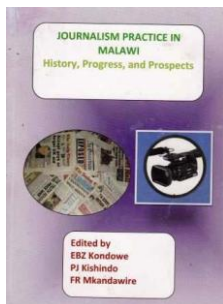


## Book Reviews

### **Journalism Practice in Malawi: History, Progress, and Prospects**

Emmanuel Kondowe, Pascal Kishindo and Francis Mkandawire (eds.). 2011.

228 pages. Lilongwe: UNESCO Malawi. ISBN: 978-99908-949-0-5. Price: Free distribution to



media training institutions in Malawi.

Distributor: UNESCO Malawi.

*Journalism Practice in Malawi* is a textbook written mainly to provide reference material for students of journalism, public relations, media and communications studies in Malawi. It is a seven-chapter book. The chapters are arranged in such a way that one must read them in that order to derive maximum benefit or understanding..

Chapter One is by Edward Chitsulo and Grey Mang'anda titled *Origins, Development and Management of the Newspaper Industry in Malawi*. It is a one-stop chapter on the history of print media in Malawi and, thus, makes it easy for the student or researcher because all one needs to know are between the two covers. The history dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and readers will find it useful.

Chapter Two is titled *Origins, Growth and Development of the Broadcasting Industry in Malawi* by Ellard Manjawira and Peter Mitunda. Just like chapter one, this chapter has done justice to broadcast history in Malawi by offering a succinct analysis of the rise of this industry. It is a must read now that Malawi has 25 licensed radio stations.

The new media is the focus of Chapter Three titled *Online Journalism in Malawi: Emergence, Challenges and Prospects* by Francis Chikunkhuzeni. He has raised questions about online journalism, which will leave you thinking, not only about the possible answers he has provided, but also your own contentions on such tricky issues as blogging and citizen journalism. His definition of online journalism is interesting, in that it is better experienced than explained. Experience it yourself by reading the chapter. The chapter attempts to answer the question whether or not there is online journalism in Malawi.

Levi Zeleza Manda is the author of chapter four, *Media in the Service of Human and Social Development*. It is a piece that challenges all of us about the goals of our work. There is a stealth question about the place of profit in the course of our duty, which should be a service to human and social development. The chapter tackles a number of areas of national development and the beauty is that he has managed to do address these diverse issues in one chapter. The chapter should generate debate on the need for a holistic approach to development in Malawi.

The issue of media freedom is discussed by Emmanuel Kondowe in Chapter Five. He contrasts the theory and practice of media in Malawi, wondering which came first as in the egg or the chicken analogy. In a democracy, the media is supposed to be free but Malawi inherited over 40 seemingly unfriendly media laws from Britain and these still have not been removed or revised from our statutes.

Chapter Six is titled *Media Markets and Commodification of News* and is a professionally engaging chapter by Maclan Kanyang'wa and Simeon Mkwaila. They discuss marketing news as a commodity, including market forces or regulations, which sometimes can restrict new market entrants. Common characteristics of news as a product are discussed and if you are running a news organization or dream of owning one (however small), this chapter is a must read for you.

The final chapter on *General Principles of Print Media Practice* is by Costly Mtogolo. It discusses the environment in which journalists in Malawi operate and how that environment confines or restricts the way they practice their trade. Mtogolo ends his chapter by giving journalists tips on news writing, interviewing and how to craft leads.

As it is said, any reading is a moment for rewriting. The writers in the book have achieved several goals, one of which is engaging readers to think anew burning questions about journalism history, theory and practice in Malawi. The inconsistencies in style and presentation cannot be seen as weakness only, but also as style. After all, the goal of publishing second editions is to correct the lapses in first editions.

---

**Mzati Nkolokosa, Head of News**

Malawi Broadcasting Corporation, Blantyre, Malawi

---