

of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, other key human rights documents in Créole, and Créole posters illustrating specific rights.

Media are a rather unique and important piece of civil society, and of the larger human rights promotion and protection puzzle. They often need a greater awareness of what their role is in promoting and protecting human rights, the skills and resources to do it, and legislated defences to allow them to play their role. HROs can build or facilitate the building of media capacity in some of these areas.

Investigative journalism and the skills of publishing or producing and transmitting over radio and television are skills that can be relatively easily taught. Less amenable to capacity building by an HRO is the provision of resources to function, or defending against government and private censorship or other impediments to media freedom of expression.²¹² Avenues for stifling media dissent include spurious libel charges, restrictions based on threats to national security or public order, or cutting off of supplies of imported newsprint. These are important issues for HRO and will require innovative approaches.²¹³

Human rights capacity building for civil society can draw HROs into the political arena between government and NGOs, opposition groups, and media. Therefore HROs must proceed with caution, but proceed they must. A strong human rights ethic and professionalism amongst key civil society components, will provide the most effective long term pressure for government to meet its human rights obligations. To avoid unnecessarily antagonizing the government yet facilitate the strengthening of civil society, HROs need to be innovative on their programming and on using others such as international NGOs as proxies.

Recommendation #62

It is recommended that an HRO facilitate the building of civil society's human rights capacity, this being the most effective strategy for long term human rights protection.

²¹² For a full listing of limits to freedom of expression and legal defences against such unreasonable censorship, see Sandra Colliver, *The Article 19 Freedom of Expression Manual*, August 1993, Article 19, London UK. pp. 284.

²¹³ A related but separate topic is the need for media capacity within both an HRO and the larger UN operation, and this is dealt with in chapter 5.