About this book:
Information on good practices in broadcasting policy is in demand in countries of every region, and particularly in countries that are opening their economies, democratizing and decentralizing. Broadcasting, Voice and Accountability offers a resource to policy makers, as well as development practitioners and students. It provides a systematic overview of the policies that foster free, independent and pluralistic broadcast media, and that can contribute to achieving public interest goals such as government transparency and accountability, enhanced quality of and participation in public debate, and increased opportunities for marginalized groups to develop and articulate their views.

This is the World Bank’s first inquiry into broadcasting policy as an area for development assistance, national leadership, and international communities of practice. Special attention is devoted to how media can enhance accountability in governance and contribute to development and “voice,” particularly for those who are disadvantaged in society.

The book draws from a wide range of country experience in all regions of the world and is illustrated extensively by country level examples of policies, laws and regulatory institutions and provisions.

Why broadcast media?
The focus is on broadcast media because broad populations, even those who are illiterate or semi-literate, can access them, and also because they impress the popular psyche and provide avenues for literate, can access them, and also because they populations, even those who are illiterate or semi-

They can magnify the impacts of localized civic engagement by involving a larger listening audience and enabling disadvantaged people to articulate issues important to them, mobilize information, learn the give-and-take of informed discussion and debate, and become more decisive agents in their own development.

In a growing number of developing countries, broadcast media, and particularly those that focus on public interest issues and are participatory and informative, have improved the internal dialogue, problem-solving capacity, and the self-organization of the people they serve.

Parts II and III offer an instructive toolkit for government officials, media practitioners, civil society groups and members of the general public who are involved in analysis, advocacy and policy making for media and communications reform.

Good practice guidelines outlined in these sections provide a framework to guide evaluations of the status quo and provide options for reforms. At the same time, they recognize that reform necessarily involves social, political and institutional processes of change that take time and require adaptation to local circumstances and interests.

Part II examines the general enabling environment for media, including standards on:
- Freedom of expression
- Access to information
- Use and misuse of defamation law
- Content rules and limits to free speech
- Regulation of journalists

Part III focuses on the promotion of plural and independent broadcasting and good practice guidelines, including:
- The role of regulatory bodies
- Regulating broadcast content and distribution
- The role, responsibilities, and practices of public service, community non-profit, and commercial private sector broadcasters – and ways to stimulate diversification within the broadcast sector

The book’s epilogue addresses future work: research and development assistance. The process of researching and compiling this book revealed a lack of relevant and systematic data and information on broadcasting. This yields a rich agenda of information needs for future exploration. Further, the book offers options and practical opportunities for development assistance to support a more coherent approach to reforming broadcasting in the public interest.

Bibliographical annex:
The volume also includes a substantial Bibliographical Annex, a collection of core documents and reference materials for sources referred to in the book, as well as other useful tools and materials. Organized by topic, annex materials include key international standards; case studies on freedoms of expression, communication, and the press, including participatory projects and experiences; impact assessment methodologies, instructional material to create and sustain broadcasting outlets (including community radio stations); and additional guidance on creation of locally-specific policies, legislation, regulation and institutions.
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Steve Buckley has been President of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) since 2003 and a member of the AMARC International Board since 1992. He is a member of the International Council of the International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX) and is Managing Director of Community Media Solutions, a UK-based media development agency. Steve was a founder of the UK Community Media Association and served as its chief executive from 1991 to 2004.

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“A robust mix of broadcasting ownership and uses are critically important to develop and sustain an informed, engaged society”

Frannie Léautier, Vice-President, World Bank Institute, 2001-2007