



## From Research to Impact: MeCoDEM Designs Outreach Program on Media Use for Conflict Resolution

How can we best share knowledge of effective communication interventions for conflict prevention and conflict management? This question was central to the latest meeting of the EU-funded project “Media, Conflict and Democratisation” (MeCoDEM) held in Stockholm, Sweden, on 15-18 February 2015. Project members and external experts engaged in discussions to ensure MeCoDEM’s research results are transformed into valuable input for activists, journalists, policy makers, and media development implementers.

“Our research is a systematic attempt to shed light on the complexities of communication during conflict situations. We want to reach out to conflict stakeholders in Egypt, Kenya, Serbia and South Africa to share the knowledge we acquire,” explains **Katrin Voltmer**, MeCoDEM’s coordinator.

MeCoDEM will arrange several events throughout its project term to build bridges between research and practice. In dialogue with activists, journalists, policy makers, and media development professionals the project members will discuss their findings on communication dynamics between conflict parties and the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) for conflict resolution. Heading these outreach activities are **Barbara Thomass** (Ruhr University Bochum), leader of work package “Impact and Dissemination”, and **Christian Christiansen** (Stockholm University), leader of work package “ICTs and Conflict”. The outreach dialogues are scheduled for 2016.

Three external experts – **Marcin de Kaminski**, **Kjetil Selvik**, and **Walid Al-Saqaf** – joined the MeCoDEM scholars in Stockholm to discuss the needs and interests of outreach addressees. De Kaminski is a policy specialist on freedom of expression and ICT at the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Selvik is an Associate Professor at University of Bergen specializing in comparative politics of the Middle East region. Al-Saqaf is a media and communication researcher at Örebro University and a free speech activist.

### About MeCoDEM:

MeCoDEM began on 1 February 2014 and will run over three years. The project investigates the interplay of communication and democratisation conflicts in four emerging democracies, Egypt, Kenya, Serbia and South Africa, each of them representing unique aspects of transitional / post-transitional divisions. Based on a comparative case study design, the research covers constitutional conflicts, civic conflicts and conflicts surrounding accountability and good governance. These conflicts constitute arenas of dispute where the media interact with the communicative strategies of governments on the one hand, and political activists and political movements struggling for recognition on the other.

MeCoDEM is funded by the European Union within the EU’s Seventh Framework Programme. With a budget of 2.2 million Euros, the project consortium includes eight partner institutions from six countries: University of Leeds (coordinating institution), University of Belgrade, University of Hamburg, University of Cape Town, University of Oxford, Stockholm University, Ruhr University Bochum and American University in Cairo.

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