

## IV Media Literacy for Media Professionals

Media professionals are, naturally, in many ways 'media literate'. On the other hand, much research all over the world successively finds that media contents often underrepresent and give biased pictures of population groups (children, women, ethnic and linguistic minority groups, etc.) and of entire populations and nations. There are also in many media other offensive and potentially harmful contents, such as representations of physical violence, pornography, and increasingly excessive marketing. While research on portrayals of physical violence and the influences of them has been carried out since the 1920s and by now amounts to many thousands of studies, and examples of research on stereotypes of groups, peoples of nations goes back to many decades, research on pornography and commercial elements in – or products connected to – the media contents is of more recent dates but is engaging a growing number of scholars.

Nevertheless, there are – in general – no signs of more balanced media contents in these respects within the explosive media flow as a whole, especially not as regards satellite television, commercial films and the newer digital media. On the contrary, research studies over time often find the same or more representations of offensive and potentially harmful media contents.

The reasons for such media violence in a broad sense – thus, including not only portrayals of physical violence but also biased psychic and structural oppression, etc. – are many. Examples of reasons are ignorance or lack of ethics among certain media professionals, as well as stressing production conditions, but, to a greater extent, the ideology and societal culture in which the media work, the dependence of media on the political power elite, and the media's policy and economy. The strive for economic profit among most mainstream media in a more and more competitive and globalised media landscape supported by the rapid development of information technology means that the observance of codes of conducts and ethical guidelines often comes in the second place or is thrown into the shade.

Combating the root of media's offensive and potentially harmful contents must therefore primarily mean analysing and changing the relations of the prevailing media globalisation process to economy and market forces, politics, technological development, dominance/dependence between countries and rich and poor people, cultural identity and human/children's rights.

As regards media's relation to children and young people, the main question that must be asked is, according to Robert McChesney (2002): 'What sort of media policies would produce positive externalities for children and all of society?' The issue of externalities (the economic and social costs of market transactions that society as a whole must care and pay for, for example, non-desirable influences of advertising or media violence) makes this a mandatory public policy issue. It is therefore imperative, he says, that debates over media and media directed to children receive widespread public participation and deliberation. Without a new direction in media policy, the current trends point to dubious outcomes for democracy, culture and public health.

Cees J. Hamelink's (2002) conclusion also is that the prevailing process of media globalisation – the neo-liberal market-centred globalisation-from-above – hampers implementation of children's information rights expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that is ratified by 191 of the 193 UN member states. Hamelink points to the need of a different humanitarian form of globalisation – globalisation-from-below that is people-centred and prefers the protection of basic human rights to trading interests. Fundamental to the implementation and protection of human rights is an environment of empowerment. This is equally important for grown-ups and minors and maybe even more crucial for the latter as there is in most cultures a strong tendency to silence them and spend more energy on filtering messages for them rather than on producing materials specifically suited for them. Implementation of a humanitarian agenda is urgent, this researcher says, since the current globalisation process of the media contributes to limiting people's free space for expression and thought, violating their privacy, and undermining their citizenship by perceiving them primarily as consumers.

There are many researchers that underline the need for research on the consequences of the prevailing media globalisation. Francis B. Nyamnjoh (2002) puts forward the hypothesis that even if media globalisation is homogenising consumer tastes, it also appears to accelerate the production of differences, heterogeneities or boundaries through the structures of inequalities inherent in global capitalism. Poverty accelerates conflict. It may well be that globalisation and media globalisation intensifies age-old boundaries and divisions.

Research, empowerment of people, and political measures are thus important means for changing media's economy and policy and their offensive and potentially harmful media contents.

Increased awareness among media professionals and policy-makers of the need for such change is therefore essential. It is reasonable to say that although media professionals and policy-makers in one way are 'media literate', they are on another plane the groups in society most in need of media literacy.

Limiting us here to media professionals' need for increased awareness of children and young people and of offensive and potentially harmful contents for them, there are also several other initiatives – on minor levels – to increase media literacy among media professionals and policy makers. We will in the following pages give a few examples.

## 1. Reporting on Children and Young People

### ● **International Federation of Journalists**, <http://www.ifj.org>

#### Putting Children in the Right

In the booklet *Putting Children in the Right. Guidelines for Journalists and Media Professionals* published in 2002 by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) with the support of the European Commission, General Secretary Aidan White considers in the introduction the fact that children and young people are seldom seen and heard in the media. This reflects a weakness that resonates through any discussion on media and the rights of children. Raising awareness about the rights of children and the promotion of children's rights is a challenge to media. Media must not just report fairly, honestly and accurately on the experience of childhood, the author says, but they must also provide space for the diverse, colourful and creative opinions of children themselves.

At the same time, the media must be freed from the reins of political and economic control, which limit professionalism and undermine ethical standards. The author points to several delicate dilemmas facing the media professionals and which are dependent on their working conditions, the issues of standards, regulation and self-regulation, and their relations to economic, political and cultural institutions in society.

Running throughout Aidan White's introduction is the issue of how to balance the right to freedom of expression and the rights of children. Media professionals can both give a voice in the media to children, listening to their views and aspirations, and protect the identity of children who should not be exposed to the glare of publicity.

The booklet *Putting Children in the Right* includes guidelines for reporting on children (see below); recommendations for raising awareness of child rights; awareness training for media professionals; a section on interviewing, photographing and filming children; and much more.

#### Objectives of the IFJ

The IFJ has in this respect integrated the following objectives in its programmes: awareness raising, integrating child rights in the professional code of ethics, supporting an international exchange of best practices between the unions, countering the commercial pressures on journalists and media for 'sensational news' and enabling children to be seen and heard.

## Guidelines for reporting on children

The above-mentioned objectives are, among other things, realised by the IFJ's guidelines for reporting on children. These guidelines were initially adopted in draft by journalists organisations from 70 countries at the world's first international consultative conference on journalism and child rights held in Recife, Brazil, in May 1998. After regional conferences and workshops the guidelines were finally adopted at the Annual Congress of the International Federation of Journalists in Seoul in 2001. The guidelines were presented by the IFJ at the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Congress against Commercial Exploitation of Children held at Yokohama, Japan, in December 2001.

### Guidelines and Principles for Reporting on Issues Involving Children

#### **Preamble**

Informed, sensitive and professional journalism is a key element in any media strategy for improving the quality of reporting concerning human rights and society. The daily challenge to journalists and media organisations is particularly felt in coverage of children and their rights.

Although the human rights of children have only recently been defined in international law, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is already so widely supported that it will shortly become the first universal law of humankind.

To do their job of informing the public effectively, journalists must be fully aware of the need to protect children and to enhance their rights without in any way damaging freedom of expression or interfering with the fabric of journalistic independence. Journalists must also be provided with training to achieve high ethical standards.

The following guidelines for journalists have been drawn up by the International Federation of Journalists on the basis of an extensive survey of codes of conduct and standards already in force across the world. The purpose is to raise media awareness of children's rights issues and to stimulate debate among media professionals about the value of a common approach which will reinforce journalistic standards and contribute to the protections and enhancement of children's rights.

#### **Principles**

All journalists and media professionals have a duty to maintain the highest ethical and professional standards and should promote within the industry the widest possible dissemination of information about the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and its implications for the exercise of independent journalism.

Media organisations should regard violation of the rights of children and issues related to children's safety, privacy, security, their education, health and social welfare and all forms of exploitation as important questions for investigations and public debate. Children have an absolute right to privacy, the only exceptions being those explicitly set out in these guidelines.

Journalistic activity which touches on the lives and welfare of children should always be carried out with appreciation of the vulnerable situation of children.

*The following statement was also endorsed at the Recife Media and Child Rights Conference:*

The IFJ is deeply concerned at the creation of paedophile Internet sites and the fact that certain media publish or broadcast classified advertisements promoting child prostitution.

The IFJ calls on its member unions to:

- intervene with media owners over the publication or broadcasting of these advertisements;
- to campaign with public authorities for the elimination of these sites and advertisements.

### **Guidelines**

Journalists and media organisations shall strive to maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct in reporting children's affairs and, in particular, they shall

1. **strive** for standards of excellence in terms of accuracy and sensitivity when reporting on issues involving children;
2. **avoid** programming and publication of images which intrude upon the media space of children with information which is damaging to them;
3. **avoid** the use of stereotypes and sensational presentation to promote journalistic material involving children;
4. **consider** carefully the consequences of publication of any material concerning children and shall minimise harm to children;
5. **guard** against visually or otherwise identifying children unless it is demonstrably in the public interest;
6. **give** children, where possible, the right of access to media to express their own opinions without inducement of any kind;
7. **ensure** independent verification of information provided by children and take special care to ensure that verification takes place without putting child informants at risk;
8. **avoid** the use of sexualised images of children;
9. **use** fair, open and straight forward methods for obtaining pictures and, where possible, obtain them with the knowledge and consent of children or a responsible adult, guardian or carer;
10. **verify** the credentials of any organisation purporting to speak for or to represent the interests of children.
11. **not** make payment to children for material involving the welfare of children or to parents or guardians of children unless it is demonstrably in the interest of the child.

Journalists should put to critical examination the reports submitted and the claims made by Governments on implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in their respective countries.

Media should not consider and report the conditions of children only as events but should continuously report the process likely to lead or leading to the occurrence of these events.

*Seoul, June 11-15, 2001*

## IFJ reports

Available on the IFJ's website are also reports on

- *Promoting Children's Rights in the Media*, a workshop in Cape Town, South Africa, 2003
- *Reporting Children's Rights in Eastern Africa*, a workshop in Nairobi, Kenya, 2003
- *Reporting Children's Rights – A Case Study in Ethiopia*, 2003
- *How the Kenyan Media Covers the Children's Rights Issues: A Content Analysis and an Assessment on the Implementation of the CRC Provisions in Kenya since the Country Ratified It Including the Children's Act 2001* by Emily Habwe Nwankwo and Arthur Okwemba, 2002

## ● **The MediaWise Trust**, <http://www.mediawise.org.uk>

MediaWise (formerly PressWise) is an independent charity, set up in 1993 by 'victims of media abuse', supported by concerned journalists, media lawyers and politicians in the U.K.

## The Media and Children's Rights – a guidebook

MediaWise has published *The Media and Children's Rights. A resource for journalists by journalists*. Devised for UNICEF by MediaWise. MediaWise & UNICEF, 2005. This guidebook was written to assist media professionals and others to consider how the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child might impact upon the way children are represented in and by the media. Based on the practical experience of working journalists, it aims to generate responsible coverage of children and the impact of adult behaviour and decisions on their lives, as well as to encourage media professionals to consider how best to protect the rights of children and help children to play a role in the mass media.

The handbook outlines two milestones for children's rights: the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and A World Fit for Children, the declaration adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2002. It contains the International Federation of Journalists guidelines (see above) and over 60 international contacts for journalists seeking facts, figures, quotes and advice about children's rights.

Key topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- children with disabilities
- child labour
- children and armed conflict
- children's health and welfare
- the child's identity
- children's opinions and civil freedoms
- children and the media.

First published in 1999, a revised and expanded second edition was published in February 2005 and is available on the website of MediaWise Trust and elsewhere.

### Children, Violence and the Media in an Expanding Europe

MediaWise presents on its website several other activities and articles on children and the media. One of these is training material for print and broadcast journalists to improve media coverage of children affected by violence. The material consists of modules for use in vocational, in-service and distance learning settings and is free to use by everyone. Three sets of training modules were devised and then tested and reformulated in response to evaluation. They cover:

- The Rights of Children & Codes of Conduct
- Uses of Images
- Interviewing Children

The modules are the result of a pilot training project called 'Children, Violence and the Media in an Expanding Europe' (2001) funded by the European Commission under the Daphne Initiative.

### Codes of conduct

MediaWise has also assembled a large collection of journalistic Codes of Conduct from around the world.

### ● **The Media Monitoring Project, South Africa,**

<http://www.mediamonitoring.org.za>

The Media Monitoring Project (MMP) monitors the media with the aim to promote the development of a free, fair, ethical and critical media culture in South Africa and the rest of the continent. MMP is an independent non-governmental organisation that has been monitoring the South African media since 1993.

The core objectives of the organisation are as follows:

- To be the pre-eminent media 'watchdog' in Africa
- To inform and engage media professionals and other key stakeholders to improve the quality and ethics of news reporting in Africa
- To influence the development of robust and effective communication legislation and media codes of conduct in Africa.

The MMP has released several reports about children and media, of which the following are some examples:

- *Reporting on Children in the Context of HIV/AIDS: A Journalist's Resource*, 2005  
In the context of widespread HIV/AIDS and poverty, this booklet provides reference information about children affected by HIV/AIDS and related policy issues,

which need urgent and in-depth coverage by the media. With the imperative to 'put children first', the booklet challenges some of the limitations and misleading messages in current coverage, and offers a resource list to help media with the task of shaping an appropriate national response to children affected by the epidemic.

- *A Resource Kit for Journalists: Children's Media Mentoring Project, 2005*  
This resource kit provides journalists with the necessary information to enable children's voices to become a part of daily media coverage, without violating children's rights, South African laws or international norms and standards. The resource kit is designed to allow journalists and editors easy access to guidelines and laws during the production of news. MMP hopes that the resource kit can help to bring more children's voices into the South African media, in positive ways, which do not harm children.
- *What Children Want, 2005*  
The MMP's latest research with children and media challenges a number of pre-conceived ideas about children's programming, how it is understood, and how it should be regulated. The study aimed to give practical realisation to children's right to participate in all matters that affect them, as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The research was conducted as part of the MMP's submission on the draft licence conditions of the SABC (South African Broadcasting Corporation) and was supported by Save the Children Sweden.

### The Empowering Children & Media project

The MMP has also performed a special project, The Empowering Children & Media (ECM) project, which monitored the representation of children and children's rights in the South African news media. The project analysed over 22,000 items from 36 different South African media, including print, radio and television media. From March to May 2003, every item that contained a reference to a child or children was monitored.

The most innovative part of the project was the participation of children themselves. The children engaged in a parallel monitoring project where they monitored the media for a two-week period. This was done so that the children could express their views directly, and so that they could see for themselves how the media represented children.

A few findings from ECM are:

- Only 6 per cent of all monitored news items contained children up to 18 years of age. When children were represented, their newsworthiness seemed to be defined by the extreme and/or dramatic nature of stories.

The children who participated in the workshops commented on this lack of representation:

*There is nothing on the radio news about children. These guys, they don't think our issues are important.*

In newspapers made by the children themselves, on the other hand, 54 per cent of all people identified were children. The children made sure to include children but there was also a clear adult component.

- Children are rarely accessed for their opinions. Children were quoted directly or indirectly in only 13 per cent of the items on children. When children were sourced, their comments were limited to sport, arts/culture, and war/conflict/violence.

Children in all of the workshops talked about how few journalists interviewed children or asked them to tell their stories.

*I realised that we can understand what is going on around us. If it is about us we are the best people to say something about it.*

The names the children chose for their own newspapers indicated that the children recognised that this was an inclusive forum through which they could express themselves. It also demonstrated strong ownership of the newspaper and recognition for what children are capable of achieving.

*We called it "Children's Voices". We made this newspaper and it is our voice.*

*We chose that because we put things that are happening in "Our World Today", things that are affecting us.*

- The results showed that almost 50 per cent of stories on children were negative. While it is a common feature of news to report on 'bad news' (stories such as crime, violence and abuse), this severely narrows the representation of children and helps locate children more often as victims in 'bad news' stories.

The children in the workshops were acutely aware that most of the coverage afforded to children in the media tends to be negative:

*They only show bad things that happen to children. They never speak about good things that we do as children.*

*I feel sad because nothing is said about the good children do.*

In addition, the children raised the fact that the media tend to focus on dramatic issues, such as child abuse, and may ignore other children's issues. This was also reflected in the monitoring done by adults, thereby indicating a fairly narrow representation of children in the news media, both in terms of topics and roles.

In their own newspapers, the children strived to maintain a balance between positive and negative news stories, and often tended to juxtapose a positive item with a negative item. Even though they used negative images or stories, there was a distinct sense that these were employed in order to deliver more positive or meaningful messages. The children also demonstrated a need for news that is relevant to their lives.

## Guidelines for interviewing children

The MMP has published on its website the Guidelines and Principles for Reporting on Issues Involving Children adopted by the International Federation of Journalists (see above) and has also released own guidelines for interviewing children.

● **ANDI – Agência de Notícias dos Direitos da Infância,**

<http://www.andi.org.br>

Below is an excerpt from the article 'Journalism on Children's Rights in Brazil' by Geraldinho Vieira, Executive Director of ANDI, Brazil, in *News from ICCVOS*, No. 1, 2002, p. 16:

The News Agency for Children's Rights (ANDI – Agência de Notícias dos Direitos da Infância) was created during the 1990s with the aim to contribute to the building of a culture in which the press gives priority to a children's and adolescents' agenda. In other words, the Agency argues that the promotion and defense of children's and adolescents' rights and their access to basic social rights is fundamental to the achievement of social equity. The Agency, in contrast to standard news agencies, acts as a center of reference where journalists can find the best story ideas, the best ways of telling their stories, and the most up-to-date sources of information, thereby establishing connections between the press, innovators and specialists.

ANDI cooperates with the Brazilian mass media to promote a new system of investigative journalism. The organization believes that it is not enough when a newspaper publishes a story with facts that, for example, four million children are exploited as slaves or that five hundred thousand little girls are driven to prostitution. In a country with such social inequalities and lack of efficient public services [as Brazil], ANDI has discovered that solutions must be sought in order to promote the changes that have to be made. This does not mean that the press should only publish 'positive' or 'optimistic' stories. On the contrary, the sooner society learns about the actions and policies that have been proven to make change possible, the greater impact the stories will have.

One of the most effective strategies developed by ANDI to increase awareness of the problem in newsrooms is the promotion of regular studies (in early 2004, 14 issues had been released beside special analyses, *editor's remark*), showing how more than 50 of the most important newspapers and magazines are reporting on subjects relevant to children's rights. After the Agency's research began to be published in 1996, the various news media launched a healthy competition among themselves. Several years later, ANDI has detected that the number of stories dedicated to themes related to children's rights has increased from 10 thousand, in 1996, to 65 thousand in 2000. Moreover, 41 per cent of these stories focus not only on social problems, but also on their possible solutions.

Therefore, it can be said that it has become easier for society to understand that street kids are not potential criminals, but instead children whose families have been destroyed by misery and unemployment. These children are, after all, kids out of home and out of school, whose essential rights have been stolen. If they are on the streets of big cities, it means that the streets provide the only way of making a living. In order to survive, get educated and contribute for the country's future, these children need help and the mobilization of the entire society. This is the change that ANDI is helping to promote.

### ● **Red ANDI América Latina**, <http://www.redandi.org>

The success of ANDI in Brazil (see above) has led to the creation of a network of non-governmental news agencies for children's rights across Latin America – Red ANDI América Latina. Each agency represents a Latin American country (at present nine countries) and is responsible for carrying out, on a national scale, a number of strategic actions based on the work of ANDI in Brazil.

Red ANDI América Latina was officially created in 2003 and the practical work of the network started in 2004.

### ● **Hatemalo Sanchar, Nepal**, <http://www.hatemalo.org>

As a pioneer child rights organisation, Hatemalo Sanchar in Nepal has been involved in advocating child rights through media campaigning – both print and broadcast – since 1982. Hatemalo Sanchar (Hatemalo meaning 'hand in hand' in Nepali) has been broadcasting radio programmes for children, has been regularly publishing a monthly child magazine from 1990, has initiated child club activities, and is engaged in research work, seminars for media professionals, and media monitoring programmes. In 1994, Hatemalo Sanchar was established formally as an independent social organisation for child right promotion. As Nepal ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1990, the Hatemalo group started encompassing children's rights through a multi-media approach. One of several initiatives for raising media professionals' media literacy is, beside seminars, the Media Monitoring Programme.

#### The Media Monitoring Programme

The Media Monitoring Programme was first initiated in 2002. In the third report *Print Coverage of Children's Issues 2004* by Saurav Kiran Shrestha and released by Hatemalo Sanchar in 2005, it is said: The main aim of the programme is to raise general consciousness on various child-related issues among mass media institutions, journalists and children so as to create child-friendly mass media. This comparative programme also endeavors to study pattern of media coverage on children. The report deals with coverage on children's issues during 2004 from nine national dailies. The study tried to reveal the pattern of print coverage under the four categories of child rights stated in the UNCRC – right to survival, right to development, right to protection and right to participation. All news/articles regarding children aged between 0-18 were taken into account.

The findings show that since 2002, there is a trend of steady increase in coverage of child-related issues in Nepal's national dailies. In fact, while comparing the coverage of the year 2003 and 2004, it has doubled. With the escalation of violence in the country, children have been equally affected and this must be attributed to, albeit partly, the increase in the coverage of children's issues.

Despite the increase in the coverage, most of the news/articles on children have been attributed to negative consequences, i.e., deaths in armed conflict, and accidents and crimes.

- Hence, the report recommends that there should be a shift in news selection priority from 'death reporting' to positive sides.

Other findings and recommendations are:

- Though some improvements vis-à-vis coverage of children's issues geographically have been observed, yet the children's issues from far-flung districts and inner hinterlands have been consistently overlooked. This has excluded the majority of the children, which should be avoided.
- Most of the news/articles are event-oriented. Hence, the reporting should go beyond covering a mere formal programme. Further exploration and in-depth investigation into the issues arising in such programmes can be taken into consideration by reporters/analysts.
- Over years, most newspapers have started publishing special supplements or segments on children's issues. But some of the dailies have either stopped publishing such things or have decreased space meant for children, which should not have been done.
- Whenever it is reported on children, the media personnel should rise above the customary/regular issues such as educational activities, health-related reports, and conflict, among others. Even these issues could be reported differently. And many overlooked issues should be covered.
- If the number of supporting pictures or sketches alongside the news report is increased, it draws more readers and makes the case stronger.

In sum, the study found many things to be worked upon in order to ensure child rights for their development: The print media have challenges ahead in reporting sufficiently many identified and unidentified issues of children, letting the voices of children residing in remote areas be heard, and practicing possible participation of children in the publication process. The print media have a challenge of rising above its existing nature of being city-centric and event-oriented in order to empower voiceless people and children.

The study also explicitly argues for the need to establish an effective and authorized body/mechanism that helps and supports media to implement codes of conduct. Likewise, the report advocates for the need of practice of professional journalism that well considers child rights principles – the best interest of children, non-discrimination, children's development and participation.

## 2. International and Regional Conferences – and Declarations, Resolutions, Charters

Another means to raise media professionals' awareness about children's and young people's relations to the media is seminars and conferences. It must be emphasised that many national, as well as some international and regional events about children, young people and media are long standing and regular. However, as a response to the globalised media flow with satellite television channels spreading rapidly all over the world since the late 1980s, and then the digital media, the international and regional meetings and conferences on children, young people and media have multiplied since the early 1990s.

These conferences have had different contexts and aims. There are, for instance, meetings mainly for professionals working with children's media. The objectives of these gatherings have been to improve the profile of children's programming and other child media contents throughout the world, to prompt initiatives to advance the diversity and quality of children's broadcasting, and to promote research, co-operation, exchange and training for those concerned with children's broadcasting and other media.

Furthermore, there are meetings with children, youth and media on the agenda arranged by UN agencies or on a regional supranational plane by, for example, the European Union. The objectives of these meetings have been partly to support states in their cultural policies, and partly to give media professionals ideas on how to promote and protect the rights of the child.

Other examples of meetings are those where most participants have been researchers and media educators. A few such international and regional conferences are mentioned under the heading 'Media Literacy for Media Educators', but one must bear in mind that these events have often invited media professionals and policy-makers, as well, beside researchers, teachers and interest organisations. Thus, there are often no sharp dividing lines between the growing amount of international and regional meetings. Most of them have been open for representatives of all groups – media professionals in traditional and new electronic and digital media, policy-makers, researchers, media educators, voluntary organisations and other interested individuals. Many of the meetings have also invited children.

However, below are listed a few examples of international and regional meetings where delegates to a greater extent have been media professionals and/or policy makers.

In addition, many of the meetings have resulted in declarations, resolutions and charters distributed to media professionals and others all over the world as expressions of opinions on how to ameliorate children's and young people's media environment. (The declarations, etc., are available on the website of the Clearinghouse, <http://www.nordicom.gu.se/clearinghouse.php>).

## ● **Non-violence, Tolerance and Television, 1994**

Coinciding with the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the prophet of non-violence and tolerance, an international roundtable on 'Non-violence, Tolerance and Television', was organised in New Dehli in April 1994 by UNESCO, the International Programme for Development of Communication (IPDC) and the Indian Government. The roundtable was restricted to a number of broadcasting professionals in order to analyse problems related to the theme of the roundtable and put forward solutions in a practical way.

The document *Non-violence, Tolerance and Television. Report of the Chairman to the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication*, UNESCO, 1994, summarises the viewpoints.

## ● **The Bratislava Meeting, 1994**

A meeting in Bratislava, Slovakia, in November 1994, arranged by the International Centre of Films for Children and Young People (Centre International du Film pour l'Enfance et la Jeunesse, CIFEJ) based in Canada, invited heads and producers of children's programming from Eastern and Western European television stations to find ways of dealing with the down-turn of national production for children.

Three days of informal talks gave rise to **the Bratislava Resolution**, which, according to the participants, outlines the minimum requirements for a worthy film and television production for children.

## ● **AGORA**

From the mid 90s till 2005, AGORA, organised by the European Children's Television Centre (E.C.T.C), has been held every year in Greece, Cyprus or Italy. AGORA has been an opportunity for key players of production and research in the international children's audio-visual field to gather in order to explore the needs of the area, to plan specific productions and research, and to exchange information and programmes. Special emphasis has been given to the promotion and the improvement of programmes from the Balkan, Mediterranean and small European countries.

## ● **KID SCREEN**

Established in the mid-90s, KID SCREEN has been an annual international seminar and meeting point for teachers, researchers and media professionals to discuss children's film and media education. It has been organised by the European Children's Film Association (E.C.F.A), based in Brussels, Belgium, with support of the Cultural Department of the Lombardy Region, Italy. For example, the theme of the 1999 seminar held in Como, Italy, was violence on the screen, and the 2000 seminar in Varese, Italy, dealt with children's creativity in a digital age. Importance is attached to nuanced

and interdisciplinary characterisation of the relationships between children and the media.

Seminar reports are released in Italian.

### ● **The first World Summit on Television and Children, 1995**

The first World Summit on Television and Children, held in Melbourne, Australia, in March 1995, was hosted by the Australian Children's Television Foundation (ACTF). The main reason for organising the Summit was that programming for children was changing and under threat in a variety of ways and could no longer remain purely a domestic issue for most nations, if it was to survive with the values and objectives that professionals in the industry believe should apply to children's programmes.

At the Summit a charter on children and television was proposed Anna Home, Head of Children's Television Programmes, British Broadcasting Corporation. **The Children's Television Charter** was revised and adopted in Munich, Germany, in May 1995.

*World Summit on Television and Children. Final Report.* Carlton, Australia, The Australian Children's Television Foundation, 1995, documents this first World Summit, which provided the incentive for several other regional and global summits on children and media.

### ● **Violence on the Screen and the Rights of the Child, 1995**

The Swedish National Commission for UNESCO in co-operation with UNESCO and UNICEF organised the international seminar 'Violence on the Screen and the Rights of the Child' in September 1995 in Lund, Sweden, bringing together participants from all continents representing the media business, universities, government institutions, teachers and parents associations, etc.

A report comprising the speeches and conclusions and with the same title as the seminar is available in English.

As a direct outcome of the seminar, The International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media (formerly The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen) was established by Nordicom, Göteborg University, Sweden, in 1997, with support from UNESCO and the Swedish government.

### ● **The Southern African Developing Countries' Summit on Children and Broadcasting, 1996**

This regional Summit held in May 1996 by The Children and Broadcasting Foundation (CBF) for Africa in Johannesburg, South Africa, was a direct result of the first World Summit on Children and Television in Australia in 1995 (see above). The delegates from Africa were concerned that Africa's voice was not being heard at the World Summit,

and felt that an environment must be created in which children's broadcasting issues could be discussed within the region.

At this SADC plus Kenya Summit discussions concentrated on, among other things, how to make the Children's Television Charter emanating from the first World Summit more relevant to Africa, and **The SADC Children's Broadcasting Charter** was adopted.

### ● **The Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media, 1996**

The Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media was held in July 1996 in Manila, the Philippines. The major organising members included the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC), the Philippine Children's Television Foundation, the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union, the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC), Philippines, and UNICEF. Issues examined at the Summit were: child rights and the media; influence of media; access to media; promoting cultural diversity; children's media; media and values; issues of portrayal; and media education.

Delegates at the Summit – including ministers and senior officials of Asian governments, journalists, media executives, educators and child rights advocates – adopted the **Asian Declaration on Child Rights and the Media**.

A report of the Asian Summit is available from AMIC.

### ● **The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 1996**

In October 1996, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (the mechanism tasked with monitoring progress in the realisation of children's rights and with advising on implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child) held a theme day on children and the media. The Committee had invited representatives of UN organs, bodies and specialised agencies, other competent bodies, including non-governmental organisations, media representatives, research and academic organisations, and children, to contribute to the discussions and provide expert advice. Three main areas were considered during the debate: child participation in the media; protection of the child against harmful influences through the media; and respect for the integrity of the child in media reporting. The discussion resulted in twelve recommendations (see the box, which includes an excerpt from an article by Thomas Hammarberg 1997).

The Committee also set up a multisectoral working group that met in Paris in April, 1997, to consider constructive ways of ensuring implementation of these recommendations.

THE COMMITTEE IDENTIFIED three main areas to be considered during the debate:

- Child Participation in the Media

In short, the discussion here centred around the importance of children participating not just as commentators, but at all levels of the information and media production process. Therefore, adequate mechanisms must be developed to

enable the child to participate. Not only the media as such but also parents and professionals working with and for children must help children to make their voices heard.

Among many other things mentioned, the potential positive impact of technology for children's rights was underlined, as well as the importance of their access also to all traditional media.

- Protection of the Child against Harmful Influences through the Media

It was said, that States should take concrete measures to encourage the media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child, as called for in article 17(a) [of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child]. The clear identification of harmful influences in media was considered essential, as well as the need to raise, through school and other fora, the awareness of children on how to tackle media issues in a critical and constructive manner.

Also, a better balance ought to be reached in the media between concern for protection and accurate reflection of the real world. A better balance is needed, too, regarding cultural diversity and gender bias. It was recognized that freedom of expression was not incompatible with the strong prohibition of material injurious to the child's well-being. Specific reference was also made to Internet, for example, the idea to develop in all countries hot-lines where Internet users can transmit information on existing harmful sites.

- Respect for the Integrity of the Child in Media Reporting

In short, it was stressed that media play an essential role in the promotion and protection of human rights in general, and should be particularly vigilant in trying to safeguard the integrity of the child. For example, media must take into account the best interests of the child when children are sources of information, as in interviews or simulations with child victims of violence and abuse. Reference was also made to the most common stereotypes in media reporting about children, such as the 'violent teen-ager' or the misrepresentation of children from specific groups.

ON THE BASIS OF THE DISCUSSIONS on the three areas and in my capacity as rapporteur of the meeting, I formulated the following recommendations:

1. Child Media: A dossier should be compiled on positive and practical experiences of active child participation in media, like 'Children's Express' in the United Kingdom and the United States.
2. Child Forum within Internet: The UNICEF-initiated 'Voices of Youth' at the World Wide Web should be further promoted and advertised as a positive facility for international discussion on important issues between young people.
3. Active Child Libraries: The experience of dynamic child libraries, or child departments within public libraries, should be documented and disseminated.
4. Media Education: Knowledge about media, their impact and functioning should be taught in schools at all levels. Students should be enabled to relate to and use the media in a participatory manner as well as to learn how to decode media messages, including in the advertising. Good experiences in some countries should be made available to others.

5. State Support to Media for Children: There is a need for budgetary support to ensure the production and dissemination of children's books, magazines and papers; music, theatre and other artistic expressions for children as well as child oriented films and videos. Assistance through international co-operation should also support media and art for children.
6. Constructive Agreements with Media Companies to Protect Children against Harmful Influences: Facts should be gathered about various attempts of voluntary agreements with media companies on positive measures such as not broadcasting violent programmes during certain hours, clear presentations before programmes about their content and the development of technical devices – like 'V-chips'– to help consumers to block out certain types of programmes. Likewise, experiences of voluntary ethical standards and mechanisms to encourage respect for them should be assembled and evaluated; this should include an analysis of the effectiveness of existing Codes of Conduct, professional guidelines, Press Councils, Broadcast Councils, Press Ombudsmen and similar bodies.
7. Comprehensive National Plans of Action to Empower Parents in the Media Market: Governments should initiate a national discussion on means to promote positive alternatives to the negative tendencies in the media market, to encourage media knowledge and support parents in their role as guides to their children when relating with electronic and other media. An international workshop should be organized to promote a discussion on this approach.
8. Advice on Implementation of article 17 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: A study should be conducted with the purpose of developing advice to governments on how they could encourage the development of 'guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being'. Such a study should also serve the purpose of assisting the Committee on the Rights of the Child in drafting a General Comment on article 17.
9. Specific Guidelines for Reporting on Child Abuse: To encourage further discussions in the news rooms and within the media community as a whole guidelines should be drafted by relevant journalist bodies on how to report on abuse of children and at the same time protect the dignity of the children involved. Special emphasis should be placed on the issue of not exposing the identity of the child.
10. Handbook Material for Journalist Education on Child Rights: Material should be produced to assist journalist and media schools on child rights standards, established procedures for child rights monitoring, existing international, regional and national institutions working with children as well as basic aspects of child development. The manual planned by the United Nations Centre for Human Rights as a tool for journalist education on human rights should be widely disseminated when produced.
11. Network for Media Watchgroups: The positive experiences of media watchgroups in various countries should be further encouraged and 'good ideas' transferred between countries. The purpose is to give media consumers a voice in the discussion on media ethics and children. A focal point for exchanges should be established.

12. Service to 'Child Rights Correspondents': Interested journalists should be invited to sign in to a list of 'Child Rights Correspondents'. They should receive regular information about important child issues, interesting reports by others and be seen as media advisers to the international child rights community.

*Source:* Thomas Hammarberg 1997

### ● **The first All African Summit, 1997**

The first All African Summit was arranged in Accra, Ghana, in October 1997. The most important thing that occurred at this Summit was the adoption of the **Africa Charter on Children's Broadcasting**. The Charter is an amendment of The SADC Children's Broadcasting Charter in 1996 (see above) and is in keeping with the international Children's Television Charter in 1995 (see above), but expands on issues relevant to the African continent, and includes radio as well. In particular greater emphasis is placed on the educational and developmental needs of Africa's children and protection from all forms of commercial exploitation.

The Africa Charter on Children's Broadcasting was ratified at the general assembly of URTNA (Union of National Radio and Television Organisations of Africa) in 2000 in Algiers, where all African broadcasters were asked to make necessary amendments. The final Charter was then further adopted by the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA) in 2000 in Cape Town, South Africa.

### ● **The Second World Summit on Television for Children, 1998**

The Second World Summit on Television for Children took place in March 1998 in London and was hosted jointly by the BBC, Channel 4, ITV and Nickelodeon UK. A large number of keynote addresses, debates, seminars, and workshops dealt with: the nature of the child audience; different programme genres; production and policy; financing; advertising; new media; globalisation vs. local survival; and co-operative ventures. Master classes and screenings of children's programmes ran parallel. There were also sessions on research.

A report from the Summit was published with support of the Annenberg Public Policy Center, U.S.A.: Anna Home & Amy B. Jordan *The Second World Summit on Television for Children 1998. Final report*. University of Pennsylvania, The Annenberg Public Policy Center.

## ● **The Power of Culture – Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development, 1998**

The Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development – the greatest manifestation for culture on a governmental level ever – held in Stockholm in March-April 1998 was designed by UNESCO to transform the ideas from the report *Our Creative Diversity*, UNESCO, 1995, into policy and practice. This report was presented by the World Commission on Culture and Development, established by the United Nations and UNESCO and led by Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. The document presents a programme of action with the purpose of influencing the international political agenda and actively engaging individuals, groups, organisations and states. One chapter is devoted to children and young people, another to mass media.

**The UNESCO Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development** was agreed upon that shall serve as an inspiration for the Member States' international and national cultural policy and be a tool for UNESCO's continued cultural work. Certain policy objectives explicitly mention children and young people.

## ● **Journalism 2000: Child Rights and the Media, 1998-2001**

In May 1998, the international conference 'Journalism 2000: Child Rights and the Media', arranged by The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), was held in Recife, Brazil. The conference focused on reporting on children.

The meeting resulted in the adoption of the **IFJ Child Rights and the Media: Guidelines for Journalists** (see also under the heading 'Reporting on Children and Young People') as a draft for debate and development among the world's journalists – a process that was expected to take three years. After regional conferences and workshops the guidelines were finally adopted at the Annual Congress of the IFJ in Seoul in 2001 and presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Congress against Commercial Exploitation of Children held at Yokohama, Japan, in 2001.

## ● **The Oslo Challenge, 1999**

In late 1998, the Norwegian Government and UNICEF responded to a request from the working group set up by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 1997 (see above) to initiate a longer process that would continue this work – meaning, for example, to identify examples of good practice in fulfilling Articles 12, 13 and 17 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC), to forge co-operative links among the many sectors involved in the issue of children and media, and to produce a checklist for the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child to facilitate consideration of submission by State Parties in relation to these articles. In connection with an international working group of media professionals, young people, UN and voluntary sector workers, researchers and creative thinkers from different continents, **The Oslo Challenge** was launched on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November 1999 – the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN CRC. The

Challenge is a call to action with the aim to ensure that the overwhelming power of the media for good in the lives of children is identified, encouraged and supported, while the potential harmful effects are recognised and reduced.

### ● **West African Regional Summit on Media for Children, 2000**

In May 2000, a West African Regional Summit on Media for Children was held in Abuja, Nigeria. The Summit was co-ordinated by Glorious Diamond Productions and Children and Broadcasting Foundation for Africa (CBF; Nigeria Chapter) in collaboration with UNICEF for the organisers, African Children Broadcasting Network (ACBN). The Summit focused largely on the forthcoming 3<sup>rd</sup> World Summit on Media for Children in Greece, March 2001.

### ● **Asia-Pacific Television Forum on Children and Youth, 2001**

An Asia-Pacific Television Forum on Children and Youth was organised by the Korea Educational Broadcast System (EBS), the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), and UNICEF in Seoul, South Korea, in February 2001. The object was to provide television practitioners from across the region an opportunity to discuss television's critical role and responsibility in promoting the understanding of and helping to protect the rights of the region's children and young people.

The **Declaration of the Asia-Pacific Television Forum on Children and Youth** was adopted at the Forum and an action blueprint developed. The action points are practical ideas for TV news and children's programmes recommended as starting points to better serve the interests of children in local and national television markets.

### ● **EU Expert Seminar: Children and Young People in the New Media Landscape, 2001**

The Swedish Presidency of the European Union, in co-operation with the European Commission, organised an expert seminar in Stockholm in February 2001, under the above heading. The seminar brought together representatives from governments and authorities within the Member States and Candidate countries, EU institutions, media industries and non-governmental organisations.

The theme of the seminar was the situation of minors in relation to the media, seen in the light of the rapidly evolving media landscape due to the impact of globalisation, digitalisation, the emergence of new media and the growth of media output. The issues discussed were protection of minors from harmful content on the Internet, in computer and video games and on television, and also television advertising directed at children. The full document and other material from the seminar are available on the website <http://www.eu2001.se/eu2001>

### ● **The 3<sup>rd</sup> World Summit on Media for Children, 2001**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> World Summit on Media for Children took off during March 2001 in Thessaloniki, Greece. It was produced by the European Children's Television Centre (E.C.T.C.) under the auspices of several institutions, supervised by the Hellenic Audiovisual Institute (I.O.M.), and organised by Children's Media Development (CMD). The Summit aimed at enhancing media quality and media awareness worldwide and at demonstrating the emerging relation between television, radio and the new media. The participants were above all media professionals across the world, but also researchers, media educators, politicians, voluntary organisations, and children.

There were four main themes with plenary sessions and workshops: 'Going Global', 'Media for All', 'New Technologies', and 'Children Have a Say'. The I.O.M. put forward the draft **Declaration of Thessaloniki: Commitment for the Future** as regards children and media, a declaration which was amended and finally adopted in 2002.

### ● **MAGIC – An Oslo Challenge Follow-Up, 2001**

In 2001, as a response to the Oslo Challenge (see above), UNICEF with the support of the Government of Norway launched the project MAGIC – a compilation of Media Actions and Good Ideas by, with and for Children. A resource pack of good ideas, which have been tried and tested by media industry players, organisations working for and with children, governments and academic/educational institutions, is continuously being put together (see <http://www.unicef.org/magic>) in order to be a working tool for a wider circle of people and organisations. The aim of the pack is to encourage and support new initiatives that will contribute to developing the relationship between children and the media.

Along with the resource pack, an e-mail network has been expanded and energised so that ideas and information can be shared and more players can be brought into this Oslo Challenge follow-up.

### ● **Asian Seminar on Children and the Internet, 2001**

In August 2001, academics, media practitioners, new media experts and NGO representatives from six Asian countries met in Bangkok, Thailand, to discuss 'The Impact on Children of New Media and the Internet in Southeast Asia'. The seminar was held under the auspices of AMIC (Asian Media Information and Communication Centre, Singapore) with support from the Netherlands Government, UNESCO, UNICEF, and Thailand's Public Relations Department.

The participants generated a set of recommendations to help protect children in cyberspace. Among them are educational programmes targeted towards children, parents, teachers, educational institutions, media, policy-makers, law enforcers, civil society organisations, unions, Internet service providers and telecom companies. Other recommendations comprise guiding principles for regulatory and self-regulatory envi-

ronments. The papers and recommendations are collected in Kavitha Shetty (ed.), *Kids On-line. Promoting Responsible Use and a Safe Environment on the Net in Asia*. Asian Media Information and Communication Centre & School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University, 2002.

### ● **2<sup>nd</sup> Asian-Pacific Television Forum, 2002**

In March 2002, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Asian-Pacific Television Forum in Bangkok, Thailand, attracted delegates from across the East Asia-Pacific region representing public and private sectors such as television, advertising, corporate, government and civil society organizations. The theme was 'Children's TV – Partnerships for Quality'. The Forum was organized by UNICEF and the Cable and Satellite Broadcasting Association of Asia (CASBAA), and hosted by the Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (MCOT) and Thailand's United Broadcasting Corporation (UBC). Recommendations aimed at building sustained partnerships for quality children's television were adopted at the closing session.

The recommendations included:

- Making existing producers of quality productions aware of child rights issues and urging them to incorporate those issues in the programmes they are already producing.
- Encourage and ensure the authentic participation of children and youth in the production of quality children's programming.
- Using integrated media – on-air, off-air, on-line and on-the-ground – to ensure maximum reach and relevance.
- Support for training/production workshops in technical and storytelling techniques, as well as exchange programmes for children's programme producers from developing countries with their counterparts in industrialized countries.

### ● **The 4<sup>th</sup> World Summit on Media for Children and Adolescents, 2004**

The 4<sup>th</sup> World Summit on Media for Children and Adolescents came off in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in April 2004. On the agenda were the rights of children and adolescents to quality media; 'Media from All, Media for All' was the overriding theme. Attendees were producers, researchers, educators, journalists, publicity and marketing professionals, students, representatives of non-governmental organisations, national and international cooperation organisations, regulatory agencies, and funding institutions. Many persons were also attending the Summit on-line via real time web casts of the principal sessions.

The Summit was organised by Rio Prefeitura Educação/MULTIRIO (Rio Prefecture of Education) and MídiaTiva (Centro Brasileiro de Mídia para Crianças e Adolescentes;

Brazilian Centre of Media for Children and Adolescents). On the closing day the **Rio de Janeiro Charter: Media from All, Media for All** was adopted.

### ● **The Radio Manifesto, 2004**

Three years of discussions and workshops by children and youth around the world have resulted in an international document, **The Radio Manifesto**, launched at The 4th World Summit on Media for Children and Adolescents in 2004 (see above). The Radio Manifesto – addressed by young people to radio broadcasters – began in 2001 with youth radio broadcasters at Bush Radio in Cape Town, South Africa. Since then, the World Radio Forum has helped young broadcasters in other countries in Africa and the rest of the world to develop the text of their Radio Manifesto. Youth 8 to 18 years of age contributed from townships, remote villages, and the streets of capital cities, together with the new young citizens of emerging democracies. Their Manifesto proclaims strongly to radio authorities the rights, needs, and hopes of young people.

The Radio Manifesto is available in several languages at <http://www.worldradioforum.org> and is open for further contributions from child and youth's radio groups.

### ● **European Association for Viewers Interests, 2004**

Television is an increasingly consolidated and globalised industry and its daily impact has continued to grow during the last years. Nevertheless, audience power and audience satisfaction have not increased proportionally, according to the European Association for Viewers Interests (EAVI). EAVI is an independent, not-for-profit association with the aim to identify, represent and advance the interests of the television viewers, and was initiated under the European Commission's eLearning initiative. Many of EAVI's objectives are of high relevance to children and young people.

In October 2004, EAVI held its first meeting, 'Advancing the European Viewers Interests', with several interest groups and associations in Lucca, Italy. Participants discussed the themes: 'viewers participation', 'media accountability' and 'media literacy and education'.

EAVI has also identified the current procedures that European citizens have at their disposal in order to effectively participate in media governance and the legal basis for citizens to exercise their rights as viewers, see <http://www.eavi.org>

### ● **The Arab Child Subject to Different Cultural Influences, 2005**

A regional conference on the above-mentioned theme was held at Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alexandria, Egypt, in September 2005. The event was organized by the Arab Council for Childhood and Development, a non-governmental organization with

legal entity that was established on the initiative of HRH Prince Talal Bin Abdul Aziz after a resolution of the Arab League Conference on Childhood in Tunisia in 1986.

The concern of the 2005 conference was to investigate the theme within the context of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that includes the cultural rights of children, and the respect of ethnic, religious, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Attendees were experts on children's culture, researchers, governmental authorities, voluntary organizations, the press and other media, as well as children.

A printed booklet with abstracts of all speeches is available in Arabic and English and **The Arab Child Subject to Different Cultural Influences** is also the name of the Final Statement and Recommendations of the conference.

### 3. Festivals, Awards, Prizes – and Programme Item Exchange

Another means of raising media professionals' awareness of children, young people and media and increasing media professionals' media literacy is festivals, awards and prizes. Certain major international festivals for children's and young people's films and TV-programmes are well-established. This is true of, for example, **PRIX JEUNESSE International**, established in 1964 and held every second (even) year in Munich, Germany (<http://www.prixjeunesse.de>); **PRIX DANUBE** established a few years later and held every second (uneven) year in Bratislava, Slovak Republic (<http://prixdanube.stv.sk>); and **Japan Prize International Educational Programme Contest** starting in the 1970s and taking place each year in Japan (<http://www.nhk.or.jp/jp-prize>).

However, there are also many new and a growing number of film and television festivals and awards around the world, for example, the regional **Asia-Pacific Children's TV Festival** held for the first time in Beijing, China, in 2005 and the regional **PRIX JEUNESSE Iberoamericano** held in Santiago de Chile in 2003 and 2005. And there are many many more. The **International Centre of Films for Children and Young People, CIFEJ**, is continuously producing a worldwide calendar of such festivals and awards as regards film and TV programmes for, as well as by, children and young people around the world. The calendar is available on CIFEJ's website <http://www.cifej.com>

There are also awards for websites created by and for children and young people.

#### ● **The Southeast Asian Foundation for Children and Television**, <http://www.anaktv.com>

As example of another kind of reward we will bring out the ANAK TV Seal in the Philippines as a tool for making broadcasters – and the audience – sensitive about television programmes for children. It is the ordinary TV audience that is the jurors of this award.

In 1996, the major television networks in the country formed the Southeast Asian Foundation for Children and Television (SEAFCTV), since few TV programmes are produced locally for children in the Philippines. Children consequently watch much Western imports and adult programming. SEAFCTV was established with the aim of protecting children from media violence, cultural decay, and crass commercialism. The Foundation invented the Anak TV Seal (Anak meaning child in the local language) as an award for TV shows that promote wholesome and child-friendly, quality programming.

The process is as follows: The TV network members send their programme entries to the SEAFCTV, which in turn organizes jury screenings all over the country. In a year, it means that some 2,000 people from all sectors of society, including children, are asked to look at episodes of TV programmes and asked to evaluate the programmes

from their own point of view as elder or parent: Is this programme safe for the children in my house or community to watch?

When a programme entry makes the grade in at least two separate jury-screening rounds, it is elevated to a higher jury level in Manila consisting of a panel of ca. 100 specialists representing various disciplines. Entries that pass the second level jury in Manila are forwarded to SEAFCTV, which declares them child-sensitive enough to deserve the Anak TV Seal.

In the 2004 ceremonies, over fifty programmes were bestowed the Seal. The winning shows install the seal in the lower left corner of the frame during broadcast, announcing to viewers that the programme has received the approval of thousands of jurors nationwide and that it is safe to let children watch, even unattended by adults.

*Sources:* Mag Cruz Hatol, Secretary General, Southeast Asian Foundation for Children and Television, Quezon City, Philippines, and several online articles.

## ● Programme item exchange

Since long, European producers of programmes for children and young people have met for exchanging programme items in organised forms. **The European Broadcasting Union (EBU)** had in 2005 had such a Children's TV Programme Item Exchange scheme for 31 years, and there are also children's TV programme item exchanges within smaller regions in Europe, such as in the Nordic countries.

More recently, children's TV programme item exchanges have started in other continents. The meetings also provide opportunities for producers to exchange ideas and engage in co-operations across borders. Usually the events include workshops for training, as well. The main idea behind the exchange meetings are for members to increase the quality of children's programme, to contribute more local television content for children and young people, and through the exchange eke out financial resources since money for producing domestic programmes for young people often is all too insufficient.

In 2005, **the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU)** had been running a Children's Programme Item Exchange scheme for 15 years. The workshop in 2005 was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, with some forty participants from twenty-one countries and twenty-eight organisations taking part. Among the activities was a two-day workshop dedicated to children's documentary productions. Besides going through storytelling, cinematography, sound effects and ethics, best practices from the EBU documentary exchange were screened. Another half-day workshop was devoted to children's drama and became the starting point for an ABU co-production series.

**The Union of National Radio and Television Organisations of Africa, URTNA**, had its first meeting for starting an exchange scheme in Nairobi in 1999 and has after that established a regular Children's TV Programme Item Exchange.

In **Latin America** an Item Exchange is at present being built up under the chairmanship of Beth Carmona, President of TVE Rede Brasil. There have been two brainstorming meetings in connection with the festival PRIX JEUNESSE Iberoamericana (see above).

**The Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU)** had its first workshop and training for a coming Children's TV Programme Item Exchange Scheme in July 2005.

These regional events also attract interest from other parts of the world. Producers from outside countries attend the exchange meetings to an increasing intent and items from their companies are partly screened, as well, meaning that these regional events have the potential to become international gatherings.

## 4. A Positive Counterculture

The main idea behind the growing programme item exchange schemes, the increasing number of workshops and training events, festivals and awards, international and regional meetings, monitoring organisations of media contents, charters, declarations, resolutions, recommendations and guidelines – in short, means of increasing media professionals' media literacy – is a growing global awareness of that counteraction is a way to minimise offensive and potentially harmful contents in transnational media – for instance, those global satellite television channels that are driven only by commercial profit and therefore almost impossible to influence by nations. Thus, the idea is to create a positive counterculture – a plurality of domestically produced media contents of high quality aimed specifically at children and young people and that children like. Research all over the world shows that if there are such high quality, home-produced entertaining and informative TV-programmes, books, magazines, radio programmes, websites on the Internet, etc., directed at children and easily available (for example, broadcast at the most appropriate times of the day) – media contents where children recognise themselves – then children will prefer to view, and listen to, and read, and search for these contents.

Research from, for instance, Australia, Japan and Sweden shows that children prefer to watch the home-produced TV programmes, and often live drama and informative children's programming instead of packages of imported routine cartoons (e.g., Rydin 2000, von Feilitzen 2004). In these countries there are also explicit media policies to safeguard children's programming.

For example, Australia has since the late 1970s made great efforts to develop children's television (whereas television programming earlier consisted largely of cheaper imports from other English-speaking countries, mainly the U.S. and the U.K.). Regulations were introduced, and in 1982 the Australian Children's Television Foundation (ACTF) was established. Nowadays it is stipulated that domestically produced children's and adult programmes must be broadcast, and that there shall be financial and other support for such production. The Australian Communications and Media Authority also plays an important role in regulating the quality of children's programming.

A joint research report released in 2000 and commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Authority, the Australian Children's Television Foundation, and the Australian Film Finance Corporation (*Twenty Years of C*, see [http://www.acma.gov.au/ACMAINTER.65640:STANDARD:1620029812:pc=PC\\_91032](http://www.acma.gov.au/ACMAINTER.65640:STANDARD:1620029812:pc=PC_91032)) shows significant improvement in the quantity, quality, diversity and Australianness of children's programmes on commercial television over 20 years, i.e., since regulation was introduced. In particular, domestically produced children's dramas have increased. The regulation from 1979 imposes C (children's) classification and quota requirements for the broadcast of C programmes.

Thus, media regulation or other media policies in a supportive rather than a prohibiting sense can without doubt be very successful. Leaving regulations aside, counteraction has started occurring in other ways. Tim Westcott (2002) questions if the

strategy of global satellite channels for children – particularly the U.S. based Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network and Disney Channel – also will mean global domination. Among other things, he underlines that competition from these three big channels has mobilised local players. Many European countries have started children's channels or branded blocks of their own. Local players have also learnt from the strategies of the U.S. players in developing a more concerted approach to rights ownership. In addition, an increasing part of animation is now being produced in Europe and Canada, beside the U.S.A. and Japan that previously completely overshadowed the market. An important reason for the growing number of animated children's programmes from other countries on the international arena is public policy initiatives (for example, in France and Canada), which give financial backing to help the development of domestic production. Support schemes have also aided development in other countries like Germany and Australia and were in 2002 under consideration in Asian countries, notably China and South Korea, the author says.

A final example of counteraction is the new children's channel JCC – Al Jazeera Children's Channel – a pan-Arabic channel funded in 1995 by Qatar Foundation (QF) for Education, Science and Community Development. On JCC's website (<http://www.qf.edu.qa/output/page469.asp>) one can read:

*In view of the existing state of television, where children are exposed to violent and inappropriate material on a daily basis, QF has the willingness and the capacity to offer a vivid and compelling alternative to the current trends in television broadcasting. More than a channel, JCC is an innovative concept for Arab television. JCC is an ideal balance between education and entertainment for the Arab family.*

JCC has developed TV programmes for the age groups: 3-6 years of age, 7-10 years of age and 11-15 years of age, and says that 40-45 per cent are produced in-house with a minimum of six hours a day consisting of original and fresh programmes. JCC will be supported by an interactive website for children and has already set up a website for the 3- to 6-year-olds.