Intersectionality Matters: Studying the contradictory effects of media development through women radio journalists in Burkina Faso

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ABSTRACT

Gender perspectives in media development are common in grey literature produced and promoted by media development actors. Yet, academic research investigating gender dimensions in media development practice and discourse remains scarce. This paper wants to contribute to filling this gap. The empirical data results from my PhD field research with women journalists in proximity radios in Burkina Faso. Based on the perspective of women journalists, the study gathered transversal data that sheds light on how they experience and perceive media development activities. The data was collected in 2019-2021 through interviews and audio diaries with a total of 10 female journalists. This paper examines media development activities and their effects on women journalists' lived experiences. The analysis uses an intersectional lens to grasp the interdependences of different power structures. Findings show how media development interventions might have both positive and negative effects on women journalists' everyday life. As such, media development activities shape the power structures within the media environment, enabling and restricting women journalists' access, interaction, and participation in content production and decision-making. The data also shows how the security situation in Burkina Faso affects women journalists in a different way and sheds light to blind spots in the efforts of NGOs to incorporate gender dimensions in their approaches. The analysis reveals the complexities in which media development interventions at times challenge and reinforce existing inequalities in the media sector.

Keywords: media (for) development, gender, women, journalists, voice, protection, proximity radio

Introduction

The field of gender media studies has a long and rich history. Since the press and the media emerged, as early as the 19th century, research about it asked at times the «gender question». To cite a few examples from German speaking journalism research of the late 19th century (see Duttenhöfer, 2009): under the pseudonym Sophie Pataky, the lexicon of German women of the feather (writers) has been published in 1898[i], Max Osborn conducted a study on women in literature and the press published in 1896[ii], and the feminist Eliza Ichenhäuser wrote in 1905 Journalism as a female profession[iii]. These examples show that women's contributions in literature, the media, and communication have always been a preoccupation for research and reflection. Similarly in Burkina Faso, a very different media context, scholarly interest in the question of women in the radio emerged at the same time with the liberalization of the airwaves in the late 1990s and the sharp increase in private radio stations (see Bâ, 1999; Somé, Kaboré, & Ilboudo, 1998).

However, it appears that particularly in research on media and development this long history of gender media studies remains invisible (Schönbächler, 2021). Even though many international, regional, and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have developed an important body of grey literature and handbooks on gender issues, its academic research remains often genderblind. Moreover, in practice, approaches that do exist seem at times top-down, required by donors and Western organizations, as it is still practised in the development sector (see Bilge, 2019 discussing the example of intersectionality in international development).

This paper critically examines the practice of media and development from a feminist perspective, highlighting the transformative and counterproductive aspects of media projects as experienced by female radio journalists in northern parts of Burkina Faso. The paper asks how media (for) development projects, intended or not, affect women journalists' work experiences in local radio stations. To do so, the paper first discusses the key concepts related to media development, gender and the media, and evaluation. It then describes how data were collected and analysed before examining in depth the different, often contradictory, practices and effects observed in the field linked to vertical and horizontal segregation, monetized training opportunities, and intersectional security threats.

Media & Development Research and Practice: A Gender-Blind Field

Media and development is a complex and fragmented field of research and practice (Benequista, Abbott, Rothman, & Mano, 2019). It can be understood in a rather broad sense or defined more narrowly. In general, the understanding and the reflections in the field depend on the definitions that are underpinning both areas: media/communication and development. Some understand the media as mainstream news media, others include video, magazines, soap operas, etc. and again others include theatre, interpersonal communication, art etc. The same is true for development. In some settings, the economic, neoliberal understanding of development as economic growth is put forth, while others emphasize on the development industry, and again others relate development to political and social cohesion and human security.

Nora Quebral coined the term development communication and the related academic field through her work in Los Baños, the Philippines. She defines it as "the science of human communication linked to the transitioning of communities from poverty in all its forms to a dynamic state of overall growth that fosters equity and the advancement of individual potential" (Quebral, 2012, p. 63). This very broad and comprehensive definition is very rich and includes the interrelations of the media/communication and development in all its diverse aspects.

However, anything then can potentially be part of the field. So, how to constitute a field?

Scholars have recently tried to define different concepts: media development, media for development, communication for social change, humanitarian communication, and media representation of development (Benequista et al., 2019; Manyozo, 2012; Scott, 2014; Vokes, 2018). Each of the concepts sets a different focus and highlights different underlying assumptions[iv]. However, it is important to note that they are not strictly separatable and that they are interdependent (Manyozo, 2012).

Media/communication for development (C4D/M4D, also including ICT4D[v]), can be considered as the vastest sub-field. The underlying assumption here is that the media or communication (or ICTs) are used in order to 'bring about behaviour change', to reach development goals, or to diffuse messages that foster development (Scott, 2014; Vokes, 2018). Manyozo (2012) links the sub-field to early theoretical perspectives of economic development and the modernization paradigm that claims that by diffusing technologies and knowledge, 'development' can be reached, in the sense of Western standards and norms (Nyamnjoh, 2010; Vokes, 2018).

Media development, on the other hand, focuses on developing the media system and structures through in-country, donor-led initiatives (Scott, 2014). As such, it is often part of the development industries, following the same guidelines, funded by the same donors, and implemented by (international) non-governmental organisations (INGOs/NGOs). The underlying assumption here is that a free and independent media environment supports Western-standard democracies and good governance (Manyozo, 2012). Projects in this sub-field include for instance the establishment and support of media outlets, training institutions, advocacy groups and journalism associations. However, the term is sometimes used in a national context to signify the development of the media system per se, without the emphasis of outside actors from the development sector (see for instance Rodny-Gumede, 2015).

Unlike the previous two sub-fields, which are based on Western epistemologies and norms, the third approach draws from the critique of these approaches that emerged particularly in Latin America (see Gumucio Dagrón, 2001, 2008; Huesca, 2008; Servaes, 1996; White, Nair, & Ashcroft, 1994). Communication for social change or participatory communication draws from Freire's pedagogy and postcolonial critique (Servaes, 1996). The assumption is that only if communities are at the centre of development processes, the goals can be achieved. To do so, participatory communication processes are key (Manyozo, 2012). Knowledge and processes must be co-constructed from the margins. As such, participatory approaches focus much more on the process, than on the message or structures (Manyozo, 2012).

A fourth, less commonly distinguished approach can be the analysis of how media report about development (Enghel & Noske-Turner, 2018; Scott, 2014). However, this article is focusing on the previous three approaches.

When it comes to gender and feminist perspectives in the literature on media and development, it is important to note that there is a big difference in the quantity of grey literature on the issue and scientific literature. The various organizations and institutions working at the intersection of the media and development have produced a huge amount of handbooks, guidelines, and publications on gender (in)equality and the media. However, the scientific literature is scarce. A literature review, I conducted in 2021, highlights the often narrow, binary, and developmentalist perception of gender on which research on media, gender, and development is based (Schönbächler, 2021). Approaches discussed in the literature include

tokenist approaches like the "add-women-and-stir" approach (see Geertsema-Sligh, 2019, p. 214) and the liberal feminist approach that aim at having a 'critical number' of women in decision-making positions in order to promote more gender equality in the media sector (see Byerly, 2019).

A common finding is that even though women are listening to radios, radios are not listening to women (Fortune & Chungong, 2013, p. 87). This holds true for the literature on media development:

> Women are only mentioned tangentially in literature on media development specifically. Very little research has been done in this area and a review of the literature shows that the field is male dominated and mostly gender blind. Literature on media development often treats women as an afterthought, for example by listing women as one of the marginalised and disadvantaged groups that should be focused on. (Geertsema-Sligh, 2019, p. 209)

This claim was supported by my literature review, where I found little mentions of "gender" and "women" in general, and if so, they were mostly in relation to gender equality as a development goal, or as one of many marginalised groups or categories (Schönbächler, 2021, p. 12).

As the literature on the media and development is generally genderblind, it is of no surprise that the indirect and unintended effects of media development practices are under-researched. One way how research interacts with media (for) development practice is through project evaluations. However, scholars have criticised the fundamental problem of the field. They argue that the lack of theoretical foundation renders evaluation difficult. Without a clear theoretical ground, it is not clear what and how to evaluate (Abbott, 2019). Noske-Turner (2017) has criticised the "quick and dirty bureaucratic evaluation" (see Chapter 2). Moreover, she problematizes the weak methodologies of many evaluations in the field, their use of 'global' indicators, their recurrent lack of baseline data, as well as the absence of genuine participatory approaches in evaluation. Therefore, calls for new and more reflexive approaches to evaluation in the field of media and development have emerged. Lennie and Tacchi (2013), for instance, have called for "new conceptualizations of social change that emphasize the contradictions and paradoxes of the process" (p. 1) as opposed to simple linear cause-effect models based on categorizations, predetermined outcomes, and upward accountability (p. 2). The authors argue that social change is highly complex, non-linear and often contradictory. A process that cannot be understood by simplistic models of cause-effect impact assessment methodologies.

Research Question and Approach

Even though the evaluation of media development was not the central topic of my PhD research, I was able to detect such unintended (often contradictory) effects of media development projects thanks to the broad scope of my research question. As such, my investigation was neither focussing on a particular project nor testing a predefined hypothesis. The present paper, therefore, asks how media (for) development projects, intended or not, affect women journalists' work experiences in local radio stations in Burkina Faso.

The paper is making use of the data collected for my PhD research in Burkina Faso between 2019 and 2021. It includes the recording of radio programs, programming grids, interviews with radio staff, and a diary study with female journalists. In total, 14 proximity radio stations in northern parts of Burkina Faso were part of the research. This includes associative, commercial, public, and religious radios. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with

managing and editorial staff. The diary study with female journalists comprises an initial interview, followed by a week-long audio diary held by the journalists, and a second follow-up interview. Out of the 14 radio stations that participated in the research, ten female journalists accepted to participate, of which six were able to complete the full diary process and four did only the initial interview due to time restrictions.

The diaries were analysed according to a multi-level intersectional framework adapted from Winker and Degele (2009). Their analytical approach is based on three levels: individual, representational, and structural level. To which a fourth level was added, the relational level, according to previous work done by feminist scholars, such as Anthias (1998, 2013) and Yuval-Davis (2006), and peace scholars, such as Lederach (2003, 2005). The analysis proposes an inductive approach to categories of inequality. As such, the approach allows one to go beyond the limits of dominant Western understandings of gender, race, class, and body. Particularly in non-Western context, such an open approach allows for unexpected configurations and materializations of power relations to be detected.

In the first step, the interview-diary transcriptions were coded line by line according to the four levels. The individual level included data on identity formation and personal experiences, the relational level focuses on interpersonal relationships, the representational level includes norms, values, symbolic orders and discourses, and the structural level includes societal structures, organizations, hierarchies, but also professional structures in the media outlet. Once the interview-diary material was coded by these levels, each case (read journalist) was analysed individually by level and the interrelations between them as suggested by Ganz and Hausotter (2020). The multilevel analysis found different aspects relevant for female journalists: entering the profession, working conditions, radio practices, personal aspects, and societal dimensions.

Interviews with radio directors and editors were coded thematically in order to contextualize the intersectional analysis. Moreover, the programming grids were analysed inductively in order to understand the scope and breadth of their programs as well as to situate women's participation in them. The 178 hours of recorded radio programs collected were analysed according to their radiophonic genre, gender of the host, women's voices, and topics. The findings show a general marginalization of women's voices with only 20% of female guests, 16% of shows hosted by female journalists, 12% of airtime for female voices, and only 7% of all call-ins came from women. Even though not representative in its sampling, the analysis shows a clear gender gap.

Context

Burkina Faso, a small landlocked country in West Africa, has long been a peaceful island in the Sahel. The religious and communitarian coexistence was and still is a key strength of the 'country of upright people'. Despite the economic and political challenges, the media landscape has long been one of the freest and best-rated on the continent (see RSF, 2022). Since the 1990s, the media system has been liberalized and many private, mostly local radio stations, have emerged. In 2018, the country of 20 million people had 154 functioning radio stations (Lamizana et al., 2018). This number, and the importance of orality, indicate that radio remains the most widespread and accessible medium in the country (Balima & Frère, 2003; Capitant, 2008; Frère, 2016; Lamizana et al., 2018). However, a free and diverse mediascape is not a fait accompli. Press freedom is a continuous struggle. As such, the murder of investigative journalist Norbert Zongo in 1998 led to social unrest that can be drawn until the 2014 popular uprising that led to the ousting of long-time president Blaise Compaoré (Soré, 2008). Since then, the national press freedom index indicates a brief improvement in the situation with its climax in 2018 (Yaméogo,

2022), and declining rapidly since the security situation deteriorated drastically from 2014 due to internal political struggles, transnational terrorism, and the rise of criminal networks. However, not only non-state armed groups threaten press freedom, but also government measures and counter-terrorism strategies curtail the freedom of expression (see RSF, 2021). In this tense and difficult situation, proximity radio stations face particular dilemmas. Without resources to protect their staff and station, many hide behind self-censorship and silence in relation to the armed conflict (Yaméogo, 2018).

Findings

Media & Development Projects in Proximity Radios

Community media (Boafo, 2000; Fraser & Restrepo Estrada, 2001; Opubor, 2000), indigenous media (Akrofi-Quarcoo & Gadzekpo, 2020), alternative media (Atton, 2002; Bailey, Cammaerts, & Carpentier, 2007; Kenix, 2011; Kidd, 1999), citizen media (Rodríguez, 2011), or, how they are most commonly labelled in West Africa: proximity radios (Ba, 2003; Munimi Osung, 2022) are important elements of many African media landscapes (Balima, 1980; Capitant, 2008; Tudesq, 2002). The same is true for Burkina Faso (Balima & Frère, 2003). It remains the most accessible medium, particularly in rural areas.

However, proximity radios are often in precarious economic situations and therefore depend on foreign funding and development assistance (Frère, 2016; Munimi Osung, 2022). During my field research, I visited and engaged with very different radio stations. Some have many partnerships and are involved in a multitude of projects with different partners; some seem to depend on one big project, hoping that it will last for a long time; while others, particularly in smaller localities, are rarely able to secure funds from international organizations. The situation was particularly difficult for radio stations in so-called red zones[vi], severely impacted by the insecurity situation. Staff in these areas complain that they cannot do anything anymore due to security risks attached to their work. As one chief of program explains, the security of staff goes before extra funds:

> We do not leave [the city] anymore. We decided not to leave [the city] because (.) the situation does not allow it. But within the city, there is no problem, we work normally. But some kilometres outside the city, really, we are afraid. Because recently we were supposed to do some radio programs with a partner on the ground, but we told them clearly that we cannot go (.) it would have been extra income for us, but we have to exist to work. If you don't exist, you cannot work. (chief of program L5, Ouagadougou, 2019)

The data gathered for my dissertation and the four years of engaging with the proximity radio stations, show that all different types of media (for) development approaches coexist. Media development projects include journalism trainings (see below), supporting journalist associations, supporting reporting, events, and lobbying for press freedom. To name an example: the International Festival for the Freedom of the Press and Expression (FILEP) has been supported by different partners for years, as well as the national report on the freedom of the press produced by the National Press Centre/Norbert Zongo which is supported by Deutsche Welle Akademie (DWA). Fondation Hirondelle created a youth radio studio, Studio Yafa, producing content to be broadcasted by a network of proximity radio stations throughout the country. A similar approach is also done by the Union Nationale de l'Audiovisuel Libre du Faso (UNALFA) in their weekly youth magazine. And UNICEF supports the production of educational radio programs (PER).

Media for development projects often focus on health and family planning. Two women journalists participating in my research were the main hosts of such programs. But airwaves are also full of spots and microprograms aiming at awareness raising on environmental protection, health, tax collection, peace etc. financed by international organizations and state administration.

Even though the radio programs recorded for my PhD show a wide variety of radio content supported, funded, produced, or co-produced by development agencies, NGOs, and state administration, only rarely however, are these programs indicated in the programming grids. The analysis of the programming grids of 14 proximity radio stations shows that externally produced content (excluding publicity and spots) makes up less than 5% of the allocated weekly airtime.

The content analysis of recorded radio shows found different approaches to radio content production related to (media) development projects. Projects or partners can pre-produce radio programs themselves and have them broadcasted by radio stations (external production). They can also send a written script which is then translated and interpreted live on air by local radio staff (scripted programs). There is also the common practice of publi-reportage (see Frère, 2016), where organisations pay for a certain reportage or radio program, which then is produced by radio staff (commissioned production). Finally, there are some projects that support participatory radio shows that are produced by radio stations in close collaboration with the community (participatory production). However, these participatory projects seem rather rare.

Vertical and horizontal segregation

The media landscape in Burkina Faso is highly gendered. Yaméogo (2017) found that in 2016, women make up only 25% of the workforce and only 5% in positions of decision-making. And even if they are appointed to leadership positions they are mostly secondary positions linked to administration, accounting, marketing etc. and only rarely to editorial and managing positions (Yaméogo, 2017). This shows a clear glass ceiling[vii]. This situation can be partly explained by the societal norm that sees journalism as 'incompatible with the female condition' (Somé et al., 1998; Soré, 2012; Yaméogo, 2017). Moreover, I found indications in my dissertation that intersectional inequalities further explain why women might not access leadership positions in the media as easily. I found a high symbolic (though not legal) value of formal higher education degrees, which discourages people without these degrees to take up responsibilities within the media. Elsewhere we found that radio directors tend to hold, more often, university degrees and tend to be more literate in French, whereas particularly listeners hold, more often, non or primary school degrees but are more often literate in indigenous languages (see also Schönbächler & Yaméogo, 2022). Education, particularly secondary and university level education, is still gendered in Burkina Faso and shows a strong rural/urban divide (INSD, 2022). Hence, women journalists from rural areas are less likely to access university education and therefore less access to leadership positions in the media. It is important to note however that formal education is by no means a legal precondition for journalists to access the profession (CNPNZ, 2016). However, progression remains in the hands of a patriarchal system that impedes female leadership (Soré, 2012).

When it comes to horizontal segregation, Yaméogo (2017, 2021) illustrated that women are better represented in television (36.8%) and online media (30.30%), than in written press (20.45%); and women are particularly underrepresented and underestimated in technical positions.

For the present study, it is particularly interesting to look at media (for) development's impact on women's employment in the media. In my sample, 4 out of 10 female journalists were hired on a project, and currently, 5 female journalists work for media projects. This has contradictory effects on women's working conditions. On the one hand, it might be only thanks to project funding that journalists can be hired. For instance, a female journalist mentioned that she often got hired on different projects with different partners before the security situation deteriorated:

> We had lots of partners coming to the radio. And they always wanted me to be the main presenter in this kind of projects, like radio programs, radio dramas and even animations in the villages (G, female journalist)

On the other hand, their contracts link them to the project cycles. This can be experienced as very precarious as the decision whether a project is continued or not can come very late, as this example shows:

> It is a partnership they sign each year. This year, it ends on September 30. Last year there was no interruption. When it finished, they continued directly. […] this year it ends on September 30th, I don't know if they will continue directly or not. We have to wait for the 30 September to see what will happen (K, female journalist, WhatsApp conversation on September 17th).

Moreover, being hired on a project rather than the radio itself can be a barrier to progress in the media outlet and the profession as a whole.

There is not much research in Burkina Faso that investigates gendered dynamics in media development projects. Nonetheless, the combined processes of gendered societal expectations, gender mainstreaming in development projects, and female journalist's personal commitment towards gender equality, education, and family topics are starting points to explain why female journalists more often treat "social" topics (Ramey, Sangaré Compaoré, & Damianova, 2019, p. 36; Soré, 2012). Women-specific media spaces do not automatically constitute a problem. Damome (2010), for instance, argued in the case of the women's radio Munyu, that the radio was able to constitute counter-hegemonic discourses and to contribute to gender equality thanks to its 'women's focus'. However, the problem emerges when media spaces for women are not valued equally to the male-dominated mainstream (see Ramey et al., 2019; Yaméogo, 2017). Because then the risk is big that women's spaces are cut when more airtime is needed for content that is perceived as more important or profitable. This happened to two research participants, J and K, who saw their own women's shows suspended to leave airtime for project-related shows.

Monetization of Journalism Trainings: Negative and Positive Discrimination

As Frère (2016) and Munimi Osung (2022) highlight, media development plays an important role in journalism training in sub-Sahara Africa. This is reflected in my data. Most of my interviewees are not formally trained in journalism (only one female journalist studied journalism at the university).

> I have learnt everything at the radio. If partners wanted radio programs, they would send us to get trained. But the radio has never sent us to any training or school for journalism. (G, female journalist).

Therefore, media development supported trainings - despite their lack of coordination, unsystematic approach, and discrimination – are key elements of media development and contribute to the professionalization of journalists (Frère, 2016). However, training opportunities are not open to all journalists to the same extent. Women journalists seemingly agreed when

expressing their frustration of not gaining the same opportunities as their male colleagues: "It's men only who go to training. It is only men who go". (G, female journalist).

Apart from gender as a factor that influences decision-making related to participation in training, it seems that implicit discrimination increases existing inequalities. Several respondents mentioned that the management would send those to trainings who already know and produce their own radio shows, instead of giving the opportunity to staff members who need capacity building:

> It is true that those who produce radio shows are sent to trainings. But not all the time! Also those without experience should get the chance to attend trainings so that they can also produce radio programs (J, female journalist)

This can be linked to the lack of a systematic, long-term, and strategic approach to career development and capacity building. On the other hand, it is important to note that due to the precarious economic situation of radio stations, journalists tend to move a lot and might leave to work in NGOs or PR once they were able to strengthen their competencies (Frère, 2016).

An important finding of my research is related to economic incentives and their consequences. The practice of paying per diem allowances for participating in trainings (and other activities) has led to a monetization of media development activities (Frère, 2016). This monetization affected the interests and decision-making practices related to them. Sanner and Sæbø (2014) talk about monopolizing behaviour of senior management. The data collected for my dissertation shows how gender, education, and economic interests are intersecting when it comes to deciding who participates in activities. A female journalist in maternity leave puts it very bluntly: "But the African [man] considers training only for the money, it is only the allowances that he likes" (E, female journalist). As such, trainings and media development activities are considered more for their economic advantage, as "income-enhancing" (Erasmus, Lötter, Tannous, & Stewart, 2018), than their central aim that should be capacity building.

As gendered societal role understandings attribute productive and income-generating roles to the typically male head of a household (Badini Kinda, 2018), the monetization of trainings might be disadvantaging women, as their productive role is considered secondary. This is illustrated very well by an example told by E: According to her, the former director of the radio station decided that a woman should participate in training, and she was already preparing for her trip to the capital. But at the last minute, the director changed his mind and argued that a male colleague should go to the training because his wife is sick and that he needs the money from the training to care for his hospitalized wife.

This is an example that illustrates well the general perception of discrimination expressed by almost all female journalists. However, the absence or underrepresentation of female participants in trainings and media development activities did not go unnoticed by (media) development organizations. Many have been implementing what can be called positive discrimination to promote female participation. Women journalists in my research have strongly emphasized that their chances to participate increase when the call for participation explicitly asks for female participants

> If in the invitation they say that they need two or even three women, they won't let men participate. But if the invitation does not specify, they will send two men. (E, female journalist)
>
> Since the gender quota, all trainings are asking that there is at least one woman. Therefore, women are now benefitting from the same trainings as men (B, female journalist)

Here, the contradictory practices and effects of media development practices come to light. Whereas the economic incentive of per diems indirectly leads to untransparent decision-making processes that disadvantage women, the explicit positive discrimination counteracts these incentives, so that female journalists can also profit from capacity building and economic incentives.

Intersectional security threats

The degrading security situation in Burkina Faso heavily impacts the media system, including proximity radio stations. In the first phase, the impact was mostly felt through direct threats posed by individuals and armed groups. Many misused interactive radio shows to threaten radio stations, their staff, and their families. These threats mostly concerned content that was considered contrary to the armed groups' interests and values (Yaméogo, 2018). However, my research argues that they rarely aim at silencing the radio stations as a whole, because they also depend on the information and communications aired. Later on, governmental measures to counter terrorist-related violence, such as a law against dis/misinformation, impacted radio stations indirectly, being afraid to broadcast false information and being fined or even incarcerated because of that (see RFI, 2019; RSF, 2021). In 2021, Radio Omega FM in the capital was suspended for five days because they diffused wrong information (RFI, 2021). During the latest military coups in 2021 and 2022, media was put under pressure and mobile internet was partly cut (Yaméogo, 2022).

While these later government-related measures impact all journalists and activists similarly, Yaméogo (2017, 2018) highlighted already in 2017 the gendered dynamic of on-air threats. Therefore, I will concentrate on this issue here. There have been some cases in which female journalists have been directly addressed by threats. E tells the story how the other radio station in her locality was threatened:

> [the other radio station] was targeted once. They were live on air. And someone called to, tell the husband of the woman [host], to stay at home, to look after the children etc. they do not even want to hear a woman talk on the radio, we are not even talking about shows about the school, family planning, all of that, they do not want that we talk about it (E, female journalist)

The main topics that were often targeted by armed groups include schooling, forced/early marriage, family planning, female genital mutilation and other topics related to gender, religion, or education. However, these topics are often supported or commissioned by development projects. Moreover, as mentioned above, horizontal segregation leads to more female journalists hosting, presenting, and producing these radio programs. Hence, female journalists seem to be more likely to be exposed to on-air threats.

It is important to consider terrorist-related violence and threat intersectionally. Gender, education, schooling, development and religion - topics that are highly exposed to threats - are closely linked to coloniality and colonial continuities (see Lugones, 2008/2016; Quijano, 2007).

Another aspect to consider is the participatory ideal (or paradigm) in development that is also transposed to media development (Drefs & Thomaß, 2019). This idea can explain the preference of many media (for) communication projects to include interactive components in their radio programs, such as call-in elements. However, this preference for interactive formats and the lack of refined technologies to control interaction opens the doors for armed groups and individuals to pose threats easily on air. That is why many radio stations suspended interactive radio shows (see Santos & Schönbächler, 2022).

Figure 1 shows how intersectional experiences of women journalists can be analysed through the radio formats, the topics talked about, and the threats posed. Different contexts, formats, and topics can have different implications for male and female journalists, as highlighted above. Hence, I argue that by ignoring the intersectional dynamics of the threats addressed to radio stations, media development actors are missing to understand that gender and coloniality cannot be separated from each other and shape how (women) journalists experience insecurity. Acknowledging these intersections is the first step in respecting the do-no-harm principles.
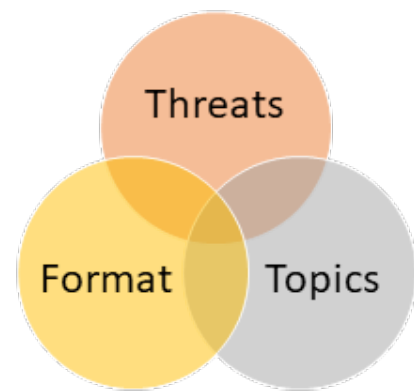

Figure 1: Elements of intersectional analysis

Discussion:
A trade-off between voice and protection

The above presentation of major research findings linked to intersectional perspectives of media (for) development projects has highlighted the following aspects: The scope and practices of a development project in Burkinabè media spheres, the vertical and horizontal segregation in the field, the contradictory practices in journalism trainings, and the intersectionality of insecurity. These aspects together render an important trade-off visible - voice vs. protection (Table 1).

Format/Production	Voice	Protection
Interactive shows	Participatory	Vulnerable to abuse
Internal productions	Control over production	Radio's responsibility
Scripted shows	Negotiated agency	Negotiated protection
External productions	No voice/agency	Responsibility externalized

Source: Own elaboration

Table 1: Voice and protection according to different approaches to media (for) development

As mentioned above, media (for) development projects   make use of different content production approaches:

- participatory/interactive approaches in which the audience is an important element that shapes the content and discourses aired though call-in or participatory shows.

- Internal (commissioned) radio production where the radio station is in control of angles and production processes.

- Scripted approaches to content production are based on a written (mostly French) script that is sent to the radio stations and translated and interpreted by local radio staff. These shows at times include interactive elements, but not with the aim to control the discourses.

- External productions are radio shows that are completely pre-produced and only broadcasted by the partner radio stations.

These four approaches highlight different degrees of agency: While participatory and interactive approaches allow for the community and listeners to intervene and co-shape the content and discourses, internal production situate the responsibility and voice within the radio stations, and scripted productions only allow for a partial control over the content through the practice of translation and storytelling by local staff. External productions that are pre-produced do not offer space for local staff or listeners to intervene in the content and situate responsibility within external entities.

However, when it comes to aspects of protection and risk exposure, the tendency goes the opposite way: while participatory and interactive approaches are highly exposed to the risk of abuse through armed groups in the context of insecurity, external productions seem to protect local staff as it is neither their voices nor their responsibility that is enacted: "as it is not with our voices […] it is not us that gives commentaries" (E, female journalist).

Scripted productions are situated in between, with local staff's voices being heard, but limiting their responsibility over the content as it was prepared by a project or organisation.

The problem with media (for) development projects in contexts of insecurity lies in the lack of participation of local journalists in decision-making about the approaches of the projects which they then have to implement. As they are the most exposed to the risks related to the radio shows presented or hosted, media (for) development projects should include local staff in the decision-making when it comes to choosing an approach to content production.

Figure 1 above shows how intersectional experiences of women journalists can be analysed through radio formats, the topics talked about, and the threats posed. Threats are inherently linked to coloniality/gender/education/modernity. However, horizontal segregation leads to more women hosting and presenting these topics. Moreover, media (for) development approaches prefer interactive/participatory approaches and therefore increase the risk of abusive calls in live broadcasting. As such, we can see that complex intersectional dynamics result in female journalists being particularly exposed through media (for) development projects in proximity radio stations in Burkina Faso. At the same time, they are less likely to access decision-making positions (vertical segregation) and gain training opportunities.

However, this risk can be mitigated through the trade-off summarized in Table 1. Externally produced content can be a way for radio stations to talk about certain topics while at the same time limiting their staff's exposure to risk. Yet, this option leaves them without voice and agency. There might not be a perfect solution in these complex situations.

Therefore, this article calls for intersectional analyses of insecurity that should guide the design of media (for) development projects in order to respect do-no-harm principles and to avoid increasing existing inequalities, by actively including women journalists in training programs and in decision-making related to media (for) development projects. So that the people who are actually exposed to the threats can co-decide on the risk they want to take.

Conclusion

This paper rendered unintended and contradictory effects of media (for) development projects in proximity radio stations in Burkina Faso visible through the perspective of female journalists. The broad intersectional approach allowed to perceive contextual dynamics linked to gender, coloniality, education, and economic conditions. The data indicates that media (for) development projects are omnipresent in Burkinabè media landscape, mainly through media development and media for development. Four ways in which projects engage with radio content production were

identified: participatory production, (commissioned) internal production, scripted production, and external productions. The paper illustrates the vertical and horizontal segregation that shapes work experiences and career progression of female journalists. Media (for) development indirectly contributes to horizontal segregation that assigns female journalists 'female' topics, related to social issues, 'women's issues', education, (reproductive) health etc. When it comes to journalism training, a key area of media development, contradictory dynamics came to light: on the one hand, female journalists express unequal access to training opportunities, a tendency that is aggravated through the monetization of training with per diem practices (negative discrimination); on the other hand, female journalists agree that their chances to attend trainings increase when female participation is explicitly required (positive discrimination). Finally, the paper discussed the intersectional dynamics linked to the insecurity situation in Burkina Faso. Here, gender, coloniality, and modernity are challenged by extremist groups, posing threats on air. However, horizontal segregation and interactive radio programs expose female journalists to greater risk. A trade-off is being pointed out, which trades voice/agency against protection. Hence, to respect do-no-harm principles, media (for) development should engage critically and intersectionally with this trade-off, including the exposed journalists in the decision-making over topics and formats of media (for) development radio productions.

Notes

[i] Sophie Pataky. Lexikon deutscher Frauen der Feder: Eine Zusammenstellung der seit dem Jahre 1840 erschienenen Werke weiblicher Autoren, nebst Biographieen der lebenden und einem Verzeichnis der Pseudonyme. Berlin: Carl Pataky Verlag, 1898 (Volume 1 und 2). https://www.deutschestextarchiv.de/book/show/pataky_lexikon01_1898

[ii] Max Osborn . Die Frauen in Litteratur und Presse. Berlin: Taendler, 1896. Reprint 1924 accessible online https://dp.la/item/9db6562931f8a903850d05bece04a24b

[iii] Eliza Ichenhäuser. Die Journalistik als Frauenberuf. Berlin & Leipzig: Verlag der Frauen-Rundschau , 1905. https://publikationen.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/frontdoor/index/index/docId/15823

[iv] You can find an overview of the three main concepts in Manyozo (2012, pp. 19–20)

[v] Even though Manyozo (2012) considers ICT4D as an approach that transgresses the three other sub-fields of media development, media for development, and communication for social change.

[vi] Red zones are often labelled as such by foreign offices, particularly France and US. Hagberg (2019) highlights the discursive foundation of such labels and the political interests that impact the people living in these areas, isolating them further.

[vii] An exceptional case is Radio Munyu, a women's radio station which must be led by a female director (personal communication with the director in 2021).

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