



# COLOMBIA Media Landscape Guide

MARCH 2022



## Preface

This guide is one of a series of Media Landscape Guides which map the media landscape in different countries. The guides have been produced by the CDAC Network in cooperation with DW Akademie and supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. This project is part of the global initiative “Transparency and media freedom - Crisis resilience in the pandemic”.

*CDAC Network would like to thank David Alejandro Schoeller-Diaz, Lead Author and Researcher and Sayuri Raigoza Rivera, Research Assistant on the Colombia Media Landscape Guide. We would also like to thank Sarah Routley and her HRI Ltd. Team for the methodology design and support to the finalisation of the guide and Rose Marsh, HRI’s Writing and Editing Assistant. This work has been made possible with inputs from individuals and organisations working in media, government, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and CDAC Network partners who kindly agreed to provide valuable insights to the research.*

Take a look at all of CDAC’s Media Landscape Guides, available in multiple languages, here: <https://www.cdacnetwork.org/media-landscape-guides>

*This Media Landscape Guide was written and edited between April and October 2021.*

# Contents

SECTION 1: Introduction	4
1.1 Purpose And Intended User	5
1.2 What Does The Guide Cover And Why It Is Needed	5
1.3 Methodology	5
1.4 Potential Role Of The Guide In Disasters	5
SECTION 2: Overview Of Communications Culture	6
2.1 Communications Culture	6
2.2 Media Landscape At A Glance	6
2.3 Language And Dialects In The Media	10
2.4 Barriers To Media Access	11
2.5 Media Preferences And Trusted Media	12
2.6 Two-Way Communication With Communities	14
SECTION 3: The Media In Disasters With A Focus On Covid-19	15
3.1 Disasters Overview	15
3.2 The Role Of The Media In Disaster Response	16
SECTION 4: Media Overview	18
4.1 Digital Media Platforms	18
4.2 Social Media Platforms	18
4.3 Television Stations	19
4.4 Radio Channels	21
4.5 Print Media	22
4.6 Traditional Forms Of Communication	23
4.7 Media Training Opportunities	23

---



## SECTION I:

# Introduction

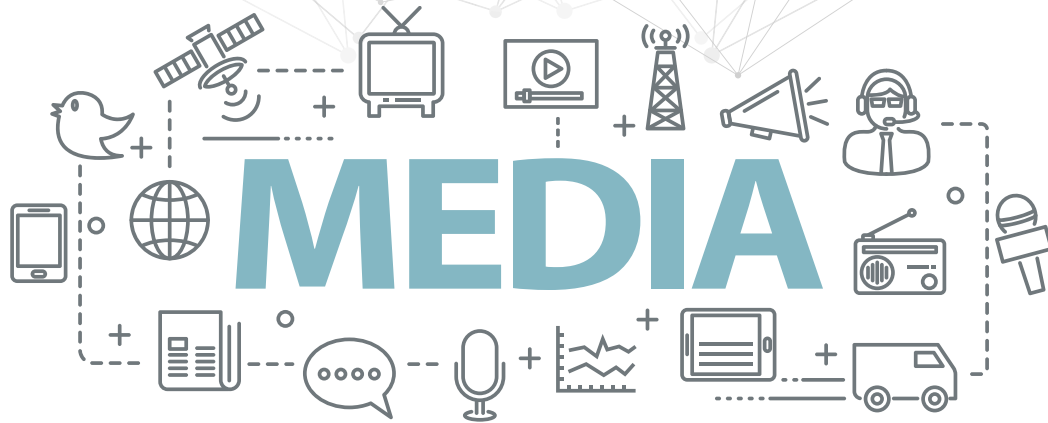
## 1.1 About The Guide

This Media Landscape Guide provides a snapshot of the media in Colombia, including the audiences, the producers, the preferences of different groups in the community, the communications culture, and the languages associated with the media. It gives an insight into the role of media in development work, crisis preparedness, recent disasters, and the (at time of writing) ongoing COVID-19 response. The guide also gives an overview of each media sector including, digital and social media, radio, television, print and other traditional forms of mass communication.

It should be noted that with the constantly changing nature of the media landscape, this is not a comprehensive overview of all media outlets and platforms but rather a snapshot summary of those most relevant at the time of writing.

The guide has been written as an introduction to help organisations and individuals engage with media in their work. For example, it can be used by:

- » Community, development, and humanitarian organisations; government and local authorities; non-government organisations (NGOs) and UN relief agencies to work with the media on community engagement, communication, outreach, and messaging and mobilisation.
- » Development workers building societal resilience to disasters by working with media in disaster preparedness.
- » Relief workers using media to engage communities to work together in early recovery from crises.
- » Media outlets (including news outlets): to improve their communication and engagement with different groups, particularly during disasters.
- » Media Development Organisations: to inform advocacy and capacity-building work to improve people's access to quality information and further development goals through better outreach.



## 1.2 What Does The Guide Cover And Why It Is Needed

Without an understanding of how a society communicates, any communication efforts may struggle and potentially miss large numbers of those for which those efforts are intended. This can cause difficulties when attempting to work with the community in a development project; in an emergency, it could be even worse, as an incoming relief operation may not have time to carry out audience research before communicating vital information, without which communication may use the wrong channels and miss those who need it. However, by engaging media in a country, you are engaging vital partners who know the communications landscape of any given country well and have the means by which to effectively disseminate information.

The aim of this guide is to act as a starting point for communicators, indicating the most effective media to use to communicate with different demographics. Many existing resources for identifying media users and audiences in Colombia are either out of date or limited in scope: this guide will help identify which media is operable at the time of writing and so help facilitate the communication of reliable, trusted and timely information, helping to make the media part of the solution in a humanitarian response.

## 1.3 Methodology

Research for the guide was carried out in-country and aided by an in-country reference group who provided guidance, expert advice, and quality assurance. Information and data were collected through a detailed desk review and interviews. Interviews were carried out with media organisations, media experts and academic researchers, government officials, media staff (including producers and journalists), humanitarian agencies, UN agencies, and NGOs.

## 1.4 Potential Role Of The Guide In Disaster Preparedness And Crisis Response

Effective, consistent, and timely communication is vital in humanitarian response and in building sustainable early recovery from crises. Communities, authorities, and responders must be kept informed of the situation of any disaster and planned response, and of any actions they need to take. Proactive communication to dispel rumours or misinformation is vital, as is the building of trust with audiences, which can be facilitated through developing mechanisms for two-way communication. The media can also play a proactive role in early warning which can influence population and response behaviour and potentially mitigate the effects of a disaster.

In aid responses and disaster preparedness it is important to know how best to use media to reach marginalised groups, with considerations of literacy levels and language preferences. It is also important to be aware of, and to address, any enhanced needs, risks, and information gaps. Good communication requires creative thinking, adapting communication tools, message formats. Working with existing media professionals can help to achieve this.

This guide is intended to help practitioners improve their communication, particularly during humanitarian responses – whether they work in the media or are using it to reach affected communities. The goal is for it to be used to improve communications, messaging and information dissemination and contribute to an effective response.

## SECTION 2:

# Overview Of Communications Culture

THIS SECTION GIVES AN OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT MEDIA LANDSCAPE IN COLOMBIA, INCLUDING DIGITAL, SOCIAL MEDIA, TELEVISION, RADIO, AND PRINT. IT LOOKS AT LANGUAGE CONSTRAINTS AND OTHER BARRIERS TO ACCESSING MEDIA AND GIVES AN OVERVIEW OF THE MEDIA PREFERENCES OF DIFFERENT GROUPS.

## 2.1 Communications Culture

Colombia is the fifth largest Latin American country, covering 1.143 million km, and has the fourth highest GDP of US\$271 billion.<sup>2</sup> It is affected by substantial humanitarian challenges, vulnerabilities, and risks, as it continues to be afflicted by violent dynamics that draw their roots from one of the longest-lasting armed conflicts in the world, between the government and different internal groups in Colombia, including notably FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia)<sup>3</sup>. While per capita GDP is US\$5,332 annually, or US\$14 per day, only inhabitants of the capital district of Bogota and six out of 32 departments, Antioquia, Valle del Cauca, Santander, Boyaca, Casanare, and Meta, earn above the national average. Meanwhile, those who live in impoverished departments like Choco, La Guajira, Nariño, Guaviare, and Norte de Santander, on average earn less than US\$7 per day.<sup>4</sup> It is no coincidence that these are among the most vulnerable departments to humanitarian crises.

Colombia faces historic problems of extreme land and income concentration amongst the wealthy, precarious rural development, social divisions, marginalisation, and gender-based violence (GBV). While the country is the second most biodiverse in the world, and the most biodiverse per square kilometre,<sup>5</sup> its natural wealth is threatened by illicit crop cultivation, illegal mining, and deforestation.

There are substantial differences in the communication cultures in Colombia between, for example, the mestizo elites in Bogota, working class IDPs and host communities in complex urban landscapes, small-scale farmers in conflict-affected rural areas, historically marginalised indigenous and afro-descendant communities, and refugees and migrants from Venezuela. Therefore, cultural awareness and sensitivity are required when putting together communications and community engagement plans, which should be sensitive to issues of region, culture and class.

## 2.2 Media Landscape At A Glance

The Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2021 states, “Colombian media has historically been dominated by publishers and broadcasters with strong ties to the political and business elites”.<sup>6</sup> Despite the relatively high number of overall media outlets, the main TV, radio, and newspaper outlets are controlled by a few wealthy families and business conglomerates with special interests in food and beverages, banking, public utilities, infrastructure, and housing.<sup>7</sup>

The media in Colombia can be characterised as an oligopoly controlled by three powerful business families. Luis Sarmiento Angulo, a wealthy billionaire in Colombia, controls the El Tiempo editorial group, including the El Tiempo newspaper, El Tiempo television, and CityTV. Likewise, the Carlos Ardila Lülle business conglomerate holds RCN television and radio, La FM radio station, and NTN24 news television channel. Meanwhile, the Santo Domingo family owns Caracol television and radio, El Espectador newspaper, and Bluradio. Despite the size and diversity of the country’s society, the media landscape exhibits low levels of pluralism.<sup>8</sup>

The Fundación para la Libertad de Prensa (Foundation for Press Freedom) has produced extensive research on how armed conflict fomented an environment of silence and censorship regarding matters that threatened the interests of armed criminal actors, as well as entrenched interests. It reported that 60% of Colombian municipalities lack local journalistic reporting. Across most departments in Colombia, the majority of municipalities are “silent zones” without any local media outlets.<sup>9</sup>

2 <https://data.worldbank.org/country/colombia>

3 World Report 2021: Colombia | Human Rights Watch ([hrw.org](http://hrw.org))

4 <https://dane.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=c5486dfd069644aebca9683d63ad1c4c>

5 <https://www.worldwildlife.org/magazine/issues/winter-2017/articles/a-look-at-the-natural-world-of-colombia#popup>

6 [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital\\_News\\_Report\\_2021\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf)

7 <https://www.sherlockcomms.com/es/rp-colombia/panorama-de-medios/>

8 <https://www.monitoreodemedios.co/contexto-general/>

9 <https://flip.org.co/cartografias-informacion/>

Unsurprisingly, most local media outlets, including local TV, radio, and newspapers, are concentrated in the more populated and developed departments of Antioquia (253 local media outlets), Cundinamarca (179), Santander (136), Nariño (129), Boyacá (119), and Valle del Cauca (102). Meanwhile, less populated departments, often with greater humanitarian vulnerabilities, have fewer local media outlets. These include Chocó (45), La Guajira (42), Putumayo (38), and Arauca (38). Areas with reduced local media coverage tend to have less content diversity and, in the areas hardest hit by armed conflict, media outlets are often silenced by fear of persecution or exercise self-censorship due to security, economic, or political considerations.

The Colombia Estéreo Radio of the armed forces has seen three decades of sustained growth and now has 104 stations across 87 cities and an unrivalled position as the most robust communication network in Colombia.<sup>10</sup> In an interview an ACDI/VOCA consultant in Chocó, highlighted the extensive radio infrastructure of the police across the Pacific region. Digging beyond department-level data, even towns like Jericó in southwest Antioquia, experience skewed journalistic coverage due to the overpowering influence of AngloGold Ashanti, a South African mining conglomerate, as the dominant financier of La Voz del Suroeste, the main local radio station.<sup>11</sup>

**PRESS FREEDOM** Colombia is 134 in the 2021 World Press Freedom Index.<sup>12</sup> According to AmericasBarometer, a survey applied to 1,563 Colombians, 58% of respondents said there was very little freedom of the press and 37% said news media is not pluralistic. These findings are closely aligned with expert perceptions and position the Colombian press as one of the least free and pluralistic in the region.<sup>13</sup>

**MEDIA ACCESS** As a middle-upper income country and member of OECD, Colombia has a relatively mature media landscape in the Latin American context, though it is uneven in relation to marginalised communities, especially in complex urban landscapes and frontier regions.

**Data from dataportel.com shows as of January 2021:**<sup>14</sup>

- » Colombia had a population of 51.07 million (50.9% female, 49.1% male).
- » 81.6% of Colombia's population live in urban centres, while 18.4% live in rural areas.
- » Internet penetration in Colombia stood at 68.0% and there were 34.73 million internet users.
- » There were 39.00 million social media users equivalent to 76.4% of the total population.
- » There were 60.83 million mobile connections equivalent to 119.1% of the total population.

**Data from ITU (International Telecommunication Union - the United Nations specialised agency for information and communication technologies) show:**

- » ITU 2020-mobile cellular coverage 100%.
- » Population covered by at least 4G mobile network 98%.
- » Mobile ownership (2019) 73%, (female 74%, male 72%).
- » Households with internet coverage at home (2018) urban 63% and rural 16%.<sup>15</sup>

Figure I Communication Infrastructure at a glance from ITU data 2020

Service	Fixed-line telephone	Mobile cellular	Mobile broadband	Broadband-fixed
Number of connections	7,248,026	6,767,270	31,455,915	7,764,772
Per 100 inhabitants	14	133	62	15

During 2020, Colombia expanded its internet coverage by nearly one million connected homes, reaching a total of 9,2 million. This brings Colombia close to achieving the government target of having 70% of its population connected by

10 <https://flip.org.co/cartografias-informacion/>

11 <https://flip.org.co/cartografias-informacion/content/periodismo-precario>

12 <https://rsf.org/en/ranking>

13 <https://www.comminit.com/bbcmmediaaction/content/media-pluralism-public-trust-and-democracy-new-evidence-latin-america-and-caribbean>

14 <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-burkina-faso?rq=Burkina>. Due to some users owning more than one device, statistics for internet and social media users and mobile connections may not equate to unique individuals

15 <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx>

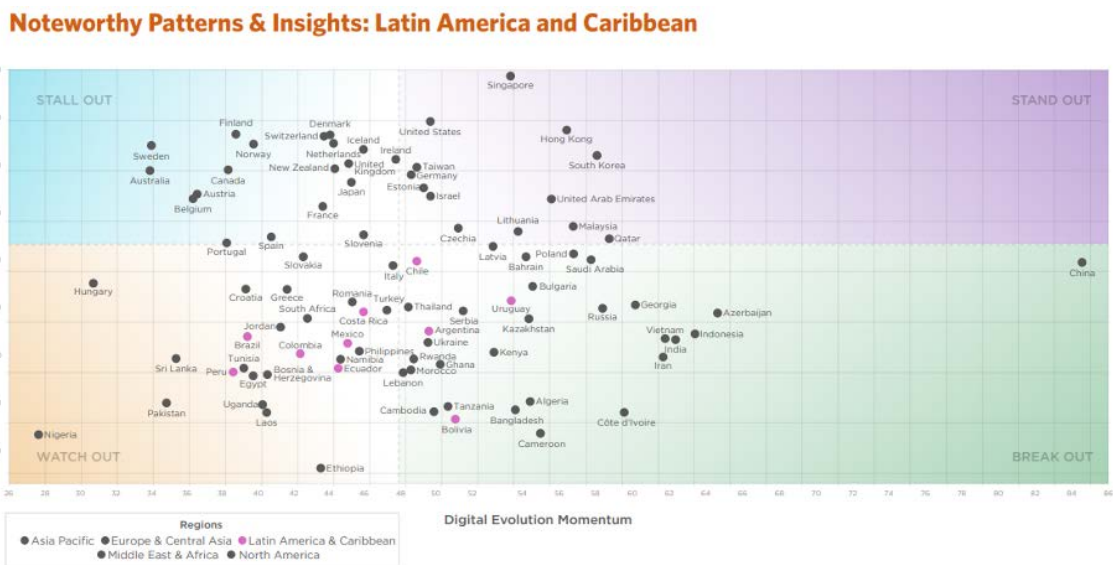
2022.<sup>16</sup> In absolute terms, this places Colombia as one of the 30 countries with most communications connections in the world, and 3rd or 4th in Latin America, just above or below Argentina.<sup>17</sup>

Mobile internet is dominant in Colombia. This is due to competition between large network companies like Claro and Movistar, and challengers like Tigo, Avantel, and Virgin Mobile, as well as the low level of fixed-line internet in marginalised urban and rural areas. Government programmes have also accelerated mobile use.<sup>18</sup>

**INTERNET** Digital Planet, a research initiative of The Fletcher School, states “amidst all of the turmoil of 2020 triggered by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, one trend did emerge clearly: digitalization helped people work, learn, shop, and socialise safely during a pandemic and hold on to some semblance of normalcy”. For that reason, the level of digitalization throughout a society, particularly among vulnerable and marginalised segments, can be a major determinant of its resilience in the face of a major shock like the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>19</sup>

The map below (Figure 2) by Digital Planet illustrates how digitalization or digital evolution varies across the globe. They assess the “competitiveness” of a country’s digital economy according to “its current state of digitalization and its pace of digitalization over time, as measured by the growth rate of its digitalization score over a twelve-year period (2008-2019)”. They arranged countries’ latest year (2019) score (state of digitalization) on the vertical axis against the growth rate over a twelve-year period (pace of digitalization) on the horizontal axis to create the Digital Evolution Chart (Figure 1). The chart classifies economies into four zones: Stand Out, Stall Out, Break Out, Watch Out. Colombia is considered to be a “Watch Out” economy, which faces significant challenges with relatively lower state of digitalization and lower momentum. To improve momentum, it would need to improve access to the internet by going beyond closing the gap between the number of mobile phones and the number of mobile phones with internet access and laying down terrestrial broadband infrastructure. Despite severe infrastructure gaps, younger demographics in these economies display enthusiasm for a digital future with increased use of social media and mobile payments. In comparison, “Stand Out” economies are both highly digitally advanced and exhibit strong momentum, “Stall Out” economies enjoy a high state of digital adoption despite slowing momentum and “Break Out” economies, while lower scoring in their current states of digitalization, are evolving rapidly.

Figure 2 How digitalisation or digital evolution varies across the globe



Worldwide, the Digital Intelligence Index for 2020 ranked Colombia as 66th among the 90 economies in terms of the state of its “Digital Evolution”, with a score of 43.80 among a global range of 98.82 to 21.22, just below Kenya and above Iran. Overall, Colombia ranks near the bottom on all indicators for digital evolution and digital trust, though this

16 <https://mintic.gov.co/portal/inicio/Sala-de-prensa/182108:Colombia-avanza-en-su-meta-de-estar-conectada-en-un-70-en-2022-DANE>  
 17 <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/colombia/#communications>  
 18 [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital\\_News\\_Report\\_2021\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf)  
 19 <https://sites.tufts.edu/digitalplanet/files/2021/03/digital-intelligence-index.pdf>



is when compared with mostly wealthy or emerging economies. For example, the index ranked Colombia as having one of the lowest work-from-home-ready workforces, though it surpassed Mexico, India, and Thailand. This shows the limitations of its labour preparedness in the face of COVID-19 and may help explain the recent high increase in unemployment. The index ranked Colombia 12th in Latin America and the Caribbean in terms of its digital evolution, just below Brazil and above Jamaica, but judged it as having the 6th highest momentum in digital transformation since 2008. Crucially, however, it ranked Colombia poorly in terms of public sector social distancing preparedness and government response to COVID-19, giving it low scores on digital public services and society, and on inclusive and affordable internet.<sup>20</sup>

Colombians primarily use the internet for work (46%) and education (39%).<sup>21</sup> In line with global trends, the growth in online shopping in Colombia following the COVID-19 pandemic has been dramatic. According to the Colombian Chamber of e-Commerce, online sales during April-June 2021 were 55% greater than during the same trimester in 2020, and 86% greater than during that period in 2019.<sup>22</sup> According to a survey in May 2020, 21% of Colombians were doing more online shopping than before the pandemic, while 66% were using their mobile phones more overall.<sup>23</sup> According to Mercado Libre, an online retailer, Colombia experienced the second greatest spike in online shopping in Latin America, after Chile.<sup>24</sup>

Of internet users aged 16 to 64, 98.1% own a mobile phone, 97.5% specifically own a smartphone, and 76.6% own a computer. These users spend an average of over 10 hours per day using the internet across devices, and almost 4 hours per day using social media. Overall internet usage was nearly twice as much as reading press media or three times as much as listening to broadcast radio. It should be noted that these figures apply to internet users, so press and radio consumption may be higher among the 32% of Colombians who are disconnected from the web. Online videos are extremely popular, with 99% of internet users aged 16 to 64 consuming them on a monthly basis. These are followed by online radio stations, which enjoy a listenership of 53% of internet users, and podcasts with 42% of internet users as listeners.<sup>25</sup>

**TELEVISION** Nationwide, television is the main traditional media provider, and has enjoyed higher viewership during COVID-19 related lockdowns, but this surge may drop as COVID-19 becomes endemic and the country enters a new normality.<sup>26</sup> There are 387 TV networks. Of these, 237 are community networks, 139 are commercial and 11 are publicly owned.<sup>27</sup> By 2019, 90% of households in Colombia owned a TV. Of these 65% view TV content through either cable, satellite or Internet Protocol (IPTV) service,<sup>28</sup> while just 12% receive Digital Terrestrial TV (TDT) signal and 13% receive analogous signal.<sup>29</sup> The majority of Colombians, 72%, have a TV subscription service.<sup>30</sup> The open TV signal is accessed by 38% of Colombians overall, but by a much higher proportion, 70%, in rural areas.<sup>31</sup>

**RADIO** The most prevalent communication tool in Colombia is radio, which covers 95% of municipalities and enjoys widespread listenership among urban and rural audiences. Overall, Colombia is estimated to have 1619 radio stations, though a precise count is difficult given the dynamism of registered and unregistered community radio stations.<sup>32</sup> Outside the major cities of Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali, there are an estimated 1235 radio stations across Colombia, of which 585 are owned by communities, 434 by commercial entities, 110 by the public sector, and 106 by the armed forces.<sup>33</sup>

20 <https://sites.tufts.edu/digitalplanet/which-governments-are-best-equipped-to-deliver-public-services-online-during-a-lockdown/>

21 <https://mintic.gov.co/portal/inicio/Sala-de-prensa/182108:Colombia-avanza-en-su-meta-de-estar-conectada-en-un-70-en-2022-DANE>

22 <https://forbes.co/2021/09/29/tecnologia/los-colombianos-cada-vez-mas-habituados-al-comercio-en-linea/>

23 <https://www.semana.com/empresas/articulo/aumento-de-las-compras-por-internet-en-colombia/287012/>

24 <https://www.bancolombia.com/wps/portal/empresas/capital-inteligente/tendencias/tendencias-globales/ecommerce-colombia-cifras-tendencias-retos>

25 <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-colombia>

26 [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital\\_News\\_Report\\_2021\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf)

27 <https://flip.org.co/index.php/en/publicaciones/informes/item/2335-periodismo-roto-un-viaje-por-las-grietas-del-periodismo-colombiano>

28 <https://www.dane.gov.co/index.php/estadisticas-por-tema/tecnologia-e-innovacion/tecnologias-de-la-informacion-y-las-comunicaciones-tic/indicadores-ba>

29 <https://www.portafolio.co/negocios/claro-tigo-y-directv-tienen-80-5-de-suscriptores-en-tv-530047> (September 2021)

30 Portfolio (2019, 28 May)

31 MinTIC. (2021, September 21)

32 <https://www.monitoreodemedios.co/contexto-general/>

33 <https://flip.org.co/index.php/en/publicaciones/informes/item/2335-periodismo-roto-un-viaje-por-las-grietas-del-periodismo-colombiano>

**PRINT** Colombia has 336 print newspapers and 228 digital papers.<sup>34</sup> Print newspapers are presently being impacted by COVID-19 and by funding cuts. Although the financial strain is part of global and historic trends, the pandemic resulted in a further drop in ad buys, especially for smaller regional newspapers.<sup>35</sup> Thus, print newspapers, which are largely private subscription-based enterprises, have been pressed to cut their staff and content.<sup>36</sup>

According to the Colombian Association of Information Media, COVID-19 has resulted in a 40-80% drop in advertising revenue for print media and has inhibited street selling of newspapers. The following regional newspapers have reported being acutely impacted by pandemic-related issues, and have been pressed to aggressively cut costs:<sup>37</sup>

- » La Opinión (Cúcuta)
- » El Nuevo Día (Ibagué)
- » La Patria (Manizales)
- » Vanguardia (Bucaramanga)
- » El Universal (Cartagena)

Moreover, the surge of direct communication from national and local governments with their constituents through social media has also curtailed the traditional role of journalists, particularly with print newspapers, of mediating and interpreting public messages.<sup>38</sup>

### 2.3 Language And Dialects In The Media

Spanish is legally recognized as the official language of Colombia, is spoken by the vast majority of the population and is relied upon for virtually all media content. In addition, there are 69 other languages, including 65 indigenous languages, 2 creole languages (palenquero of San Basilio and creole of San Andrés and Providencia islands), Romani and Colombian sign language.<sup>39</sup> Indigenous languages may be grouped within families, including Arawak, barbacanas, bora-witoto, caribe, chibcha, chocó, guahibana, makú, quechua, salibana, and tucana. Based on the 2018 census, 1,905,617 indigenous persons live in Colombia, affiliated with 115 native communities, and representing 4.4% of the national population.<sup>40</sup> Most of the indigenous population is concentrated among the Wayuu (380,460 persons), Zenú (307,091), Nasa (243,176), and Pastos (163,873) communities, and is located in the departments of La Guajira, Cauca, Nariño, Córdoba, and Sucre.<sup>41</sup>

The 2018 census showed a dramatic decline in afro-descendant persons, from 4,311,757 persons in 2005 to 2,982,224 in 2018.<sup>42</sup> This may be related to limitations in the survey design, the difficulty reaching populations in complex urban landscapes and remote rural areas, and changes in ethnic self-recognition as well as actual demographic change. While afro-descendants mostly speak Spanish, it is important to recognize rich linguistic traditions, such as palenquero and creole languages, and the preservation of words and modes of dialogue of African origin.

In recent years, Colombia has received migrants from the Caribbean, Africa, and elsewhere, who have concentrated in the small town of Necoclí in the northwest region, en route to the United States.<sup>43</sup> This population is highly heterogeneous, changeable, and nonstationary and there is no significant media catered to them. However, due to the lack of language barrier, migrants from Venezuela and elsewhere in Latin America are able to access Colombian Spanish-language media.

**BROADCAST LANGUAGES** Some indigenous radio stations, such as Dachi Bedea Radio of the National Indigenous Organisation of Colombia (ONIC - its Spanish acronym) and Emisora Virtual de los Pueblos Indígenas del Cauca of CRIC, include content in Spanish as well as indigenous languages.<sup>44</sup>

34 <https://flip.org.co/index.php/en/publicaciones/informes/item/2335-periodismo-roto-un-viaje-por-las-grietas-del-periodismo-colombiano>

35 <https://www.larepublica.co/empresas/la-pandemia-del-covid-19-una-prueba-de-fuego-para-los-periodicos-o-su-estocada-2994991>

36 <https://razonpublica.com/oscuero-panorama-del-periodismo-colombia/>

37 <https://www.larepublica.co/empresas/la-pandemia-del-covid-19-una-prueba-de-fuego-para-los-periodicos-o-su-estocada-2994991>

38 <https://razonpublica.com/oscuero-panorama-del-periodismo-colombia/>

39 <https://www.onic.org.co/noticias/636-65-lenguas-nativas-de-las-69-en-colombia-son-indigenas>

40 <https://www.iwgia.org/es/colombia/3739-mi-2020-colombia.html>

41 <https://www.iwgia.org/es/colombia/3739-mi-2020-colombia.html>

42 <https://www.dane.gov.co/files/investigaciones/boletines/grupos-etnicos/presentacion-grupos-etnicos-poblacion-NARP-2019.pdf>

43 <https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2021/08/11/migrantes-varados-necocli-colombia-orix/>

44 <https://www.onic.org.co/media/dachi-bedeo-radio.html> and <https://www.emisoracric.org/>

Humanitarian interventions that are either targeted to or may include members of indigenous communities must ensure a culturally differential approach, including high standards of cultural competence and use of the corresponding native languages alongside Spanish if necessary. Additionally, communication products aimed specifically at populations should be developed and validated with local community members to ensure broad understanding and appropriation of the intended messages. By developing or testing communication products with diverse representatives, these outputs may be enriched with culturally appropriate concepts, narratives, or terminology, while expunging exogenous items, jargon, or cultural biases.

In contrast to other humanitarian contexts, the overwhelming majority of the population in Colombia speaks Spanish, so language barriers may be particularly relevant for key indigenous communities in areas like Chocó, Cauca, Putumayo, or Amazonas. There are a multitude of small media initiatives in their respective languages, these would have to be carefully explored engaging with these populations.

Specific languages or media outlets have to be prioritised when engaging with key communities. For example, the Peace Accords between the Government and the FARC were translated into many indigenous languages, but these are exceptions. Initial public health education on COVID-19 in Amazonas was only in Spanish, which delayed and inhibited local adoption.

## 2.4 Barriers To Media Access

Interviews carried out when researching this guide provided valuable insights into the most common barriers to media access. The general coordinator of La Otra Juventud, stressed the lack of internet in remote rural areas, where people have to travel to the urban core or to school to get connectivity. In those rural contexts, community radio is a key communication tool. However, it is hard to gauge audience numbers because of the lack of technological or digital measurement tools in these areas.

According to the founder of AFRODES, there are significant barriers for the afro descendant communities that are concentrated in the Pacific region when it comes to communication with the rest of the country and beyond. This is because the region is held back by illiteracy and lacks crucial technology. Services dependent on satellite technology, such as telecommunication and television, are still novel for much of the region, with some regions even lacking telephone and radio.

The director of strategic alliances at Fundación Apoyar, notes that many migrants from Venezuela who are traversing Colombia lack cell phones or are forced to share a single handset between many people. To bypass this barrier to communication, his organisation has sought to continue holding in-person meetings and distributing printed materials to guide migrants despite COVID-19 restrictions.

Literacy has increased dramatically over the past 50 years – in 2018 illiteracy stood at 5.1%. However, literacy levels vary greatly between the main cities and remote rural areas.<sup>45</sup> While just 2% of survey respondents in Bogota were illiterate, over 10% of those in the departments of La Guajira, Chocó, Vichada, Sucre, and Córdoba were illiterate. There is a strong inverse correlation between age and literacy, with the highest levels of literacy among 10–19-year-olds, and declining levels among older respondents.

Although there is a marked gender gap in literacy rates worldwide, this is not reflected in Colombia, where 91.8% of women and 91.3% of men were literate.<sup>46</sup> Colombia has medium high internet access, but access varies greatly across the country. In Bogota, 76.2% of households have internet access. Numbers are similar in wealthy, urbanised departments like Valle del Cauca (67.7%), Risaralda (61.1%), Santander (60.5%), Antioquia (55.4%), Quindío (63.9%), and Meta (54%). Meanwhile, other departments are overwhelmingly disconnected from the internet and have much lower access figures: La Guajira (20.3% of residents have internet connectivity), Putumayo (16.6%), Chocó (14.4%), Guainía (11.9%), Amazonas (10.0%), Vichada (5.2%), and Vaupés (1.6%). Within departments, the internet is heavily concentrated in the urban cores, where 61.6% of households have access, whereas just 20.7% of rural homes are connected.<sup>47</sup>

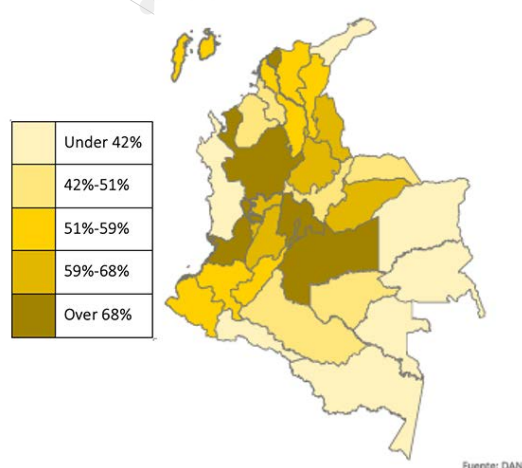
45 <https://www.eltiempo.com/datos/cifras-de-analfabetismo-en-colombia-564784#:~:text=En%201964%2C%20la%20tasa%20de,no%20sab%C3%ADa%20leer%20ni%20escribir>

46 <https://www.eltiempo.com/datos/cifras-de-analfabetismo-en-colombia-564784#:~:text=En%201964%2C%20la%20tasa%20de,no%20sab%C3%ADa%20leer%20ni%20escribir>

47 <https://www.dane.gov.co/index.php/estadisticas-por-tema/tecnologia-e-innovacion/tecnologias-de-la-informacion-y-las-comunicaciones-tic/indicadores-ba>

Figure 3 The proportion of persons over 5 years of age who used the internet per department in 2019.48

This digital divide is particularly concerning in light of the fact that Colombia has experienced some of the longest periods of school closures in the region as a measure to contain COVID-19. The Lack of internet connection and computer devices among marginalised urban children and youth is increasing the population of school dropouts and gang involvement, with lasting damages to wellbeing and safety, according to an article in the Economist.<sup>49</sup> In an interview, the founder of AFRODES shared the example of some children and young people in the rural Pacific coast who had to walk for hours to access an internet signal in order to connect to remote classes when their school was closed as a result of COVID-19 prevention measures.



The CEO of Kuja Kuja Colombia, an information collection and analysis company, notes that WhatsApp is a key communication tool for migrants who don't have reliable internet access. Among the 66,000 migrants that her company has engaged with, 70% have access to WhatsApp, regardless of whether they have a cell phone data package. Meanwhile, 30% of these migrants have some access to the internet, despite continuous movements in transit.

Digital media is concentrated in major cities and is overwhelmingly derived from pre-existing newspapers, TV channels, or radio stations. Thus, digital media has had moderate success in diversifying media ownership beyond the oligopoly of dominant media outlets and broadening geographic and demographic reach beyond pre-existing audiences.<sup>50</sup>

## 2.5 Media Preferences And Trusted Media

As shown in the table (Figure 4), Colombians are making relatively frequent use of digital tools, reflecting the digital evolution underway. Half of Colombians use instant messaging (using it several times a day), 44% use social networks, 28% use mobile apps, and 27% use webpages. TV channels also have high viewership: 61% report watching television at least once per day, while just 4% report never doing so. Radio stations have broad, yet less frequent consumption: 37% listen to stations at least once a day, 33% do so on occasion and just 12% report never doing so. Conversely, print newspapers and print magazines have relatively limited audiences: 29% of Colombians report never reading either media type and about half of respondents report doing so only on occasion.<sup>51</sup>

In the light of the high mobile use in Colombia and even higher adoption after the outset of COVID-19 pandemic, it is unsurprising that eight out of ten respondents to a Reuters survey reported using their mobile phones to consume news. A digital survey found that 87% of respondents use online sources as their primary source of information, while 58% use television and 24% print.<sup>52</sup> However, the fact that the survey was carried out online may risk over-representation of online sources and could obscure patterns among more marginalised segments of society.

According to the ENDS survey of 2015, consumption of TV channels and radio as information sources is inversely correlated with higher education levels. In addition, whereas urban residents prefer the internet, radio is more popular in rural areas, while TV is popular across the urban/rural divide. The demographic that most relies on the internet for its information is single women between 15 and 24 years of age.<sup>53</sup> It should be noted that the ENDS survey, which has historically been conducted every quinquennial, has been delayed since its scheduled iteration in 2020 due to COVID-19.

Preferences of communication channels are different among communities affected by humanitarian crises. For example, based on feedback collected by Kuja Kuja through over 29,143 interactions with community members in late

48 <https://www.dane.gov.co/index.php/en/statistics-by-topic-1/technology-and-innovation/information-and-communication-technology-ict/basic-ict-indicators-in-homes>

49 <https://www.economist.com/the-americas/2021/07/10/a-teachers-union-tries-to-keep-colombias-schools-closed>
















50 <https://flip.org.co/index.php/en/publicaciones/informes/item/2335-periodismo-roto-un-viaje-por-las-grietas-del-periodismo-colombiano>

51 <http://www.acimcolombia.com/estudios/estudio-general-de-medios-egm/>

52 [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital\\_News\\_Report\\_2021\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf)

53 <https://profamilia.org.co/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/ENDS-2015-TOMO-II.pdf>

Figure 4 Consumption frequency of various media

Consumption frequency of media type		Several times p/day	Once p/day	Several times p/week	Once p/week	On occasion	Never
Radio stations		22%	15%	14%	5%	33%	12%
TV channels		41%	20%	13%	3%	20%	4%
Print newspapers		3%	8%	6%	6%	49%	29%
Print magazines		3%	3%	5%	6%	54%	29%
Webpages		27%	9%	18%	5%	26%	14%
Apps		28%	7%	13%	4%	25%	21%
Social networks		44%	10%	14%	3%	18%	11%
Instant messaging apps		50%	8%	10%	2%	16%	14%
Live streaming		18%	8%	18%	6%	32%	19%
email		19%	8%	14%	6%	30%	22%
Text messages		18%	6%	10%	3%	33%	30%
Podcasts		8%	5%	10%	6%	34%	38%
On-demand audiovisuals		17%	10%	20%	8%	24%	22%
On-demand musical platform		15%	5%	9%	3%	24%	42%
Public spaces		21%	8%	22%	6%	37%	6%

2020 and early 2021, 23% of community members preferred printed materials like brochures, 12% opted for radio, 11% for social media, 11% for posters, and 7% for megaphones.<sup>54</sup>

According to the Edelman Trust Barometer, a global media trust survey conducted annually, most Colombians consider news organisations to be biased. Specifically, 73% of respondents in Colombia say that journalists intentionally deceive their audience with false or exaggerated content, 72% say that news organisations place greater priority in advancing a political ideology or position rather than informing their audience, and 76% say that media is failing to be objective and impartial. Regionally, the proportion of respondents who report having high trust in the media dropped to its lowest level in 2016/17 with 45% of respondents expressing low trust and 19% intermediate trust. Colombia was the country with least trust in the media across the region.<sup>55</sup>

According to Carolina Jurado, the Director of Corporate Affairs at Edelman, “Colombians are demanding greater independence, neutrality and the development of bias-free content from the media. The results obtained in our barometer allow us to observe that the majority of citizens in the country distrust the origin of the news given by the media. The Trust Barometer 2021 revealed a shift in priorities, where being critical of information is more important now, and makes a clear wake-up call to the general population on hygiene of information, given that 69% of Colombians do not have habits of curating the information they receive and share”.<sup>56</sup>

The Reuters digital survey found that, among television channels, regional news channels, including Citytv, TeleAntioquia, Telepacífico, and TeleCaribe, prompted the highest levels of trust (70%), possibly due to their community engagement, closer territorial ties and their reduced emphasis on national controversies. These were followed by CM& and the public channel Señal Colombia, which are trusted by 68% and 66% of respondents, respectively. Conversely, TV and radio news by RCN and Caracol, the dominant outlets with a marked right-wing tilt, are all distrusted by roughly a quarter of Colombians; a similar level of distrust as Q’Hubo, a tabloid with a penchant for gruesome violence. See figure below.<sup>57</sup> However, distrust does not appear to dampen viewership, as Caracol and RCN TV continue to be the dominant news sources for Colombians; while the more trusted public broadcaster Señal Colombia is only viewed by 10% of Colombians weekly.<sup>58</sup>

54 Interview with CEO of Kuja Kuja Colombia

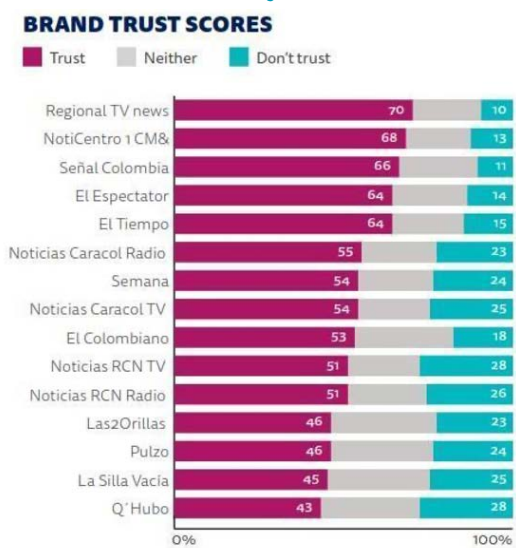
55 <https://revistapym.com.co/comunicacion/infodemia-una-amenaza-para-la-confianza-a-nivel-global-edelman-trust-barometer-edicion-colombia>

56 <https://revistapym.com.co/comunicacion/infodemia-una-amenaza-para-la-confianza-a-nivel-global-edelman-trust-barometer-edicion-colombia>

57 [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital\\_News\\_Report\\_2021\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf)

58 <https://www.señalcolombia.tv/general/medios-comunicacion-confianza-estudio>

Figure 5 Trust scores of media brands



Trust = % scored 6-10 on 10-point scale. Don't trust = 0-4, Neither = 5. Those that haven't heard of each brand were excluded. Only the above brands were included in the survey so should not be treated as a list of the most trusted brands.

**MEDIA CONTENT** Historically, news across traditional outlets have covered the political contest between the long-standing Conservative and Liberal Parties, and since the late 1990s, this has included parties covering a broader ideological spectrum like Partido la U, Centro Democrático, Cambio Radical, MIRA, Partido Verde, Colombia Humana, FARC, and others. The protracted armed conflict and violent dynamics have also been a fixture in news content, with dominant outlets like Caracol and RCN stressing the national threats posed by left-wing guerrillas, especially against major cities and traditional socioeconomic sectors. Moreover, drug trafficking has been a key theme since Colombia became an epicentre of marijuana, cocaine, and heroin production and distribution in the 1980s, with an emphasis on crime by weaker links in the drug chain, such as small-scale traffickers or local dealers. Finally, news outlets have kept a spotlight on criminal and delinquent activity that is considered abhorrent by general public opinion.

Conversely, relatively scarce attention is awarded to the underlying root causes of the armed conflict and its impacts on rural and vulnerable populations, such as extreme income, land inequality, and humanitarian crises outside the major cities. In recent years, attention has shifted to the contentious negotiation and uneven implementation of the peace process between the government and the FARC guerrillas, which ended one of the most enduring internal conflicts worldwide. The aftermath of the peace accords was the 2016 plebiscite in which a slim majority of Colombians voted not to ratify the agreement. This was followed in 2018 by the presidential victory of Ivan Duque of the Centro Democrático party, which opposed the peace negotiations and promoted the vote against the peace accords. Over the past decade, a series of social protests have captured national attention, including the student movement against university finance reform in 2011, the national agrarian strike in 2013 and anti-government protests against inequality. There was also a focus on the stalling peace process in 2019-2020, and the national strike against a fiscal reform and inequality in 2021. Since early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has also dominated the news.<sup>59</sup>

News outlets most commonly rely on the police, the church, private enterprise, and witnesses of events as sources of information. Afro-descendant, indigenous and displaced persons, migrants from Venezuela, young persons, and sexual minorities are almost completely unrepresented, as evidenced by television or radio news interviews.

## 2.6 Two-Way Communication With Communities

Two-way communication allows people to raise their concerns, ask questions and to receive responses, clarification and answers. This is important in building understanding and trust and influencing behaviour change. It can also reduce fear and panic during times of disaster.

The new application MinSaludDigital of the Ministry of Health replaces CoronApp. It provides vaccination and PCR certificates, personalised information on prevention and allows complaints to be made, such as irregularities in vaccination.<sup>60</sup>

The Caracol TV afternoon news programme recurrently opened a “virtual ballot box” that gathered public perceptions on COVID-19 and related subjects, such as increased internet connectivity.<sup>61</sup> Mainstream radio stations, like La W and BluRadio have presented daily questions on COVID-19, enabling listeners to call in and occasionally consult with epidemiological doctors.

59 [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital\\_News\\_Report\\_2021\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf)

60 <https://www.semana.com/coronavirus/articulo/como-funciona-minsalud-digital-la-nueva-app-que-reemplazara-a-coronapp/202157/>

61 <https://noticias.caracoltv.com/colombia/coronavirus-ha-mostrado-la-importancia-de-la-conectividad-y-la-tecnologia-mintic>

## SECTION 3:

# Media In Disasters With A Focus On Covid-19

COLOMBIA IS HIGHLY VULNERABLE TO GEOLOGIC, HYDROLOGIC AND CLIMATIC HAZARDS, ESPECIALLY EARTHQUAKES, FLOODS, DROUGHTS, LANDSLIDES, AND INTENSE STORMS. COVID-19 PRESENTED A UNIQUE CHALLENGE TO THE MEDIA AND OFFERS AN OPPORTUNITY TO UNDERSTAND ITS ROLE IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT.

## 3.1 Disasters Overview

Between January and April 2021, Colombia's risk and disaster management agency (UNGRD - its Spanish acronym) registered 1,365 natural disasters, mostly floods, which affected 104,829 people. Nearly half of these emergencies took place in the departments of Bolivar and Choco, in the Caribbean and Pacific regions, respectively.<sup>62</sup>

Despite the signage of the peace accords in 2016, the plight of internal displacement continues, with at least 19,934 people affected during the first four months of 2021, chiefly along the Pacific coast. During the first five months of 2021, over 100,000 people, especially afro-descendant and indigenous people, were victims of violence, including forced displacement, confinement, and homicides.<sup>63</sup> Historically, 8,143,758 people have been displaced by conflict as of 31 May 2021, nearly 16% of the national population.<sup>64</sup> Antioquia has historically been the department most affected by forced displacement, both in terms of expulsion and reception of persons, followed by Bolivar, Valle del Cauca, Magdalena, Nariño, Cesar, Cordoba, Chocó, Cauca, and Norte de Santander. While displacement has been widespread across Colombia, expulsion has concentrated in the northwest, the Pacific and Atlantic coasts, and along the borders with Venezuela, Ecuador, and Panama.

The internal displacement situation is compounded by the Venezuelan migration crisis, which has especially affected Colombia. According to Migracion Colombia, the governmental migration agency, over 1.74 million Venezuelan migrants were present in Colombia, as of January 2021.<sup>65</sup> The eastern border departments of Norte de Santander, La Guajira, and Arauca host a large proportion of migrants, especially newcomers who are often the most vulnerable. Migrants also congregate in the Caribbean region, in and around major cities of Bogota, Medellin, and Cali, and along a southbound corridor, to emigrate to other South American countries. "Those without regular status are more vulnerable to exploitation and violence and face barriers to socio-economic integration within the country."<sup>66</sup>

**COVID-19** According to WHO, Colombia has had 5,086,381 confirmed cases of COVID-19 up to 10 December 2021, and 128,929 deaths. This is the 11th highest caseload in the world.<sup>67</sup> Despite a slow start, 27.73% of the population was fully vaccinated as of August 20, one of the highest proportions in the region. As of 14 December 2021, 52% of the population has been fully vaccinated and 60 million doses administered. Refugees and migrants are the most affected groups, with a 26% increase in infections from April to May, followed by seniors with a 16% increase during the same period.<sup>68, 69</sup> However, as of May, the departments that are most affected by humanitarian crises, including Choco, Cauca, Putumayo, La Guajira, Arauca, Vichada, and Guaviare, had the lowest rate of administered vaccines, between 5.2 and 11.9% of the population, suggesting a prolonged vulnerability to the pandemic in these complex areas.<sup>70</sup>

COVID-19 has reduced or inhibited economic growth for the vast majority of Colombians. According to a web survey by iMMAP, the majority of respondents reported a decline in their household income, while 42% saw no change in income and a very small minority saw an increase. Adults between 35 and 64 years were the group most likely to see their livelihoods impacted by the pandemic. The pandemic has left a long-lasting economic dent on large swathes of Colombian society. The highest proportion of those negatively impacted saw their income reduced for over a year

62 [https://immap.org/wp-content/uploads/20210629\\_SitAn\\_COVID\\_Colombia\\_May.pdf](https://immap.org/wp-content/uploads/20210629_SitAn_COVID_Colombia_May.pdf)

63 [https://immap.org/wp-content/uploads/20210629\\_SitAn\\_COVID\\_Colombia\\_May.pdf](https://immap.org/wp-content/uploads/20210629_SitAn_COVID_Colombia_May.pdf)

64 <https://www.unidadvictimas.gov.co/>

65 [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Support%2520Plan%2520ETPV\\_DRAFT11062021\\_ENG\\_FV24062021.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Support%2520Plan%2520ETPV_DRAFT11062021_ENG_FV24062021.pdf)

66 [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Support%2520Plan%2520ETPV\\_DRAFT11062021\\_ENG\\_FV24062021.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Support%2520Plan%2520ETPV_DRAFT11062021_ENG_FV24062021.pdf)

67 <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/region/colombia>

68 [https://immap.org/wp-content/uploads/20210629\\_SitAn\\_COVID\\_Colombia\\_May.pdf](https://immap.org/wp-content/uploads/20210629_SitAn_COVID_Colombia_May.pdf)

69 <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/region/colombia>

70 [https://immap.org/wp-content/uploads/20210629\\_SitAn\\_COVID\\_Colombia\\_May.pdf](https://immap.org/wp-content/uploads/20210629_SitAn_COVID_Colombia_May.pdf)

(36%), followed by those who were impacted for between 6-12 months (23%), between 4-5 months (14%) or between 2-3 months (15%). Such impacts led many people to rely on their savings, begin a new enterprise, work more hours, take up dangerous work, or go into debt.<sup>71</sup>

### 3.2 The Role Of The Media In Disaster Response

The high prevalence of disasters in Colombia means that they are a recurrent topic for news coverage, with particular focus on storms and flooding during environmental phenomena like El Niño and La Niña, earthquakes, and landslides. Many socio-natural disasters disproportionately impact already vulnerable communities, including victims of armed conflict and other previous disasters. This is partly due to the relative accessibility of disaster-prone areas, like riverbeds and steep slopes, to build or inhabit informal or low-cost settlements. Such congruence between poverty and disaster may be displayed differently by the media, either by placing responsibility on victims for risky decisions or inviting compassion towards already downtrodden communities.

Espinel-Rubio argues that the media is devoted to merely informing and creating a spectacle of disaster, but not analysing risk. In her study of the destruction of the town of Gramalote, Norte del Santander, in 2010, she codified local and national news coverage, and found that it centered on narratives of the person as a master/slave of nature; a people without roots; the absence of leadership; and most prominently, mystical and prophetic causes.<sup>72</sup>

Regarding COVID-19, in March 2020, president Iván Duque began to deliver daily speeches through the television programme *Prevención y Acción* on Canal Institucional.<sup>73</sup> Through that Prime-Time slot, President Duque delivered data on infections and deaths, while promoting frequent hand washing and the use of facemasks in accordance with WHO guidelines and announcing containment measures and assistance for the most affected population groups. Thus, *Prevención y Acción* was considered to be a moderately informed communication approach to the pandemic, and a relevant vehicle to disseminate public policy, resulting in a recognition from the WHO.<sup>74</sup> Numerous TV channels, including the dominant Caracol and RCN, began transmitting the presidential speeches, which reached an audience of 3.4 million nightly viewers.<sup>75</sup> However, within months these hour-long speeches began to generate less public interest,<sup>76</sup> along with calls from the opposition to suspend them and critiques about government propaganda in the midst of a slow vaccine rollout.<sup>77</sup>

Semana magazine continuously organises forums on diverse policy matters, including on disasters and COVID-19, such as an event titled “One peso invested in disaster risk mitigation now saves seven in attention later”.<sup>78</sup> Likewise, the weekly magazine has sections on natural disasters that may conduct more in-depth analysis than some daily newspapers.<sup>79</sup> Local radio stations have also been active on the pandemic. For example, Resander, a cooperative with 35 linked radio stations in Norte de Santander, generated podcasts on preventing COVID-19 and helped disseminate events from the Pan American Health Organisation.<sup>80</sup>

**FAKE NEWS AND MISINFORMATION** Numerous actors, including UN,<sup>81</sup> government,<sup>82</sup> nonprofit, media,<sup>83</sup> and academic entities, have sought to track and counter fake news and disinformation through initiatives in Colombia though this report will only point to a few key efforts. Most importantly, Consejo de Redacción, a nonpartisan nonprofit that is associated with over 100 journalists, launched Colombiacheck as a digital, open, collaborative fact-checking platform. Colombiacheck is a signatory of the International Fact-Checkers Network (IFCN). In July 2020, Colombiacheck

71 <https://covid19.immap.org/report/details/colaug2021>

72 <https://revistasoj.s.ucaldas.edu.co/index.php/virajes/article/view/4837/4418>

73 <https://elnuevosiglo.com.co/articulos/07-2020-prevencion-y-accion-una-efectiva-arma-anti-covid-de-duque>

74 [https://caracol.com.co/radio/2021/03/25/nacional/1616680590\\_758665.html](https://caracol.com.co/radio/2021/03/25/nacional/1616680590_758665.html)

75 [https://caracol.com.co/radio/2021/03/25/nacional/1616680590\\_758665.html](https://caracol.com.co/radio/2021/03/25/nacional/1616680590_758665.html)

76 <https://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/ivan-duque-como-va-el-rating-del-programa-diario-del-presidente-duque-551018>

77 [https://caracol.com.co/radio/2021/03/25/nacional/1616680590\\_758665.html](https://caracol.com.co/radio/2021/03/25/nacional/1616680590_758665.html)

78 <https://www.forossemama.com/articulo/id/12665/un-peso-invertido-en-mitigar-el-riesgo-de-un-desastre-ahorra-siete-en-atencion>

79 <https://www.semana.com/noticias/desastres-naturales/>

80 <https://www.resander.com/>

81 <https://nacionesunidas.org.co/onu-internacional/noticias-falsas-y-desinformacion-otra-pandemia-del-coronavirus>

82 <https://mintic.gov.co/portal/inicio/Sala-de-prensa/Noticias/126509:Por-que-las-noticias-falsas-tambien-son-un-riesgo-real>

83 <https://www.lasillavacia.com/la-silla-vacia/detector-de-mentiras/>



forged an alliance with Facebook to combat fake news related to COVID-19. This alliance convened over 20 Colombian news media and universities to assess potentially fake or misleading news, and to disseminate verified content. Acknowledging the proliferation of fake news on Facebook, the company agreed to reduce the reach of this material and notify users before sharing it. Facebook, along with Google and Microsoft, have been major funders of Colombiacheck since at least 2019.<sup>84</sup>

La Silla Vacía, an alternative media outfit and also a signatory to the IFCN, launched its Detector de Mentiras (Lie Detector), which, as of December 2021, had refuted 359 fake news items related to COVID-19.<sup>85</sup> But according to a member of Fundación Ideas para la Paz, a Colombian think-tank, initiatives such as Colombiacheck and Detector de Mentiras have done a fine job at monitoring news, but have not addressed the underlying issue of public awareness of the need to question potential fake news.<sup>86</sup> A political science professor also opined that Detector de Mentiras seemed to be made for persons like her, intellectuals in Bogotá, and more effort is needed to reach the broader public who may be drawn to emotive and polarising content.<sup>87</sup>

Other initiatives include the Museum of Disinformation, launched by the COLEV Group at Universidad de los Andes, which employs design, big data, and machine learning tools to understand disinformation, its dynamics, and its effects on the spread of COVID-19. The initiative also visualises data on the most pervasive disinformation regarding COVID-19, among it rumours related to Bill Gates, and magnetic 5G tracking microchips. According to a study by the COLEV Group, nearly half of the fake news on these topics in Colombia was disseminated through Facebook, while a fifth passed through Twitter, and lesser amounts through YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instagram.<sup>88</sup>

The Cybernautic Police Centre identified and refuted 151 fake news items throughout 2020 using official sources and authorised validators.<sup>89</sup> Between March 30 and April 26 2020, this police centre published daily reports on fake news, including but not restricted to COVID-19.<sup>90</sup> Within its cybercrime website, the national police also produced a webpage on fake news content.<sup>91</sup> However, these police efforts at combating fake news lack content, clarity, and user-friendliness, and have not been sustained to gain public traction.

UNICEF created a “rumour bank” to inquire about community beliefs regarding COVID-19. The agency then sought to counter rumours with key messages on the virus and vaccine safety through social media, community radios, and posters at health centres, schools, and other strategic locations. This was especially targeted at remote areas in the Pacific and Southwest regions<sup>92</sup>

Mercy Corps launched a campaign with El Espectador called De Lado a Lado (Side to Side) to counter fake news and xenophobia against migrants from Venezuela and promote their social integration.<sup>93</sup> Mercy Corps has also made special efforts to counter fraud by persons who impersonate that organisation to defraud purported beneficiaries.<sup>94</sup>

Notwithstanding these efforts, the negative impacts of fake news remain substantial, and much more is needed to counter harmful content. According to a study published by the Pan American Journal of Public Health, among six major Latin American countries, Colombia and Peru are the ones with the lowest public capacity to recognize fake news related to COVID-19. The study found a correlation between low usage of social media as prime information source and high capacity to discern factual content, and lower mortality rates due to COVID-19, though this does not necessarily imply causation given other potentially relevant factors in each country.<sup>95</sup>

---

84 <https://consejoderedaccion.org/noticias/facebook-apoya-nueva-red-nacional-de-chequeadores-de-colombiacheck-para-combatir-desinformacion-sobre-covid-19>

85 <https://www.lasillavacia.com/la-silla-vacia/detector-de-mentiras/>

86 Interview with Area Coordinator, Fundación Ideas para la Paz

87 Interview with Professor of Political Science, Universidad de los Andes

88 <https://isabelaortiz.github.io/desinformacionPagina/>

89 [https://caivirtual.policia.gov.co/sites/default/files/balance\\_cibercrimen\\_2020\\_-\\_semana\\_45.pdf](https://caivirtual.policia.gov.co/sites/default/files/balance_cibercrimen_2020_-_semana_45.pdf)

90 <https://www.policia.gov.co/reporte-fakenews>

91 <https://caivirtual.policia.gov.co/mural-cibercrimen/fake-news>

92 Interview with Project Lead on COVID-19, iMMAP

93 <https://mercycorps.org.co/noticia/como-hacer-realidad-la-integracion-de-migrantes-venezolanos-evento-de-la-campana-lado-a-lado>

94 Interview with representative of Mercy Corps

95 <https://scielosp.org/pdf/rpsp/2021v45/e44/es>

## SECTION 4:

# Media Overview

THIS SECTION PROVIDES A CONCISE OVERVIEW OF EACH OF THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEDIA IN COLOMBIA, INCLUDING: DIGITAL MEDIA PLATFORMS, SOCIAL MEDIA, TELEVISION, RADIO, PRINT AND TRADITIONAL FORMS OF COMMUNICATION. IT DOES NOT AIM TO GIVE AN EXHAUSTIVE REVIEW, INSTEAD FOCUSING ON THE MAIN MEDIA PROVIDERS FOR EACH CATEGORY, USING THE AVAILABLE DATA AND STUDIES.

### 4.1 Digital Media Platforms

Digital media is concentrated in major cities and is overwhelmingly derived from preexisting newspapers, TV channels, or radio stations. For example, the El Tiempo newspaper website overshadows its peers as the most-used news site (40%) and the 25th most visited website overall in Colombia, followed by the online versions of El Espectador and Caracol TV (27%). Nevertheless, some digital native media, such as Las2Orillas, La Silla Vacía, Verdad Abierta, and Kienyke, have gained followers and respect due to their alternative, user-generated, and innovative content. Meanwhile, Pulzo, the main aggregator of other national and international news, relies on a business model based on clicks and advertising that appeals to youth.<sup>96</sup> See details of the main digital media below:

Figure 6 Main Digital Media

Media organisation	Weblink	Print audience	Website ranking	Coverage
El Tiempo	eltiempo.com	16%	25	National
El Espectador	elespectador.com	4%	54	National
Q'hubo	qhubo.com	21%	856	National
ADN	diarioadn.co	24%	5,254	National
Semana	semana.com	16%	46	National
Pulzo	pulzo.com	N/A	87	National
infobae	infobae.com/america/colombia	N/A	169	National
las2orillas	las2orillas.co	N/A	N/A	National
Publimetro	publimetro.co	N/A	456	National
Al día	aldia.co	10%	5,042	Regional (Barranquilla)
El Colombiano	elcolombiano.com	4%	65	Regional (Antioquia)
Kienyke	kienyke.com	N/A	607	National
El País	elpais-cali.com	2%	221	Regional (Valle)

### 4.2 Social Media Platforms

Data shows that Colombians are heavy social media users this is rapidly increasing, with an 11% rise in active social media users during 2020, a much sharper increase than that of mobile or internet connections. There are 34.73 million internet users and 39 million social media user accounts in Colombia (this discrepancy can be explained by individuals having more than one account per platform or issues cross-referencing users across platforms).<sup>97</sup> Social media usage peaks among 25-34-year-olds (15% of total users), and gradually declines along each subsequent age group.<sup>98</sup>

YouTube is the most-used social media platform in Colombia, with 96% of internet users connecting on a monthly basis. Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Messenger occupy the next 4 places ranging from 94%-70% of users. Other platforms, like Twitter (59%), TikTok (39%), Snapchat (30%), and Telegram (21%) also enjoy substantial appeal among more niche audiences. According to the Ministry of Information and Communications Technologies (MinTIC),

<sup>96</sup> [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital\\_News\\_Report\\_2021\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>97</sup> Estimates of Internet usage in Colombia are largely consistent across sources, ranging from a low of 31.28 million according to Internet World Stats and a high of 33.2 million based on the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the World Bank.

<sup>98</sup> <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-colombia>

Colombia ranks 14th among the nations with the highest number of Facebook users, and it is estimated that it has more than 6 million Twitter users.

Among social media platforms, TikTok is experiencing a dramatic rise, partly driven by the stay-at-home orders due to COVID-19, securing its place as the most downloaded app in 2020.<sup>99</sup> An estimated 40-60% of TikTok users are between 13 and 24 years. This group may be vulnerable to privacy and safety issues, as highlighted in recent scandals.<sup>100 101</sup> The Colombian Superintendency of Industry and Commerce has opened inquiries into potential privacy and data protection violations by TikTok, as well as by Facebook and other social media platforms.<sup>102</sup> Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Messenger are the social media apps most used for news Provision. The Reuters online survey report found 67% of respondents rely on Facebook as their main news source, 45% WhatsApp, 28% Instagram and 34% rely on YouTube, a Google app.<sup>103</sup>

### 4.3 Television Stations

Colombia has two main national-level private TV channels and three public TV channels, as well as numerous regional channels. Caracol TV is the most popular channel by weekly viewership (59% weekly usage), followed by RCN (36%).<sup>104</sup> Caracol TV commands 72% of monthly television audiences, while Canal RCN enjoys 60% of monthly viewership. Jointly, RCN and Caracol are the dominant national private channels, as well as the chief news-producing radio stations (RCN Radio and Caracol Radio). Among public TV channels, Canal Uno is the main state-owned channel that disseminates both public and private content, Señal Colombia delivers educational and cultural content, and Señal Institucional broadcasts government content.<sup>105</sup>

Regional television channels, including Canal Capital in the Bogotá metropolitan area, Teleantioquia and Telemedellín in the northwest, Telecaribe in the north, Telepacífico in the southwest, Telecafé in the coffee triangle and Teleislas in San Andrés and Providencia islands, among other smaller outlets, enjoy moderate monthly viewership at the national level, but have much higher viewership in their respective regions. All of these are majority government owned, either by the regional governorships or through partnerships with public corporations. The figure below illustrates the classification of TV services:

Figure 7 Classification of TV services



99 <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-colombia>

100 <https://www.radionacional.co/cultura/cuales-serian-los-riesgos-de-seguridad-para-menores-en-tiktok-and-how-to-prevent-them>

101 <https://www.semana.com/vida-moderna/articulo/tik-tok-la-aplicacion-deafter-the-dangerous-challenge-of-teenagers/650683/>

102 <https://www.eltiempo.com/tecnosfera/novedades-tecnologia/tik-tok-es-investigada-por-la-sic-por-tratamientos-from-social-network-data-to-minors-494488>

103 [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital\\_News\\_Report\\_2021\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf)

104 [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital\\_News\\_Report\\_2021\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf)

105 <https://www.sherlockcomms.com/es/rp-colombia/panorama-de-medios/>

In mid-2021, the Education Ministry announced the launch of Exploremos, a new government-funded educational channel that seeks to fill some of the gaps caused by remote learning as a response to COVID-19. This channel is especially aimed at children and youth in marginalised urban or rural contexts. Its content is developed by an interdisciplinary team and is adapted to regional and social contexts, and offers a broad cultural and musical spectrum. Apart from its pluralist content and pedagogic purpose, Exploremos is also novel in that it benefits from funding from the Canadian government - foreign funding of television broadcasting is otherwise uncommon in Colombia.<sup>106</sup> The main TV stations are listed below:

Figure 8 Main Television Stations

Media Organisation	Weblink	Ownership	Main Source Of Funding	Audience	Coverage	Locations Of Main Audience	Most Popular Programme
Canal Rcn	Canalrcn.com	Commercial Or Private Company	Advertising/ Commercial	60%	National	National	Noticias Rcn
Caracol Televisión	Caracoltv.com	Commercial Or Private Company	Advertising/ Commercial	72%	National	National	Noticias Caracol
Telemedellin	Elemedellin.tv	Government Owned	Government Funding	N/A	Local	Medellín	Noticias Telemedellin
Teleantioquia	Teleantioquia.co	Government Owned	Government Funding	4%	Regional	Antioquia	Hora 13 Noticias, Teleantioquia Noticias
Canal Capital	Canalcapital.gov.co	Government Owned	Government Funding	3%	Local	Bogotá	Conexión Capital
Telepacífico	Telepacifico.com	Government Owned	Government Funding	2%	Regional	Southwest Region	Noticiero 90 Minutos, Noticiero Noti 5, Telepacífico Noticias
Canal Uno	Canaluno.com.co	25% Public/75% Private Partnership	Advertising/ Commercial	4%	National	National	Cm&, Noticias Uno
Telecaribe	Telecaribe.co	Government Owned	Government Funding	3%	Regional	Caribbean Region	Noticiero Televista, Noticiero Las Noticias, Cv Noticias
Telecafé	Telecafe.gov.co	Government Owned	Government Funding	N/A	Regional	Caldas, Quindío And Risaralda	Tva Noticias, Telecafé Noticias
Señal Colombia	Senalcolombia.tv	Government Owned	Government Funding	3%	National	National	Rhvc Noticias
Ntn24	Ntn24.Com	Commercial Or Private Company	Advertising/ Commercial	N/A	National	Bogotá	El Informativo Ntn24, La Noche Con Claudia Gurisatti
Exploremos	N/A	Public Service	Government, International Grant	N/A	National	Rural Areas	Diverse Cultural And Educational Content
Cablenoticias	Cablenoticias.tv	Commercial Or Private Company	Advertising/ Commercial	2%	National	Bogotá	24 Hour National And International News
Teleislas	Teleislas.com.co	Government Owned	Government Funding	N/A	Regional	San Andrés Y Providencia	Teleislas News
Citytv	Citytv.com.co	Commercial Or Private Company	Advertising/ Commercial	13%	Local	Bogotá	Citynoticias, Arriba Bogotá

<sup>106</sup> [https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1759/w3-article-404615.html?\\_noredirect=1](https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1759/w3-article-404615.html?_noredirect=1)

## 4.4 Radio Channels

Radio stations can be split into three categories: 660 are commercial, 335 are public, and 624 are community-based.<sup>107</sup> In remote areas, community radio is crucial as it is the most accessible and far-reaching medium. Mirroring the television landscape, Caracol Radio is the most popular, with 13% of the monthly audience, followed by RCN Radio with 6% of listeners. It is of note that Carlos Ardilla Lülle, who owns RCN, also holds La FM radio station with 8% of the audience, while the Santo Domingo family, which owns Caracol, also holds W Radio with 9% and Bluradio with 6% of the audience. This illustrates the oligopolistic character of the radio ecosystem, and how these dominant stations are linked to business and political interests.



While Radio Policía Nacional holds a modest 2% of the audience, it has significant and sometimes exclusive coverage in rural areas across Colombia. According to an interview with a consultant of ACDI/VOCA in Chocó, “the police has a very good radio infrastructure and its music is tailored to each region, keeping people tuned based on their own musical tastes”.<sup>108</sup>

The tables below illustrate the broader radio ecosystem in some key areas of humanitarian intervention, including indigenous community radio stations from Cauca department in the southwest region, and mostly afro-descendant radio stations from Chocó department in the Pacific coast.

Figure 9 Main Radio Stations

Media Organisation	Weblink	Ownership	Main Source Of Funding	Audience	Coverage	Locations Of Main Audience	MOST POPULAR PROGRAMME
Caracol Radio	Caracol.com.co	Commercial Or Private Company	Advertising/ Commercial	13%	National	National	La Luciérnaga, 6 Am Hoy Por Hoy
Policia Nacional	Tunein.com/radioradio-Polica-Cali-1020-Fm-S300307	Government Owned	Government Funding	2%	National	National	Na
La Fm	Lafm.com.co	Commercial Or Private Company	Advertising/ Commercial	8%	National	National	La Fm
Rcn Radio	Rcnradio.com	Commercial Or Private Company	Advertising/ Commercial	6%	National	National	Amanecer Rcn
Bluradio	Bluradio.com	Commercial Or Private Company	Advertising/ Commercial	6%	National	National	Mañanas Blu
W Radio	Wradio.com.co	Commercial Or Private Company	Advertising/commercial	9%	National	National	La W
Radiodifusora Nacional Clasica	:Radionacional.co	Government Owned	Government Funding	1%	National	National	La Señal De La Mañana
Todelar	Odelar.comradio_todelar_voz.html	Commercial Or Private Company	Advertising/ Commercial	3%	National	National	La Voz (Programme With The Same Name Across Regions)
Super	Co.radio.netscadenasuper	Commercial Or Private Company	Advertising/ Commercial	0.4%	National	National	
Colmundo	Colmundoradio.com.co	Commercial Or Private Company	Advertising/ Commercial	0.1%	National	Bogotá, Medellín, Cali, Pasto, Cartagena, Bucaramanga	La Chispa

<sup>107</sup> <https://mintic.gov.co/portal/inicio/Sala-de-Prensa/Noticias/161831:Queremos-ser-el-gran-aliado-de-the-means-in-their-process-of-economic-reactivation-Minister-Kar>

<sup>108</sup> Interview with Consultant at ACDI/VOCA in Chocó

The table below illustrates the indigenous community radio stations from the Cauca department in the southwest region.

Figure 10 Indigenous community radio stations from Cauca (these broadcast in Spanish and/or their native languages).

Radio station	Indigenous group/Language	Municipality
Namui Wan Estéreo	Misak	Silvia
Uswal Nasa Yuwe	Nasa	Caldono
Tejido Tel Yuwe: (Nuestra Voz Estereo, Radio Identidad-Chimborazo, Programa de Jóvenes)	Nasa	Morales
Renacer Kokonuco	Kokonuco	Puracé
Radio Nasa de Tierradentro	Nasa	Belalcazar
Aires del Pueblo Yanakona – Stereo	Yanakona	Almaguer
Radio Payumat	Nasa	Santander
Programa de Comunicación y Cultura – Radio Libertad	Totoró	Totoró
Voces de Nuestra Tierra de Jambalo	Nasa	Jambalo
Nasa Estéreo	Nasa	Toribio
Emisora Canoas Estéreo	Nasa	Caloto

The table below is of mostly afro-descendant radio stations from Chocó department in the Pacific coast.

Figure 11 Radio stations from Chocó

Radio Station	Weblink	Contact
Cocomacia Stereo	Tunein.com/Radio/Emisora-Comunitaria-Cocomacia-Stereo-1068-5221093	cocomaciastereo@gmail.com
Radio Santo Domingo Sabio Fm	Domingosaviostereo.com	sds90.8fm@gmail.com
Carrasquilla Stereo	Carrasquillaindustrial.edu.coindex.phpradio-Online	info@carrasquillaindustrial.edu.co
Ecos Del Atrato	Colombiaemite.comemisoraschochoquibdoecos-Del-Atrato	ecosdelatratol400am@yahoo.es
Radio Universidad Del Chocó	Radioutch.edu.co	radiouniversidad@utch.edu.co
Q Radio	Qradio.com.coco	Lmontoya648@Gm Ail.com
Emisora La Voz Del Chocó	Onlineradiobox.comcolavozdelchocoplayer?Cs=Co.lavozdelchoco&Played=1	glfire14-hotmail.com
Emisora Paccífico Stereo	Emisorascolombianas.co/Pacifico-Stereo	paccificostereo@gmail.com
Caracol Radio - Quibdó	Caracol.com.cotagquibdoa	dipereal@gmail.com
Jmd La Voz	Facebook.comjmdlavoz	mayramaturanaa@gmail.com, jmd.lavozdelajuventud@gmail.com
Made In Chocó	Madeinchoco.org	madeinchocoquibdo@gmail.com
Talento Chocoano	Talentochocano.com	talentochocano@hotmail.com
Emisora Mario En Tu Radio	Marioenturadio.com	marioenturadiofm@hotmail.com

## 4.5 Print Media

Just two major newspapers, El Tiempo and El Espectador, have a national reach, while other newspapers, such as El Colombiano in the northwest, El Pais in the southwest, and El Heraldo in the Caribbean coast, dominate their respective regions. It should be noted, however, that the tabloid Q'hubo is the most read print newspaper, with 21% of the print news audience, through twelve region-specific versions that share the same style and structure, including Atlántico, Cundinamarca, Santander, Valle del Cauca, Bolívar, Norte de Santander, Tolima, Caldas, Antioquia, Risaralda, Cauca, and Cesar. Apart from its regional contextualization, Q'hubo stands out for its sensational and even morbid coverage of violence, and its semi-nude female models, all with a visually impactful style.<sup>109</sup> Partly due to its appeal among urban working classes, the success of Q'hubo as a print publication has not translated to digital prominence, as it is the 856th most visited website in Colombia, whereas El Tiempo is the 25th most visited website and El Espectador is the 54th.

<sup>109</sup> <https://www.qhubo.com/>

The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impacts on the print news industry, due to the disruptions to the distribution networks, widespread economic impacts, and a broader consumer digitalization. Víctor García Perdomo, journalism professor at Universidad de la Sabana, described the impact of COVID-19 on print news:

“Many people were not willing to buy or receive papers in public places. Some regional papers, like El Mundo from Medellín, stopped printing for financial and logistical reasons, but others, including El Espectador and El Tiempo, began sending subscribers print editions in bags as a COVID-19 preventive measure. Free newspapers like Publimetro suspended printing and launched PDF editions together with social media content distribution campaigns to retain traditional advertisers in digital formats. Traditional news publishers like El Tiempo, El Espectador, and Semana magazine, which had been already struggling with their business models, introduced or tightened their paywalls to compensate for shrinking income”.<sup>110</sup>

#### 4.6 Traditional Forms Of Communication

Traditional spaces like religious, musical, or other events, tend not to be prominent spaces for transition of information. Theatre is a relatively niche but vocal medium for social commentary, particularly regarding the armed conflict, crime, and violence. The following theatre festivals are worthy of note:

- » Festival de Teatro Ciudad de Itagüí
- » Festival estudiantil de Teatro de Bogotá
- » Festival Iberoamericano de Teatro de Bogotá
- » Festival Internacional de Teatro de Manizales
- » Festival Internacional de Teatro de Mosquera
- » Festival Internacional de Teatro del Caribe
- » Festival de Teatro Brújula al Sur, Cali
- » Festival de Teatro de Cali

#### 4.7 Media Training Opportunities

Government, NGOs, and multilateral agencies in Colombia deliver media training opportunities. The government decree 1447 of 1995 not only posited the democratisation of communication, but also the capacity-building of radio in project management in order to promote their economic sustainability and broader social participation. Such capacity-building, delivered by the Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications (MinTIC), includes RadioFest, which delivers technical and production assistance to existing community radio stations<sup>111</sup> and special training opportunities for aspiring community radio stations with a differential ethnic approach.<sup>112</sup>

The Organisation of American States (OAS) has focussed its Leadership School, aimed at community leaders from youth, rural, ethnic, and community action boards, to include the programme The Leadership School Takes on Radio. The programme is active in rural municipalities of Antioquia, including El Bagre, Dabeiba, Valdivia, and San Andrés de Cuerquia, where training on community radio is not only targeted at select leaders, but at the community as a whole.<sup>113</sup>

The international NGO Cultural Survival offers training scholarships for indigenous youth on technology, programme development, the community radio ecosystem, and the international defence of indigenous rights. These scholarships are available across a dozen countries in Latin America, as well as in South Africa and Nepal.<sup>114</sup>

Corporación para la Comunicación Ciudad Comuna, a local nonprofit in Medellín, established a communication school that applies critical pedagogy and participatory action research to train young communicators.<sup>115</sup> Through such school, Ciudad Comuna has established the virtual radio station Voces de la 8, the audiovisual collective Común Audiovisual,

<sup>110</sup> [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital\\_News\\_Report\\_2021\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>111</sup> <https://radiofest.mintic.gov.co/portal/>

<sup>112</sup> <https://mintic.gov.co/micrositios/fortalecimientoradiocomunitaria/745/w3-channel.html>

<sup>113</sup> <https://www.mapp-oea.org/tag/radios-comunitarias/>

<sup>114</sup> <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/convocatoria-de-propuestas-para-la-beca-jovenes-indigenas-en-medios-comunitarios-2021#:~:text=Cultural%20Survival%20se>

<sup>115</sup> <https://www.redalyc.org/journal/4763/476368272006/html/>



the newspaper *Visión 8*, and outputs throughout its website and social networks.<sup>116</sup> As well as their programmes in communication studies, some academic institutions have also established observatories that are useful repositories of information regarding the media landscape in Colombia. Below is an illustrative, though not exhaustive, list of some academic media observatories:

- » Observatorio de Medios, Universidad de Pamplona: covers press, TV, radio, and digital media in the Norte de Santander department.<sup>117</sup>
- » Observatorio de Medios, Universidad Sergio Arboleda: assesses role of media in relation to public policy and civil society.<sup>118</sup>
- » Observatorio de Comunicaciones, Universidad Jorge Tadeo Lozano: conducts research about media production, content, and audiences.<sup>119</sup>
- » Observatorio de Medios y Opinión Pública, Universidad del Norte: seeks to promote a platform for dialogue among academia, media, and audiences in the Caribbean region.

---

<sup>116</sup> <http://www.ciudadcomuna.org/>

<sup>117</sup> <https://www.unipamplona.edu.co/observatorio/>

<sup>118</sup> <https://www.usergioarboleda.edu.co/escuela-de-ciencias-de-la-comunicacion/observatorio-de-medios>

<sup>119</sup> <http://avalon.utadeo.edu.co/comunidades/observatorios/comunicacion/analisis.html>





This guide is one of a series of Media Landscape Guides which map the media landscape in different countries. The guides have been produced by the CDAC Network in cooperation with DW Akademie and supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. This project is part of the global initiative "Transparency and media freedom - Crisis resilience in the pandemic".



© CDAC NETWORK 2022. The CDAC Network convenes a diverse group of stakeholders to promote innovative thinking, knowledge sharing, and the strengthening of collaboration between those seeking to engage and communicate with disaster-affected communities. Registered with Companies House, UK: Registration Number: 10571501. Registered UK Charity Number: 1178168.