

## 4 The Media Development and Diversity Agency

The MDDA will, through its various roles, functions, programmes and activities, help promote and implement media development and diversity for the benefit of all South Africans. It will, by becoming a resource for the whole nation, act as a catalyst for the transformation of the media industry.

### 4.1 The MDDA's vision and mission

#### Vision

The MDDA's vision is for:

A thriving South African media reflective of the population it serves through:

- ◆ Participation by all groups and interests as owners, managers and producers of media.
- ◆ A diverse media infrastructure that provides relevant content to South Africa, Africa and the world, and is conducive to a public discourse that reflects the needs and aspirations of all South Africans.

#### Mission

The MDDA's mission will be to:

- ◆ Promote development by creating an enabling environment for sustainable media diversity in South Africa and thereby deepen democracy.
- ◆ Increase access to media for all citizens, as consumers and producers, and, in particular, ensure that the voices, aspirations and images of marginalised sectors such as women, people who are illiterate, rural people and people with disabilities, are heard and seen.

### 4.2 The MDDA's role

The MDDA's role will be to:

- ◆ Help develop a more diverse media industry.
- ◆ Promote the transformation of the media industry to reflect the diversity of South Africa.
- ◆ Act as a champion and watchdog of media development and diversity.
- ◆ Raise public awareness around media development and diversity issues.
- ◆ Make policy recommendations to government as well as the private sector and other media agencies.

### 4.3 Aims and objectives

To accomplish its mission, fulfil its role, and achieve its objectives, the MDDA will promote media development and diversity by:

- ◆ Providing support - including funding, training and capacity building - to promote diversity in ownership, control and staffing of media.
- ◆ Stimulating debate and creating awareness about the importance of media diversity.
- ◆ Evaluating and making recommendations, in consultation with stakeholder groups, around media and advertising training curricula, and codes of conduct.

- ◆ Identifying under-serviced areas and facilitating project development in these areas.
- ◆ Striving - through research, monitoring and lobbying - to support the public broadcaster in carrying out its public service mandate.
- ◆ Lobbying relevant self-regulatory bodies in the broadcasting, print and advertising industries to promote and develop their codes of conduct through open, public processes and to pay attention to advancing media diversity in the codes of conduct.
- ◆ Playing an advocacy role.
- ◆ Taking up media development and diversity issues with relevant bodies.
- ◆ Ensuring public participation through holding open hearings and having transparent procedures (unless there are exceptional circumstances) and giving clear reasons for any of its decisions.
- ◆ Engaging in research, proposing policy and making recommendations to other organisations, including regulators, government, training institutions and funders.
- ◆ Playing a part in efforts to promote media development and diversity in the SADC region, through networking, information-sharing and forging relations with appropriate government and non-governmental initiatives.

Through these activities, the MDDA will promote conditions conducive to media development and diversity, and thereby to media freedom and democracy.

#### 4.4 The MDDA's powers and mandate

The MDDA's main mandate will be to promote diversity and development in the print, broadcast and new media. It will seek out collaboration with bodies dealing with telecommunications, licensing, film and video, in order to achieve effective coordination and avoid duplication

The MDDA will be a statutory structure championing media diversity. It will commission research, make recommendations to government, the media industry and other relevant bodies.

It will also:

- ◆ Take a proactive interest in media competition issues.
- ◆ Consult with all state and statutory institutions dealing with issues within its mandate.
- ◆ Consult with relevant self-regulatory bodies, industry associations, and trade unions.
- ◆ Refer complaints it receives to relevant regulatory bodies, since it will not in itself be an enforcement agency.
- ◆ Develop policies that are informed by ongoing research and evaluation.

#### 4.5 Independence and accountability

The MDDA will be an independent, statutory body at arms-length from government, private sector, donors and beneficiaries. It will:

- ◆ Be governed by a board and will account to Parliament.
- ◆ Fall under the Public Finance Management Act No.1 of 1999, as amended by Act 29 of 1999.
- ◆ Have to apply for exemption from Schedule 2 of the Act, which states that all revenue should go into the National Revenue Fund.
- ◆ Meet with all relevant public institutions and organisations at a consultative Annual Review Forum, which will consider its annual report.