MUM), they have agreement that the lecturers and instructors for NTA levels 4, 5 and 6 should improve the delivery methods to accommodate content of DEFIR in their lessons, both in theory and practical trainings. The Open University of Tanzania (OUT), has incorporated DEFIR in its newly reviewed course of Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations and Marketing (BAPRM). By doing so, excellence in journalism is being promoted right from the universities.

Similarly, the Excellence in Journalism Awards Tanzania (EJAT) is one of the key events that promotes excellence in Journalism. It is now scheduled to happen on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2024. During the reporting period, the main focus is on financial resource mobilization to cover the costs and ensure the success of the event.



*Former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Hon. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete (seated, fourth from the right) in a group photo with government, MCT officials and the winners of the Excellence in Journalism Awards Tanzania (EJAT)2011, held at the Diamond Jubilee Hall, Dar es Salaam*



In the last 6 months, journalists submitted entries in the announced 20 different awards categories, with the submission deadline being January 2024. Additionally, during this reporting period, a proactive approach is being explored and tested. Media experts have been engaged to research on how the media and journalists covered stories of public interest, such as DP World saga, the Ngorogoro issue and the Hanang disaster.

## **Lessons and Looking Ahead**

SMR, DEFIR and EJAT are important tools. They need to be utilized in a more efficient and effective manner to promote excellence in journalism in Tanzania.

The Council is proactive in adding more value to the tools' utilization. SMR may focus on researching specific themes aligned with international celebrations such as IDUAI, Radio Day, WPF, etc. With regard to DEFIR, the focus may be extended beyond popularization to tracking the performance on individual journalists, editors and managers who appended their signatures on DEFIR, assessing how they promote excellence in journalism. Similarly, a proactive approach will be tested by actively searching for quality media work rather than solely relying on entries for judgement.

### **3.2: How the Council's Inclusive Policies are Empowering Women**

Charity begins at home! The Council is role modelling inclusivity policies, ensuring they are not just on paper. During the past 6 months, during the reorganization of the management team, a female programme officer was delegated more responsibilities, now acting as Programme Manager. Additionally, a female finance officer was co-opted in the management team while awaiting for recruitment of a finance manager.

Currently, the management team consists of four members, three of whom are females, led by a male Executive Secretary. To ensure gender balance and adherence to set policies, a male programme officer was co-opted into the team.

Following the departure of a male finance manager from the Council, the recruitment process to fill the vacancy attracted 84 applicants, of which 18 (24%) were female. 5 candidates were shortlisted for interviews, including 2 (40%) females. The top 3 candidates, of which 2 (67%) were female, were highly recommended for the post. Ultimately, a female candidate was recruited as the new finance manager.

On joining the Council, she was immediately given additional responsibilities, becoming the Finance and Administration Manager. This change followed the re-allocation of a female HR and



Administration manager, who took on more roles as the Institutional Sustainability Specialist. The specialist's new roles included heading the Council's Zanzibar office, managing M&E functions, and heading the newly established consulting unit. This reorganization provides clear evidence of the Council's commitment to promoting women to top leadership positions.

The inclusivity policies are also embedded in the Council's constitution and the reality during this reporting period is that out of 9 Governing board members, 3 are female. Similarly, out of 3 Board of Trustees members, 1 is female.

In fact, out of 16 full-time employed staff at the Council, 50% are women. In the management team 60% are women. In the finance and administration department, 44% are women, in the programme team 33% are women and in Zanzibar office 100% are women and the office attendants are equally treated, one female and another male but both have same salary.

In the past 6 months, the Council's administration allowed staff to take leave or time off to attend their paternity, maternity, breastfeeding and compassionate leave without gender discrimination.

Regarding implementation of programme activities in the past 6 months, through organized specialized trainings, the Council has enhanced media women managers with new skills and knowledge on application of artificial intelligence, media management, leadership, financial management in the newsrooms, managing sales, and financial accountability. From the feedback, the Council noted that the women managers were enlightened and committed to use the newly acquired skills to improve their work.



*Finance and Administration Manager of the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT), Rehema Kongola speaking to female journalists during the Media Management training to senior female journalists who are also heads of departments in their media houses held on May 29 and 30, 2024 in Morogoro.*



*“The training has awakened me up from a deep sleep, and now I am knowledgeable, I will go and use the knowledge to my radio station, also I will impart some skills to my fellow women”* says, Salma Abdul, Chief Editor Uyui FM

Soon after the training, Anna Elias, Assistant programme radio manager at Sengerema radio in Mwanza, conducted more than 2 sessions for her radio reporters and imparted the same knowledge that she acquired from the Council’s specialized training held in Morogoro, on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of May, 2024.

During the reporting period, the Council’s Executive Secretary visited radio Sengerema and found them strategizing to establish a gender desk. Anna, being the ambassador on gender issues in Sengerema, has asked for support from the Council to establish the gender desk. These are the fruits of empowering women and applying inclusivity policies by practice.

Hilda Kinabo, Program producer and presenter of Radio 5 and Agri Smart online has also started to utilize the skills and knowledge acquired from the Council’s specialized training for women managers. When a team led by the Executive Secretary visited the radio in Arusha, she confirmed how gender sensitive she is nowadays, especially on considering ethical conducts. She demonstrated one of her programs where she was cautious not to identify victims of sexual abuse. She also confirmed to use AI technologies in creating images and articles in her daily work.

The Council’s inclusivity policies also benefited Amina Mchezo all the way from Zanzibar to Morogoro with her small baby and her baby sitter to attend the specialized trainings. MCT is an equal opportunity organization that seeks to ensure its programme benefits all groups in the society. Women are particularly targeted through women in media projects that ensure their biological challenges do not limit their access to the opportunities provided.

*“MCT has done something that some Institutions would not accept, allowing me to attend training with a baby and my baby sitter and paid all required entitlements according to the law is really amazing. For me, MCT is a very special institution as I have also benefited greatly from the training”* says, Amina Mchezo, Programme Manager Coconut FM, Zanzibar.

Specialized reporting is one of the key areas MCT emphasizes in promoting excellence in journalism. During the reporting period, media women managers were trained on gender inclusivity and mainstreaming. Quotable quotes from some of the 14 women managers and 24 gatekeepers testify to their commitment to quality reporting on gender specific issues and needs.

*“This kind of training/meeting is more important because they build a woman’s confidence and hence they can easily stand for their rights”* says, Flora Magabe, the activist for women’s rights and owner of online TV ‘Konzi la Moyo’



*“The Monitoring report that you presented here today, highlighted very important ethical issues, especially the identification of victims of sexual violence, I think it is very important that next time should be distributed to media houses so that editors/journalists use it as a reference”* says, Salim Salim, a veteran journalist who attended the consultative editors’ meeting where women managers also participated.

Mr Salim referred to the report whose findings were presented at the meeting resulting from the Council’s monitoring mechanism on gender mainstreaming from the process of assigning journalists for news gathering, story sourcing, reporting with a gender perspective aims to bring a diversity of views into media content.

During the past 6 months, findings indicated that only 25% of the sampled 16 stories on economic issues were assigned to women journalists. In contrast, 73% out of 26 stories were assigned to women journalists to cover on culture and social issues, 51% of 35 stories were assigned to women journalists to cover issues on entertainment and 52% of 19 stories were assigned to women journalists to cover on political issues. This highlights the need for greater gender balance in the assignment of stories to ensure diverse perspectives in media coverage.

*“There is a need for MCT to organize meetings with Media Owners, we have always been discussing media issues in different forums and get resolutions which some of them need the owners to act, but many of these owners do not care them”* – says, DAVIS MINJA- Editor, Kilimanjaro Revival, adding that they are struggling to put up better systems for strengthening their gender desk.

Through consultative training, Kilimanjaro Revival has managed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) as one of the ways to produce various articles and images for their social media posts. The knowledge on financial management has also helped them to think creatively and diversify their sources of revenues by organizing various youth talks shows.

*“Personally, I have benefited from the Consultative training held in Morogoro. It has also contributed to my knowledge that we need strong leadership and management systems. I have also been encouraging my journalists to consider ethics when processing their news stories, but also the use of AI has helped me to create images that we can use in our newspaper. Currently we are strengthening our administrative systems including the gender desk,”* says Manyerere Jacton, Managing Editor, Jamhuri Newspaper.

The narrative above demonstrates how the Council’s code of conduct on gender equity is promoted in the workplace, not only at the Council but also extended to its members, especially the media outlets. Thanks to the support from development partners for the Women in the Media project, the Council continuously monitors gender issues, conducts capacity building programmes for women, and holds consultative meetings with editors on gender issue. The project also includes mentoring



programmes for female journalists, the establishment of gender desks in newsrooms, and the training and adoption of gender policy applications in newsrooms.

In the past 6 months, as a results of gender mainstreaming in media, the Citizen newspaper covered a story which revealed alarming statistics and calls for systemic changes to protect women and children from gender-based violence. Several Tanzanian media stories have effectively addressed gender issues, showcasing significant strides in gender equality and inclusivity during the reporting period.

## **Lessons and Looking Ahead**

There is a growing awareness and commitment to gender inclusivity in Tanzania. The Council is recognizing the importance of gender mainstreaming in media content through monitoring media performance and advocating for ethical standards, including gender representation. Role modelling of gender mainstreaming at the Council is also a lesson to be embraced.

The Council is looking ahead to exploring more partnerships with development partners to effectively and efficiently support gender mainstreaming. This will involve strengthening the media monitoring systems at the Council and subsequently building capacity and advocating for inclusivity policies across all media outlets in Tanzania.

The current leadership in the last six months, has been able to start deploying a strategy for promoting inclusivity (for women). However, plans are underway to strengthen the gender mainstreaming approaches in all MCT work. This process shall have to go hand in hand with the management investment towards capacity enhancement of all key actors within MCT on gender knowledge and skills.

In the long run, however, more institutional efforts would need to be directed to deploying deeper gender mainstreaming processes for all MCT programs and more in tracking the impact, of who is reached, and not reached and what are the impacts of the Council's work for different social groups at different levels of engagement.

Effective gender mainstreaming approaches in an institution such as MCT call for identification of key gender capacity gaps of all its key actors and address them through organizing various programs, including training, mentorship, and others for all staff, Board members, and selected partners.

## Chapter 4:



### Strengthening Strategies to Boost Media Activities in Zanzibar

*The Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) Zanzibar Office was opened in 2003. Five years later, the MCT Governing Board on 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2008 directed the Secretariat to make performance assessment of the MCT Zanzibar office. One of the key findings based on the assessment was that activities in Zanzibar were sporadic, episodic and ad-hoc in nature. Even after the MCT secured basket funding during those years, Zanzibar was not reflected in the operationalization of the Strategy.*

*During handing over on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 to the new leadership, the outgoing leadership recommended strongly to assess the Zanzibar situation going forward and seeing how to strengthen MCT media activities in Zanzibar.*

*This section evaluates what went right during the last 6 months and room for improvement to strengthening strategies to boost media activities in Zanzibar. Section 4.1 focuses on reflecting on the past, lessons for turning the tide while section 4.2 focuses on escalating Vision for Change in Zanzibar.*



## **4.1 Reflecting on the Past, lessons for turning the tide**

“MCT has been able to carve a niche and get its presence accepted on the Isles through its activities. It has also been able to maintain a non-partisan stand, which is vital for smooth operation in Zanzibar considering the political sensitivities and sometimes volatile situation on the Isles.

“In the five years that the Zanzibar Office has been in operation, all the activities carried out were based in Unguja. Where budget allowed, participants from Pemba were invited, but it was more like a token.

“Since its establishment, the Zanzibar Office did not always feature distinctively in the programming of the Council. Even after MCT secured basket funding, Zanzibar was not reflected in the operationalization of the Strategy. Because of this situation: Most MCT Zanzibar Office activities have been sporadic, episodic and ad-hoc in nature.

“Linkages, sharing and two-way support between staff at MCT HQ in Dar es Salaam and the Zanzibar Office have not been developed to a level where the 2 have a sustained symbiotic and synergistic relationship. The new thinking at the Secretariat is that MCT has been able to lay a foundation for increased and more intense programming in Zanzibar. It has managed to cultivate goodwill and trust. MCT, however, cannot rest on its laurels.

“In fact, MCT needs to move to a higher level of programming on the Isles. The challenges pointed out above should be dealt with through concrete governance and administrative measures, that will also be reflected in the programmes levels on the Isles.

“MCT Zanzibar is part of MCT. Thus, activities for the Zanzibar Office should be reflected in the Annual Plans. For every programme activity line and budget, Zanzibar should be taken on board, unless the activity is not relevant in Zanzibar. This means MCT Zanzibar will be a full-fledged office, with activities throughout the year, and in line with the Programme Strategy.

“Why MCT Zanzibar Status has to be elevated. The overriding argument for raising the status and activity level of MCT Zanzibar Office is the fact that there is so much that MCT can, and should, be doing in Zanzibar. Comparatively, Mainland is better off than Zanzibar in terms of professionalism in journalism, a better legal and regulatory environment, and even the fact that processes to improve the media legal regime and establish media friendly policies are more advanced on the mainland than the Isles. This means that we need to strengthen the Zanzibar Office by:

- a. Enhancing the quality of its staff, so as to get quality outputs and to attract even more respect from stakeholders, including the Government, and





b. Ensuring realistic staff levels for efficient implementation of programme and other work.

“The present situation has been that the coordinator is everything: administrator, programme officer, office manager. With the increased level of activities anticipated to rise at least four-fold, one person will not be able to handle the MCT Zanzibar Office.

“The MCT Zanzibar Office will need to be headed by a manager who will advise and assist the ES in all administrative and governance matters. This will also have to be a person who can internalize and interpret the Strategy, analyse the Zanzibar media scene, and propose and design interventions. The proposal is to recruit the MCT Zanzibar Manager and the Assistant Manager.”

One may think the quotes above reflect the current situation. It was one of the Board papers reported 15 years ago. MCT laid a foundation to establish an office in Zanzibar on the basis that although at governmental level information is not a Union matter, at practical level it is. This is because there are many journalists in Zanzibar who work for the mainland-based media outlets, and there are Mainland-based journalists who report for Zanzibar media outlets.

## **4.2 Escalating Vision for Change in Zanzibar**

“The Council has a respectable presence in Zanzibar. The Council has been engaging effectively with all stakeholders, including the Government at the highest level. We are also very active in the Zanzibar Media Committee (ZAMECO). The strategy as well as the 2024 work plan have planned activities for Zanzibar. However, it is important to note that recently, activities in Zanzibar have been on the wane, especially after moving to project funding. It would therefore be in order to assess the Zanzibar situation going forward and seeing how to strengthen MCT activities there.” Quoted from the handing over note to the new leadership on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2024.

In the past 6 months, the quote inspired the new leadership to escalate vision for change in Zanzibar, driven by the same MCT theory of change but localizing to fit to Zanzibar’s situation. A surprise visit was made to study the MCT Zanzibar office realities. Engagement with key stakeholders were informed on ad hoc to meet the new leadership.

Informal studies by the new leadership, confirmed by the State of the Media report released recently by MCT indicates similar areas of concerns for intervention in Zanzibar like in Tanzania mainland. The most significant ethical challenges in the media today are the proliferation of misinformation and fake news. Media content increasingly leans towards infotainment, while many journalists are not as inquisitive as they should be. This lack of curiosity and dedication to the journalism professionalism poses a threat to the integrity and quality of news reporting.



Government owned media are often controlled in terms of the type of content they are allowed to publish or broadcast, raising concerns about financial sustainability. Current ethical debates in Zanzibar highlight that media outlets are increasingly ignoring and neglecting traditional norms and customs of the Zanzibari people, with cultural values are no longer being respected. The list goes on to include an endless tasks advocating for legal and media policy reforms in Zanzibar.

Having noted that MCT Zanzibar office has only 2 staff, the Senior Programme officer and office attendant, and by reflecting on the past, considering lessons for turning the tide creatively, the new leadership considered position rearrangements from the MCT HQ office in Dar es Salaam. An Institutional Sustainability Specialist position was created to focus on heading the MCT Zanzibar office. This role is primarily tasked with re-assessing the Zanzibar situation and developing a comprehensive strategy for Zanzibar.



*Pictured are Members of Zanzibar Media Committee (ZAMECO) attending the meeting held at MCT Zanzibar offices located at Mwanakwerekwe, Zanzibar*

In the past 6 months, activities in Zanzibar were being implemented in a business-as-usual mode, with some activities replicated from the 2024 annual plan, which was developed with a focus on mainland Tanzania. Several meetings were held through Zanzibar Media Committee (ZAMECO), an advocacy initiative comprising several media organizations to promote freedom of expression and media freedom.

The World Press Freedom Day (WPFDD) was also commemorated in Zanzibar, more than two weeks later after the global commemoration held on 3<sup>rd</sup> May. Also, daily media monitoring continued, primarily with a focus on 3 mainstream newspapers. Rapid responses regarding unethical reporting and gender imbalance in reporting were promptly communicated to editors.



To change the gear from business-as-usual mode, supported by the Governing Board, the new leadership installed the Institutional Sustainability Specialist relocating from Dar es Salaam. The first task in the last 6 months has been to conduct SWOT analysis as presented in the matrix below: -

Strengths:	Opportunities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Local Presence:</b> The Zanzibar office has a direct connection to the local media landscape and it has built strong relationships with journalists and media outlets on the island including Government officials.</li> <li>• <b>Understanding media context:</b> MCT staff have a deeper understanding of the media challenges in Zanzibar.</li> <li>• <b>Advocacy:</b> MCT Zanzibar office has championed the advocacy work in the isle advocating for media freedom and media friendly laws.</li> <li>• <b>Collaboration:</b> MCT Zanzibar office collaborates with like minded organizations such as TAMWA, ZPC, PPC, THRDC, WAHAMAZA, ZLS etc to promote media freedom, access to information and journalists' safety. It also works with the government.</li> <li>• <b>Membership base:</b> MCT Zanzibar has a members' base of 26 Institution members who are paid up.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Digital media:</b> The rise of digital media like online news platforms and social media creates new avenues for reaching audiences and engaging them on MCT work.</li> <li>• <b>Tourism:</b> The influx of tourists creates a demand for information and entertainment, presenting opportunities for MCT's creative products.</li> <li>• <b>Growing media landscape:</b> Zanzibar media landscape is growing with 56 registered online media, 27 radios, newspapers, 12 TV stations and 3 Journalism Colleges, all of which provide an opportunity for MCT to provide training, resources, and support to local journalists.</li> <li>• <b>Development partners' growing interest in Zanzibar:</b> Zanzibar office can explore funding opportunities from international NGOs, or foundations/development partners interested in supporting media development in Zanzibar.</li> <li>• <b>Capacity building:</b> MCT to offer training to journalist, create a media hub/centre where journalists will have a space to do their work- can be done at MCT offices, Online training on various areas such as IJ, data, Climate change, blue economy, how to effectively use AI and fact checking. Also, Journalist safety issues online and offline.</li> <li>• <b>Collaboration with other Organizations:</b> The Zanzibar office can collaborate with local, regional and international media organizations to share resources and best practices.</li> </ul>



Weaknesses:	Threats:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Limited resources:</b> Reduced resources has to the large extent affected the activities for Zanzibar Office.</li> <li>• <b>Limited visibility:</b> MCT office visibility has gone down due to decreased activities.</li> <li>• <b>Media economy instability:</b> This has led to some media houses to be closed, this has affected membership contribution to MCT.</li> <li>• <b>Connectivity challenges:</b> Reliable internet connectivity and access to technology can be limited in some parts of Zanzibar affecting online media operations.</li> <li>• <b>Self-censorship:</b> Self-censorship by journalists affects investigative reporting and critical analysis, journalists are still receiving threats and intimidation. Pemba is more affected.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Funding challenges:</b> Funding challenges limits MCT's ability to sustain its operations and deliver programs.</li> <li>• <b>Cybersecurity threats:</b> Online censorship and hacking disrupts media operations and limit access to information especially during election.</li> <li>• <b>Unfriendly media laws:</b> Unfriendly media laws stifle freedom of expression and limit critical and investigative reporting.</li> <li>• <b>Misinformation and fake news:</b> The spread of misinformation through social media poses a challenge to the credibility of the media.</li> <li>• <b>Media Economic Instability:</b> Lack of advertisements may cause close down of some media outlets and high fees by authorities affects media sustainability.</li> <li>• <b>The presence of international news outlets:</b> They compete for local audiences and advertising revenue, thus affect the local media economy.</li> </ul>

In the last 6 months, the team in Zanzibar under the guidance of the new leadership explored strategies to overcome weaknesses and threats and capitalize on opportunities available in Zanzibar. There is a long list of strategies but to mention the key ones are as follows: -

- i) Use of Non-traditional Revenue Stream (NTRS) on financial resource mobilization. The strategy will help to strengthen the capacity of Zanzibar offices to invest in human and materials resources.
- ii) Use of multimedia story telling formats to develop interactive content for MCT website. The strategy will help to increase visibility of MCT work and create awareness on core functions of MCT.



- iii) Use of digitized content creation of every MCT publications. The strategy will help to increase online audience engagement.
- iv) Use of Public Services Adverts (PSA). The strategy will help to create public awareness on MCT work, especially the services on alternative disputes resolutions.

## **Lessons and Looking Ahead**

The establishment of the MCT office in Zanzibar, along with its historical background, continues to guide MCT on the right path to fulfill its mandates based on the unique context in Zanzibar.

MCT is looking ahead to finalize strategies with implementation plans aimed at spearheading the expected impact on freedom of expression and media freedom in Zanzibar.



*The Chairman of the Coalition on the Right to Information (CoRI) who is also the Executive Secretary of MCT, Ernest Sungura presenting the greetings from CoRI before the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Hon. Samia Suluhu Hassan (not in the picture) at the National Media Sector Development Conference held on June 18 and 19, 2024 at Mlimani City Hall, Dar es Salaam*



*The Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania, Hon. Kassim Majaliwa Majaliwa (Mp) speaking at the Commemorations of the World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2024 held at the Jakaya Kikwete Conference Hall, in Dodoma*



*The government officials, journalists and various media Stakeholders pictured together at the Opening Ceremony of Second National Media Sector Development Conference held on June 18 and 19, 2024 at the at Mlimani City conference hall in Dar es Salaam.*



*The government officials, journalists and various media Stakeholders pictured together at the Opening Ceremony of Second National Media Sector Development Conference held on June 18 and 19, 2024 at the at Mlimani City conference hall in Dar es Salaam.*



*The Executive Secretary of the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT), Ernest Sungura, (left) was among the heads of Media and Press Councils attended the African Media Councils meeting in Cape Town, South Africa from May 14th to 17th, 2024*



*Prime Minister Hon. Kassim Majaliwa Majaliwa (left) holding a copy of Media Guideline on Reporting Children when visited the pavilion of the Media Council of Tanzania's (MCT) during the official launch of the World Press Freedom Day (WPF) 2024 held on May 3, 2024 at the Jakaya Kikwete Conference Hall in Dodoma. First right with a white shirt is MCT Executive Secretary, Ernest Sungura the and acting program Manager Saumu Mwalimu*



*The Executive Secretary of the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) Ernest Sungura (left) speaking during the Commemorations of the World Press Freedom Day held in Zanzibar on May 23, 2024 at ZSSF hall. Ernest Sungura called on the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar to ensure that ongoing discussions aimed at revising media policies and laws result in definitive and beneficial changes for all stakeholders.*





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Tegeta Skanska , House No. KUN/MTN/532, Bagamoyo Road, P.O. Box  
+255 719 494640 | +255 767 494826 www.mct.or.tz

 mediacounciltanzania  mediacounciltanzaniamct  mctanzania  mediacounciltanzania