

MDDA celebrates World Radio Day

As yesterday, Monday, 13 February 2012, was World Radio Day, the Media Development and Diversity Agency ([MDDA](#)), called on South Africans to celebrate radio broadcast, improve international cooperation among radio broadcasters and encourage decision-makers to create and provide access to information through radio, including community radios.



The day is proclaimed by [UNESCO](#), as an occasion to draw attention to the unique value of radio, which remains the medium to reach the widest audience and is currently taking up new technological forms and devices.

Speed up transformation

In South Africa, we are celebrating 76 years of SABC Radio, 18 years of community radio and 62 years of commercial radio. Mention must be made of Radio Freedom, which transmitted from the 60s to the 90s.

Radio continues to play a significant role in helping people in all their diversity to communicate with each other in order to strengthen our democracy, promote a culture of human rights and enable all to participate fully in our economic growth and speed up transformation and development.

Empower citizens

Radio is even more important in SA, where the rate of illiteracy is reported to stand at around 18% of adults over 15 years old (about 9-million adults are not functionally literate). Radio reaches almost every corner of our country, rural, peri-urban and urban. Radio has informed, educated and entertained our citizens even during the apartheid days, Radio Freedom and community radio (through cassettes, campaigns, etc.) continued to empower citizens with alternative information.

Every citizen irrespective of their social class, (wherever located, rural or urban, poor or rich) should have access to a choice of a diverse range of media. Access to communication and information empowers citizens, facilitates participatory democracy and assists in defending, advancing and deepening our democracy. We must support and create an enabling environment for media development and diversity so that we can look forward to many years of radio.

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