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Cultural Organization

**IPDC** THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME  
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION

**Journalists' Safety Indicators (JSI) - related  
Project in Nigeria  
2014-2015**

**UNESCO Regional Office in Abuja  
Nigeria**



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**Narrative Report**

*Of*

**PROJECT TITLE:**

BASELINE AUDIT ON STATE OF SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS IN NIGERIA

**IMPLEMENTING AGENCY:**

INTERNATIONAL PRESS CENTER

**SUBMITTED TO:**

UNESCO

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## 1.0. INTRODUCTION

This report is being submitted following the conclusion of the activities embarked upon under the project titled **Baseline Audit On State Of Safety Of Journalists In Nigeria** as supported by UNESCO's office in Nigeria. The main objective was to conduct an assessment that provides baseline information on safety of journalists in Nigeria especially in the context of UNESCO's Journalists' Safety Indicator at the National Level and enables the development of an intervention plan by UNESCO, its partners and other interested stakeholders

The project was necessitated by the continued threat to journalists in Nigeria amidst growing conflicts and the rise of terrorism especially in the North East. The activities were therefore meant to provide useful insights into the state of safety and security of various categories of media professionals in within the context of the widening conflicts. The audit, the experts' meeting and other related components of the project were against this background designed to help develop appropriate response mechanisms to the challenge posed to media freedom and journalists' rights. Central to the outcome would be the need to engage in appropriate capacity building and other initiatives on safety and security of journalists towards repositioning the media for effective performance of social duties and obligations to the society.

## 2.0. THE ACTIVITIES & OUTCOMES

### ***ACTIVITY 1: Monitoring and documentation of attacks against journalists***

#### **Outputs/Milestone achieved**

- ❖ The monitoring took place from November 2014 to April, 2015 as planned.

The nine newspapers monitored for the documentation were: *The Guardian, The Punch, The Nation, Thisday, Leadership, Vanguard, Daily Independent, Daily Sun* and *Nigerian Tribune*.

#### **Outcomes**

- ❖ A total 47 attacks against journalists were documented during the period
- ❖ The attacks affected journalists from 22 national and international media outlets
- ❖ 4 of the 47 attacks were directed against female journalists
- ❖ The monitoring report was published for each month
- ❖ The reports were published in several newspapers, IPCs social media platforms and linked to the pages of key stakeholders on twitter and face book

#### **Indicators**

- ❖ Monitoring reports submitted to UNESCO;
- ❖ Press releases on monitoring reports
- ❖ Media publications on monitoring reports
- ❖ Reports on IPC website and others

*The bi-monthly reports are attached as appendix*

## ***ACTIVITY 2: Development of questionnaires for interviews and focused group discussions***

### **Outputs/ Milestone achieved**

- ❖ The questionnaires were developed and circulated to relevant stakeholders as intended.

### **Outcomes**

- ❖ Target stakeholders including journalists and editors working in conflict prone areas responded to the questionnaires
- ❖ A narrative report highlighting the challenge of safety of journalists from the perspective of stakeholders was generated from the responses to the questionnaires.

### **Indicators**

- ❖ A narrative report on Baseline Audit on Safety and Security of Journalists in Nigeria was produced
- ❖ The report was used to engage stakeholders at the experts' meeting

*The questionnaires are attached as appendix*

## **ACTIVITY 3: The conduct of desktop research/study of frameworks on safety of journalists**

### **Outputs/ Milestone achieved**

- ❖ The **desktop research/study** was undertaken

### **Outcomes**

A report was produced following the **desktop research/study**

### **Indicators**

- ❖ The report was used as **one of the resource materials** for the experts' meeting
- ❖ The report is expected to form part of the content of a proposed resource book on safety of journalists in Nigeria

*The report is attached as attached as an appendix*

## Activity 4: Experts' meeting on safety of journalists and emerging issues in conflict in Nigeria

### Outputs/ Milestone achieved

- ❖ The experts' meeting/focused group discussion took place in Abuja on April 30, 2015
- ❖ The meeting was attended by up to 25 media experts drawn from the print, broadcast and online media, the academics and media support groups

### Outcomes

- ❖ The report of the baseline audit was presented to the experts' meeting
- ❖ Three well researched papers were presented at the experts' meeting

### Indicators

- ❖ The presentations at the experts' meeting are expected to form part of the content of a proposed resource book on safety of journalists in Nigeria
- ❖ News reports on the experts' meeting were published by broadcast, print and Online media outlets
- ❖ Copy of workshop programme
- ❖ Presentations by facilitators
- ❖ The Communiqué.
- ❖ Selected Pictures from the programme.

*The presentations, communiqué, photographs etc are attached as appendix*

### 3.0. LESSONS LEARNT AND THE WAY FORWARD

#### The project has revealed that:

- ❖ There is widespread attacks on journalists in Nigeria despite sixteen years of democratic rule;
- ❖ The attacks have been taken place despite the existence of laws and frameworks that should promote the right of free expression such as the Freedom of Information Act
- ❖ The major perpetrators of the attacks on journalists are the security agencies, political party agents or thugs and unknown gun men
- ❖ The attacks have been targeted at male and female journalists;
- ❖ The attacks have been targeted at both Nigerian and foreign journalists;
- ❖ Not all the attacks are reported and documented;
- ❖ Perpetrators of attacks on journalists are rarely prosecuted
- ❖ There is knowledge and capacity gap on the safety of journalists and issues in conflict in Nigeria



**It is recommended that:**

- ❖ The project resource materials including the audit and the desktop study/research should be published in book form to serve as resource material on the state of safety of journalists in Nigeria;
- ❖ There should be continuous monitoring and documentation of attacks on journalists in the country involving the use of diverse sources;
- ❖ An alert system should be put in place on attacks on journalists involving a network of media groups working on the safety of journalists;
- ❖ Media organisations and professional bodies should be encouraged to put in place important measures including the provision of insurance facilities in order to protect all media professionals; in particular, there should be regular training and re-training on safety consciousness for journalists in the country especially those working in conflict areas;
- ❖ Media organisations and professional bodies should be encouraged to establish welfare schemes for the purpose of taking care of journalists who fall victims of conflicts as well as their families;
- ❖ There should be regular interactive forum between media stakeholders and the security agencies on the safety of journalists and issues in conflict in Nigeria
- ❖ Journalists working in situations of conflict and tension should have adequate insurance cover for illness, injury, repatriation and death. Media organisations should ensure that this is the case before sending journalists employed by them on dangerous missions. Self-employed journalists should make their own insurance arrangements
- ❖ Media organisations and professional organisations should give consideration to the setting up of a solidarity fund to indemnify journalists or their families for damage suffered in cases where insurance is insufficient or non-existent.
- ❖ A journalists' safety emergency hotline should be established to manage issues relating to threats and attacks on journalists
- ❖ The Government should be urged to undertake full and thorough investigations into all incidents of attacks or threats against media professionals; and should instruct the military and police authorities to give necessary and reasonable protection and assistance to journalists when they so request, and treat them as civilians
- ❖ The Governments should give their full political support to the strengthening of media freedom by promoting safe and unimpeded conditions for journalists to perform their professional duties and make it their priority to carry out swift and effective investigations, sending a message to society that perpetrators and or masterminds of violence against journalists will be efficiently brought to justice
- ❖ The Police authorities should thoroughly investigate officers and men alleged to be responsible for attacks on journalists and should incorporate modules on the importance of freedom of expression and media rights into its core training documents
- ❖ The Human Right Commission should work closely with the NUJ to bring to an immediate end all acts of impunity against media professionals especially journalists

## Appendix 1

### REPORTS OF MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION OF ATTACKS AGAINST JOURNALISTS



INTERNATIONAL PRESS CENTRE (IPC) LAGOS

#### **Summary report of the monitoring and documentation of incidents of attacks on journalists in March and April, 2015**

##### **1.0 Introduction**

The just concluded elections witnessed an increase in incidents of violence, intimidation and threats against journalists and media workers some of whom were not allowed to freely document the electoral process.

Fifteen (15) of such incidents, as sourced from nine national newspapers were documented during the period.

The documentation revealed that most of the attacks occurred in Delta State where journalists were assaulted at the premises of INEC during the monitoring and collation of results for the Presidential and National Assembly elections.

Few others were reportedly manhandled by thugs allegedly loyal a politician in the state.

The harassment of journalists in the course of their legitimate duties as evidenced by the outcome of monitoring clearly shows that press freedom remains under threat in the country despite the efforts that have been made to widen the scope of freedom of expression and uphold the right of the public to know the truth since the return of civil rule.

Indeed, it remains worrisome that the alleged perpetrators of the attacks have not been brought to justice.

## **2.0. Indicators and Findings**

| <b>Name of Journalists affected</b> | <b>Medium of Journalists affected</b> | <b>Gender of Journalists affected</b> | <b>Location of incidents</b>                        | <b>Nature/Description of attacks</b>  | <b>Persons/groups allegedly responsible</b>            | <b>Losses/Injuries suffered</b>   | <b>Actions taken</b>  | <b>Newspapers reporting incidents</b> | <b>Date of reporting</b> |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Joe Ukah</b>                     | The Nation                            | Male                                  | Dopemu, under bridge on Lagos - Abeokuta expressway | Hoodlums grabbed him from behind and hit him repeatedly with sticks.  | Hoodlums   | Sustained injuries to the head; lost personal belongings such as Phones and 15,000 naira cash | Nil   | The Nation                            | March 9                  |
| <b>Perez Brisibe</b>                | Vanguard                              | Male                                  | Asaba, Delta  | Assaulted at the premises of INEC during the monitoring and collation of results of Saturday's Presidential and National Assembly | Policemen attached to the Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) | Assaulted ; his shirt was torn to shreds and mobile phone was confiscated                     | Journalists called for the immediate transfer of the DPO, Mr. Galadima from the area. | Vanguard                              | March 30,                |

|                         |                                 |      |              |  |                 |  |   |   |           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|------|--------------|--|-----------------|--|---|---|-----------|
|                         |                                 |      |              | elections  |                 |  |   |   |           |
| <b>Shedrack Onitsha</b> | Publisher of Advocate Newspaper | Male | Asaba, Delta | Assaulted by police officers when he went to inquire on the position of things with a detained journalist  | Policemen       | Assaulted by police officers on duty   | Journalists called on the immediate transfer of the DPO, Mr. Galadima from that area. | Vanguard  | March 30, |
| <b>Sola Oneil</b>       | Regional Editor of the Nation   | Male | Delta        | Manhandled by thugs allegedly loyal to a politician who instructed them to make sure the journalists did not cover the voting exercise in Ward 5, Unit 12, Okere road. | Political thugs | Pictures taken by the journalists were deleted from their cameras by the Political thugs | Nil   | <a href="http://nigeriantimes.ng/news/journalists-attacked-in-warri/">http://nigeriantimes.ng/news/journalists-attacked-in-warri/</a> |           |
| <b>Sylvester Idowu</b>  | Newswatch Times                 | Male | Delta        | He and others were reportedly stopped and molested by men  | Political thugs | Pictures taken by the journalists were   | Nil   | <a href="http://nigeriantimes.ng/news/journalists-attacked-">http://nigeriantimes.ng/news/journalists-attacked-</a>                   |           |

|                      |                   |      |       |  |                 |  |     |   |  |
|----------------------|-------------------|------|-------|--|-----------------|--|-----|---|--|
|                      |                   |      |       | of the Nigeria Police in Calabar   |                 | deleted from the cameras by the Political thugs  |     | in-warri/   |  |
| <b>Dele Fasan</b>    | Galaxy Television | Male | Delta | He and others were reportedly stopped and molested by men of the Nigeria Police in Calabar | Political thugs | Pictures taken by the journalists were deleted from the cameras by the Political thugs | Nil | <a href="http://nigeriantimes.ng/news/journalists-attacked-in-warri/">http://nigeriantimes.ng/news/journalists-attacked-in-warri/</a> |  |
| <b>Daniel Ebinum</b> | Galaxy Television | Male | Delta | He and others were reportedly stopped and molested by men of the Nigeria Police in Calabar | Political thugs | Pictures taken by the journalists were deleted from the cameras by the Political thugs | Nil | <a href="http://nigeriantimes.ng/news/journalists-attacked-in-warri/">http://nigeriantimes.ng/news/journalists-attacked-in-warri/</a> |  |

|                            |                           |      |                      |  |           |     |                          |   |  |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|------|----------------------|--|-----------|-----|--------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Funsho Arogunda de</b>  | PM News/TheNews           | Male | Ipaja, Lagos         | He and others were reportedly stopped and molested by men of the Nigeria Police in Calabar | Policemen | Nil | IPC condemned the attack | <a href="http://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2015/03/31/ipc-decries-attacks-on-journalists-calls-for-release-of-jazeera-journalist/">http://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2015/03/31/ipc-decries-attacks-on-journalists-calls-for-release-of-jazeera-journalist/</a> |  |
| <b>Imani Joe-Adeniyi,</b>  | Channels TV Correspondent | Male | Calabar, Cross River | He and others were reportedly stopped and molested by men of the Nigeria Police in Calabar | Policemen | Nil | IPC condemned the attack | <a href="http://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2015/03/31/ipc-decries-attacks-on-journalists-calls-for-release-of-jazeera-journalist/">http://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2015/03/31/ipc-decries-attacks-on-journalists-calls-for-release-of-jazeera-journalist/</a> |  |
| <b>Saviour Etim Asuquo</b> | Channels TV Camera man    | Male | Calabar, Cross River | He and others were reportedly stopped and  | Policemen | Nil | IPC condemned the attack | <a href="http://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2015/03/31/ipc-decries-attacks-on-journalists-calls-for-release-of-jazeera-journalist/">http://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2015/03/31/ipc-decries-attacks-on-journalists-calls-for-release-of-jazeera-journalist/</a> |  |

|                     |                                 |        |                      |   |              |     |                          |   |  |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------|----------------------|---|--------------|-----|--------------------------|---|--|
|                     |                                 |        |                      | molested by men of the Nigeria Police in Calabar  |              |     |                          | 3/31/ipc-decries-attacks-on-journalists-calls-for-release-of-jazeera-journalist/  |  |
| <b>Tina Todo</b>    | The Guardian newspaper reporter | Female | Calabar, Cross River | She and others were reportedly stopped and molested by men of the Nigeria Police in Calabar, Cross River State on their way to the headquarters of the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, to obtain updates on the collation of election results. | Police men   | Nil | IPC condemned the attack | <a href="http://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2015/03/31/ipc-decries-attacks-on-journalists-calls-for-release-of-jazeera-journalist/">http://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2015/03/31/ipc-decries-attacks-on-journalists-calls-for-release-of-jazeera-journalist/</a> |  |
| <b>Ahmed Idris,</b> | Al-jazeera                      | Male   | Maiduguri            | Military personnel  | Military Men | Nil | CPJ and IPC              | <a href="https://cpj.org/2015">https://cpj.org/2015</a>   |  |



|                    |            |      |           |  |              |     |                                      |   |  |
|--------------------|------------|------|-----------|--|--------------|-----|--------------------------------------|---|--|
|                    |            |      |           | confined him and his colleague to their hotel room and forbade them from leaving because the journalists were covering a story on military activities in the area as part of Al-Jazeera's broader election coverage. |              |     | condemned the act.                   | <a href="https://cpj.org/2015/03/nigerian-soldiers-confine-al-jazeera-journalists-t.php">/03/nigerian-soldiers-confine-al-jazeera-journalists-t.php</a>                     |  |
| <b>Mustafa Ali</b> | Al-jazeera | Male | Maiduguri | Military personnel confined him and his colleague to their hotel room and forbade them from leaving because the journalists were covering a story on military activities in the area as part of Al-Jazeera's broader | Military Men | Nil | CSOs, CPJ and IPC condemned the act. | <a href="https://cpj.org/2015/03/nigerian-soldiers-confine-al-jazeera-journalists-t.php">https://cpj.org/2015/03/nigerian-soldiers-confine-al-jazeera-journalists-t.php</a> |  |

|                        |  |      |                         |   |               |  |     |                   |          |
|------------------------|--|------|-------------------------|---|---------------|--|-----|-------------------|----------|
|                        |  |      |                         | election coverage.  |               |  |     |                   |          |
| Victor Ahiuma Young    | Assistant Labor Editor, Vanguard Newspaper | Male | Oshodi-expressway Lagos | Shot by armed robbers on a motorcycle at a vendor's stand | Armed robbers | Shot in the thigh and lost his Cash  | Nil | The Nation        | April 22 |
| Kingsley Ighomwenghian | Daily Independent Editor                   | Male | Oshodi-expressway Lagos | Attacked by four armed robbers                            | Armed robbers | Disposed of his cash, Phones, Laptop, a bag containing his cheque book and some other things | Nil | Daily independent | April 15 |

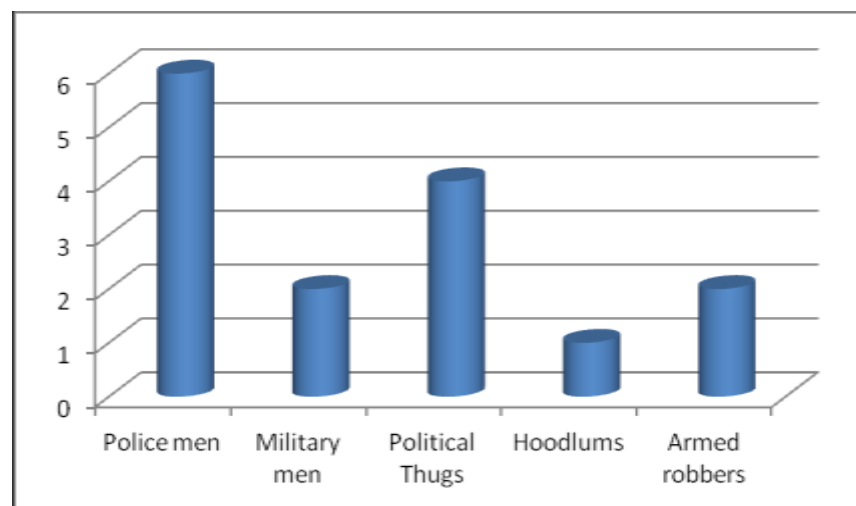
### 3.0 Brief Analysis

From the findings carried for the months of March and April it was discovered that the attacks against journalists increased as a result of the elections conducted during the month.

Persons/groups responsible for attacks

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| Frequency | Persons/Group responsible | Location              |
|-----------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 6         | Police men                | Calabar, Lagos, Asaba |
| 2         | Military men              | Maiduguri             |
| 4         | Political Thugs           | Delta                 |
| 1         | Hoodlums                  | Lagos                 |
| 2         | Armed robbers             | Lagos                 |



Six (6) journalists were molested arrested and detained by the Police in Cross River, Lagos and Delta States

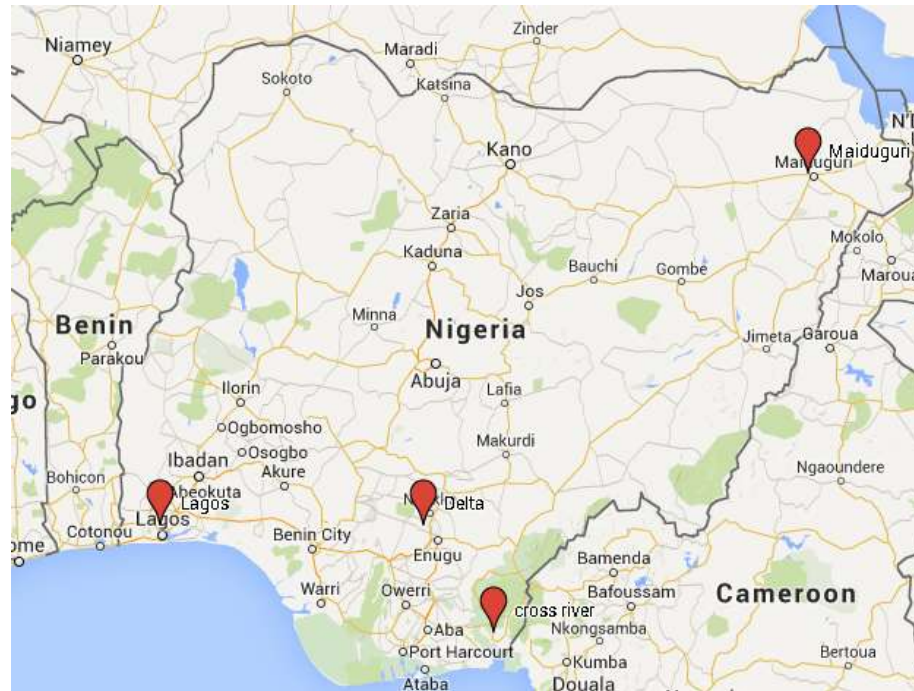
Two (2) Journalists were confined to their rooms by the Nigerian military men in Maiduguri

Four (4) journalists were manhandled by Political thugs in Delta State

One (1) journalist was assaulted by hoodlums in Lagos

Two (2) journalists were attacked by armed robbers in Lagos

**Map showing states where the attacks against Journalists occurred in the Month of March**



## 5.0 Observations and recommendations

The just concluded elections were marked by an increase in intimidation and harassment of journalists by security agencies and this has becoming alarming.

Political Thugs have continued to assault journalists and media practitioners without being reprimanded.

The police authorities, other law enforcement agencies and the leadership of the political parties should enlighten their men and members on the important role of the media during future elections which requires that the freedom of journalists should not be tampered with.

Journalists should seek appropriate legal action whenever their rights are violated



**Summary report of the monitoring and documentation of incidents of attacks on journalists in January and February, 2015**

**1.0 Introduction**

Violence, intimidation and threats against journalists and media workers continue to present a significant challenge to the establishment of a free and safe media environment

This second report of the monitoring of attacks on journalists in Nigeria, as sourced from nine national newspapers with focus on the months of January and February documents 11 incidents of attacks on journalists.

In particular, IPC notes that many perpetrators of attacks against journalists continue to enjoy impunity for their actions. Although there was progress in the case of Kofa Kings of Daily Sun, most others have not been investigated. The fact that police and other security agencies, are still culpable is particularly alarming.

Beyond their impact on the individual victims, violence against journalists represents a threat to freedom of expression as a human right. Governments have an obligation to provide adequate protection to members of the press and to thoroughly investigate any violence or threats perpetrated against them.

## 2.0 Indicators and Findings

| Name of Journalists affected | Medium of Journalists affected   | Gender of Journalists affected | Location of incidents | Nature/Description of attacks  | Persons/groups allegedly responsible | Losses/Injuries suffered                         | Actions taken  | Newspapers reporting incidents    | Date of reporting    |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Matthias Ogbagah</b>      | Rainbow Paper/<br>Financial Secretary of The Nigerian Union of Journalists Ughelli Chapter | Male                           | Delta                 | Armed men spent about four hours to break into his house and macheted him to the point of death and only left him because they thought he was dead. Again on December 31 2014 he was shot twice by armed robbers in his residence at Ughelli North Local Government Area | Armed robbers                        | Lost personal belongings such as phones and cash | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) chapter Ughelli condemned the attack | Vanguard<br><br>Daily Independent | 2/1/15<br><br>5/1/15 |

|   |           |      |              |   |              |  |   |                   |         |
|---|-----------|------|--------------|---|--------------|--|---|-------------------|---------|
| <b>Kofa Kings</b>   | Daily Sun | Male | Delta        | Assaulted while trying to cover the Peoples Democratic Party(PDP)'s primary for Bomadi/Patan Federal Constituency and denied access to venue        | Mob          | Lost personal and working tools including hands et midgett and money | The Police arrested one of the suspect-Gregory Tuodonye | Daily Independent | 12/1/15 |
| <b>Group of unnamed journalists as well as Alhaji Ibrahim Musa Special Assistant Media to Governor of Kebbi State</b> | -         | Male | Birnin Kebbi | Threatened to be shot by security men while trying to gain access to Emir of Gwandu's palace to cover courtesy visit of Vice President Namadi Sambo | Security Men | Nil  | Nil   | Leadership        | 1/1/15  |



|  |                      |      |              |   |   |     |     |            |         |
|--|----------------------|------|--------------|---|---|-----|-----|------------|---------|
| <b>Group of unnamed journalists as well as Abubakar Muazu Dakingari Chief Press Secretary to Governor of Kebbi State</b> | -                    | Male | Birnin Kebbi | Threatened to be shot by security men while trying to gain access to Emir of Gwandu's palace to cover courtesy visit of Vice President Namadi Sambo | Security Men  | Nil | Nil | Leadership | 1/1/15  |
| <b>Samson Echenim</b>  | Leadership Newspaper | Male | Lagos        | Attempted to be lynched while trying to investigate allegations of extortion from graduates seeking to register as cadets with FERMA                | Officials of Subsidy Re-investment Programme (SURE-P) under FERMA | Nil | Nil | Leadership | 23/1/15 |
| <b>Wole</b>  | The Sun              | Male | Ado Ekiti    | Brutalized after  | Soldiers  | Nil | Nil | Leadership | 5/2/15  |

|                        |                       |      |               |   |  |                                       |  |            |         |
|------------------------|-----------------------|------|---------------|---|--|---------------------------------------|--|------------|---------|
| <b>Balogun</b>         | Newspaper             |      |               | being accused of obstructing the free flow of traffic with his car at Okeyinmi roundabout   |  |                                       |  |            |         |
| <b>Charles Eruka</b>   | Channels TV           | Male | Okrika Rivers | Stabbed severally and injured as multiple explosions and sporadic gunshots was fired from different directions surrounding the National Field, Okrika, Rivers state, rocked the campaign venue of the campaign rally of Dakuku Peterside, the governorship candidate of APC | Political Thugs, allegedly linked to a member of Rivers State House of Assembly, Evans Bipi. | Sustained various degrees of injuries | Governor Amechi and the NUJ Chairman condemned the attack, while the members of the NUJ Rivers State Chapter staged a peaceful protest | Leadership | 19/2/15 |
| <b>Anayo Onukwugha</b> | Leadership Newspapers | Male | Okrika Rivers | Assaulted and injured as multiple   | Political Thugs allegedly  | Lost personal                         | Governor Amechi and the  | Leadership | 19/2/15 |

|                     |         |      |         |   |   |   |  |            |         |
|---------------------|---------|------|---------|---|---|---|--|------------|---------|
|                     |         |      |         | explosions and sporadic gunshots was fired from different directions surrounding the National Field, Okrika, Rivers state, rocked the campaign venue of the campaign rally of Dakuku Peterside, the governorship candidate of APC | y linked to a member of Rivers State House of Assembly, Evans Bipi. | and working tools including two phones, a digital voice recorder and the cash | NUJ Chairman condemned the attack, while the members of the NUJ Rivers State Chapter staged a peaceful protest |            |         |
| <b>Tife Balogun</b> | Reuters | Male | Yenagoa | Invaded his home over for over four hours for alleged act of espionage claiming to be acting on the order from Abuja  | Department of State Security Service (SSS)                          | Personal computers, and electronic working gadgets                            | He was quizzed for several hours and released into the Custody of the state chairman of the                    | leadership | 16/2/15 |

|                         |  |      |       |  |        |       |   |          |        |
|-------------------------|--|------|-------|--|--------|-------|---|----------|--------|
|                         |  |      |       |  |        |       | Nigerian Union of journalists (NUJ) comrade Tare Akono                              |          |        |
| <b>Emmanuel Fateman</b> | Assistant Editor National Waves Magazine | Male | Abuja | Detained when the Publisher Jimmy Enyeh, Publisher of National Waves Magazine as part of his journalistic duties uncovered alleged suspicious deals regarding a contract of N650 million awarded to A.A Oil Company LTD and pursuant of National Waves Magazine's policy of fair and honest reportage , sought for his side of the story | Police | Abuja | Festus Keyamo, Human Rights Lawyer petitioned the Inspector General of Police(IG P) | vanguard | 6/2/15 |

|                        |   |      |       |   |        |       |   |          |        |
|------------------------|---|------|-------|---|--------|-------|---|----------|--------|
|                        |   |      |       | through a letter dated 1/9/14, entitled ,<br>“Request for reaction on collection of N650 million for unexecuted contract”   |        |       |   |          |        |
| <b>Joseph Jolayemi</b> | Graphic Artist<br>National waves magazine | Male | Abuja | Detained when the Publisher Jimmy Enyeh, Publisher of National Waves Magazine as part of his journalistic duties uncovered alleged suspicious deals regarding a contract of N650 million awarded to A.A Oil Company LTD and pursuant of National Waves Magazine’s policy of fair and honest reportage , | Police | Abuja | Festus Keyamo, Human Rights Lawyer petitioned the Inspector General of Police(IG P) | Vanguard | 6/2/15 |

|  |  |  |  |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  | sought for his side of the story through a letter dated 1/9/14, entitled , “Request for reaction on collection of N650 million for unexecuted contract” |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|

### 3.0 Brief Analysis

The findings revealed an increase in attacks directed at journalists by security agencies in the north and the south west. Table below shows the diversity of sources of these attacks;

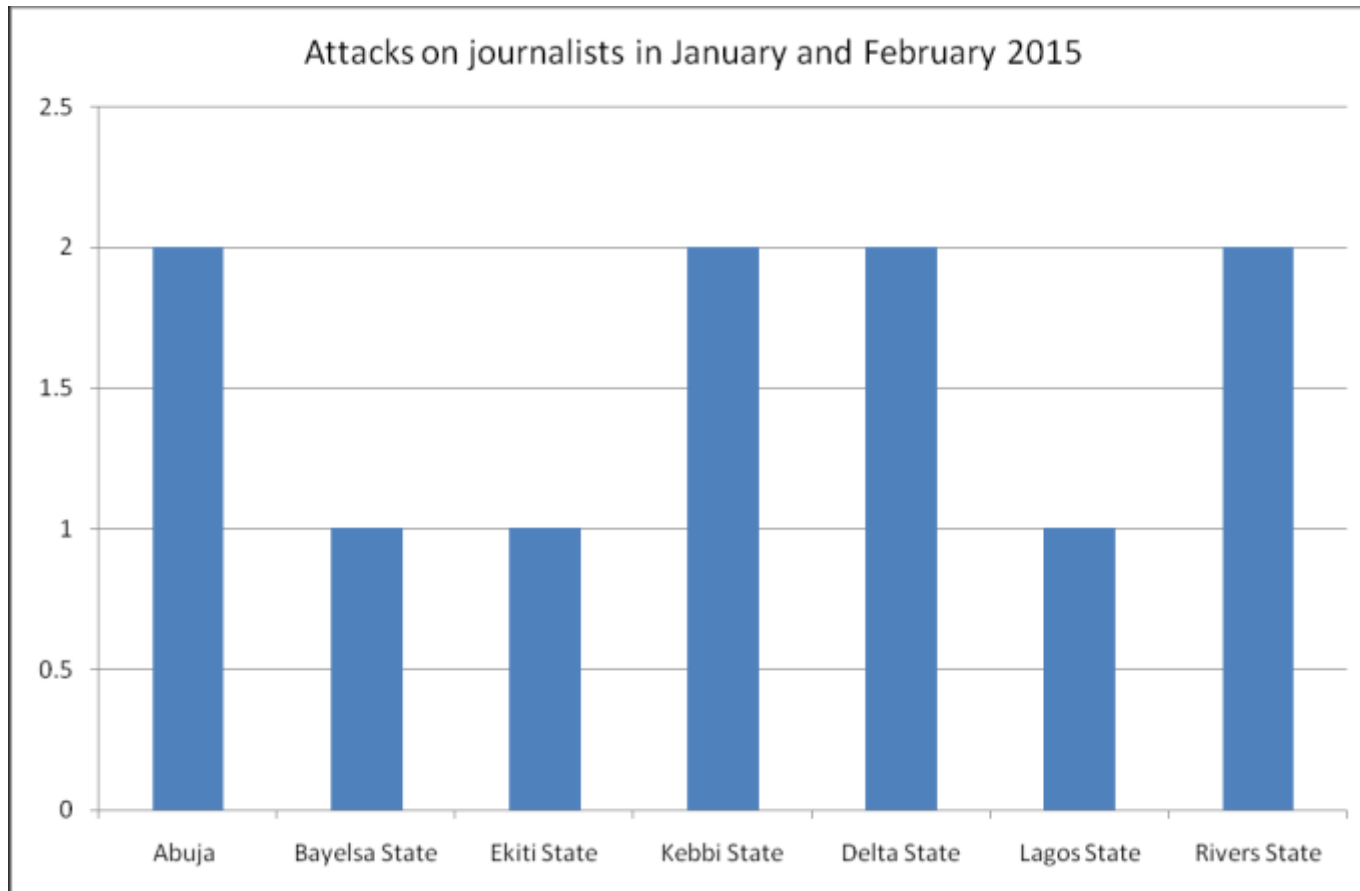
*Persons/groups responsible for attacks*

| Number | Responsibility                             | Location               | Total             |
|--------|--|------------------------|-------------------|
| 2      | Police                                     | Abuja                  | Security Agencies |
| 1      | Department of State Security Service (SSS) | Yenagoa, Bayelsa       | 55%               |
| 1      | Soldiers                                   | Ado-ekiti, Ekiti       |                   |
| 2      | Security Men                               | Birnin Kebbi,<br>Kebbi |                   |
| 1      | Unknown gunmen                             | Ughelli, Delta         | Others            |
| 1      | Officials of SURE-P                        | Lagos, Lagos           | 45%               |
| 2      | Political Thugs                            | Okrika, Rivers         |                   |
| 1      | Mob  | Delta                  |                   |

Five of the eleven incidents of attacks were documented in January while six were recorded in February. These were at separate locations with the breakdown as follows:

- Two (2) journalists were arrested and detained by the Police in Abuja
- One (1) journalist was harassed by the Department of State Security Service (SSS) in Yenogoa
- One (1) journalist was assaulted in Ado-Ekiti
- Two (2) journalists were threatened to be shot by Security Men in Birnin Kebbi
- One (1) journalist was mutilated and shot by Unknown gunmen in Ughelli, Delta State

- One (1) journalist was to be lynched by Officials of SURE-P in Lagos
- Two (2) journalists were stabbed and assaulted by political thugs in Okrika, Rivers State
- One (1) journalist was assaulted by the Mob in Delta







## **5.0 Observations and recommendations**

- ❖ The Police and other Security Agencies have continued to be the principal perpetrators of attacks on journalists and media practitioners especially in view of the forthcoming elections;
- ❖ Security Agents including private ones are in the habit of denying or restricting the access of journalists and other media professionals to important political events;
- ❖ Political thugs have continued to assault journalists and media practitioners without being reprimanded by the Police;
- ❖ The Police authorities should thoroughly investigate officers and men alleged to be responsible for attacks on journalists;
- ❖ The Police should incorporate modules on the importance of freedom of expression and media rights into its core training documents;
- ❖ The Government should undertake full and thorough investigations into all incidents of attacks or threats against media professionals; and
- ❖ The Human Right Commission should work closely with the NUJ to bring to an immediate end all acts of impunity against media professionals especially journalists.

## **REPORT OF THE MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION OF INCIDENTS OF ATTACKS ON JOURNALISTS IN NOVEMBER & DECEMBER, 2015**

### **1.0. Introduction:**

This report covers the first two months of a six-month monitoring and documentation of attacks on journalists in Nigeria, as reported by nine national newspapers - *The Guardian, The Punch, The Nation, Thisday, Leadership, Vanguard, Daily Independent, Daily Sun* and *Nigerian Tribune*

The International Press Centre (IPC), Lagos-Nigeria is undertaking the exercise as part of a project on **safety of journalists and emerging issues in conflict in Nigeria** supported by UNESCO, Nigeria.

The monitoring started in November, 2014 and will end in April 2015. The purpose is to have baseline information on the violations of the rights of journalists and the implications for press freedom, freedom of expression and media independence.

In particular the exercise is meant to highlight the danger faced by journalists, the nature and character of the violations of their rights, the institutions and persons responsible for such violations and the actions taken or not taken to promote the safety of journalists.

Among the documented violations in November and December, 2015 are assault, abduction and destruction of working equipment.

### **2.0. Indicators & Findings**

| <b>Newspapers reporting incidents</b>                              | <b>Date of reporting</b>         | <b>Name of Journalists affected</b> | <b>Medium of Journalists affected</b> | <b>Gender of Journalists affected</b> | <b>Location of incidents</b> | <b>Nature/ Description of attacks</b>   | <b>Persons /groups allegedly responsible</b>                        | <b>Losses/Injuries suffered</b>                                | <b>Actions taken</b>   |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| <b>The Punch</b><br><b>The Nation</b><br><b>Thisday</b>            | 24/11/14<br>20/11/14<br>25/11/14 | Ugochukwu Ugorji-Eke                | The Nation                            | Male                                  | Umuahia                      | Abducted from his family house in Aba by gunmen who reportedly demanded for N20million ransom | Gunmen  | Ransom paid  | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the abduction while the union's officials visited the family |
| <b>Leadership</b><br><b>Daily Independent</b><br><b>The Nation</b> | 18/11/14<br>18/11/14<br>18/11/14 | Shola O'Neil                        | The Nation                            | Male                                  | Warri                        | Abducted and held hostage while returning to Warri from Ogidigbe                              | Militants, alleged to be followers of a militia leader in the State | Tormented and lost personal and working tools including Phone, | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the act while  |

|                          |               |                 |            |      |       |  |   |  |   |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|------|-------|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Nigerian Tribune</b>  | 4<br>21/11/14 |                 |            |      |       | n where they had covered a community rally and press briefing by Itsekiri people   |   | camera, and bag  | President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a probe   |
| <b>Leadership</b>        | 18/11/14      | Bolaji Ogundele | The Nation | Male | Warri | Abducted and held hostage while returning to Warri from Ogidigben where they had covered a community rally and press briefing by Itsekiri people | Militants, alleged to be followers of a militia leader in the State | Tormented and lost personal and working tools including Phone, camera, and bag | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the act while President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a probe |
| <b>Daily Independent</b> | 18/11/14      |                 |            |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>The Nation</b>        | 18/11/14      |                 |            |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Nigerian Tribune</b>  | 21/11/14      |                 |            |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Leadership</b>        | 18/11/14      | Emma Amaize     | Vanguard   | Male | Warri | Abducted and held  | Militants, alleged  | Tormented and lost   | The Nigerian  |

|                                    |                      |               |            |      |       |  |   |  |   |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|------------|------|-------|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Daily Independent</b>           | 18/11/14             |               |            |      |       | hostage while returning to Warri from Ogidigben where they had covered a community rally and press briefing by Itsekiri people | to be followers of a militia leader in the State                    | personal and working tools including Phone, camera, and bag                    | Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the act while President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a probe              |
| <b>The Nation Nigerian Tribune</b> | 18/11/14<br>21/11/14 |               |            |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Leadership</b>                  | 18/11/14             | Shola Adebayo | Leadership | Male | Warri | Abducted and held hostage while returning to Warri from Ogidigben where they had covered a community rally and                 | Militants, alleged to be followers of a militia leader in the State | Tormented and lost personal and working tools including Phone, camera, and bag | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the act while President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a probe |
| <b>Daily Independent</b>           | 18/11/14             |               |            |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>The Nation Nigerian Tribune</b> | 18/11/14<br>21/11/14 |               |            |      |       |  |   |  |   |

|                          |          |             |                            |      |       |  |   |  |   |
|--------------------------|----------|-------------|----------------------------|------|-------|--|---|--|---|
|                          |          |             |                            |      |       | press briefing by Itsekiri people  |   |  |   |
| <b>Leadership</b>        | 18/11/14 | Emma Arubi  | National Daily             | Male | Warri | Abducted and held hostage while returning to Warri from Ogidigben where they had covered a community rally and press briefing by Itsekiri people | Militants, alleged to be followers of a militia leader in the State | Tormented and lost personal and working tools including Phone, camera, and bag | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the act while President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a probe |
| <b>Daily Independent</b> | 18/11/14 |             |                            |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>The Nation</b>        | 18/11/14 |             |                            |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Nigerian Tribune</b>  | 21/11/14 |             |                            |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Leadership</b>        | 18/11/14 | Awoso Harry | Delta Broadcasting Service | Male | Warri | Abducted and held hostage while returning to Warri from  | Militants, alleged to be followers of a militia leader in           | Tormented and lost personal and working tools including                        | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the act   |
| <b>Daily Independent</b> | 18/11/14 |             |                            |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>The Nation</b>        |          |             |                            |      |       |  |   |  |   |

|                          |                      |            |                     |      |       |  |   |  |   |
|--------------------------|----------------------|------------|---------------------|------|-------|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Nigerian Tribune</b>  | 18/11/14<br>21/11/14 |            |                     |      |       | Ogidigben where they had covered a community rally and press briefing by Itsekiri people   | the State   | Phone, camera, and bag   | while President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a probe   |
| <b>Leadership</b>        | 18/11/14             | Olu Philis | Channels Television | Male | Warri | Abducted and held hostage while returning to Warri from Ogidigben where they had covered a community rally and press briefing by Itsekiri people | Militants, alleged to be followers of a militia leader in the State | Tormented and lost personal and working tools including Phone, camera, and bag | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the act while President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a probe |
| <b>Daily Independent</b> | 18/11/14             |            |                     |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>The Nation</b>        | 18/11/14             |            |                     |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Nigerian Tribune</b>  | 21/11/14             |            |                     |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Leadership</b>        | 18/11/14             | Paulinus   | Channels            | Male | Warri | Abducted   | Militants   | Tormented  | The   |



|                          |               |               |                                     |        |       |   |   |  |   |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------|-------|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Daily Independent</b> | 4<br>18/11/14 | Odedeyi       | Television                          |        |       | and held hostage while returning to Warri from Ogidigben where they had covered a community rally and press briefing by Itsekiri people | , alleged to be followers of a militia leader in the State          | d and lost personal and working tools including Phone, camera, and bag         | Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the act while President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a probe |
| <b>The Nation</b>        | 18/11/14      |               |                                     |        |       |   |   |  |   |
| <b>Nigerian Tribune</b>  | 21/11/14      |               |                                     |        |       |   |   |  |   |
| <b>Leadership</b>        | 18/11/14      | Osarose Sadoh | Africa Independent Television (AIT) | Female | Warri | Abducted and held hostage while returning to Warri from Ogidigben where they had covered a community                                    | Militants, alleged to be followers of a militia leader in the State | Tormented and lost personal and working tools including Phone, camera, and bag | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the act while President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a   |
| <b>Daily Independent</b> | 18/11/14      |               |                                     |        |       |   |   |  |   |
| <b>The Nation</b>        | 18/11/14      |               |                                     |        |       |   |   |  |   |
| <b>Nigerian Tribune</b>  | 21/11/14      |               |                                     |        |       |   |   |  |   |

|   |          |               |                               |      |       |  |   |  |   |
|---|----------|---------------|-------------------------------|------|-------|--|---|--|---|
|   |          |               |                               |      |       | y rally and press briefing by Itsekiri people  |   |  | probe   |
| <b>Leadership</b>                       | 18/11/14 | Alex Omoniyi  | Africa Independent Television | Male | Warri | Abducted and held hostage while returning to Warri from Ogidigben where they had covered a community rally and press briefing by Itsekiri people | Militants, alleged to be followers of a militia leader in the State | Tormented and lost personal and working tools including Phone, camera, and bag | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the act while President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a probe |
| <b>Daily Independent Nation Tribune</b> | 18/11/14 |               |                               |      |       |  |   |  |   |
|   | 18/11/14 |               |                               |      |       |  |   |  |   |
|   | 21/11/14 |               |                               |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Leadership</b>                       | 18/11/14 | Anthony Ebule | Fresh Angle                   | Male | Warri | Abducted and held hostage while returning to Warri   | Militants, alleged to be followers of a militia                     | Tormented and lost personal and working tools                                  | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned   |
| <b>Daily Independent</b>                | 18/11/14 |               |                               |      |       |  |   |  |   |

|                          |          |                |             |      |       |  |   |  |   |
|--------------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|------|-------|--|---|--|---|
| <b>The Nation</b>        | 18/11/14 |                |             |      |       | from Ogidigben where they had covered a community rally and press briefing by Itsekiri people  | leader in the State   | including Phone, camera, and bag   | the act while President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a probe   |
| <b>Nigerian Tribune</b>  | 21/11/14 |                |             |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Leadership</b>        | 18/11/14 | Celestine Ukah | Fresh Angle | Male | Warri | Abducted and held hostage while returning to Warri from Ogidigben where they had covered a community rally and press briefing by Itsekiri people | Militants, alleged to be followers of a militia leader in the State | Tormented and lost personal and working tools including Phone, camera, and bag | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the act while President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a probe |
| <b>Daily Independent</b> | 18/11/14 |                |             |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>The Nation</b>        | 18/11/14 |                |             |      |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Nigerian Tribune</b>  | 21/11/14 |                |             |      |       |  |   |  |   |

|                          |          |                   |             |        |       |  |   |  |   |
|--------------------------|----------|-------------------|-------------|--------|-------|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Leadership</b>        | 18/11/14 | Josephine Ughweri | Fresh Angle | Female | Warri | Abducted and held hostage while returning to Warri from Ogidigben where they had covered a community rally and press briefing by Itsekiri people | Militants, alleged to be followers of a militia leader in the State | Tormented and lost personal and working tools including Phone, camera, and bag | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the act while President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a probe |
| <b>Daily Independent</b> | 18/11/14 |                   |             |        |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>The Nation</b>        | 18/11/14 |                   |             |        |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Nigerian Tribune</b>  | 21/11/14 |                   |             |        |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Leadership</b>        | 18/11/14 | Victoria Nwaeze   | Fresh Angle | Female | Warri | Abducted and held hostage while returning to Warri from Ogidigben where they had covered a   | Militants, alleged to be followers of a militia leader in the State | Tormented and lost personal and working tools including Phone, camera, and bag | The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) condemned the act while President Goodluck Jonathan                 |
| <b>Daily Independent</b> | 18/11/14 |                   |             |        |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>The Nation</b>        | 18/11/14 |                   |             |        |       |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Nigerian Tribune</b>  | 21/11/14 |                   |             |        |       |  |   |  |   |

|                  |          |                      |                     |      |        |   |                 |                  |   |
|------------------|----------|----------------------|---------------------|------|--------|---|-----------------|------------------|---|
|                  | 4        |                      |                     |      |        | community rally and press briefing by Itsekiri people   |                 |                  | ordered a probe   |
| <b>The Punch</b> | 30/11/14 | Akeem Garba and crew | Channels Television | Male | Ilorin | Assaulted while trying to cover the state assembly primaries of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and denied access to venue | Political Thugs | Camera destroyed | Kwara State Chairman of PDP, Iyiola Oyedepo condemned the attack stating that |
| <b>Vanguard</b>  | 4/11/14  | Mojeed Alabi         | New Telegraph       | Male | Osun   | Stabbed while at an undisclosed event in Ifon-  | Political Thugs | Nil              | The Committee for the Defence of Human Rights                                 |

|                     |         |              |          |      |        |  |           |   |  |
|---------------------|---------|--------------|----------|------|--------|--|-----------|---|--|
|                     |         |              |          |      |        | Osun in Orulu LGA , Incident occurred after he had published an investigative report titled “Osun: Streams of dead projects on September 15. |           |   | (CDHR) petitioned the Inspector General of Police and the Attorney General over the incident |
| <b>The Guardian</b> | 7/12/14 | Wole Ayodele | This Day | Male | Taraba | Assaulted while trying to cover the swearing –in of newly appointed commissi   | Policemen | Broken head<br><br>- Ipad, handset and wristwatch<br>confiscate | Taken to the hospital  |

|                     |         |               |           |      |        |   |        |   |   |
|---------------------|---------|---------------|-----------|------|--------|---|--------|---|---|
|                     |         |               |           |      |        | oners and denied access to the venue of the event |        |   |   |
| <b>The Guardian</b> | 7/12/14 | Fanan Ihyongo | Nation    | Male | Taraba | Assaulted while trying to cover an event          | Police | - | - |
| <b>The Guardian</b> | 7/12/14 | John Mkom     | Vanguard  | Male | Taraba | Assaulted while trying to cover an event          | Police | - | - |
| <b>The Guardian</b> | 7/12/14 | Stephen Osu   | Blueprint | Male | Taraba | Assaulted while trying to cover an event          | Police | - | - |

### **3.0, Brief Analysis**

The documentation revealed that attacks against journalists during the two months emanated from both state and non-state actors. Most of the attacks affecting 17 journalists occurred in November at separate locations with the breakdown as follows:

- 14 journalists including **3 females** were collectively kidnapped in Warri by militants.
- 1 journalist was abducted by gunmen in Umuahia and released a few weeks later after a ransom was paid.
- 1 journalist was stabbed in Osun after a lawmaker threatened to deal with him for allegedly portraying him in bad light in an investigative report published by his news medium.
- 1 journalist and his crew members were assaulted in Kwara by political thugs while covering the PDP state assembly congress

The police were allegedly responsible for most of the attacks that occurred in December. Four of them were reported to have been attacked by the police in Taraba State in the course of their duties at separate locations.

### **4.0 Observations and conclusions**

- Journalists working in conflict zones and politically volatile areas continue to be vulnerable to attacks
- The police were responsible for attacks involving security agents
- There was no conclusive investigation and apprehension of those responsible for the abductions
- The NUJ has been the most visible in condemning the attacks among other media pressure groups. Others should be proactive in doing the same.



## Appendix 2

### LINK TO MEDIA REPORTS

| Name Of Newspaper    | TITLE OF STORY   | WEB LINK  |
|----------------------|--|---|
| The Guardian         | IPC laments poor welfare package of journalists  | <a href="http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/2015/05/ipc-laments-poor-welfare-package-of-journalists/">http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/2015/05/ipc-laments-poor-welfare-package-of-journalists/</a>   |
| The Punch            | Press centre seeks security for journalists  | <a href="http://www.punchng.com/i-punch/press-centre-seeks-security-for-journalists/">http://www.punchng.com/i-punch/press-centre-seeks-security-for-journalists/</a>   |
| NDR                  | Take Ethics and Safety Seriously on voting day, IPC urges Journalists  | <a href="http://www.ndr.org.ng/take-ethics-and-safety-seriously-on-voting-day-ipc-urges-journalists/">http://www.ndr.org.ng/take-ethics-and-safety-seriously-on-voting-day-ipc-urges-journalists/</a>   |
| First African News   | IPC Boss Bemoans Poor Welfare Package of Journalists   | <a href="http://firstafricanews.ng/index.php?dbs=openlist&amp;s=20731#sthash.4wdCnNNB.dpuf">http://firstafricanews.ng/index.php?dbs=openlist&amp;s=20731#sthash.4wdCnNNB.dpuf</a>   |
| The Street Reporters | IPC Decries Attacks on Journalists During National Elections, Calls for Al Jazeera Journalists Release       | <a href="http://thestreetreporters.com/ipc-decries-attacks-on-journalists-during-national-elections-calls-for-al-jazeera-journalists-release/">http://thestreetreporters.com/ipc-decries-attacks-on-journalists-during-national-elections-calls-for-al-jazeera-journalists-release/</a>                                   |
| Universal Reporters  | Communique Of A One-Day Experts' Meeting On Safety Of Journalists And Emerging Issues In Conflict In Nigeria | <a href="http://universalreporters247.com/2015/05/communique-of-a-one-day-experts-meeting-on-safety-of-journalists-and-emerging-issues-in-conflict-in-nigeria-">http://universalreporters247.com/2015/05/communique-of-a-one-day-experts-meeting-on-safety-of-journalists-and-emerging-issues-in-conflict-in-nigeria-</a> |

|                                |  |   |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
|                                | Organized By The International Press Centre (IPC) At Top Ranks Hotel Abuja, Fct On April 30, 2015. | <a href="http://organized-by-the-international-press-centre-ipc-at-top-ranks-hotel-abuja-fct-on/">organized-by-the-international-press-centre-ipc-at-top-ranks-hotel-abuja-fct-on/</a>  |
| Leadership Newspapers          | Safety: IPC Begins Survey On Journalists   | <a href="http://leadership.ng/news/413603/safety-ipc-begins-survey-on-journalists">http://leadership.ng/news/413603/safety-ipc-begins-survey-on-journalists</a>   |
| Cyboknews                      | IPC wants private media owners to implement insurance scheme for journalists                       | <a href="http://cyboknews.com/ipc-wants-private-media-owners-to-implement-insurance-scheme-for-journalists/">http://cyboknews.com/ipc-wants-private-media-owners-to-implement-insurance-scheme-for-journalists/</a>                       |
| The Street Reporters           | NigeriaDecidesTake Ethics, Safety Seriously on Voting Day  | <a href="http://thestreetreporters.com/nigeriadecidestake-ethics-safety-seriously-on-voting-day-ipc-tasks-journalists/">http://thestreetreporters.com/nigeriadecidestake-ethics-safety-seriously-on-voting-day-ipc-tasks-journalists/</a> |
| <i>Inspired Reporters News</i> | Safety: IPC Begins Survey On Journalists   | <a href="http://inspiredreporters.com/safety-ipc-begins-survey-on-journalists/">http://inspiredreporters.com/safety-ipc-begins-survey-on-journalists/</a>   |
| Naija Dailies                  | IPC decries attacks on journalists during presidential election                                    | <a href="http://www.naijadailies.com/News/Nigeria/2015-poll-IPC-sensitizes-journalists-on-media-code-910463">http://www.naijadailies.com/News/Nigeria/2015-poll-IPC-sensitizes-journalists-on-media-code-910463</a>                       |
| Daily                          | IPC decries attacks on journalists during  | <a href="http://dailyindependentnig.com/2015/04/ipc-decries-">dailyindependentnig.com/2015/04/ipc-decries-</a>  |

|                      |  |   |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Independent          | presidential election  | attacks-journalists-presidential-election-2/  |
| Daily Independent    | Experts to brainstorm on safety of journalists                                     | <a href="http://dailyindependentnig.com/2015/04/experts-brainstorm-safety-journalists/">http://dailyindependentnig.com/2015/04/experts-brainstorm-safety-journalists/</a>   |
| All Africa           | Nigeria: Survey Puts Nigerian Journalists At High Risk in Conflict Situations      | <a href="http://allafrica.com/stories/201502240653.html">http://allafrica.com/stories/201502240653.html</a>   |
| Pm News              | IPC Conducts Survey On Safety Of Journalists In Nigeria                            | <a href="http://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2015/02/23/ipc-conducts-survey-on-safety-of-journalists-in-nigeria/">http://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2015/02/23/ipc-conducts-survey-on-safety-of-journalists-in-nigeria/</a>                               |
| Amazon Herald        | IPC Conducts Survey On Safety Of Journalists In Nigeria                            | <a href="http://www.amazonherald.com/news/ipc-conducts-survey-on-safety-of-journalists-in-nigeria">http://www.amazonherald.com/news/ipc-conducts-survey-on-safety-of-journalists-in-nigeria</a>   |
| The Street Reporters | Experts Brainstorm On Journalists' Safety Thursday, As IPC Releases Attacks Report | <a href="http://thestreetreporters.com/experts-brainstorm-on-journalists-safety-thursday-as-ipc-releases-attacks-report/">http://thestreetreporters.com/experts-brainstorm-on-journalists-safety-thursday-as-ipc-releases-attacks-report/</a> |
| Nigeria Tribune      | <i>IPC calls for release of Al-Jazeera journalists</i>                             | <a href="http://tribuneonlineng.com/content/ipc-calls-release-al-jazeera-journalists">http://tribuneonlineng.com/content/ipc-calls-release-al-jazeera-journalists</a>   |

|                      |  |   |
|----------------------|--|---|
|                      |  |   |
| Daily Trust          | experts to brainstorm on journalists' safety   | <a href="http://dailytrust.com.ng/daily/index.php/news-menu/news/53275-experts-to-brainstorm-on-journalists-safe">http://dailytrust.com.ng/daily/index.php/news-menu/news/53275-experts-to-brainstorm-on-journalists-safe</a> |
| Community Of Nigeria | Experts to Brainstorm On Safety of Journalists | <a href="http://communityofnigeria.com/2015/04/28/experts-to-brainstorm-on-safety-of-journalists/">http://communityofnigeria.com/2015/04/28/experts-to-brainstorm-on-safety-of-journalists/</a>                               |

## COMMUNIQUÉ

COMMUNIQUE OF A ONE-DAY EXPERTS' MEETING ON SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS AND EMERGING ISSUES IN CONFLICT IN NIGERIA ORGANIZED BY THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS CENTRE (IPC) AT TOP RANKS HOTEL ABUJA, FCT ON APRIL 30, 2015.

### INTRODUCTION

The one day experts' meeting organized by the International Press Center (IPC) Lagos with the support of UNESCO Regional Office in Nigeria was a landmark development in the quest to document, raise consciousness and propose solutions to attacks on journalists while addressing other safety issues affecting effective journalism practice.

The meeting had in attendance about thirty-five experts drawn from prominent media institutions, bodies and associations as well as the law enforcement agencies. Also present were female and male editors in print and broadcast media outlets including those reporting in the conflict affected areas of the North East.

Among those present were Julie Osagie-Jacobs, National Programme Officer/Communication & Information, UNESCO, Mr. Bayo Atoyebi, former Executive Secretary, Nigerian Press Council (NCP); CSP. Abayomi Shogunle, who represented the Force PRO; Louis Achi of the Nigeria Guild of Editors, (NGE) and James Uwem, representing the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ).

The discussions were preceded by the presentation of the Overview of the report of Baseline Audit on Safety and Security of Journalists in Nigeria by the Director of IPC, Mr. Lanre Arogundade. Also presented were three other papers were also presented including Media Handling of Gender Issues in Contemporary Nigerian Conflicts by Dr. Ifeoma Dunu, Department of Mass Communication, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka; Professionalism and ethics in reporting conflicts: perspectives on dealing with the new challenges by Dr Sola Ishola of the Department of Peace &

Conflict Studies, University of Ibadan and Religious conflicts and media responsibility and the emergent challenge of Boko Haram by Dr Abubakar Mu'azu of the Department of Mass Communication, University of Maiduguri.

The presentations were followed by plenary sessions during which the experts exchanged ideas on contentious issues in conflicts and the safety of journalists.

## OBSERVATIONS

The participants observed that:

- The safety of journalists seems to be on the downward trend as forty seven journalists were attacked between November 2014 April 2105, according to the baseline audit on safety of journalists which relied on information sourced from nine print media outlets;
- Attacks on journalists are mostly perpetrated by security agents, armed militia men, political party loyalists/thugs and unknown gun men;
- There has been no diligent prosecution of those responsible for various attacks on journalists;
- Journalists working in conflict prone areas especially the north east of the country have been exposed to physical sufferings and psychological trauma;
- Media outlets in the North East are sometimes vulnerable to attacks by terrorists;
- Media reporting of the Boko Haram crisis sometimes do not show sufficient understanding of the north eastern landscape and the enormity of the task of combating the terrorists; For example, Borno state has a bigger land mass than combined five states in the south while the Sambisa forest stretches from Nigeria to the East African region;
- There is the tendency for security agents operating in conflict areas to be hostile to journalists reporting such conflicts;
- There is absence of regular dialogue between media stakeholders and security agencies on the challenges of violent conflicts in the country;
- The gender dimensions of conflicts in the country are often under-reported;

- The reporting of conflicts poses many professional and ethical challenges and dilemma, which should be properly addressed;
- The media is not doing enough to report the factors that predispose parts of the country to conflicts.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The meeting recommended that:

- Journalists should in the course of reporting conflicts and other issues avoid compromising professional and ethical principles so as not to be seen as being biased by parties to the dispute; Allegations of bias could expose journalists to risk or danger;
- Media proprietors and the union/professional associations of journalists should put in place multiple insurance schemes as part of the welfare provisions for journalists; Journalists working in or reporting in conflict prone areas should in addition be entitled to special insurance schemes as they face higher risks of attacks, accidents, injuries and loss of life and property;
- Security agents should accept the obligation to protect and ensure the safety of journalists working in or reporting in conflict affected areas;
- Security agents should understand the necessity of attending to requests for information on conflicts from journalists; They not see such requests as constituting acts of hostility to the state;
- Security agencies and media professional bodies and associations should hold periodic roundtables to discuss issues in conflicts and the challenge of ensuring the safety of journalists; Such forum would also enable them to develop mechanisms for overcoming mutual distrust and suspicion;
- Journalists reporting in conflict affected areas should understand that security agencies are invaluable sources of reliable information and therefore should cultivate them in a professional and respectful manner;

- Media outlets and media professional bodies/associations should commit adequate resources to the training and re-training of editors and reporters on conflict sensitive reporting and safety in reporting conflicts;
- Journalists working in conflict prone areas must study and imbibe professional safety tips; They should avoid acts that could put their lives at risk;
- The reporting of conflicts should take into account the plights of women and children; Journalists should adopt the principles of gender sensitivity in reporting violent conflicts especially by avoiding gory or offensive details of violent acts against women and children;
- Journalists should adopt the principle of an injury to one is an injury to all, and therefore act in solidarity whenever in any one of them is subjected to harassment or assault by whosoever;
- Media managers/gate keepers must not allow their partisan or commercial interests to override good judgment in reporting conflict issues so as not to expose journalists reporting from the field to unnecessary risk or danger;
- The media should in line with its social duty and constitutional obligation hold government accountable to its responsibility to provide for the needs of the people and alleviate poverty, so as to discourage the resort to acts of terrorism.

Lanre Arogundade

Director, IPC

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## Appendix 4

### QUESTIONNAIRES

#### Mapping of Media groups/ Target Respondents

\*Media Professionals

\*Media Gatekeepers/Managers

\*Media/Peace & Conflicts Experts

#### **Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) for Journalists in Conflict Zones**

1. Journalists (Reporters, Columnists, Cameramen, Program Presenters)

#### **Key Informants Interviews (KIIs) for Media professionals/gatekeepers/experts**

2. Journalists (Reporters, Columnists, Cameramen, Program Presenters)
3. Media Managers/ Gatekeepers (Managers, Editors)
4. Media Professional Bodies / Associations (NUJ/NAWOJ/RATTAWU etc)
5. Law Enforcement Agencies (Military, Police, SSS, NSA)
6. Media Support Organisations/Platforms
7. Academic / Scholars (Media /Peace and Conflicts Experts)

#### **Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide for Journalists in Conflict-Prone Zones**

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1. Please tell us your name and the name of your media establishment?  
 Gender: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)  
 (i) Male                      (ii) Female  
 Marital Status: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)  
 (i) Married    (ii) Single    (iii) Separated    (iv) Widowed  
 Years of Experience .....
- Educational Qualification: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)  
 (i) School Cert. (ii) Diploma    (iii) BSc/HND/BA    (iv) PGD/MSc    (v) PhD
2. When was your media organization founded? What is the nature of its activities?
3. What is your experience/knowledge about conflicts in the conflict zone
  - (a) nature/dynamics of conflict situations?;
  - (b) dimension of violent incidents?;
  - (c) impacts of insecurity on journalists and other media professionals?
4. What are the most common forms of threats/risks you experience in conflict-zones? (*tick or circle the appropriate*) (a)Threatening calls (b) Trailing by unknown persons (c) Physical harm/death (d) Threats of loss of job (e) Harassment by security agents (f) Threat to family (g) Others .....
5. What is your experience of conflicts/violence/insecurity in details and how have you been directly or affected?
  - (a) Was there any formal report of the incident?
  - (b) Was there any action taken by investigating authority?
  - (c) Was there any redress? What was the nature of the redress?
6. How frequently or regularly does your work or beat expose you to insecurity?
7. How do you cope with the situation?
8. How regularly do you furnish your employers with feedbacks on security situation and possible threats?
9. Do you consider the response from your employers adequate and timely when in distress or difficult situation?

10. Has your media organization experienced negative impacts of violent conflicts or insecurity in the past? Please provide a brief details of the experience as well as the details of the victims (if any) of such incidence.
11. How would you describe impacts of conflicts/violence/insecurity on journalism profession and freedom of the media?
12. How would you describe the impact of conflicts/violence/insecurity on female journalists and gender inclusion or mainstreaming in the media?
13. What steps have been taken (or being taken) by your organisation to improve the security of journalists and other media professionals?
14. Has your organization any insurance policy in place for journalists in conflict zones?
15. Have you considered personal insurance to cover your safety at work?
16. What is your opinion on the roles of security agents in ensuring the safety of journalists and other media professionals in conflict zones?
17. What is your opinion on the roles of government in ensuring the safety of journalists and other media professionals in the zone?
18. What would you consider as effective strategies for improving security of journalists and media professionals in general?
19. Whatt further specific steps do you think your organization should take to enhance security of journalists?
20. Are you aware of any effort aimed at improving or better secure journalists by your professional organisation (i.e. NUJ, NAWOJ, RATTAWU etc)?
21. Are you aware of any support group or assistance for journalists in distress? If yes, has your organization sought the assistance of any of such group? Are you aware of any other media or journalist that has benefitted from such assistance?
22. What do you know about conflict sensitive journalism?

23. Have you participated in any training/capacity building program aimed at sensitising journalists on security?  
Please describe such training and your level of participation?
24. What kind of training do you anticipate for better security of journalists and the media?
25. What suggestions would you offer to journalists on their safety at work?
26. Please, provide any other relevant information.
-

Key Informant Interviews (KII) for Media Managers/ Gatekeepers (Managers, Editors)

1. Please tell us your name and the name of your establishment?

Gender: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)

- (i) Male                      (ii) Female

Marital Status: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)

- (i) Married    (ii) Single    (iii) Separated    (iv) Widowed

Years of Experience .....

Educational Qualification: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)

- (i) School Cert. (ii) Diploma (iii) BSc/HND/BA (iv) PGD/MSc (v) PhD

2. What is your experience/knowledge about situation in the conflict zones?

- (a) nature/dynamics of conflict situations?
- (b) dimension of violent incidents?;
- (c) impacts of insecurity on journalists and other media professionals?

2. Briefly describe your professional responsibility in the organisation; operational coverage as well as well as the mission and vision of the organization.

3. Has your organization any plan/policy on security of journalists and other media professionals?

4. How regularly do you get feedback or update on security situation, as part of policy requirements, from journalists and other media professionals in conflict zones?

5. What are the most common forms of threats/risks you experience in conflict-zones? (*tick or circle the appropriate*) (a)Threatening calls (b) Trailing by unknown persons (c) Physical harm/death (d) Threats of loss of job (e) harassment by security agents (f) Threat to family (g) others .....

6. What is the level of control or monitoring put in place by your organisation for journalists and other media professionals in conflict zones?

7. What specific mechanism is in place for emergency assistance in case of threats or insecurity?

8. Do you provide incentive or compensation in case of injuries or loss to journalists in conflict zones?
  9. Has your organization any insurance policy in place for journalists in conflict zones? Do you consider the level of remuneration adequate for journalists in conflict zones?
  10. Do you consider working conditions adequate for journalists in conflict zones?
  11. What in your opinion do you consider as effective strategies for improving security of journalists and other media professionals in general?
  12. What steps are being taken by your organization to specifically address challenge of insecurity in conflict-prone zones?
  13. Is there any existing framework for security of female journalists or in mainstreaming gender in insecurity and emergency situation?
  14. What is your organization doing to sensitize journalists and other media professionals on insecurity?
  15. What is your opinion on the roles of security agencies in securing journalists working in conflict zones?
  16. What is your opinion on the roles of government in securing journalists working in conflict zones?
  17. How regularly do you get alert on security threats from media houses and journalists?
  18. Do you have adequate operational mechanism for responding to the needs of journalists in distress or danger in conflict zones?
  19. What kind of improvement in emergency response do you anticipate?
  20. How do you think journalists and media establishments could better prepare and respond to insecurity situation in conflict zones?
  21. What kind of trainings and capacity building programs on security do you anticipate for journalists and other media professionals?
-

- 22. What framework for collaboration between media professionals and security agencies would you propose for enhanced security of journalists in conflict zones?
- 23. What suggestions would you offer to journalists on their safety at work?
- 24. Please, provide any other relevant information.

**B. Key Informant Interviews (KII) for Journalists (Reporters, Cameramen, Program Presenters)**

1. Please tell us your name and the name of your establishment?

Gender: *(tick or circle the appropriate)*

- (i) Male                      (ii) Female

Marital Status: *(tick or circle the appropriate)*

- (i) Married    (ii) Single    (iii) Separated    (iv) Widowed

Years of Experience .....

Educational Qualification: *(tick or circle the appropriate)*

- (i) School Cert. (ii) Diploma    (iii) BSc/HND/BA    (iv) PGD/MSc    (v) PhD

2. What is your experience/knowledge about situation in the conflict zones

- (a) nature/dynamics of conflict situations?
- (b) dimension of violent incidents?;
- (c) impacts of insecurity on journalists and other media professionals?

2. Briefly describe your professional responsibility in the organisation; operational coverage as well as well as the mission and vision of the organization.

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3. Has your organization any plan/policy on security of journalists and other media professionals?
4. How regularly do you get feedback or update on security situation, as part of policy requirements, from journalists and other media professionals in conflict zones?
5. What are the most common forms of threats/risks you experience in conflict-zones? (*tick or circle the appropriate*) (a)Threatening calls (b) Trailing by unknown persons (c) Physical harm/death (d) Threats of loss of job (e) Harassment by security agents (f) Threat to family (g) others .....
6. What is the level of control or monitoring put in place by your organisation for journalists and other media professionals in conflict zones?
7. What specific mechanism is in place for emergency assistance in case of threats or insecurity?
8. What in your opinion do you consider as effective strategies for improving security of journalists and other media professionals in general?
9. What steps are being taken by your organization to specifically address challenge of insecurity in conflict-prone zones?
10. Is there any existing framework for security of female journalists or in mainstreaming gender in insecurity and emergency situation?
11. What is your organization doing to sensitize journalists and other media professionals on insecurity?
12. What is your opinion on the roles of security agencies in securing journalists working in conflict zones?
13. What is your opinion on the roles of government in securing journalists working in conflict zones?



14. How regularly do you get alert on security threats from media houses and journalists?
  15. Do you have adequate operational mechanism for responding to the needs of journalists in distress or danger in conflict zones?
  16. What kind of improvement in emergency response do you anticipate?
  17. How do you think journalists and media establishments could better prepare and respond to insecurity situation in conflict zones?
  18. What kind of trainings and capacity building programs on security do you anticipate for journalists and other media professionals?
  19. What framework for collaboration between media professionals and security agencies would you propose for enhanced security of journalists in conflict zones?
  20. What suggestions would you offer to journalists on their safety at work?
  21. Please, provide any other relevant information.
- 

**C .Key Informant Interviews (KII) for Media Professional Bodies / Associations (NUJ/NAWOJ/RATTAWU etc)**

1. Please tell us your name and the name of your establishment?
-

Gender: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)

(i) Male                      (ii) Female

Marital Status: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)

(i) Married    (ii) Single    (iii) Separated    (iv) Widowed

Years of Experience .....

Educational Qualification: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)

(i) School Cert. (ii) Diploma    (iii) BSc/HND/BA    (iv) PGD/MSc    (v) PhD

2. What is your experience/knowledge about situation in the conflict zone?

(a) nature/dynamics of conflict situations?

(b) dimension of violent incidents?;

(c) impacts of security on journalists and other media professionals?

3. Briefly describe your professional responsibility in the organization; operational coverage as well as well as the mission and vision of the organization.

4. Has your organization any plan/policy on security of journalists and other media professionals?

5. How regularly do you get feedback or update on security situation, as part of policy requirements, from journalists and other media professionals in conflict zones?

6. What is the level of control or monitoring put in place by your organization for journalists and other media professionals in conflict zones?

7. What specific mechanisms are in place for emergency assistance in case of threats or insecurity?

8. Do you provide incentive or compensation in case of injuries or loss to journalists in conflict zones?
9. Has your organization any insurance policy in place for journalists in conflict zones? Do you consider the level of remuneration adequate?
10. Do you consider working conditions adequate for journalists in the conflict zone?
11. What in your opinion do you consider as effective strategies for improving security of journalists and other media professionals in general?
12. What steps are being taken by your organization to specifically address challenge of insecurity in conflict-prone zones?
13. Is there any existing framework for security of female journalists or in mainstreaming gender in insecurity and emergency situation?
14. What is your organization doing to sensitize journalists and other media professionals on insecurity?
15. What is your opinion on the roles of security agencies in securing journalists working in conflict zones?
16. What is your opinion on the roles of government in securing journalists working in conflict zones?
17. How regularly do you get alert on security threats from media houses and journalists?
18. Do you have adequate operational mechanism for responding to the needs of journalists in distress or danger in conflict zones?
19. What kind of improvement in emergency response do you anticipate?

20. How do you think journalists and media establishments could better prepare and respond to insecurity situation in conflict zones?
  21. What kind of trainings and capacity building programs on security do you anticipate for journalists and other media professionals?
  22. What framework for collaboration between media professionals and security agencies would you propose for enhanced security of journalists in conflict zones?
  23. What suggestions would you offer to journalists on their safety at work?
  24. Please, provide any other relevant information.
- 

**D. Key Informant Interviews (KII) for Law Enforcement Agencies (Military, Police, SSS, NSA)**

1. Please tell us your name and the name of your establishment?

Gender: *(tick or circle the appropriate)*

- (i) Male                      (ii) Female

Marital Status: *(tick or circle the appropriate)*

- (i) Married    (ii) Single    (iii) Separated    (iv) Widowed

Years of Experience .....

Educational Qualification: *(tick or circle the appropriate)*

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(i) School Cert. (ii) Diploma (iii) BSc/HND/BA (iv) PGD/MSc (v) PhD

2. What is your experience/knowledge about situation in the conflict zones

(a) nature/dynamics of conflict situations?

(b) dimension of violent incidents?;

(c) impacts of insecurity on journalists and other media professionals?

3. Briefly describe your professional responsibility in the organisation; operational coverage as well as well as the mission and vision of the organization.

4. Has your organization any plan/policy on security of journalists and other media professionals?

5. How regularly do you get feedback or update on security situation, as part of policy requirements, from journalists and other media professionals in conflict zones?

6. What is the level of control or monitoring put in place by your organisation for journalists and other media professionals in conflict zones?

7. What specific mechanism is in place for emergency assistance in case of threats or insecurity?

8. What in your opinion do you consider as effective strategies for improving security of journalists and other media professionals in general?

9. What steps are being taken by your organization to specifically address challenge of insecurity in conflict-prone zones?

10. Is there any existing framework for security of female journalists or in mainstreaming gender in insecurity and emergency situation?
11. What is your organization doing to sensitize journalists and other media professionals on insecurity?
12. What is your opinion on the roles of security agencies in securing journalists working in conflict zones?
13. What is your opinion on the roles of government in securing journalists working in conflict zones?
14. How regularly do you get alert on security threats from media houses and journalists?
15. Do you have adequate operational mechanism for responding to the needs of journalists in distress or danger in conflict zones?
16. What kind of improvement in emergency response do you anticipate?
17. How do you think journalists and media establishments could better prepare and respond to insecurity situation in conflict zones?
18. What kind of trainings and capacity building programs on security do you anticipate for journalists and other media professionals?
19. What framework for collaboration between media professionals and security agencies would you propose for enhanced security of journalists in conflict zones?
20. What suggestions would you offer to journalists on their safety at work?
21. Please, provide any other relevant information.

## E. Key Informant Interviews (KII) for Media Support Organisations/Platforms

1. Please tell us your name and the name of your establishment?

Gender: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)

(i) Male                      (ii) Female

Marital Status: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)

(i) Married    (ii) Single    (iii) Separated    (iv) Widowed

Years of Experience .....

Educational Qualification: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)

(i) School Cert. (ii) Diploma    (iii) BSc/HND/BA    (iv) PGD/MSc    (v) PhD

2. What is your experience/knowledge about situation in the conflict zones

(a) nature/dynamics of conflict situations?;

(b) dimension of violent incidents?;

(c) impacts of insecurity on journalists and other media professionals?

3. Briefly describe your professional responsibility in the organisation; operational coverage as well as well as the mission and vision of the organization.

4. Has your organization any plan/policy on security of journalists and other media professionals?

5. How regularly do you get feedback or update on security situation, as part of policy requirements, from journalists and other media professionals in conflict zones?
  6. What is the level of control or monitoring put in place by your organisation for journalists and other media professionals in conflict zones?
  7. What specific mechanism is in place for emergency assistance in case of threats or insecurity?
  8. Do you consider the level of remuneration adequate?
  9. Do you consider working conditions adequate for journalists in conflict zones?
  10. What in your opinion do you consider as effective strategies for improving security of journalists and other media professionals in general?
  11. What steps are being taken by your organization to specifically address challenge of insecurity in conflict-prone zones?
  12. Is there any existing framework for security of female journalists or in mainstreaming gender in insecurity and emergency situation?
  13. What is your organization doing to sensitize journalists and other media professionals on insecurity?
  14. What is your opinion on the roles of security agencies in securing journalists working in conflict zones?
  15. What is your opinion on the roles of government in securing journalists working in conflict zones?
  16. How regularly do you get alert on security threats from media houses and journalists?
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17. Do you have adequate operational mechanism for responding to the needs of journalists in distress or danger in conflict zones?
  18. What kind of improvement in emergency response do you anticipate?
  19. How do you think journalists and media establishments could better prepare and respond to insecurity situation in conflict zones?
  20. What kind of trainings and capacity building programs on security do you anticipate for journalists and other media professionals?
  21. What framework for collaboration between media professionals and security agencies would you propose for enhanced security of journalists in conflict zones?
  22. What suggestions would you offer to journalists on their safety at work?
  23. Please, provide any other relevant information.
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**F. Key Informant Interviews (KII) for Academic / Scholars (Media /Peace and Conflicts Experts)**

1. Please tell us your name and the name of your establishment?

Gender: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)

- (i) Male
- (ii) Female

Marital Status: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)

- (i) Married
- (ii) Single
- (iii) Separated
- (iv) Widowed

Years of Experience .....

Educational Qualification: (*tick or circle the appropriate*)

- (i) School Cert.
- (ii) Diploma
- (iii) BSc/HND/BA
- (iv) PGD/MSc
- (v) PhD

2. What is your experience/knowledge about situation in the conflict zones?

- (a) nature/dynamics of conflict situations?;
- (b) dimension of violent incidents?;
- (c) impacts of in security on journalists and other media professionals?

3. Briefly describe your professional responsibility in the organization; operational coverage as well as well as the mission and vision of the organization.

4. How regularly do you get feedback or update on security situation, as part of policy requirements, from journalists and other media professionals in conflict zones?

5. What is the level of control or monitoring put in place by your organization for journalists and other media professionals in conflict zones?
  6. What specific mechanism is in place for emergency assistance in case of threats or insecurity?
  7. What in your opinion do you consider as effective strategies for improving security of journalists and other media professionals in general?
  8. What steps are being taken by your organization to specifically address challenge of insecurity in conflict-prone zones?
  9. Is there any existing framework for security of female journalists or in mainstreaming gender in insecurity and emergency situation?
  10. What is your organization doing to sensitize journalists and other media professionals on insecurity?
  11. What is your opinion on the roles of security agencies in securing journalists working in conflict zones?
  12. What is your opinion on the roles of government in securing journalists working in conflict zones?
  13. How regularly do you get alert on security threats from media houses and journalists?
  14. Do you have adequate operational mechanism for responding to the needs of journalists in distress or danger in conflict zones?
  15. What kind of improvement in emergency response do you anticipate?
  16. How do you think journalists and media establishments could better prepare and respond to insecurity situation in conflict zones?
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17. What research findings and studies are relevant to the emerging security situation in Nigeria and how do you think journalists and other media professional can take maximum advantage?
  18. What kind of trainings and capacity building programs on security do you anticipate for journalists and other media professionals?
  19. What framework for collaboration between media professionals and security agencies would you propose for enhanced security of journalists in conflict zones?
  20. What suggestions would you offer to journalists on their safety at work?
  21. Please, provide any other relevant information.
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Appendix 5

PICTURES OF EXPERTS' MEETING IN ABUJA





## Appendix 6

### PROGRAM

#### INTERNATIONAL PRESS CENTRE (IPC) LAGOS

*One-Day Media Experts' Meeting On Safety Of Journalists And Emerging Issues In Conflicts In Nigeria*

**@Top Ranks Hotel LTD, Plot 892 Gimbiya Street, off Ahmadu Bello way, behind Area 11 shopping mall, Garki Abuja**

### SUPPORTED BY UNESCO NIGERIA

#### Programme

08.30 - 09.00

**Arrival and Registration of Participants**

09.00 - 09.30

Welcome/ Introduction

09.30 - 10.00

*Opening/ Welcome remarks by*

**Ms. Julie Osagie-Jacobs**, National Programme Officer, Communication & Information

**UNESCO regional Office Abuja**

**Ms. Stella Nwofia**, Programme Officer, International Press Centre (IPC)

10.00 - 10.30

Overview of **Report of Baseline Audit on Safety and Security of Journalists in Nigeria** by **Lanre Arogundade**, Director, International Press Centre (IPC) Lagos

10:30 – 11:00

*Responses by:*

*Mr Emmanuel Ojukwu, The Force PRO, Nigeria Police, Abuja*  
*Major-General Chris Olukayode, Director of Information, The Nigerian Army*  
*Defence Headquarters, Abuja*  
*Mohammed Garba, National President, NUJ*  
*Henry Odugala, the General Secretary RATTAWU*  
*Suleiman Uba Gaya, Nigeria Guild Editors*

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 11.00-11.30   | TEABREAK  |
| 11.30 - 12.00 | Presentation 1: Professionalism and ethics in reporting conflicts:<br>dealing with the new challenges , by <i>Dr Ishola Dept. Peace &amp; Conflicts Study Institute</i><br><i>of African Studies University of Ibadan</i>                               |
| 12.00 - 12.30 | <b>Presentation 2:</b> Media Handling of Gender Issues in Contemporary Nigerian Conflicts by<br><i>Dr. Ifeoma Dunu Department of Mass Communication Nnamdi Azikiwe University,</i><br><i>Awka</i>   |
| 12:30 – 13:00 | Plenary Discussion<br><br><i>Lead Discussants:</i><br><br><i>Mr. Segun Olaleye, Executive Secretary Broadcasting Organization of Nigeria</i><br><i>Stella Jubrin, Director, Nigeria Press Council</i><br><i>Mrs Tongnan Bawa, NAWOJ Zonal Secretary</i> |
| 13.00-14.00   | LUNCH   |



14:00-14:30                    **Presentation 3:** Religious Conflicts and Media Responsibility: The Emergent Challenge Of Boko Haram by *Dr Abubakar Mu'azu Department Of Mass Communication University Of Maiduguri*

14.30-15.00                  Plenary discussions

*Lead Discussants:*

Mr. Bayo Atoyebi, former Executive Secretary, Nigeria Press Council

Mr. Leman Shuiabu Usman, National Secretary, Nigeria Union of Journalists

**15.00 -15.30                  Wrap up/ Vote of thanks/ Closing**

## **Religious Conflicts and Media Responsibility: The Emergent Challenge of Boko Haram**

**Abubakar Mu'azu, PhD**

**Department of Mass Communication &**

**Centre for Peace, Diplomatic and Development Studies (CPDDS)**

**University of Maiduguri**

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(DRAFT)

### **Introduction**

Religious conflicts, like all conflicts, invite media attention because conflict is an important element that makes news. There is no medium operating as a news organisation that can ignore religious conflicts unless such a conflict has not come to the attention of the medium. The intensity and range of some conflicts have made it necessary for the media to cover them for the public as news, and later, in the form of analysis and commentary in order to provide context to

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the conflict. The media are important instruments for bringing religious conflicts to their diverse audiences, separated by time and space, to first know about it and where it happened. The religious conflict is thus a raw material for news because it tends to have higher audience interest: attracting more readership for the print media and listeners and viewers for radio and television. The Nigerian media have been reporting several cases of religious conflicts over the years in different parts of the country as part of their responsibility of exercising surveillance of the environment, the watchdog function of the media.

It is important to note that the religious conflicts were not in most cases purely religious as they also had ethnicity, regionalism and politics thrown into dilute their claim. There were cases that appeared to have religion as the overriding factor. The cases of Maitasine in the 1980s; the conflict between Muslim and Christian Students at the College of Education, Kafanchan, in Kaduna State in 1987; the Muslim-Christian conflict in Jos, the Plateau State capital since 2001 with intermittent recurrence; the beauty contest controversy leading to attack on the office of *ThisDay* newspaper in Kaduna; the Danish cartoon conflict in 2006; and, the raging, fatal and more devastating attacks by the *Jama'atul Ahlus Sunnah Lidda'awati wal Jihad* (People Committed to the Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and Holy War). This latter religious conflict is still on and the group involved in the conflict is popularly referred to as Boko Haram, which is simplistically translated as Western Education is a Sin or Prohibited.

The responsibility of the media will revolve around the presentation of the issues and the tone adopted in the reporting. It is the contention of this paper that while the media may not be party to a conflict, they can responsibly

contribute to the process of its resolution through their coverage and framing of the issues. The emergence of the *Jama'atul Ahlus Sunnah Lidda'awati wal Jihad* meaning people committed to the Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), popularly known as Boko Haram, on a large scale, and the *Jama'atul Ansarul Musilimina fi Bilad as-Sudan* meaning the Group that Commits itself to Helping Muslims in Africa, on a low but no less threatening and devastating scale, have introduced new dimension to a conflict with an Islamic theological claim. Ansaru opposes the actions of Boko Haram, but engaged in kidnapping foreigners. This places a responsibility on the media to bring the issues of the conflict to the diverse Nigerian people in a context that makes meaning. The media need to consider the challenges and complexities of the conflict that draws into its vortex ethnic, regional and political sensibilities.

### **The Media and Religion**

The media and religion have a reciprocal relationship even if in some situations that reciprocity may not always be positive. Religion needs media and the media also need religion such that they influence each other in ways that may not be readily apparent. Religion is an important factor in the life of people and has continued to grow with various sects emerging to stake a claim on true religious teachings. The resurgence of religion in the life of people throws up issues of discussions and tensions within and between religions that are of interest to the media. The PEW Centre in America continues to give empirical data on the resurgence of religion. That in itself is news worthy. This resurgence is partly a result of the atrophy of economic opportunities over the years as a result of the implementation of market-driven policies imposed by the Breton Woods Institutions in the mid-1980s. In such a context people tend to find solace in religious doctrines as an explanation of why they are in a particular state. In Nigeria we notice the growth in

the number of mosques and churches since the economic crisis of the 1980s and nouveau-riche preachers that have by their position become issues in the news.

Religious issues command media attention in various ways, both in times of peace and in times of conflict, whether violent or not. In Nigeria, religion is an important part of the life of the people and the activities of religious groups often receive significant media coverage. Religion is a social force – building and sustaining a sense of community among its adherents. The activities of different religious groups gain the attention of the media. Communal acts of worship within the week such as Christian Sunday Service or Muslim Friday prayer are covered in the Nigerian media. Religious ceremonies and acts of worship also receive significant media attention: New Year (January for Christians and Al-Muharram for Muslims), Eid-el Fitr (marking the conclusion of Ramadan – Muslim fasting period), Eid-el Kabir (marking the example of Prophet Abraham/Ibrahim (AS)) of offering animal sacrifice, usually a ram), Easter in April, Christmas in December; including the offering of prayers on national days such as Independence and Youth and Children’s days. These are reported in the media by emphasising the messages from religious leaders and activities of their organisations and relating this to the peace and stability of Nigeria.

Religion is important to the media such that time and space are devoted to religious issues. The Nigerian media do not only initiate coverage of religious issues on their own, but religious organisations also reach out to the media either to buy space or air time to propagate the doctrines of their faith, win converts, protest attacks on their beliefs, or make announcements. Both electronic and print media, on their own volition and as part of their community service, readily

offer time or space to religious scholars/leaders to preach on their faiths. Friday and Sunday sermons, by Muslims and Christians respectively, receive significant air time on radio and television and in newspapers. It is also a sign of accommodation and religious tolerance by the media to devote air time or space on voluntary and commercial basis to the adherents of religions. This coverage of religion is mutually beneficial to the religious groups and the media. It can be argued that religion is being mediated and religious groups are also involved in the media.

The coverage of religious issues, though on a large scale dominated by peace messages, also focuses greatly on intra- and inter-religious conflicts. The coverage of religious conflicts take on different intensity in the Nigerian media whether intra- or inter-religious. Wherever people of different religious beliefs co-exist it is reasonable to expect that there are moments when certain issues could result in conflict. It is not the conflict itself that is the problem, but how the competing parties work to resolve them. The media are at the centre of bringing the issues in the conflict to the public arena. It is important to point out that conventional media no longer have the monopoly of coverage of religion in general. As Hoover (2008:6) observes: "... trends in technology and in economics which have resulted in an increasingly diverse, decentralised and multi-channel environment." As a result, "... more and more channels have emerged in the traditional media and in the digital, online and social media realms." Hoover (2008:6) states that this had led to "a growing market for a wider range of content [which] has developed, significantly [to] lowering what had been barriers to entry by religion."

The use of media by organised religious groups for peaceful purposes has been noted above. But also the possibilities of religious groups establishing their own medium for the propagation of their faith exist side by side with commercial media. However, in Nigeria, the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) cannot license religious stations for fear of misuse or abuse to foment violent religious conflict. Notwithstanding this legal prohibition, religious broadcasts are available on subscription and free-to-air television to those that can afford it. The use of the media by extremist religious groups, as terrorists, raises concerns to media professionals, researchers and the public. There are several aspects to this concern. According to McQuail (1992:247-8):

the media have been said to give a platform (the ‘oxygen of publicity’), as well as legitimacy, to some political aims of terrorism. They may undermine, by criticism, the police and other forces of order and fail to convey the enormity of terrorist acts. By simply reporting events they may encourage terrorism by way of contagion or imitation and collaborate with terrorist strategies which include the demoralisation of the public.

But he also observes that “the media can give ‘terrorists’ a bad name, provide a peaceful forum for grievances, diminish the level of terror and panic by information and generally collaborate with the forces of law and order”(McQuail, 1992:248).

### **The Emergence of Boko Haram**

The emergence of Boko Haram confronted the Nigerian media with a claim that is different from the types of religious conflicts that they were used to reporting. In the earlier types of religious conflicts, though there were measures of violence with loss of life and destruction of property, the media could clearly identify the contending groups or

communities involved in the conflict with significant people interviewed to explain the context and make appeals for cessation of hostilities with relatively higher degree of success. However, Boko Haram emerged to attack both the State and Society and introduced a religious conflict, a fundamentalist Islam that targeted State actors, Christians, places of worship and Muslims that did not agree with or condemn its version of Islam.

Though Boko Haram started as a sect opposed to abuse of power, corruption, democracy and pauperisation of the people, it later became a threat to the State when the security services discovered that the group was stockpiling weapons. In the earlier stages of its existence, the controversial preaching of its leader Mohammed Yusuf against the vices plaguing society and opposition to recognition of only Western education as a basis for democratic participation, he did not receive significant and critical media attention. This continued even when he had a cult following with young men accompanying him in a convoy. Since there was no physical violence to his actions, no attention seemed to be paid to him. Yet when he decided to provide food, clothing and shelter to orphans and widows, his action may be regarded as an act of philanthropy and was never questioned. It is important to put on record that the security agencies and the local government authorities had made reports to the higher authorities in Borno State, little or no action was taken. At that point in the life of Boko Haram, no medium bothered to focus attention on its activities as it had nothing of news interest to relay to the public. The content of the preaching of Mohammed Yusuf was never raised for discussion in the media so as to raise debates and contest his understanding of the teachings of Islam on democratic government. This was a major crippling oversight on the part of the media.



The absence of both media and public scrutiny of his religious teachings gave him the room to win support of young people that had acquired Western education, but stayed for years without gainful employment. His condemnation of such a system was appealing and convincing that the certificates they obtained were regarded as useless. There were reported cases of some of his followers that tore their secondary school and diploma certificates. At that point in time, the media also had an opportunity to interview the young people that believed in his message and tore their certificates to explain their actions to the public. It is clear that though the Boko Haram conflict had a strong religious bent there were feelings of exclusion, poverty and resentment against the system around it. Since the young people believed in his message, along with some adults that sold off their property to support the cause of the puritan Islamic society that he was promoting, with assurance of a place in paradise in the event of death in the puritan Islamic cause, it became a potent attraction and ready commitment to martyrdom.

### **Boko Haram Attracts Media Attention**

The initial suggestion that a group of people with a theological claim were ready to challenge the Nigerian State emerged when the Nigerian Taliban decided to stake a claim in Kanamma, in Yobe State in 2002. This proclamation was met by the use of force by the Nigerian State. Having dislodged them from Yobe State, those that managed to escape regrouped in parts of Gwoza and Bama local government areas of Borno State. Still the Nigerian State, having received reports of heightened robbery on the Maiduguri –Mubi road and raids on villages for food supplies, once again, sent in the military to dislodge the Nigerian Taliban. The military, again, successfully dislodged them and the issue of the Nigerian Taliban that reared its head in 2002, was brought to an end. Little did the authorities know that these were foretastes to a wider attack on law and order, and later, seizure by military force, of several parts of Nigeria's

territory. Mohammed Yusuf was in Maiduguri, preaching his brand of Islam that questioned any relationship with government, attending school without work, exclusion of persons without Western education from contesting elections, the teachings of evolution in Western education and the rain cycle that contradict Islamic religious teachings (Mohammed, 2014).

The media in covering religious conflicts or any other conflict tend to follow the theory of issue-attention circle. An issue attracts media attention when it has high news value particular when it is unusual, dramatic, conflictual, bizarre and incongruous. Boko Haram after the military crackdown in 2009 seemed to have become a major issue on the media and public agenda. The media and public's interest turned to issues that would enhance the peace and security of the people and the failures that stopped the authorities from taking action to nip the group in its formative stage. One important issue in the public arena was the issue of failure of intelligence which was dispelled by the former Director of the State Security Services, Mr. Afakirya. The service did its job and was reported to be sending reports to the political authorities over a two-year period without immediate action taken. The Boko Haram militants were organising to avenge the killing of their leader Mohammed Yusuf in the custody of the Nigeria Police Force.

It would appear that the determination of the Boko Haram to avenge the killing of their leader was heightened by the perceived inaction on the part of the authorities. To make matters worse, the Nigerian Police were shown in a clip on Al-Jazeera killing extra-judicially some individuals believed to be members of Boko Haram. This also could have strengthened the resolve of the Boko Haram militants to confront the Nigerian State violently. According to

Mohammed (2014) Boko Haram shifted from its preaching of brand of Islam to embrace violent struggle after the 2009 crackdown by the military. The effect of the crackdown then contributed to the radicalisation of the group, but could have also decimated it into various factions operating as franchises of sorts. The group came under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau and the story of Boko Haram became one of violence since then.

Boko Haram started issuing statements to local and international media, BBC, VOA and Radio Deutsce Welle (RDW) and posted some on YouTube making its demands known to the public. It is important to note that these demands continued to shift as it suits its interest. Boko Haram demanded for the prosecution of the Police officers that killed their leader, rebuilding of their mosque and freedom to worship without State interference. It also demanded that its adherents that were in custody be freed by the authorities. That changed to a demand to overthrow the democratic government, which it considered an infidel system, to be replaced by Shari'ah. It, at some other point, demanded that President Goodluck Jonathan must convert to Islam in rebuffing his call for dialogue. With its shifting demands, it became difficult to understand what Boko Haram precisely wanted. The continued stress in its pronouncements was simply to impose an Islamic theocratic state peopled by Muslims only and unquestioningly in support of its doctrine.

Its method of violence was not to engage in direct confrontation with the forces of the State, but organised targeted killings of security agents, politicians and civilians. The first agents of the State that came under attack was the Police, then politicians:(Alhaji Awana Ngala (Chairman) and Engineer Fannami Gubio (gubernatorial candidate), both members of the then ANPP. The junior brother of the former Governor of Borno State, Senator Ali Modu Sheriff,

was killed along with Engineer Gubio. The sustained attacks against the Police led to a situation where Police officers could not wear their service uniforms and had to move in mufti. Police stations became targets of attacks and soldiers had to be drafted to support the Police in guarding their stations. Boko Haram upped the scale of attacks and added Prison officers and later soldiers to their targets. This was a successful tactic as it sent signals to the civilian population that shut people up especially after setting deadly examples of gunning down suspected informants to the security agencies. Boko Haram turned to attacking the Muslim Ulama that preached against its religious doctrine or opposed its methods. In their mission to impose Sharia on Nigeria, they targeted pastors and churches for attacks. Their pronouncements, thereafter, made it clear that they were ready to exterminate Christians from Nigeria unless they convert to its brand of Islam.

Boko Haram's targeted attacks through drive-by shootings using motorcycles, sneak attacks on targets in the community, detonation of bombs and attacks on police stations heightened the fear among the people and led to public outcry and media pressure to restore law and order. Boko Haram attacks, instead of abating, continued to escalate. Two suicide bomb attacks sign post the fact that Boko Haram had become more daring, more sophisticated and more ambitious in its goals. In 2012, Boko Haram carried out its first successful suicide attack on the Nigeria Police Force Headquarters in Abuja just a few days after the Inspector General of Police, Hafiz Ringim's visit to Maiduguri, where he announced that he would deal with the group. The attacks by Boko Haram continued on security facilities, telecommunications masts, churches and mosques, and raids on banks. The Federal Government was forced to declare a state of emergency in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States. This declaration was to help stem the attacks and

to give the security forces greater leeway to restore law and order. The actions of the security agencies in fighting Boko Haram militants also raised concerns in Maiduguri in particular as they were accused of using excessive force, human rights abuses, inhuman and degrading treatment. There were calls by the Borno Elders' Forum for the military to be withdrawn. This call generated a lot of accusations, discussions and debates in the media and heated exchanges and hate speeches on social media.

The declaration of state of emergency, on two separate occasions and one extension, did not seem to provide the desired effect. Boko Haram intensified its attacks followed by taking over of Nigerian territory and declaring an Islamic caliphate. Local governments in parts of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa fell under its control despite the presence of the Nigerian military. It declared an Islamic Caliphate and renamed Mubi in Adamawa State as *Madinatul Islam*. As Paden (2015:4) cited *The Economist* notes:

Armed with rocket-launchers and armoured vehicles stolen from the demoralised Nigerian Army, Boko Haram ... has moved beyond its established lairs in Sambisa Forest and Mandara Mountains.... It has taken several towns close to the Cameroonian border, among them Gwoza, Gamboru Ngala and Banki.... The grab for territory signals a change from Boko Haram's hit-and-run tactics. This may be in keeping with pronouncements by its firebrand leader, Abubakar Shekau, that chunks of Borno State are 'Muslim Territory' in what appears to be an imitation of the caliphate proclaimed in parts of Iraq and Syria by Islamic State (*The Economist*, 2014).

The successes of Boko Haram was becoming a national embarrassment and projected Nigeria as militarily weak, incapable of protecting Nigeria's territory, protecting its citizens and defeating the insurgents. The situation was so bad

that the Governor of Borno State was compelled to reveal that the weaknesses of the military were a result of poor or lack of equipment and low motivation of the military personnel.. Reported cases of soldiers fleeing on sighting Boko Haram militants and abandoning what little equipment they had for the militants underlined the incompetent handling of the campaign against insurgency. These are clearly matters that the media could not ignore.

Boko Haram attacked and burnt schools in Borno and Yobe states. In 2013, it attacked a school in Yobe in which 40 students were killed. Schools were attacked in Mamudo, Buni Yadi and Gujba, with the last two towns coming under BH control. In Borno State, it staged a dramatic attack and abducted 276 girls, most of them Christians, from a secondary school in Chibok leading to an international outcry and demand for their release. The FG is still being pressured under the hashtag *#BringBackOurGirls* campaign. The abduction of the school girls unleashed dramatic episodes which the media could not ignore. First, doubts were cast on the abductions by some politicians of the ruling political party. It was suggested that it was an arrangement to embarrass President Goodluck Jonathan. The First Lady to the President also staged her drama with comic relief that made her the butt of jokes on social media. Another group emerged in support of the efforts of the military and tried to discredit the *#BringBackOurGirls* campaign as politically motivated. The 2015 elections became an important factor in the FG stepping up efforts in combating the activities of insurgents and recovery of territory seized by Boko Haram.

The militants did not limit their activities to Nigeria as they explored the ungoverned spaces in the North East freely moving into Niger, Chad and Cameroon. The porosity of the extensive border, the paucity of border security

personnel, ethnic and religious ties across the border made it possible for the insurgents to escape Nigeria's security forces. The war against the insurgents was largely a Nigerian affair. But the reality is that the ungoverned spaces in the North East demanded joint action by all the countries neighbouring Nigeria on that axis. Boko Haram forced Cameroon to join in the campaign when its citizens came under direct attack. Chad and Niger also later came to join the fight against Boko Haram having recognised that no one country could succeed alone and without cooperative action the violence would continue. It is important for the media to understand the geographical location of the BH conflict as a transnational challenge made possible by the porosity of the border, ungoverned spaces, wide and open expanse of land, mountains and forests cover that makes it possible for insurgents to quickly take refuge. It is also an area where criminal activities across the border are possible. Trans-border crimes that affect countries in the Chad Basin area were also rife giving access to small and light weapons, and subsequently but suspiciously, access to heavy weapons in the form of armoured tanks and anti-aircraft guns. The military with all its arsenals of war was initially at a disadvantage having failed to properly understand the geography of the area, the lack of joint military operations with neighbouring countries and demonstrable lack of trust for the local population.

### **Media Responsibility**

The Boko Haram conflict, with an Islamic religious claim at its base, places a demand on the media to utilise all resources: professional theoretical, intellectual and societal to make the public understand the context of the conflict and help to engineer societal response that could bring peace and security. The 'Boko Haram' reference is easy shorthand available, appropriated by the media and rendered in simplistic terms as 'Western Education is a Sin or

Prohibited'. Such a rendition is an oversimplification of a complex phenomenon and leads media audience into a superficial understanding. The militant group opposed the label Boko Haram when it dropped leaflets during the prison attack to free its members in Bauchi rejecting the label. From the discussion on the emergence of Boko Haram, it was clear that it was concerned about certain contents of Western education and did not reject it outright. In media practice the constraints of space and time, push professional journalists to go for shorthand labels because it eases difficulties of detailed explanation – making for easy understanding – and saving time. Boko Haram was incensed by the media of its activities and used this as a reason to attack *ThisDay* newspaper office in Abuja as a warning to media organisations.

The media have to think through some of the shorthand labels used to refer to Boko Haram. The simple rendition of Boko Haram as “Western Education is a Sin” oversimplifies the complexities around this phenomenon as single issue driven religious revolt. The threats posed by Boko Haram and its destructive effects are what concerns the public. Indeed media reportage is likely to create panic and reduces the Boko Haram issue to securitisation, with emphasis on law and order. The media have a responsibility to bring to the public arena the fact that the insurgency is beyond law and order. The issues of receding the Lake Chad and decline in sustainable livelihoods, porous borders, instability in Chad and Libya including the Great Lakes region, infiltration of small and light arms, cross-border crime, governmental neglect, the youth bulge and lack of employment opportunities are issues that the media have responsibility to place on the public agenda. This will help the public to understand the nuances of the phenomenon confronting Nigeria and its neighbours. Some international organisations have opted to using *Jama'atu Ahlus Sunna* or simply JAS in place of Boko



Haram because of their belief that if there could be negotiation and dialogue, it is important to show the parties respect.

Professional media organisations do recognise and accept that there is now competition from the social media giving citizens the freedom to generate and disseminate their news stories as they deem fit. This challenge to the monopoly of professional media gathering, processing, packaging and dissemination of news does not diminish the roles and responsibilities of the media in reporting religious conflicts. The emergence of the social media is a welcome development in the democratisation of communication. However, the social media is an open space, all-comers arena unencumbered by the professional demands imposed on professional media. Therefore, professional media organisations have a responsibility to continue to uphold the journalistic ethos of providing the public credible and reliable information.

Considering that Boko Haram understands and utilises the social media, threatens journalists to report its attacks and grants interviews to international media, it means that it is conscious of media publicity to its goal. Adetula (2015:15) argues that the use of communication technologies by religious movements including uncivil wars like Boko Haram means that “the state loses power over its territories.” The media have a responsibility to bring what Boko Haram does on the social media space to the larger public, both to inform and to alert against becoming a victim of attack. The media, in that sense, become platforms for both the public and State actors, on the one hand, and terrorist groups, on the other. This is more in tune with the role of the media to remain balanced, neutral, non-partisan and objective.

There is no way Boko Haram can be ignored by the media because it portends danger to people and information is important for purposes of decision making to restore law and order and to ensure safety and security.

The media is indeed facing a challenge in sourcing information especially from the Nigerian military authorities whose understanding and use of the media is simply to publicise their own version of events in security challenged areas. This explains why the military and other security services have spokespersons without a corresponding creation of proper briefing sessions for journalists in the area of the conflict. The briefing session is organised almost 1,000km away from the insurgency by a top military officer to journalists that very likely have never visited the affected areas. They also do not organise tours for journalists in areas of the insurgency as means of keeping the Nigerian public abreast of progress of the military campaign. After the attack on Baga by the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF), which was described as ‘genocide’, the military simply got some journalists and took them to the area and returned them to Abuja without allowing them to interview anyone. Some of the journalists were experienced and indeed complained that they had never seen the type of closed tour organised except by the Nigerian military authorities. Social media became the arena for the dissemination and discussion of the raid on Baga. This restricts journalists from getting accurate and reliable information for dissemination to the public. The true scale of the devastation after the MNJTF raid was revealed when Human Rights Watch released a satellite image of the devastation to the world. It is the obsession of the security forces to ensure secrecy in all aspects of their operations that made the military to detain two Nigerian journalists working for *Al-Jazeera* – Ahmed Idris and Ali Mustapha – in their hotel rooms in Maiduguri for several days shortly before the 2015 elections.

Journalists dare not venture into some of the areas without security cover and the security agencies are very unwilling to take journalists along to the areas of their operations. Journalists cannot be primitive heroes by going into areas of the insurgency and put themselves in danger. Even without venturing into the areas of the insurgency, journalists have been made to pay the supreme price. An NTA journalist, Zakaria Isa was gunned down by Boko Haram militants on the suspicion that he was an informant to the security agencies. At the height of its targeted shootings in Maiduguri, Boko Haram earned publicity for their killings by phoning journalists to report the incident to the world. It is significant to note that journalists based in Maiduguri were directed, not requested, by Boko Haram to ensure that they reported these killings and attacks to the world. Journalists were obliged to report it because they do receive calls from hidden numbers telling them they know where they are, the type of dress they were wearing and who are their relations. So reporting became not only a matter of news selection, it was also an undertaking under duress. Some of the journalists had to request to be posted out of Maiduguri. This raises an important responsibility for media organisations to develop schemes for protection of their journalists by giving them security orientation and insistence on security protection by the authorities in areas of conflict.

The media have a responsibility to report on the activities of the security forces on the efforts and progress in the campaign against Boko Haram, it is also to ensure that the personnel deployed observe the rules of engagement. The deployment of the Joint Task Force (JTF) in the early of the campaign against the insurgency in the North East raised concerns about rights abuses. The military authorities felt unhappy about the critical comments on their role at a time

that they were the direct targets of attack. The media's responsibility is not to make the authorities happy: their first duty is to uphold the sanctity of the citizen as a human being. This is just as the responsibility of the security forces is to protect life and property as the agents of the Nigerian State. Any detraction from this, by unlawful means, must receive media attention and exposure. It is the outcry by the affected communities and reports in the media that led to the change in the tactics of fighting the insurgency in parts of the North East. There is an important responsibility that the media need to take up. This is the coverage of the insurgency as an issue that affects people resident in Nigeria and who need to be protected irrespective of the identity that they claim. Human-centred reporting should be the concern of the media. When Boko Haram suicide bombers attack in most cases, except for targeted bombing of places of worship, it is people of all types of identities that get affected. The attack in Kano in which more than 150 people died, a journalist – EnencheGodwin Akogu – was part of the casualty.

## **Conclusion**

The media – journalists in particular – need to be safe to undertake the responsibility of meeting the public's right to know. The security agencies have a role in ensuring that journalists are protected. In fighting the insurgent activities of Boko Haram security agencies often complain of poor cooperation from the media. At some point the Nigerian military was complaining that the media was giving Boko Haram more publicity than was necessary. It accused the media of paying too much critical attention on the conduct of its officers and contributing to undermining the success of the campaign against the Boko Haram militants. At some point the military in particular described *Sahara Reporters* as Boko Haram media. The media have a responsibility to cultivate strong relationships with the security agencies that

in turn need to cultivate trust for the media. Both sides have a responsibility to break the suspicion that makes it difficult for them to have a smooth working relationship.

The media – reporters, editors, publishers – need to take up the issue of protection and safety of journalists as an important matter. The media are the instruments for the protection and promotion of rights of citizens. Attacks on the media are also attacks on freedom of expression. There is the need to urgently organise training for journalists on issues of their security and safety particularly in areas of conflict; cultivation of a strong sense of professional solidarity among journalists; safety and security protection for the media by security agents. There is the need to mount campaigns to sensitise and gain the support of the public in ensuring the safety and security of the media.

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In the wake of the April 14, 2015 Chibok girls' saga, the Nigerian media were awash with stories of the abduction of about 276 female students of Government Girls' Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State. Women suddenly became 'prominent' and 'subjects' of major news in Nigeria. Although the conflict emanating from the BokoHaram had for over four years ravaged the North Eastern States, the reportage has more or less centred on the carnage, havocs and threats by the terrorists group. While the aggressions chiefly exhibited (as has always been attributed to) by men is widely reported, women remained in the shadows and at the receiving end; as the 'helpless' victims of the conflict- as widows, displaced, raped etc. Suffice to say at this point that even the horrendous experiences and the supposed 'helplessness' of the Nigerian women in the war-torn zone had before the 'Chibok Girls' received minimal media coverage. Buttressing this common trend in media coverage of gender issues, Ogbonna-Nwaogu, (2008) quoting (Inger, 1997) asserts that:

...has been so glaringly inadequate as women's horrendous experiences of despair in conflict zones and roles albeit ironically as having "actively supported violent, sectarian organizations on both sides of the divide either through the indirect financing of these wars from the endless labour of the female labour force who mostly contribute money, other basic essentials and the preparing of food for the soldiers...., are hardly covered/reported. This is as a result of the media's preference of objectifying women as "helpless, passive and powerless subjects" (p.256)

The pattern of reportage in conflict from this snapshot reveals conflict gendered coverage, playing up the ever pervasive and prevalent gender stereotypes- men's aggression and women as pitiable objects. A quick scrutiny of Nigerian national dailies; either contains reports of the Joint Task Force efforts to repress the BokoHaram rebels, or the Niger Delta crisis, communal clashes and some content on the kidnapping phenomenon, including the political

conflicts among the political actors and the displaced refugees resulting from the BokoHaram attacks. These reports mostly exclude or marginalize women. Rarely do these media coverage focus on the gender relations in conflict. The fact we seek to establish is that conflict situations make ready headlines any day. In reporting conflict, Nigerian journalists fail to reflect all dimensions of the conflict, from forced displacement to all forms of gender violence, impoverishment, sexual abuse, forced labour/slavery including different ways men and women are coping with the situation and how it is affecting them. In its surveillance function, the press plays the role of an observer, which is “a necessary component for enforcing economic, political, cultural and even moral stability” in the polity (Mu’azu, 2002,p.47). In this role, the media highlight aspects of society – events, people and issues – which they gather as information and report as news. However, in the Nigerian situation as in other places our conception of conflict is gendered, because the concept of conflict mostly focuses on aggressive aspects of conflict and not the entire experience and dimensions of conflict. Such dimensions mainly focus on men's role in conflict situation with men as the chief actors and spotlight in any conflict situation. Despite this gendered perspective in conflict women and children also experience conflict alongside men in the society.

Today, in Nigeria, women make up almost half of the population and there’s an increase in the number of Nigerian women who read newspapers, watch televisions, log onto websites and listen to radios. Yet, studies also show that majority of the contents of the daily Nigerian media diet are often dominated by men and men affairs (Okunna, 2005; Ukozor, 2005; GMMP, 2010). From general interest and business sections to politics, conflicts, development, religion and economy, the media (newspaper, radio and TV) in Nigeria is still a male bastion. Nigerian media is thus perceived as gender -blind in its coverage of news and issues. The critical questions here are: How do the Nigerian media



routinely report women and issues concerning women? What is the nature of Nigerian media working environment? Does the Nigerian female journalist encounter conflict in the journalism practice? What happens to the women in Nigerian regions charged with violence or the threats of it?

### **NIGERIAN MEDIA POTRAYAL OF GENDER**

The Nigerian media has been described as vibrantly competitive, with a large measure of independence and freedom. But when reporting gender, the media seem to function with both voluntary and imposed constraints and biases. Nigerian news media could be described using these three adjectives; issue-based, intense news coverage and gender-blind. This gendered orientation, may not be unconnected with the male-dominated nature of the Nigerian media industry. Ndubisi, (2010) submits that in Nigeria, men produce an overwhelming majority of the messages in the media. At the turn of the century, a staggering ninety-five percent of the journalist reporting the news in the country's radio, television and newspapers are male. The implication is that news selection process and the power to define the media agenda is still a male privilege. The Nigerian media so to say exclude women from serious debates in the public spheres of Nigerian society on matters such as politics, conflicts, religion and war. Instead construct the female as subjects living almost exclusively in the private sphere. Looking at Nigerian media coverage of gender, we observe that the gender inequality in Nigerian society is reflected in men's representations of women in the news media . To exemplify, in Nigeria, the status of women remains low, although 49% of the Nigerian society are female. Men (51%), as a group, control the means of production and other resources. They have decision-making power within households and many institutions. Because of entrenched gender discrimination, women, who constitute almost half of the population and have continued to make incursions in national development, have one of the lowest rates of female entrepreneurship in

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Sub-Saharan Africa. The majority of women are concentrated in casual, low-skilled, low paid informal sector employment. Only 7.2% of women own the land they farm, which limits their access to credit and constrains entrepreneurship and business activity. Only 9% of those who stood for election in Nigeria's April 2011 National Assembly elections were women while 4% of local government councilors are women (Gender In Nigeria Report, 2012).

What this sample data demonstrate is that in Nigeria, both the larger society and the male sub-culture see women and women's aspirations as unquestionably subordinate and the marginalization, trivialization and stereotyping of women are incontrovertible aspects of Nigerian life. In the Nigerian national context women are confined to the traditional role of childbearing and family which continues to put women in the private sphere and in conflict with activities outside its realm. Given the patriarchal structure of Nigerian society, the Nigerian media operate under a gendered existence less obvious to the audience. Gender issues are compartmentalized dichotomously in media texts, formats and schedules. What we see in a day's typical media offering is the messages of powerful state and corporate actors. In hotly contested issues such as politics and elections, men's voices dominate. When women voices are used those of men generally outnumber them sending subtle messages about what is 'normal'. When we examine guest lists for most media programmes they mostly reflect men, the serious players on policy issues without providing alternative framework or agendas for women. One major consequence of this depiction is that what is uncontested now maybe difficult or impossible to detect and change. In the news media, research has continued to show women's invisibility. Only three groups of women make news in the Nigerian media, viz.: those few women in politics that are occasionally heard, wives of public officers who enjoy the best press in Nigeria on account of the public profiles of their husbands. Women in

government also make news but this is because they speak on the portfolios they control. Unlike their male colleagues, they rarely comment on issues of national importance unrelated to their portfolios. The daily experiences, struggles and diversity of everyday lives of the ordinary Nigerian woman hardly get a mention in the media. The 2010 GMMP (Global Media Monitoring Project) research on gender in the news media captures it all as it states:

That gender inequality still persists in Nigerian mass media. Women's participation in the news is relatively low compared with men's participation. Majority of the news subjects for all the news media studied were men. In 2005, 17% were female news subjects, while 83% were male news subjects. While in 2010, 14% were female news subjects, while 86% were male news subjects (p,5).

Apart from underrepresentation of women in the news media, Anyanwu, (2001) comments on the dominant ethos of Nigeria news media coverage of gender as she explains; An analysis of the mainstream media in Nigeria reveals a dominant pattern where women are largely seen not heard. Their faces adorn newspapers, however on important national and international issues they fade out. Even when the news is about them, the story only gains real prominence if there is a male authority figure or news maker on the scene. What we see in a day in Nigeria's news media in relation to gender portrayal is summarized by media authors this way:

- ❖ Majority of media stories revolve around men; men are the voices, subjects, experts and sources of media stories.
- ❖ Women stories in news are generally few and women are made 'invisible' by the media's omission of their voices and images.

- ❖ Women become front-page and headline, when they engage in activities which are not in line with society's prescription of what women 'should' and 'should not' do. These stories often are given lots of prominence in news pages and broadcasts.
- ❖ Women when they appear in the media, are most often portrayed as sex objects, beauty objects, homemakers, victims of violence, poverty, victims of natural disasters, war and conflict, etc.
- ❖ Coverage of issues of concern to women such as violence, sexual and reproductive health, women in decision-making, are often confined to special pages and segments in the media and pegged as 'women's issues', rather than being placed on the news pages as issues of concern to everyone.
- ❖ Women in elected offices often are not portrayed in the same ways as their male counterparts
- ❖ Women in politics and governance in Nigeria are constructed by the media as 'women who have stepped out of the gender norm of remaining in the private'.
- ❖ They become news when: They are involved in a controversy or scandal; When women are fighting each other; When they are identified with a 'man of power'.
- ❖ When they do something that is 'out of the ordinary', often interpreted by the media as 'being tough' like men instead of 'soft'.
- ❖ The portrayal of women in politics in and through the media often sends broader messages such as: 'politics is not for women'; or even the message that 'women who are in politics are not good women'.
- ❖ The language used in stories on women in politics is one clue of the underlying gender biases in the media.

Anyanwu, (2001) is right when she maintains that;

Overall, the coverage of women in Nigerian media is comparatively less impressive than many other nations in the region. But if, as the study by the IJC concludes, this state of affairs can be explained by the overwhelming dominance of males in the profession, are the few women, especially those in decision-making positions, making a difference? Looking at the coverage of news in Nigeria's mainstream media, the globe has only shifted slightly since those early years when the amazons of Aba and Fumilayo Kutis of Lagos forced society's attention upon their issues through dramatic public protests. That Rose Ukeje is today the chief judge of the federal High Court; that Ndi Okereke is today the director general of the Nigerian stock exchange; that young Prisca Soares has been making waves as the managing director of the country's foremost insurance agency, NICON, and that numerous women are today chairpersons of outstanding banks, have not quite changed the dominant attitude towards news about women. The old notion that their pretty faces are more marketable than their voices still prevails (p,4).

Media coverage of gender also tend to generally portray women in a familiar range of stereotypes mostly confined to traditional roles in the private sphere as mothers, nurturers, caregivers, and mere appendages to their husbands and sons. The use of stereotypes tend to limit women's potentials and empowerment and reflect a mental block not only in terms of what society may expect from women, but also more seriously in terms of what women may expect from themselves (IFA,Report,2009). Women issues hardly adorn the pages of our national dailies and neither does it form a major part of the daily broadcast schedule of radio and television stations. Women's issues are confined by news media to a genre of information considered as soft news, buried or relegated to the society, art, home and entertainment pages thus, trivializing them. Only in sports, however, do women speak loudly because of their overwhelming presence and

performance. As argued by scholars, an examination of the Nigerian media reveals fundamental principle of patriarchal thinking, which shows gender discrimination which is a reflection of Nigerian society. Overall, the Nigerian News media continue to portray a world according to Lemish (2004), where men are presented as normal "majority" of society while women are presented as the "minority", the "other", the "marginal". In spite of the pluralistic nature of the Nigerian media and increased number of women working in the media especially broadcast media and indication of possible changes, the Nigerian media routine reporting and coverage of events and issues still leaves women at the margins of the social, economic, cultural and political processes as documented in many other studies globally.

### **BEING FEMALE IN A MALE DOMINATED INDUSTRY: ANY CHALLENGES?**

We have seen abundant evidence of underrepresentation of women as subjects of news coverage. However, women's status in news media ownership pattern and in the gate keeping process might also account in some ways for this. We argue that since news agenda, framing and content is the final outcome of the gate keeping process, which involves the participation of men and women, gender status in news room exert influence in what is produced. This is because there can be no full press freedom until women have an equal voice in the news gathering and news dissemination process. So how many women and men are news reporters in Nigeria? Any imbalance, disparity or marginalization? why, and what are the implications. These questions are pertinent because it brings out facts on who are the key players in the Nigerian media houses . The news reporter for instance, is a stronger gatekeeper than the news presenter. He or she is actually the first gatekeeper who decides what is reported in the field as news (GMMP, 2010). .

### **THE NIGERIAN MEDIA: A SNAPSHOT OF GENDER STATUS**

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Studies reveal that the Nigerian media though pluralistic in terms of number (297), as an industry are a collection of enterprises largely funded and run by men as is in other climes. Men as a group controls the policy, apparatuses of media production and decision- making that enable their domination in the industry. For instance Nigeria print media organizations, totaling about 44 newspaper outfits, 15 Magazines, are majorly owned by men. Similarly, the broadcast media with 138 radio station (public and private) and 100 television stations is dominated by male ownership. This ownership structure is a reflection of male dominance of means of resources and production in the country. The ownership structure of news industry is also complicated by the complex profit-driven structure and volatile competitive terrain that repose orientation and control of media institutions on men. That is why the media has been described as male dominated and it is a fact. Also majority of journalists working in the media are men. A look at the GMMP (2010) study with reference to Nigeria media organizations confirms an acute gender imbalance in the print media. In the study, Male reporters were 81% while female reporters took the back seat at 19%. The gender difference in radio was not much, though male reporters were still more in number than female reporters at 56% and 44% respectively. Gathering and disseminating information is the most popular and traditional function of the media, and this process is overwhelmingly controlled by men. In terms of reporting we see that women as journalists are largely invisible. From what we see, the Nigerian media industry is male dominated in ownership structure, decision- making and news reporting (GMMP, 2010; IWMF, Global Report, 2011). How does this gendered newsroom status affect women journalists is another area of concern.

## **BEING FEMALE IN A MALE DOMINATED INDUSTRY: THE TRAIIVAILS**

As we have seen from the Nigerian media portrayal of gender, the disparity in gender representation in workforce in media, lower representation at decision-making and governance levels has direct consequences on the content produced, the issues covered, the voices represented and the manners in which women and men are portrayed (Byerl and Ross, 2006; White, 2009; North, 2009; Djerff-Pierre, 2007). A related repercussion to this is the limitation of voices that may challenge the status quo. The large number of men in the media workforce produces a discriminatory climate that succeeds in keeping women outside of the positions of power and slows their moving beyond the glass ceiling. Other consequences of gender disparities in news room in Nigeria are outlined as follows:

1. Unfriendly working environment that subtly violates rights of women journalists such as regarding and treating them as sexual objects, groping, sexual harassment and intimidation. As Tumber, (2006) suggests, Journalism historically was a male profession and women have often encountered sexism from their colleagues as well as from outsiders.
2. Professional indoctrination. This is the negative culture of toughening the female journalists by intimidations, abuses and power play by male counterpart. This results in accepting the female journalists as one of the 'boys', if she survives the intimidations without complaints. She is now regarded as a 'journalist' not a 'female journalists', thus undermining her identity in less obvious ways and reinforcing male superiority and dominance of men in the profession.
3. Sexists jokes and name labeling of female journalists is another discriminatory practice that results from gender disparity in most newsrooms.



4. Undervaluing or ignoring the work, successes, efforts and rights of the female journalist are other symbolic ways of undermining their self confidence and frustrating them.
5. One pronounced discriminating practice in news room is lack of equal opportunities for male and female journalists in terms of training and exposure.
7. Refusal of male journalists to cover issues they see as women issues. GMMP (2010) study summarizes the situation appropriately this way:

..... The situation has become worrisome because the trend observed from both results is that male reporters report more of stories with male news subjects, while female reporters report more of stories with female news subjects. The import is that issues concerning women will continue to witness less media coverage, except there is a gender balance in the number of reporters in the country's media. This will also work as against access of women to the media, recognizing that male reporters who dominate the media industry do not seem to be interested in the views of female news subjects or in female topical areas such as “the girl-child”(GMMP,2010).

Despite the disparity witnessed in Nigeria media industry. it is gratifying to observe as shown from studies that there is no serious gender difference existing in the scope of stories reported by female and male reporters, except that males reporters did not report any story on the girl-child, and female reporters did not report any story on, celebrity, arts and media, and sports. There is also no wage discrimination among female and male journalists working in Nigeria as is sometimes seen in other countries. The Nigerian female journalist, working in a male- dominated profession and in a society that sees women journalists negatively and in a conflict environment are prone to dangers that have not always

been highlighted but needs urgent attention. The urgency becomes necessary as we recall some of the recent attacks on female journalists and even past ones. Female journalists working in a patriarchal society where journalists are essentially regarded as a male profession are more vulnerable than their male counterparts when it comes to issues of violence.

There are at least three different ways in which violence against women journalists occur as suggested by authors. One is during the course of reporting dangerous events such as wars and conflict zones which in our context include political conflict arena as they erupt everyday across the nation, even in non conflict zones such as the legislature, violence erupts and women journalists just like their male counterpart find themselves in a dangerous context. Is she trained adequately on safety measures to take? As we face the March 28th elections, violent conflicts are bound to arise, how well prepared are they? Any safety measures on ground? A second form is sexual violence which while rarely meted out to male journalists, is preponderantly acted out against women. Then there is state sponsored violence in the form of arbitrary arrest, imprisonment and torture, though we can argue that this is no longer common place in our democracy, yet worthy of consideration. These issues are important because on a daily basis our journalists put themselves in line of danger as they run to cover breaking news and capture events and situations even in conflict and violent zones. That is why they deserve due consideration especially during this period of election.

## **REPORTING CONFLICT IN NIGERIA: ANY GENDER DIMENSION?**

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One major area of concern of this paper is on the ways in which Nigerian media reflect gender in conflict reporting. To accomplish this we need to also glance at the safety of Nigerian journalists covering conflicts situations even though we have made a mention of it previously. Often, safety issues of Nigerian journalists are taken for granted, overlooked or simply ignored. However, the increasing spate of conflict in Nigeria and the number of journalists being held hostage, attacked or dead, demands a corresponding action on the safety of journalists, from the regulatory bodies, government, media organizations and civil society organization. For instance we are aware of the abduction of a journalist by gunmen in Abia State; The assault of more than two journalists in the River State skirmishes; Assault of one journalist in Osun State, while another journalist and his crew members were assaulted in Kwara State and the attack of four journalists in December in Taraba State. What this brief data show is that obviously, journalists working in conflict zones and politically volatile areas in Nigeria continue to be vulnerable to attacks irrespective of gender and the need for their safety becomes urgent. Evidence however shows that issue of journalists' safety is still in its embryonic stage in Nigeria and the need for call to action becomes imperative as more issues that might lead to conflict seem to unfold.

## **REPORTING CONFLICT AND GENDER IN NIGERIA**

In today's Nigeria environment new forms of conflict seem to emerge that demands media coverage in such a way that the public will understand the varied dimensions. Maybe due to the complex nature of such conflict situations the Nigerian media coverage appears insufficient, superficial and gendered. What we see is a simplistic, vivid, and incessant but shallow converge, where consequences and victims are covered while causes and solutions are openly ignored. However, the wide held view is that media reports deriving immediately from conflicts hardly deepens the Nigerian

audiences' understanding of the situations other than that they are kept posted on list of casualties, utterances of leaders of troops, pronouncements and threats of rebel leaders, victims of the conflict and governments treatment of victims. A few examples of the screaming headlines in our National dailies will suffice: *Another Bomb explosion rocks Jos as hundreds of people lose their lives; 350 massacred as Boko Haram overruns community in North -East Nigeria; Death toll continues to rise as more victims die from the Nyanya bomb blast in Abuja.* In fact sometimes news media are filled up with the number of casualties that it arouses fear and confusion in the mind of the average audience without any critical examination of the details, causes and effect of conflict. As Waisbord, (2002) emphasizes, the news media establishes a "culture of fear" which they perpetuate by portraying a "vast array of threat". No wonder, the Nigerian media has been criticized for focusing on conflict behaviours. Pate (2002, p.41) submits that the press is wont to "writing incomplete stories that do not cover sources, options and resolutions. Instead, they concentrate on conflict behaviour: 'who is doing what to whom with what effect'. Conflict reporting discourse is not balanced and exhaustive. The media of Nigeria has also been accused as falling short in its responsibility of providing reliable reporting, and the balanced reflection of diverse views and voices by ignoring and marginalizing women issues in conflict reporting. This is because the reports do not cover the entire life circle of a particular conflict situation. The gendered distinction in society between private and public is also such that in periods of conflict, women's suffering is invisible since it does not take place in the public domain. Turshen and Twagiramariya, (1998, p.118) support this view based on their experience with Rwandan women. "Women tend to define their suffering in relation to other people such as their husbands and children and are reluctant to make public their own experiences of abuse which society often sees as belonging in the private realm (Meintjes and Goldblatt 1998,p.54). In order to understand conflict situations we have to understand that structures in our societies

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which are gendered influence our concept of conflict and result in different experiences for men and women during war due to their different roles in society. Using the Boko Haram conflict as a case in point let's see what the women experiences during conflict and find out whether such experiences have been reported duly by Nigerian media:

- In conflict situations such as we have in parts of the country, women's rights are violated and not always recognized as human rights.
- Gender based violence increases as we see in the Chibok Girls abduction.
- Incidences of internally displaced women increase.
- Sexual violence becomes evidence in conflict with systematic rape and sexual abuse used as a part of strategy to demoralize the group under threat.
- Some women are taken as combatants while some are taken in by rebels and expected to perform non military services such as cooks, carriers, sex slaves and forced wifery. This is evident in the evolving strategy of the BokoHaram terrorist group in using female teenagers as suicide bombers and 'wives'.
- Social networks are disrupted and destroyed and family structures and composition changed (DeTemmerrn, 2001).

From what we have above it becomes clear that Nigerian's women's experience which is quite similar to what we have seen have not received a lot of attention in the media perhaps because our society is structured in such a way that women's suffering remains invisible. Nigerian media coverage of conflict retains the dominant pattern of "Women are

largely seen but not heard", their voices are silenced. In majority of the conflict stories, women are portrayed as victims or when they do extraordinary things like being one of the suicide bombers they are sensationalized and suddenly acquire prominence. The fact remains that conflict affects men and women differently and as such should be reported that way. In conflict, women can be civilians not just helpless victims, they can be breadwinners because conflict situations affect gender roles, they can also be peace builders and at times also combatants. Yet our mainstream seems stuck in repetitively reporting conflict from a gender biased lens.

## **DRAWING DOWN THE CURTAIN**

The dominant attitude among Nigerian journalists is that women's issues rarely make marketable news. Controversy is what sells. The prevailing circumstances and the supposed status quo have also made women even more withdrawn as most women shy away from controversial issues; they remain out of the orbit of hot news. Their struggles and triumphs are part of the social landscape, which ought to be reflected in the national media but are not. Beyond the portrayal of gender we also appraised the context in which media images and agenda are produced in Nigeria. What seems to emerge is a pluralistic media industry with an increase in volume of media content but not a corresponding increase in diversity of opinions and voices. What emerges is a pattern of 'malecentric' communication content. In conflict situations such as we have in Nigeria women are the most vulnerable and abused victims. They make up the majority of victims (Chibok Girl's case is a typical example). The violence ranges from assault to rape to homelessness and family disruptions. These are harsh realities that qualify as hard news but they hardly make the news. It therefore, behoves the media practitioners to rise to the imperatives of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in becoming more gender sensitive in

reporting conflict holistically such that women's experiences and roles will be duly represented rather than stereotyped as has always been the case. The time for a change and repositioning is now.

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## **PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS IN REPORTING CONFLICTS: PERSPECTIVES ON DEALING WITH NEW CHALLENGES**

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Unlike in other professions and vocations, the issue of ethics and professionalism are always more contentious in journalism practice because of its peculiarities and association with the fundamental human rights provision situated within constitution that support the right to freedom of production and exchange of information. National laws and international conventions recognises such rights and civil societies in democracies often institute mechanisms to protect this basic right from being eroded in whatever form, as within it is ingrained the survival of democratic tenets in contemporary democracies. While other professions can enforce professionalism and regulate ethics strictly through established professional bodies and association, the nature of journalism practice and technology has made any strict enforcement of professional ethics to be very difficult in spite of the presence of viable bodies, official and unofficial mechanisms to regulate communication and associated practices, including journalism.

For any profession to retain respectability and credibility, ethical conduct and professionalism must be established, must be displayed by its members and must be enforced through agreed mechanisms. Sometimes, there tends to be ambiguities in understanding some ethical issues in profession practices. In most cases, people tends to present professional and ethical issues rigidly in terms of “good” or “bad”, “right or wrong”, and “black or white”. In journalism however, the context in which the practitioner finds himself sometimes determine the interpretation of professionalism and ethical conducts. The very nature of news collection, processing and dissemination are influenced by environmental factors. Hence, for instance, professional practice and ethical conduct of a journalist practicing in a

peaceful environment may be differently interpreted from the one practicing in a chaotic conflict or violent environment. By extension, the professional practice that applies in a dictatorial context is quite different from a democratic environment in terms of access to news sources and the manner of distributing the news. In these contexts, ethical expectations may vary. Nevertheless, in spite of this, there appears to be a consensus among practitioners and non-practitioners alike that there are constant elements that must be observed, which are perceived as appropriate professional conducts in whatever environment or context a journalist finds himself. However, many of the journalism ethical issues cannot be enforced by law or with any strict code of conduct; but ethics are more guided by attitude of minds and conscience of journalists which could only manifest in conducts and behaviours that are voluntarily exhibited by individual journalists. That is why it is more preferable for journalists associations as bodies, to regulate their activities through acceptable professionally established ombudsman, rather than any officially sanctioned or government regulatory mechanism.

Professionalism, in journalism is interpreted in terms of the reporters, editors, media managers, technical staff, including cameramen and photojournalists, performing their official activities with dignity and with high sense of responsibility. It is expected that all categories of media staff should perform in an unbiased manner without ulterior influences, displaying objectivity, neutrality and balance in collecting, processing and presenting stories and accounts of events they are assigned to cover before publishing them in the media. In addition to this, in most professional codes of conducts of journalists across the world, it is expected that journalists should exhibit decency and integrity in terms of personal conduct in their relationships with sources. Journalists must be accurate and fair in terms of coverage and

presentation of all sides to a story, shun rewards and gratifications while carrying out their duties, respect agreements with their sources especially in terms of protection of identities of sources especially if disclosing their identities could endanger the lives of such sources. Furthermore, respect for public interests and displaying sense of social responsibility are crucial professional elements that the journalist must exhibit in order to conform to professional etiquettes (Adio Wazziri, 2001). Undoubtedly, many of these ingredients are qualities that are displayed by media practitioners and media managers in Nigeria which has contributed to the growth of the media to the extent that it has risen up to the global standard in terms of meeting up to professional expectations. The media has nourished democracy and performed its role to expectation in the struggle for independence, in the struggle to rid the country of military dictatorship and in the struggle to institutionalise accountability and good governance in the public space.

However, the economic context within which the media operates in Nigeria has prevented them from meeting up to some of the other expectations, especially with regard to the aspects of rewards and gratifications. Personal greed of some individual journalists has also aggravated this situation, in the face of inability of the media to adequately compensate journalists and media workers up to international standard. Apart from paying inadequate remuneration to their staff, several media houses in Nigeria are in the habit of owing several months of arrears of salaries and the conditions of service of many are very poor. This situation has made it difficult to eradicate the brown envelope syndrome and many journalists and media house has compromise on their integrity and the constant political frays that occur in the operating environment.

It is observed that there is a thin line between professionalism and ethics in the media in Nigeria. In public discourses around the roles and performances of the media in the polity, most of the criticism around professionalism in the media have radiated around ethical issues and moral conducts of the journalist and media practitioners within all categories of the media, hence most of the time, what is regarded as professional is also regarded as ethical. For instance, the Nigerian media code published in 1998 enjoined the journalist to seek the truth, to be independent and objective, to minimize harm, to be morally and professionally responsible and accountable, to exhibit social responsibility, to respect human rights, to maintain professional integrity and to respect cultural, ethnic and religious diversity (Ukpabi, 2001). This debate around the observance of the media professional or ethical codes are also steeped in the dichotomy of the public versus private media, even though it is difficult to see which among the two categories of the media is more affluent or more deprived in the real sense in the operating environment. While there is steady budgeting for the sustenance of the public (government) owned media, many of such media still are not adequately funded to the extent that their staff often do not have conducive environment to operate in. The harsh economic operating environment within which the private media are also operating has also prevented them from adequately catering for the welfare and development of their staff. So in essence, professional and ethical compromises cannot be said to be more predominant either within the private or public media in Nigeria.

### **Professional Ethics in Reporting Conflicts and Violence**

The professional ethical standard that applies to journalism practice generally also applies to covering conflicts events and violent situations. However, the situational components of a conflict environment, whether violent or non-violent

often put more pressure on journalists' ethical standards and public expectations, which dictates that the journalist should perform beyond the normal ethical expectations when he is assigned to cover and report conflicts, especially armed conflicts and violent situations. This is because covering such event could save lives or contributes to the devastations occasioned by the conflict. It is here the journalist is expected to demonstrate his understanding of social responsibility and his expected role in contributing to the de-escalation of the conflict he is covering. However, one question that media intellectuals often contend with is whether professionalism and ethical practices could, in reality, be observed and practiced in a chaotic situation of violent conflict when even the life of the reporter could be at risk. Beyond this, when violence is stretched beyond the physical typology to other forms such as structural, psychological and culture-based violence, to what extent should the journalist go in acting under the guise of social responsibility to unravel, cover and report such varieties of violence without compromising ethics, assuming he recognises such varieties of violence for what they are? Stretched further, how should the journalist portray victims and perpetrators of violent conflicts without being biased and aggravating the conflict? How should he report and reflect the plights of the vulnerable groups such as women, minors, the elderly and the infirm during armed conflicts? To what extent should he display emotion and practice journalism of attachment during violent conflicts? These are some of the puzzling circumstances that the journalist must contend with in covering conflict situation. They are on-going dilemmas that individual journalist often contend with, which does not have definite answers beyond the experiences that journalists could share and theoretical postulations that media scholars could prescribe when journalists find themselves in such situations.

Galtung (1998) has proffered two models that apply to the conducts of journalists when covering armed conflict and violence. The first model is what he refers to as taking the “Low road”, while the second model is taking the “High road”. According to Galtung, it is left to the journalist to decide for himself which of the roads to take whenever he finds himself in a conflict environment. The low road appears to be the easiest road for the journalist to trek when reporting conflicts and violence. It is the road Galtung refers to as war/violence journalism. Such road is characterised by focusing on the sensational events of conflict and violence; it is propaganda and victory oriented in terms of describing the win-lose features among the parties involved in conflict. Such journalism tends to focus more on the impacts of the conflict on the interests of the elites involved and tends to ignore the plights of the victims and the suffering elements in a violent conflict environment. Latching on the pressure of time and competition that influence journalism practice in the contemporary times, journalists who are engaged on this road engage in superficial reporting of the momentary and episodic events of conflicts that often have long escalatory trend, but deliberately ignore to provide background information that could enrich the reporting of the conflict and help in the resolution efforts. Such reporting does not pay attention to efforts of mediators, relief organisations and peace workers who are trying to work to achieve de-escalation and reconciliation in the conflict environment. On the low road, there is little regard for strict adherence to ethics of the profession and there is virtually no attention paid to the plight of the suffering victims caught in the web of the conflict environment. The focus of the journalist is on meeting the deadline set by his newsroom and beating the competitors to breaking the news. Consideration for human sufferings could come later in news analysis and follow-ups after breaking the major news and adequately feasting on it.

Galtung's second and alternate model, the High road, is what he described as the Peace/Conflict Journalism, in which the journalist sees conflict as a necessary occurrence in any society and conceives himself as part of the mechanisms for de-escalation and for the search for peace in the society. This road is not popular because it is truth oriented and abhors propaganda and sensationalism in reporting violent events. It is people oriented because the journalist focuses more on the impacts of violence on humanity and the suffering victims of a conflict; it is solution oriented because the journalist sees it as a duty to contribute to the search for peace and reconciliation among the parties that are involved in the conflict. The high road is often difficult to trek because the journalist imposes it on himself to go beyond the superficial reporting of the momentary events to provide detailed background and the accounts of the escalation trend of the conflict before it gets to the crisis stage. The journalist identifies the primary, secondary and tertiary parties that are active in a conflict and the extent of their contributions, without which appropriate resolution of the issues in contention is impossible. On the high road, the journalist goes further to provide the platform for negotiation among the conflict parties by being fair, balance and giving equal access into his media by the parties in the conflict. He looks beyond immediate competition and pressure of breaking the news to identify the appropriate sources, individuals, groups and institutions that are working to bring reliefs into the conflict environment and assist in exploring avenues for peacemaking and peace building.

However, not many journalists are professionally and intellectually prepared and trained to trek on the “high roads” and take on the role of peace interventionists while reporting violent conflicts, despite the fact that the world is now witnessing more of intra-state conflicts rather than inter-state conflicts that are pervasive in the last century especially

during the cold war era when most conflicts are regarded as “others” conflict. Presently, more often than not, the journalist is more closely involved in armed conflicts by virtue of its nearness to their roots and the globalisation trend which has stretched personal and familial interests of journalists beyond their immediate geographical borders. In essence, the nature of contemporary conflicts has thrown even the corporate interests of media organisations beyond national borders and journalists can easily get entangled in what was hitherto considered as foreign conflict which could suddenly become local. The contemporary global fight against Islamic fundamentalism, which started from the Middle East, has been taken to Africa and the West. It was initially thought to be a regional conflict restricted to the Far East but the conflict gradually spread to other continents and has become a local phenomenon in many countries in Europe, Africa, Americas and Asia continents.

Some media scholars and professionals have argued that in reality, the media should be dispassionate when it comes to the issue of reporting conflict and report conflict events as they are, rather than playing the role of mediators which is outside the responsibilities of the media (See Isola, 2010). Moisy (2002:9), while kicking against the evolution of a universal ethical code that would insist on journalists demonstrating social responsibility and acting on the side of peace while performing their professional duties, asserts that:

I resent being placed in the unpleasant position of asserting that the peace of the world and the harmonious development of societies are not among my responsibilities as a newsman. They are, or at least they should be the objectives of politics and politicians. To enlist the press in the same task is another way of preventing it from telling the world like it is. Which is essentially its duty.



Claude Moisy, a former chief executive of *Agencies France Press* (AFP), adequately represents the non-attachment school in the above quotation. This school argues that it is neither the responsibility of the media nor its duty to moralise on events that takes place in conflict environments, even in the face of human sufferings. Incidentally, this thinking coincides with the standard training curricular of journalists in most traditional journalism schools where the news is conceived as consisting of conflict events and clashes. It is important to state that this conception drives the professional attitudes and actions of journalists on the field, some of whom are visibly less concerned about the human sufferings that accompany violent events during armed clashes. Many journalists only focus on the events that could hit the headlines on the front page of their media, while the angle of reporting are the sensational points which could quickly draw the attention of the audiences. While this professional attitude to conflict events could have its positive side in terms of drawing global attention to a conflict and attracting possible interventions of relevant institutions that could affect de-escalation, the negative side often involve presenting the lurid details of events that could quickly aggravate violent conflicts and stimulating reprisal actions from various sides of the conflict, which could make de-escalation difficult and could draw attention away from peace initiatives that are already in place to de-escalate the conflict. Some of the consequences of this damning professional attitude could be self-consuming to the media itself because the operating environment of the media could be affected negatively in the short or long run. It should therefore be a subject of debate whether the traditional conception of the news should be reviewed or whether it should remain the same in the face of the new realities in global media operating environment.

Since journalism ethics for covering conflicts, like others, are not codified and are not enforceable by any professional law but are left to the conscience of the individual journalist, the turn of events while covering violent conflict assignments and the dilemmas faced by reporters sometimes turn fatalistic for reporters. When a journalist is unable to resolve a dilemma he faces while covering violent events, when professional guidance is unavailable and he has to act against his conscience while working under pressure, the attendant confusion and trauma experienced could become a psychological issue which, when help is not available to such individual could eventually ruin the career and the personality of such journalist. Many journalists have been exposed to traumatic armed conflict events without adequate preparations. In some cases, such journalist would rather contribute to alleviation of sufferings on the field if given the option, than pursue professional duty of merely reporting violent occurrences. Many journalists have themselves become victims of violent incidents in the past because they were not able to quickly resolve the dilemma they faced on whether they should help victims or face their professional duties. This problem will continue to be an ethical issue in professional journalism practice until professional associations, individuals and media organisations are able to provide psychological support and develop a standard practice code or house style for tackling dilemmas that journalists face in covering violent conflicts.

In spite of the fact that ethical standard for covering conflict and violent events may not be available in any codified format, the journalist can take some measures that could help the conflict environment while also putting his conscience in comfortable position after performing his assignment. Treating victims of violent conflict with dignity, respecting and recognising their feelings and sufferings is the way to begin. There is always the temptation to extract as

much information as possible from victims of violence that could enable the reporter to file robust stories about violent events. In the process, some reporters would rub more salt into the injuries of victims by not showing sufficient sensitivity to the plights and sufferings of the victims, since all that matters is the information they want to collect from the victims even while at the point of death. Recognising the immorality in this and demonstrating willingness to help in alleviating the suffering of victims even before collecting information from them is the right way to feel comfortable after the events have been reported. No professional code will prevent a journalist from arranging first aid treatment or medical evacuation for victims of a violent event if it is within the capacity of the journalist even while carrying out his duty. Insisting on the enforcement of the rights of victims and advocating for their causes on the scene of violent event would not deter the reporter from performing his duty. Such actions would rather enrich his story when remedial efforts are reported along with the accounts of events that transpired on the scene of violence. In a similar manner, the journalist must show respect for the feelings of the relatives of victims and other grieving stakeholders in a violent conflict. Human interests must be the main focus of the reporter rather than the momentary and sensational events that has transpired in the conflict.

It is also important to respect the views of information sources while covering violent conflict events and keeping to agreements reached with them. Some sources risk their lives to provide information to reporters on the scene of violent events and carelessly, those sources are revealed by reporters while reporting the events. Several people have been killed on this account by terrorists, for example. It is a moral and professional responsibility of the journalist to protect the identities of their sources in a conflict environment which on no account a reporter must compromise. If

on the account of a compromise a source loses his life, such event may engrain a permanent scar on the conscience of the journalist for the rest of his entire life. It is also important for the reporter to reveal his identity to sources in relation to the conflict. If a journalist is a stakeholder in a particular conflict event, he should not hide it under any disguise from a source. The reporter must reveal his interests, if there is any, in a conflict even if it would determine whether the source would open up or not.

When reporting a conflict event, it is unethical for a reporter to employ stereotypical languages and labelling words in presenting the parties to the conflict. Such stereotypes and labelling, which could be in form of ethnic, religious or gender biased languages could only aggravate the conflict and send signals across to the conflict parties that the reporter is bias in covering and reporting the event. In essence, individuals and groups in a conflict should be presented for what they really are and not on the basis of their identities with larger groups. In Nigerian environment, several violent clashes have been dubbed ethnic or religious conflict because reporters either did not have the skill for conflict analysis or are too lazy to carry out sufficient analysis to get to the roots of such conflicts. Often, they based their perception on conjectures about the ethnicity of the dominant parties in conflicts to describe conflicts as ethnic or religion based. Such labelling has contributed to aggravating violence with attendant loss of lives and destruction of properties and brought enmity into communities that were hitherto at peace.

Except in an editorial, it is not the duty and responsibility of the media to apportion blames to any of the parties in a violent conflict or be judgemental on any issues that are involved in the conflict in their reports. In essence, the duty of the journalist is to report and give an account of the event that transpired, including the roles played by the conflict

parties in a fair, balance and neutral format. Any format that is different from this often erodes the credibility of the media and could expose the reporter or media organisations to retaliation or revenge action by aggrieved parties.

### **New Challenges to Ethical Reporting of Conflicts**

The first major challenge to ethical reporting of conflict and violence is the pervasiveness of the social media and proliferation of blogging activities. Even though it is good and welcome development, citizen journalism has however put professionalism and ethics at risk in the practice of journalism. Presently, within minutes of the outbreak of any major conflict event, it would have become instantly a global issue with all accounts and visuals on the internet, especially on the social network media. The problem with this trend, however, is that no professional or ethical considerations are given to the production and uploading of the visuals and narratives posted on the internet by the mostly untrained bloggers and citizen journalists who report such events. More often than not, such reports do damage to the fragile fabrics of the local communities of the breaking news event in terms of moral, race and ethnic relations. By extension, international co-existence and understanding are also affected by the sensitive nature of some violent events reported on the social media. Osborn (2001:5) reinforced this, stating that: “Holding people to sound ethical standards, especially journalists is daunting; it is more challenging in this era of the internet and fluidity of how information is sourced and disseminated rapidly across the globe”. In essence, therefore, for online journalism to be acceptable as a professional calling, it must subscribe to ethics in all ramifications and must subscribe to the shared values and standard rules of journalism practice in the conventional sense. How to enforce professionalism and ethics in online journalism practice is another problem now because there is open access to the internet and there is no holds

barred on what could be done online as a citizen journalist. Recently in Nigeria, a number of bloggers and internet activities came together with the purpose of evolving an ethical code for blogging (*Punch* Newspaper, Thursday, 6 March, 2015). This could be good news for citizen journalism practice in Nigeria if dedicated efforts are made towards evolution and adoption of such practice code.

The pressure of 24/7 reporting on journalists across the globe is another major challenge to ethical reporting of conflicts. Most of the time, there is not enough opportunity for the journalist to think about the ethical consequences of the reports that he is filing into his news organisation who is eager to break the news of the event before the competitors. Similarly, under the pressure of the newsroom and the emotion of wanting to be first to break the news, editors do often ignore to pay appropriate attention to ethical implications of the breaking news and the consequences of such news on communities. As long as such pressures continue, ethical standards will continue to depreciate with dire consequences on humanity.

The seeming politicisation of media regulatory agencies across the world and especially in Nigeria has grave implications on professionalism and maintenance of ethical standards in journalism. In the recent times, amidst the fray of the electioneering campaigns for the coming elections, hate speeches had taken over the air waves from several broadcasting media, especially the officially backed ones. Unfortunately, the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) in Nigeria has refused to take any punitive action beyond the rhetoric of threats and warnings to the erring media organisations, most of which has refused to hearken to the warnings of the regulatory body. Several print media also published advertisements paid for by politicians that was denigrating the personalities of political opponents and

carrying death wishes of party candidates. The Nigerian Press Council (NPC) has refused to take action against such newspapers for whatever reason. These developments are not only threatening the survival of Nigerian democracy but are also capable of inciting the people into political violence. If this irresponsible neglect of professional ethics of producing the media contents continues, the media itself is at risk of self-denigration and losing credibility before the audiences.

The yet unclear clarification of issues constituting national interests and national security is still a serious threat to professionalism and ethical practices while covering armed conflicts and terrorism events. This is happening against the backdrops of the global nature of the fight against terrorism, religious extremism and ethnic frictions that has been pervasive since the end of the cold war. The ethics of coverage and reporting of these issues are still controversial in terms of whether to approach the reporting from official security perspective or from the perspectives of humanity and objectivity. Whenever the media report this issues unilaterally from the perspective of human sufferings and expose the atrocities of the security apparatus that are involved in the conflicts, they are accused of non-patriotism by government and the military for not protecting national interests. On the other hand, when they approach such conflict environment from embedded platforms and security covers provided by the military and report such conflicts from official security perspectives, objectivity and neutrality are sacrificed and the credibility of such reports produced become suspect. Many local and international conflicts have become protracted as a result of the media becoming compromised by security forces and conflict parties losing confidence in the media in objectively reporting conflicts involving them.

## **Self-censorship by the Media: Solution to Ethical Dilemmas in Conflict Reporting?**

Media study literature is replete with instances of the fact that sometimes reports in the media, especially live and graphic communication of gruesome incidents during violent conflicts have sparked reprisal effects leading to intensification and spreading of violence to other places. For instance, ethnic violence and killing of the Ibos in the Northern Nigeria had sparked reprisal violence and killing of the Hausas in the Eastern Nigeria based on media reports. Indeed, sometimes the presence of journalists and television crews on the scene of violent conflicts and violent protests often encourage more violence and dramatic display of heinous crimes by fighters and other parties during violent conflicts, with the belief that their activities would have more impact on the opponents when the media relay those gruesome acts to the public. Terrorists deliberately pass on the recordings of their gruesome activities to the media and also post them on the social media to have maximum effect on the media audience. Because of the realization of the effects that media coverage and reporting could have on the intensification of conflicts, government sometimes is tempted to embark on censorship of media contents, believing that it could reduce the level of conflicts. However, government suppression of the media contents often create greater appetite for information from other sources apart from the media, thus rendering more damage to the information flow process. This tends to justify the suggestion and advocacy that the media should restrain itself through self-censorship and see such activities as part of their social responsibility commitment to the community. While journalists and the media can moderate and temper images and presentation of gruesome events to prevent backlashes and reprisal violence, alternative sources such as propagandists and rumour networks cannot do this. Government censorship and suppression of the media, therefore,



cannot be encouraged in managing information in contemporary violent conflicts because of its political consequences on the freedom of the media.

Now a crucial question is pertinent: Where instances of conflict and violence are likely to inflame passion and provoke more violence and reprisal attacks, what should a responsible journalist do? The answer to this is very simple. The media is a stakeholder in the society; as a responsible institution, it is also accountable for the welfare and development of the society. The Sean McBride Report for UNESCO (1980) emphasised the importance of the media constantly demonstrating such sense of responsibility: “For the journalist, freedom and responsibility are indivisible. Freedom without responsibility invites distortion and other abuses. But in the absence of freedom, there can be no exercise of responsibility.” A responsible media should naturally embark on a measure of self-censorship when it is clear that security of the society could be endangered through media reports. Self-censorship by the media is better than government censorship as could be clearly seen from earlier argument. A well-trained media practitioner is in a better position to know what should be included and what should be left out in the accounts of a violent conflict event and should know the implications of such stories on the community. When given the chance, government and its security arms are likely to undertake censorship with impunity and with use of force, in the process fuelling rumour mongering. Therefore, the sense of social responsibility of the media begins with restrained use of languages and visuals, knowing that careless usage of such could lead to incitement into violence and devastation of the society. Many ethical dilemmas could be resolved by the media practicing self-restraint and it could give succour to the professional conscience of media practitioners.

Another way a journalist might resolve a practical ethical dilemma when faced with such on the field while covering violent conflict is to ask himself a number of questions, which could suggest the way to go in resolving some of the dilemmas. He could ask himself: What are the possible consequences of my reports on the stakeholders in the conflict environment, on the society and on the vulnerable others who may not be visible in the conflict environment? Will truth telling have an adverse consequence in the short and long runs? If the roles were reversed and I found my place in the position of the stakeholders or those who are directly affected by the conflict, what will I do? How can I reflect the position of everyone concerned in the conflict in my report? What professional guidelines should I consider in my action and what organisational policy of my media organisation should I take into consideration when taking a decision during my assignment? What are my personal ethical concerns and preferences? Will my action go against such preferences and my conscience? Can I justify my final decision to my colleagues; to the stakeholders in the conflict environment that I'm covering; and to myself and my conscience? If the conflict reporter is able to provide sincere answers to these questions, he is likely to resolve his dilemmas in covering and reporting conflicts.

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**Report of Baseline Audit on Safety and Security of Journalists in Nigeria**

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## **References**

### **List of acronyms and abbreviations**

*IPC –International Press Centre*

*NBC –National Broadcasting Commission*

*NPC –Nigerian Press Council*

*NGE –Nigerian Guild of Editors*

*NUJ –Nigeria Union of Journalists*

*KII –Key Informant Interview*

*FGD –Focus Group Discussion*

*NAWOJ –Nigeria Association of Women Journalists*

## 1.0 Executive summary

Baseline audit on state of safety security of journalists in Nigeria was conducted in January/February, 2015 as part of the implementation of project on *Safety of Journalists and Emerging Issues In Conflicts In Nigeria* implemented by ***International Press Centre (IPC)*** with the support of UNESO Regional Office in Nigeria.

The audit became necessary as a way of providing useful insights into the state of safety and security of various categories of practitioners in the media industry in Nigeria. The outcome of the audit is aimed at stimulating better understanding of the issues connected with the safety and welfare of media practitioners and other stakeholders in the profession.

The outcome of the baseline audit is aimed at enhancing appropriate capacity building on safety and security towards repositioning the media for greater responsibility, objectivity, transparency and accountability.

Baseline audit involves key informant interview (KII) of select groups within select stakeholders: (a) Media Managers/ Gatekeepers (i.e. Managers, Editors), (b) Journalists (i.e. Reporters, Columnists, Cameramen, Program Presenters), (c) Media Professional Bodies / Associations (i.e. NUJ/NAWOJ/RATTAWU etc), (d) Law Enforcement Agencies (military, police, SSS, NSA), (e) Media Support Organisations/Platforms, (f) Academic / Scholars (Media /Peace and Conflicts Experts).

The baseline audit also involved focus group discussions (FGDs) targeted at key individuals within media professional bodies and associations like Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Nigeria Guild of Editors (NGE), Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN), and Nigeria Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ).

The outcome of the baseline audit reveals huge gap in capacity in conflict-sensitive related training and capacity building for journalists. Reporters working in conflict zones lack requisite knowledge and capacity for carrying out their assignments effectively. In addition, reporters are limited in required knowledge and information for coping with conflict situations. Findings also reveal prevalence of mutual suspicion amongst security agents and journalists and the need to build better synergy for understanding, cooperation and partnership between media stakeholders and security agencies.

It was evident from the findings that journalists faced with threats and insecurity do not get adequate support from their media organisations and other stakeholders in the media profession as a result of lack of adequate information and engagement as well as non-availability of organisational policies and plans that address the issues of safety and insecurity and appropriate responses. Journalists, particularly those in conflict zones or covering sensitive issues, are not adequately remunerated or compensated. Journalists and media organisations are yet to pay appropriate attention to provision of insurance cover as a direct and deliberate component of welfare policy.

## **2.0 Background**

The media play critical role in getting the public informed, educated and enlightened in any society. Media practitioners wield enormous power and influence which affect varying aspects of human endeavour and in particular politics and the polity. The media set agenda in the society and provide platforms for engaging the democratic process through mainstreaming of issues and agenda that promote public interest. While some measures of responsibility and objectivity are required of the media, journalists and other media practitioners are often exposed to insecurity based on their power and influence.

Section 22 of Nigeria's 1999 Constitution recognises that agencies of the media shall at all times be free to discharge their fundamental objectives and uphold responsibility and accountability of the government to the people<sup>i</sup>, media practitioners suffer untold hardship in the process of carrying out their constitutional responsibilities. Freedom of the press is universal as enshrined in Article 19 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) Article 19 Paragraph 2 of International Convention on Civil and Political Rights<sup>ii</sup>. It is therefore crucial to prioritise security and safety of journalists so as to ensure that the media remain very active and free in the society.



It is in realisation of the existing gaps in safety and security of media practitioners that the project was initiated to provide appropriate intervention as may be necessary. The baseline audit complements other aspects of the project which focuses on the Nigerian media. The baseline audit and the resultant outcomes are captured in different sections of this report which dwell on analysis of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

### 3.0 Baseline Approach and Methodology

Combined qualitative and quantitative approach was deployed for the baseline audit. Qualitative method was carried out with the aid of KII and FGD deployed to generate primary data for the baseline audit. Secondary data were generated through quantitative method which involves review of relevant literature, survey and comparative analyses of safety and security of journalists. The approach enhanced critical assessments and evaluation of knowledge and experience of media stakeholders on existing safety and security measures as well as challenges and expectations on how to improve on safety and security measures with the view to meeting global practices and standards.

### 4.0 Analysis of Findings from Baseline Audit

Baseline activities on state of safety and security of journalists were carried out with two separate KII targeted at reporters and editors of media organisations in Nigeria. KII was also conducted with Media Support Organisations / Platforms as well as with Academic/Scholars/Experts on issues relating to peace and conflicts in the media. KIIs for editors and journalists were conducted through online means with practitioners drawn from the media identified below.

| KII with (7) Editors               |        |  | KII with (31) Reporters            |        |  |
|------------------------------------|--------|--|------------------------------------|--------|--|
| Media organisations of Respondents | Number |  | Media organisations of Respondents | Number |  |
| Print Media                        | 4      |  | Print Media                        | 10     |  |
| Broadcast Media                    | 2      |  | Broadcast Media                    | 12     |  |
|                                    |        |  | News Agency                        | 1      |  |
|                                    |        |  |                                    |        |  |
| <b>Gender of Respondents</b>       |        |  | <b>Gender of Respondents</b>       |        |  |

|        |   |        |    |
|--------|---|--------|----|
| Male   | 5 | Male   | 19 |
| Female | 2 | Female | 12 |

*Table 1: Details of KII Respondents (see appendix for names and media organisation of respondents)*

## **I. Summary of findings of Baseline Audit involving Editors**

### **(a) Knowledge about situation in conflict zones**

Editors noted that journalists are often victims of social tension or other forms of infractions and repressive activities either by government or groups in the society. Journalists are often caught in the cross fire and brutalised or assaulted. Since the upsurge in the activities of terrorists in Nigeria, journalists, particularly those working in the northern parts of the country and the federal capital territory have been subject to trauma. Some media houses had their newspapers seized by the military that prevented them from coming to the federal capital territory on the pretext of enforcing security measures. Journalists working in the northeast region where activities of Boko Haram have been prevalent have been forced to abandon their beats and relocate to more secured places.

### **(b) Existence of policy/plan on safety of journalists and other media professionals**

Working in conflict zones is a peculiar challenge for journalists. As shown in Table 1 below, not all media establishments have life insurance plan for editorial staff. Journalists are also rarely paid compensation when they suffer hardship owing to insecurity in the course of their duty and when compensations are paid, they only cover medical bills; depending on the degree of losses. However, the usual benefits due to dead staff apply. In place of life insurance or compensation, media establishments are more disposed to approve redeployment from location or beat when Journalists complain about threats. Editors agreed that it is not yet the practice in media organisations to consider

insurance plan or special provision for compensation for journalists working in conflicts zones in case of injury or any incidence. Editors or management of media establishments do not often receive complaints about threats from journalists and other media professionals working in conflict zones.

| <b>Issues</b>  | <b>Frequency of Responses</b> |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Knowledge about insurance policy                             | 5                             |
| Non-Existence of insurance policy                            | 2                             |
| Existence of compensation for editorial staff                | 1                             |
| Redeployment from location or beat in case of danger signals | 2                             |
| <b>Number Respondents</b>                                    | 7                             |

*Table 2: Editors' view on policy/plan on safety of Journalists & other media professionals*

### **(c) Dealing with threats and harassments**

The most common forms of threats/risks faced by journalists in conflict-zones include harassment by security agents, trailing by unknown people as well as threat messages (through SMS calls or e-mails). Although harassment of journalists by security agents has been a peculiar challenge in Nigeria since the days of the military rule, the trend has reduced considerably. However, security agents still indulge in the use of threats and harassment of journalists in the course of their legitimate duties. In case of threats and harassment and in the absence of reporting procedures, journalists are compelled to devise coping strategy which most often times may not address the situation. However, when reports are made known to them, the choice before media organisations may include (a) seeking protection for the journalists involved (b) relocation of the journalists concerned to a new office or location (c) withdrawal from beat.

However, respondents also indicated that media establishments occasionally but rarely receive complaints about threats to safety and insecurity from journalists on the field; some journalists rarely file complaints until something undesirable happens. Lack of definite or specific rules of engagement relating to threat management in most media organisations

create avenue for disconnect in effective response to insecurity. Although, editors get in touch with journalists on the field to ask about progress, but the issue of welfare or security are rarely discussed. Most media organisations do not have monitoring and reporting procedures or mechanisms in place to assist journalists who could be in danger or likely to be treading along the paths of danger.

#### **(d) Media and effective response to security challenges**

Editors advocated the need for media stakeholders to device early warning mechanisms that would readily place journalists on alert as at when due. The need for effective synergy between media stakeholders and security agents as part of the framework for early warning mechanisms is also emphasised. The need to assess conflicts before deployment of personnel should also be seen as part of early warning mechanisms. It is also advocated that strategy for effective response should incorporate appropriate training programme as well as dissemination of security information. Journalists must always strive to cope with challenges associated with the peculiarity of the environment of their work places. Journalists in conflict zones are admonished to imbibe the spirit of team work by proper disclosure of movements and details of assignments to their superiors and trusted professional colleagues in case of any eventuality. It was also suggested that journalists in conflict prone zones should be closely monitored from their head offices to track security and safety challenges.

#### **(e) Prioritising and improving security of journalists and other media professionals**

Editors advocate the need for adequate insurance cover in addition to improved remuneration. Other incentives they advocated include prizes and awards as well as offering company shares to journalists. Payment of adequate wages and special allowances to journalists should be complemented with requisite opportunities for training and capacity building on security matters. One of the existing gaps in the efforts at securing the safety of journalists is the almost non-existence of framework for gender mainstreaming in security and emergency response for journalists and media in Nigeria. Notwithstanding that most media organisations are privately-owned, government needs to pay more attention to issues of security in the country. Government rarely pay attention to harassment of media organizations and journalists in the country as majority of media are privately owned. Mechanisms for responding to the needs of journalists in distress do not exist in some media organisations. There is however the need to reassess and strengthen the mechanisms where they exist.

**(f) Security agencies and safety of journalists in conflict zones**

There is a prevalence of mutual suspicion that makes security agents perceive the media as threats. In a conflict situation, safety of journalists becomes the least of the priority of security agents. There is the need to strengthen synergy between security agencies and media organisations as well professional platforms like NUJ, BON and NBC with the view to prioritizing safety and security of journalists and other media professionals. Early warning strategy proposed for the media should strengthen framework for better security. Framework for collaboration between media professionals and security agencies that could enhance security of journalists in conflict zones include (a) periodic interface (roundtable) between media professionals and security agencies to get proper understanding and update on dynamics and challenges of prevailing safety and security situations.

**(g) Training / capacity building on security and safety for journalists and media professionals**

Suggested capacity building includes security tips on emergency response as well as coping strategies in difficult situations. Training on conflict sensitive journalism and reporting is also suggested.

**(g) Journalists and safety at work**

Findings indicate the need for journalists to uphold the ethics of the profession, at all times, as it relates to fairness and objectivity. Journalists should refrain from the urge to deploy the profession as instrument or weapon of warfare to blackmail or attack a perceived enemy. Journalists need to be security conscious and recognise that trust is very vital to safety of journalists at work. Journalists must recognise the need to conceal their identities in certain places and be restrained in their socialisation. Journalists should be more committed to personal welfare by demanding insurance cover from their media organisations.

**II. Summary of findings of Baseline Audit involving Reporters**

**(a) Knowledge about situation in conflict zones**

Conflicts that often put journalists on the frontline of insecurity range from religious, ethnic and political/electoral. Some of these conflicts have serious violent undertones. There is also the prevalence of activities of militant groups

and insurgents. These conflicts have the capacity to restrain journalists from reporting accurately as a result of fear of being hurt. Ethno-religious differences also manifest in political or electoral disputes which often lead to violence. Most of the conflicts that force reporters to live in perpetual fears include religious disturbances, activities of insurgents with attendant bomb incidents/scares as well as violent political crises.

**(b)Existence of policy/plan on safety of journalists and other media professionals**

Working in conflict zones posits a peculiar challenge for journalists. As shown in Table 3 below, less than 10% of respondents could confirm the existence safety policy/plan/measure in their media establishments. Over 80% of respondents are presently not under any insurance cover in their organisations while only 6% of the respondents have taken personal step to get insurance cover. The bottom-line is that in the event of lack of insurance plan, journalists are rarely covered by insurance or adequately compensated when they suffer hardship owing to insecurity in the course of their duty. Although compensations are paid to cover medical bills, it amounts to little depending on the degree of losses.

| <b>Issues</b>                                      | <b>Frequency Responses</b> | <b>of</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--|----------------------------|-----------|----------|
| Knowledge about insurance policy                   | 3                          |           | 9.5%     |
| Existence of insurance policy                      | 25                         |           | 81.0%    |
| Organisation commitment to payment of compensation | 20                         |           | 65 %     |
| Personal commitment to insurance plan              | 2                          |           | 6 %      |
| <b>Number Respondents</b>                          | 31                         |           |          |

*Table 3: Reporters' view on policy/plan on safety for Journalists & other media professionals*

**(c) Dealing with threats and harassments**

Most of the respondents have not had course to report threats or risks to their establishments. However, those who had made such report did so out of the exigencies of the situation. Most journalists do not see the need to report threats but would rather prefer to deploy coping strategies as deemed appropriate. The common types of threats and risks and their frequency of occurrence are shown in Table 4 below

| Type of Threats / Risks          | Rate of Occurrences |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Harassment by security agents    | High                |
| Threat messages (calls or mails) | Average             |
| Physical harm/death              | Average             |
| Trailing by unknown persons      | Low                 |

Table 4: Common Threats/Risks to Journalists in conflict zones

Depending on circumstances involved, response to reports of threats / risks by management of media organisations are described by respondents as *\*positive \*adequate \*not encouraging \*timely and effective*. However, there is a consensus amongst respondents that management of media organisations often lack requisite capacity to provide timely and effective response as may be deemed necessary. Part of the coping strategy deployed by reporters when faced with the challenge of insecurity include playing safe to avoid hazard of the occupation and this may entail abandoning an investigation or dropping a report or story which most often times may not address the real situation. Depending on individuals involved, journalists find it compelling to make report of threats or risks to their management immediately, regularly or occasionally.

**(d) Impact of Conflicts/Violence/Insecurity on Journalism and Gender Mainstreaming**

Impacts of conflicts/violence/insecurity on the profession of journalism are multi-dimensional and laced with serious consequences for freedom of information and fundamental objectives of upholding the responsibility of ensuring that government is accountable to the people as a guarantee for genuine democratic society. Journalists are forced to

abandon commitment to investigative reporting in the face of threats and risks. A notable challenge in the face of terrorist activities is that media organisations and journalists in Nigeria have become targets of harmful attacks and extermination. Female journalists also suffer untold hardships during crisis and conflict because of their gender. Although both male and female journalist are endangered, female journalists are more vulnerable. Female journalists are unduly exposed to molestation and abuse as a result of their gender under the guise of chaos and extreme anarchy. As a result of uncertainty and possible danger, some media organisations are compelled to reassign or relocate female journalists from place of assignment located within conflict zones. Deriving from the socio-cultural peculiarity of conflict environment, long term impact of violence is that female journalists are hindered from freely expressing themselves in their chosen career while younger generations of female journalists could easily be discouraged and disoriented.

#### **(e) Media and effective response to security challenges**

Respondents advocated better monitoring efforts and by security agents as well as regular forum that would serve as interface between security agencies and leadership and platforms of the media. Capacity building on safety and security should also be considered to avail reporters of necessary safety tips on safety. The need for timely response to complaints about security threats by reporters/correspondents is emphasised. The need for the organisation to constantly keep in touch with the security agencies to encourage the needed partnership for improved safety. The need for openness and teamwork is also emphasised with the view of reducing or mitigating potentials of risks and threats.

#### **(f) Prioritising and improving security of journalists and other media professionals**

Provision of insurance cover and training in safety and security measures are considered a necessary incentive that would encourage reporters in conflict zones. Professional platforms like NUJ should provide enough protection for Journalists and ensure that ever attack on journalists are investigated with culprits brought to book. Provision of adequate security information and tips for journalists whenever the need arises this will assist journalists to smoothly carry out their duties especially during crisis. The need for constant dialogue between security agencies and owners of media organizations is also suggested. Media professionals should be adequately sensitized on appropriate responses to security challenges and emergencies. Security agencies should establish department/unit to take care of the



protection/security of journalists in conflict areas. Media organisations and reporters should strive to be fair and balanced as well as avoid partisanship and sentiments in the discharge of their responsibilities.

#### **(g) Security agencies and safety of journalists in conflict zones**

Respondents noted that security agencies are often overwhelmed by crisis situation and therefore unable to see journalists as partners in progress. Security agencies need to be trained and sensitised about the roles of journalists in conflict situations. They try by all means to prevent journalist from accessing information, therefore care the less about their safety most of the time. There is the need to strengthen synergy between security agencies and media organisations as well professional platforms like NUJ, BON and NBC with the view to prioritizing safety and security of journalists and other media professionals. Early warning strategy proposed for the media should strengthen framework for better security. Framework for collaboration between media professionals and security agencies that could enhance security of journalists in conflict zones include (a) periodic interface (roundtable) between media professionals and security agencies to get proper understanding and update on dynamics and challenges of prevailing safety and security situations.

#### **(h) Training / capacity building on security and safety for journalists and media professionals**

Most of the respondents are aware of the need to be conflict sensitive in their place of primary assignment, but they will however need to undergo trainings and refresher courses that would build their capacities towards appropriate responses considering the increasing spate of terrorism across the country. Suggested capacity building includes security tips on emergency response as well as coping strategies in difficult situations.

#### **(i) Journalists and safety at work**

Respondents stress the need for journalists to take more interest in capacity building programs that would to expose them to emerging issues and dynamics as it relates to media and security in global terrain under the threats of increasing terrorism. The need for journalists to uphold ethics of the profession, at all times, as it relates to fairness and objectivity becomes very crucial. Journalists should refrain from the urge of deploying the profession as instrument or weapon of warfare to blackmail or attack a perceived enemy. Journalists need to be security conscious and recognise that trust is very vital to safety of journalists at work. Journalists must recognise the need to conceal their identities in certain places

and be restraint in their socialisation. Journalists should be more committed to personal welfare by demanding insurance cover from their media organisations.

### **III Summary of findings of Baseline Audit involving Academics, Scholars and Experts**

#### **(a) Threat Alerts:**

Threat alerts are seldom made available to stakeholders in the media profession by journalists apart from report to primary organisation of the journalists involved. Media stakeholders in the academic as well as experts in media, peace and conflicts are usually not alerted and therefore are not adequately informed and sensitised

#### **(b) Remuneration:**

Remuneration and compensations for journalists are grossly inadequate for journalists in conflicts zones as well those on sensitive beats that could expose them to dangers. There is the need for media organisation to provide further incentives to journalists in terms of sponsorship / scholarship for training on security and conflict related issues. Media stakeholders in the academic as well as experts in media, peace and conflicts advocate adequate provision of equipment including communication gadgets as well as good insurance policies for journalists and media professionals who are exposed to violent conflicts. It is also recommended that journalists should be periodically updated on the need for risk assessment and responses.

#### **(c) Framework for addressing security of female journalists:**

There is yet no specific framework for mainstreaming or addressing security of female journalists. Although, media organisations deploy one form of strategy or the other depending on the situation, there is the need for standard frameworks that would guide approach and commitment to security of female journalists.

#### **(d) Role of security agencies:**

There is need for synergy between security agents and media organisations whereby journalists would regularly be provided advisory services on potential dangers. Measures need to be put in place to protect journalists working in conflicts zones and in ensuring that journalists are not impeded from carrying out their assignments.

**(e) Role of government:**

Government should ensure that specific administrative measures are deployed within the military and security agencies that would prioritise security and protection of journalists in conflict zones. Journalists in conflict zones should be provided with adequate knowledge on potential dangers. The proposed administrative measures should ensure that combatants respect the rights of journalists in conflict zones.

**(f) Role of Academics, Scholars and Experts:**

Academics and experts should take up the responsibility and be supported to design specific training curricular and programs on approaches and techniques for conflict coverage and reporting. Academics and experts are also expected to conduct research on framework and strategies for effective synergy on protection and security of journalists as well media establishments.

**(g) How media could better prepare and respond to safety of journalists:**

Adequate periodic trainings are proposed to enhance professional capacities of journalists with provision of appropriate equipment as well as remunerations and compensations.

**(h) Research finding or studies on how journalists could cope with new trend of insecurity:**

Research findings and studies on media and conflicts would be of tremendous help to media professionals and media organisations. Journalists should take ample and adequate steps to access publications and research materials available online which address issues of media and insecurity as well the new dimension of terrorism.

**(i) Needed capacity building programme:**

In addition to other professional trainings and capacity building, private security organizations should be engaged to provide journalists with security tips on self protection and coping strategies in the conflict zones.

**(j) Framework for collaboration:**

Media organisations and journalists working in conflict zones should be sensitive to any form of collaboration with security agencies that is capable of compromising objectivity and unbiased reporting in conflict zones.

**(k) Suggestions for Journalists**

Journalists need to adequately study the context of the peculiar conflicts within the environment or purview of their primary assignment before settling down to business. Journalists should get as much information as possible about parties to conflict as well as the real and tangible issues involved in the conflicts. Journalists need evolve contingency plans as well as precautionary measures and make use of knowledge and information at their disposal.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

As shown by this study, it is safe to conclude that journalists face enormous challenges in fulfilling their professional obligations to society. Some of these challenges arise from the disposition of society and governments while others are institutional. Safety nets that are supposed to be put in place within media institutions are either weak or non-existent. Insurance covers for journalists and other media workers are ignored amidst poor remuneration.

There is mutual suspicion between journalists and security agencies hence the synergy that should have been explored is lost. There is the dearth of institutionalised framework for reporting and resolving threats to journalists and other media workers. In all, the atmosphere for safety of journalists is very unfriendly.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

- It is recommended that a framework for reporting threats and resolving same should be instituted by media organizations in conjunction with security agencies.

- The need for media organisations to take the welfare of journalists more seriously has become imperative given the increasingly dangerous conditions under which they operate. Indeed, insurance cover should be a given in any media organization.
- Journalists should also be conscious of the dangers they face and take precautionary safety measures including reporting urgently to their editors and managers as well as to security agencies as the situation may warrant.
- Editors and managers should actively place the safety of their staff on a higher scale through preventive actions and payment of compensations to victims of violence.
- Training of journalists on conflict-sensitivity and trauma management should be given priority.
- Journalists should uphold their ethical and professional standards and be cautious of not reporting in a way that will put their lives and society in danger.

## ***References***

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<sup>i</sup> Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999)

<sup>ii</sup> A National Baseline Survey Report (2003) for the Kenya Media Programme - <https://hivos.org/activity/kenya-media-programme>

## **Appendix**

### **Respondents to KII for Editors/Reporters and Media Organisations**

1. Johnson Ayantunji -*Daily Independent*
2. Keye Ewebiyi -*International Press Centre*
3. Aofolaju Oluyemisi Omowunmi – *Nigerian Tribune*
4. John Osadolor –*Businessday Newspaper*

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5. Layinka Adagun –*Radio Traffic Radio*
  6. Hamza Idris –*Daily Trust Newspaper*
  7. Abdul Alugbere – *Vision 92 FM, Abuja*
  8. Rowland Longs -*Plateau Radio Television Corporation*
  9. Tony Akowe -*The Nation Newspaper*
  10. Baba Nagedu Martins – *Newswatch Times Newspaper*
  11. Leah Thomas -*Newline Newspaper Minna Niger State*
  12. Garzali Yakub -*Freedom Radio Kano*
  13. Talatu Landy -*Nigeria Television Authority (NTA)*
  14. Comfort Mukollo -*Gombe Media Corporation*
  15. Shu'aibu Umar -*Gombe Media Corporation*
  16. Okeke John Chinaka –*Guardian Newspaper*
  17. Charles Akpeji –*Guardian Newspaper*
  18. Ismail Omipidan -*The Sun Newspapers*
  19. Bello Mutjaba Ramalan -*Federal Radio Corporation (FRCN), Kaduna*
  20. Rabi Mohammad -*Rima Radio*
  21. Paulin Onyibe -*National Point Newspaper*
  22. Juliana Katung -*Next Voice Newspaper*
  23. Jedidah Solomon -*Nigeria Sunrise Newspaper*
  24. Muhammad Sabiu -*Nigerian Tribune*
  25. Gilbert Olie -*Delta Broadcasting Service (DBS) Asaba, Delta state*
  26. Hope Ikwe -*Bussiness Day Media Limited*
  27. Iliya Habila -*News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), Gombe State Office*
  28. Ede Ogaba Ede -*The NewsMirror Newspaper*
  29. Bulama Yerima -*BRTV Maiduguri*
  30. Onovughakpo Ufuoma -*RADIO SAPIENTIA*
  31. Yusuf Alhaji Isah -*Yobe State Television (YTV)*
  32. Timothy M. Choji -*Voice of Nigeria*
  33. Victoria Roland Andekin – *Taraba Publishing Company*
  34. Bulama Yerima -

**Respondents to KII for Academics / Scholars / Experts in Media & Peace and Conflicts**

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35. Dr. Olusola Ishola; *Senior Research Fellow, Peace and Conflict Studies Program, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan*
  36. Chido Onumah; *Coordinator, African Centre for Media & Information Literacy*
  37. Dr. Oloruntola Sunday; *Senior Lecturer, Mass Communication Department, University of Lagos.*

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## APPENDIX 9

### REPORT OF DESKTOP RESEARCH/STUDY OF FRAMEWORKS ON SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS

#### International frameworks on the safety of journalists

*Prepared by Edetaen Ojo, Executive Director, MRA*

#### **1. UN General Assembly Resolutions on the Safety of Journalists**

In November 2014, the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution A/C.3/69/L.50/Rev.1 on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity – the latest in a series of international instruments, mechanisms and efforts focusing attention on the issue of the safety of journalists around the world.

The resolution was preceded by an earlier instrument, Resolution 68/163, adopted by the same General Assembly on December 18, 2013 on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity, in which it proclaimed November 2 of every year as the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists.

In the 2014 Resolution, the UN General Assembly urged UN Member States “to do their utmost to prevent violence, threats and attacks against journalists and media workers, to ensure accountability through the conduct of impartial, speedy, thorough, independent and effective investigations into all alleged violence, threats and attacks against journalists and media workers falling within their jurisdiction, to bring perpetrators, including those who command, conspire to commit, aid and abet or cover up such crimes to justice, and to ensure that victims and their families have access to appropriate remedies.”

The General Assembly also asked UN Member States “to create and maintain, in law and in practice, a safe and enabling environment for journalists to perform their work independently and without undue interference.”

The measures prescribed by the General Assembly include:

- Legislative measures;
- Awareness-raising in the judiciary and among law enforcement officers and



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Military personnel, as well as among journalists and in civil society, regarding international human rights and humanitarian law obligations and commitments relating to the safety of journalists;

- The monitoring and reporting of attacks against journalists;
- Publicly and systematically condemning violence and attacks; and
- Dedicating the resources necessary to investigate and prosecute such attacks and to develop and implement strategies for combating impunity for attacks and violence against journalists, including by using, where appropriate, good practices such as those identified in Human Rights Council resolution 27/5 of 25 September 2014;

The General Assembly also stressed the need to ensure better cooperation and coordination at the International level, through technical assistance and capacity-building, with regard to ensuring the safety of journalists, with regional organizations.

It called upon States to cooperate with relevant United Nations entities, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as well as international and regional human rights mechanisms, to share information on a voluntary basis on the status of investigations into attacks and violence against journalists.

The General Assembly thereafter invited relevant agencies, organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations system to actively exchange information, through already identified focal points, about the implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, in cooperation with Member States and under the overall coordination of UNESCO.

It requested the Secretary-General of the UN to report to the General Assembly at its 70th session, and to the UN Human Rights Council at its 30th session on the implementation of the present resolution.

### **United Nations Human Rights Council Resolutions**

The United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva has similarly adopted resolutions on the safety of journalists, particularly Resolution A/HRC/21/L.6, adopted in September 2012; and Resolution A/HRC/27/L.7, adopted in September 2014.

In the 2012 Resolution, the Human Rights Council reaffirmed the rights contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in particular the right of everyone to hold opinions without interference, and the right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art or through any other media of their choice.

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It expressed concern that violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression continue to occur, including increased attacks and killings of journalists and media workers. It therefore stressed the need to ensure greater protection for all media professionals and for journalistic source.

The Council condemned “in the strongest term” all attacks and violence against journalists, such as torture, extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and arbitrary detention, as well as intimidation and harassment.

It called on all parties to armed conflicts to respect their obligations under international human rights law and international humanitarian law, including their obligations under the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and, where applicable, the Additional Protocols of 8 June 1977, which extend protection to journalists in situations of armed conflict. It urged them to allow, within the framework of applicable rules and procedures, media access and coverage, as appropriate, in situations of international and non-international armed conflict.

The Council also expressed concern that attacks against journalists often occur with impunity, and called upon States to ensure accountability through the conduct of impartial, speedy and effective investigations into such acts falling within their jurisdiction, and to bring to justice those responsible and to ensure that victims have access to appropriate remedies.

It also called upon States to promote a safe and enabling environment for journalists to perform their work independently and without undue interference, including by means of:

- Legislative measures;
- Awareness-raising in the judiciary, law enforcement officers and military personnel, as well as journalists and civil society, regarding international human rights and humanitarian law obligations and commitments relating to the safety of journalists;
- The monitoring and reporting of attacks against journalists;
- Publicly condemning attacks; and
- Dedicating necessary resources to investigate and prosecute such attacks.

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In its 2014 Resolution, the Human Rights Council repeated much of the text in the 2012 Resolution.

A/HRC/21/L.6

It noted the good practices of different countries aimed at the protection of journalists, as well as those designed for the protection of human rights defenders that can, where applicable, be relevant to the protection of journalists.

The Council called upon States to develop and implement strategies for combating impunity for attacks and violence against journalists, by using, where appropriate, good practices such as those identified and/or compiled in the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on good practice on the safety of journalists, including:

- (a) The creation of special investigative units or independent commissions;
- (b) The appointment of a specialized prosecutor;
- (c) The adoption of specific protocols and methods of investigation and prosecution;
- (d) The training of prosecutors and judiciary regarding the safety of journalists;
- (e) The establishment of information-gathering mechanisms, such as databases, to permit the gathering of verified information about threats and attacks against journalists;
- (f) The establishment of an early warning and rapid response mechanism to give journalists, when threatened, immediate access to the authorities and protective measures;

The Council emphasized the important role that media organizations can play in providing adequate safety, risk awareness, digital security and self-protection training and guidance to employees, along with protective equipment, where necessary.

It stressed the need to ensure better cooperation and coordination at the international level, through technical assistance and capacity-building, with regard to ensuring the safety of journalists, with regional organizations.

The Council invited United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, other international and regional organizations, Member States and all relevant stakeholders, when applicable and in the scope of their mandates, to cooperate further in the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.

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It also called upon States to cooperate with relevant United Nations entities, in particular UNESCO as well as international and regional human rights mechanisms, and to share information on a voluntary basis on the status of investigations into attacks and violence against journalists.

The Council acknowledged the importance of addressing the issue of the safety of journalists through the process of the universal periodic review.

It urged national, sub-regional, regional and international human rights mechanisms and bodies, including the relevant special procedures of the Human Rights Council, treaty bodies and national human rights institutions, in the framework of their mandates, to continue to address the relevant aspects of the safety of journalists in their work.

## **2. UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity**

The UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity was endorsed by the UN Chief Executives Board on April 12, 2012.

The Plan was prepared during the First UN Inter-Agency Meeting on the issue, which was convened by the Director General of UNESCO at the request of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC).

The Plan of Action is the result of a process that began two years earlier upon request of the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC.

The Plan of Action seeks to create a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers, both in conflict and non-conflict situations, with a view to strengthening peace, democracy and development worldwide.

Its measures include, among others, the establishment of a coordinated inter-agency mechanism to handle issues related to the safety of journalists as well as to assist countries to develop legislation and mechanisms favourable to freedom of expression and information, and support their efforts to implement existing international rules and principles.

To strengthen prevention, the Plan of Actions recommends working in cooperation with governments, media houses, professional associations and NGOS to conduct awareness raising campaigns on a wide range of issues such as existing international instruments and conventions, the growing dangers posed by emerging threats to media professionals, including non-state actors, as well as various existing practical guides on the safety of journalists.

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The plan is a set of objectives, principles and actions developed by UNESCO in consultation with other UN bodies, inter-governmental organizations, NGOs, professional associations and UNESCO's member states and it is intended to directly address the problem of journalists' safety and the problem of impunity.

The plan is designed to uphold the fundamental right of freedom of expression, which ensures that citizens are well informed and able to actively participate in society and it aims to do this by creating a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers, including social media producers, in two ways: by building partnerships among all stakeholders to introduce and harmonize mechanisms designed to reduce the danger -- both in conflict and non-conflict situations -- and by strengthening the legal mechanisms available nationally, regionally and globally, that support the right to freedom of expression and information, and supporting governments with their implementation.

The UN Plan includes a set of actions that are further developed in its implementation strategy, updated on a regular basis. It includes, among others, the following actions:

- Raising awareness among citizens about the consequences when journalists have their right to free expression curtailed.
- Helping governments develop and implement laws to safeguard journalists and deal with the problem of impunity.
- Providing training courses for journalists.
- Establishing real-time emergency response mechanisms.
- Strengthening the safety of journalists in conflict zones.
- Sensitizing member states, journalists, media owners, policy makers, news organizations, editors and journalists on the growing dangers and emerging threats to media professionals and non-state actors.
- Promoting good working conditions for journalists, including freelance journalists.

### **3. UNESCO's Building Digital Safety for Journalism**

UNESCO's new publication, Building Digital Safety for Journalism, seeks to foster global understanding of emerging safety threats linked to digital developments.

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The publication, sponsored with support from the Kingdom of Denmark, was first presented at a meeting of UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) held in Paris on March 27, 2015. It will subsequently be launched and presented at a number of other international events including the World Press Freedom Day Celebration Event in Riga, Latvia, on May 3, 2015 and the 10th Internet Governance Forum taking place in Brazil, on November 10 to 13, 2015.

UNESCO commissioned the project as part of its on-going efforts to promote freedom of expression online and offline and implement the United Nations Inter-Agency Plan on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. The publication identifies at least 12 digital threats among worrying trends that have emerged in the digital environment, including illegal or arbitrary digital surveillance, location tracking, and software and hardware exploits without the knowledge of the target.

Other examples identified in the publication are: phishing, fake domain attacks, Man-in-the-Middle (MitM) attacks, and Denial of Service (DoS).

According to UNESCO, although not all the people who contribute to journalism are fulltime journalists, the publication and the research which led to it, take an inclusive approach that is relevant to any actor who is in danger of being targeted for doing journalism.

Accordingly, many of the points made in the publication are also of direct relevance to human rights defenders in general, to people who are sources for journalists, and to other actors who simply make use of digital communications for personal use.

In examining cases worldwide, the publication is aimed at serving as a resource for a range of actors.

It surveys the evolving threats, and assesses preventive, protective and pre-emptive measures while also showing that digital security for journalism encompasses, but also goes beyond, the technical dimension.

The publication gives an overview of actors and initiatives working to address digital safety, as well as identifying gaps in knowledge that call for awareness-raising.

It contains detailed sets of recommendations for governments, journalism contributors and sources, news organizations, trainers, corporations and international organisations.

The insights contained in the publication are also expected to be valuable for policymakers, civil society organisations, media companies, and a range of journalistic actors, offering them enhanced understanding about new challenges to journalism safety.

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#### **4. UN Human Rights Council Resolution 27/L7**

On September 25, 2014, the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva unanimously adopted Resolution 27/L7, a new resolution on the safety of journalists, wherein it reiterated and strengthened Resolution A/HRC/RES/21/12, which it had earlier adopted in 2012 on the same subject.

Among other key aspects, the resolution elaborates on the need and, notably the means, to have full investigations and prosecutions in the hundreds of cases of murdered journalists. In the resolution, the Human Rights Council calls on member states to consider the creation of special investigative units or independent commissions, appoint special prosecutors, and adopt specific protocols for investigation, as well as establish an early warning and rapid response mechanism to give journalists access to protective measures.

#### **5. Council of Europe Online Platform to Promote the Safety of Journalists**

The Council of Europe launched in Paris, France, on December 4, 2014, an Internet-based Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists

The platform is intended to facilitate the compilation, processing and dissemination of information on serious concerns about media freedom and safety of journalists in the Council of Europe as guaranteed by Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Information is submitted and posted in English or French, unless urgency requires an alert to be submitted in another language.

The platform is a public space where trusted Partner Organisations are able to post information subject to their own verification processes and standards.

It indicates that each contributing Partner Organisation is responsible for the content which it posts and Council of Europe does not edit posts, although it has a precisely worded disclaimer.

The Council of Europe may also post information on action taken by the Council of Europe's organs or institutions in response to serious concerns about media freedom and safety of journalists.

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The information collected on the platform is based on the common understanding that serious concerns about media freedom and safety of journalists will be recorded and publicised and as a general rule, the factual information posted by Partner Organisations should ordinarily fall within one of the following thematic areas:

- Threats to the physical integrity and security of journalists and other media actors, bloggers, writers, human rights defenders and other persons communicating in the public interest
- Impunity in the abovementioned cases;
- Threats to the confidentiality of journalists' sources or threats to their physical integrity and security because of their collaboration with journalists, media or human rights defenders or organisations;
- Threats to journalists' privacy;
- Chilling effects on media freedom, in particular related to:
  - a) judicial intimidation of journalists (by opportunistic or abusive use of defamation, anti-terrorism laws, national security, hooliganism or anti-extremism laws);
  - b) political intimidation including hate speech and incitement to violence against journalists.

The project is supported by organizations such as the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Brussels; the Association of European Journalists (AEJ), Brussels; Reporters Without Borders (RWB), Paris; Article 19, London; the International News Safety Institute, (INSI), London; and the Open Society Institute (OSI-Media), London.

It is planned that an evaluation on the effectiveness of the Platform will be made after an initial trial period of one year.

## **6. OSCE Safety of Journalists Guidebook**

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (**OSCE**) is the world's largest security-oriented inter-governmental organization whose mandate includes issues such as arms control, as well as the promotion of human rights, freedom of the press and fair elections. The OSCE is also concerned with early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict rehabilitation. Its 57 participating states are located in Europe, Asia and North America and cover most of the land area of the Northern Hemisphere.



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The OSCE Safety of Journalists Guidebook was issued in November 2011 and is intended to be of practical use to OSCE participating States.

It describes the nature of the actual threats to journalists' safety, sets out the accepted norms and standards of the OSCE that are applicable, and describes the best practices which States are urged to adopt. It also outlines the issues to be considered by participating States when evaluating what they can do to improve the climate for journalists in their countries. In addition, it provides a practical guide on the steps they can take to ensure a media-friendly environment.

The Guidebook asserts that responsibility for upholding all OSCE commitments lies with the governments of the participating States and that national governments are to take the necessary steps to protect the physical safety and security of journalists who face threats of violence.

This obligation, according to the Guidebook, calls for coordinated and consistent State policies and practices, including ensuring that national laws, administrative and judicial systems protect and promote freedom of expression and safeguard the lives and professional rights of journalists.

Elected politicians and all who hold high office are to demonstrate their unequivocal commitment to respecting press freedom, and the safety of journalists, while politicians and officials should not abuse their status by speaking in a derogatory or insulting way about journalists or the media.

According to the Guidebook, such language, when used by leading public figures, can encourage extremists to view journalists as targets to be silenced or attacked. Senior political leaders are therefore enjoined not to use intemperate or inappropriate language.

The Guidebook contains a framework for journalists' safety in law and administration with 16 points covering matters of law, regulation and practice which, taken together, represent a framework for protecting the safety and legitimate professional rights of journalists in OSCE participating States.

## **7. ACHPR Resolution 185 on the Safety of Journalists and Media Practitioners in Africa**

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In Resolution 185, on the Safety of Journalists and Media Practitioners in Africa, adopted on May 12, 2011, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights called on States Parties to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights to take all necessary measures to uphold their obligations under the Charter and other international and regional instruments, providing for the right to freedom of expression and access to information. In particular, the Commission called on:

- State parties to the African Charter to implement the principles enshrined in the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa;
- State parties to the African Charter and other concerned parties to fulfil their obligation on preventing and investigating all crimes allegedly committed against journalists and media practitioners and also to bring the perpetrators to justice;
- All parties involved in situations of armed conflicts to respect the independence and freedom of journalists and media practitioners to exercise their profession and guarantee their safety and security in accordance with international humanitarian law;
- States Parties to African Charter, to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa of the African Commission, in the execution of its mandate.

#### **8. France's TV5 Monde System**

France's TV5 Monde has a system in place for rapid response to danger in which broadcaster's protection systems liaise closely with state authorities. However, care is taken to ensure that the liaison is not at the expense of the independence of journalists.

Under the system, tracking technology enables live monitoring of the safety of international correspondents in the field, who also need to report to editors about their whereabouts and circumstances at least every 12 hours.

However, this system is thought to have a risk of the possibility of information about local movement of journalists being sometimes compromised by betrayals from associated staff, which could expose journalists to kidnapping and consequential ransom demands.

#### **9. Protection Mechanism for Journalists in Colombia**

In Colombia, a system has been in place for 15 years, under three different governments, to protect journalists, and this is believed to have helped to drastically reduce the numbers of journalists killed in the country.

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Known as the Protection Mechanism for Journalists in Colombia, the resource was developed by the Colombian Foundation for Press Freedom (FLIP) with the support of the Program on Independent Journalism of the Open Society Foundations (OSF/PIJ). It is a centrally-driven initiative and integration of protection with legal actions against those who attack journalists.

The protection mechanism has served both as a platform to discuss threats against the press as well as one to offer some protection to those outlets and journalists facing the biggest risks.

Under the mechanism, civil society and the media sit at the table with the government to discuss issues with the possibility of these stakeholders to bring forward cases to the attention of the government. In this framework, the government is accountable and responsible officials are aware of their obligation to respond, not only at the table but also before the public at large.

The manner in which the protection mechanism is established and has evolved means that it is not a “one-man-show” and its existence is not dependent on the good will of any particular administration in office. The protection mechanism is established within a public policy framework with a legal basis. In addition, the mechanism has an assigned budget for its operations.

A number of public officials and institutions play specific roles in the mechanism and means that there are some counterweights in place. These officials and institutions include the Constitutional Court, which has defined criteria for assessing and addressing risks; the Ombudsman; the General Attorney and the General Comptroller. Among other actors, these officials and institutions are part of the mechanism and have a say in how it works.

However, the degree of effectiveness of the mechanism is thought not to be dependent on the structure of the policy but on the willingness of the public officials to engage in the decision-making and monitoring activities.

Below is a graphic representation of the structure of the mechanism and how it works:

A journalist receives a threat or is attacked

1

Foundation for Press Freedom (FLIP)

FLIP documents the case and submits it to the UNP.

NATIONAL PROTECTION UNIT (UNP)

2

UNP has 72 hours to assess the case and determine if it merits an emergency response.

Emergency procedure

the UNP has the discretionary power to allocate protection without a risk assessment. The case will follow the ordinary path, but the journalist will have protection in the meantime.

Technical Group for Information Collection and Analysis (CTRAI)

3

Preliminary Assessment Group (GVP)

4

CERREM

executive branch

civil society



5

control agencies

judicial branch



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## 10. International Federation of Journalists International Safety Fund

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) “International Safety Fund” was established in January 1992 and is internationally recognized as an important and crucial source of support for journalists under threat.

The Fund is the only international assistance fund for journalists established by journalists and is an integral part of the IFJ Safety Programmes, which include casework, protests, campaigns, provision of information and production of various publications.

The Safety Fund provides immediate financial relief to particular journalists.

The IFJ, through the Safety Fund, helps to pay hospital bills of injured journalists, supports exiled journalists and contributes to legal costs in court actions to defend journalists in countries where poverty and social conflict often make it impossible for journalists to have proper legal representation.

The IFJ International Safety Fund covers the following areas of assistance:

- The IFJ Safety Fund is designed primarily to provide assistance for journalists and media staff who are injured in the line of duty, often in the so-called “hot-spots” of the world and in cases where the media employing the journalist/media staffer are unable to cover such costs. This assistance can be in the form of travel, medical or subsistence costs.
- The Safety Fund can also be used on a case by-case basis to assist in legal fees for journalists/media staff that again cannot find sufficient support from their employer, although this is applied in a very limited fashion.
- The Safety Fund can also provide immediate assistance for the families of journalists and media staff whose ‘bread-winner’ has been killed and who have no means to sustain themselves.

Whenever the IFJ gives assistance there is a monitoring and reporting process to ensure that the money goes to where it is intended.

Over the years the IFJ Safety Fund has been used to produce publications as part of the IFJ Safety Programmes. These have included the IFJ Safety Fund brochures produced in English, French Japanese and Spanish and the IFJ Safety Manual, Live News (see Press Freedom and Safety at [www.ifj.org](http://www.ifj.org)) for journalists travelling to conflict areas.

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Live News has been produced in Albanian, Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese, English, French, Italian, Japanese, Macedonian, Romanian, Russian, Serbian and Spanish.

The publications provide basic guidelines on the dangers which may occur, and what measures journalists can take to minimise risks. They are distributed to journalists free of charge.

The Safety Fund is not just a practical source of aid and comfort; it is also a symbol of international goodwill that is aimed at encouraging journalists to carry on even in times of struggle and distress.

The type of relief provided by the IFJ Safety Fund, the speed with which it can be used, and the flexibility built into the system means that it is a unique source of solidarity for journalists.

The IFJ tries to maintain regular contact with other organisations working in the field of journalists' safety and freedom of expression in order to avoid duplicating their work. Information is exchanged with such organizations, and, where necessary, an individual may receive coordinated assistance from more than one source.