

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Multi-Donor Programme
on Freedom of Expression
and Safety of Journalists

Annual Report 2019

Overall Programme Information

Special Account:

Multi-Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists

Geographical scope/benefitting countries:

Global action

Africa: Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, The Gambia, as well as regional actions

Arab States: Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, as well as regional actions

Asia and the Pacific: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan

Latin America and the Caribbean (regional action)

Budget codes:

Outcome 1: 408GLO5001

Outcome 2: 408GLO5002

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This progress report presents the main findings and achievements of a self-evaluation exercise conducted by the responsible UNESCO project officers at Headquarters and in the relevant Field Offices and covers the following:

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Background

In October 2015, the Multi-Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists (MDP) was approved by UNESCO's Director-General and reviewed by the Executive Board in its 200th session (Decision 200 EX/19).

The MDP was then formally created in 2017, and it supports activities to promote the adoption of relevant policies and normative frameworks to strengthen the environment for freedom of expression, press freedom and the safety of journalists, as well as to foster sustainable and independent media institutions. The initiative is to facilitate UNESCO's work to implement the Major Programme of the Organization's Communication and Information Sector, as outlined in the Major Line of Action (MLA) 1 of Programme V in the C/5, under two expected results:

- **Expected Result 1 (Member States are enhancing norms and policies related to freedom of expression, including press freedom and the right to access information, online and offline, and are reinforcing the safety of journalists by implementing the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity).**
- **Expected Result 2 (Member States have benefited from enhanced media contributions to diversity, gender equality and youth empowerment in and through media; and societies are empowered through media and information literacy programmes and effective media response to emergency and disaster).**

The MDP falls under the authority of the Director-General and is managed by the Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information. It is overseen by the Director for Strategies and Policies in the Field of Communications and Information, and managed by two Chiefs of Section (Section for Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists, and Section for Media and Information Literacy and Media Development).

The pooling of funding under the MDP promotes programmatic coherence and donors' coordination, and gives UNESCO increased flexibility to channel funds towards emerging priorities and the most pressing needs to achieve its Expected Results. It enables the CI Sector to address complex issues through holistic and medium/long-term interventions at national, regional and global levels. The advantage of this mechanism is that it allows UNESCO and its partners to achieve greater impact and sustainability, whilst reducing transaction costs and fragmentation of activities.

The MDP has strengthened UNESCO's role in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 16, Target 10 on "public access to information and fundamental freedoms". It currently supports national actions in 20 countries through 20 UNESCO national and regional offices spread across four regions. Besides national-level activities, the programme supports global initiatives, as well as regional actions in Africa, the Arab Region, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

The MDP has two major Outcomes:

- **Outcome 1 (corresponding to Programme V/MLA1/ER 1 in UNESCO's 39/C5 Programme): Member States are enhancing norms and policies related to freedom of expression, including press freedom and the right to access information, online and offline, and are reinforcing the safety of journalists by implementing the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.**
- **Outcome 2 (corresponding to Programme V/MLA1ER 2 in the 39 C/5): Member States have benefited from enhanced media contributions to diversity, gender equality and youth empowerment in and through media; and societies are empowered through media and information literacy programmes and effective media response to emergency and disaster.**

Under the MDP, actions have been taken at global, regional and national levels. Some countries have had activities relevant to both Outcomes, while other countries have been limited to on one or the other.

This is the second annual narrative report, which assesses progress towards the achievement of the abovementioned outcomes during the period of 1 January to 31 December 2019. While the first report, which was produced in March 2019, covered the de-facto year of operation in the inception phase, this report is the first to cover a full calendar year with funding that entailed continuity of previous work, and the initiation of actions in new countries. This work was supported by generous contributions:



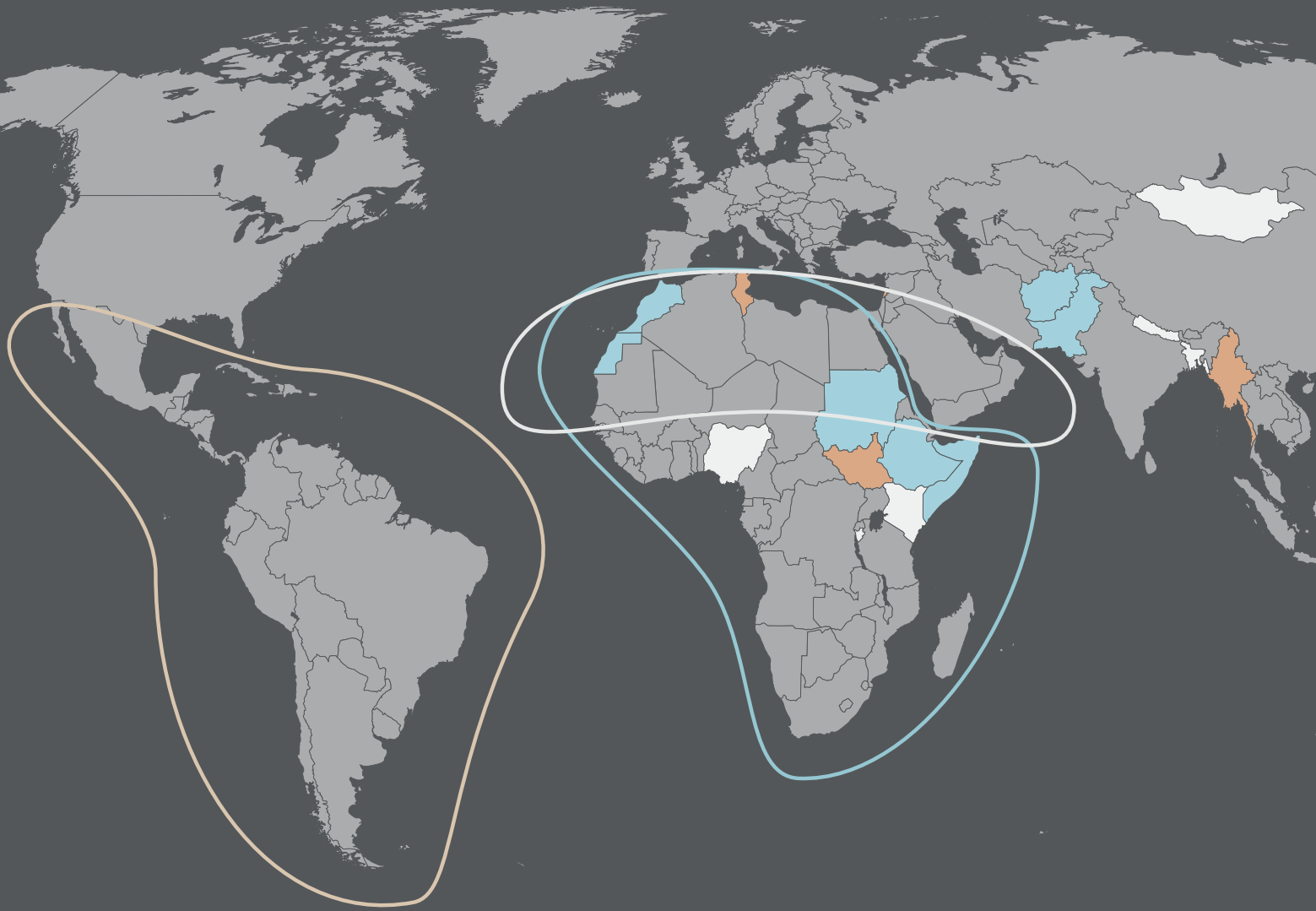
Initial contributions in 2018 were provided by Austria, Canada, Norway and Switzerland. In July of the same year, the MDP received a substantial four-year pledge by Sweden and the first installment, which multiplied its resources and allowed for the preparation of a major upscale of activities commencing in 2019. The efforts undertaken built on previous actions and relevant achievements supported through UNESCO's regular programme funds, as well as other extra-budgetary funds, including the Funds-in-Trust (FIT) project funded by Sweden, titled Promoting Freedom of Expression, Media Development, and Access to Information and Knowledge, and which was completed in July 2018.

In mid-2019, the MDP received another multi-year pledge from Iceland, thus allowing UNESCO to expand its work under this programme to Afghanistan. In the last quarter of 2019, the MDP enabled UNESCO to extend immediate support by responding to emerging priority actions in Sudan. Following the country's revolution and the transition, the Prime Minister of Sudan signed undertakings with a number of UN bodies and also aligned Khartoum to the Global Pledge to Defend Media Freedom developed by the Media Freedom Coalition of states initiated by the UK and Canada. UNESCO's timely support has since helped Sudan to embark on a full media reform.

Another new country benefitting from the MDP in 2019 is Ethiopia, where UNESCO has identified urgent priorities and the possibility to achieve considerable outcomes. In May, the 26th global celebration of World Press Freedom Day was jointly commemorated with the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the African Union Commission. On the occasion, the Prime Minister expressed his commitment to the reforms initiated since his inauguration including the release of all imprisoned journalists and the unblocking of journalistic websites, also reiterating Ethiopia's "unwavering commitment" to fostering press freedom.

Alongside these new countries, the MDP enabled UNESCO to upscale its activities in 2019, building on previous results in all focus areas. Its approach in contributing to policy reform through its standard-setting actions and normative work has allowed it to achieve positive change in various regions. This report provides a comprehensive account on the impact of these actions and the MDP's comparative value.

Where we work



● **OUTCOME 1:**
Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan,
Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine,
Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Afghanistan,
Myanmar, Pakistan

● **OUTCOME 2:**
Nigeria, Mongolia, The Gambia
Bangladesh, South Sudan, Nepal
Kenya, Tunisia, Palestine, Burundi,
Myanmar

○ Africa Regional
○ Arab Regional
○ LAC regional

● **OUTCOME 1 + 2:**
South Sudan, Tunisia, Palestine,
Myanmar

1. Summary

The MDP's operates on the Sector's theory of change and intervention logic, where activities focus upon supporting and bridging duty bearers and rights holders in relation to improving media law and policy. The duty bearers are regional intergovernmental bodies, state officials, parliamentarians and electoral regulatory bodies. Rights holders include journalists' unions, relevant civil society organizations (CSOs) and academia. Activities encompass capacity development, coalition building, advocacy and knowledge production. In most cases, UNESCO has worked with partners, bringing its unique credibility and access to all stakeholders. In this way, and through overall coordination from HQ and direct implementation by UNESCO specialists in the field, UNESCO has succeeded in developing common ground amongst all actors, enabling media policy reforms and transformations in many countries. This has also been possible thanks to snowball effects generated through continued work in previous years by UNESCO, and through the MDP in particular, since 2018.

Examples include progress made related to access to information laws in Morocco and Tunisia, where UNESCO is now at the stage of supporting their proper implementation, after having assisted in their drafting, in accordance with international standards, and subsequent adoption in previous years. Furthermore, UNESCO has been entrusted in contributing to the drafts of other new media laws in Morocco, along with training members of parliament on freedom of expression and access to information. The same trust has been extended in Sudan, with the Minister of Culture and Information expressing his appreciation for UNESCO's valuable contribution, and reaffirming his commitment, echoing that of the Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdook, towards media reform in the country. In Ethiopia, three media laws have been drafted with UNESCO's support: the Media Law, the Public Access to Information Law, and the Cyber Crime Law, while in South Sudan, a 3-year Information Commission strategy document (2020-2021) on the operationalization of the Access to Information Act, 2013 was launched during the 2019 celebration of the International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI). In the same vein, with the assistance of UNESCO, the government of Nepal is in process of drafting several laws at present that covers the media sector and working journalists. The Mass Media Bill, which is expected to define public, private and community media and their functions, is also under review at the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.

Results related to safety of journalists included the creation of a national reporting mechanism on safety of journalists /SDG16.10.1 in Pakistan in collaboration with the National Commission for Human Rights, and similar national safety mechanisms in Palestine and Somalia. A network of Safety Focal Points in media houses was formed across Myanmar, and another network in Palestine combining members from the West Bank and Gaza. Other important achievements include the launch of a high-level National Media and Justice Dialogue towards creating a safety mechanism in Morocco, and the upscaling of prevention and prosecution mechanisms in Tunisia, along with the reinforcement of the methodology and coordination mechanisms of the Monitoring Unit on attacks against journalists led by the Union of Journalists (SNJT).

Strengthening the capacities of the judiciary continued in Latin America and was marked with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights to further reinforce cooperation with the regional court and outreach for UNESCO's initiative in training judges in freedom of expression issues. An additional MoU with the Ibero-American Association of Attorney Generals was finalized and is awaiting signature in 2020. In Africa, the signing of an MoU

by UNESCO and the ECOWAS Court of Justice in July 2019 strengthened dialogue with this regional court, and will ensure higher credibility for UNESCO's specialized training of judicial officials, as well as promote the exchange of best practices in the areas of freedom of expression, access to information and safety of journalists. Initial discussions and similar initiatives are underway in Asia and the Arab region for 2020. Judicial schools that have been part of this programme from the beginning are now reporting the formal incorporation of UNESCO's toolkit in their regular curricula for training national judges and other judicial operators.

Work with an additional category of duty bearers took place in Lebanon, where a letter of intent was signed between UNESCO and the Internal Security Forces (ISF) to create a safer and more enabling environment for journalists, in addition to a communication strategy which will be in effect in 2020. In 2019, the role of media during elections was also strengthened with significant progress in the fight against disinformation during electoral cycles in Uruguay, where all six major political parties signed an ethical pact to help counter disinformation. This pact was signed in the presence of the current President of Uruguay, along with two former incumbents. A policy paper on these issues was discussed with several electoral regulators and was launched with successful outreach. In Myanmar, an agreement was reached among key stakeholders to work jointly in order to improve coverage of the general elections in 2020, notably through the updating of the Election Reporting Guideline and the creation of a mechanism for communication between the election's management body, political parties and the media. The critical role that UNESCO played in strengthening the relationship and collaboration between the Press Council and the Union Election Commission has allowed the Yangon Office to fundraise USD 2,5 million from the UN Peacebuilding Fund (pending of the signature of the Government) to support the media and counter disinformation during the 2020 General Elections. UNESCO, over the course of 2019, supported the sustainability of community media in Bangladesh, Burundi, Gambia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, South Sudan and Tunisia. Policy dialogue was initiated in these countries through a series of national consultations and baseline surveys. Local stakeholders including duty bearers drafted eight national strategy documents on community sustainability. The strategy documents are being further deliberated and combined with the results of the studies to serve as a basis in filling the gaps in the local media laws, thereby strengthening media pluralism and democracy. In Nepal, the process is advanced with redrafting of relevant community media law. Across various countries, hundreds of duty bearers and media workers, community radio stations, youth organizations, and community media networks benefited from the use of UNESCO's Policy Series toolkit on community media sustainability.

The diffusion of Media and Information Literacy (MIL) in targeted countries has advanced significantly during the reporting period, with milestone achievements in the development of national MIL policies and strategies. Policy makers raised their awareness and acquired new knowledge on MIL, through series of national consultations on MIL policies and strategies. In Myanmar, the process led to the formal establishment of a national committee for the promotion of MIL within the Ministry of Information. The Committee for the Promotion of MIL mandated with the implementation of various initiatives to foster a media and information literate society through national media, libraries and community centers. In Mongolia, a national MIL policy and strategy was formulated and adopted by stakeholders from governmental and non-governmental sectors. The draft policy and strategy document was submitted to all members of the Mongolian Parliaments' Standing Committee for Education, Culture, and Science. The first national MIL Policy and strategy document for Kenya has been prepared and validated through a national stakeholders' conference. In Nigeria, 22 institutions from across the 6 geopolitical zones of the country have piloted the localized MIL curriculum, and the National Commission of Colleges of Education decided to introduce MIL as a compulsory general.

UNESCO continued to reinforce dialogue among duty bearers and rights holders in order to enable change; in Myanmar, the first ever national dialogue on the role of media in democratic regimes brought together the Government, the Parliament, security forces and the media; in Pakistan, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Peace and Justice Network, and the Parliamentary Commission for Human Rights to ensure more attention is given to the issue of the safety of journalists; in Ethiopia, UNESCO convened national and international partners to form the Ethiopia Media Sector Alliance (EMSA); and in Somalia, due to UNESCO's multifaceted support and policy advice, a dialogue between the national coordination committee on safety of journalists and key government stakeholders has officially commenced based on an 11-point communiqué on safety of journalists. In Nigeria, the MIL Coalition in Nigeria has been revitalized to facilitate coordination of MIL activities and promote synergies between policy makers and civil society actors. The three national consultations on MIL policies and strategies in Kenya, Mongolia, and Myanmar enabled dialogue between rights holders and duty bearers thus reflecting the perspective of various stakeholder groups. UNESCO also supported cooperation across various Ministries of Government to ensure a more integrated approach and sustainable development of MIL in Palestine.

The process of establishing regional coordination mechanisms in Eastern Africa to support freedom of expression and safety of journalists has been reinforced through the successful mobilization of the East African Community Secretariat, the East African Legislative Assembly, the East African Court of Justice, the ECOWAS Community Court of Justice and the African Court on Human and People's Rights, which was translated through the regional representation in events marking the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists (IDEI) observed in Arusha, Tanzania, and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This has subsequently led to a strengthened basis for partnerships and engagement of duty bearers, particularly judges and prosecutors, and the East African Community institutions on freedom of expression and safety of journalists.

In line with UNESCO's mandate and its continuous efforts to strengthen media's contribution to reconciliation, support to counter hate speech in Syria was marked by a first-of-its-kind meeting of media outlets from inside and outside the country to discuss the results of the first monitoring activities and provide recommendations on the way forward.

Enhancing gender equality was the focus of actions across all four regions covered under the MDP, including specialized trainings for female journalists in Tunisia; in South Sudan, the capacities of female journalists and editors were strengthened to enhance gender responsive reporting and the safety of women journalists; in Afghanistan, gender responsive activities included trainings on physical safety and digital security. On a regional level, the "Call of Salé" on gender equality in the media was adopted within the framework of the 2019 International Women's Film Festival of Salé, Morocco.

Awareness raising and advocacy actions represent a core element within UNESCO's approach to promote freedom of expression, access to information, the safety of journalists, media pluralism, and media and information literacy. In 2019, commemorations were organized globally and in each country supported by the MDP. The strategic dimension has been to leverage five key international occasions as a means to an end in terms of assisting ongoing actions and building on momentum. This applies to World Radio Day (WRD), World Press Freedom Day (WPFDD), the International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI), the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists (IDEI), and the Global MIL Week. The occasions were all accompanied by extensive visibility activities. Globally, regionally and nationally, each occasion helped to gain government support, reinforce national commitment among various stakeholders, strengthen coalitions, and strengthen a culture supportive of the rights to freedom of expression and access to information.

The [World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development Report](#) (WTR) has increasingly served as a comprehensive, factual and data-driven reference tool on press freedom and the safety of journalists. In 2019, UNESCO published three innovative In-Focus Reports tied to the commemoration of the abovementioned international days, under the following themes: (i) [Elections and Media in Digital Times \(WPFDF\)](#); (ii) [Access to Information: A New Promise for Sustainable Development \(IDUAL\)](#), and (iii) [Intensified Attacks, New Defences: Developments in the Fight to Protect Journalists and End Impunity](#) (IDEI). These reports deepened policy understanding around the key themes of three international days, and were also important inputs for global debates at the Internet Governance Forum, and the World Forum for Democracy.

Progress achieved in several countries enabled UNESCO to secure additional financial support for its activities in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Lebanon. Building on the success of the main celebration of WPFDF 2019 in Addis Ababa, the Embassy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) in Ethiopia joined joint programming in 2020 on building capacities of Ethiopian journalists. In Sudan, the British Embassy in Khartoum provided financial support to UNESCO's assessment of the Sudanese media landscape and regulations, which will lead to the drafting a Media Reform Roadmap. Likewise, the British Embassy in Lebanon has offered financial contributions to capacity building activities of the Internal Security Forces, enabling UNESCO to expand the scope of this project in the coming years. On the global level, UNESCO's strong leading role in the implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity was recognized the UK and Canada, who selected the Organization to administer a new Global Media Defence Fund, to foster international legal cooperation. This Trust Fund will complement the work of the MDP through developing jurisprudence on press freedom in a number of countries.

Monitoring of project implementation according to the MDP results framework was done on a regular basis through email exchanges and Skype meetings between HQ and Field Offices. Formal reporting was also completed biannually on SISTER and through field colleagues' collection and submission of data for the preparation of this annual report. In light of the alignment between the 39 C/5 Expected Results and those of the MDP, monitoring of activities supported by the fund has contributed to monitoring implementation of activities through other sources of funding and fed into statutory reports to UNESCO's Executive Board on the execution of the Programme.

Throughout 2019, UNESCO worked on developing a comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan, including data collection tools created specifically for the MDP and in line with its results framework. The plan was produced with the support of an M&E expert team, and in an inclusive manner where all UNESCO CI Field specialists provided input related to their specific context. The plan has been praised by UNESCO's Bureau of Strategic Planning (BSP) as a good practice and will be considered as an example to follow across the Organization. The MDP team from all benefitting countries received training on the use of the tools, the identification of baselines and targets according to the results framework, and the analysis and use of the collected data in their reporting. Starting in 2020, the plan will go into full effect, accompanied by an online communication platform which was already created in 2019 as part of UNESCO's Digital Workspace project. The Communication and Information (CI) Sector will serve as a Pilot for this Workspace project before it is rolled out across the Organization. The MDP was the first Programme within CI to create its own specialized platform in line with this digital transformation.



2. Progress towards achievement of results

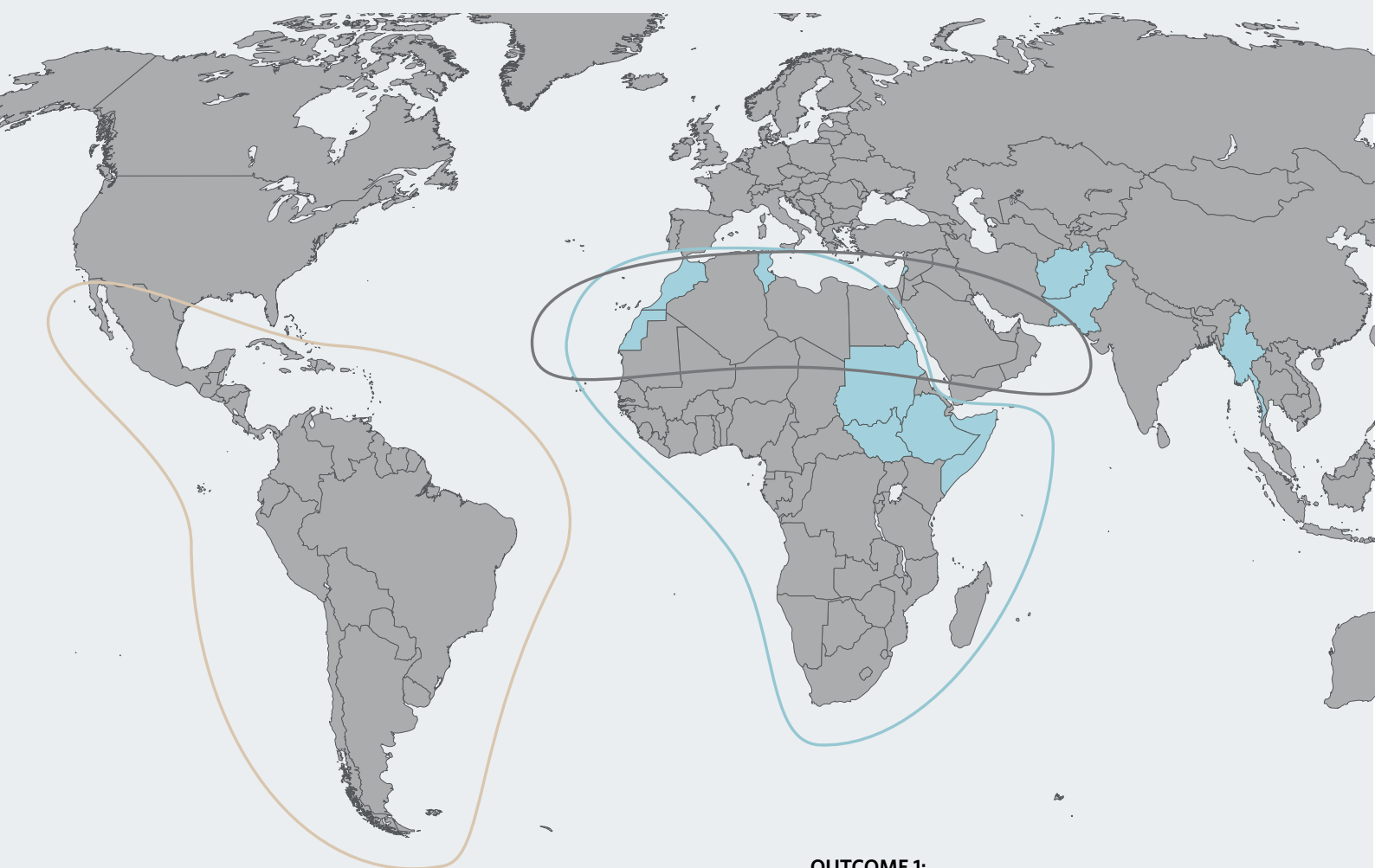
The national celebration of IDUAI held in South Sudan provided a timely opportunity to launch the 3-year Information Commission strategy document, drafted with technical and financial support from UNESCO.

Below is an analysis of the progress made towards the achievement of the MDP outcomes through actions implemented under each of the contributing outputs. A more detailed assessment is included in section 9, dedicated to country/region summaries.

Outcome 1:

Enhancing freedom of expression and the safety of journalists

This outcome rests upon four distinctive outputs, which are each assessed below. In a number of cases, a given activity has multi-dimensional significance in that it contributes to more than one output, and this is signaled where relevant.



OUTCOME 1:

- Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Pakistan
- Africa Regional
- Arab Regional
- LAC regional

Output 1:

Awareness-raising initiatives supported at a national, regional and global level

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:



100 World Press Freedom Day celebrations worldwide



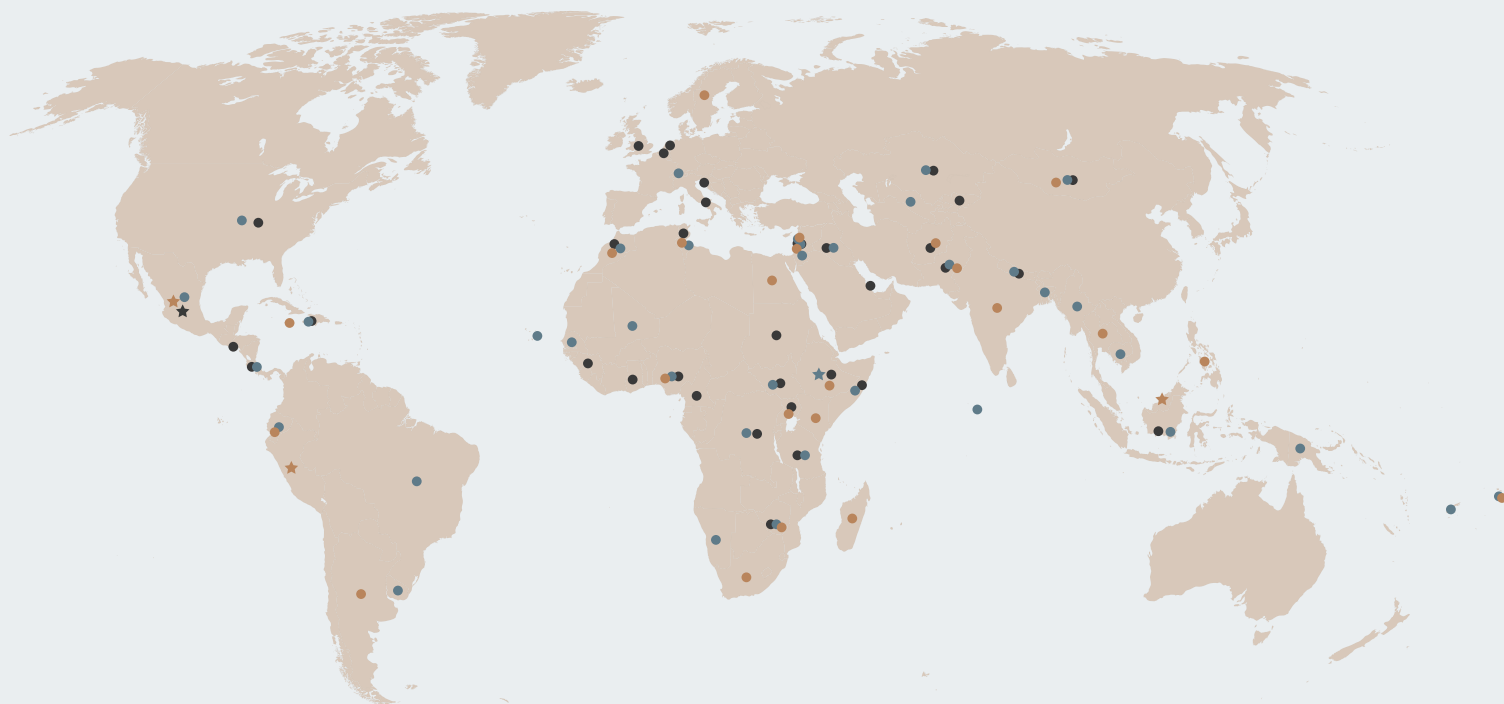
27 National and regional IDUAI commemorations



35 National IDEI commemorations



Adoption of the Addis Ababa Declaration



UNESCO CELEBRATIONS

● World Press Freedom Day (39)

Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Fiji, Haiti, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nigeria, Nepal, Pakistan, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan, Switzerland, Tanzania, Tunisia, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe

★ ETHIOPIA - Main celebration

Asia & the Pacific: 11, Western Europe & North America: 3, Central & Eastern Europe: 1, Arab Region: 6, Latin America & the Caribbean: 6, Africa: 12

● International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists (35)

Afghanistan, Belgium, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Italy, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, The Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, UK, USA, Zimbabwe

★ MEXICO - Main celebration

Asia & the Pacific: 7, Western Europe & North America: 5, Central & Eastern Europe: 1, Arab Region: 7, Latin America & the Caribbean: 4, Africa: 11

● International Day for Universal Access to Information (27)

Afghanistan, Argentina, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Lebanon, Madagascar, Mongolia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Philippines, Samoa, South Africa, South Sudan, Sweden, Thailand, Tunisia, Uganda, Zimbabwe

★ PERU, MALAYSIA, MEXICO - Main celebrations

Asia & the Pacific: 8, Western Europe & North America: 1, Arab Region: 5, Latin America & the Caribbean: 5, Africa: 8

Awareness-raising activities and advocacy play a pivotal role in UNESCO's approach to promote freedom of expression, the safety of journalists and access to information at global, regional and national levels. Actions carried out under the MDP have thus contributed to bringing these issues to the forefront by building public awareness around them. These efforts have also been focused on supporting policy change, building coalitions, strengthening political commitments to assess and improve national media landscapes, and adapt existing laws to international standards. The commemorations of World Press Freedom Day, of the International Day for Universal Access to Information, and of the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists provided momentous occasions for UNESCO to foster dialogue, strengthen existing networks and coalitions and mobilize all relevant stakeholders, which includes duty bearers and right holders. As a result of advocacy efforts deployed during the event and of the magnitude of the celebrations, many Member States have pledged to take and/or have initiated transformative action on the Day.

The 2019 commemoration of the **World Press Freedom Day (WPF)**, saw events in more than 100 countries among which 40 organized by UNESCO and its partners. The global event was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and organized based on a tripartite partnership between UNESCO, the African Union Commission and the Government of Ethiopia. This provided significant symbolic support for the ongoing reforms in the country. The event gathered some 2000 participants from some 100 countries. It constituted the first major opportunity for Ethiopian journalists, some of whom were still in prison or in exile the year before, to openly discuss press freedom reforms with national stakeholders, regional and international media organizations and experts. During the commemoration, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia delivered a speech in which he reiterated Ethiopia's "unwavering commitment" to fostering press freedom.

Among the major accomplishments of the Conference, participants adopted the Addis Ababa Declaration, which focuses on the media's role in electoral processes in digital times, and which now informs UNESCO's strategic approach going forward around the world. UNESCO to strengthen cooperation in the area of media and election with other key actors such as UNDP, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, the World Association of Broadcasters and the Réseau francophone des régulateurs des medias. The Declaration has also informed work in Latin America and the Caribbean, such as the publication of a policy paper on social media and elections and the signing of an ethical pact between all six major political parties in Uruguay to counter disinformation during electoral cycles. The WPF national Steering Committee in Ethiopia is evolving into a joint coordination committee to take forward the Addis Declaration through a continental programme.

These experiences place UNESCO in a uniquely strategic position for further collaboration with the African Union Commission on issues related to press freedom, the safety of journalists, and media and elections. UNESCO has also used the momentum towards exploring interest in establishing a group of friends on access to information at the Africa Union. (Ambassadors in New York, Paris, Geneva and Vienna have constituted groups of friends on safety of journalists). UNESCO also continues to collaborate with the AUC to promote the piloting of national multi-stakeholder mechanisms for the safety of journalists in Africa. WPF likewise enabled UNESCO to strengthen cooperation in the area of media and election with other key actors such as UNDP, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, the World Association of Broadcasters and the Réseau francophone des régulateurs des medias. The theme of this edition of World Press Freedom Day too guided actions related to media and elections in Latin America and the Caribbean, such as the publication of a policy paper on social media and elections and the signing of an ethical pact between all 6 major political parties in Uruguay to counter disinformation during electoral cycles.

Among the other commemorations of WPF in 2019 was the national celebration in Myanmar which garnered extensive coverage in local media outlets. Pan Ei Mon and Chit Su Win, the wives of the laureates of the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano Prize, Kyaw Soe Oo and Wa Lone, two Reuters reports from Myanmar, delivered speeches during the event. More than 300 representatives of the media industry and government were present, which culminated in an agreement by the Myanmar Press Council and the Election Commission to strengthen collaboration in preparation for the upcoming 2020 General Elections. In Pakistan, celebrations of the Day took the form of a “Sahafi Summit” (Journalists Summit in Urdu) organized in partnership with the European Union, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Embassy of Sweden in Pakistan, and DW Akademie. The event served to maintain dialogue between rights holders and duty bearers about the need for improvements in the media situation in Pakistan.

Two regional WPF events were held in Latin America, the first one held at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in Costa Rica, in the presence of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights' Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression and of the President of the Court. The second regional event was held in Uruguay jointly with civil society groups Cotidiano Mujer and Articulación Feminista Marcosur, and with support from the European Union. This strengthened momentum around addressing gender-specific challenges faced by women journalists in the region.

(Further information about the reach and impact of commemorations in beneficiary countries is available in the country summaries in section 9.)

Celebrations of the **International Day for Universal Access to Information** took the form of a series of “Open Talks” (modelled on the TEDx format), achieved through co-operation between UNESCO's Section for Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists and the Section for Access to Information. The global event was held in Lima, Peru, jointly organized with the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights of Peru. Two regional “Open Talks” were also held in Malaysia and Mexico, one international “Open Talk” at the Global MIL Week 2020 Feature Conference in Gothenburg, Sweden, and more than 20 countries other held events to celebrate the international day. The global event in Lima showcased UNESCO's convening power to bring together international representatives from civil society and government, such as Open Government Partnership, Transparency International and the International Conference of Information Commissioners (ICIC) network, which are important actors recognized for setting standards to foster government transparency and accountability. The occasion raised awareness on how public access to information fights corruption, and was the opportunity to launch one of the In-Focus Reports of the World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development series titled [Access to Information: A New Promise for Sustainable Development](#). Discussions also explored the need to prepare regulatory bodies for the impacts of emerging technologies, how to harness these technologies to transparency and information for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and how to empower women and girls by making access to information a driver to diminish gender inequalities.

The national celebration of IDUAI held in South Sudan provided a timely opportunity to launch the 3-year Information Commission strategy document, drafted with technical and financial support from UNESCO. As described by the South Sudanese Information Commissioner on the Day, this document will be a guide to develop “a world-class right of access to information regime in the country, the region and beyond”. In Palestine, the celebration of IDUAI was organized within the wider framework of the Arab Regional Digital Inclusion Week with additional support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. An “Open Talk” organized by UNESCO reinforced awareness on the importance of access to information for good governance and the rule of law.

The theme of this edition of the IDUAI likewise inspired side-events in Latin America, during which members of the Peruvian Judiciary and Directors of Latin American schools of prosecutors were gathered to discuss the role of judicial operators in implementing and protecting the right to access information.

The international seminar commemorating the 2019 **International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists** actively facilitated dialogue, sharing of good practices and networking between key stakeholders in the fight against impunity. The event, held in Mexico City, strengthened national and regional cooperation by gathering national authorities, the UN local and regional representatives, judicial operators, law enforcement, media, civil society, and regional actors such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) and the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights. It highlighted good practices of criminal investigations, and stressed the need for stronger protection mechanisms. In this way, the event led to increased public awareness, policy change, and strengthened political commitment to drive reforms in the field of the safety of journalists forward. At the opening of the conference, the spokesperson of the Presidency announced the Mexican government's commitment to improve the protection of journalists by: (1) creating a Fund to support investigative journalism, which will be administered independently by UNESCO; (2) launching a social security programme for freelance journalists to address their precarious working conditions; and (3) by taking into account the 104 recommendations of an independent assessment from the OHCHR to strengthen Mexico's national protection mechanism for human rights defenders and journalists, which has faced numerous challenges to effectively protect journalists in Mexico. UNESCO is currently finalizing an agreement with the Mexican government to provide funding through the MDP to support a "Fund for the Support and Promotion of Investigative Journalism". The outreach of the event was further reinforced by the participation of a mission of International NGOs, and by the organization of the Latin American Congress of Investigative Journalism (COLPIN), held back-to-back with IDEI in Mexico on 7-10 November 2019.



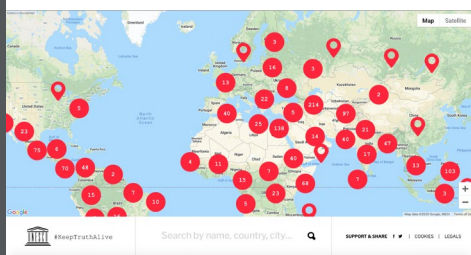
About

DAPHNE CARUANA GALIZIA

Female
 Maltese
 Journalist (Print / Online)
 Killed in Bidnija, Malta
 NaN undefined NaN

This killing remains unpunished*

*According to UNESCO's methodology based on information provided by UNESCO Member States up until September 2019.



#KeepTruthAlive: An impactful global campaign

On 2 November 2019, UNESCO launched a new global communication campaign #KeepTruthAlive, developed pro bono by the creative agency Doyle Dan Bernbach (DDB) Paris, which raised awareness on the dangers faced by local journalists around the world.

A Google Maps (keeptruthalive.co) was created for the campaign – which featured information on the 1,348 journalists killings that have been condemned by UNESCO since 1993 – and were encouraged to call for justice by sharing the map on social media.

As a result, the question of impunity and the threats faced by local journalists received increased media attention, and the involvement of the public and media partners sent a strong message of solidarity with journalists around the world.

Accompanying the global IDEI event in 2019, more than 30 other events commemorating IDEI around the world gathered national authorities, media professionals, civil society, UN organizations, and the public at large to advance the safety of journalists and end impunity. Commemorations of IDEI in Afghanistan were marked by a declaration by the Deputy Minister of Information and Culture acknowledging the perilous working conditions of journalists in the country, and publicly reaffirmed the Afghan government's commitment to fight impunity for violence against journalists. The commemorations held in South Sudan led to the proposal of key action points by participants, such as the establishment of a National Mechanism on Safety and Protection of Journalists. The occasion also provided an opportunity for participants to call upon the government to follow-up on 10 pending cases for the murder of journalists. In neighbouring Sudan, celebrations of the Day were organized in cooperation with the Sudanese Minister of Culture and Information, who delivered opening remarks to the event. The occasion took the form of a brainstorming workshop to discuss improving the safety situation in Sudan, along with diversity in the media, self-regulation, judicial impartiality, public confidence in the media and the safety of women journalists. All groups jointly discussed their findings in presence of the Minister and produced a series of recommendations.

As part of IDEI 2019, a global media campaign **#KeepTruthAlive** raised awareness worldwide.

While UNESCO builds on the momentum of the aforementioned international Days in order to expand outreach and impact for its advocacy efforts, several awareness raising campaigns were also conducted year-round locally. For instance, in **Lebanon**, UNESCO created an online campaign on safety of journalists with 18 young journalists, which targeted young and women journalists and was disseminated on social media. The Beirut Office organized an additional campaign on access to information which surpassed expectations in terms of outreach, with a sensitization video being aired by different national media outlets. In Syria, a contest was organized for media students at the University of Damascus to write scripts for Public Service Announcements on safety of journalists, hate speech and the right to access information. The selected PSAs will be professionally produced in 2020.

UNESCO further participated in several international events with the goal of raising awareness and advocating for freedom of expression, access to information and the safety of journalists. The Lux Film Festival in **Luxembourg** (March 2019), and the 2019 World Forum for Democracy in Strasbourg, **France** (November 2019) were opportunities for the Organization to promote and give further visibility to these issues. During the first Global Conference for Media Freedom (**United Kingdom**, July 2019), UNESCO welcomed the establishment of the Global Media Defence Fund by the governments of the UK and Canada, and co-organized a panel on press freedom (Press Freedom, development and democracy in Africa) as well as a session on safety of journalists (Keeping journalists safe – what international organizations can do, with the Council of Europe). In February 2019, UNESCO participated in a seminar on Monitoring disinformation in electoral campaigns: tools and challenges, organized in **Belgium** by the European Union's Election Observation and Democracy Support initiative, and where the Organization shared insights and good practices in the field of media, Internet and elections. In addition, UNESCO organized a side session during the 2019 Internet Governance Forum held in **Germany**, which gathered judicial operators for a special session to assess new challenges for judicial authorities in dealing with digital rights and digital ecosystems. UNESCO likewise took part in a special discussion by the OAS Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and the Mexican National Electoral Authority on developing regional guidelines to face disinformation during electoral times.

UNESCO continued to support the actions of key stakeholders and partners to promote and increase global awareness over freedom of expression. In April 2019, UNESCO took part in the 2019 Strategic Conference of IFEX – a global network of over 100 organizations dedicated to the promotion and defense of freedom of expression – in **Berlin**, Germany, where the Organization actively contributed to the discussion of the next IFEX's six-year strategy.

Output 2:

World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development Report



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

Total number of views in 2019 of the entire World Trends Report series:

108,555



A new In-Focus Series of the World Trends Report launched including:



Three In-Focus Reports on media and elections, safety of journalists, and access to information

Since the publication of its first global report in 2014, on mandate of UNESCO's General Conference, the *World Trends Report in Freedom of Expression and Media Development (WTR)* series has increasingly served as a comprehensive, factual and data-driven reference tool on media freedom, pluralism, independence, safety of journalists, and related topics. During the reporting period, UNESCO launched an innovative new [In-Focus Series of the WTR Report](#), consisting of shorter publications on specific themes linked to the commemoration of international days. These serve to concentrate information in digestible packages, and provide focused policy options for action, at the same time as producing content that can contribute to the comprehensive Global Report. In addition, UNESCO undertook preparatory work for the next edition of the Global Report, to be published in 2021. An overall vision and budget for the global edition was prepared, a concept note for the WTR series developed, and potential members for an advisory board identified.

Three In-Focus Reports were published in 2019 under the following themes: (i) [Elections and Media in Digital Times](#); (ii) [Access to Information: A New Promise for Sustainable Development](#) and (iii) [Intensified Attacks, New Defences: Developments in the Fight to Protect Journalists and End Impunity](#). These reports have served as essential documents to shape discussion and deepen policy resonance around the key themes of the three aforementioned international days: WPF, IDUAI, IDEI.

During the reporting period, UNESCO organized and/or participated in several events that raised visibility of its *World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development – In Focus Series Reports*. The In-Focus Report on Access to Information was presented on the occasion of the International Day for Universal Access to Information, and the In-Focus Report on Safety of Journalists was presented during the International Day to End Impunity. At the 2019 edition of the World Forum for Democracy (November 2019) in Strasbourg, the Organization presented its In-Focus publication “Elections and Media in Digital Times” during a session attended by over 500 participants, which included governmental, CSO and youth representatives. This edition of the report was also presented during the global Internet Governance Forum that was held in Germany the same month.

The World Trends Report serves as the CI Sector’s flagship publication. To make real impact and add value to UNESCO’s work in raising awareness, building capacity, and shaping policies, UNESCO and relevant stakeholders have identified that the Report should strengthen its data components. Following discussions with Sweden, in 2018, funding was given to the MDP, for cooperation with the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) for the gathering of media-related statistics for the World Trends Report. Additional support from Sweden was given to UIS for data collection related to the WTR as well as monitoring of SDG 16.10.2 on public access to information. Ongoing discussions were held between the CI Sector and the relevant colleagues in UIS on the scope and feasibility of the collection of media-related statistics with this framework. In the second half of 2019, UIS commissioned an expert study on the feasibility of collecting statistics for the World Trends Report and the Internet Universality Indicators. With the support of UNESCO, the study identified a number of possible sources of secondary data collection, gleaning from existing sources, and proposed possible primary data, while not numerical, that could possibly be sourced from national commissions and from the private sector on issues related to social media.

Following the reporting period, an additional workshop on indicators and statistical resources was held at UNESCO HQ in February 2020, co-convened by UNESCO and UIS. The workshop which enabled discussions on issues related to the collection of primary and secondary data for the global WTR as well as to identify sources for data for the themes to be covered by the Report. The discussions expanded the diversity of sources available (as was as regional limitations thereof), lack of internationally comparable data on the range of themes covered by the WTR, the requirements in time and budget required to collect such data, and need for more transparency, particularly from Internet companies.

The Way Forward

The Report team has proposed that going forward, a number of actions can be taken, which include to:

1. Analyse and “mash-up” existing datasets by UNESCO and other public and private sector institutions, for novel forms of analysis and findings;
2. Dedicate a chapter of the 2021 WTR to the question of open data;
3. Advocate for more open data, especially vis-à-vis tech platforms and governments;
4. Leverage existing UNESCO programmes, partnerships, flagship reports, indicator frameworks, and initiatives;
5. Focus data collection and analysis to selected topics that would benefit relevant stakeholders.

Output 3:

Safety of journalists enhanced, and the implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists supported, particularly at the national and local level, and with special attention to women journalists

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:



ACHPR Working Group created on the Promotion and Protection of Journalism and the Safety of Journalists in Africa



A Regional coordination mechanism established to support FoE and SoJ in Eastern Africa

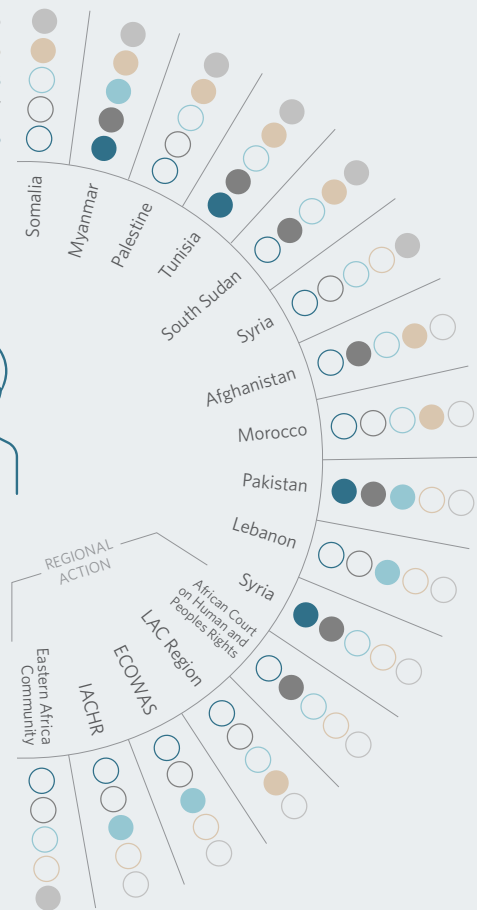


National safety networks established in Myanmar and Palestine



National safety mechanisms created in Somalia, Pakistan, and Tunisia

NATIONAL SAFETY MECHANISMS
CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES
MOUs
ADVOCACY
RESOURCES AND ASSESSMENTS



As the lead UN agency in the implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, UNESCO has maintained momentum through sustained collaboration with a variety of stakeholders to provide a safer environment for journalists and media workers. Actions under the MDP have made a substantial contribution to the implementation of the Plan in beneficiary countries, most notably through advocacy and coordination efforts for the setting up or enhancing of national mechanisms for prevention, protection and/or prosecution. Efforts also focused on promoting dialogue, capacity building, the sharing of good practices and the development of resources and guidelines adapted to local contexts.

One of the major achievements in 2019, was the intensified cooperation with the African Union, which built on the interregional forum on national mechanisms for the safety of journalists organized by the African Union in 2018 and supported by UNESCO. Consultative meetings held with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and regional stakeholders led to the submission request for the establishment of the ACHPR Working Group on the Promotion and Protection of Journalism and the Safety of Journalists in Africa, which has directed the initiative to its Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information.

Additionally, the establishment of a regional coordination mechanism to support freedom of expression and safety of journalists in Eastern Africa has been initiated through the successful mobilization by UNESCO of the East African Community Secretariat, the East African Legislative Assembly, the East African Court of Justice, the ECOWAS Community Court of Justice and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights. UNESCO strengthened its working relationship with African Courts both at national level (e.g with the Supreme Court of Senegal) and at regional level with the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and ECOWAS Court of Justice to raise awareness and knowledge of high-court judges on international standards and regional jurisprudence on freedom of expression and safety of journalists.

Within the framework of the Judges Initiative launched in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2013, and building on previous work conducted in cooperation with national schools of judges across the region, UNESCO convened the first meeting of the heads of national schools of prosecutors from 14 Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay) and Spain. Participants at this meeting were sensitized on the judicial dimensions of safety of journalists and on the importance of training prosecutors as judicial operators who play a crucial role in prosecuting crimes committed against media workers.

As the work undertaken within the framework of the Judges Initiatives regionally in Africa and Latin America benefits both Output 3, by advancing knowledge and awareness on safety issues, and Output 4, by reinforcing duty bearers' capacities; further information about the progress achieved in this regard can be found in the succeeding section the report.

In **Somalia**, the technical support provided by UNESCO to national coordination committees and joint working groups engendered triggered the establishment of a national mechanism for safety of journalists. A plan of action for the National Coordination Committee for Safety of Journalists was also developed, and UNESCO's reporting tools on safety were disseminated among relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, dialogue between the national coordination committee on safety of journalists and key government stakeholders around an 11-point communiqué on safety of journalists was launched.

A reporting mechanism on incidents against journalists was created by UNESCO with provincial police departments in **Pakistan**, in collaboration with the National Commission for Human Rights. Focal points within the police departments have been nominated. Another notable milestone was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO's implementing partner, the Peace and Justice Network, and the Parliamentary Commission for Human Rights to ensure that more attention is given to the issue of the safety of journalists.

“Journalists are the frontline human rights defenders. They need special protection through law. This can be achieved by building capacity of duty bearers to produce and use credible data for policy making.”

Chaudhry Muhammad Shafique,
Member of Pakistan's National
Commission for Human Rights

The establishment of a national network of safety focal points from media houses across **Myanmar** was supported by UNESCO through capacity building sessions on digital safety. The Organization also facilitated exchanges between the Indonesian Press Council and the Myanmar Press Council on the development of a mechanism of collaboration for the safety of journalists. Once finalized, this mechanism could be an example of South-South cooperation on safety in the Asia-Pacific region. Other noteworthy achievements in Myanmar were the formation of a working group between the Myanmar Press Council, UNESCO, IMS and MyPol (the European Union's police reform project) to support the establishment of national mechanisms for the safety of journalists; along with the commitment made by the Myanmar Press Council to initiate bilateral dialogue with Myanmar police forces to develop an additional mechanism (in the form of an MoU) for the safety of journalists. In addition to these mechanisms, UNESCO organized training sessions on digital safety for women journalists, and development a module on digital safety for journalists in Myanmar language.

UNESCO supported the creation of a safety officers' network in **Palestine** through capacity development and technical support. In addition, a national mechanism for monitoring the safety of journalists was launched under the patronage of the Prime Minister of Palestine and in cooperation with the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate. UNESCO furthermore organized open dialogues between journalists and members of the police and security forces to improve relations between the two groups. Elaborating on these experiences, UNESCO is now looking into supporting media organizations in establishing and/or reinforcing clear routines, protocols and systems to enhance the safety of both their staff and the freelancers and fixers that they work with, with special attention being given to female journalists.

A New Network of Palestinian Journalists contributes to safety in the field



*Mohammad Awad,
Palestinian journalist*

UNESCO and the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate have supported journalists from the West Bank and Gaza to develop a network providing training and emergency support to journalists, as well as mainstreaming safety and risk awareness protocols in news organizations.

Humanitarian issues reporter Mohammad Awad is part of the first team of safety officers. He explains the need for professional media content from the field, but acknowledges the major safety issues and lack of training provided to journalists in high-risk areas.

Like over 30 other journalists, he participated in courses and specialized trainings co-organized by UNESCO, during which professional safety experts taught ways to identify risks, react in emergencies, devise escape routes and communicate with senior management to keep them informed on situations.

Read the full story in the "Let Free Media Thrive" story magazine annexed to this report

Building on the selection of **South Sudan** as a pilot country for the implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity in previous years, UNESCO led various capacity building activities for over 150 journalists on gender-responsive reporting, safety, the UN Plan of Action and local media laws. Commemorations of IDEI in Juba led participants to propose key action points such as establishment of the national mechanism on safety and protection of journalists to ensure monitoring and reporting of journalists' incidents. An agreement among key stakeholders was reached to establish a working group on safety as a first step of setting up this mechanism. This working group will officiate as an inclusive and representative coordinating forum.

In **Syria**, UNESCO has laid the groundwork for the foundation of national prevention, protection and monitoring mechanisms for the safety of journalists and for the development of a safety of journalists' action plan. This plan will draw a framework and detail plan to carry out advocacy efforts in order to improve the safety of journalists in the country. For that purpose, a needs assessment was conducted, and several focus group discussions with Syrian journalists and media organization (both state and independent) were organized.

Celebrations of IDEI in **Afghanistan** were marked by a statement by the Deputy Minister of Information and Culture during which he acknowledged the difficult safety situation of journalists in the country and publicly affirmed that the legal pursuit of cases of violence against journalists was priority for the Afghan government. Moreover, women journalists from different provinces benefitted from training sessions on safety and first-aid assistance, and journalists from across the country (among which half were women) gained skills on digital safety.

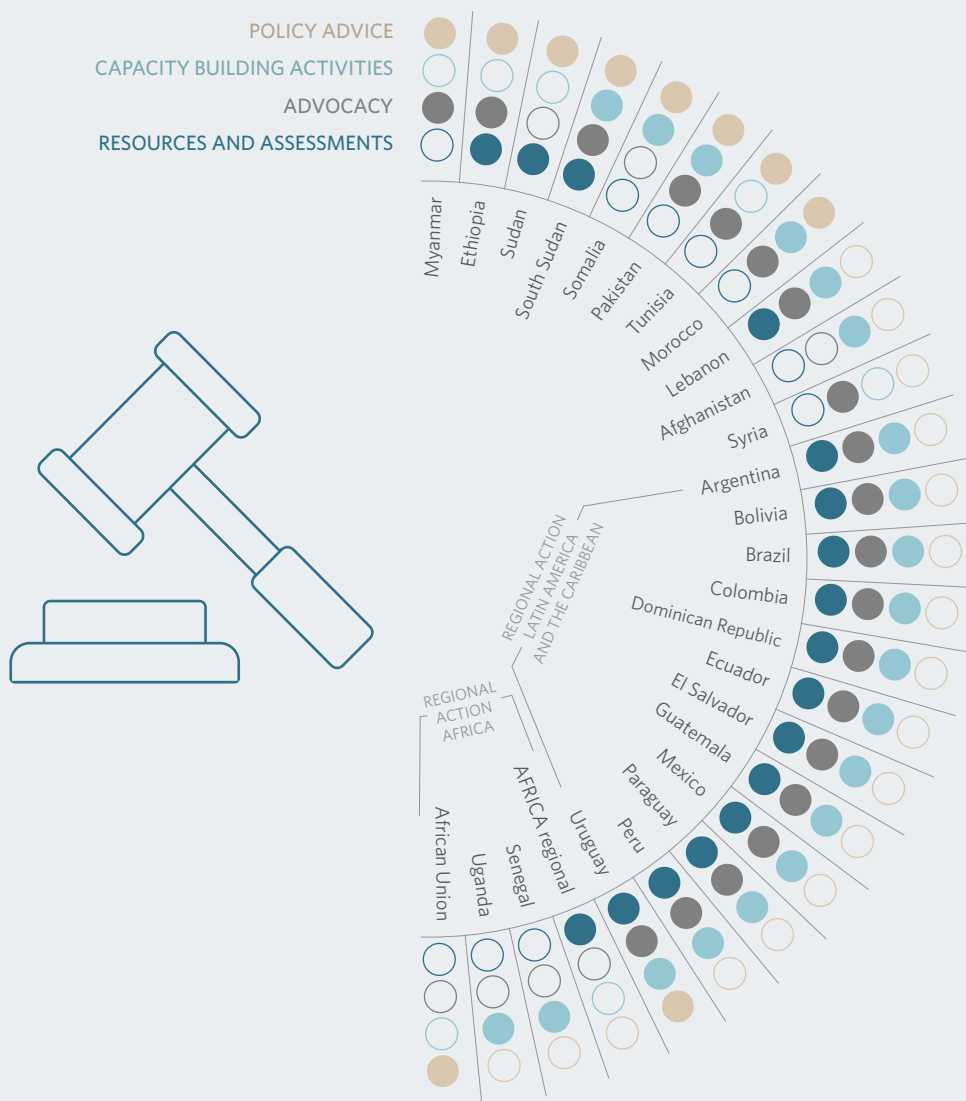
In **Lebanon**, UNESCO signed a letter of

intent with the Internal Security Forces (ISF) with the aim of cooperating to create a safer and freer environment for journalists, especially in rural areas. This will be followed by the training of ISF officers to communicate on social media platforms and a training of trainers for outreach officers on issues such as communication, conflict resolution, and Media and Information Literacy (MIL) in 2020. In addition, following the production of a model course on safety of journalists for media faculties, the UNESCO Beirut Office joined forces with May Chidiac Foundation to train 20 media students and fresh graduates in an effort to create a culture of safety in the country. Participants created and disseminated a social media campaign to advocate for the importance of journalists' safety.

Drawing on previous work undertaken under MDP funding, efforts to monitor violence against journalists have been upscaled in **Tunisia**. Following the pilot phase, the Monitoring Unit on attacks against journalists led by the Union of Tunisian journalists in Tunisia (SNJT) has published monthly and annual reports. Data, conclusions and recommendations contained in the reports were discussed during IDEI commemorations in Tunis to reinforce coordination mechanisms to tackle impunity. Implementation of these recommendation continues on the national agenda. Tunisia, along with Morocco, was also part of a 2-year project entitled "Enhancing a gender responsive film sector in the South Mediterranean region" which was co-funded by the European Union and concluded in 2019. Fourteen Moroccan national media outlets supported the project and benefited from trainings on safety of women journalists and on covering gender issues in the media. Following the success of these trainings, management of these outlets decided to extend funding for the trainings in provinces of the country so that more staff may benefit from them. UNESCO has also been approached by key Moroccan stakeholders to implement supplementary activities on this thematic.

Output 4:

Policy advice provided to, and capacities reinforced of duty bearers to improve legislative and institutional frameworks related to freedom of expression online and offline



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:



Capacities of 2,200 judicial operators in Latin America strengthened reinforcing a network of over 11,000 judicial officers



MoU signed between UNESCO and the ECOWAS Court of Justice



MoU signed with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights



Engagement with the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) in revising the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa



Launch of Media Reforms in Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia



A three-year Information Commission strategy document (2020-2021) on the Access to Information Act 2013 was launched in South Sudan

The role of judges and judicial operators in safeguarding freedom of expression and combatting impunity continues to be a priority in UNESCO's work on freedom of expression. Through support from the MDP, the knowledge and awareness of judges, judiciary actors and civil society in Africa on issues pertaining to freedom of expression and the safety of journalists have increased. This improves the relationship between the judiciary and the press in the different regions.

“The sessions were stimulating, interesting, informative and very relevant to the needs of our developing nations. They need to be held regularly, so that we, Judges, are constantly reminded of our sacred responsibilities, and our respective duties to each society in which each of us find ourselves.”

Justice Nicholas Browne-Marke,
Supreme Court of Sierra Leone
(participant in the Kampala seminar)

The previously developed [Massive Open Online Course \(MOOC\)](#) on international and African legal standards of freedom of expression was launched in French-speaking African countries in January 2019.

Drawing on the success of previous initiatives conducted in Africa and Latin America, two regional seminars gathered high-level judges, judiciary actors, and civil society in Dakar, Senegal, in September 2019 and in Kampala, Uganda, the following month.

The training seminar in Dakar was organized in cooperation with the Supreme Court of Senegal and gathered 16 supreme court judges from the Member States of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The seminar led to the adoption of 12 recommendations of concrete measures to strengthen the rule of law and fight impunity. The seminar in Kampala took place prior to the 4th African Judicial Dialogue and gathered judges and Chief Justices from supreme courts from 13 countries in Africa, including 27 high-level judges from Uganda. Both seminars were organized in cooperation with the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and included the participation and active exchange with representatives of civil society and the media.

As a result of these initiatives, strong partnerships were established with the Supreme Court of Senegal, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, and GIZ, and dialogue were also created between members of the judiciary and civil society (notably ARTICLE 19).

“The internet is a special area, it is an imagined area, a developing area, that needs all hands-on deck for us to be able to tackle the issues arising.”

Justice Edward Asante,
President of the ECOWAS
Court of Justice

During the 2019 Internet Governance Forum in Berlin, UNESCO gathered judicial operators for a special session to discuss the challenges for judicial authorities in dealing with digital rights and digital ecosystems. Justice Edward Asante, President of the ECOWAS Court of Justice; Judge Darian Pavli, from the European Court of Human Rights; Appeals Court Judge from the Rio de Janeiro State in Brazil, Judge Andre Gustavo; and Malaysian lawyer, Adlin Majid notably took part in this session. The debates centered around why and how the rule of law is a crucial concept when policies related to data governance and safety issues are being designed and implemented. Particular attention was given to identifying and exchanging practices and jurisprudence in line with international standards related to digital challenges (such as intermediary liability, hate speech, disinformation, and data privacy) and to how the judicial system could be involved in the Internet Governance discussions.

Judges and prosecutors from Somalia took part in regional workshops, and once back home, benefited from additional specialized training on the safety of journalists using UNESCO's tools.

Judges in Latin America rule in favour of Freedom of Expression



“The technical independence of judges is a guarantee of rights, and the way of administering justice in a society remains one of the most important elements to measure democracy.” – Judge Luis Charles.

Shortly before the 2019 presidential elections in Uruguay, information on past functions of an advisor to a candidate was disclosed. Despite the information being neither offensive nor inaccurate, and despite having been contacted for an interview to give his version of the facts, the advisor resorted to suing three media outlets to demand a right of reply.

In appeal, a verdict in favour of the media outlets was given by Judge Luis Charles, one of the 15,000 judicial operators who have participated in trainings on international standards of freedom of expression and access to information organized by UNESCO in Latin America and the Caribbean since 2014.

Read the full story in the “Let Free Media Thrive” story magazine annexed to this report

The strengthening of judicial actors’ capacities advanced regionally as well in Latin America and the Caribbean, where UNESCO provided support to the organization and conducting of capacity development sessions for judicial operators based on UNESCO’s Toolkit for Training Trainers on Freedom of Expression, Access to Information and Safety of Journalists in 12 countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay). UNESCO also launched the 5th edition of its MOOC on the “International Legal Framework of Freedom of Expression, Access to Public Information and Protection of Journalists”. The capacities of more than 2,200 judicial operators who took part in this edition were strengthened, thereby further reinforcing an informal network of over 11,000 judicial officers who took part in the programme about how to apply international standards and reinforce implementation of the UN Plan of Action within their national contexts.

An additional MOOC was rolled out in collaboration with Internet Society, with the aim of providing an understanding of technical and policy principles related to the Internet ecosystem and Internet governance to around 500 participants, thereby offering an opportunity for additional training and increased awareness for the judicial operators who had already gone through the basic modules of the Judges Initiative. In addition, the capacities and knowledge of representatives of six Latin American countries (Brazil, Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay, Mexico and Uruguay) on the application of UNESCO’s Internet Universality Indicators were reinforced through a workshop organized in Brazil in March 2019. In total, over 3,500 judicial operators successfully benefitted from capacity building activities organized by UNESCO in 2019.

Ensuring free and fair election coverage in Myanmar



"[Journalists] should understand [...] impartiality and fact-checking. If the public gets reliable and comprehensive information, they can make a wise decision and contribute to the democratic transition. A reckless and unprofessional reporting can trigger violence and unrest." - Myint Kyaw, Head of Training, Myanmar Journalism Institute

Myint Kyaw is the head of training of the Myanmar Journalism Institute, the only journalist training institution in the country. It was founded in 2014 as a result of Myanmar's recent political reforms towards democracy. Along with more media freedoms, new, independent organizations were needed to strengthen media's role and ensure free and fair elections.

Throughout 2019, ahead of the 2020 general elections, UNESCO has successfully encouraged dialogue between the media and the organ responsible for managing elections. It also promoted transparency and impartiality, and contributed to the fight against disinformation.

Read the full story in the "Let Free Media Thrive" story magazine annexed to this report

UNESCO furthermore successfully conveyed two unprecedented and historic meetings. Within the margins of the UN High-Level Political Forum, five major justice systems (the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the Conference of Ministers of Justice of Ibero-American Countries (COMJIB), the Ibero-American Association of Public Prosecutors (AIAMP), the Ibero-American Judicial Summit and the Inter-American Association of Public Defenders (AIDEF) came together and published a joint statement reaffirming their commitment to advancing SDG 16 on "peace, justice and strong institutions". A second meeting gathering the Latin American network of media regulators (PRAI) and the network of anti-trust regulators initiated dialogue among these two instances on the role of anti-trust law in the fight against media concentration in the region.

An additional milestone for capacity building of duty-bearers is the signing of two Memoranda of Understanding by UNESCO and the ECOWAS Court of Justice in May 2019, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in October 2019. These MoUs have intensified dialogue with these regional courts and will ensure increased credibility for UNESCO's specialized training of judicial officials, while also promoting the exchange of best practices in the areas of freedom of expression, access to information and safety of journalists. A Memorandum of Understanding with the Ibero-American Association of Attorney Generals has also been finalized, and the document is awaiting signing.

At the national level, the MDP has helped UNESCO to strengthen the capacities and commitment of duty bearers. This has been through policy advice and technical support to various public institutions, and has helped advance legislative reforms in several Member States.

Afghan women journalists want to be free of attacks and stereotypes



“Many people [...] don’t like women to become journalists. We need more literate people in our society. It takes time to change people’s opinions about women.” -

Minar Samimi, Afghan journalist

Minar Samimi is a journalist working for one of the few Afghan radio stations fully run by and for women. Just like her, many Afghan women are pressured to stop their journalism careers or studies. In Afghanistan, women are particularly vulnerable to physical and verbal violence, their profession and their gender making them a “double target”.

Throughout 2019, UNESCO carried out awareness-raising activities with key governmental stakeholders, organized safety and first-aid training for women journalists, and trained local journalists on digital safety - from data safeguard to fighting against online harassment.

Read the full story in the “Let Free Media Thrive” story magazine annexed to this report

In **Pakistan**, building on discussions with officials and media development partners held in 2018, UNESCO conducted a multi-stakeholder forum on policy for access to information and legislative advocacy in the Baluchistan province. This was an effort to encourage relevant duty bearers to adopt regulations in line with international standards, and led to concrete results. A noteworthy consequence in terms of commitment to adhere to international standards was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO’s implementing partner, the Peace and Justice Network, and the Parliamentary Commission for Human Rights to ensure more attention to the issue of the safety of journalists. National policy makers were also mobilized to discuss and collect recommendations on the ‘Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016’ so as to curtail possible misuse of the text. Additionally, a series of sensitization workshops on SDG 16.10.1 was carried out and led to the formation of provincial working groups on this indicator that includes safety of journalists.

One example is in **Myanmar**. In order to ensure free and fair coverage of the upcoming 2020 General Elections UNESCO helped reach an agreement between the Myanmar Union Election Commission and the Myanmar Press Council to update the Election Reporting Guidelines and establish a mechanism to enable better communication and collaboration between the elections management body, political parties and the media. Following this agreement, UNESCO, in cooperation with the International Media Support (IMS) identified capacities and began providing support to the Myanmar Press Council to update the guidelines.

Duty bearers in **Afghanistan** were provided with technical expertise and capacity building activities in an effort to encourage the development of an enabling environment for freedom of expression, notably through the advancement of legislative, policy and institutional frameworks and mechanisms to protect freedom of expression, safety of journalists and access to information. As a

Media reform in Sudan: The beginning of a new era for freedom of expression



For a long time, the lack of democracy did not allow media actors to “play [their] true role, which is to reflect the problems facing the Sudanese citizens”, - Sara Fadul, Director of the University of Khartoum radio.

Following the 2019 Sudanese revolution and the signing of the August 2019 interim Constitutional Declaration, Sudan undertook an historic democratic transition. Substantial commitments in favour of media freedom and safety of journalists were made, and UNESCO Office in Khartoum has upscaled work in the Communication and Information field, initiating an assessment based on UNESCO’s Media Development Indicators as a contribution to developing a Roadmap for Media Reform, as well as an assessment based on UNESCO’s Internet Universality Indicators (IUI).

Read the full story in the “Let Free Media Thrive” story magazine annexed to this report

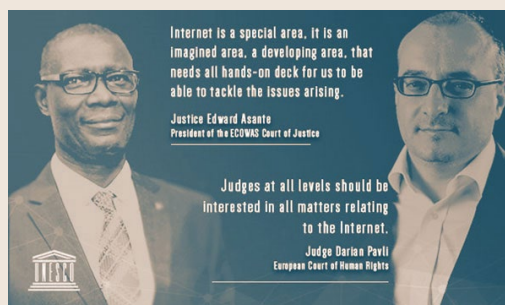
result of UNESCO’s advocacy efforts, the Joint Committee of the Government and Media (JCMG) of Afghanistan, which works on safety of journalists, has now prioritized a specific agenda item for women’s safety in its monthly meetings.

Recent once-in-a-generation developments in **Sudan** put an end to decades of authoritarian rule and persistent human rights violations. New authorities have engaged in opening up their media landscape and in reforming the country’s media legislation. To support this opportunity, UNESCO initiated an assessment of the Sudanese media landscape based on UNESCO’s Media Development Indicators, the results of which will be the basis for the drafting of a Media Reform Roadmap. Sudanese authorities have expressed their appreciation, support and commitment to this exercise, thereby reinforcing the sustainability of the continuation of the reforms underway.

Similar political evolution has arisen in **Ethiopia**, which initiated massive reforms in 2019. UNESCO has been actively involved in the matter of laws related to freedom of expression and freedom of the media, and has provided support to various public institutions such as the Office of the Prime Minister and the Legal and Justice Affairs Advisory Council in order to ensure future media regulations are in line with international standards. Three media laws had been drafted by December 2019. Moreover, an assessment of the Ethiopian media landscape was conducted with help from UNESCO using the Media Development Indicators instrument has been essential in proposing actions to address concerns on hate speech, disinformation and related professional challenges.

Likewise, UNESCO has provided support for the review of media laws in **Somalia** and **Somaliland** to ensure compliance with international standards. Through this, the Organization increased rights holders’ advocacy and their ability to participate in legislative and institutional processes on freedom of expression.

Rule of Law as a key concept in the digital ecosystem during Internet Governance Forum - Interviews



During the 2019 Internet Governance Forum in Berlin, UNESCO invited judicial operators on 28 November 2019 for a session to discuss the challenges for judicial authorities in dealing with digital rights and digital ecosystems. UNESCO conducted interviews with Hon. Justice Edward Asante, President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Court of Justice and Judge Darian Pavli, from the European Court of Human Rights.

Read the full story in the “Let Free Media Thrive” story magazine annexed to this report

Furthermore, UNESCO played a crucial role in revising regional standards on freedom of expression. Building on established relations of cooperation and trust with the **African Union**, UNESCO was able to successfully contribute to the revision of the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR) Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa, which now takes into account the challenges posed by the digital age.

As a result of UNESCO’s continuous technical and financial support to the **South Sudan** Information Commission, a three-year Information Commission strategy document (2020-2021) on operationalization of the Access to Information Act 2013 was launched on the International Day for Universal Access to Information 2019. The document details five key strategic priority areas that the Information Commission has set out to implement during a three-year period. On the occasion of IDUAI, the South Sudan Information Commissioner stated that this document will be a guide to develop “a world-class right of access to information regime in the country, the region and beyond”. Additionally, over 140 stakeholders from public and private institutions were sensitized to the provisions of the 2013 access to information law, and trained on their roles to practice proactive information disclosure as a mechanism for building between citizens, the government and private institutions.

Advocacy meetings and dialogues on the implementation of access to information regulations were convened by UNESCO in **Tunisia** and **Morocco**. In the latter, Public Information Officers were trained, with an initiative supported by the Prime Minister, who pledged his intention to mainstream access to information within the government and to promote transparency and accountability. The first cohort of Public Information officers graduated in July 2019. Furthermore, the robustness of the relations of trust built with

Moroccan authorities has been illustrated by UNESCO's support in advancing media reform and in discussions regarding the creation of a justice and media dialogue. The Organization has also been solicited to train members of parliament on freedom of expression and access to information.

“UNESCO’s support on the right to access information has been instrumental to bridge the gap between CSOs and government, especially during the long and arduous adoption process of the law.”

Mohamed Leghtas,
Former coordinator of Morocco’s
Network of Civil Society Groups for
Access to Information (REMDI)

Recommendations on countering hate speech in the **Syrian** media content were formulated as the conclusion to phase two of a project initiated in 2017. Representatives of the media outlets who had been monitored throughout the project were invited to an open discussion and encouraged to put an end to hate speech and play a role in peacebuilding. Phase three, starting in 2020 will include a nation-wide, and social media advocacy campaign followed by a comparative monitoring and analysis.

In **Lebanon**, UNESCO initiated talks with the judiciary through the Supreme Judicial Council, ahead of a 2020 action which will focus on: (a) strengthening of judges’ capacities on freedom of expression and journalists’ safety; (b) capacity development of journalists to cover judiciary matters; and (c) the organization of a national conference bringing together the judiciary and the media to create a sustainable and transparent relation of trust between these two spheres.

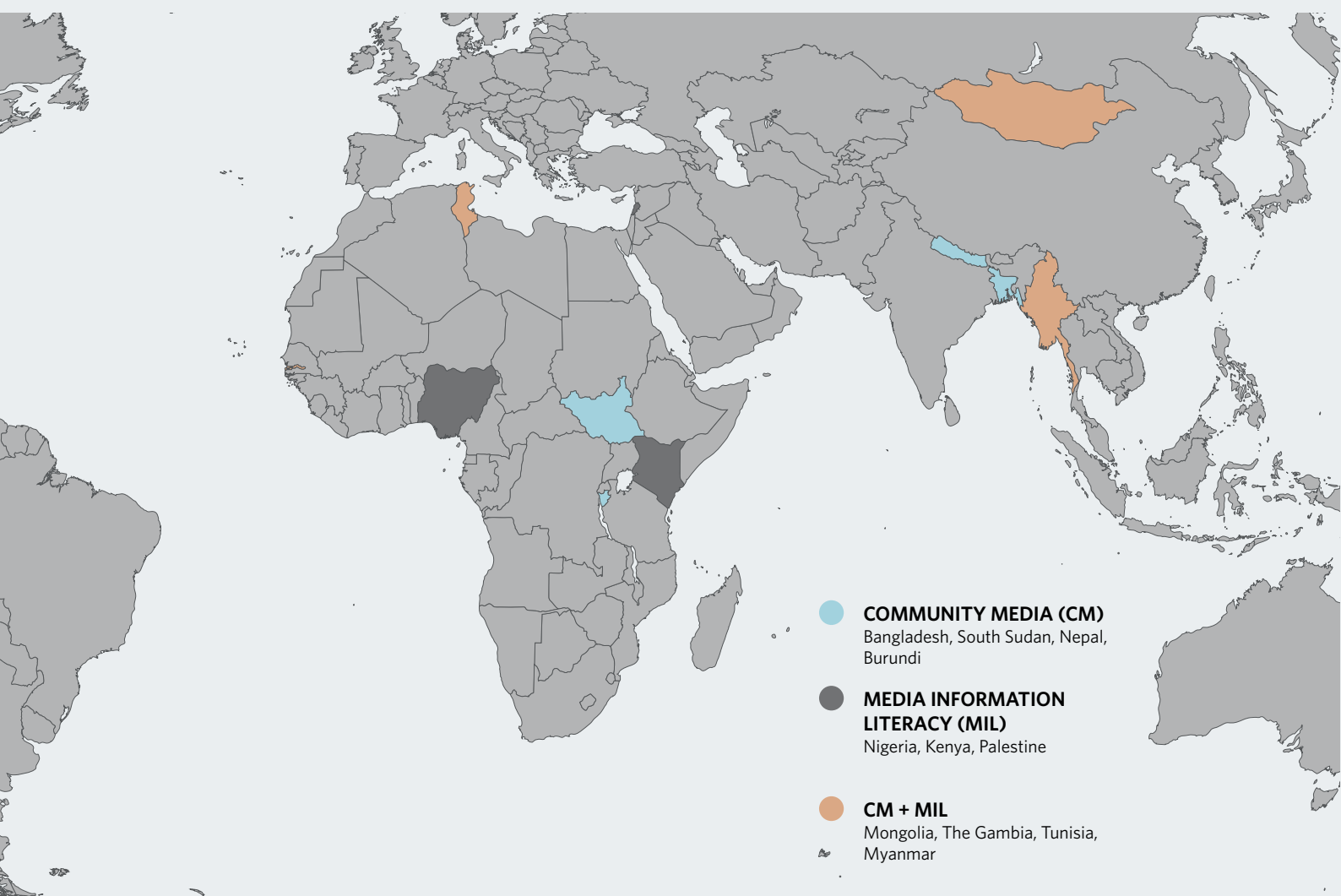
During the 2019 Internet Governance Forum in Berlin, UNESCO gathered judicial operators for a special session to discuss the challenges for judicial authorities in dealing with digital rights and digital ecosystems. Leading members of the ECOWAS Court of Justice, the European Court of Human Rights and an Appeals court in Brazil, along with a prominent Malaysian lawyer took part in this session. The debates centered around why and how the rule of law is a crucial concept when policies related to data governance and safety issues are being designed and implemented. Particular attention was given to identifying and exchanging practices and jurisprudence in line with international standards related to digital challenges (such as, intermediary liability, hate speech, disinformation, and data privacy) and to how the judicial system could be involved in the Internet Governance discussions.

Further details about progress achieved are included in this Chapter’s Country Summaries section.

Outcome 2

Enhancing media contributions to diversity, gender equality and youth empowerment in and through media; and empowering societies through media and information literacy programmes

This outcome rests upon two distinctive outputs, which are each assessed below. In a number of cases, a given activity has multi-dimensional significance in that it contributes to more than one output, and this is signaled where relevant.



Output 1:

Community Media Sustainability supported through strengthened capacities, reinforced cooperation and increased knowledge and awareness amongst policy makers of the sector's needs, supporting SDG 16.10

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:



8

Member States took steps needed to create a supportive environment for community media



370

Community radios empowered



8

National community media networks strengthened



WRD commemorated in

100

countries

Community media is key to media pluralism and diversity. It is an alternative to public and private broadcasting and press, in that it offers a platform to express community-based concerns. The emergence of stronger community media sectors in target countries is an indication of strengthening democracy and participation in the push for sustainable development. A strong community media sector, particularly for underserved and marginalized groups, is critical to advance information access and freedom of expression. Through the MDP, UNESCO aims to strengthen recognition and to improve the legislative environment surrounding community media by training duty-bearers and raising their awareness about the importance of supporting the sector.

In this framework and under the current MDP set of actions, **eight Member States**, including four in Africa, have increased awareness of the steps needed to create a supportive environment for community media. They are in the process of strengthening policies to enable a more diverse and pluralistic media landscape in their country. During the reported period, UNESCO guided local stakeholders who conducted a series of national Community Media Sustainability consultations and situation analysis, including baseline surveys, in **Bangladesh, Burundi, Gambia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, South Sudan, and Tunisia**. Stakeholders drafted eight national strategy documents on Community Media Sustainability.

UNESCO Office in **Bangladesh** partnered with local stakeholders who conducted a comprehensive community radio sustainability situation analysis, including a baseline survey on community media throughout the country. The baseline survey is enabling local authorities and all other community media stakeholders to understand better the challenges that Bangladesh's current 18 Government-registered community radio stations are facing. The studies also identify the status, opportunities, and ways for duty-bearers and right-holders to improve the development of community media in Bangladesh. Government officials, as well as local authorities and community radio broadcasters, were involved in the national consultation. As a result, a comprehensive Community Radio Action Plan and Roadmap for 2019-2020 has been developed and agreed upon by both duty-bearers and right holders. The Action Plan and Roadmap includes a strategy to enhance the capacity, visibility, and coordination of the community radio sector in Bangladesh.

Building on previous work funded under MDP, UNESCO continued to assist the government of **Burundi** in their effort to align with the standards set out in UNESCO's Community Media Sustainability Policy Series. Over 2019, a series of national consultation forums on community radio was co-organized with the Ministry of Communication and Media, leading to a draft framework media law that will serve as a compass for institutional reforms in favour of the Burundian community radios.

Despite delays in the **Gambia**, partly due to staff changes, UNESCO supported local partners who launched a baseline study involving various stakeholders, including duty bearers such as Authorities of the Public Utility Regulation Agency, and rights holders such as members of the Association of Community Radio Broadcasters. The process contributed to raising awareness among duty bearers on the importance of ensuring community media sustainability. The Ministry of information has used the report as a background document in the drafting of the new media law bill.

In **Mongolia**, the community media is still not formally recognized under the media regulatory framework. Against this backdrop, UNESCO's efforts over 2019 were concentrated on increasing the understanding and capacities of community radio stakeholders through the Community Radio Association of Mongolia (CRAMO) to advocate for supportive policy changes with regulatory bodies. UNESCO partnered with CRAMO and organized a consultation meeting and training workshop. A Strategy for Community Radio Sustainable Development in Mongolia (2019-2022), detailing the steps towards more favourable legislation and targeted actions, was adopted by almost 60 duty-bearers and right-holders. They included community radio managers and board members, governors and representatives of SOUMS (local authorities in Mongolia), representatives from the Parliament and President's Office, the Communications Regulatory Commission of Mongolia, the Media Council, and other civil society groups in Mongolia.

The government of **Nepal**, as a follow-up of UNESCO actions related to the MDP, is in the process of drafting several laws that cover the media sector and working journalists. The Mass Media Bill, which is expected to define public, private and community media and their functions, is also under review at the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs. This policy will strengthen community media and considerably contribute to diversity, gender equality, youth empowerment, and effective media response to emergencies and disasters.

In **South Sudan**, UNESCO guided partners who conducted an assessment survey at a national level to identify critical issues faced by community radios and to give recommendations on knowledge sharing mechanisms established between community media networks and duty bearers. A detailed report on Community Media Sustainability in South Sudan resulted from the survey. The report will serve as a basis for identification and recording gaps in the community media ecosystem, and help in designing the future community media laws in South Sudan.

Likewise, in **Tunisia**, a study on the sustainability of community radios was conducted, aiming at providing a detailed overview of these media in the country and proposing appropriate and effective strategies and public policies to develop community media and their long-term sustainability.

Community radio stations need direct support as well, and during the reported period and since the beginning of the current MDP round, UNESCO has enhanced the technical and editorial capacities of over 370 community radio stations to serve diverse audiences. The radio stations spread across seven countries as detailed in the Country Summaries in section 9 below.

During 2019, in Africa as a whole, the MDP has helped empower 46 community radios in **Burundi**, **South Sudan**, and **Tunisia**. In addition, eight national community media networks were strengthened to promote cooperation and knowledge sharing, mainly in Asia.

For instance, UNESCO Katmandu Office was able to continue its work in 2019 with an umbrella organization of community radio - the Association of Community Radio Broadcasters **Nepal** (ACORAB), which covers 350 stations across Nepal. Of these stations, 244 participated in UNESCO activities and workshops. UNESCO also helped in bringing together and strengthening community media stakeholders in **Bangladesh**. Given the partnership and policy interface between the Bangladesh Community Radio Association (BCRA) as a community radio umbrella entity and the Government, UNESCO's agreed technical assistance focused on reinforcing the capacity of community media stakeholders. By leveraging UNESCO's Community Media Policy Series, which was translated into Bangla, UNESCO was able to share international experience and good practices.

Media and Information Literacy Crucial for a Colorful and Diverse Media Landscape in Myanmar



Before the political opening-up in 2012, Myanmar's media landscape was nothing like the country's diverse natural landscape: wide plains fully covered with the grey asphalt of State media only. Only after political reforms, including the abolishment of prior censorship, did new media outlets sprout and bloom. The liberalization measures in the telecom industry since 2013, also contributes to the rapid growth of mobile and internet usage, and notably, the country witnessed 105% SIM penetration rate and 80% for smartphone in 2018. Today, there are over 140 licensed internet service providers in Myanmar in addition to the four telecom operators.

This completely changed the way Myanmar people communicate with each other, and consume and share information and media content. These developments have brought new opportunities as well as challenges to Myanmar citizens to engage in their society and in the transformations that their country is going through.

Read the full story in the "Let Free Media Thrive" story magazine annexed to this report

During 2019, duty bearers in **Myanmar** could not progress with the necessary reforms to regulate the community media sector, which have stalled since the amendments of the broadcasting law were promulgated in 2018. Noting this, UNESCO's efforts in 2019 focused on building a coalition of national and international CSOs (43 organizations, including the existing five community pilot projects) to strengthen coordinated advocacy efforts to push forward the process. As a result, the coalition drafted a strategy to strengthen the capacities of duty-bearers to develop a legal framework and policies that are conducive to the development of community media in the country.

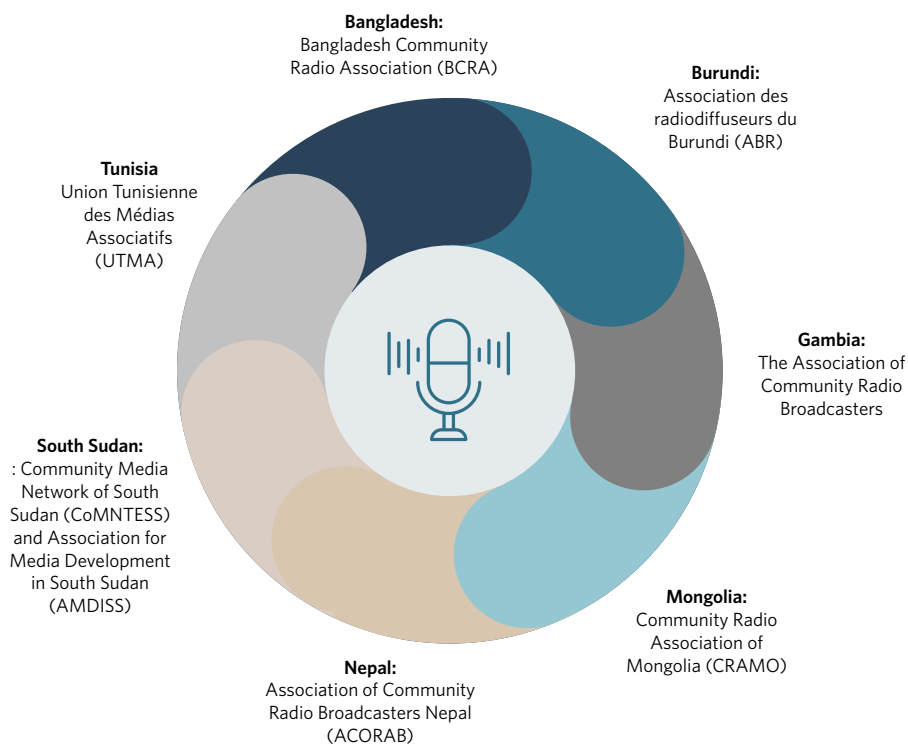
The project has been delayed in **Tunisia**, largely because of instability in parts of the country. (Details are in the Country Summaries in Section 9 below). Notwithstanding this, UNESCO has continued to encourage the development of the community media there, as well as coordination among actors. The World Radio Day (WRD) celebration constituted the leading event in 2019 which regrouped all the stakeholders of relevant sectors. The UNESCO Office in Tunisia enabled a strategic partnership between the National Public Radio and the community radio actors through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding.

Number of community media empowered through improved technical and editorial capacities to serve diverse audiences, engage in networking and coordination, and/or advocate for greater sustainability of sector

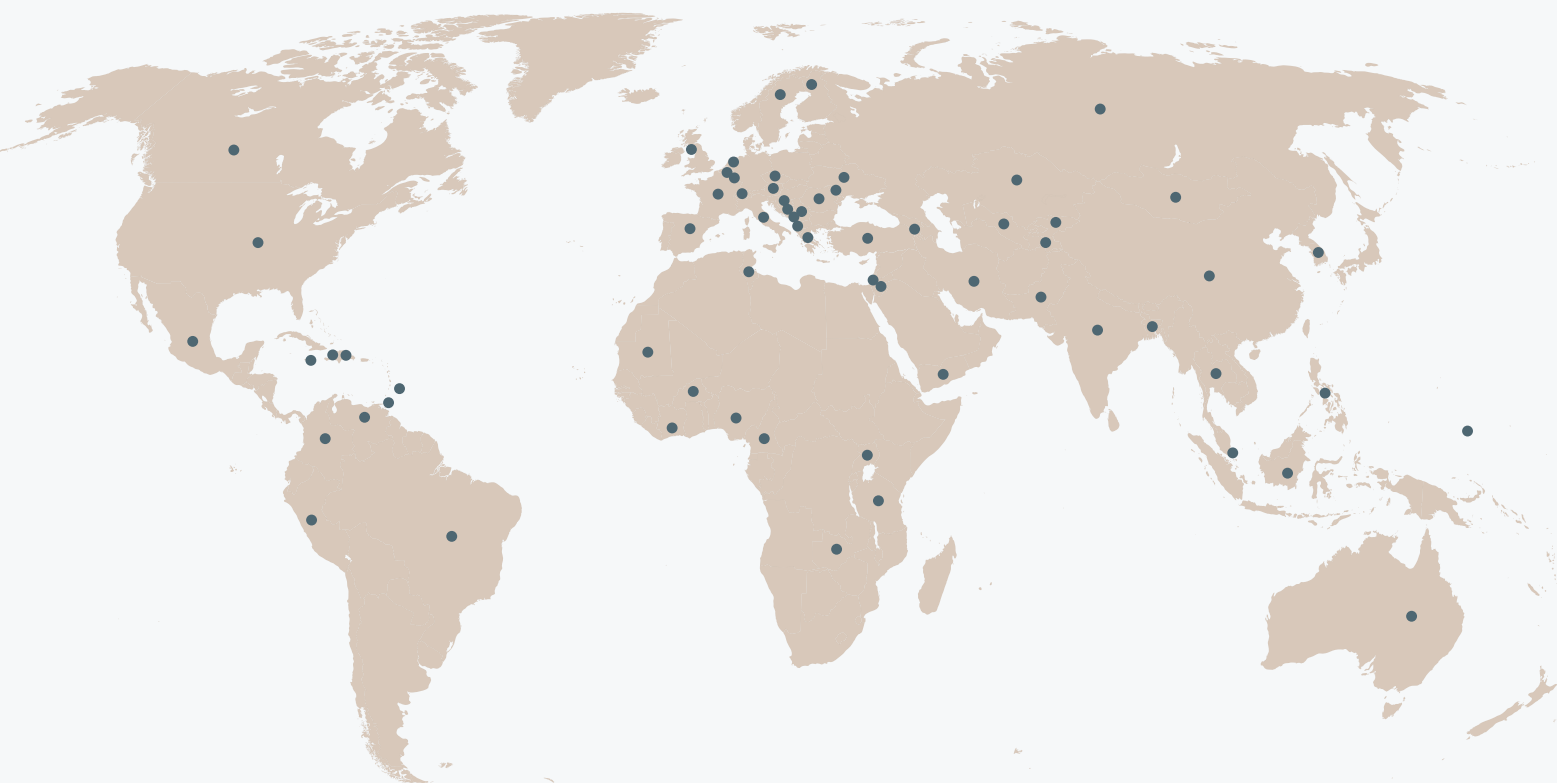


Nepal	244
South Sudan	30
Bangladesh	18
Tunisia	10
Mongolia	9
Burundi	6
Myanmar	5
Total:	313
	including 46 in Africa

Number of national or regional community media networks launched or strengthened to promote cooperation and knowledge sharing



World Radio Day 2019 (WRD) was an occasion to raise awareness and advocate for community radio once again exceeded expectations during the reporting period. The theme of “Dialogue, Tolerance and Peace” was chosen as the annual theme and the Day **entailed 474 events across some 100 countries.**



WORLD RADIO DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Albania, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Czechia, Dominican Republic (the), Ethiopia, Finland, France, Greece, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Luxembourg, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands (the)

Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines (the), Republic of Korea (the), Republic of Moldova (the), Romania, Russian Federation (the), Serbia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the), United Republic of Tanzania (the), United States of America (the), Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen, Zambia

Africa: 21, Arab States: 13, Asia and the Pacific: 17, LAC: 21, Europe and North America: 28

The WRD also featured a Paris-based event, broadcasting with an ephemeral Radio UNESCO in French, English and Spanish, as well as offering 10 'speed workshops' teaching the tips and tricks of radio to 183 guests. Major radio broadcasters such as Radio France Internationale (RFI), Monte Carlo Doualiya (MCD), and Radio Orient also diffused live from UNESCO's headquarters.

Capitalising on the Day, at least 33 offices organized forums, conferences or other celebrations. Inter-sectoral cooperation was particularly high, with the involvement of all five Sectors at UNESCO. In 2019, WRD continued as the UNESCO day with the most press interviews and the broadest geographical spread. UNESCO staff members, from both headquarters and the field, gave at least 64 interviews around the world.

Synergies with external partners also helped to make World Radio Day 2019 a success. In a partnership with the European Radio Show, UNESCO supported the organization of the World Radio Day contest for the best thematic radio message and distributed rights-free jingles in each of the six official UN languages. To further promote the organization and the Day, UNESCO also participated in the 2019 edition of the European Radio Show from the 24-26 January 2019.

UNESCO collaborated closely with other UN agencies, namely UN News, UN Peacekeeping and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). Additionally, the 2019 edition partnered once more with the World Radio Day committee and other major broadcasters, specifically:



- Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU)
- Asia Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD)
- World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC)
- Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC)
- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)
- Permanent Conference of Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators (COPEAM)
- International Association of Broadcasting (IAB)
- Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)
- Radio France Internationale (RFI)
- International Radio and Television Union (URTI)

UNESCO convening community radio stakeholders in Bangladesh

UNESCO has been a part of the community media development process in Bangladesh for many years. While UNESCO initially provided radio equipment to community radio stations, in recent years, with funding support from UNESCO's Multi Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists, UNESCO focused on providing capacity strengthening, convening key stakeholders, and promoting networking and knowledge exchange among key community radio entities in Bangladesh.

One key activity was a large national-level consultation meeting with key community radio stakeholders that was conducted by the UNESCO Dhaka Office in partnership with the Institute of Communication Studies (ICS) and the Bangladesh Community Radio Association (BCRA) on 29 July 2019. The consultation meeting brought together key community radio rights-holders and duty-bearers and allowed for discussions on key sustainability issues of Bangladesh's community radio sector, including issues of licensing, public funding, fundraising, and digital transition.



Discussions during Community Radio Stakeholder Consultation Meeting, 29 July 2019. Photo: UNESCO

Output 2:

Member States capacity on MIL enhanced to critically assess and use media, including social media, and supporting SDG4 and SDG17

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:



MIL Week:
over 200 events in

68

countries



480

Duty bearers, with
advanced knowledge of
MIL policy best practices



300

Teachers/educators with
improved capacities to
adapt and apply MIL



33

Youth Organizations
empowered to integrate
MIL in their operations



4 synergetic
collaborations among

110

stakeholders'
organizations

Media and Information Literacy (MIL) is a basis for enhancing access to information and knowledge, freedom of expression, and combatting disinformation.

During the reported period, over 68 countries joined UNESCO and celebrated the 9th edition of the **Global Media and Information Literacy Week 2019**, on 24 - 31 October 2019, around the theme MIL Citizens: Informed, Engaged, Empowered.

In **Tunisia** for instance, the first national MIL Week was organized with actors such as IREX Europe, International Media Support, Article 19, The Press Council, and support of the Ministry of Education and the High Independent Authority of Audiovisual Communication. The Tunisian MIL Week will take place every year and will serve to establish an inventory around the various initiatives and to promote coordination and synergy. Combined with the celebration of the MIL Week in Tunisia, a pilot testing workshop was organized with participation by representatives of the Ministry of Education, universities, civil society organizations, and other international actors working on MIL in Tunisia (IMS, Irex Europe, and PAMT). A tailored and detailed MIL curriculum/program was developed by the local partners and piloted in the formal educational system in Tunisia. UNESCO also conducted meetings with partners to establish a multi-stakeholder steering committee to contribute the MIL Curriculum adaptation process.

The MIL Week Feature Conference was held in Gothenburg, **Sweden**. For three days, almost 300 individuals from five continents came together to learn and understand more about the challenges of our time and how MIL can strengthen democracy and free speech all over the globe.



Anna Ekström, Minister for Education of Sweden, at the Global MIL Week 2019 Feature Conference in Gothenburg, Sweden

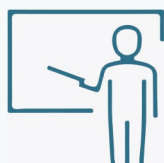
Young people's voices resonated loudly in the global commemoration of Global MIL Week as well as the feature events. Youth were engaged not just as target groups for MIL training but also as actors and as part of the solution to achieve media and information literate societies. Besides being vocal in the Feature Conference, young people took the lead of the Youth Agenda Forum. The youth participants decided to speak directly to duty bearers at the highest level by addressing an Open Letter to Heads of International Development Organizations and Heads of States. This stresses the vital role of MIL

and youth in the sustainable development process and encompasses specific calls to action directly addressing Heads of International Development Organizations and Heads of States, urging them to advance MIL development in their countries and globally. The full Open Letter which UNESCO has helped to publicise can be [downloaded here](#).

MIL has gained traction as a tool for development by now being recognized by the 193 countries that unanimously proclaimed Global MIL Week as official week at the 40th Session of the UNESCO General Conference on 25 November 2019, thereby committing UNESCO to assist Member States in their quest to advance MIL policy and practices.

With the support of the MDP, duty bearers and professionals benefited from MIL-related interventions in 2019. UNESCO enhanced the capacity of almost 500 duty bearers and 300 teachers or professionals in **Kenya, Gambia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine**, and **Tunisia** to integrate MIL curricula in their respective Education and Communication and Information systems. This was achieved through the organization of five training workshops and the co-organization of three national consultation of MIL policies and strategies in Kenya, Mongolia, and Myanmar.

In **Kenya**, UNESCO technical support was provided towards the preparation of the country's first Media and Informational Literacy Policy and Strategy Document. This was done through a consultative process led by the Media Council of Kenya and involved the adaptation of UNESCO model MIL Policy and Strategy Guidelines and Kenya's national development aspirations, guidelines, and policies. Technical meetings were held towards the development of the MIL Policy and Strategy document with inputs from expert teams drawn from Government Ministries as well as expert from ICTs, and education, academia, private sector and non-state actors. The draft Media and Information Literacy Policy and Strategy document was validated through a national stakeholders' conference held on 10 December 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya. The policy and strategy document provide a foundation for further advocacy and mobilization of government to prioritize a nationwide dialogue on integration of MIL in the country's development agenda, namely Teacher Training and Education, BIG 4 Agenda, and Kenya's Vision 2030 Agenda.



Total of 480 professionals trained

Myanmar	300
Palestine	68
Mongolia	40
Kenya	37
Nigeria	35



Total of 298 teachers/educators trained

(with 50/50 gender balance in aggregate)

Mongolia	114
Myanmar	75
Nigeria	54
Palestine	30
Tunisia	25

UNESCO assisted **Mongolia** to develop its National MIL Policies and Strategies framework, building on the results of the previous consultations with various stakeholders. The document analyzed the current media and information literacy framework in Mongolia, including the existing resources, advantages and challenges. The draft Mongolian National MIL Policies and Strategies was submitted to all members of the Mongolian Parliaments' Standing Committee for Education, Culture, and Science, for further deliberation.

In **Myanmar**, UNESCO, in collaboration with the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication, ten national NGOs and the Ministries of Education and Information, has developed a MIL Competency Framework based on the existing UNESCO MIL Curriculum, the UNESCO MIL Competency Framework: Country Readiness and Competencies and other publications and tools on MIL. The framework was adapted into a training module by the local NGO Myanmar ICT for Development Organization (MIDO). The Ministry of Education is using it for the integration of MIL into teacher education. It will be used as the basis for the MIL Action Plan that the Ministry of Information will start developing in 2020 with UNESCO's support.

Media and Information Literacy (MIL) for Critical Thinking in Nigeria



« The adapted UNESCO MIL curriculum has supported my engagement with the children and the society at large on MIL. It is a great tool to impart critical thinking and democratic discourse for the benefit of the society. » - Martin Akpan, Media and Information Literacy practitioner

With 781 million illiterate adults and 262 million young people out of schools, basic literacy is a global challenge. Many educators, like Nigerian MIL practitioner Martin Akpan, believe in merging it with MIL to better empower youth with critical thinking and quality media information.

To him, empowering people through MIL is becoming an essential prerequisite for fostering equitable access to information and knowledge and promoting free, independent and pluralistic media and information systems. That is one reason why M. Akpan participated in a UNESCO co-launched MIL Massive Open Online Course (MOOC).

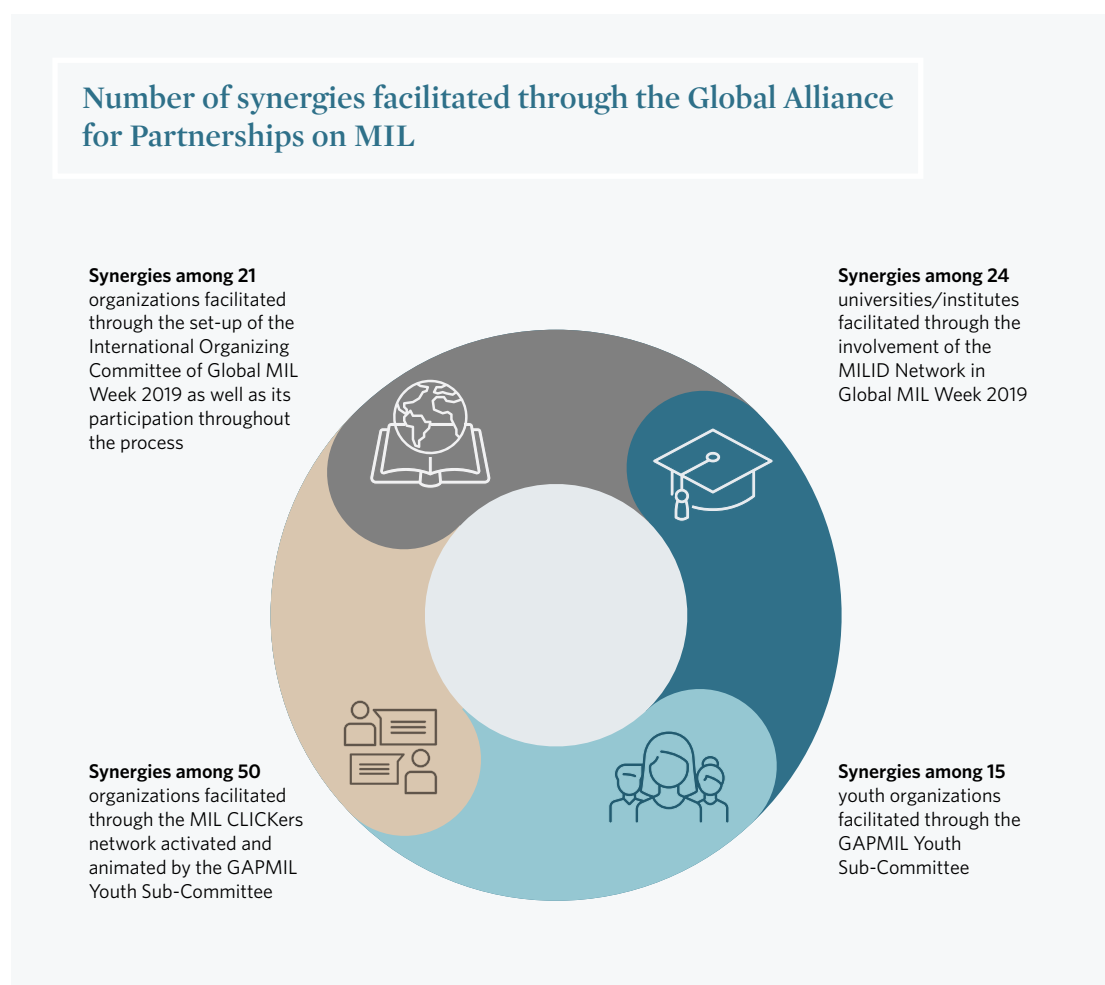
Read the full story in the "Let Free Media Thrive" story magazine annexed to this report

In preparation for the rollout of MIL Curriculum across institutions of learning in **Nigeria**, a two-day workshop was organized with school managers and teachers to introduce the curriculum and develop modalities for deployment. Upon completion of the workshop, stakeholders representing 32 institutions (Universities, Monotechnics, Polytechnics, secondary schools, and private training institutions) agreed to pilot test selected competencies various institutions. Three months later, 22 institutions progressively reported their pilot test process with 14 fully adopted the curriculum for teaching. UNESCO partnered with Education Initiative to train teachers who would in turn establish MIL clubs in their various schools and thereby mainstream the curriculum as an extracurricular activities. This intervention saw to the training of 40 teachers on the MIL curriculum. At the end of the exercise, the country has 22 functional MIL clubs established. Building on the previous achievement of the MDP in Nigeria, within this reporting period, UNESCO revitalized the Media and Information Literacy Coalition of Nigeria (MILCON) group and hosted a stakeholder consultative forum on MIL. The MILCON group is facilitating coordination of interventions on MIL in Nigeria and promote synergy amongst stakeholders towards advocacies on national policies and integration of MIL into the school's curriculum.

In **Palestine**, MIL is often included in many after school activities. Through the collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE), UNESCO and partners are working towards MIL inclusion in school curricula, with MOEHE piloting it in 24 schools. The formalization and integration of MIL curricula in Palestine is thereby underway at the MOEHE.

The UNESCO-led Global Alliance for Partnerships on MIL (GAPMIL) of some 500 organizations from 112 countries continued to serve as the major MIL network facilitating partnerships and policy advocacy around the globe. In 2019, four synergetic collaborations were achieved among stakeholder organizations. The MDP supported the various initiatives of the GAPMIL Youth Sub-Committee, which built synergies by activating and animating the [MIL CLICKers](https://en.unesco.org/MILCLICKS) community of practice, <https://en.unesco.org/MILCLICKS> to strengthen the collective fight against disinformation in social media.

The Youth Sub-Committee has also established the GAPMIL Youth Ambassadors network, consisting of young professionals from different organizations. These GAPMIL Youth Ambassadors are undertaking research and advocating for MIL policies and strategies. Through a call to the UNESCO-initiated University Network on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue (MILID), universities/institutes were involved in Global MIL Week 2019, and contributed collaborative knowledge and resources through the preparation and sharing of academic articles and research findings. Moreover, representatives from many organizations joined forces to serve on the International Organizing Committee of Global MIL Week 2019.





Women journalists in Afghanistan from different provinces benefitted from training sessions on safety and first-aid assistance

3. Contribution to UNESCO Priority Gender Equality

UNESCO is fully committed to the promotion of equality between women and men across the Organization's mandate and has consequently made Gender Equality one of its two global priorities. Through this, Gender Equality is recognized as an important end in itself, and as a fundamental element for the achievement of sustainable development, in line with UNESCO's Gender Equality Action Plan for 2014-2021 and with Sustainable Development Goal 5 (empowerment of women and girls) of the 2030 Agenda.

Gender equality or a lack thereof is a dramatic concern for freedom of expression. If women do not partake in producing media content and in decision-making processes within media organizations, this affects the extent to which media content reflects society as a whole. In order for women's voices to be heard in societal discourses, for issues that concern primarily women to be recognized and for gender equality to be promoted, gender is a key considerations when addressing freedom of expression, media development and safety of journalists.

Women are under-represented in newsrooms as well as in decision-making roles in the media in most countries, but reasons thereof are manifold and often specific to the country context. Often, patriarchal societal structures are at the root of discrimination against women in the workplace or work within the media sector is perceived as irreconcilable with family duties assigned to women. Furthermore, gender-specific attacks against women online and offline drive women out of the media sector or deter women journalists from working on specific beats.

In this context, the MDP mainstreams gender-sensitivity throughout all of its projects, while also supporting projects that address specifically the promotion of gender equality. This means that all activities within the MDP identify and acknowledge gender differences and inequalities. As far as possible, they are also gender-responsive, meaning that they also go beyond identifying disparities and instead articulating initiatives to address them. A large proportion are gender-transformative in the sense of actively challenging discriminatory policies and practices. A number of examples below have been cited earlier in this report, but here the gender angle is highlighted.

As an example, the dimensions of gender equality and gender-specific challenges were explored throughout the In-Focus Series of the World Trends Report on Freedom of Expression and Media Development (WTR). The “Elections and Media in Digital Times” report dedicates a sub-chapter to gender related threats against journalists and media actors. The importance of access to information to tackle gender inequality is highlighted throughout the “Access to Information: A New Promise for Sustainable Development” report. Finally, the “Intensified Attacks, New Defences – Developments in the Fight to Protect Journalists and End Impunity” devotes a special chapter to gender dimensions of journalists’ safety. It may also be noted that in 2019, UNESCO launched a comprehensive study on online violence against women journalists and on best practices to counter it.

On a regional level, a two-year project in Maghreb-Machreq region, titled “Enhancing a gender responsive film sector in the South Mediterranean region” concluded in December 2019 co-funded by the European Union and UNESCO through the MDP. The project, which was carried out in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, and Libya, as well as in MDP countries Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia, helped to bring to light and document existing gender inequalities within the Arabic language film industry. It also surfaced female talents, catalyzed a network, and supported the development of a pedagogical module on gender in film which was launched in universities in **Jordan** and **Morocco**. Other key achievements included the initiation of the process of adopting a regional charter for equality in the film sector, with a view of sensitizing national public entities, and the adoption of the recommendation document of the 13th International Women Film Festival of Salé in September 2019.

On the national level, the issue of gender equality and the specific threats faced by women journalists were incorporated into the agenda of all workshops organized by UNESCO in **Pakistan**. In this regard, discussions were initiated with the Cyber-crime governmental department regarding gathering evidence on harassment and digital threats which affect female journalists disproportionately.

In **Sudan**, women journalists and reporters were provided with a safe and open space to express their concerns in UNESCO-initiated engagements. Participants highlighted challenges and culturally frowned-upon practices in certain communities, like working late hours and being outdoors at night. Participants also stressed the very limited opportunities for promotion due to a male-dominant culture and harassment in the workplace. These issues were later raised by UNESCO during meetings and workshops with national stakeholders.

Activities dedicated to addressing gender-specific issues were organized in **Afghanistan**, with a focus on women's managerial role in the media, the safety of women journalists and capacity-building. A safety training tailored for women journalists successfully equipped journalists with safety and first-aid training. Additionally, women journalist gained skills on safeguarding data and technological tools during a digital safety training, during which they constituted 50% of participants. A similar training dedicated to the digital safety of women journalists was organized in **Myanmar**.

In **Lebanon**, training sessions for young journalists on safety issues had over 70% of female participants, and also included a component highlighting safety concerns of women journalists. UNESCO also recorded a majority of female participants in its activities carried out with the Internal Security Forces of Lebanon, with women officers being intensely involved in all stages from planning to execution of the ISF's communication strategy.

Over 150 journalists and editors' skills and capacities have been enhanced on gender responsive reporting and safety and knowledge on media laws in **South Sudan**. The importance of empowering media institutions and networks was emphasized during activities conducted in the country. Moreover, a 50/50 gender balance was promoted in the selection of participants for capacity building and advocacy initiatives.

UNESCO encouraged participants to activities in **Palestine** to question norms and cultural behaviors in the male-dominated field of journalism, something which proved challenging at times, and will require the organization of additional activities. Through various discussions and workshops, participants analyzed their gendered constructions of the contribution of men and women to freedom of expression, and awareness was raised around gender-biased and limiting legislation.

In **Syria**, the development of the safety of journalists' action plan was underpinned by a gender-sensitive approach. A plan is being developed that will focus several actions on the safety of women journalists, and evaluation and monitoring efforts will include gender-sensitive indicators. Furthermore, the upcoming second monitoring of hate speech in Syrian media content will include a specific section on hate speech targeting women and female journalists.

UNESCO developed a series of training sessions to raise awareness among media professionals regarding gender-sensitive media content in **Tunisia**, together with the Tunisian National Regulator and the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR). These sessions have aimed to promote the establishment of a working group comprised of media professionals to further the advocacy on a gender charter to be adopted by the Tunisian media.

The Community Radio Sustainability Situation Analysis and Baseline Survey on Community Media launched during the reported period in **Bangladesh, Burundi, Gambia, Nepal, and South Sudan** include specific references to gender. The studies also emphasize the potential of community radio to empower women and to achieve gender equality. For the baseline study, the gender balance was given due consideration, particularly in the selection of duty bearers and the right owners to participate in the study. The composition of the Task Force has considered the equal presence of men and women.

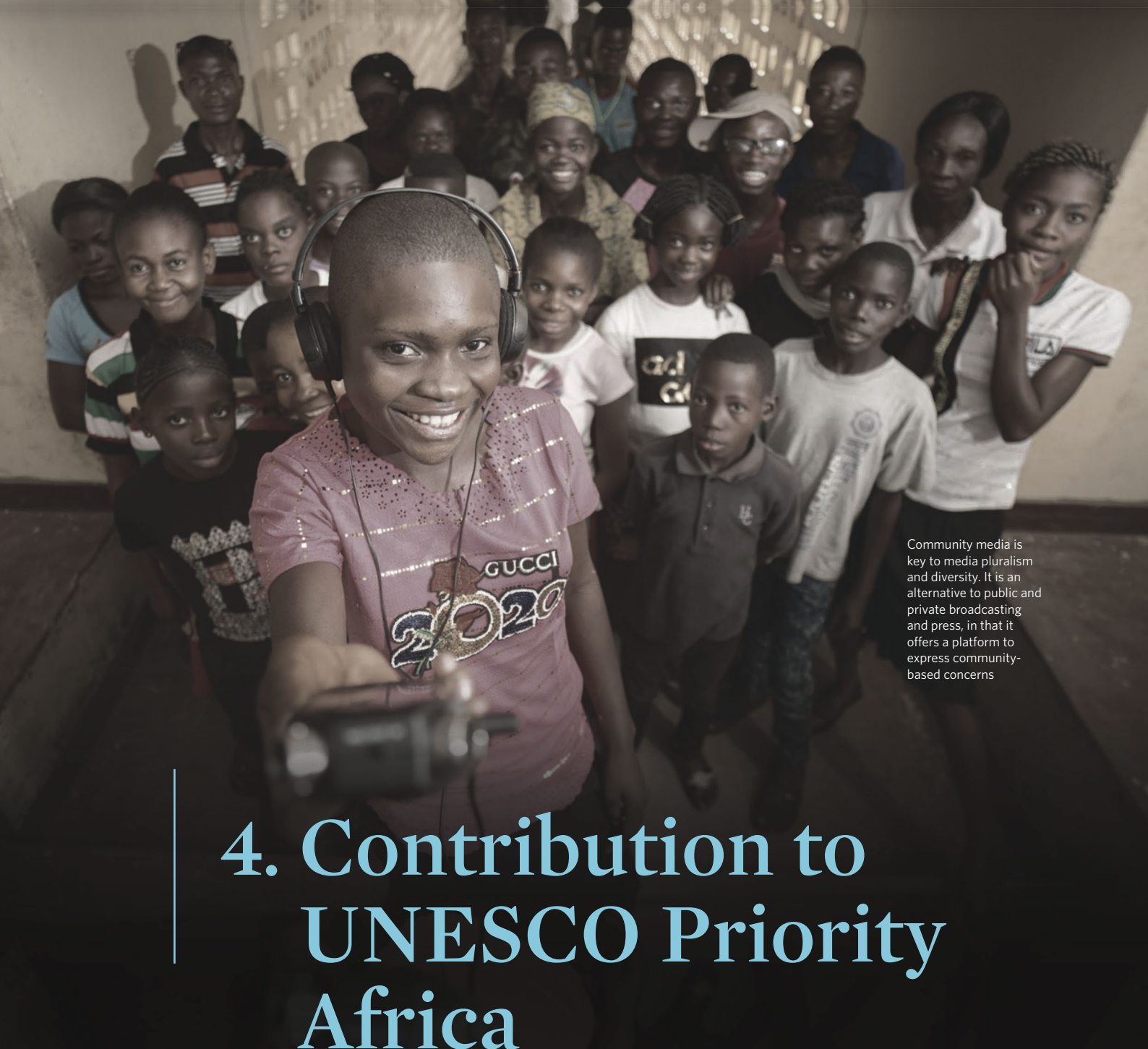
Kathmandu Office conducted a study on the status and practice of gender equality and social inclusion in community radios of **Nepal**. It was found that there is minimal participation of the women journalists in the community radios, and the situation is even disappointing in the management boards and managerial positions. The ACORAB, therefore, was called on to take appropriate step towards increasing women's participation. Based on the data and case studies, the study recommended that

because gender inclusiveness has a strong impact on the production of the content, a study on how the gender inclusion policy has been adopted in the community radios is necessary. The findings of the study have been shared with the stakeholders and with the UN Resident Coordinator Office in Nepal under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and with the development partners to explore the opportunities of additional collaboration to speed up the gender-transformative and gender-responsive activities.

In **Nigeria**, UNESCO, UN Women and UNDP encouraged exchange of experiences and highlighted the participation of women role models in peace building activities and decision-making processes during a series of workshops concerning the engagement of media on TV debates and Talk Shows.

Gender dimensions of MIL are central in the MIL Competency Framework developed by UNESCO. In **Myanmar**, 70% of the teacher educators and Ministry of Information staff trained on MIL during 2019 are women. Gender was mainstreamed as development issues for which MIL can serve as a tool to address, during project implementation throughout the preparation of draft National Media and Information Literacy Policy and Strategy Document and Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers.

In **Kenya**, technical committees, consultation workshops, and national validation workshops considered gender representation of women and men. The national validation workshop for the tailored MIL Curriculum for Teachers had a total of 37 participants comprising 24 men and 13 women. In **Myanmar**, UNESCO's counterparts in activities for Media and Information Literacy in government ministries as well as CSOs/NGOs are women.



Community media is key to media pluralism and diversity. It is an alternative to public and private broadcasting and press, in that it offers a platform to express community-based concerns

4. Contribution to UNESCO Priority Africa

As a response to Africa's current development challenges and to release the full potential for the development of the continent, UNESCO has adopted Global [Priority Africa](#); a priority through which the Organization commits to support African States, the African Union and regional communities in achieving Africa's priorities and the Organization's medium-term goals set for 2014-2021. In order to help fulfill the vision enshrined in the African Union's Agenda 2063 and in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, efforts deployed across the continent within the framework of the MDP have focused on raising awareness, and strengthening the capacities of right holders, including journalists and media workers, while at the same time developing the capacities of duty bearers, and strengthening advocacy of the importance of safeguarding freedom of expression and access to information in order to ensure rule of law, good governance and transparency. A number of examples below have been cited earlier in this report but indicated here under this frame of reference, and their significance to the region is underlined where appropriate.

Building on the Judges Initiative implemented in Latin America and the Caribbean since 2013, the programme was extended to the African continent in cooperation with the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights. Since 2017, more than 1,800 judicial operators and representatives of civil society in Africa were trained on regional and international standards pertaining to freedom of expression and safety of journalists. A comprehensive set of tools was developed to this effect, including Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), workshops, as well as a [Toolkit on the legal standards on freedom of expression for the judiciary in Africa](#) available in English and French. In addition to sharing the Toolkit with the participants of UNESCO's workshops, copies were also sent to 15 African judicial training and legal practice institutes, as well as to all the African regional courts. Moreover, the Toolkit was also used by some of UNESCO's partners for their own activities, such as a Media Legal Defence Initiative (MLDI) workshop for legal professionals, organized in August 2019 in South Africa, and informed an [Online course on Media Freedom and Freedom of Expression in Africa](#).

The latest examples of workshops and training have included two regional seminars which gathered judges from Supreme Courts and judiciary actors. The training seminar in Dakar was organized in cooperation with the Supreme Court of Senegal and gathered 16 supreme court judges from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) countries and led to the adoption of 12 recommendations of concrete measures to strengthen freedom of expression standards. The seminar in Kampala took place prior to the 4th African Judicial Dialogue and gathered judges and Chief Justices from supreme courts from 13 countries in Africa, and 27 high-level judges from Uganda. Both seminars were organized in cooperation with the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and included the participation and active exchange with representatives of civil society and the media.

Furthermore, UNESCO and the ECOWAS Court of Justice signed a Memorandum of Understanding in May 2019 in an effort to strengthen the protection of freedom of expression, press freedom and safety of journalists in West Africa. UNESCO is now looking to strengthen these initiatives through on-the-ground training of trainers as well as new online courses for judiciary actors and civil society representatives in Africa.

Through the UNESCO Addis Ababa Liaison Office to the African Union, work has been undertaken at continental level with the African Editors Forum (TAEF) in order to put in place effective coordination mechanisms in Africa for the promotion and protection of journalism and journalists' safety. To this effect, joint work has been carried out to adapt the Council of Europe's platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists across African Union Member States. This platform in process will consist of a public space that facilitates the compilation, processing and dissemination of information on serious concerns about media freedom and safety of journalists in Africa with an aim to improve the protection of journalists, better address threats and violence against media professionals and foster early warning mechanisms and response capacity within the African Union Member States. Through this, Member states will be encouraged to post reports on action taken by their respective organs and institutions in response to cases in respective countries.

During 2019, UNESCO also conducted consultative meetings which led to the submission of a request for the establishment of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) Working Group on the Promotion of Protection of Journalism and the Safety of Journalists in Africa. This has now been addressed to the African Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information. Finally, UNESCO contributed to the ACHPR revision of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa, which now takes note of developments in the digital age. This Declaration is a reference point for judicial decisions around the continent.

UNESCO additionally supported media law reforms in **Burundi, Ethiopia, Gambia, Sudan, and Tunisia** as well as supported dialogue between policy makers and media stakeholders on impending media legislation in Somalia. In **South Sudan**, UNESCO has actively assisted access to information reforms, and contributed to the drafting of a 3-year plan for the ATI Commission. South Sudan has just completed its community media baseline survey, which will set a path for a more pluralistic media environment.

In the **Gambia**, the recommendations resulted from the baseline study on community radio sustainability are now used by the Ministry of Information as a framework in the drafting of the new media service bill. The same applies to the other countries mentioned above. In **Burundi**, UNESCO advocacy and technical assistance to the Government led to an increase of the budget dedicated to the media support fund. At a political level, UNESCO supported media law reforms in Burundi, Ethiopia, Gambia, Sudan, and Tunisia as well as supported dialogue between policy makers and media stakeholders on impending media legislation in Somalia.

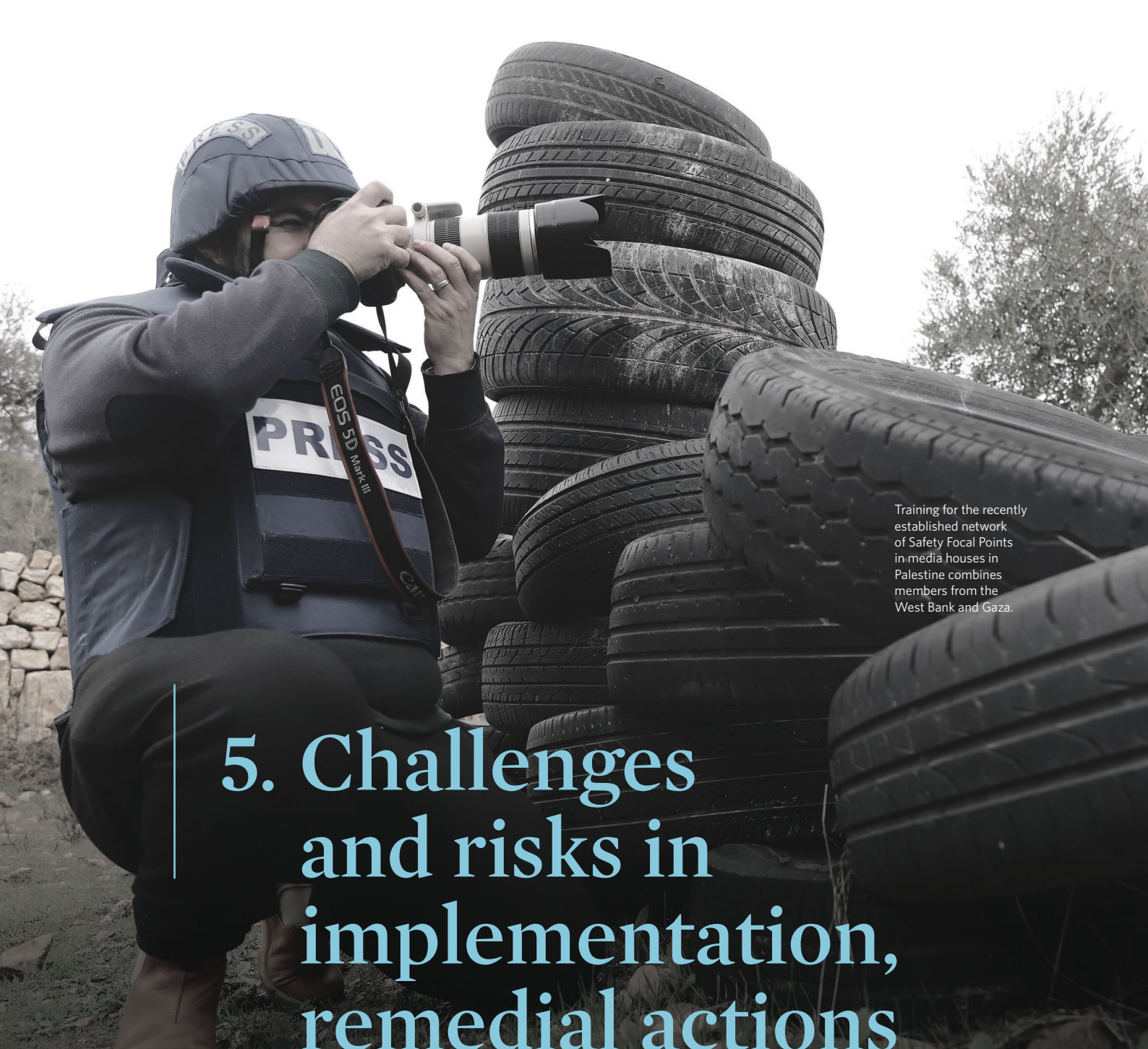
Trained media professionals are paramount to ensure ethical, independent and pluralistic media landscape. To this end, the MDP through dedicated and tailored workshops and seminars has enhanced the capacity of almost 50 community radio stations, and give networks of media professionals in **Burundi, Gambia, South Sudan and Tunisia**. In Burundi with a fragile media environment, a community media branch is under creation setting a path for more voices and more opinions to be heard.

Three of the seven target countries for MIL actions in the MDP are in Africa. UNESCO has been supporting the development of national MIL policies and strategies in the **Gambia, Kenya, and Nigeria**. Through the implementation of MIL component in Kenya, the government has strengthened its capacity on MIL and recognized the needs to upscale the deployment of MIL actions in the country, notably the Ministry of ICTs and the Ministry of Education. The first MIL Policy and Strategy Document for Kenya has been prepared and validated by a range of government agencies and other national stakeholders.

In the **Gambia**, UNESCO has successfully advocated for the Ministry of information and the Ministry of Education to work together for advancing MIL agenda. This led to the establishment of a joint task force to work on MIL readiness assessment and policy in The Gambia.

MIL has been integrated into the national education in **Kenya and Nigeria** at different levels. In formal education, the UNESCO model MIL Curriculum has been adapted to the Kenyan and Nigerian contexts; the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development has endorsed the MIL Curriculum as a timely resource for retooling Kenyan teachers to deliver the new national curriculum. The localized MIL curriculum has been piloted in several institutions in Nigeria, and the Nigerian National Commission of Colleges of Education started mainstreaming the MIL Curriculum into Colleges of Education Minimum Standard and has decided to introduce MIL as a compulsory general course in 1 to 2 years. At the non-formal education level, MIL Clubs were established in 22 schools in Nigeria.

Stakeholders in Africa have been more actively engaged in advocating for MIL. The celebration of Global MIL Week 2019 was reverberated in 10 African countries with 19 national and local events.



Training for the recently established network of Safety Focal Points in media houses in Palestine combines members from the West Bank and Gaza.

5. Challenges and risks in implementation, remedial actions and lessons learnt

As in previous years, many of the challenges faced in the implementation of activities stemmed from political instability and ensuing security concerns, particularly in countries currently experiencing or having recently overcome armed conflict. In the same way, frequent changes in government and limited coordination among governmental instances also remained an issue, and often caused delays in implementation. Additional challenges encountered throughout the year also included the lack of capacities or dissolution of partner institutions, lack of political will or interest by certain actors, and delays in funding from new partners.

Security and/or stability issues in countries such as Afghanistan, Lebanon, Palestine, Somalia, Syria and Tunisia repeatedly proved a challenge for the implementation of actions. For instance, in Afghanistan and Somalia, levels of insecurity impeded the organization of several planned activities. The aggravation of insecurity in Palestine, and especially in Gaza, caused delays in the implementation of the activities comprised in the 2019 work plan. These adverse circumstances were nonetheless an opportunity to stress the importance of safety of journalists, and of developing safety officer positions within media organizations. Meanwhile, in Lebanon, massive demonstrations and subsequent governmental changes created obstacles for the involvement of parliamentarians in outreach activities and again called for specific attention to intensify work on safety of journalists during demonstrations. Likewise, in Syria, sectarianism fueled by the ongoing conflict in the country has forced UNESCO to be extra attentive to political sensitivities and carefully decide on the type of activities implemented, the partners involved, and how to approach the priorities identified. With its non-biased position, and expertise, UNESCO was able to achieve certain results, despite the persistent challenges.

Changes in government and fragmented leadership in some partner institutions persisted as one of the most recurring challenges faced in the implementation of activities. The issue was pervasive regionally in Africa and in countries such as Ethiopia, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Pakistan, Sudan, and Tunisia; and momentarily imperiled the sustainability of some actions. For instance, the ostensibly overlapping mandates of African Union commissions on the topics of freedom of expression, media freedom and the safety of journalists made it difficult to identify the most relevant counterpart without overstepping the mandate of other structures. In response to these challenges, UNESCO held meetings with relevant duty-bearers to discuss possible ways to move forward. In some countries, pragmatic and country-specific solutions were adopted, such as the contracting of a professional trainer to fill the gaps in work that should have been coordinated by partner organizations in Palestine, or the signing of an agreement on Training of Trainers with a local ministry in Sudan.

UNESCO too had to challenge the low engagement of certain actors in countries such as Myanmar, Pakistan, South Sudan and Syria. For instance, in Myanmar, despite initiatives undertaken by UNESCO to encourage significant reform of the country's legal framework on freedom of expression and access to information, certain officials have held back due to a lack of trust in the media. In a number of countries, duty bearers do not have a full understanding of community media (misperceived by many as simply a case of local private media), and its potential in development. A similar lack of knowledge was noted in Pakistan, where parliamentarians showed low engagement with UN reports and mechanisms on safety of journalists. In Syria, however, and possibly for reasons of fear, time and a lack of autonomy, it was journalists and journalism students who showed hesitancy to engage with the Safety of Journalists Curriculum presented by UNESCO.

Under the reporting period, two countries, namely Ethiopia and Sudan, faced distinct challenges brought about by rapid political change and comprehensive reform processes. The dissolution of certain instances and staff transfers created gaps in roles and responsibilities, thereby impacting the timing, implementation and sustainability of some activities. Still, in both countries, this environment of change and reform was fortuitous for the sharing of new ideas and ways of working. In the same vein, changes in the Government in Bangladesh following the elections in 2018 made it possible to identify some new duty-bearers, as well as to reconfirm the commitment from previously engaged counterparts, in order to continue with the implementation of community media activities as planned.

In UNESCO's regional work in Africa on the training of judges on freedom of expression and the safety of journalists, the Organisation witnessed the reversal of a country withdrawing from a regional protocol that had been supported under the MDP. This was Tanzania's withdrawal from the Declaration 34(6) of the Protocol of the African Court, which allows individuals and NGOs to directly present their cases before the African Court. Additional challenges in the Judges Initiative in Africa included difficulties

in reaching out to relevant duty bearers (particularly senior judges and Chief Justices) and identifying good partners. A number of countries also imposed internet shutdowns during the rolling out of the MOOC in Africa, which restricted access for participants from these countries. As a mitigation measure, UNESCO sent all participants in the MOOC the toolkit for the judiciary once the course was over. Meanwhile, the Latin American branch of Judges Initiative faced the singular challenge of the perpetuation of an informal network of close to 13,000 judicial operators and of continuing to engage previously trained judges. Furthermore, the critical mass of stakeholders reached and trained within the framework of the Judges Initiative since 2013 has created high expectations in terms of the volume of follow-up activities carried out at regional level.

One considerable challenge encountered in Sudan was the delay in funding from a donating partner. Thanks to the flexible nature of the MDP, the UNESCO Office in Khartoum was able to provide the support needed on time and enable Sudan to embark on its media reform as promised.

As during the previous reporting period, lengthy procedures were a hindrance for the conduct of certain activities. In Syria, for example, bureaucratic procedures of some governmental departments and the numerous approvals required were a major factor in delaying activities.

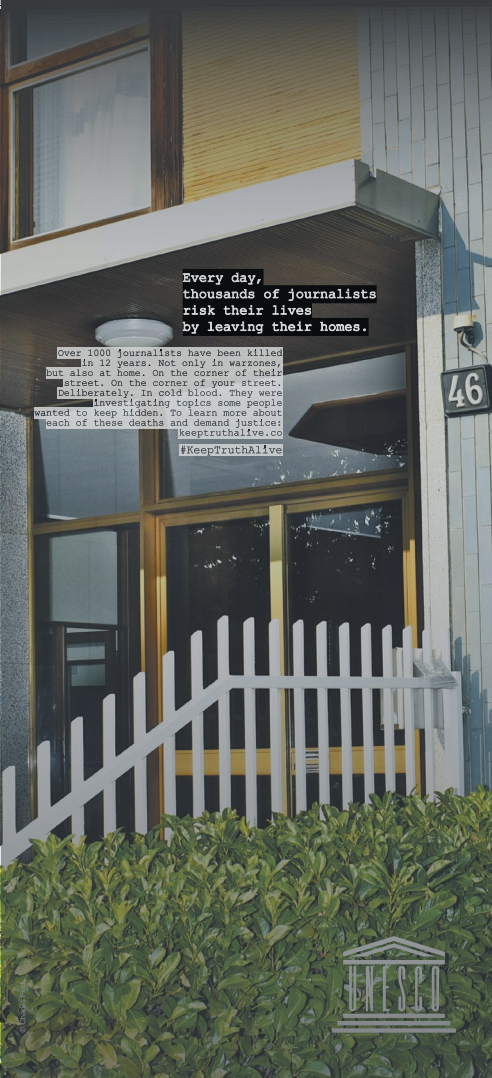
Progress has been very slow in Gambia where it has been difficult for the country to take a leadership role in the assessment of country-readiness for MIL and development of MIL policy. This has been due to logistical and bureaucratic issues such as lack of time for involvement by focal persons or delays in inter-ministerial communication. To remedy this situation, some planned activities were delayed and the implementation of other activities adapted to meet the country situation.

A further difficulty has resided in finding local experts, particularly on MIL. To address this issue, UNESCO has reached out and identified experts from its network of institutions and partners in the region.

The lengthy process of legislative development and debate, as is the case in Somalia, has affected the delivery of certain outputs. In like manner, unequal and unsteady implementation of Access to Information legislation across the Latin America and Caribbean region has burdened progress in this regard.

Overall, these challenges have been met through the inherent flexibility of the MDP, the adaptability and pragmatism of UNESCO officers on the ground; and sustained efforts to identify, reach out and communicate with partners. Regular backstopping from UNESCO Headquarters has also been decisive in many cases. It should also be noted that new activities and countries were integrated into the 2019 work plan, such as Ethiopia, Afghanistan and Sudan. These and other planned actions are reflected in the work plan included in Annex II.

More information about country-specific challenges, remedial action and lessons learnt can be found in the country and regional summaries in Section 9 below.



Every day, thousands of journalists risk their lives by leaving their homes.

Over 1000 journalists have been killed in 12 years. Not only in warzones, but also at home. On the corner of their street. On the corner of your street. Deliberately. In cold blood. They were investigating topics some people wanted to keep hidden. To learn more about each of these deaths and demand justice: KeepTruthAlive.co

#KeepTruthAlive



Pour un journaliste, chercher sa fille à l'école est parfois plus dangereux que de partir en zone de guerre.



Major newspapers featuring IDEI's #KeepTruthAlive campaign in their print versions on 2 November.

6. Visibility

The MDP significantly upscaled communication efforts throughout the last year, notably through the efforts of the Communications Officer recruited in the fall of 2018. The previously developed communication plan was finalized, along with guidelines regarding social media outreach, visual identity and the production of engaging content through an approach inspired by storytelling. The Communications Officer created common, streamlined visual identities for global, regional and commemorations of WPF and IDEI, thereby contributing to the impact of UNESCO's awareness raising and communication initiatives by producing a coherent, poignant, effective and immediately identifiable presence online and in the media. In addition, country and regional factsheets have been finalized, and should be propagated in order to raise awareness about the MDP and attract stakeholders interested in contributing to the Programme.



WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

WPFDF website: **55.5K views**

WPFDF was mentioned in

1,569 news articles

Estimated reach of **504.6K** and potential impressions of **2.4M in social media**

(content published from UNESCO social media accounts)



INTERNATIONAL DAY TO END IMPUNITY FOR CRIMES AGAINST JOURNALISTS

300 news articles

published about the Day,

+1 million impressions

on Twitter;

Estimate reach of more than

250K

Over **6,000 views** of the map, keeptruthalive.co;

The #KeepTruthAlive campaign was displayed on digital billboards in

60,000 spots

in France, Mexico City and Brussels.



ACCESS TO INFORMATION DAY

IDUAI website: **7.5k views**,

Estimated reach of **68k** and potential impressions of **464K** in social media.



WORLD RADIO DAY

World Radio Day website: **94K views** and **22K** only on the 13 February.

+1 million impressions

on Twitter and Facebook;

#DiaMundialdeRadio and #WorldRadioDay trending topics during the Day.



GLOBAL MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY WEEK

Hashtags translated in **10 languages**

Estimated reach of

150K in social media

for MIL CLICKS learning series

News articles are regularly published on the [MDP webpage](#), the other pages of the Communication-Information Sector on UNESCO's website, and on Field Offices websites. Some items have appeared on the main UNESCO home page. News continue to be disseminated by partners through their own online platforms and social media. The Newsletter of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue on Impunity now reaches over 39600 subscribers.

In other examples, online visibility efforts were undertaken in order to promote the work with judges in Africa, the launch of the French version of the MOOC and the launch of the toolkit via UNESCO's social media and publication on African Court's social media. Extensive efforts to reach out to UNESCO partners in Africa as well as to Presidents of Courts and bar associations across the continent also encouraged them to share this project within their own networks, thereby ensuring high awareness around UNESCO's activities in this field among concerned stakeholders. In Latin America, actions have been communicated to the 13,000 judicial operators who are members of an informal network, thus amplifying significantly the outreach of the programme.



Several field offices created their own local awareness-raising and visibility campaigns, as was the case for instance in Lebanon and in Syria. In Lebanon, UNESCO created an online campaign on safety of journalists with 18 young journalists from the May Chidiac Foundation, which targeted young and women journalists and was disseminated on social media. The Beirut Office organized an additional campaign on access to information which surpassed expectations in terms of outreach, with a sensitization video being aired by different national media outlets. In Syria, a contest was organized for media students at the University of Damascus to write scripts for Public Service Announcements on safety of journalists, hate speech and the right to access information. The selected PSAs will be professionally produced in 2020. Other field Offices that were proactive in producing materials to disseminate through social media, include:

- Afghanistan: interviews of Kandahar journalists trained on digital safety in Kabul.
- Pakistan: Promotional videos for IDEI and IDUAI
- Palestine: Testimonies from different journalists that participated in safety trainings.



Aside from the national campaigns organized by field offices, UNESCO maintained visibility at a global level, which not only provided the thematic focus, messages and overall approach for the celebration of international days and awareness raising internationally, but also for national and regional scopes. The MDP supported this financially, but also through the technical support provide by the Programme's Communication Officer.

Defend Journalism: Media around the world joined UNESCO to take a stance to defend journalism.

On the occasion of WPF 2019, UNESCO launched a global campaign titled Defend Journalism and called on media organizations to take a stance to defend journalism by publishing elements of its visual identity, such as banners in their print editions and GIFs

on their online platforms, as well as to dedicate coverage related to press freedom. Approximately 40 large media outlets around the world raised awareness about WPF 2019 by sharing the campaign materials, dedicating an editorial and/or publishing articles and in-depth reportages, such as The Washington Post, The Globe and Mail, CNN, Rappler among others. Among the participating media were the New York Times, the New Yorker, France Médias Monde, El País, Il Corriere della Serra, Rappler, Animal Politico and TASR. The co-operation was boosted by the suspension of the New York Times' paywall for three days in commemoration of WPF 2019.

UNESCO also benefitted from the support of its large networks of partners and collaborators to disseminate the campaign such as the world newspaper association WAN-IFRA and the UN Information Centres (UNIC). Several political organizations and governmental departments produced videos to commemorate the Day, such as the Council of Europe, the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UK Foreign Affairs Committee. Most notably, United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres published a video message to mark the Day, a message which was widely circulated and aired on several TV outlets around the world.

The campaign around WPF 2019 was jointly launched with the African Union to promote the call to speak out for free, independent and quality journalism, and engage local stakeholders. In total, the WPF website received **55.5K views**, WPF 2019 was mentioned in **1,569 articles** published online and **854 articles** mentioned the laureates of the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano Prize, the (then) imprisoned Myanmar journalists Kyaw Soe Oo and Wa Lone. UNESCO social media accounts had an estimated reach of **504.6K** and potential impressions of **2.4M**.

In commemoration of WPF 2019, Twitter launched a campaign entitled [#HerStory](#) to highlight work of women journalists. Testimonies included Maria Ressa (Rappler), Rukmini Callimachi (NYT) and Sylvia Obell (BuzzFeedNews). In addition, official accounts of the Twitter group such as Twitter Public Policy, Twitternews and Twitter India published special tweets to commemorate WPF 2019. UNESCO and Cartooning for Peace ran for 3rd consecutive year its online campaign Cartoons for Freedom of Expression. A page dedicated to highlights and milestones of the campaign was created on the [UNESCO Exposure website](#), along with one summarizing [celebrations of the Day around the world](#).



The main conference of WPF2019 held in Addis Ababa was widely covered by Ethiopian outlets, thereby demonstrating the highly symbolic importance of holding this event in the country and reflecting the keen interest of the Ethiopian public in WPF. The event was for instance covered by Ethiopian state-owned TV outlet EBC and private networks Fana Television and EBS TV Worldwide, along with major dailies such as EBA, The Reporter, and The Ethiopian Herald.

Local celebrations of the UNESCO-led event organized thanks to the support of MDP funds likewise garnered attention in national and regional media, as was for example the case in Pakistan, Myanmar, Palestine, South Sudan and Somalia.

#AccessToInfoDay: “Open Talks” raised awareness about leaving no one without access to information

Communication efforts around the International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI) were mostly deployed online. Articles about the main celebration in Peru as well as the event in Malaysia and Mexico were published on the UNESCO website. The series of “Open Talks”, with its engaging TEDx-style format, commemorated IDUAI and were promoted through teaser and a series of interviews with participants on UNESCO’s Youtube channel. Pages dedicated to IDUAI on the UNESCO website attracted **7.5k views**, and communication efforts on social media had a total engagement of **3k** on Twitter and Facebook, with a total reach of **68k** on Facebook and potential impressions of **464K** on Twitter. Furthermore, social media outreach for the day by the United Nations and UNESCO partners such as Transparency International and IFEX, had a potential reach of **12M users**.

#KeepTruthAlive: Threats to journalists happen closer to us than what we imagine

The 2019 IDEI media and social media campaign titled #KeepTruthAlive benefited from the support of key media partners, including The New York Times, The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Le Monde, Libération, Le Parisien, Les Echos, and Helsingin Sanomat who published one of the visuals in their newspapers. The campaign was also massively relayed online, with media including [France Media Monde](#), L'Express, L'OBS, The Huffington Post, Al Jazeera, [Rappler](#), [La Repubblica](#), and The [Times of India](#), publishing articles and content on their websites, Twitter and Facebook pages. High-profile personalities, such as renowned [journalists Christiane Amanpour](#) and [Carmen Aristegui](#), also relayed the campaign on their social media accounts.

Additionally, the visuals of the campaign were translated in 15 different languages and have been featured on JCDecaux public billboards in Paris and in Mexico City, as well as in the subway stations of Brussels. A series of 12 [portraits](#) of local journalists that have been killed were also developed and shared on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, to illustrate how the threats, intimidations and the fear of being attacked are often an everyday reality for some journalists.

Key figures of the campaign include:

- **300** news articles published about the Day,
- **+1 million** impression on Twitter; **151,500** total reach on Facebook; **9,500** engagements on Facebook; 101,700 total reach on Instagram;
- Over **6,000** views on the website of the map, keeptruthalive.co;
- The campaign was displayed on digital billboards in **60,000** spots in France but also in Mexico City (city and metro) and Belgium (metro);
- Partners' support for the campaign (including its development by DDB, the Google Maps, and the publication of the visuals in key media) amounted to approximately **600,000** USD in in-kind contributions.

In Myanmar, during the implementation of the project, partners in the community radio and MIL field, leveraged on their internal communications capacities and teams to ensure visibility of project activities and to disseminate information about the project to stakeholders in all the countries involved in Outcome 2.

News about planned activities were published in UNESCO's internal newsletters and social media accounts while partners published on their websites and social media accounts. UNESCO logos and related MDP partner's logo were used and advertised on correspondences and banners for planned events. There was also media coverage on TV and published articles on online and print media in Kenya.

EXAMPLES OF MEDIA COVERAGE

Myanmar's overlooked groups seek a voice on emerging community radio
 18 Jan 2019

Facebook | Twitter | Weibo | Google | Print

Myanmar's geographic and ethnic diversity makes it a fascinating and culturally rich country – but with media coverage, such diversity in the physical and cultural landscape poses major challenges. Rugged terrain and poor roads prevent print publications from reaching remote communities in a timely manner. The dozens of languages spoken by Myanmar's different ethnic groups also mean that many people understand the mainstream, Burmese-language media. The concerns and interests of these communities are often overlooked by mainstream media outlets, which are usually based in larger cities such as Yangon and dominated by the majority Bamar ethnic group.

Filling the gaps in the media landscape and giving a voice to people who seldom have been heard was the recently concluded 'Supporting ethnic and community media in Myanmar' project supported by the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). The project was implemented by Myanmar's ten-member Independent Ethnic Media Alliance (IEMA) in cooperation with DW Akademie, a leading organization for international media development.

The project laid the foundation for community radio in Myanmar to add new content and perspectives to the airwaves. Radio is not dependent on roads that become impassable during the rainy season, and that gives communities greater access to information relevant to their own contexts. It broadens the conversation.

Why Kenya needs a policy and strategy on information literacy

By Victor Bwire on November 11, 2019 • 4 min read • shares

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Information including media content regulation in Kenya is as problematic as it is in the rest of the world, given the rapidly expanding information and communication space within the context of increasing demand for respect for human rights including freedom of expression and right to information access. As we grapple with ensuring our regulatory environment protects Kenyans against harmful information and nonprofessional content, we must prioritize developing a nation's policy and strategy on media and information literacy for the country to make meaningful use of the information and technological innovations instead of over-relying on regulations.

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MINISTRE DE LA COMMUNICATION ET DES MEDIAS > Forum de consultation nationale

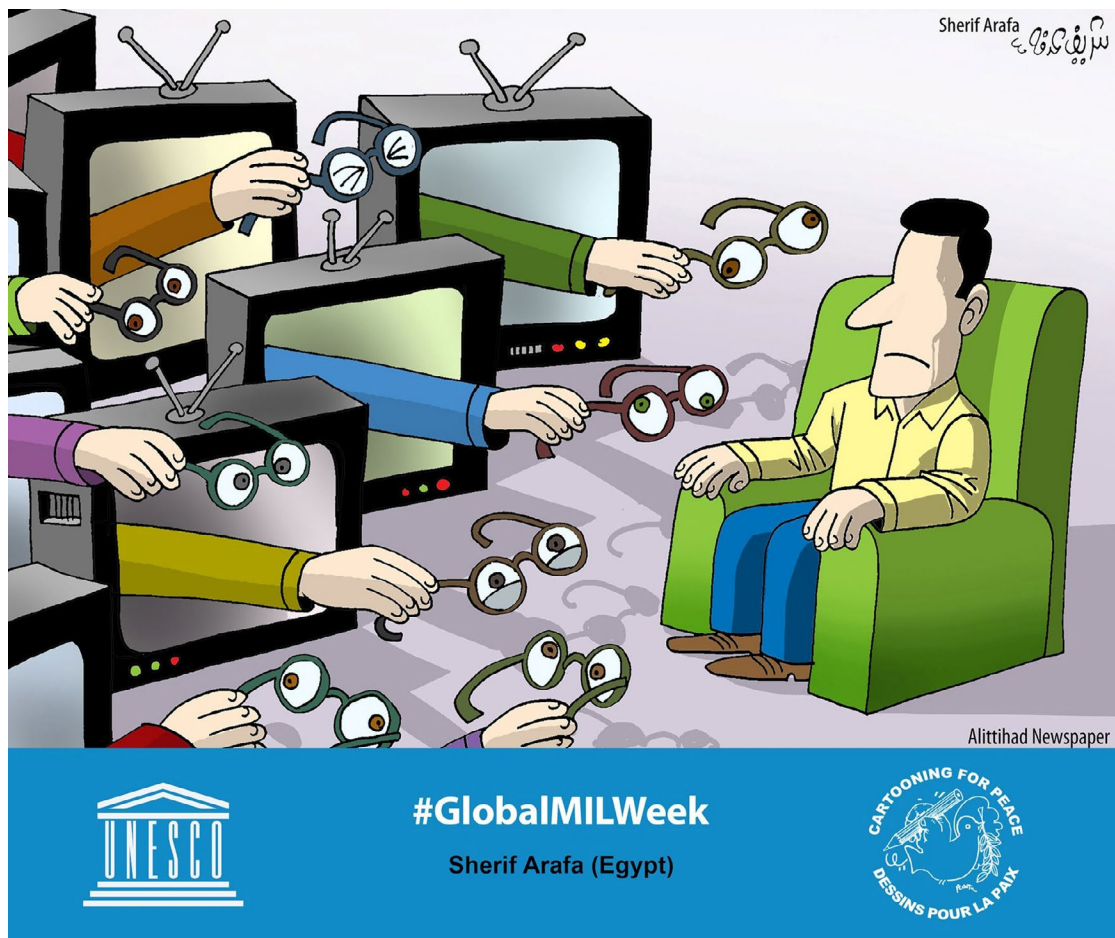
La durabilité des radios communautaires au Burundi

 Le ministère de la Communication et des médias a organisé le mardi 2 juillet 2019, en collaboration avec l'Unesco, un forum de consultation nationale sur la durabilité des radios communautaires au Burundi.

Dans son allocution, le ministre de la Communication et des médias, Frédéric Nahimana a fait savoir que l'objectif principal de ce forum était de réfléchir sur la mise en place d'un cadre de réglementation légale pour la radiodiffusion communautaire reposant d'une part, sur une approche fondée sur les droits, intégrée au sein de politiques plus générales en matière de médias et communications, et d'autre part conscient des besoins spécifiques du secteur et des communautés. Il a ajouté que cette consultation repose sur cinq grands thèmes dont la définition des radios communautaires et la reconnaissance officielle, le système d'attribution de licences, la formation, le financement public ainsi que des soutiens privés et la transition de l'analogique vers le numérique. Il a indiqué que ces thèmes viennent à point nommé et que le ministère attend des participants des recommandations concrètes qui, une fois mises en application, seront susceptibles d'impulser le développement du monde rural. « Aussi veut-il des radios communautaires dignes de ce nom, capables de durer dans le temps et dans l'espace. » Le ministre Nahimana a profité de cette occasion pour indiquer que la radio communautaire se dote d'une série de critères dont la gestion est assurée par la communauté bénéficiaire ; sa philosophie est de permettre aux sans voix, jeunes, femmes, vieux, commerçants, agriculteurs, artisans, fonctionnaires, métiers informels, ... de s'exprimer. Il a ajouté que mêmes les critères d'ordre géographique, psychoaffectif, chronologique ainsi que la vie en société ne sont pas éloignés. Frédéric

[World Radio Day](#) and [Global MIL Week](#) observance are also useful tools for awareness and promoting the visibility of the MDP project and UNESCO activities due to their significant outreach to the general public.

Traffic to the World Radio Day website in 2019 was high – **94,359 page views** in Jan/Feb 2019 and **22,394 page views** on the 13 February. The event performed extremely well on social media, with #DiaMundialdeLaRadio trending number one on Twitter for most of the day as a global topic and #WorldRadioDay as number three. At country level, in Nepal for example, project activities on community radio were well covered by the local and national media (print, online, radio and television) in Nepali and other indigenous languages. On World Radio Day 2019, the social media post about the national conference in Nepal was covered in UNESCO's Facebook page dedicated to celebrating World Radio Day. The project activities were posted on website and social media (Facebook and Twitter) platforms of UNESCO Kathmandu as well as by the implementing partners.



#GlobalMIL Week social media campaign in partnership with Cartooning for Peace

Twitter joined the Global MIL Week as a major partner, and launched the Teaching and Learning with Twitter guide jointly with UNESCO. The hashtags #GlobalMIL Week, #ThinkBeforeClicking and #ThinkBeforeSharing were disseminated by Twitter regional offices in 10 languages. In partnership with Cartooning for Peace, UNESCO launched the #GlobalMIL Week social media campaign. The MIL CLICKS learning series “MIL and Artificial Intelligence”, “MIL Parenting”, “MIL and Gender Equality”, and “MIL Footprint” were launched in 2019 within the framework of the MPD, and gained **over 150,000 reach on Facebook**.

With regards to the MIL-related activities implemented in the seven target countries, visibility was ensured through traditional media coverage, social media campaigns, online feature articles etc. For example, in **Myanmar**, the trainings on MIL conducted for staff from the Ministry of Information and the panel discussion organized by the Ministry during the Global MIL Week received wide coverage by the Government-owned media. In **Palestine**, the activities carried out in 2019 benefited from continued media coverage, thanks to the involvement and commitment of 22 Ministries in the trainings. In **Nigeria**, numerous major local media outlets have publicized the activities, including Premium Times Nigeria, TVC News, and Vanguard.



Members of the Committee for the Promotion of Media and Information Literacy in Myanmar in preparation for the draft National Media and Information Literacy Policy and Strategy Document and Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers.

7. Synergies

The establishment of synergies with like-minded partner structures and stakeholders remains instrumental in order to ensure optimal efficiency, visibility and sustainability in the implementation of activities. For this purpose, synergies were created and/or reinforced with various CSOs, UN bodies, intergovernmental organizations and governmental instances (including embassies at country level), as well as with other UNESCO entities. Specialised networks in various regions were also created, and/or reinforced including judges, freedom of information commissioners, journalists, public service broadcasters, broadcast regulators, and others. Furthermore, UNESCO continued to reinforce intersectional work within the Communication and Information Sector (CI), and synergies between the sectors for Communication and Information and the sector for Culture, building on previous successful mutual achievements.

Synergies with partner organizations were of importance during the commemorations of the three international Days falling under Outcome 1 (WPF, IDUAI, IDEI), and were decisive in generating maximum impact, visibility, outreach and participation. For instance, the main celebration of World Press Freedom Day 2019 was, for the first time, organized on a tripartite basis with an international organization, the African Union, and the Government of Ethiopia. The Conference received support from 60 partners in total, among which the UN Economic Commission for Africa, UNDP, OHCHR, Sweden, the Permanent Mission of Norway to the African Union, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Commonwealth.

UNESCO's work on promoting mechanisms on safety of journalists at national level, as well as on assisting states to monitor report on access to information under SDG indicator 16.10.2, has relied extensively on partnerships with entities such as IMS, Free Press Unlimited, Deutsche Welle Academy, Article 19, IFEX, the Centre for Law and Democracy and the International Conference of Information Commissioners. In supporting the inter-agency UN network on safety of journalists, UNESCO has worked in close co-operation with other members of the UN family.

Another example of the importance of fostering synergies among UN Agencies can be found in the commemorations of IDEI organized throughout **Afghanistan**, which could not have been possible without the combined efforts of UNESCO and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). UNAMA helped the UNESCO Kabul Office overcome security obstacles and successfully hold commemorations of the Day across the country, thus providing a platform for journalists in provinces to express their concerns regarding the safety of journalists in Afghanistan and gain awareness about UNESCO's work in the fight against impunity for crimes committed against media workers.

UNESCO celebrated 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages to bring attention to the urgent need to preserve, promote, and revitalize endangered languages. In **Nepal**, community radio stations operating in more than 70 languages play a crucial role in defending the rights of expression of indigenous peoples in promoting education through mother tongue. UNESCO co-organised two-day national consultation on community radio for indigenous people with Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (ACORAB) Nepal and local authorities in Province 1 of Nepal in May 2019. The main objective of the event was to bring the duty bearers, community-broadcasting leaders, radio journalists, language experts, and thematic experts on the right of indigenous people together and search the common way forward on the role of community radio for participation, empowerment and preservation of culture and language of indigenous people through the community broadcasting system. The idea met the priority of UNESCO's Education Sector as well as UNDP. Therefore, the two sectors, Communication and Information, and Education, contributed financially and technically to the programme while UNDP collaborated through financial support.

Cooperation with CSOs and NGOs proved an excellent way to amplify impact on the topic of community radio, as in the UNESCO Dhaka Office which leveraged synergies with other national and international stakeholders engaging in the community radio sector in **Bangladesh**, including BBC Media Action, DW Akademie, academia, and NGOs.

In **Myanmar**, 2019 enabled planning for a project on tackling hate speech and disinformation during elections, jointly proposed alongside UNDP and with additional contributions from the UN Peacebuilding Fund. The UN Secretary General's Special Envoy to Myanmar is involved in the project as well. A new project proposal has been developed for the Empowerment of Women (GYPI) together with UN Women. UNESCO is now looking to secure the endorsement of the Myanmar Ministry of Information for both projects. Another cooperation with UNDP was achieved in Latin America, through a project on countering disinformation during electoral cycles in **Uruguay**.

Another example of the synergies built with other UN sister agencies is the ones with UN Women. In addition to the cooperation already mentioned above (Section 3 of this report) in Nigeria, UNESCO and UN Women organized a gender sensitive training jointly in with representatives of the Minister of Communication and Information of **Burundi**.

Synergies with the European Union were also strengthened through the implementation of a 2-year project titled “Enhancing a gender responsive film sector in the South Mediterranean region”. The project concluded in 2019 and was implemented in partnership with UN Women and ALECSO, along with several CSOs. The EU also offered support to UNESCO for the organization of commemorations of World Press Freedom Day in **Uruguay**, an event which highlighted gender-specific issues faced by female journalists in Latin America.

Intersectional synergies carried out by UNESCO within the sector for Communication and Information proved very valuable in producing information relevant to freedom of expression, access to information, diversity and MIL. An example is **Tunisia** where an internet assessment based on UNESCO’s Internet Universality Indicators is ongoing through a project financed by Sweden via UNESCO’s International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) and implemented by the Section for Digital Technologies and Innovation. A multi-stakeholder advisory board has been established, and data collection is underway through joint efforts under the MDP and the IPDC. The IPDC funding also contributed to capacity building activities for Latin American stakeholders about the IUIs and their implementation.

As in previous years, UNESCO continues to foster synergies between the Communication and Information Sector (CI) and the Culture Sector (CLT), thus further reinforcing combined action by the two arms of UNESCO on the topics of the diversity of cultural expressions, media diversity and artistic freedom. This builds on previous joint work funded by Sweden, such as the joint launch events of the 2018 Global Report ‘Re | shaping Cultural Policies: Advancing creativity for development’ (Global Report), and the 2017/2018 World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development report (World Trends Report). Synergies were also created in past years on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day celebrations in Jakarta (2017) and Accra (2018), with an emphasis on media diversity and linkages between freedom of expression and artistic freedom.

Activities relevant to Outcome 1 included advocacy on the links between media diversity and artistic freedom, notably and through two Create2030 talks organized in **Thailand** and **Kenya**, and through a workshop and two sessions on artistic freedom organized within the framework of World Press Freedom Day 2019 in **Ethiopia**. Talks around artistic freedom and expressions for sustainable development were held in Bangkok in February 2019, gathering renowned cultural practitioners and experts from Thailand and beyond to discuss establishing a positive environment for the creative sector. Additional Create2030 Talks were organized in Nairobi in October 2019 within the framework of the Somali Heritage Week, the first Create2030 Talk for Somalia. The talks were broadcasted live on RTN Somali Television and were organized in partnership with the Awjaama Omar cultural Trust.

The 2019 commemoration of World Press Freedom Day proved a timely opportunity to stress the intertwined nature of press and artistic freedom and reflected the international community’s growing interest in freedom of creation. The workshop gathered over 20 influential Ethiopian civil society and governmental actors. Held within the framework of UNESCO’s Aschberg programme for artists and cultural professionals, it brought together a variety of cultural actors who reviewed policies and measures to protect and promote artistic freedom, and discussed how Ethiopia may respond to the question of artistic freedom as part of the quadrennial periodic report on the implementation of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, due in April 2020.

The first session organized under the theme “Artistic freedom of expression at the tip of the pen”, was co-organized with Cartooning for Peace and culminated with the presentation of a Declaration calling for the recognition of cartooning as a human right. A second session was held under the theme “Enlarging Choices: Artistic Freedom and Diversity of Contents” and explored how a crucial it is for democracies to be exposed to different voices and narratives as well as the challenges to freedom of artistic expression.

Several capacity building activities were organized on the theme of media diversity and the diversity of cultural expressions in **Indonesia, Mongolia** and the **Seychelles**. In Indonesia, a taskforce on media diversity was instituted and is currently working on a feasibility study to establish a media diversity monitoring framework. Furthermore, a working meeting was held in June 2019 under the theme “Creating communities of practices and fostering research: Session on media diversity” in preparation of the next edition of the Global Report “Re|Shaping Cultural Policies”, due in June 2021. Several emerging issues were identified, such as digital evolutions, gender, individual broadcasters and journalism vs non-journalism status, among others.

Additionally, with support of CI in some country offices, CLT has actively involved media professionals in the national teams that are in charge of the participative elaboration of the periodic reports to the 2005 Convention in 16 beneficiary countries, thereby fostering dialogue and cooperation in policy monitoring and formulation among culture and media professionals.

In **South Sudan**, synergies have been built with the Culture Sector as regards a National Archives project. Through this intersectional collaboration, broadcast journalists have had an opportunity to visit the national archives with the sole purpose to equip/expose journalists to South Sudan media history, and with the aim to use past media history to shape the present and future media landscape.

With UNESCO’s Education Sector (ED) and in the framework of the Media and Information Literacy component under Outcome 2, synergies were established especially through leveraging ED established partners such as the Ministry of Education and the ED-related Institute of Curriculum and Development. This ensured efficient coordinated engagement and involvement of these partners during the preparation of the MIL Policy and Strategy Document and MIL Curriculum for Teachers in **Kenya, Myanmar**, and **Nigeria**. In Kenya for example, it is foreseen that further synergies will be established with ED sector during the adaptation of the developed Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers within Teacher training institutions with a possible cooperation within its TVET programme in Kenya. In the same vein, the two UNESCO Sectors in Myanmar are supporting the Ministry of Education in doing a comprehensive reform of pre-service teacher education, which includes the development of a new curriculum, development of policies related to teacher education, and capacity building of the Ministry to deliver quality education to all.



Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in October 2019. The MoUs have intensified dialogue with regional courts and will ensure increased credibility for UNESCO's specialized training of judicial officials.

8. Sustainability

Activities implemented under the reported period were specifically tailored to the needs of each context and designed to involve national duty bearers and right holders every step of the way. Through this approach, UNESCO sought to ensure sustained impact of MDP-funded actions beyond the implementation period. Actions in the work plans were developed and carried out in close cooperation with intergovernmental organizations, government authorities (ministries and specialized departments and/or agencies, parliamentary groups, embassies and diplomatic missions), regulatory entities, national and regional courts, media outlets, journalists and organizations representing them, UN bodies and international as well as local media development stakeholders.

The inherent flexibility of the MDP enabled the programme team at HQ and in the field to adjust operations as developments in each country unfolded, thereby responding to delays or the need for alterations of the work plans. Efforts carried out throughout 2019 built on actions undertaken in the past, thereby both reinforcing past work's sustainability and reinforcing its continuity.

UNESCO's advocacy and capacity-development efforts were conceived to support dialogue and encourage national ownership and inclusiveness of relevant stakeholders and duty bearers to carry through progressive legal reforms. In this regard, UNESCO's role in regard to national initiatives in the review of media laws has been supportive without creating dependency or assuming the leadership. This pattern has been observed in **Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia** and **Morocco**. In Sudan, the Organization thereby helped to lay the groundwork for the reform of the country's media legislation by working with stakeholders to conduct an assessment of Sudanese policies and laws. The result of this assessment will be the basis for a Media Reform Roadmap. In **Syria**, key stakeholders have been engaged throughout 2019 with respect for their essential roles in preparing a Safety of Journalists Action Plan. Meanwhile, in **Myanmar**, UNESCO helped reach an agreement among key stakeholders to update Election Reporting Guidelines, an initiative which can now ensure improved communication and collaboration between the electoral management body, political parties and the media for the upcoming 2020 General Elections and beyond.

UNESCO's role extended beyond the revision of laws to their implementation to reinforce sustainability, therefore it supported efforts within Member States already endowed with access to information legislation such as **Morocco** and **South Sudan**. In South Sudan, UNESCO assisted the Information Commission in producing a 3-year strategy document which will serve as a roadmap for implementation of the 2013 Access to Information Act.

Sustainability is not possible without the practice and symbolism of national buy-in, especially on the decision-making level. Throughout the past year, the authorities of several countries have publicly expressed their appreciation of UNESCO's work, with some going as far as offering the high patronage of their respective Prime Ministers for some UNESCO-led activities, as was the case in **Palestine** and **Morocco**. In the latter, previously established and enduring relations of trust have led the Moroccan government to solicit UNESCO to implement additional activities soon, such as training of Members of Parliament on freedom of expression and access to information issues. Another example of government buy-in was evident in Uruguay where all six major political parties signed an ethical pact to help counter disinformation in the presence of the current President of **Uruguay**, alongside two former incumbents.

The implementation of the UN Plan of Action for the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity was further reinforced by the establishment of mechanisms to enhance the protection of media workers. Building on previous successes in Africa and the Arab region, the establishment of mechanisms was initiated in **Myanmar, Pakistan, and South Sudan**; and existing ones were supported in **Palestine, Somalia** and **Tunisia**. The institutionalization of capacity-building regarding safety of journalists through the integration of university curricula and modules into educational institutions, was likewise promoted in **Palestine** and **Syria**.

The mechanism of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is a further way that UNESCO seeks to consolidate sustainability. Over the period, MoUs have been signed with the **Economic Community of West African States** (ECOWAS) in May 2019, and a second one was signed with the **Inter-American Court of Human Rights** (IACHR) in October 2019. Likewise in **Pakistan**, UNESCO's implementing partner, the Peace and Justice Network, signed such a document with the Parliamentary Commission for Human Rights to ensure more attention is given to the safety of journalists. In **Lebanon**, a letter of intent was signed by UNESCO and the Internal Security Forces, thus confirming the political interest and paving the way for significant cooperation on the safety of journalists in the years to come.

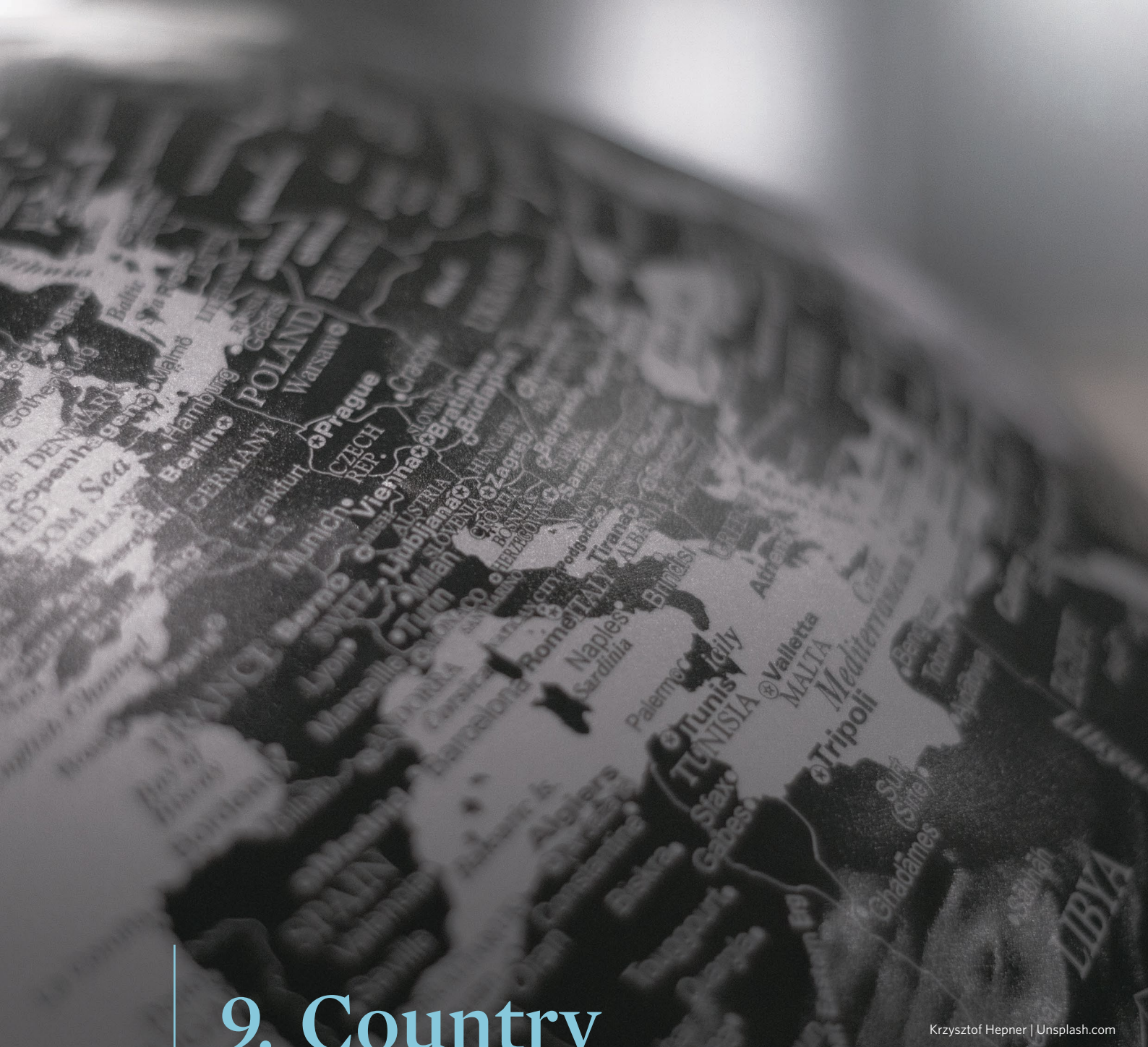
The sustainability of UNESCO's work was further fortified by the creation and institutionalization of new structures as was the case in **Ethiopia** and **Mexico**. In the former, UNESCO convened national and international partners to form the Ethiopia Media Sector Alliance (EMSA), a multi-stakeholder coordination platform that intends to facilitate effective and joint media development initiatives, centralize ideas, efforts, resources, as well as to generate higher impact and sustainability. In Mexico, during the main commemoration of IDEI, the Spokesperson of the Presidency announced the Mexican government's commitment to create a Fund to support investigative journalism which will be administered independently by UNESCO, and a commitment to launch a social security program for freelance journalists to address their precarious working conditions. Catalysing commitment of national public resources is a valuable component of sustainability.

A significant example of the positive and likely enduring impact that UNESCO can have on local partners can also be found in the engagement, capacity building and empowerment of the **South Sudan Information Commission**. Building on skills developed during UNESCO capacity building sessions, the Commission has been able to lobby support from other media partners (such as the Norwegian People's Aid and UNICEF) to support the implementation of the 2013 Access to Information Act.

During 2019, UNESCO, with support of the MDP, convened networking of different CSOs and NGOs in the field of Communication and Information to address issues collaboratively. An example is support to develop the skills and mindset necessary for co-operation to ensure greater sustainability of the community media sector. The networks of the community radio broadcasters, federation of journalists, and the media committee inclusive of government and non-government stakeholders at federal, provincial, and district levels were engaged in **Bangladesh, Burundi, Mongolia, Myanmar, and Nepal**. These networks and committees play instrumental roles in advocacy and lobbying for freedom of expression, access to information, and strong community media policy. The project has the advantage of having these mechanisms in place with their influential roles at all levels. After the project concludes, these stakeholders will remain active and take full ownership of the achievements of the project.

A further step to sustainability has been continuous engagement and empowerment of national partners with relevant materials and knowledge. This was the case with the Community Media Network of South Sudan (CoMNTSS) and Association for Media Development in **South Sudan** (AMDISS) which continue to lobby the relevant government institutions to reduce registration and license fees for community radios. UNESCO also secured the buy-in of government stakeholders in connection with the implementation of MIL actions. Illustratively, the MIL project in Kenya was implemented in close collaboration with government authorities, media regulatory institutions, media practitioners, academia, and non-state actors.

UNESCO further contributes to sustainability by sharing of good practices. The MIL Competency Framework articulated in **Myanmar**, will be a reference tool for any organization or entity who intends to implement MIL programmes in the country. UNESCO systematically shares experiences with stakeholders across the target countries.

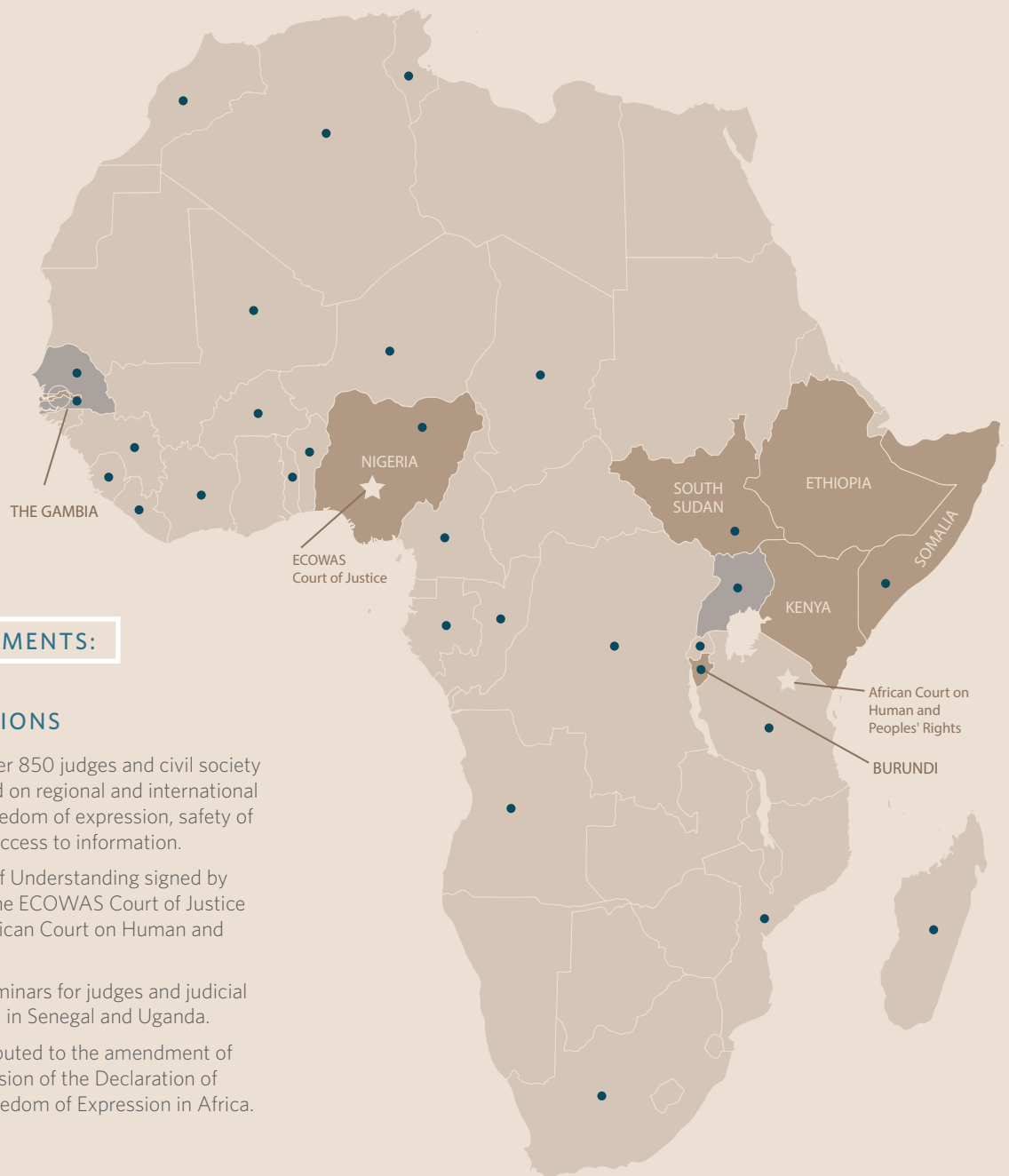


9. Country Summaries

Krzysztof Hepner | Unsplash.com

Activities implemented under the reported period were specifically tailored to the needs of each context and designed to involve national duty bearers and right holders every step of the way. Through this approach, UNESCO sought to ensure sustained impact of MDP-funded actions beyond the implementation period. Actions in the work plans were developed and carried out in close cooperation with intergovernmental organizations, government authorities (ministries and specialized departments and/or agencies, parliamentary groups, embassies and diplomatic missions), regulatory entities, national and regional courts, media outlets, journalists and organizations representing them, UN bodies and international as well as local media development stakeholders.

Action in Africa



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

REGIONAL ACTIONS

- Capacities of over 850 judges and civil society actors reinforced on regional and international standards on freedom of expression, safety of journalists and access to information.
- ★ Memorandum of Understanding signed by UNESCO with the ECOWAS Court of Justice and with the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights.
- Two regional seminars for judges and judicial actors organized in Senegal and Uganda.
- UNESCO contributed to the amendment of the ACHPR Revision of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa.

NATIONAL ACTIONS

South Sudan

Launch of a three-year Information Commission strategy document (2020-2021) on operationalization of the Access to Information Act 2013. (Outcome 1)

Community Radio Sustainability Situation Analysis and Baseline Survey on Community Media. (Outcome 2)

Ethiopia

Revision and drafting of 3 new media laws.

Somalia

Revisions of media laws to ensure compliance with international standards and the launch of a National safety mechanism.

Burundi

Recommendations for institutional reforms in favor of community radio stations.

Nigeria

Mainstreaming of UNESCO MIL Curriculum into Nigeria Colleges of Education System.

The Gambia

Community Radio Action Plan and Roadmap.

Kenya

National Media and Information Literacy Policy and Strategy Document.



Context

The full realization of independent journalism, freedom of expression, access to information, and safety of journalists are present challenges everywhere in the world, including in Africa with varying degrees depending on the country. Therefore, within this Programme UNESCO has aimed to address these challenges through two approaches, one regional, and the other more nationally focused. The regional approach has been very effective in supporting a regional dialogue for common problems, which also opened the door for stakeholders from politically sensitive environments to participate. On a national level, UNESCO identified specific countries and provided tailored support based on the precise needs and opportunities and their relevance to the MDP priorities. Activities undertaken in these countries are thus presented in this section under specific country pages, while this regional chapter is illustrating continental approach to crosscutting challenges and priorities.

Freedom of expression and safety of journalists as well as ending impunity for crimes committed against them are of vital importance to ensure the rule of law and human rights more broadly. A major role is played by a judiciary that is empowered to understand and apply international standards in the national and regional context. While the reform of the media sector and legislation had advanced in the continent, too many African judicial operators were still unaware of regional and international standards. UNESCO has therefore been working with the judiciary to support their role in protecting and ensuring an environment conducive to freedom of expression, access to information and other fundamental freedoms. Building on the success of the trainings of judges and judicial actors implemented by UNESCO in Latin America and the Caribbean since 2013, through which more than 13,000 judicial actors from 22 countries were trained on issues pertaining to freedom of expression, public access to information and safety of journalists. Thanks to MDP, since 2018 this initiative was extended South-South to the African continent.

Following the signing of a memorandum of understanding between UNESCO and the African Court on 14 August 2018, through which the two organizations committed towards reinforcing the capacities and the knowledge of judiciary actors (judges, prosecutors, lawyers, and other legal professionals), in 2019 this initiative gained momentum. In that year, UNESCO upscaled its support to training judges regionally and nationally in order to implement the regional legal framework on issues related to free speech in Africa. In addition to trainings, UNESCO has also strengthened its cooperation with the African Union, to accompany its political will to advance and fully implement regional standards of freedom of expression, safety of journalists and access to information. With the aim of expanding previous initiatives' reach, the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) for judicial operators was translated into French and launched in January 2019 for countries in Africa using French. This was followed by the development and publication of an accompanying Toolkit, in both French and English, along with civil society representatives and the media. Furthermore, two regional training seminars were organized in Senegal and Uganda in cooperation with the African Unions' African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR). Such trainings were an opportunity for active exchange among numerous high-level judges and representatives of civil society in the media, and as a result, strong commitment was achieved for the replication and continuation of such trainings in partnership with the Supreme Court of Senegal, the ACHPR and GIZ.

Another flagship initiative undertaken at a continental scale was achieved by supporting the UNESCO Addis Ababa Liaison Office's action to build the momentum with the African Union and with the ACHPR as well as a wide range of partners to ensure adequate responses to the protection of journalists and the fight against impunity in Africa. Notably, consultative meetings led to the submission of a request for the establishment of the ACHPR Working Group on the Promotion and Protection of Journalism and the Safety of Journalists in Africa.

Recognizing the vital role of information commissioners in upholding information rights in the interest of sustainable development, UNESCO focused on enhancing their capacities as well as integrating them into the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goal on access to information (ATI). With support from the MDP, UNESCO organized a pre-event to the 11th International Conference of Information

Commissioners (ICIC) in Johannesburg, South Africa, bringing together information commissioners and equivalent functions from Africa. Co-funded by Sweden through IPDC, and with additional support from Germany and The Netherlands, the conference has enabled delegates to form a steering committee that will formalize a network of African Information Commissioners.



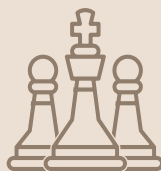
Areas of action

Awareness-raising and advocacy	World Trend Report	Enhancing journalists' safety	Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities
National initiatives commemorating IDEI were supported in 10 African countries with the presence of numerous stakeholders strengthening advocacy and awareness locally.	Regional launches of the Global World Trends Report with special focus on Regional Overview of Africa 2017/2018, as well as the three In-focus series of 2019 were held at the African Editors Forum, the Southern African Editors Forum, and the Editors Forum of Lesotho during the annual Freedom of Expression festival, in Lesotho.	Consultative meetings with stakeholders were organized by UNESCO leading to the submission of a request for the establishment of the ACHPR Working Group on the Promotion and Protection of Journalism and the Safety of Journalists in Africa.	Two regional workshops for members of the judiciary were organized in Senegal and Uganda, gathering high-level judges, judiciary actors and civil society. Both were organized in cooperation with and full backing of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights.
Synergies and dialogue were fostered with over 400 stakeholders from all over Africa during a session on "Free Independent and Pluralistic Media to Foster Peace and Development in Africa", which was organized by UNESCO during the Biennale of Luanda in September 2019.			During the 2019 Internet Governance Forum in Berlin, UNESCO gathered high-level judicial operators from all around the world, and notably the President of the ECOWAS Court of Justice, for a special session to discuss the challenges for judicial authorities in dealing with digital rights and digital ecosystems.
			The Massive Open Online Course for the judiciary on Freedom of Expression was launched in African countries using French, successfully training 852 judges and civil society members.
			UNESCO contributed to the ACHPR's revision of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa



Key Achievements

- Through the support of the MDP, the knowledge and awareness of judges, judiciary actors and civil society in Africa on issues relating to freedom of expression and the safety of journalists have increased, leading to a rights-based relationship between the judiciary and the press in the different regions.
- Enhanced capacities and knowledge among judges, judicial officials and civil society actors from over 30 countries in Africa on international and regional standards on freedom of expression, press freedom and access to information (including jurisprudence from the African Court and ECOWAS Court of Justice), and dialogue between legal and civil society professionals from different African countries has been opened through discussion forums in the framework of the workshops.
- Since the launch of its activities involving the judicial sphere in Africa, over 1,800 judicial officers and civil society representatives were trained and sensitized on freedom of expression and the safety of journalists through a series of trainings and online courses.
- Following the regional and interregional meetings in Dakar (Senegal), and Kampala (Uganda), there is a strengthened basis for partnerships and engagement of duty bearers, notably judges and high-level representatives of regional and national courts, on freedom of expression and safety of journalists. Some 70 judges were trained through the workshops, and a total of 852 judges and civil society members were trained through the MOOC in 2019. Institutional links between UNESCO, the ACHPR and the ECOWAS of justice have likewise been reinforced, thereby boosting the credibility and outreach of UNESCO's actions targeting judges in the region.
- The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding by UNESCO and the ECOWAS Court of Justice in May 2019 intensified partnership with this sub-regional court, and stronger endorsement for UNESCO's specialized training of judicial officials, as well as promote the exchange of best practices in the areas of freedom of expression, access to information and safety of journalists.
- UNESCO contributed to the amendment of the ACHPR's revision of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa, succeeding in advocating with the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa to take note of developments in the internet age.
- Additionally, synergies and dialogues were fostered with over 400 stakeholders from all over Africa during a session under the theme "Free Independent and Pluralistic Media to Foster Peace and Development in Africa", which was organized by UNESCO during the Biennale of Luanda in September 2019.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

Regarding the training of members of the judiciary and judges, it sometimes proved challenging reaching out to the relevant duty-bearers, particularly senior judges and Chief Justices, and ensuring the highest possible attendance. This is being addressed by further involving the relevant courts and partners, such as the ACHPR, the ECOWAS Court of Justice, and partner GIZ, in order to reach as many high-level participants as possible. Additionally, the recruitment of a new Regional Advisor in Nairobi in 2020 will provide a stronger coordination between UNESCO field offices in the region which will strengthen the reach and impact of regional actions. Furthermore, it was noted that enhancing the work with high level judges, by the lessons learnt from Latin America, will require a strong personal engagement of UNESCO's senior authorities, through increased face to face dialogue with Chiefs of Justice.

Another challenge has been the identification of relevant partners to reinforce outreach on the continent and upscale programmes. Building on the success of the two MoUs signed with the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights in 2018 and with the ECOWAS Court in 2019 respectively, UNESCO would like to formalize its relationship with the East African Court on Justices. Additionally, in December 2019, Tanzania decided to withdraw from the declaration 34(6) of the Protocol of the ACHPR which poses a challenge to the strengthening of the African legal framework on human rights.

Furthermore, the lack of strong national associations of journalists in Africa makes for limited support for actions at country level on their part. For example, in Ethiopia, while the country has shown significant progress in freedom of expression and press freedom since 2018 following the media reform,

the Ethiopia journalists association, the Ethiopia Media Women Association which are expected to be the main entities bringing together the Ethiopian journalists, remain without the effective structures, strategy and capacity needed to be a reliable partner in implementing projects, let alone enforcing the journalists code of ethics in the country. The Independent Ethiopia Media Council established in 2019 has yet to have all its structures and capacity in place. However, the support UNESCO has provided in coordination of media partners such as the Ethiopia Media Sector Alliance has garnered multistakeholder support and ownership of the action implemented on the ground, synergy creation and sustainability, by ensuring partners join efforts, build on each other's projects and avoid duplication of efforts.

At the continental level, the Federation of the African Journalists association has been embroiled in internal challenges, with two groups claiming ownership of the title. Meanwhile, most media partners have instead concentrated work with civil society, human rights defenders, NGOs and media entities such as the African Editors Forum. However, the associations issue has complicated expected support and local ownership by national media and other actors. UNESCO has sought to mitigate the issues through work with a range of partners and a multistakeholder approach which includes rights and duty bearers at national, regional and global level.

Regarding relations with the African Union, it has sometimes been difficult identifying which commission or structure is responsible for positioning freedom of expression, media freedom and the safety of journalists within the AU organs without over-stepping the mandate of each other.

Rwanda

Burundi



Context

Tanzania

The media situation in the country is difficult. No evaluation of the media landscape has been carried out in recent times due to the socio-political issues that the country has experienced. The country now has many journalists in exile or imprisoned. The implementation of projects benefiting from technical and financial support from foreign actors is very limited. In addition, the broadcasting laws have no clear regulatory provisions for community radio stations.

However, UNESCO has dialogued with Burundian authorities about possible community media endeavours, including a grassroots rights approach.

A consultation framework was established between the UNESCO Regional Office based in Yaoundé and the UNESCO Office for a Culture of Peace in Burundi on one hand, and the Burundian Government on the other hand through the Ministry of Communication and Media. There is agreement on the need to assess the situation of community radio stations and to support their evolution in line with UNESCO's Community Media Sustainability Policy.

The first major step in this process was to hold a national consultation on the status of community radios on 2 July 2019 in Bujumbura. The intention is to encourage next steps during 2020.



Areas of action and progress towards Outcome 2

Community Media Sustainability

UNESCO undertook with the Ministry of Communication and Media of Burundi consultation at different levels aiming at aligning Burundi with the Community Media Sustainability Policy. A national consultation forum on community radio, which is one of the most important meetings organized within the framework of this account, led to the formulation of a set of recommendations to the Burundian authorities that will serve as a compass for institutional reforms in favour of Burundian community radios. Apart from the national consultation, three other seminars and workshops were organized jointly with the Ministry of Communication and Media.

UNESCO empowered the network of radio broadcasters (Association des Radio diffuseurs du Burundi) to not only advocate for more sustainable media but also to take a leadership role on knowledge sharing among radio stations.

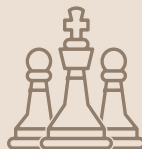
“ The recommendations resulting from the consultation would create a regulatory framework for community radio, give a clear definition of community radio and set out the conditions for granting licenses ,”

Frédéric Nahimana,
Minister of Communications and Media,
July, 2nd 2019, Bujumbura.



Key Achievements

- Within the framework of this project, UNESCO undertook with the Ministry of Communication and Media of Burundi a series of consultations at different levels to develop a possible compass for institutional reforms in favour of Burundian community radios. UNESCO succeeded in obtaining the commitment of the Burundian government through its Ministry of Communication and Media to accompany the adoption and promulgation of the consultation outcomes into a law. The Ministry of Communication and Media is now at the heart of the process initiated by UNESCO. The Minister himself, in the presence of several other national authorities, opened the national consultation work session stated that the recommendations resulting from the consultation would create a regulatory framework for community radio, give a clear definition of community radio and set out the conditions for granting licenses.
- Although there is no official publication of the results of the consultation, the Burundian authorities have validated the allocation of an amount to a media support fund, although since community radio stations do not yet have official status in Burundi, there is no specific allocation for them. In the dialogue that UNESCO had with Burundian Government, this matter was raised and recognition given that community radios are an important component of Burundi's media environment. It is now hoped that the fund will also benefit these stations if the policy framework emerging from the consultation process is validated with the Parliament. After UNESCO's dialogue with the government, the authorities have also decided to reopen the School of Journalism in Cankuzo, in the east of the country, 2020-2021 academic year.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

Community radio stations so far are not specifically mentioned in the laws governing the media sector in Burundi, yet the media landscape in Burundi remains dominated by community media. Burundi's National Development Plan (PND 2018-2027), the reference document for all development sectors in Burundi, provides for a significant financial allocation for the modernization of radio and television broadcasting and the strengthening of the institutional capacities of the media. Noting the absence of a specific regulatory framework for the establishment and operation of community radio stations in Burundi, UNESCO continues under the MDP to trigger the implementation of a community media sustainability policy in that country.



Ethiopia



Context

Following the election of Dr. Abiy Ahmed as Prime Minister in April 2018, Ethiopia initiated, after decades of authoritarian rule, a substantial reform and democratic transition process which generated tremendous political and institutional changes. The new Ethiopian government has pledged to bring more transparency to the government, as well as to reform democratic institutions, giving them independence from the executive.

The Ethiopian media space has been opening up, thanks to measures such as the release of all imprisoned journalists, the unblocking of more than 260 media websites, and the authorization of diaspora-based satellite television channels to operate inside the country. Laws restricting media and freedom of expression are not applied and instead are on the agenda for reform. The national broadcaster,

the statutory regulator, state press and news agencies structures have been moved from the control of the Executive to the supervision of the legislative branch, and they are in the process of being reformed. A new independent information commission is to be established. UNESCO contributed to these developments by providing advice on international standards and good practices to the relevant duty-bearers. The Organisation has also stepped up its support in the process of policy reform, especially with regard to the revision of laws impacting media. It has also supported dialogue among media stakeholders, initiated co-ordination amongst media development actors, promoted media self-regulation, and strengthened professional practice.

This embracing of a more open media landscape was well illustrated by Ethiopia's hosting and co-organizing of the 2019 World Press Freedom Day Global Conference, alongside UNESCO and the African Union. On that occasion, both, the Ethiopian President Sahle Work-Zewde and Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed made commitments to promoting and defending press freedom in the country and conveyed their pride in hosting the global celebration. "The symbolism of this grand gesture is even more important – given that only one year ago Ethiopia was labeled as Africa's foremost jailer of journalists and one of the most repressive environments in the world for the functioning of independent news", said Dr. Ahmed during the event.

Social media is playing an increasingly important role in access to information and sharing of political discourse. Nonetheless, disinformation amplified by social media has played a negative role in violent conflicts seen in 2019, when a temporary Internet shutdown was enforced across the country in June 2019, triggering criticism by specialized observers. The use of social media to spread disinformation and hate speech is therefore of concern in Ethiopia, and

the government has begun legislating on these issues. In this regard UNESCO has been promoting Media and Information Literacy (MIL) to tackle disinformation with a right-based, prevention oriented, approach as distinct from a regulative approach which is hard to implement and risks over-reach.

UNESCO has been actively involved in the reform of laws related to freedom of expression and freedom of the media. Through MDP funds, support and need-based advice have been provided to various public institutions such as the Office of the Prime Minister and the Legal and Justice Affairs Advisory Council in order to ensure future media regulations are in line with international standards. Three draft media laws had been prepared as of December 2019.

Another milestone is the convening of national and international partners in Ethiopia to form the Ethiopia Media Sector Alliance (EMSA), a multi-stakeholder coordination platform that has been launched with MDP support in mid-2019. This has since facilitated effective and joint media development initiatives, generated higher impact and sustainability, sharing ideas, and rationalizing efforts and resources.



Areas of action

Awareness-raising and advocacy

Ethiopia hosted the Global celebration of the World Press Freedom Day 2019 globally, with the main conference being held in Addis Ababa, jointly with the African Union and the Government of Ethiopia under the theme "Media for Democracy: Journalism and Elections in Times of Disinformation", drawing unprecedented attendance with over 2000 participants from more than hundred countries. The conference issued the "Addis Ababa Declaration on the role of the media in times of elections" which was adopted by the participants and has since then been used by UNESCO and others in international work on promoting media freedom in times of elections.

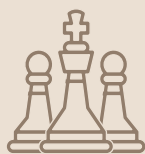
<p>Awareness-raising and advocacy (cont'd)</p>	<p>Drawing from previous experiences in countries in transition, UNESCO convened national and international media partners in Ethiopia and formed the Ethiopia Media Sector Alliance (EMSA), a multi-stakeholder coordination platform facilitating effective and joint media development initiatives in the country and supporting in addressing the challenges facing online and offline media in Ethiopia.</p>
<p>Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities</p>	<p>In order to help relevant duty bearers, align future reforms with international standards of freedom of expression, safety of journalists and access to information, a series of experts' roundtables were organized. These roundtables enabled enriching and robust discussions around standards to be adopted in future draft laws.</p>
	<p>Technical support was provided to the Office of the Ethiopian Prime Minister to carry out an assessment and a national convention on the role of the media in transitional democracies in Ethiopia.</p>
	<p>Additional support was provided to the Legal and Justice Affairs Advisory Council (LJAAC) to advise the government on drafting new media laws (Media Law, Public Access to Information Law and Computer Crime Law).</p>
	<p>The creation of an independent Information Commission has been proposed, and the law concerning its establishment has been drafted.</p>



Key Achievements

- UNESCO jointly organized the global conference on the occasion of the 2019 World Press Freedom Day 2019 with the African Union and the Government of Ethiopia in Addis Ababa. The event had a high attendance with almost 2,000 participants from more than 100 countries registered to attend over 30 sessions. The event led to joint programming in 2020 between UNESCO, AU and other media partners, as well as to other media development partners such as the British Embassy in Addis Ababa joining efforts in building the capacity of the Ethiopian journalists.

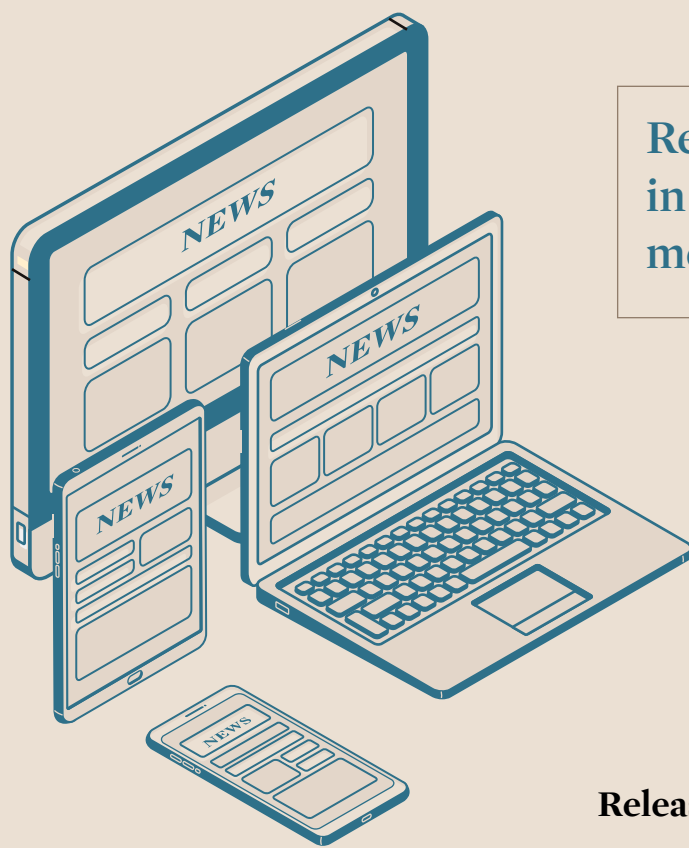
- During commemorations of WPF2019, both the Ethiopian President and the Prime Minister of Ethiopia delivered statements reiterating their commitment to improve freedom of expression and working conditions for journalists in the country.
- UNESCO convened national and international partners in Ethiopia to form the Ethiopia Media Sector Alliance (EMSA), which is set to facilitate effective and joint media development initiatives, generate higher impact and sustainability, centralize ideas, efforts, resources and; as well as address the challenges facing online and offline media in the country.
- UNESCO provided the Office of the Prime Minister of Ethiopia with technical and need-based support in assessing the role of the media in the transition period the country is currently traversing. This assessment was acknowledged as critical in advising on actions to address current concerns by national decision makers on “fake news”, disinformation and related professional challenges that have been accused of stirring tensions in the country.
- Three new media laws (Media Law, Public Access to Information Law and Computer Crime Law) have been drafted in Ethiopia in conformity to international standards and practices by a Working Group established by the Legal and Justice Affairs Advisory Council and supported by UNESCO. Additionally, a law to establish an independent Information Commission has been drafted in order to insure effective implementation of ATI regulations. Synergising with all this has been complementary work to conduct a Media Development Indicators assessment in the country, with support from UNESCO’s IPDC.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

The reform process happening in Ethiopia has created a rapid economic, political and institution transformation. However, the lack of strong institutions, the reshuffling of officials, and the dissolution of the Government Communication Affairs Office created gaps in role and responsibilities. It therefore required UNESCO to often change and build relations with new interlocutors. Additionally, while social media played a vital role in the reform, in relation to access to information and supporting political discourse, it

has also contributed to disinformation and incited inter-ethnic violence. This in turn led to an targeted internet shutdown which was not anticipated as part of the reform process. Furthermore, despite the top-level Ethiopian government’s strong commitment to reform institutions, the mindsets of some middle-level implementers proved to be resistant to change and have demanded an additional time-consuming effort.



Recent evolutions in the Ethiopian media landscape



**Release of imprisoned
journalists**



Unblocking of more than

260

media websites



Diaspora-based satellite
television operating in the
country



**Restrictive media
laws being reformed**

and a new independent
information commission
will be established



**Less government
control**

of press agencies
and regulators

Senegal

Gambia



Context

In Gambia, there are 12 radio stations that define themselves as community media, almost all of which are members of the national Network of Community Radio Broadcasters. This organization was primarily established to foster the sharing of good practices at the national level. However, the prevailing legal framework, which the government has vowed to reform, has much room for improvement towards community media sustainability.

Community media are legally recognized and given priority for broadcasting licenses. In 2017, the Government also published draft guidelines on ownership and cross-ownership in the broadcasting sector, but they have yet to be validated. However, this draft has no specific provision for community media and treats all broadcasters equally regardless of their size. If enacted, this could result in expensive licensing fees and limitations to advertising, which could strongly impede the sustainability of community

media. Due to the possible consequences of such legislation, support for the reform of national media policy is growing to promote the adoption of fair and sustainable regulation.

Concerning media and information literacy, in West Africa region and especially in Gambia, teachers need to have the knowledge and ability to help students move towards new understandings of the media and the impact it has in their lives, as a means to empower and develop their communities. To ensure that MIL is effectively implemented, an identification of key stakeholder groups and the designation of a steering committee is under way together with UNESCO.



Areas of action and progress

In Gambia, a baseline study on community media sustainability was carried out in 2019 with the participation of various stakeholders, particularly duty bearers, such as the Public Utility Regulation Authority (PURA), Local authorities, and rights holders such as members of the Association of Community Radio Broadcasters. Recommendations stemming from the study highlighted improving community media independence, service and governance as well as supporting their transitioning to digital radio. Increase sustainability of community radios is necessary to preserve their continuous contribution to nurturing population, including youth and women, with gender sensitive and public interest information. The study, which included organizing focus groups and interviews with stakeholders,

contributed also to raising awareness among duty bearers on the importance of ensuring community media sustainability. Since the diffusion of the study report, the Ministry of Information has used the report as background document in the drafting of the new media service law bill.

Though it has taken more time than foreseen, UNESCO has successfully advocated for the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Education to work together for advancing MIL agenda in Gambia. This has led to the government establishing a joint task force to work on MIL readiness assessment and policy for the country.



Key Achievements

- The baseline study on community radio sustainability, based on UNESCO's principles, has been completed with a report formulating five key recommendations for policy changes to improve or support media independence, governance, service and transitioning to digital technology. The Government, through the Ministry of Information has demonstrated appropriation of those recommendations by including them to inform the drafting of the new media service bill.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

Progress working with the government for it to take a leadership role in the assessment of country readiness of MIL and development of MIL policy has been very slow due to issues such as focal persons' lack of time for involvement in multiple of commitments and delays in inter-ministerial communication. In consequences, and as a remedial action, some planned activities were delayed and implementation had to be adapted to meet the country situation according to which some MIL activities should stem from or follow the policy choice to be made by the government. Another difficulty has resided in the finding of local experts on MIL. To address this issue, UNESCO has reached out and identified experts from its network of institutions and partners in the region.



Context

Kenya has a vibrant and diverse media scene. Whereas traditional media - newspapers, television and radio - still dominate, alternative channels, particularly social media, have become credible alternatives for certain audiences like youth. While new technologies offer unique opportunities for participation in governance as enshrined in the Constitution, they are present threats in the form of disinformation, the abuse of vulnerable populations and the dilution of the quality of public discourse on governance and other issues of public interest. In Kenya, widespread poverty, relative deprivation, high unemployment, lack of education, and political marginalization contribute to radicalization and violent extremism.

Kenya's national long-term development blueprint, Vision 2030, which aims to transform it into an industrialized, middle-income country, recognizes ICTs as having a critical role in driving economic, social

and political development. It is therefore envisaged that this initiative can trigger MIL initiatives that will help to enhance the promotion of knowledge societies and foster the development of free, independent and pluralistic media with universal access to information and knowledge for good governance.

The Kenyan government invited UNESCO to develop a MIL programme to build the capacities of teachers in the country. This creates an opportunity for the integration of MIL curricula into formal and non-formal education in Kenya. Previously, UNESCO had been instrumental in the set-up of the Kenyan Centre for MIL, which is strengthening capacities of youth organizations on MIL and led to the development of a draft Background Document on National MIL Policy and Strategy in 2015. This initiative has laid the foundation for MIL policy development in the country.



Areas of action and progress

<p>Media and Information Literacy (MIL)</p>	<p>UNESCO has provided technical support towards preparation of Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers in Kenya. This was conducted through a consultative process - led by the Centre for MIL in Kenya - of adaptation of UNESCO's Model Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers while ensuring that the version as developed conforms to Kenya's national curriculum policy, competency-based education and training policy framework, and East Africa e-learning strategy.</p>
	<p>Technical consultative meetings comprising experts drawn from wide range of institutions such as the Teachers' Service Commission, Kenya Education Management Institute, Kenya Private Sector Alliance, University of Nairobi, United States International University - Africa, Technical University of Kenya, St. Paul's University, Karatina University, Media Council of Kenya, and Article 19 East Africa. Furthermore, a national validation workshop for adaptation and mainstreaming the developed curriculum in teacher training and professional development was held on 06 September 2019. This was attended by 37 participants comprising of 24 men and 13 women drawn from government agencies, academia, education sector, civil society and private sector in Kenya.</p>
	<p>Technical assistance was also provided towards preparation of the first Media and Informational Literacy Policy and Strategy Document for Kenya. This was done through a consultative process led by Media Council of Kenya through adaptation of UNESCO model MIL Policy and Strategy Guidelines and Kenya's national development aspirations, guidelines and policies. Technical meetings were held towards development of the MIL Policy and Strategy document with inputs from expert teams drawn from Government line ministries - ICTs, and Education, academia, private sector, and non-state actors.</p> <p>The draft Media and Information Literacy Policy and Strategy document has been validated through a national stakeholders' conference that was held on 10 December 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya</p>



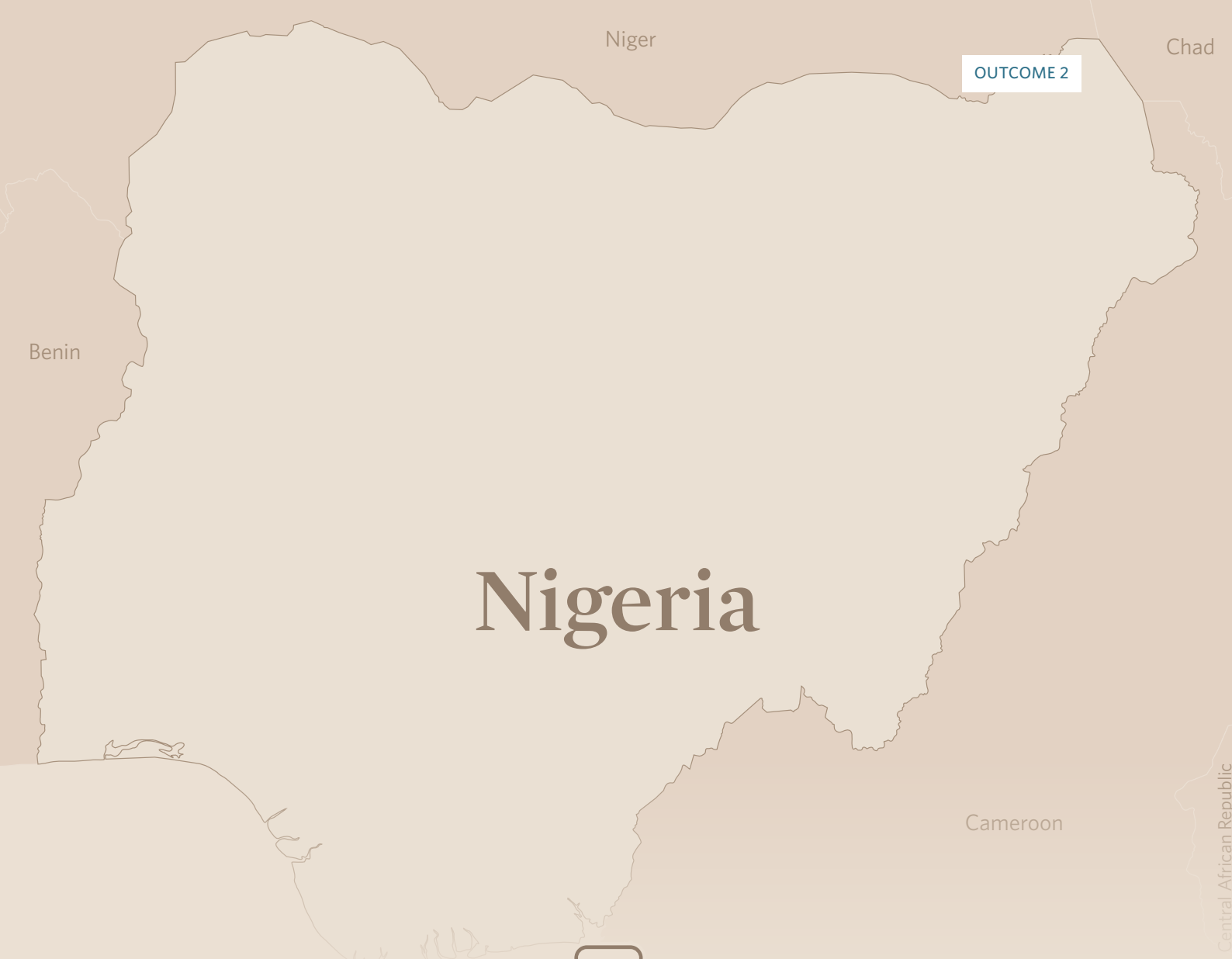
Key Achievements

- Key outcomes included: preparation of draft National Media and Information Literacy Policy and Strategy document and the Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers in Kenya. These outcomes provide a basis towards enhancing and ensuring societies are empowered through MIL interventions. There is a strong call for scaling up MIL awareness interventions to Kenya's county governments - 47 Devolved Governance Units - for ensuring buy-in and cooperation towards integrating MIL into their plans, programs and activities in the country.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

The Constitution of Kenya, 2010 created a decentralized system of government comprising of 47 devolved political and administrative counties. Each of these devolved units has the responsibility of ensuring quality childhood development within their respective regions. The challenge is to create cost-effective mechanisms to strengthen technical capacity of teachers on how to integrate MIL into their plans and also support technical consultative engagement with the county governments to lobby for adaptation of UNESCO's MIL Curriculum to early childhood learning institutions within their counties. UNESCO envisages that the best counties can be leveraged as MIL Champions to stir a coordinated discourse on the importance of MIL in Kenya.



Context

Nigeria has been hit in recent times by the menace of disinformation as well as harmful content inciting to violence. Almost 400 persons were killed in 2019 as result of communal and bandit attacks attributed in part to the circulation of misinformation. There are several instances where cultural, religious and political tensions have been heightened. The situation is not

getting better as the promotion of ethnic and religious hate is on the rise. Curbing disinformation has been a major challenge, propelling the proposition of a bill. Stakeholders believe that to tackle disinformation there is a greater need for multistakeholder-based preventative actions instead of . Hence the relevance of MIL.



Areas of action and progress

Media and Information Literacy (MIL)

UNESCO has engaged different stakeholders, particularly duty bearers, on sustainable ways to build a knowledge society with strong competencies in information management, and MIL. In achieving this, four major activities were pursued namely:

- Strengthening of a coalition on MIL to advance authentic information and pursue advocacy at all levels;
- Pilot testing of the UNESCO MIL Curriculum;
- Facilitating the adaption of the curriculum in different institutions;
- Facilitating the establishment of MIL clubs in institutions of learning.

The above were largely attained through rigorous engagements with different government institutions responsible for curriculum and teaching in Nigeria. In addition, non-governmental actors were engaged in ensuring a vibrant coalition. Negotiations are at an advanced level with the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC), the agency responsible for the development and deployment of curriculum in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria. This is to achieve national institutional mainstreaming of MIL into school curriculum. However, a concrete result has been attained, in mainstreaming MIL in the teacher-training curriculum in Nigeria with the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), the agency responsible for the training of teachers. A Benchmark Academic Standard (BMAS) has been produced and every student in Nigeria colleges of Education must take and pass MIL in year one and two. This will boost the capacity of pre-service teachers on MIL and techniques of applying knowledge as in-service teachers.

Support to the National Open Universities of Nigeria to Develop a Tailored Version of the Curriculum through OER platform for Piloting:

In order to facilitate open access to MIL contents, the platform of OER/MOOCs was leveraged. A partnership was developed with the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) to design a MOOC on MIL based upon the existing UNESCO MIL Curriculum. Over 2,000 persons engaged in the exercise. This revealed how ICTs (OER/MOOCs) are useful in popularizing MIL.

Establishment of MIL clubs:

While awaiting positive engagement with Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC), UNESCO partnered with the Education Initiative to train teachers who would in turn establish MIL clubs in their various schools, and thereby mainstream the curriculum as an extracurricular activity in schools. This intervention saw to the training of 40 teachers by the Education Initiative on the MIL curriculum. At the end of the exercise, the country has about 30 functioning MIL clubs established.



Key Achievements

- The (re)establishment of a national coalition (MILCON) bodes well for synergy amongst stakeholders towards advocacy on national policies and integration of MIL into the schooling curriculum;
- 20 institutions in the country have pilot-tested the MIL curriculum, and some have adapted the use of the curriculum in some of their teaching subjects;
- The UNESCO MIL Curriculum has been mainstreamed into the Minimum Standard in Colleges. MIL has thus become a compulsory general course in year one and two of the country's national colleges;
- UNESCO supported the National Open University of Nigeria to develop a MOOC on Media and Information Literacy curriculum based on the existing UNESCO MIL curriculum, which was deployed through the OER platform. At the end of the six-week programme, over 2000 participants took part in the exercise;
- Some schools now have MIL clubs where activities of MIL are practiced during their extra-curricular activities. With this regard, establishing MIL clubs in some schools is regarded as a viable means and platform for expanding civic education movement, enabling students in primary and secondary schools as principal agents of social change.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

The immediate challenge of the MDP's implementation in Nigeria is funding. More successes would have been recorded, if adequate funds were sourced. The support and coordination of the Coalition and UNESCO's advocacy with the national government provides a basis for further progress.

Somalia



Context

Somalia remains one of the most dangerous and deadliest countries for journalists to work in in Africa, on average accounting for half of all journalists killed in the continent. According to the UNESCO Observatory on Killed Journalists, which is partly supported by the MDP, 21 journalists have been killed in the country. Freedom of expression, safety of journalists and access to information have suffered as a result of internal conflicts and the weakness of central government, as a significant part of Somalia's territory is under non-state actors' control. Local journalists are also subject to non-lethal attacks such as intimidation attempts, arbitrary arrests and closing media outlets by local authorities.

As a result, an atmosphere of self-censorship prevails, and those who refuse to be silenced face harassment, arbitrary arrest, imprisonment, physical attacks, torture, and in the worst cases, death. Often, due

to lack of funding, certain media outlets resort to funding sources close to central government, thereby weakening the independence of the Somali press.

Despite the problem in terms of safety of journalists, Somalia has a vibrant media sector, which is nevertheless often lacking professionalism or is overly connected with political or other actors. A media law initially approved by the Federal Government of Somalia in 2016 has been under review since 2017, and a revised version was eventually passed by the Federal Parliament's Lower House in July 2019, following two years of debate. The final version was validated by the upper House and sent to the President for assent. However, the Bill has been criticized by specialized observers for its vague and restrictive provisions, particularly referring to the independence of the media regulator, and the sanctions related to publication of "false/fake news", and offences against

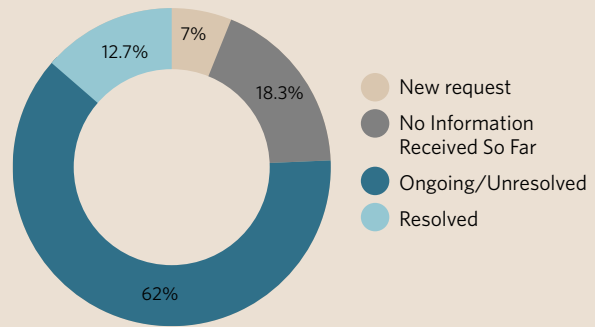
SOMALIA

Somali culture and religion. Media workers in Somalia have raised concerns that, if signed into law by the President as it is, the Bill would significantly curtail the freedom to impart information and make journalists vulnerable to criminal prosecutions for disclosing confidential information, among other objections.

Somalia was further highlighted by a historic visit by the Director General of UNESCO in February 2020, during which the country renewed its commitment to multilateralism and to the human dimension of reconstruction.

Nevertheless, 2019 was a year of progress for Somalia's path to peacebuilding, reconstruction and stability, as local authorities upscaled efforts to build peace through political reform. During an October 2019 visit, a delegation of UN and African Union delegations noted the country's achievements in the participation of women in its peacebuilding process, and highlighted the role played by the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in the peacebuilding process. The reconstruction of

Status of cases condemned by UNESCO
2006-2019



Areas of action and progress

<p>Awareness-raising and advocacy</p>	<p>Knowledge sharing and dialogue fostered among various national stakeholders was supported through sponsoring members of the national safety mechanisms to take part in the global WPFDD conference in Ethiopia.</p> <p>Local initiatives marking both the WPFDD and the IDEI in Somalia were supported with the aim of strengthening national momentum and advocacy.</p>
<p>Enhancing journalists' safety</p>	<p>Technical support for the establishment of a national mechanism for safety of journalists established through National Coordination Committee and joint working groups.</p> <p>Timely and consistent support enabled the development of a National Plan of Action for the National Coordination Committee for Safety of Journalists, which was strengthened through the submission of recommendations at a High-Level meeting on Safety of Journalists.</p> <p>The national mechanisms for safety of journalists were further strengthened through dedicated trainings on UNESCO.</p>

<p>Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities</p>	<p>Support was provided for the review of media laws in Somalia and Somaliland to ensure compliance with international standards.</p> <p>As part of the judges' initiative in Africa, judges and prosecutors in Somalia received specialized training on international and regional standards on freedom of expression and safety of journalists.</p>
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Key Achievements

- Enhanced capacities of duty-bearers (notably judges and prosecutors) and right-holders to monitor, report and enhance safety of journalists through the dissemination of, and training on, UNESCO's resources and tools on safety of journalists. An increased political will to report on this issue has also been noted.
- The establishment of a national mechanism for safety of journalists and of a National Plan of Action has enhanced the dialogue between duty-bearers and right-holders
- Support provided to the revision of media laws in Somalia and Somaliland increased rights holders' advocacy and participation abilities in legislative and institutional processes on freedom of expression.
- Due to UNESCO's multifaceted support and policy advice, a dialogue between the National Coordination committee on safety of journalists and key government stakeholders has officially commenced based on an 11-point communiqué on safety of journalists.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

The security situation continued to be critical throughout 2019, making it impossible for non-emergency and humanitarian missions to safely operate inside Somalia - so missions had to be limited and much training had to be organized outside the country. Additionally, given Somalia's context, the pace of legislation of key laws necessary for the full engagement of stakeholders, such as the media law, continued to be slow, thus making planning unpredictable. However, UNESCO has consistently continued to provide the support needed, following various complimentary approaches to support the media law reforms aspired.

Sudan

Ethiopia

South Sudan

Central
African RepublicDemocratic Republic
of the Congo

Kenya



Context

Having gained its independence in 2011, South Sudan remains a young country which has been marred by political instability as well as a civil war which lasted six years. The signing of a peace agreement in 2018 led to the easing of tensions in the country, but its implementation remains lacking and the country's peace process has been described as precarious by the UN Security Council.

South Sudan is characterized by a fragile and young media sector, vibrantly growing while facing a myriad of challenges. Achieving a free, independent and safe environment for media to thrive is imperative in order to secure democratic advances, peace and development in South Sudan.

Various reports have reflected South Sudan as a perilous country for journalists, and the country's freedom of expression rankings by international observers consistently remain among the lowest. A survey undertaken in 2017, based on UNESCO's Journalist' Safety Indicators, showed that media censorship perseveres, and that journalists' protection by the media outlets they work for is virtually nonexistent.

Nonetheless, there has been some progress achieved in recent years, which was highlighted during the 2019 national celebration of WPFD. No journalists were killed in South Sudan in 2018, none were in prison at

the time the commemoration was held in May 2019, and a total of 131 media houses/associations were issued with licenses and 141 international journalists were accredited.

UNESCO actions in South Sudan have focused on boosting mechanisms at policy and practice levels to ensure the participation of duty bearers and national and international media development stakeholders working towards the achievement of an enabling media environment for freedom of expression, access to information and a sustainable development. The South Sudanese Right of Access to Information Act was proclaimed in 2013, right after the country's independence. However, its implementation has been slowed down by civil war. UNESCO's office in Juba has been providing technical support and policy advice to the South Sudan Information Commission since its inception in 2016. As a result, a 3-year Information Commission strategy document (2020-2021) on operationalization of the 2013 Act was launched during the 2019 IDUAL. The document details five key strategic priority areas that the Information Commission has set out to implement.

During the commemoration of IDUAL, the South Sudan Information Commissioner stated that this document will be a guide to develop "a world class right of access to information regime in the country, the region and beyond". Additionally, during 2019 over 140 stakeholders from public and private institutions were sensitized to the provisions of the 2013 Act and trained on their roles to practice proactive information disclosure as a mechanism for building trust between citizens, the government and private institutions.

Building on the earlier selection of South Sudan as a pilot country as part of the implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, UNESCO has also focused on developing journalists' capacities in several areas including gender-responsive reporting, safety, and knowledge of media laws. The actions above, as part of UNESCO's ongoing support, have resulted in an agreement among key stakeholders was reached to establish a working group on the safety and protection of journalists, which has been officiated as an inclusive and representative coordinating forum.



Areas of action and progress

<p>Awareness-raising and advocacy</p>	<p>The commemoration of 2019 IDEI focused on "Building Trust in Media and Countering Disinformation" through a media freedom symposium in partnership with national media partners.</p>
	<p>The celebration of IDUAL under the theme "Access to Information - leaving no one behind!" in collaboration with the South Sudan Access to Information Commission was marked by the launch of a 3-year Information Commission strategy document (2020-2021) on operationalization of the Access to Information Act, 2013.</p>
	<p>The Government's commitment in supporting freedom of expression was reiterated through their leading role in the commemoration of WPFJ which was organized by UNESCO in close collaboration with the Ministry of Information and South Sudan Media Authority, in addition to the Association for Media Development, Journalists Female Network, and National Editors Forum. Recent achievements in media freedom in South Sudan were highlighted during the event.</p>

<p>Enhancing journalists' safety</p>	<p>The implementation of the UN Plan of Action was reinforced through capacity development activities targeting female journalists and editors to enhance gender responsive reporting and safety of female Journalists, using the UNESCO training manual on Freedom of Expression and Public Order.</p> <p>The IDEI conference held in Juba, resulted in key follow up actions including the establishment of a National Mechanism on Safety and Protection of Journalists to ensure journalists' safety to monitor and report on attacks against journalists.</p>
<p>Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities</p>	<p>A roundtable discussion for Media Authority personnel, editors and radio station managers on media laws and regulations, was organized in partnership with the Media Authority and Community Empowerment for Progress Organizations, aiming at creating a space for stakeholders to advocate for freedom of expression and discuss next steps for the National Mechanism on Safety.</p> <p>A technical workshop was organized for the Information Commission staff to develop a road map to ensure the operationalization of the Access to Information Act, 2013.</p> <p>A seminar on "ATI: Comparative Practices and Opportunities" was organized in cooperation with the Access to Information Commission and the Africa Freedom of Information Centre. National commitment was evident by the participation of over 80 stakeholders from the Information Commission, Ministry of Information, Parliament, independent oversight commissions, lawyers, civil society and media association representatives.</p>
<p>Community Media Sustainability</p>	<p>UNESCO conducted an assessment at national level to identify key issues faced by community radios and give the recommendations on long-term reporting and knowledge sharing mechanisms established between community media networks and duty bearers.</p> <p>The report expansively evaluates the current situation of community media sustainability, and explores in-depth the challenges faced by community media in the country. Findings from the assessment aim at informing and educating the relevant stakeholders such as the Media Authority, Access to Information Commission, community media networks and associations, and CSOs. Further, the report also explores opportunities for media development partners and CSOs to support/facilitate the development of community media in the country.</p> <p>The final detailed assessment report on community media sustainability in South Sudan will be the first of its kind in the country. It will be an opportunity to provide reliable recommendations that will be a basis for identification and recording gaps in the community media ecosystem in South Sudan. It will also serve as a basis for the development of community media policies relevant to support thriving, sustainability, and recognition of community media as a third sector arm of the media.</p>

Recommendations from the national assessment on community media sustainability

1. Policy

- Resolving ambiguities between legislation and institutional mandates around the protection and recognition of community media and the frequency allocation for community media.
- Promoting legislative awareness on community media among government officials at central and state level and among the general public in South Sudan, including the public right to freedom of expression and the public roles and responsibilities in ensuring freedom of expression.

2. Structural and Capacity building

Key recommendations and benchmarks on the current and required state support measures for community media:

- Strengthening coordination between government and civil society organizations by setting up a multi-stakeholder platform between media government institutions (e.g. Media Authority, National Communication Authority), CSOs and international organizations to improve coordination and provide coordinated services to the public, and by supporting CSOs with their advocacy role.
- Promoting awareness on the importance of community media by training government officials and by launching public awareness campaigns, with a special focus on underserved communities and youth.



Key Achievements

- As a result of UNESCO's continuous technical and financial support to the South Sudan Information Commission, a 3-year Information Commission strategy document (2020-2021) on the operationalization of the 2013 Access to Information Act was launched during the IDUAL. The document details five key strategic priority areas that the South Sudan Access to Information Commission has set out to implement.
- Furthermore, the successful collaboration with the Access to Information Commission of South Sudan has demonstrated how stakeholders' engagement reinforces ownership, participation and sustainability beyond the actual implementation period. For instance, the empowerment of the Commission's staff through UNESCO-led activities has enabled the Commission to mobilize support from other media development partners (such as the Norwegian People's Aid and UNICEF), thus amplifying and ensuring sustainability of the implementation of the Access to Information Act.
- In a country like South Sudan, reaching over 800 stakeholders during the commemoration of relevant international days such as WPF, IDUAL and IDEI 2019 is quite an achievement. This has led to an increased awareness on the importance of press freedom, freedom of expression and journalists' safety, thus showing notable improvements in the South Sudanese media sector, which was highlighted during the celebration of WPF in Juba.
- As a conclusion to the commemoration of IDEI, stakeholders provided key action points leading to the establishment of the National Mechanism on the Safety and Protection of Journalists to ensure their safety, including a monitoring and

reporting system. Next steps involve establishing a working group in 2020 to act as an inclusive and representative coordinating forum to ensure the safety of journalists both at policy and practice level. It will include all arms of the government, security departments, CSOs, human rights defenders, lawyer associations, media regulatory bodies, journalists' representatives, and media development partners.

- Additionally, the IDEI national celebration was also an opportunity for rights holders to call upon the government to follow-up on the 10 pending cases of journalist killed/jailed/attacked and ensure justice for journalists who have lost their lives at the line of duty.
- UNESCO successfully conducted the national assessment on community media sustainability

for South Sudan. In the next phase of implementation in 2020, it is expected that the final report will be endorsed and next action is to implement key recommendations highlighted in the report and UNESCO to continue support for partners to adopt the UNESCO policy series on community media sustainability.

- In addition, as a result of UNESCO continued support towards commemoration of the international World Radio Day, increased awareness on the importance of access to information through radio has been witnessed over the years. The WRD has been effectively used as a platform to remind stakeholders and policy makers of the need to support progress of the radio broadcast sector and support development of community media. The WRD event in Juba was broadcast live.

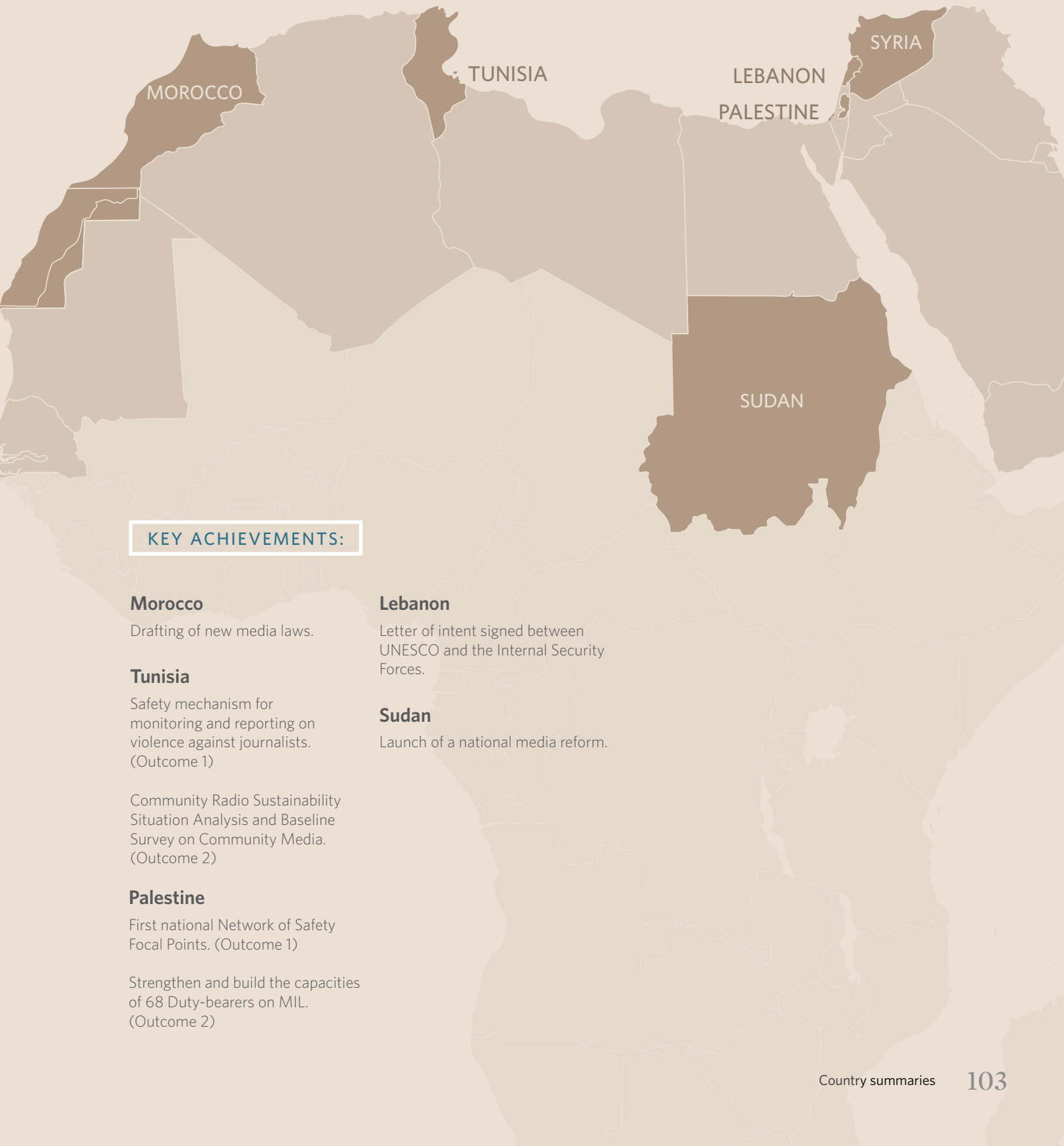


Challenges, risks and remedial actions

In line with UNESCO's approach to strengthen national ownership and encourage the commitment of all stakeholders, the UNESCO office in Juba involved national partners in all actions and tried as much as possible to rely on national expertise, which also aims at guaranteeing continuity and sustainability. However, the limited capacities in the country posed a challenge, which led UNESCO to outsource certain activities requiring specialization to international experts, but with a particular attention to ensure that such a support would also reinforce local capacities and future sustainability.

The political instability and sometimes lack of cooperation and delayed responses by some national stakeholders also impacted the implementation timeline, led to an overall delay and decreased operational efficiency. Therefore, the UNESCO office in Juba was obliged to revise its work plan, which was possible due to the flexibility of the MDP.

Action in Arab States



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

Morocco

Drafting of new media laws.

Tunisia

Safety mechanism for monitoring and reporting on violence against journalists. (Outcome 1)

Community Radio Sustainability Situation Analysis and Baseline Survey on Community Media. (Outcome 2)

Palestine

First national Network of Safety Focal Points. (Outcome 1)

Strengthen and build the capacities of 68 Duty-bearers on MIL. (Outcome 2)

Lebanon

Letter of intent signed between UNESCO and the Internal Security Forces.

Sudan

Launch of a national media reform.



Context

In its efforts to promote freedom of expression, the safety of journalists and access to information across the Arab Region, UNESCO has encountered a wide variety of national contexts and political situations, as MDP-benefitting countries continue to face widely varying challenges. This diversity thus required, as in other countries, specifically tailored approaches to the needs identified by UNESCO and/or expressed by national stakeholders.

For instance, while the Lebanese media landscape is well established and strikingly vibrant, political instability and security concerns in Palestine and Syria pose considerable challenges for the advancement of safety of journalists in these countries. In Tunisia and Morocco, UNESCO encountered legislative delays and hesitant implementation of laws while, in Sudan, government commitment to media reform provided a rare opportunity for progress to happen.

While most of the support provided to Arab states was on a national level, two regional initiatives were undertaken across the region with support from the Multi-Donor Programme.

1. Integration of the Model course on safety of journalists by UNESCO and the International Federation of Journalists into the curricula of journalism schools and universities

The [Model Course on the Safety of Journalists](#), produced by UNESCO in cooperation with the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), was first launched in 2017. Throughout the past years, it has been progressively integrated into the curricula of journalism schools and universities across the region. In 2019, this integration was evident and wide-reaching. In Palestine, for instance, Birzeit University, Modern College University, An-Najah University, Hebron University, Al-Quds Open University, and the American Modern University, all located in

West the Bank, took part in this initiative. In Gaza, Al-Aqsa University, University College of Applied Sciences, Islamic University, and Al-Azhar University also began integrating the model course into their curricula. In Syria, the Model Course was integrated into the curriculum of the University of Damascus. Meanwhile, in Lebanon, the previously undertaken introduction of the course into local schools' curricula led to new initiatives with Lebanese media students. The UNESCO Beirut Office joined forces with the May Chidiac Foundation to train media students and fresh graduates in an effort to create a culture of safety. Following the success of a series of safety trainings, participants launched a national social media campaign to promote and advocate for the importance of journalists' safety.

2. Enhancing a gender responsive film sector in the South Mediterranean region

As previously highlighted in this report, UNESCO concluded in 2019 a two-year project titled "Enhancing a gender responsive film sector in the South Mediterranean region" co-funded by the European Union and by UNESCO through the Multi-Donor Programme. The project was carried out in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. Through the holistic implementation approach of the project, innovative thinking and actions were developed with a view to enhance gender equality in the film industry of the Arab region. Relevant decision makers in the film industry, as well as filmmakers were encouraged to address gender equality and women empowerment through film, tackle gender stereotypes, as well as promote the role of female film professionals.

The project resulted in:

1. A monitoring report on gender equality in films and within the Arabic language film industry;
2. An online collaborative directory of female film professionals in the Maghreb-Mashreq;
3. Sensitized film industry actors on gender-related stereotypes;
4. Sensitized national public entities supporting film development as part of the creative industries to integrate a gender responsive approach;
5. Enhanced capacities of female film professionals;
6. Enhanced capacities of film producers to integrate a gender responsive approach in the film production;
7. Increased support to film and audio-visual schools;
8. Increased women's participation in film festivals in the Maghreb-Mashreq region.

Monitoring undertaken during the project helped to better document existing gender inequalities within the Arabic film industry. Producing an online directory of female film professionals helped shed a light on female talents which are too often little known or purposely ignored, and this served as the basis for a wider advocacy campaign.

A pedagogical module on gender in film was developed and was launched in universities in Jordan and Morocco. This module aims to integrate a gender responsive approach in film and audio-visual schools' curricula while students pilot thematic film screenings as a pedagogical experience. The sustainability of these results will be further strengthened and maintained through the commitment of national partners involved in the project.

Another key achievement was the initiation of the process of adopting a regional charter for equality in the film sector, with a view of sensitizing national public entities.

Finally, a regional seminar on the project organized during the 13th edition of the International Women Film Festival of Salé in September 2019 saw the production of a recommendation document. During the Festival, the "Call of Salé" was adopted by all the participants from the region in an effort to define the modalities and guidelines of the "Sessions on Equality in the audio-visual and film sector in the Maghreb-Mashreq region" to be held in Morocco in 2020.

Lebanon

Syria



Context

The Lebanese media landscape is well established and is one that is often described as free and business savvy. Eleven leading Arabic daily newspapers are distributed in the country, alongside two French-language dailies, one Armenian, and one English-language newspaper. Despite its vibrancy, there are many challenges affecting Lebanese media. In a sector that is penetrated by deep political and religious divides, partisan ownership of media translates into a chronic lack of editorial independence. Professionalism, accuracy and fact checking is another point of contention. Furthermore, advanced technical facilities are mostly available to politically dependent outlets, which comparatively limits the ability of non-partisan media to reach equally wide audiences.

Freedom of expression has come under stress in Lebanon over the past three years, with a noticeable rise in the numbers of threats and arrests of journalists, as well as of different kinds of restraints of freedom of expression, online freedom and safety of journalists and citizen-journalists.

Lebanon passed a law in 2016 on the access to information, and its adoption in 2017 was welcomed as a major step in reinforcing freedom of expression and achieving SDG 16, in particular its target 10 on achieving “public access to information and fundamental freedoms”. However, implementation is delayed and subject to many challenges. The public body assigned to oversee the implementation of the law still had not been created by 2019, and local authorities have generally failed to comply with its provisions. As a result, the general public remains rather unaware of the provisions of the law. As part of its support to guarantee an effective implementation of the law, UNESCO partnered with Lebanon’s Ministry of State for Administrative Reform and the Transparency Association (LTA) to organize a [national conference](#) on the occasion of the 2019 IDUAI. UNESCO’s endeavours to get the government on board to support this major step, were verified by the government’s commitment, evident through the patronage of the Minister of State for the Administrative Reform, Dr May Chidiac (and recipient

of the 2006 UNESCO-Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize), and the involvement of the ministry itself as a partner. Sessions throughout the day focused on the role of the Executive and the Judiciary in guaranteeing the right of access to information and the right of access to information from the CSOs and media perspective.

Additional challenges were posed by the shortcomings of journalism education in the country. While many journalism training programmes exist, they are generally focused on theory and do not give sufficient

importance to practical skills, making it hard for students graduating in journalism to then find work. Building on the [model course on Safety of Journalists](#) produced in 2017 for media faculties, the UNESCO Beirut office joined forces with the May Chidiac Foundation to train media students and fresh graduates in an effort to create a culture for safety. Following the success of a series of safety trainings, participants launched a national social media campaign to promote and advocate for the importance of journalists' safety regardless of the environment.



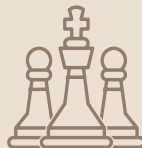
Areas of action and progress

Awareness-raising and advocacy	<p>Awareness around the importance and provisions of the Lebanese Access to Information law raised through a series of information sessions in local communities across the country.</p>
	<p>Advocacy efforts targeting national stakeholders for the full implementation of the ATI law were upscaled and government commitment reasserted during the celebration of the 2019 IDUAI.</p>
	<p>Lebanese stakeholders pledged to advocate for a policy change in the Arab Region following the "Call of Salé" on gender equality in the media, which was adopted in September 2019 as part of the Medfilm project.</p>
	<p>Journalists brought attention to safety of journalists through a high-impact, national online advocacy campaign on social media. This was possible with UNESCO's support through capacity building of young male and female journalists.</p>
Enhancing journalists' safety	<p>Implementation of the UN Plan of Action on Safety of Journalists further reinforced through the signing of a letter of intent with the Internal Security Forces (ISF). This intensifies cooperation between UNESCO and ISF to create a safer and enabling environment for journalists, especially in rural areas. Additionally, a communication strategy for ISF has been developed and will be in action starting 2020.</p>
Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities	<p>Encouraging discussions have been undertaken with the judiciary through the Supreme Judicial Council, securing a plan for 2020 action which will focus on: a) developing judges' capacities on how to deal with media, b) developing journalists' capacities to cover judiciary matters, and c) the organization of a national conference bringing together the judiciary and the media to create a sustainable and transparent relationship built on mutual trust.</p>



Key Achievements

- The ATI campaign surpassed expectations in term of outreach, with over 1200 members reached and a video reaching thousands through various media channels.
- Reaffirmed government commitment towards the implementation of the ATI Law, with stronger coalitions among national partners, led by the Lebanese Transparency Association.
- Successfully streamlined gender equality in all activities implemented, including over 70% female representation in all safety trainings organized in 2019 with a specific component highlighting their particular safety concerns. In a male-dominated field, women officers of the Internal Security Forces (ISF) represented the majority of participants from planning to execution.
- An agreement between UNESCO and the Supreme Judicial Council of Lebanon was reached, laying the grounds for action to be carried out in 2020 aimed at creating a mutual understanding and a common cause among the judiciary and the media to support an enabling and safe environment for freedom of expression and access to information.
- A letter of intent was signed with the Internal Security Forces (ISF), paving the way for further fruitful cooperation in 2020, in relation to safety of journalists and conflict resolution. Additionally, a communication strategy for ISF has been developed with UNESCO's support. The project will focus on strengthening the capacities of ISF officers on safety of journalists, outreach, conflict resolution, and MIL.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

The security situation in Lebanon, and in particular the demonstrations which started in October 2019, plus changes in the government, created a number of uncertainties and delays during the implementation. Two major actions were affected: a) Access to Information - outreach to and involvement of members of parliament from various political parties; and b) Support to Internal Security Forces (ISF), who at the time were overwhelmed with the security situation.

However, UNESCO's credibility, independence and convening power allowed for the redirecting of the work conducted on ATI and achieving results as highlighted above. Moreover, as it was not possible to work with the ISF during the demonstrations, UNESCO focused on producing a communication plan for ISF, thanks also to additional funding from the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Beirut. The plan has been finalized and is ready for adoption by the ISF in 2020.

Morocco

Algeria



Context

The 2011 constitutional reform was followed by a complex consultative process eventually leading to media legislation reform in 2016-2017. Independent specialized observers criticized the slow pace in the implementation of the reform and questioned its effective implementation in relation to journalistic imprisonment in 2019. Meanwhile, UNESCO sought to assist the implementation of the existing new legal framework, while supporting international standards.

Despite the challenges, there were also advances and UNESCO contributed to this. The establishment of the statutory self-regulatory National Press Council and the appointment of an Access to Information Commissioner have strengthened independent public institutions and reduced potential interference by the executive power in the media profession.

In this context, UNESCO has actively supported the implementation of the ATI law in the country, notably through the training of Public Information officers and the production of pedagogical tools in French and Arabic, with support from the highest levels of government. This resulted in the creation of a first cohort of Public Information officers, who graduated in July 2019. In the aftermath of this activity, the Prime Minister of Morocco pledged his support to mainstream ATI within the government and to promote transparency and accountability.

In line with UNESCO's Priority Gender Equality Action Plan 2014-2021, the Organisation also supported and co-funded, alongside the European Union, a regional project on combatting gender-based stereotypes in the film industry in the MENA region (Algeria, Egypt,

Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia) which was coordinated from Morocco. This project enabled an impact at the policy level, including the mainstreaming of gender responsive best practices within the public funding mechanism for the film industry, as well as the continued support of national broadcasters in the in-house implementation of a gender action plan.

Workshops held within the framework of the project with MDP funding allowed for advocacy on the safety of women journalists, on the importance of training Moroccan journalists on covering violence against women and girls, and on policies on gender equality and safety in the audiovisual industry.



Areas of action and progress

<p>Awareness-raising and advocacy</p>	<p>Concluded a 2-year project on gender representation in the film industry and the MENA region. A Call (“Call of Salé”) on gender equality in the media was adopted following a seminar organized in September 2019, during which stakeholders pledged to advocate for a policy change in the region.</p>
<p>Enhancing journalists’ safety</p>	<p>Within the framework of the “Enhancing a gender responsive film sector in the South Mediterranean region” project, UNESCO organized sessions to strengthen the capacities of national media outlets on the safety of women journalists.</p>
<p>Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers’ capacities</p>	<p>Continued advocacy efforts enabled the organization of meetings with Ministries of Justice and of Communication, the Prosecutor General’s Office, the National Press Council and representatives of the judiciary regarding the creation of a dialogue between justice and the media. The opening of the dialogue is scheduled for 2020. This dialogue will generate impact at policy level, as the Penal Code is currently being redrafted by the Parliament, and will also impact the field, as the sensitization of judges and prosecutors which may result in fewer prosecutions and convictions on expression cases.</p> <p>Capacity building of Public Information Officers led to the graduation of the first cohort of officers in July 2019. Additionally, resources for the training of Public Information officers were developed in French and Arabic. As a result of these successes, UNESCO has been solicited to train members of the Parliament on ATI and freedom of expression.</p> <p>Drawing on previous successful collaboration with the Moroccan authorities, UNESCO has been actively involved in discussing and drafting new media laws.</p>



Key Achievements

- Reinforced synergies with various Ministries and governmental actors, as well as secured support and involvement of the Prime Minister of Morocco in fully implementing the new law on ATI, including awareness raising and training of officers. The Prime Minister pledged to support mainstreaming ATI within the government and to promote transparency and accountability.
- The robustness of the relations and trust built with Moroccan authorities has been illustrated by UNESCO's support for the implementation of the new media laws, and the creation of the justice and media dialogue. The Organization has also been solicited to train members of Parliament on freedom of expression and access to information.
- The UNESCO Office in Rabat successfully completed the coordination of a two-year project titled "Enhancing a gender responsive film sector in the South Mediterranean Region", implemented inter-sectorially with the Culture Sector and with a regional reach. Numerous outstanding milestones were reached during the project, including the adoption of the "Call of Salé" during a seminar held within the framework of the 2019 International Women Film Festival of Salé, which gathered regional stakeholders from the film industry. Stakeholders and donors pledged to support a policy for change in the region.
- Activities supported by this Programme under the previous years, resulted in a long-term sustainability and institutionalization where 14 Moroccan national media outlets involved in the project have decided to take on the responsibility to sustain safety trainings and strengthening gender coverage in media, in all provinces of the country, on their own expense.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

Political uncertainty and instability, which persisted until October 2019, partially delayed some of what was initially envisaged in the work plan. Additionally, reluctance from certain stakeholders made the building of the media-justice coalition a time-consuming process.

Palestine

Israel

Jordan



Context

Political issues in Palestine, as well as security concerns, have created an increasingly precarious working environment for journalists. In addition to being intimidated and facing retaliation by elements within Palestine, local journalists often have to deal with pressure from Israeli actors. The Freedoms Committee of the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate recorded 838 violations of media freedoms in its 2018 annual report, which ranged from physical assault and raids on media outlets, to confiscation of equipment and arrest. Out of these violations, 13% involved female journalists. Fully aware of the extent of these challenges, UNESCO has made the safety of journalists one of its priority areas of intervention.

In line with UNESCO's continuous support to Palestinian media organizations, which includes initiatives to promote freedom of expression and the safety of journalists, the Ramallah Office held several specialized trainings of safety officers within media organizations as an initial step towards the creation of a network of safety focal points in the country. The training also focused on reinforcing safety protocols in newsrooms in order to provide better security for journalists on all levels: physical, psychological, legal and digital. These trainings also highlighted the need to take into account gender-specific threats in safety protocols and practices.

In the past years, the Ramallah Office had trained scores of journalists on conflict-sensitive reporting, risk assessment, first aid and safety. UNESCO co-produced with the NGO Reporters without Borders a safety handbook for reporters in high-risk environments, and has developed, together with the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), a specialized course on journalists' safety that was integrated within the curriculum of six universities in the West Bank (Birzeit University, Modern College University, An-Najah University, Hebron University, Al-Quds Open University, and the American Modern University) and four universities in Gaza (Al-Aqsa University, University College of Applied Sciences, Islamic University, and Al-Azhar University).

Grounded on its role in building coalitions and enhancing dialogue among various national partners, UNESCO has organized open discussions between journalists and members of the police and security forces to improve relations between the two groups, and to enhance their skills in areas related to freedom of expression and safety of journalists. Building

upon this experience, UNESCO is now looking into supporting media organizations in establishing and reinforcing clear routines, protocols and systems to enhance the safety of both their staff and the freelancers and fixers that they work with, with special attention being given to female journalists.

In the field of MIL, Palestine is becoming more aware of the importance of these competencies. Through collaboration with Ministry of Education and Higher Education, ten pilot schools were involved in the integration of new MIL curricula. UNESCO and the partners going ahead will expand the targeted groups and advocate for it within school curriculums.

Special attention was given to Gender equality throughout all of UNESCO's implemented activities; addressing the norms and cultural behaviours within journalism and the media, a field that remains overwhelmingly male-dominated in Palestine. In that regard, UNESCO has ensured that the section on "Gender and Safe Reporting" in the Safety Model Course, is being recognized in different universities.



Areas of action and progress

Awareness-raising and advocacy

The celebration of IDUAI saw the launch of the In-Focus report "Access to Information: A New Promise for Sustainable Development". The event was held within the framework of the Arab Regional Digital Inclusion Week at An-Najah University and received additional support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. An Open Talk organized by UNESCO reinforced awareness on the importance of access to information for good governance and the rule of law. Knowledge sharing around the provisions of Palestine's Cybercrime law was made possible after a year-long discussion through a national conference organized in cooperation with the 7amleh NGO. A special session enabled the exchange of regional and international perspectives on guaranteeing freedom of expression online, in line with international standards and UNESCO's Internet Universality principles for Rights, Openness, Accessibility and Multistakeholder participation.

Enhancing the safety of journalists	<p>Creation of a Safety Officers Network and strengthening the capacities of its safety officers from various media organizations.</p>
	<p>As part of wider efforts to strengthen national monitoring and reporting mechanisms for the safety of journalists, a national mechanism for the monitoring of safety of journalists was launched under the patronage of the Prime Minister of Palestine and in cooperation with the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate.</p>
	<p>National commitment towards the implementation of the UN Plan of Action was strengthened through various capacity development actions in line with international mechanisms on safety of journalists, international treaties signed by Palestine pertaining to freedom of expression, UN standards for monitoring and reporting.</p>
Media and Information Literacy (MIL)	<p>MIL capacity development was delivered in partnership with the Media Development Center (MDC) and Birzeit University benefitting Public Relations Officers from different Ministries. This was achieved through a collaboration with Prime Minister's Office and UNDP. The training will continue throughout the first quarter of 2020.</p>
	<p>On the occasion of the Global MIL Week, multi-stakeholder coordination was strengthened, and advocacy enhanced through the capacity development of the three leading Palestinian youth organizations in the field of MIL.</p>



Key Achievements

- A national mechanism for monitoring the safety of journalists was created with MDP support, in cooperation with the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate. UNESCO launched the mechanism at the 2019 IDEI commemoration with relevant ministries and CSOs, and under the patronage of the Prime Minister of Palestine.
- The very first network focusing on safety of Palestinian journalists from the West Bank and Gaza was created to contribute to safety in the field, especially during emergencies, and coordinate responses when journalists face attacks. This was the result of increased understanding and enhanced skills related to the physical and professional safety of journalists,

- which was achieved through training of safety officers within media organizations.
- New partnerships were formed, and additional support secured by the UNESCO office in Ramallah, notably from Al-Jazeera, to extend the reach and impact of the work on safety in Palestine. This includes advanced trainings on safety in the field in the West Bank and Gaza, bringing together the journalists who are members of UNESCO's Safety Officers Network and Al-Jazeera staff.
 - 68 Public Relations Officers from different Ministries benefited from the MIL capacity training that were held throughout the reporting period and shall continue throughout the first quarter of 2020.
 - Empowerment and strengthening of three youth organizations in the field of MIL.
 - Marking the Global Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Week.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

The political instability of Palestine and the deterioration of the security context (especially in Gaza) as well as changes within the government and various ministries, caused delays in the implementation of activities as envisaged in the initial work plan. A revised timeline was therefore adopted, and the dates of some activities shifted. Moreover, these adverse circumstances were an opportunity to stress the importance of creating safety officer positions within media organizations, which was achieved following extensive advocacy and sensitization, including several meetings with Palestinian media managers.

Another notable challenge was the lack of internal coordination within certain partner organizations, which caused delays in the follow-up of activities. To remedy this issue, a local professional trainer was recruited to help with the coordination that should have been done by other partners.

Sudan



Context

Close to 30 years of authoritarian rule marred by human rights abuses in Sudan came to an end on 11 April 2019, when former President Omar al-Bashir, wanted by the International Criminal Court as human-right violator, was overthrown following months of demonstrations and civil unrest. Since August 2019, a Transitional Civil-Military Council initiated a 39-month transitional period, under the authority of a Sovereign Council of Sudan in the lead up to the general elections scheduled in November 2022.

Sudan's current transitional authorities have expressed firm commitment to reforming their media laws and allowing for more freedom of expression and freedom of the media and have requested support

from UNESCO for this. Moreover, during the event organized within the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2019 and with the participation of UNESCO Director-General, the Sudanese Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdock signed the Global Pledge to Defend Media Freedom of the Media Freedom Coalition. He declared that "never again in the new Sudan will a journalist be repressed or jailed".

Through its Khartoum Office, and with strong backing by Headquarters, UNESCO has taken steps towards supporting Sudan. UNESCO initiated a series of high-level meetings aimed at advising Sudanese authorities on reforming the media sector, as well as

the laws and policies pertaining to the media and the internet. UNESCO's Assistant Director-General on Communication and Information led some of these meetings which involved the Minister of Culture and Information, the Minister of Education (and President of the UNESCO National Commission), as well as media managers, and foreign ambassadors based in Khartoum. The initiative was to support the building of coalitions to support the planned reform. These high-level meetings resulted in a consensus with the government on the need to have a participatory approach with the creation of a dedicated independent commission, as well as recognizing UNESCO's role as a pivotal enabler for the media reform.

In parallel, a country-wide assessment of the media situation in Sudan was initiated in November 2019 in collaboration with hundreds of Sudanese media

experts, media professionals, journalists' unions, broadcasting agencies, news agencies, TV and radio stations, legal entities, policy makers as well as representatives from the national civil society. This assessment is instrumental to the development of a Media Reform Roadmap. This Roadmap covers areas such as the safety of journalists, advocacy for the rights of media professionals, the compliance of laws and policies with international standards, and capacity-development for journalists and media professionals to promote freedom of expression. Preliminary findings of the assessment, based on the UNESCO's Media Development Indicators (MDI), were launched in February 2020, alongside the findings of another assessment based on UNESCO's Internet Universality Indicators (IUI).



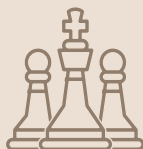
Areas of action and progress

<p>Awareness-raising and advocacy</p>	<p>The commemoration of the 2019 IDEI in Khartoum brought together stakeholders to support advocacy and awareness-raising about this critical topic.</p>
<p>Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities</p>	<p>The assessment of the Sudanese media landscape, policies and laws using UNESCO's Media Development Indicators is underway. The results of this assessment will be the basis for a Media Reform Roadmap.</p> <p>The launch of the national assessment of Sudan's media landscape and legislations was marked by the government's buy-in and commitment through the presence of the Sudanese Minister of Culture and Information and key governmental actors. The high attendance of national stakeholders, over 200 media professionals, journalists, legal bodies, media academics, unions representatives, civil society organizations, also showed national commitment and ownership, alongside international backing, namely through additional financial support by the British Embassy.</p>



Key Achievements

- The Minister of Culture and Information and the relevant undersecretary have committed to a participatory and inclusive approach to the media reform, that will be based on the assessment of the Sudanese media landscape using the UNESCO Media Development Indicators. The assessment serves as a basis for the reform's Roadmap, which will inform the creation of an independent commission on media reform.
- An open national dialogue has been possible in Sudan for the first time in years, thanks to UNESCO support in fostering an exchange of ideas among relevant stakeholders from the governmental sphere, CSOs and the media. This is an important exercise in a country currently overcoming decades of violations of freedom of expression, and a lack of awareness of international standards.
- Reaffirming its distinct role in strengthening coalition building and bringing together key national stakeholders to cause change, UNESCO has managed to convene decision makers and rights holders for the launch of the national media reform process, starting with the media assessment, which is an unprecedented event in Sudanese history given its scope, quality, and high-level participation.
- The importance of UNESCO's work in Sudan was confirmed also by the mobilization of additional funding and support from the British Embassy in Khartoum. Building upon the MDP support as seed finding, this will further strengthen implementation and a wider, more comprehensive and sustainable impact.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

In Sudan, the transition process is proceeding slowly, creating tensions vis-a-vis expectations and aspirations. Negotiations for peace agreements are ongoing in the rebel areas, but not yet completed. The media community is divided, and the Sudanese Union of Journalists has been suspended (together with all other trade unions, as connected to the previous regime).

Through persistence and persuasion, an initial lack of cooperation from certain national stakeholders was overcome by UNESCO dialogue and transformed to guarantee national commitment and ownership. The project's governance mechanisms were subsequently

reviewed and adapted in order to address lack of buy-in of certain stakeholders. Duty-bearers within the government sphere were also sensitized to reconfirm the role of media reform within national priorities.

A challenge faced by the UNESCO Office in Khartoum was a delay in receiving envisaged funds by the British Embassy in Khartoum, where timing was important to retaining government commitment and not missing a window of opportunity to create change in the country. This was overcome by the timely and immediate support from the MDP which allowed for prompt action.

Syria

Lebanon

Iraq



Context

Syria retained its place as one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists in recent years, with 46 deaths in the country since 2015, as recorded by UNESCO's [observatory](#) of killed journalists. The highly complex nature of the political situation in Syria further impedes the exercise of journalism. This polarization also affects the very structure of the media landscape, which is characterized by the multiplication of outlets as well as by factional and unprofessional reporting. As a result, the Syrian population has extremely limited access to independent and reliable information and is often exposed to media content exhibiting different degrees of hate speech.

UNESCO thus upscaled advocacy towards prevention of hate speech in Syrian media and developed national capacities through creating a pool of Syrian media monitors in cooperation with the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM). UNESCO's support to SCM's Hate Speech Observatory allowed for the first monitoring of hate speech in Syrian media content in 2018. In July 2019, representatives of Syrian media gathered in Paris to discuss the outcomes of this monitoring and agreed on needed steps to curb this phenomenon. The monitoring results were shared in two ways: one overall report excluding the names of outlets but referring to their type and affiliation; and other more detailed reports, sent privately to each

outlet, containing information specific to their media content and the amount of hate speech registered. The reason behind producing two types of reports was to avoid a “naming and shaming approach” and instead underlining shared nationwide interests in peace that need the commitment of parties involved. This allowed for a more objective discussion which resulted in a number of recommendations that have been adopted for the next phase of the project starting in 2020. The upcoming phase includes a nationwide advocacy campaign, targeting Syrian media inside and outside the country, followed by a second comparative monitoring and further meetings with media managers and editors.

UNESCO also advocated for the safety of journalists through monitoring and advocacy, including in the Syrian capital. Discussions with the University of Damascus undertaken in previous years have led to the development and adoption of a Safety of Journalists curriculum adapted to the Syrian context. An assessment of needs following a multi-stakeholder approach, with focus group meetings with Syrian journalists and media organizations, has been conducted with the aim of developing a set of recommendations on safety of journalists.



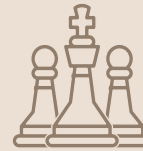
Areas of action and progress

<p>Awareness-raising and advocacy</p>	<p>Following a contest for media students at the University of Damascus to produce scenarios for public service announcements on safety of journalists, hate speech and the right to access information, three scripts have been selected and will be professionally produced in 2020.</p>
<p>Enhancing journalists' safety</p>	<p>In preparation of a safety of journalists action plan tailored to the Syrian context and in line with the UN Plan of Action, recommendations were gathered from Syrian journalists and media organizations (State ones and independent) to develop guidelines on journalists' safety, and the media industry, to be presented to political and social actors for their action and follow up.</p> <p>A needs assessment was conducted to identify the gaps in availability and accessibility of support on safety and mechanisms in response to violence against journalists in general, and female journalists in particular. The initiative will be continued in 2020.</p>
<p>Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities</p>	<p>The project aimed at countering hate speech in Syria, launched in 2017 in partnership with Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM) witnessed a milestone when on July 2019 media managers and editors of Syrian media outlets sat at one table, in an unprecedented meeting to discuss an end to the incitement to violence in media content. A set of recommendations resulted from the day-long discussions which provide guidance for the following phase in 2020.</p>



Key Achievements

- Managers and editors of Syrian media outlets, based inside and outside Syria, gathered around one table in an unprecedented meeting convened by UNESCO in Paris, and unanimously agreed on the need to counter hate speech in Syrian media content. Considering the ongoing conflict in Syria and the current tense situation, such a consensus among media affiliated with various sides of the conflict is considered a breakthrough. The meeting, which was organized to discuss the analysis of the results of the hate speech monitoring report, resulted in a set of recommendations that will be adopted for the following phase, which includes a second comparative monitoring, preceded by a national advocacy campaign.
- Students from the University of Damascus, studying safety following UNESCO's newly integrated special curriculum on safety of journalists, were exposed to new concepts and made exchanges with other youth, journalists, and freedom of expression experts at the global commemoration of WPF in Addis Ababa. All students described this mission as a highly beneficial experience, one that opened their eyes to new horizons, which they can take back home and further develop through their journalism education and careers.
- The first draft of a needs' assessment on safety of journalists in Syria has been produced, and the final version will be shared with Syrian media and UNESCO's international and regional partners in 2020 to agree on an action plan and complimentary support in 2020 and 2021. Such an updated assessment in the continuously evolving Syrian context is needed in order to best design follow up action and support.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

IFJ/[UNESCO's Model course on safety of journalists](#) was initially rejected by the University of Damascus as it included examples of human rights violations which were deemed inappropriate. Therefore, UNESCO negotiated and adapted the Arabic version, still maintaining alignment with international standards, which was then approved and thus integrated into the curriculum.

Introducing concepts related to freedom of expression to journalism students in Syria has been challenging as their understanding and acceptance have been affected by what they have been taught and exposed to for years. Therefore, UNESCO has been involving youth in interactive actions and initiatives to introduce them to these principles through practice.

Bureaucratic administrative procedures, especially to acquire approvals for meetings and activities were a major hindrance and factor for delay.

Considering the restrictions on movement for Syrians, in addition to safety concerns, bringing participants for the roundtable discussion on results of the hate speech monitoring report was challenging both logistically and for security reasons. Adding to that was sensitivity about the political context and the risk related to the lack of willingness among media representatives from different political affiliations to come together. However, having the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM) as a partner in the project, as a well trusted and respected Syrian organization among all participants, alongside UNESCO's impartiality and mandate, it was possible to have a wide and equal representation.

Tunisia



Context

Tunisia had a challenging year following the sudden passing of the President in July 2019 and the subsequent legislative and presidential elections in October 2019. Despite cementing its democratic achievements and strengthening its public institutions, the country is still facing some political and economic uncertainty.

Notable progress in terms of access to information was achieved since the adoption of the Right to Information Law in 2016, which saw the creation of a National Access to Information Authority the following year and made Tunisia the second country in the Arab region to adopt such a law. On the other

hand, the framework of media laws set to replace the 2011 transitional decree-laws are still pending, and members of the constitutional court were yet to be elected as of 2019.

Under the MDP, throughout 2019 UNESCO has provided support at the policy and legislative level for the ongoing dialogue on the framework laws on media. Efforts concerning prevention and prosecution mechanisms have been upscaled.

Furthermore, the Monitoring Unit on attacks against journalists led by the Union of Journalists in Tunisia (SNJT), which was piloted since 2018 with support

from the MDP and OHCHR, was reinforced and its methodology and coordination mechanisms were consolidated throughout 2019. In fact, following the pilot phase, the SNJT's Monitoring Unit is providing monthly and annual reports on attacks against journalists, which include a gender-specific component.

A report on the electoral period (covering both the legislative and the presidential elections) was also produced. The data, conclusions and recommendations of the reports have been published and shared with key stakeholders in the country. An assessment of Tunisia's Internet landscape based on UNESCO's Internet Universality Indicators has been initiated: a multi-stakeholder advisory board was established, and data collection is underway, in synergy with an IPDC project.

Despite the legal guarantees for community media and the liberalization of the sector since 2013, the situation of community media still needs more support to ensure more legal guarantees, more financial stability and to enhance the social impact of community media. UNESCO is continuing to engage with the broadcast regulator, HAICA, and the professionals of the media sectors including contributing to consultations on broadcasting law

reform and supporting the development of study to enhance the sustainability and the social impact of community media in the country.

UNESCO is supporting a wide consultation around the new broadcasting law to be in line with international standards, meet professional expectations, and to include more guarantees for the sustainability of community media. A study of community media sustainability in the country addresses recommendations to the regulatory body, to the government, and the Parliament to reinforce those guarantees. Advocacy workshops and meetings among concerned stakeholders are planned over 2020 as a follow-up to implement those recommendations.

MIL remains a very necessary tool to equip young citizens and journalists to better handle information, and to be able to detect and combat hate speech and violent extremism. UNESCO's actions under the MDP have been to set up the basis of a MIL strategy with wide concertation with all concerned parties. The project succeeded at creating a new MIL dynamic among key partners, mainly around the celebration of the MIL Week for the first time in Tunisia and by piloting the MIL programme in schools and universities.



Areas of action and progress

<p>Awareness-raising and advocacy</p>	<p>UNESCO has been at the forefront of the efforts to impact the policy and legislative agenda to ensure consolidation of country's post-transition gains in the field of freedom of expression and safety of journalists.</p>
	<p>A string of advocacy efforts have been deployed throughout 2019 to strengthen the sustained work on freedom of expression and safety of journalists. WPF 2019 at national level was an opportunity to consolidate with national stakeholders the discussions on the Tunisia's media law reform and ensure its alignment with international standards.</p>

Enhancing journalists' safety	<p>Supported jointly with OHCHR, a unique monitoring unit on safety in the region has been set up. This initiative, independently operated by the journalists' union, confirmed its relevance during the 2019 elections, and established itself as a good practice for an independent, sustainable mechanism on safety of journalists in the region.</p>
	<p>UNESCO pursued its work on ensuring safety of journalists at the institutional level by facilitating a dialogue and meetings towards the organization of trainings for the judicial operators. This initiative aims to expand the work of sensitizing prosecutors and judicial operators on international standards on freedom of expression, building upon UNESCO's ongoing work in this area.</p>
Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities	<p>UNESCO partnered with the national institutions and CSOs to ensure an effective and locally owned implementation of the ATI law. Through support to the newly-created independent authority for access to information (INAI), the ATI law was appropriated by the institutional partners and the civil society organizations.</p>
	<p>Work on access to information was conducted in synergy with a Swiss-funded project and another project financed by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development. The joint efforts in this specific area also support the realization of the National Voluntary Review of the country especially related to SDG 16.10 (including indicator 16.10.2 on ATI, for which UNESCO is custodian).</p>
Community Media Sustainability	<p>Throughout 2019, four advocacy workshops with concerned duty bearers among parliament, government, regulators, and other public institutions were organized as part of the Baseline Study, which was launched to assess the situation of community radios and other community media in Tunisia.</p>
	<p>On 13 February 2019, on the occasion of WRD, a National Consultation on the future legal framework of the community media sector was led in Tunisia. The meeting gathered 109 participants (46 of them were women), including government officials, members of parliament, and the broadcast regulator, HAICA. Based on the sustainability principles of UNESCO, the new broadcasting bill was improved to include more guarantees for the independence and the sustainability of CM in Tunisia</p>
	<p>In order to strengthen the community media sector and their related capacity, UNESCO helped to build a strategic partnership between the National Public Radio and the community radios.</p>
Media and Information Literacy (MIL)	<p>The first edition of the MIL week was organized in Tunis, Tunisia, on 26 October 2019. Ninety participants were involved at the event - among them 46 women.</p>

Media and Information Literacy (MIL) (cont'd)

A series of pilot testing workshops to integrate new MIL curriculum/program into the formal educational system in Tunisia was combined with the celebration of the Global MIL Week in the presence of representatives of the ministry of education, the representatives of universities, civil society organizations and other international actors working on MIL in Tunisia (IMS, Irex Europe, PAMT).



Key Achievements

- Building on previous work undertaken under MDP funding, efforts to monitor violence against journalists as well as prevention and prosecution mechanisms have been upscaled. Monthly and annual reports produced by the SNJT with UNESCO support have led to the drafting of recommendations which were discussed during IDEI, and whose implementation will be further discussed in the near future.
- To reinforce democracy and a pluralistic media landscape in Tunisia, a study on the sustainability of community radios was launched to provide a detailed overview of those media in the country. The study results will propose appropriate strategies and public policies to develop a favourable community media environment and ensure their long-term sustainability.
- A strategic partnership between the National Public Radio and the community radios was established to strengthen cooperation and knowledge sharing for the journalists and technicians of different community radios.
- Observance of the first Global MIL Week in Tunisia.
- A tailored and detailed MIL curriculum/program was produced and is ready to be used by Tunisian partners and integrated into the formal educational system in Tunisia.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

Changes in government and political instability triggered by the President of Tunisia's sudden passing and the ensuing elections interrupted the momentum on drafting the framework law in the media consolidating the transition gains and required the deployment of new advocacy efforts with the new parliamentarians and members of government.

Action in Asia



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

Afghanistan

Women journalists equipped with knowledge and tools for physical and digital safety.

Myanmar

National safety mechanisms created and relations with security forces improved. (Outcome 1)

MIL modules have been included in the new curriculum of teacher education and was rolled out. (Outcome 2)

Pakistan

Provincial police monitor and report on attacks against journalists.

Mongolia

Adoption of The Strategy for Community Radio Sustainable Development (2019-2022).

Bangladesh

Policy Brief in local language (Bangla) to increase awareness and initiated steps to create a supportive environment for community media..

Nepal

Community Radio Action Plan and Roadmap.



OUTCOME 1

Afghanistan



Context

Throughout the past decade, Afghanistan has, with the assistance of the international community including various UN Agencies, made considerable progress in rebuilding its political system, State institutions, and economy, with notable improvements. The Government has also introduced new legal frameworks and has increasingly made progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals as part of its commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The formation of the National Unity Government in 2014, a broad political coalition established following highly disputed presidential elections, led to the adoption of laws and policies that are more conducive to the independence of the media in Afghanistan. The revision of media legislations in 2015 gave way

to the creation of a Mass Media Commission, whose role is to arbitrate complaints and criminal cases against the media. The following year, the President of Afghanistan signed decrees aimed at strengthening freedom of the media, notably through increased efforts to fight impunity for crimes against journalists.

But despite positive steps and noted political will to improve the situation of journalists in the country, the political instability and insecurity have had a lasting deleterious impact on the free exercise of journalism. Afghanistan continues to record concerning numbers of killings of journalists year after year, and journalists are unceasingly exposed to threats and violence. Amongst them, women journalists are particularly vulnerable, as their gender and profession make them a “double target”.

In response to these challenges, UNESCO office in Kabul has been active in supporting media reform initiatives, through the provision of technical support and policy advice, the development of national capacities, and facilitation of inclusive discussions with various levels of policy makers and decision makers alongside rights holders, including journalists, academia, and civil society groups. UNESCO's multifaceted and complementary approach has fostered open dialogue between media workers and the government and enabled them to openly share their concerns and agree on what should be done. As a result, duty-bearers are encouraged to develop an enabling environment on the policy level, through the introduction of laws and regulations in line with international standards, advancement of legislative, policy and institutional frameworks and mechanisms to protect and promote freedom of expression, safety of journalists, and access to information.

Furthermore, UNESCO has given special attention to the specific needs and challenges faced by women journalists in Afghanistan by organizing special trainings for female journalists on various topics, including safety and digital security, and women's managerial role in media. UNESCO also supported the Joint Committee of the Government and Media (JCMG) specialized in safety of journalists, leading it to prioritize a specific agenda item for women's safety in its monthly meetings.



Areas of action and progress

<p>Awareness-raising and advocacy</p>	<p>The celebration of the 2019 IDUAI was organized in partnership with the Access to Information Commission of Afghanistan focused on good governance and anti-corruption, the role of the media and the government in strengthening ATI culture.</p>
	<p>Multi-stakeholder coordination was strengthened, and advocacy enhanced through national, country wide, celebrations of the IDEI in collaboration with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Afghan Journalists Safety Committee in Kabul in seven Afghan provinces</p>
<p>Enhancing journalists' safety</p>	<p>The implementation of the UN Plan of Action was reinforced through digital safety trainings for investigative journalists on safeguarding data and technological tools (50% females)</p>
	<p>Specific attention to the safety of female journalists in Afghanistan was given through developing the capacities of women journalists on safety and first-aid assistance</p>



Key Achievements

- Strengthened national commitment resulting from UNESCO's advocacy and multi-stakeholder approach including engaging key stakeholders such (the Ministry of Information and Culture, the UN Special Representative to Afghanistan, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, the Afghan Journalists Federation, the Afghan Journalists Safety Committee, local CSOs, media specialists and academia) in all actions on access to information and the safety of journalists through the celebrations of IDUAI and IDEI (over 700 influential participants took part in those celebrations).
- During the celebration of 2019 IDEI in Kabul, the Deputy Minister of Information and Culture acknowledged that working conditions were unsuitable and unfavourable for journalists in Afghanistan, as infringements of journalistic/media laws and regulations are widespread. He affirmed that the legal pursuit of cases of violence against journalists was priority for the Afghan government.
- The emerging of an environment conducive to dialogue on issues such good governance, the role of the media in strengthening the culture of access to information, the Afghan media in the peace process, the safety of journalists in Afghanistan and specific local challenges journalists face in Afghan provinces. This enabled Afghan media workers to present their concerns regarding safety issues to their government and to the international community.
- Stronger national coalitions and partnership among journalists, government and international community resulted from joint actions supported by UNESCO, including the celebration of the IDEI, in addition to synergies created with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

- Female journalists equipped through safety and first-aid trainings, and investigative journalists (50% females) trained on the use of technological tools and data safety through UNESCO activities.
- The Joint Committee of the Government and Media (JCMG) of Afghanistan, who works on safety of journalists, has now prioritized a specific agenda item for women's safety in its monthly meetings.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

The levels of insecurity in Afghanistan limits movements on regular basis and case by case in different locations, which made it difficult to hold activities outside the capital as well as at a provincial level. To overcome this, a multi-stakeholder approach and the organization of joint celebrations and programmes maximized the inclusion of all stakeholders and beneficiaries in various parts of the country. This provided access to remote areas, and added value such as human resources with larger coverage and network. One of the main partners who supported such an approach was UNAMA who joined the organization of IDEI events in several Afghan provinces.

Another challenge was the fact that a major partner the newly established Access to Information Commission, did not have a bank account in early 2019, which delayed work and slowed the process. Thanks to the new ATI law, the Commission was later allowed to open a bank account and receive funding, and consequently work with national and international partners on joint initiatives. Still, due to the lengthy government process, the 2019 IDUAI was organized with many challenges especially in relation to administrative procedures. For the future, it is considered to include other media partners that can provide logistical support.

India

Bangladesh



Context

In Bangladesh, community media - especially community radio - remains a popular media, especially for the rural population to consume and receive information, to increase their knowledge, as well as to gain new insights and building critical thinking skills.

Community radio in Bangladesh started in the late 1990s and has since then grown and gained in popularity, expressed by the numerous non-

governmental organizations, development practitioners, media-enthusiasts, and representatives of civil society who started or are using community radio stations to reach the rural population of the country.

In 2017, with support from UNESCO, a community radio association was established - the Bangladesh Community Radio Association (BCRA). Since the national elections in December 2018, community

radio has entered a new era, allowing both policy-makers and community leaders to be more involved in the development of their community via radio. BCRA maintains a very close relationship and serves as interlocutor vis-à-vis the Government of Bangladesh.

In 2018, the Government of Bangladesh introduced a policy for community radio, the “Community Radio Installation, Broadcast and Operation Policy 2017”. The policy underlines the importance of radio stations. It describes their essential role in Bangladesh “to improve the area of education, culture, human values and dignity, and awareness building with a new dimension” (Policy Gazette).

UNESCO has been a part of the community media development process in Bangladesh since the early days. While UNESCO initially provided radio equipment to community radio stations, since 2016, the focus has been on providing capacity strengthening, convening key stakeholders, and promoting networking and knowledge exchange among crucial entities. In 2019, the UNESCO Office in Dhaka has supported community radio stations on standardized community media programming, provided guidance on strategic directions, strengthened fundraising mechanisms for sustainable development, and provided capacity-development training in collaboration with various partners.



Areas of action and progress

Community Media Sustainability

Over the course of 2019, UNESCO organized a number of community radio stakeholder meetings including a national-level consultation and stakeholder meeting of community radio broadcasters and duty-bearers in July 2019 in collaboration with BBC Media Action, DW Akademie, Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC), and Bangladesh Community Radio Association (BCRA).

UNESCO Office in Dhaka, in partnership with its local implementing partner ICS, conducted a comprehensive community radio sustainability situation analysis, including a baseline survey on community media in Bangladesh. The baseline survey aims at enabling local authorities and all other community media stakeholders to understand better the challenges that Bangladesh’s current 18 government-registered community radio stations are facing, as well as to identify the status, opportunities and ways for duty-bearers and right-holders to improve the development of community media in Bangladesh.

<p>Community Media Sustainability (cont'd)</p>	<p>UNESCO translated, printed, and disseminated the UNESCO Policy Series on Community Media Sustainability among duty-bearers and right-holders in Bangladesh in order to increase awareness. This accompanied steps to create a supportive environment for community media in Bangladesh that recognizes the value of community media and supports its long-term sustainability. The translated UNESCO Policy Series has proven to be a strong resource for Bangladesh's community radio stakeholders, and it was used and referred to during many stakeholder meetings, the development of the Action Plan and Roadmap 2019-2020, as well as during the context analysis.</p> <p>Further, under the umbrella of the project, UNESCO and ICS provided technical support to community radio stations and the Bangladesh Community Radio Association (BCRA), including on policy development, radio programming content (Gender, Celebration of WPF), as well as in the development of fund mobilizations plans.</p>
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<p>Recommendations that emerged from consultation and stakeholder meeting (July 2019)</p>	<p>Policy level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual partnerships with local Government mechanism shall be developed and pursued Community Radio Stations (CRS) shall observe and share experiences in implementing 2017 Community Radio Installation, Broadcast and Operation Policy
	<p>Structural level :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A joint project development fund should be established to enhance the financial sustainability of individual community radio stations, Joint capacity building activities can leverage synergies and be a cost-effective measure to enhance the quality of reporting and programming
	<p>Radio programming :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity-building is required to strengthen the journalistic quality of community radio stations CRS can sensitize, encourage, and engage listeners through innovative radio programming to bring positive change at the community level.



Key Achievements

- Translation of UNESCO Policy Series on Community Media Sustainability into Bangla.
- Community Radio Sustainability Situation Analysis and Baseline Survey on Community Media for the country.
- Elaboration of an agreement on a comprehensive Community Radio Action Plan and Roadmap for 2019-2020. This includes a strategy to advocate for the community radio sector in Bangladesh, to build its capacities and sustainability, to strengthen the network, of community radio stations as well as to enhance their visibility and coordination.
- Provision of technical support to community radio stations.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

Changes in the Government in Bangladesh following the elections in 2018 required to identify and build relations with some new officials, as well as reconfirm the commitment from previously engaged duty-bearers in order to continue with the implementation of activities as planned.

Political sensitivities around media in Bangladesh was an issue that required the UNESCO Office in Dhaka to ensure that government stakeholders were aware and involved in interventions of UNESCO and of its implementing partners.

Despite the government issuing its “Community Radio Installation, Broadcast and Operation Policy 2017”, it has proven to be difficult to engage with duty-bearers at the national level to discuss the implementation of the policy. As a remedial action, UNESCO and its implementing partners are discussing the implementation of the 2017 policy with local authorities.

Mongolia

China



Context

In Mongolia, currently, the community media is still not recognized under the state policy and regulatory framework. Thus, there is no form of support at the government or local level. Against this backdrop, UNESCO's efforts have concentrated on increasing the understanding and capacities of community radio stakeholders to advocate for supportive policy changes within regulatory bodies and media law and to strengthen the community media network. A Strategy for Community Radio Sustainable Development in Mongolia (2019-2022) detailing the steps towards more favourable legislation and targeted actions was also adopted by duty-bearers and rights-holders including community radio managers, board member, governors and representatives of SOUMS (local authorities in Mongolia) , representatives

from the government, Parliament and President's office, Communications Regulatory Commission of Mongolia, Media Council, and civil society groups in Mongolia.

The project strengthened the knowledge of policymakers, media professionals, regulatory and self-regulatory bodies, and other relevant stakeholders about MIL policy and best practices. It improved their capacities to adapt and apply MIL curricula and policy in Mongolia. The UNESCO-supported document for National MIL Policies and Strategies for Mongolia was discussed and adopted by 114 MIL stakeholders from the governmental and non-governmental sectors, including the State Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports. The MIL

Policies and Strategies have been submitted to all members of the Mongolian Parliament's Standing Committee for Education, Culture, and Science. As part of the Strategies, localized MIL curricula were developed by a working group composed of representatives from education institutions, ready to be tested and implemented by training institutions and primary and secondary schools.



Areas of action and progress

<p>Community Media Sustainability</p>	<p>During the first quarter of 2019, launch of a baseline survey with the objectives of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining the current state of the legislation and the state support measures for community media in Mongolia; • Collecting and analysing data; • Identifying benchmarks to achieve at the end of the project; • Establishing clear steps for legislative improvement and/or support to community media from the government.
	<p>On 16 April 2019 at the UN House a Consultative Meeting was held in order to provide preliminary findings of the baseline survey collected from the CRs and to discuss how to address key issues concerning legislation for community media. A total of 24 participants attended the meeting, including representatives from policy making public bodies, governmental departments, civil society organizations, academia, as well as media organizations.</p>
	<p>To strengthen, promote cooperation and knowledge sharing among community radio actors, UNESCO helped convene the second general meeting of the Community Radio Association of Mongolia (CRAMO) on 5 June 2019. The meeting was attended by 18 participants representing the founders and the CRAMO Board members. The current issues on policy, regulation and licensing issues, which affect the operations of the community radios were discussed during the meeting. The Sustainability Plan for 2019-2022 was adopted.</p>
	<p>A two-day national meeting and training workshop was organized on 6-7 June 2019, involving 57 participants, including governors and representatives of the SOUMS (local authorities), as well as representatives of the government, parliament and President's Office, Communications Regulatory Commission of Mongolia, Media Council and civil society groups. The meeting reinforced the understanding of the concept and principles of community media and their sustainable development, enhanced the capacities and local ownership of community radio stations, and enhanced the institutional capacity of the community media. The Strategy for Community Radio Sustainable Development (2019-2022) was adopted at the meeting.</p>

Media and Information Literacy (MIL)

An online survey was conducted among primary and secondary school teachers (teaching various subjects) from Ulaanbaatar and rural provinces. A total of 209 teachers completed the survey questionnaire that aimed at collecting basic information about technical facilities used by school teachers, main sources of knowledge and information (in general and for preparing teaching content), access and use of computers and the Internet for teaching purposes and the degree of MIL relevant content being taught by teachers

Parallel with the survey among teachers the Press Institute conducted an online survey among school children from Ulaanbaatar and rural areas aged between 13 - 17 years. A total of 298 children were involved in the survey. The survey indicated that despite the emphasis on digital literacy in the school curricula, the learning opportunities offered at school lag behind the needs and abilities of school children. In order to clarify, obtain explanations and positions and discuss options for solutions with relevant stakeholders, individual meetings with 18 stakeholders were conducted.

40 key national stakeholders were introduced to the UNESCO MIL project in Mongolia supported by SIDA at a project kick-off stakeholder meeting on 16 February 2019. The stakeholders included the State Secretary for Education, Science, Culture and Sports, the Head of the Policy Council of the Mongolian National Library, the Head of the Media and Public Communications Department of the General Police Department, the Secretary General of the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO, as well as media professionals, education experts, civil society representatives and the ICT specialists.

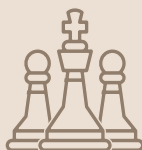
On February 27, 2019, a National Stakeholder Forum on MIL was attended by some 100 people representing MIL stakeholders from the governmental and non-governmental sectors to discuss the MIL situation in Mongolia, share positions on needs and potential solutions and agree on key recommendations for further strategic steps towards a national policy on MIL. The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports was represented by the state secretary Ms. Bayarsaikhan. Participants agreed on the key strategic recommendations to be taken into consideration when finalizing the stakeholders' position paper on MIL.

On May 6-7, a two-day workshop was organized to review the content of existing elements of media and information literacy in school curriculum. About 40 people participated in the workshop including representatives from the Ministry of Education, Institute for Teacher's Professional Development, Institute for Education, Lifelong learning Centre, Agency for Family, Children and Youth Development, school teachers, civil society and libraries. All participants agreed that the MIL curricula workshop to discuss existing components and needs for improvement was very relevant for Mongolia



Key Achievements

- Adoption of the Strategy for Community Radio Sustainable Development (2019-2022);
- Development of a draft Background document for MIL policy and Strategy in Mongolia based on the UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Policy Guidelines, model MIL Curriculum, and other related documents, taking into consideration the local context.
- Development of a draft Position Paper on National MIL Policies and Strategies to be presented to the Ministries and to the Parliament.
- Development of a localized MIL curriculum for teachers both in formal and informal education sector.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

Mongolia will hold its parliamentary election in June 2020, which may affect the efficiency and effectiveness of past/ongoing efforts in terms of policy recommendations.



Myanmar



Context

UNESCO has provided continuous support for the creation of an environment conducive to free and quality journalism in Myanmar. Since 2013, UNESCO has provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Information and to the parliament in reforming media-related legislation, strengthened journalists' capacities, and facilitated the dialogue among media, government authorities, CSOs and ethnic groups to jointly address freedom of expression and media development challenges. However, a persistent distrust towards the media has made relevant duty-

bearers in Myanmar reluctant to undertake necessary reforms of the country's freedom of expression and access to information legislation, leading to a stagnation of media legal reforms in the country since 2011. In this context, UNESCO's efforts have been focused on building trust between the governmental institutions and the media, along with highlighting the role that media can and should play in supporting the democratic transition in Myanmar, as the country prepares for 2020 elections.

In addressing safety of journalists concerns, UNESCO advanced preceding work on strengthening the capacities of national stakeholders and on supporting the participation of coalitions of national actors to develop national mechanisms for the safety of journalists. South-South cooperation has also been set afoot to help build the relationship between Indonesian and Myanmar Press Councils. After dialogues held between the two press councils in Yangon, Myanmar, the Indonesian Press Council invited Myanmar Press Council to attend the Bali Civil Society and Media Forum under 12th Bali Democracy Forum in December 2019. The Chairman and Secretary of the Myanmar press council attended, and the Southeast Asian Press Councils Network (SAPCN) was formed. The network members are Indonesia, Myanmar, Thailand and East Timor.

Building on previous collaborations, UNESCO has also established a working group combining the Myanmar Press Council, UNESCO, the NGO IMS and MyPol (the European Union's police reform project) to support the establishment of national mechanisms for the safety of journalists.

In order for UNESCO to best address the needs in the country, actions supported by the MDP have been informed by the "Mapping of Media Development in Myanmar" report produced in 2018, which assessed progress towards the recommendations of the 2016 "Assessment of Media Development in Myanmar" based on UNESCO's Media Development Indicators. These actions are furthermore underpinned by a roadmap spearheaded by the 7th Media Development Conference held in 2018, which was endorsed by the Myanmar Ministry of Information.

As far as community media are concerned, there has been little advancement towards the necessary reforms to regulate the community media sector, in standstill since the amendments of the broadcasting law were promulgated in 2018. Noting this, UNESCO's efforts were focused on building a coalition of national and international CSOs (43 organizations, including the existing five community pilot projects) to strengthen coordinated advocacy efforts to push forward the legislation needed to regulate the community media sector. UNESCO has conducted a community media sustainability situation analysis, which includes a strategy to strengthen the capacities of duty-bearers to develop a legal framework and policies that are conducive to the development of community media in Myanmar.

UNESCO has strengthened its leading role in the promotion of MIL during 2019, developing a localized competency framework in collaboration with the Ministries of Education and Information and partnership with ten national organizations working in this field. Three of these partners have started developing their MIL programmes based on the framework.

Through the project, UNESCO has successfully positioned MIL as a critical element in efforts to address hate speech and disinformation in the lead up to the 2020 elections among both international and national development actors. This has been achieved through advocacy work in different forums (media development and elections support working groups) and through the celebration of the Global MIL Week.



Areas of action and progress

<p>Awareness-raising and advocacy</p>	<p>Two national dialogues on the role of media in a democratic regime were organized, bringing together security forces, the Government, the Parliament and the media, and leading to a strengthened collaboration and trust among all engaged stakeholders.</p>
<p>Enhancing journalists' safety</p>	<p>UNESCO initiated the establishment of a national network of Safety focal points from media houses across the country, through the building of capacities of selected reporters on digital safety.</p>
	<p>A dialogue between the Indonesian Press Council and the Myanmar Press Council on the relations between the media and security forces enabled the development a mechanism for collaboration on safety of Journalists.</p>
	<p>A working group was established, bringing together the Myanmar Press Council, UNESCO, IMS and MyPol to support the establishment of national mechanisms for the safety of journalists.</p>
	<p>Implementation and localization of the UN plan of Action was reinforced through capacity development activities on digital safety targeting female journalists and through the development of digital safety for journalists in Myanmar language.</p>
<p>Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities</p>	<p>By virtue of UNESCO advocacy, an agreement was reached between the Myanmar Press Council and the Myanmar Union Election Commission to initiate a dialogue to strengthen collaboration in preparation for the upcoming 2020 elections.</p>
	<p>UNESCO advocacy and policy advice also led to an agreement between the Myanmar Union Election Commission and the Myanmar Press Council to update the Election Reporting Guidelines and establish a mechanism to enable better communication and collaboration between the Elections management body, political parties and the media. This process has already begun thanks to technical support provided by UNESCO and IMS.</p>
	<p>In order to better support media coverage of the upcoming 2020 elections and strengthen collaboration with the Elections management body, identification of capacities for the Myanmar Press Council has commenced.</p>
	<p>Preparations for the 8th Media Development Conference are underway.</p>

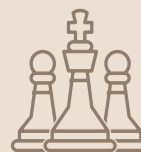
<p>Community Media Sustainability</p>	<p>In collaboration with the AMARC Asia-Pacific (World Association of Community Broadcasters), UNESCO has conducted a situation analysis on Community Radio in Myanmar. The document comprehensively assesses the actual status of the legislation and state support measures in Myanmar towards community media, ground-level challenges, and the potential of CSOs to participate in the development of community media.</p>
	<p>All organizations and CSOs working on community radio in Myanmar have endorsed the report and are committed to engaging in advocacy efforts, provide policy advice to duty bearers on legislation and policies for community radio, and set up a community radio network in Myanmar.</p>
	<p>The working group of international actors supporting community radio in Myanmar (UNESCO, IMS-Fojo, and DW Akademie) has agreed on a collaborative work plan to continue sharing resources and knowledge in support of community radio in Myanmar in 2020.</p>
<p>Media and Information Literacy (MIL)</p>	<p>Continued support to integrate MIL in the new 4-year curriculum of Pre-Service Teacher Education in Myanmar. This includes rolling out of the first year of the curriculum in 25 National Education Colleges, training of 75 Teacher Educators to deliver MIL related modules and identifying MIL learning outcomes to be included in the Year 2 of the mentioned curriculum.</p>
	<p>Strengthened the capacities of the Task Force for the Promotion of MIL at the Ministry of Information as well as build the capacities of other 300 officials from the Mol on MIL, in preparation for the development of a comprehensive National MIL Action Plan (which will be initiated with UNESCO's support in 2020).</p>
	<p>Production of 30 Information, Communication and Education materials on MIL focusing on disinformation, Hate Speech, and digital literacy.</p>
	<p>In collaboration with 30 national stakeholders (including CSOs, journalism training institutions, and Ministries of information and Education), finalized a common competency framework on MIL that will serve as the basis for the development and implementation of MIL activities in the context of Myanmar. The document is based on existing UNESCO tools on MIL, such as the MIL Curriculum for Teachers and the Global Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Assessment Framework.</p>



Key Achievements

- An agreement was reached among key stakeholders to work jointly in order to improve coverage of the 2020 elections, notably through the updating of the Election Reporting Guidelines and the creation of a mechanism of communication between the election's management body, political parties and the media.
- The Myanmar Press Council committed to initiate a bilateral dialogue with the Police Forces, with the support of UNESCO and the Indonesian Press Council, to develop a mechanism (in the form of an MoU) for the safety of journalists.
- The creation of a network of Safety Focal Points in media houses across the country has been initiated.
- The first ever, national dialogue on the role of media in democratic regimes took place in Myanmar, gathering key stakeholders and duty-bearers (Government, Parliament, security forces and the media).
- WPPD got extensive coverage in national media outlets, as the wives of the two Reuters Reporters awarded with the Guillermo Cano Prize (Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo) attended the event.
- The critical role that UNESCO played in strengthening the relationship and collaboration between the Press Council and the Union Election Commission has allowed the Yangon Office to fundraise USD 2,5 million from the UN Peacebuilding Fund (pending of the signature of the Government) to support the media and counter disinformation during the 2020 General Elections.
- UNESCO's situation analysis and recommendations to support community media in Myanmar were accepted as a roadmap for the way forward by all international actors working on this area (DW Akademie, IMS, and FOJO) in Myanmar. The roadmap includes a strategy to advocate for and build the capacities of duty-bearers with regard to community media.
- UNESCO succeeded in reaching an agreement and commitment by all national actors involved in community media to establish a network of community radios.

- Twenty-five education colleges from across the country started teaching student teachers (future teachers of basic and primary education) MIL, included in the Year 1 of the new curriculum that UNESCO has developed with the Ministry of Education.
- MIL modules have been included in the Year-2 of the new curriculum of teacher education and was rolled out in December 2019.
- All stakeholders working on MIL in Myanmar (including CSOs, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of information) agreed on a MIL Common Competency Framework developed with the support of UNESCO as the basis for advocacy and capacity building efforts on MIL in the country.
- The Ministry of Information has made progress in building the capacities of their staff on MIL, following the creation of a MIL promotion Task Force within the Ministry.
- The current MDP phase of the project achieved the positioning MIL as a critical tool to address hate speech and disinformation in the lead up to the 2020 elections in Myanmar.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

Certain Myanmar officials were reluctant to undertake significant reform of the country's legal framework regarding freedom of expression and access to information issues. While this posed a challenge, UNESCO pursued other initiatives to support the aspired reform including the organization of the 7th Media Development Conference in 2018. This event enabled dialogue to continue in 2019 between the governmental sphere, Supreme Court members, human rights NGOs and the National Human Rights Commission. While the concerned duty-bearers remained with reservations, considerable progress was still possible.

China

Nepal

India



Context

Community radio broadcasters became more vocal about the need of community media policy for increasing access to information of communities. The MDP was successful in bringing stakeholders together for continuous and specific discussions towards strengthening Community Media Sustainability in Nepal. With the support of UNESCO, Association of Community Radio Broadcasters Nepal (ACORAB) formulated a set of recommendations on a media policy, which was presented to the government. They included endorsement of the universally agreed-upon definition of community broadcasting, allocation of frequencies, ensuring ownership and participation of community members in radio stations, establishment of an independent regulatory agency for media, and setting up an independent fund for the development of the broadcasting sector, all of which we hope will receive the government's highest consideration.

Action covers duty bearers and community broadcasters scattered nationwide at federal level, seven provinces and 753 local bodies and has been successful to build common understanding that the strengthening of the community media would serve in the interest of the communities. At least 100 government officials and political leaders benefitted from the activities in 2019.

UNESCO's role has been widely appreciated by the stakeholders particularly, for fostering dialogue with duty bearers conducive to an enabling environment for community media. UNESCO's assistance is needed in this field in future due to the fact that Nepal is still in the process of drafting of several media-related policies. Advocacy for sustainable community media will continue to be essential until full commitment of the concerned stakeholders.



Areas of action and progress

Community Media Sustainability	<p>In February 2019, UNESCO organized a three-day national conference of the community radio broadcasters, where around 400 people participated in solidarity to express the need of a comprehensive media policy that also addressed the needs of community media broadcasters. Among the participants, more than 200 community radio broadcasters brought into discussion the opportunities and challenges of community radio.</p>
	<p>The conference saw the active participation of several Nepali policy-makers, including the then Minister for Communication, Information and Technology, Chief Minister of the Karnali Province, parliamentarians and government officials.</p>
	<p>In May 2019, two-day national consultation of the community media broadcasters and duty bearers on “Community Plurality and Diversity of Indigenous People and Languages in Community Broadcasting” was organized in Province 1. During the conference, the community radio broadcasters reached consensus for joint initiatives to advance protection of community plurality as well as cultural and linguistic diversity. An action plan in this regard was adopted.</p>
	<p>In August 2019, over 30 radio broadcasters and policymakers, community radio experts participated in a two-day workshop, drafted the recommendation on community media policy, and submitted it to the government.</p>

“I did not have a knowledge of the larger impact upon the citizens made by the media policies we draft at the Ministry of Communication. Thanks to the continuous advocacy by the community media sector, now I have started reflecting on how these policies can promote or discourage my own right to access information or my rights to express as a citizen of this country. Now I can see the laws and policies from people’s perspectives,”

Mahendra Bahadur Sankhi, Under Secretary and the federal Ministry of Communication, Information and Technology. 9 August 2019 Godavari-Lalitpur. <https://bit.ly/32RvL4B>.
Minister of Communications and Media, July, 2nd 2019, Bujumbura.



Key Achievements

- The project was successful in bringing stakeholders together for continuous and specific discussions towards strengthening Community Media Sustainability in Nepal. With the support of UNESCO, Association of Community Radio Broadcasters Nepal (ACORAB) formulated a set of recommendations on a media policy, which was presented to the government.
- At least 100 government officials and political leaders benefitted from the project activities in 2019.
- The duty bearers have an increased awareness on the positive effects of counting with a community media policy.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

The most significant risks and challenges in Nepal are:

- Frequent change of government officials at the line ministry and departments.
- Inadequate understanding among the duty bearers on freedom of expression and access to information as a fundamental right

Some additional challenges lie in the lack of clarity among the state security forces to differentiate between the civil offense and criminal offense. This has increased cases of harassment and threats by the state forces to civil society members. For instance, a total of 14 media-related policies are under formulation at provincial and federal levels. Some of the proposed provisions in the bills contradict international human rights standards, Nepal's commitment to international communities as well the country's constitution.



Pakistan



Context

As in previous years, the situation of freedom of expression, the safety of journalists and access to information remains complex in Pakistan, despite a noted overall decline in the number of killings of journalists in the country.

The federal nature of the Pakistani Republic has produced uneven progress with regards to legal standards pertaining to freedom of expression and access to information. For example, while certain

provinces such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, and Sindh have adopted Right to Information Laws in recent years, the Baluchistan province' legal framework on this issue remains unchanged since 2005. To address this gap, UNESCO has encouraged duty bearers in Baluchistan to create a strong ATI legal framework. It should also be noted that the Constitution as well as some other laws do not fully meet international standards and that, when they do, their implementation level is weak.

Additionally, the country is yet to undertake an exhaustive media freedom reform. Despite a Journalist Safety, Security, Protection and Welfare Bill having been drafted in 2018, the text was still not tabled on the agenda of the National Assembly as of 2019.

Media stakeholders have too raised concerns about the evolving nature of risks to safety of journalists, including ambiguous and potentially detrimental laws. For instance, the proposal by the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) to regulate online content and the proposal by the Ministry of Information to set up media tribunals have raised grave concerns.

Throughout 2019, UNESCO therefore continued its efforts to raise awareness and advance the knowledge of federal and provincial duty-bearers on safety of journalists, the importance of reforming both national and regional legal frameworks and international standards pertaining to freedom of expression. The involvement of partners such as the National Commission for Human Rights was an opportunity for activities implemented in Pakistan to be linked with ongoing debate on improving human rights in the national assembly and gave impetus for the revival of advocacy for the Journalists Safety Bill and draft legislation for human rights defenders.



Areas of action and progress

<p>Awareness-raising and advocacy</p>	<p>Commemorations of WPFDD took the form of the “Sahafi Summit” under the theme “National Convention on Digital Disinformation and Emerging Challenges to Press Freedoms in Pakistan”, co-organized with local partners and in partnership with the European Union, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Embassy of Sweden in Pakistan, and DW Akademie.</p> <p>Reinforced awareness of relevant duty bearers was ensured through a roundtable consultation under the theme “Mapping emerging challenges for independent journalism and exploring solutions under the Sustainable Development Goals framework”.</p> <p>UNESCO’s role as a convener of various stakeholders was crucial in organizing multi-stakeholder consultations on the UN Plan of Action and sensitizing relevant actors.</p>
<p>Enhancing journalists’ safety</p>	<p>The implementation of the UN Plan of Action was strengthened through the establishment of a national reporting mechanism on incidents against journalists, with provincial police departments in collaboration with the National Commission for Human Rights. Provincial police have already nominated focal points in various departments to report on crimes against journalists. As a result, SDG 16.10.1 will be treated as part of human rights indicators with an integrated approach.</p> <p>Advocacy efforts geared towards duty bearers and government officials on the UN Plan of Action permitted the identification of a need for an institutional framework for safety of journalists and monitoring as well as reporting on SDG 16.10.</p>

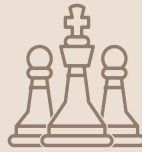
Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities	<p>Sensitization of duty bearers across Pakistan on safety of journalists enabled the formation of provincial working groups on SDG16.10.1 and the development of recommendations on a coordination and monitoring mechanism with parliamentary oversight, which was subsequently created. This mechanism will serve as an anchor for upcoming activities on freedom of expression.</p>
	<p>Advocacy and mobilization of policy makers led to the production of recommendations to prevent the misuse of the 'Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016'.</p>
	<p>Continued work to support an access to information reform in Baluchistan culminated in capacity building activities for policy makers and duty bearers in an effort to trigger legislative change in the province.</p>
	<p>Through its efforts to institutionalize mechanisms on safety of journalists and increase awareness around SDG 16, new partnerships were formed with Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs and the Parliamentarians' Commission for Human Rights.</p>



Key Achievements

- A national reporting mechanism on incidents and attacks against journalists with provincial police departments was created in collaboration with the National Commission for Human Rights. Another coordination and reporting mechanism was created following sensitization sessions of duty bearers and the formation of provincial working groups on SDG 16.10.1.
- UNESCO was able to form significant new partnerships with the strategic objective of institutionalizing aforementioned mechanisms, including with Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs and the Parliamentarians' Commission for Human Rights.
- A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by UNESCO's implementing partner, the Peace and Justice Network, and the Parliamentary Commission for Human Rights to ensure more attention is given to the issue of the safety of journalists. The PCHR is an independent, non-profit and non-governmental organization comprised of Pakistani MPs from all major political parties and four provinces of the country. Under its banner, these parliamentarians work for protection and promotion of human rights through parliament. PCHR engages relevant parliamentarians (federal and provincial) in issues related to safety of journalists and provides support in engaging relevant departments.

- Activities conducted with MDP support engaged a high number of duty bearers emanating from a total of 20 government departments (Police, Judicial Academies, Labor, Home and Law, National Commission of Human Rights, Federal Right to Information Commission, Ombudsman office, Planning Department SDG Units, Pakistan Telecommunication Authority, Social Welfare, Prosecution Department, Women Development, Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority, National Database & Registration Authority, National Police Bureau (NPB), Press Information Department (PID), Civil Defence, Federal Investigation Agency, Cybercrime department, National Commission on the Status of Women), three ministries and two parliamentary groups. Their capacities on safety of journalists, the UN Plan of Action as well as on the reporting mechanisms on incidents against journalists established with provincial police departments were enhanced.
- On 25 April 2019, the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) of Pakistan announced the nomination of focal persons in all provincial and federal police departments of the country to report on crimes against journalists. During the event - which was part of a series of workshops organized by UNESCO and implemented in collaboration with the NCHR - the Chair of NCHR, retired Justice Ali Nawaz Chowhan, highlighted the tremendous contribution of journalists for humanity and called them "the voice of people". Justice Chowhan had notably participated in the 2017 IDEI international seminar in Colombo, Sri Lanka, which advanced dialogues and strategies to strengthen the regional cooperation on safety of journalists and ending impunity in Asia.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

A strategic partner, the National Commission for Human Rights, became non-operational midway through implementation. A new partnership was therefore formed with the Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs so as to gather input, identify key stakeholders, and endorse project activities. An outgoing member of the NCHR was also retained as a facilitator.

The level of accountability and ownership by relevant government bodies was found to be low due to the fragmented mandates of ministries and departments on the issue of the protection of media and information.

Another challenge was the low level of involvement of the Ministry of Information and overall low level of engagement at ministerial level regarding the protection of media. Similarly, low engagement of parliamentarians with UN reports and mechanisms on safety of journalists and the issue of impunity. To remedy these issues, bilateral meetings were held with key members of the Parliamentary Commission for Human Rights, and ministerial focal points were involved in all project activities, thereby successfully adding the revival of the Ministry of Information's previously established protection mechanisms to the agenda of workshops held with duty bearers.

Action in Latin America and the Caribbean



Inter-American Court of Human Rights

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- 3500 judicial operators sensitized on international and regional standards pertaining to FOE, ATI and SOJ
- Pledge by Mexican government to create a Fund to support investigative journalism, independently administered by UNESCO
- Convening of two historic meetings among regional justice systems and among media regulators
- Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the IACHR
- Signing of an ethical pact against disinformation in Uruguay



Context

While the situation of freedom of expression and media freedom has seen significant improvements across Latin America and the Caribbean over past decades, many of the challenges affecting the region remain unchanged. For instance, as was stressed in a 2019 In-Focus edition of the World Trends Report, the situation of safety of journalists and levels of impunity continue to be alarming across Latin America and the Caribbean, even though the region is not currently experiencing any major armed conflict. That said, it is pertinent to note that the 80% rate of impunity for killings of journalists is 10 points below the global average rate, which can indicate that some of the measures undertaken to fight impunity in the region are actually working.

A rising number of non-fatal attacks has also been noted, sometimes emboldened by political discourse that is hostile towards journalists, and among these a growing trend of on-line harassment against women journalists. In light of this, the organization of the main commemoration of the IDEI in Mexico in November 2019 proved particularly momentous. The event provided a valuable platform for Latin American stakeholders to discuss steps ahead and concrete measures to strengthen the fight against impunity in the region, as well as to enhance South-South cooperation on this matter. The conference was furthermore marked by the Mexican government's pledge to improve the safety of journalists in the country through a series of concrete measures. UNESCO's Judges Initiative, launched in 2013, continued to enjoy an unprecedented scale in terms of cooperation with the legal sphere by virtue of its numerous and augmenting partnerships and to the robust credibility the project has acquired through the years. UNESCO sustained its efforts pertaining to the training of judiciary officers, with 3500 judiciary operators benefiting from capacity building activities in 2019. Under the reporting period, special attention

was given to the importance of the role of public prosecutors in ensuring freedom of expression and safety of journalists. Since the initiative's outset, close to 13,000 judicial operators and judges have successfully gained skills on freedom of expression, safety of journalists and access to information issues. UNESCO's work in this regard was also fortified by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in October 2019, a document that will ensure strengthened dialogue with the regional court, along with further bolstered credibility and outreach for UNESCO's specialized trainings of judicial officers. A first meeting with the network of national schools in charge of training prosecutors also took place in 2019, and a Memorandum of Understanding was finalized with the Ibero-American Association of Attorney Generals and is now awaiting signing.

It is also important to note that new synergies with UNESCO's judges initiative were fostered in 2019. Internet Society (ISOC), Facebook, UNDP and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) engaged with the capacity-building work. It is also important to note the synergies with several IPDC funded projects in the region.

Significant progress was achieved in recent years across the LAC region regarding Access to Information legislation, with only a handful of countries having yet to adopt the ATI legislation. The organization of the main celebration of IDUAL in Peru and the high interest demonstrated by Latin American stakeholders is illustrative of these developments. Implementation of the ATI laws has however been uneven across the region, with implementation in certain countries still facing some key challenges, particularly regarding the independence of information commissioners or equivalent bodies.

Concentration of ownership of the media continues to be an enduring issue across the region, and significantly undermines editorial independence as well as diversity of content. In addition, hindrances limiting the independence of public broadcasters and media regulators require attention. UNESCO has therefore initiated dialogues between media regulators and anti-trust regulators with the aim of identifying concrete steps to remedy this oligopoly of ownership.

An emerging area of concern across the LAC region has been the transformations brought about by the advent of the digital age. For instance, the rise of online hate speech and disinformation presents new threats

to freedom of expression, access to information, the safety of journalists as well as to the unfolding of free and fair democratic elections. Reforms pushing for the neutrality of the internet, along with increased responsibility of intermediaries, are also necessary in order to best address these rising challenges and can be noticed as a positive trend in some of the LAC countries. In this regard, UNESCO has carried out various activities aiming to strengthen the knowledge of key stakeholders and duty bearers regarding international standards on freedom of expression online and also its Internet Universality Indicators and their application.



Areas of action and progress

Awareness-raising and advocacy

Several national celebrations of WPFJ were supported with the aim of reinforcing awareness of key stakeholders. Notably, a commemoration was organized at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in Costa Rica, in the presence of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights' Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression and of the President of the Court. Another celebration, held in Uruguay jointly with NGOs Cotidiano Mujer and Articulacion Feminista Marcosur, and with support from the European Union, strengthened the knowledge of participants on the gender-specific issues faced by women journalists in the region.

The international event to celebrate the IDUAI held in Peru enabled awareness to be raised among representatives of ATI regulatory bodies, justice systems, CSOs and media about how ATI can play an instrumental role in sustainable development. The In-Focus World Trends Report titled "Access to Information: A New Promise for Sustainable Development" was launched on this occasion.

The main commemoration of the 2019 IDEI in Mexico saw the government make a political commitment to fight against impunity, as well as announce several concrete measures. The spokesperson of the Presidency announced that the Mexican government's pledge to improve the protection of journalists by (1) creating a Fund to support investigative journalism, which will be administered independently by UNESCO; (2) launching a social security program for freelance

<p>Awareness-raising and advocacy (cont'd)</p>	<p>journalists to address their precarious working conditions; and (3) by taking into account 104 recommendations produced by OHCHR to strengthen Mexico's national protection mechanism for human rights defenders and journalists.</p> <p>Fostered dialogue and synergies among renowned international experts and the networks of media regulators and anti-trust regulators on challenges created by technological evolutions for regulatory frameworks in LAC during an international seminar "Regulatory Challenges of the Convergence of Audiovisual Services" in Mexico, in collaboration with the PRAI (Platform of Audiovisual Regulators of Ibero-America) and OBSERVACOM (Latin American Observatory of Regulations, Medias and Convergence).</p> <p>Knowledge sharing among journalists and journalism students was promoted through the support provided to the 14th Congress of the Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalists organized in Sao Paulo by Abraji. The event gathered 1,000 participants to discuss key challenges for investigative news media, of which several benefited from workshops organized by UNESCO in collaboration with UNESCO's Regional Center for Studies on the Development of the Information Society (Cetic.Br) on strategies to cover internet issues enhancing the safety of journalists.</p> <p>Convened the first meeting with the heads of the national schools of prosecutors coming from 14 Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay,) plus Spain, during which participants were engaged on the topic of training on the safety of journalists.</p>
<p>Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities</p>	<p>Building on years of previous work undertaken within the framework of the Judges' Initiative, UNESCO provided support to the organization and conducting of capacity strengthening sessions for judicial operators based on UNESCO's Toolkit for Training Trainers on Freedom of Expression, Access to Information and Safety of Journalists in 12 countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay).</p> <p>Launched the 5th edition of its MOOC on the "International Legal Framework of Freedom of Expression, Access to Public Information and Protection of Journalists" with additional support from Sweden. The capacities of more than 2,200 judicial operations who took part in this edition were strengthened, thereby further reinforcing an informal network of over 11,000 judicial officers committed to the application of international standards and reinforcement of the implementation of the UN Plan of Action within their national contexts.</p>

Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities
(cont'd)

An online capacity-building programme for judges was carried out in the form of a MOOC in collaboration with Internet Society. This online training provided an understanding of technical and policy principles related to the Internet ecosystem and Internet governance to around 500 participants and offered an opportunity for additional training and increased awareness for the judicial operators who had already gone through the basic modules of the judges initiative.

The capacities and knowledge of representatives of six Latin American countries (Brazil, Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay, Mexico and Uruguay) on the application of UNESCO's Internet Universality Indicators were reinforced through a workshop organized in Brazil in March 2019.

UNESCO convened a historic meeting of 19 authorities hailing from five major regional Justice Systems (the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the Conference of Ministers of Justice of Ibero-American Countries (COMJIB), the Ibero-American Association of Public Prosecutors (AIAMP), the Ibero-American Judicial Summit and the Inter-American Association of Public Defenders (AIDEF)) under the theme "Strengthening the Rule of Law and Human Rights to Achieve Peaceful, Fair and Inclusive Societies", within the margins of the United Nations High Level Political Forum in July 2019. For the first time in their history, these five institutions were gathered to discuss the role of justice systems and human rights in the achievement of SDG16. Participants published a Joint Statement, in which they reaffirmed their commitment to continue interinstitutional dialogue on issues such as violence and security, access to justice, and access to public information, among others.

Supported the signing of an "Ethical pact against disinformation", drafted by the Uruguayan Press Association, by the six most important political parties in Uruguay. This pact highlights the duties and responsibilities of politicians and political parties in helping counter disinformation during electoral periods.

Advanced dialogue on media concentration in Latin America and the Caribbean by convening, for the first time in their history, the network of media regulators (PRAI - Platform of Audiovisual Regulators of Ibero-America) and the network of anti-trustee regulators. Together, they discussed a policy brief prepared by UNESCO on the role of anti-trustees in fighting against concentration of media ownership in the region.

Supported the participation of Latin American judges in a session organized by UNESCO within the framework of the 2019 Internet Governance Forum in Berlin. During this session, UNESCO gathered high-level judicial operators from all around the world a special session to discuss the challenges for judicial authorities in dealing with digital rights and digital ecosystems.

Policy advice and reinforcement of duty bearers' capacities
(cont'd)

Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and UNESCO, a document which will ensure increased cooperation with the regional court on freedom of expression, safety of journalists and access to information issues as well as reinforced outreach.

The preparation of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ibero-American Association of Attorney Generals has been finalized and the document is awaiting signing.



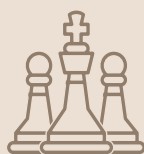
Key Achievements

- Through the 5th edition of the MOOC and other capacity building activities, the knowledge and skills of close to 3500 judicial operators coming from all countries in Latin America were reinforced on international standards pertaining to freedom of expression, safety of journalists and access to information. These new alumni join an informal network created through the course and free of geographical limits, of close to 13,000 previously trained judicial officials committed to the implementation of international standards across the region. It is also important to note that different schools of judges are reporting the full incorporation of UNESCO's toolkit in their regular curriculum for training judicial operators.
- During the commemorations of IDEI, the Mexican government pledged to undertake concrete measures to improve working conditions of journalists, notably by: (1) creating a Fund to support investigative journalism, which will be administered independently by UNESCO; (2) launching a social security program for freelance journalists to address their precarious working conditions; and (3) by taking into account the 104 recommendations produced by OHCHR. This commitment is especially symbolic in light of the dire situation of safety of journalists in the country and of continuously high rates of impunity for crimes committed against them.
- Under the reporting period, UNESCO successfully conveyed two unprecedented and historic meetings. Within the margins of the UN High Level Political Forum, five major justice systems congregated and published a joint statement reaffirming their commitment to advancing SDG 16. A second meeting gathering the network of media regulators (PRAI) and the network of anti-trustee regulators advanced dialogue among these two instances on the role of anti-trustees in the fight against media concentration in the region.
- The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights further reinforces cooperation with the regional court and outreach for UNESCO's judges

initiative. An additional MoU with the Ibero-American Association of Attorney Generals has been finalized and is awaiting signing, and a first activity under the umbrella of this cooperation already took place, involving the national schools of prosecutors from 15 countries

- Significant progress was achieved in the fight against disinformation during electoral cycles in Uruguay, where all six major political parties signed an ethical pact to help counter disinformation. This pact was signed in the

presence of the current President of Uruguay, along with two former incumbents; this initiative was a joint cooperation with national CSOs and UNDP. A policy paper on these issues was discussed with several electoral regulators and was launched with a successful outreach.



Challenges, risks and remedial actions

A notable challenge under the reporting period was the perpetuation of the informal network of 13,000 judicial operators. In an effort to consolidate this network and to keep engaging previous participants, new resources were tailored for judicial actors who had already completed basic training, such as the course on Internet ecosystems organized jointly with Internet Society.

Success achieved within the framework of the judges initiative and the critical mass of stakeholders reached over the past six years has created expectations among participants and recipients of capacity

building activities to maintain as well as upscale activities. These expectations, while reflecting high levels of trust towards UNESCO, create a need for additional resources.

Challenges were also faced with regards to Access to Information legislation, whose implementation across the region remains lacking.

These annexes are external

Annex I

Results Framework

Annex II

Timeline 2019 and Work Plan 2020

Annex III

Resources and Publications

Title of resource	Type	Language	Country	Link
#KeepTruthAlive Google Map (developed for the IDEI 2019 campaign)	Online map	English	Global	https://keeptruthalive.co/
Access to Information: A New Promise for Sustainable Development	Publication	English	Global	https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000371485
Intensified Attacks, New Defences: Developments in the Fight to Protect Journalists and End Impunity	Publication	English	Global	https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000371487
Elections and Media in Digital Times	Publication	English	Global	https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000371486
Interviews for IDEI (total 5)	Videos	English, Spanish	Global	https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWuYED1WVJINb3_fI09gZJ7BThb_baoNeD
Interviews and highlights for the IDUAI (total 11)	Videos	English, French, Spanish	Global	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5jh6Kx8s7w&list=PLWuYED1WVJINvaMaHFJVCCTIISSaRele6
Communication and visual identity materials of International Day for Universal Access to Information,	Visual identity	English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, Chinese	Global	https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/accessstoinformationday/2019/communication
“Legal Standards on Freedom of Expression. Toolkit for the Judiciary in Africa”	Publication	French	Regional: Africa	https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000367137
“Legal Standards on Freedom of Expression. Toolkit for the Judiciary in Africa”	Publication	English	Regional: Africa	https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000366340
Social media and elections	Policy Paper	English, Spanish	Regional: Latin America and the Caribbean	https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000370634

Joint Statement of Institutions of the Justice Systems of Ibero-America	Statement	English	Regional: Latin America and the Caribbean	http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Montevideo/pdf/CI-JointStatement-NY.pdf
Rapid Assessment on the Role of media in Ethiopia's Transition	Assessment	English	Ethiopia	N/A
الحق في الوصول الى المعلومات: آفاق وتحديات (The Right to Information: prospects and challenges)	Policy paper	Arabic	Lebanon	Was distributed in printed form https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/annex_iii_pub_1_finaldraft.pdf
: قانون الحق في الوصول إلى المعلومات إنت هون بإدارة بحقك تطلب منها المعلومة (the right to information: You are here and entitled to request information)	Infographic	Arabic	Lebanon	Was distributed in printed form https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/annex_iii_pub_2.pdf
:قانون الحق في الوصول إلى المعلومات وبين فيك تحصل على المعلومات (the right to information: Where to find information)	Infographic	Arabic	Lebanon	Was distributed in printed form https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/annex_iii_pub_3.pdf
ابرز ما تضمنته الخطة الوطنية لتطبيق قانون الحق في الوصول إلى المعلومات (The most prominent contents of the national plan to implement the law on the right to access information)	Infographic	Arabic	Lebanon	Was distributed in printed form https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/annex_iii_pub_4.pdf
إصدار المرسوم التطبيقي لقانون الحق في الوصول إلى المعلومات-02 (Issuance of the implementing decree of the Right to Information Act -02)	Infographic	Arabic	Lebanon	Was distributed in printed form https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/annex_iii_pub_5.pdf
المادة 5 و 7 من اقتراح تعديل قانون الحق في الوصول إلى المعلومات (Articles 5 and 7 of the proposal to amend the Law on the Right to Access Information)	Infographic	Arabic	Lebanon	Was distributed in printed form https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/annex_iii_pub_6.pdf

المادة 18 و23 من اقتراح تعديل قانون الحق في الوصول إلى المعلومات (Articles 18 and 23 of the proposal to amend the Law on the Right to Access to Information)	Infographic	Arabic	Lebanon	Was distributed in printed form https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/annex_iii_pub_7.pdf
المعايير الدولية للحق في الوصول إلى المعلومات (International standards for the right to access information)	Infographic	Arabic	Lebanon	Was distributed in printed form https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/annex_iii_pub_8.pdf
قانون الحق في الوصول إلى المعلومات (the right to information)	Infographic	Arabic	Lebanon	Was distributed in printed form https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/annex_iii_pub_9.pdf
Interview with Barbara Trionfi (Executive Director of the International Press Institute)	Video	English	Lebanon	https://www.facebook.com/maychidiacfoundation/videos/1118069435250939/
Interview with Sofia Amara (Journalist and Filmmaker)	Video	French	Lebanon	https://www.facebook.com/UnescoBeirut/posts/d41d8cd9/3025803460824931/
Video on Safety of Journalists in Lebanon	Video	English	Lebanon	https://www.facebook.com/maychidiacfoundation/videos/492464258256211/
Thematic report of the monitoring Unit on electoral violence against journalists during the 2019 presidential and legislative elections in Tunisia	Report	Arabic	Tunisia	https://bit.ly/2Ah8caO
Annual report of the monitoring Unit on attacks against journalists	Report	Arabic, English	Tunisia	https://bit.ly/2ZG2CJX
12 Monthly reports of the monitoring Unit On attacks against journalists	Report	Arabic	Tunisia	https://protection.snjt.org/category/%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%aa%d9%82%d8%a7%d8%b1%d9%8a%d8%b1/

An attack on one is an attack on all – Successful initiatives to protect journalists and combat impunity	Publication	English	Pakistan	https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000250430
Draft Guide for duty bearers on: Right to Information	Guide	English	Pakistan	Was distributed in printed form https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/guide_-_rti-pak_1.pdf
Draft Guide for duty bearers on : Freedom of Expression & Safety of Journalists	Guide	English	Pakistan	Was distributed in printed form https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/guide_-_foe_soj-pak_1.pdf
“Right of Access to Information” Strategic Plan 2020-2022	Plan of Action	English	South Sudan	Was distributed in printed form https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/190922_final_strategy_plan.pdf
Community Radio Action Plan and Roadmap 2019-2020	Plan of Action	English	Bangladesh	Soft Copy
Community Radio Sustainability Situation Analysis and Baseline Survey on Community Media in Bangladesh	Analysis/Survey	English	Bangladesh	Soft Copy
UNESCO Policy Series on Community Media Sustainability Translated in Local Language	Policy Brief	Bangla	Bangladesh	Soft Copy
Community Radio Sustainability Situation Analysis and Baseline Survey on Community Media in Burundi	Analysis/Survey	French	Burundi	Soft Copy
Community Radio Action Plan and Roadmap	Plan of Action	English	Gambia	Soft Copy
The Strategy for Community Radio Sustainable Development (2019-2022)	Policy Framework Document	English	Mongolia	Soft Copy
A common competency framework on MIL in Myanmar.	Position Paper	English	Myanmar	Soft Copy
Community Radio Action Plan and Roadmap	Plan of Action	English	Myanmar	Soft Copy
Community Radio Sustainability Situation Analysis and Baseline Survey on Community Media in Myanmar	Analysis/Survey	English	Myanmar	Soft Copy

Community Radio Sustainability Situation Analysis and Baseline Survey on Community Media in Nepal	Analysis/Survey	English	Nepal	Soft Copy
Community Radio Action Plan and Roadmap	Plan of Action	English	Nepal	Soft Copy
Community Radio Sustainability Situation Analysis and Baseline Survey on Community Media	Analysis/Survey	English	South Sudan	Soft Copy
Community Radio Sustainability Situation Analysis and Baseline Survey on Community Media in South Sudan	Plan of Action	English	South Sudan	Soft Copy
Community Radio Sustainability Situation Analysis and Baseline Survey on Community Media in Tunisia	Analysis/Survey	Arabic	Tunisia	Soft Copy
#GlobalMILWeek social media campaign	Graphics	English, French, Spanish,	Global	Facebook, Twitter
Teaching and Learning with Twitter guide jointly with UNESCO	Publication	English, French, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Arabic, Japanese, Swedish, Hindi.	Global	https://about.twitter.com/content/dam/about-twitter/company/twitter-for-good/en/teaching-learning-with-twitter-unesco.pdf
World radio Day 2019	Web page	Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian Spanish	Global	https://webarchive.unesco.org/20191122183614/https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/worldradioday
Global MIL Week 2019	Web page	Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian Spanish	Global	https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/globalmilweek

Annex IV

Let Free Media Thrive - Story Magazine



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Multi-Donor Programme
on Freedom of Expression
and Safety of Journalists

LET FREE MEDIA THRIVE

STORIES OF IMPACT OF THE MULTI-DONOR PROGRAMME ON
FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS



Let Free Media Thrive

2019 has seen major achievements resulting from needs-based, and specifically-tailored support through the Multi-Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists (MDP). Actions building on ongoing work and others opening new avenues, have initiated substantial changes in favour of freedom of expression and media development.

The stories presented here are some examples of how the MDP works to provide countries and their populations with the necessary tools to nurture a free and independent media. This includes promoting the adoption of policies and standards on freedom of expression and safety of journalists, and fostering diversity, gender equality and media and information literacy through and with the media. Hence the name given to this series of articles: **Let Free Media Thrive**.

We invite you to read the testimonials from people working to improve freedom of expression in their countries. Find out more about the fight of women journalists in **Afghanistan**, who are learning ways to combat online harassment while seeking to change the perception that journalism is not a women's issue.

Mohamad Awad's story in **Palestine** will show you how a new network of young journalists trained to deal with safety risks is now operating to provide vital assistance in emergencies and coordinate responses when journalists are attacked. From **Sudan**, you will hear the expectations of those who are implementing the country's media reform in a unique context of political transition.

The article on **Myanmar** reflects on the need to train professional journalists to cover the country's general elections in 2020 freely and without favour, and for the government to have specific actions to combat hate speech and disinformation through media and information literacy. On this same theme, in **Nigeria**, be inspired by Martin Akpan and his tireless work to train the youth to think critically about what they read and share on social media.

You will also discover how a judge in Uruguay overturned a lawsuit that forced three Uruguayan media to grant a right of reply, thereby establishing a precedent for protecting freedom of expression in **Latin America**. Finally, don't miss the interview with international judicial operators that UNESCO brought together during the 2019 Internet Governance Forum in Berlin, to bring to light the challenges facing the judiciary in dealing with digital rights and digital ecosystems.

All these stories testify to the impact of the MDP at the closing of 2019. Their protagonists are those who want to let free media thrive, and UNESCO is working with them to bring about that change.



Minar Samimi, a young Afghan journalist from Kandahar province, joined other women journalists from different Afghanistan's provinces in a UNESCO organized workshop on digital safety. Photo: ©UNESCO Afghanistan Office

Security threats and stereotypes jeopardize women journalists in Afghanistan

Since the fall of the Taliban regime close to 20 years ago, the media sector has flourished in Afghanistan. There are now hundreds of active media, most of them also expanding online and on social networks.

At the same time, insecurity remains a concern, and many journalists are exposed to threats and violence in a country where the situation continues to be volatile. Among them, women are particularly vulnerable, their profession and their gender making them a “double target”.

Minar Samimi is a journalist from the Kandahar province working for Birman radio, one of the few Afghan radio stations entirely run by women. According to her, female media workers are still frowned upon by society: “It takes time to change peoples’ opinions about women. We need more literate people in our society. If we have more journalists in my province the public opinion can be changed.”

Like Minar, many Afghan women journalists are pressured to stop their media careers or studies. This hostile environment towards female journalists makes them particularly vulnerable to physical and verbal violence.

In an effort to support these women journalists whose needs are too often overlooked, UNESCO organized safety and first-aid training for 50 women journalists in Kabul and across Afghan provinces.

With the rise of digital media as well as investigative journalism in Afghanistan, UNESCO also identified a need for equipping local journalists with skills on digital safety. In order to help local journalists make the most of this emerging digital age while minimizing the risks, in 2019, UNESCO facilitated the training of 26 Afghan investigative journalists (half of them women) on protecting digital sources in the digital age. Through this, participants learnt key competences such as how to safeguard data and how to react against online attacks.

For Minar and other female journalists such a training is particularly useful because now they know how to keep their accounts safe from cyberattacks and how to send information through encrypted programs. One step towards a safer practice. Minar points out that online harassment is one of the main problems affecting her work. She recalls one instance when she received a wave of hostile comments after posting in defense of women journalists: “Many people showed opposition. They condemned me for spreading anti-Islam values. They don’t like women to become journalists.”

Addressing gender-specific issues in the media remains one of UNESCO’s priorities in Afghanistan. Throughout 2019, UNESCO carried out awareness raising activities with key governmental stakeholders. A notable achievement in 2019 in this regard was the prioritization of a specific agenda item for the safety of women journalists by the Joint Committee among media and Government’s representatives established as a national mechanism to promote the Safety of Journalists and the issue of impunity. Additional activities were organized with a focus on women’s managerial role in the media in 2019. These efforts form part of a wider initiative to encourage the development of an enabling environment for freedom of expression in Afghanistan.



As Myanmar prepares for a general election in 2020, UNESCO has been working with Myanmar media professionals like Myint Kyaw, head of training of the Myanmar Journalism Institute, in order to ensure free and fair election coverage. Photo: Myint Kyaw

Ensuring free and fair election coverage in Myanmar

Myint Kyaw is the head of training of the Myanmar Journalism Institute, the only journalist training institution in the country, founded in 2014. He is also a member of Myanmar's Press Council, an independent body created in 2010, which includes privately owned media and is in charge of settling press disputes.

Both institutions were created as a result of Myanmar's media reforms, which were part of larger political reforms towards democracy that started in 2010. The reforms mainly involved the abolition of a censorship board and the passing of Broadcast and Press laws. As the country started to give more freedoms to the media and to move away from long-standing censorship practices, there was also a need to establish independent organizations to strengthen media's role in ensuring free and fair elections, which are a key moment in democratic life.

Preparing for the general elections in 2020 has also served as an opportunity to improve the relationship between media and the government. Throughout 2019, UNESCO has therefore focused its efforts on encouraging dialogue between the Election Commission, the organ responsible for managing elections, and the Myanmar Press Council. In August, the two bodies met for the first time to initiate a dialogue to strengthen collaboration in preparation for the elections.

This dialogue helped both entities to better understand the role of the media as well as the challenges and frustrations experienced by the electoral body when disseminating information to journalists.

“Myanmar citizens rely more and more on the media, especially to receive electoral information. Media should have a good relationship with the Union Election Commission in order to educate voters because electoral information is disseminated by the Election Commission. Political parties’ messages and campaigns also use the media to reach voters. If the public gets reliable and comprehensive information, they can make a wise decision and could contribute to the democratic transition in Myanmar,” affirmed Mr. Kyaw.

An absolute priority for Mr. Kyaw is the need to enhance journalists’ skills when reporting on elections. Very often, lack of professionalism allows disinformation to leak into the news and provoke tensions.

“Sometimes journalists have a political bias and should understand journalistic principles and practices such as impartiality and fact-checking. There was a case during the elections in 2012 that triggered the anger of political candidates. One candidate anticipated the official election results and declared he received most of the votes. This information was unverified and spread online very quickly on social media platforms.”

In order to provide the media with a valuable resource on how to best cover the elections with transparency and impartiality, UNESCO, in collaboration with IMS supported the Myanmar Press Council to update the Election Reporting Guidelines. The update follows an agreement by the Press Council and the Election Commission to set up regular channels of communications to respond quickly to disinformation about political parties spread through the media and on social media. This agreement represents an important step in building stronger relations of collaboration and trust between the media and public institutions, in a country where distrust towards the media still prevails.

Mr. Kyaw concludes by stressing the threats posed by the spread of misinformation during elections. “A reckless and unprofessional reporting can trigger violence and unrest during the election period. We have had similar experiences during communal violence and ethnic armed conflict, but we did not have related evidence with elections. We must prepare well for these issues before 2020.”



Participants at a workshop to develop an action plan for the promotion of Media and Information Literacy in Myanmar. Photo: ©UNESCO Myanmar Office/Naing Naing Aye

A Colorful and Diverse Media Landscape in Myanmar

Before the political opening-up in 2012, Myanmar's media ecosystem was nothing like the country's diverse natural landscape: wide plains fully covered with the grey asphalt of State media only. Only after political reforms, including the abolishment of prior censorship, did new media outlets sprout and bloom.

The liberalization measures in the telecom industry since 2013, also contributed to the rapid growth of mobile and internet usage, and notably, the country witnessed 105% SIM penetration rate and 80% for smartphone in 2018. Today, there are over 140 licensed internet service providers in Myanmar in addition to the four telecom operators.

This completely changed the way Myanmar people communicate with each other, and consume and share information and media content. These developments have brought new opportunities as well as challenges to Myanmar citizens to engage in their society and in the transformations that their country is going through. The digital leapfrog pushed Myanmar citizens from not having a phone nor even having experience sending a text message, to using smartphones daily. However, most people have very low Media and Information Literacy (MIL) competencies.

One of the greatest challenges is the spread of hate speech and disinformation through social media, which has been reported as a key factor in the escalation of inter-ethnic and inter-



Participants are discussing the news during MIL training at the training center in Nay Pyi Taw ©UNESCO Myanmar Office/Naing Naing Aye

religious tensions in the country. These tensions have led to episodes of violence in some cases.

UNESCO in collaboration with stakeholders in Myanmar is striving to tackle those challenges. MIL being more relevant than ever in such a context, the Ministry of Information decided to establish a Committee for the Promotion of Media and Information Literacy.

For the inception of this groundbreaking committee, the Ministry of Information together with UNESCO organized a workshop to develop an action plan for the promotion of MIL. This plan outlines concrete programmes and links these to different government departments. It further identifies the resources required for implementation of the programmes. The Government’s efforts to build a media and information literate society in Myanmar have since then commenced.

The Ministry demonstrated its motivation to carry out this mission: “With its mandate to inform, educate and entertain the public, the Ministry has the responsibility to take a leading role in promoting MIL in Myanmar”, said Dr Thida Tin, Deputy Director-General at the Ministry of Information and Head of the Committee.

The workshop was rapidly followed by a training on the principles of MIL, thanks to which 300 staff from government

departments and national media outlets learned different dimensions of MIL, ranging from understanding of media to technological competencies. The participants involved and empowered will play a key role in carrying the mission forward.

The establishment of this committee and the commitment of the Government to promoting MIL marked a milestone of UNESCO’s advocacy work in the field of MIL in Myanmar. Under the auspices of UNESCO, the Government and stakeholders in Myanmar, including the education sector, journalism training institutions, the media, and CSOs, are taking steps to put MIL on the country’s development agenda.

UNESCO and the Myanmar Government will join forces and continue these actions, while navigating the newly emerged jungle that is the current media landscape in the country. Equipping citizens with MIL competencies is one of the most effective ways to weed out hate speech and disinformation cropping up across all channels and platforms. MIL further enables them to enjoy the opportunities and benefits of the diverse and colorful media landscape, fostering intercultural dialogue, critical thinking, and peacebuilding. These actions are therefore crucial.



Students of Zee Kay Secondary School, Ikorodu playing a MIL Game. Photo: ©UNESCO

Media and Information Literacy for Critical Thinking in Nigeria

Preparing young minds for a new world of information, technology, and media should be a priority for all educators. Yet, the world is still facing a grave challenge with basic literacy: 781 million illiterate adults and 262 million young people out of schools.

How can we merge the world of basic literacy with that of Media and Information Literacy (MIL)? Many educators around the world are championing this cause.

In Nigeria, one of these champions is Mr. Martin Akpan. Martin Akpan is an educator and the founder of Teen Resources Center in Nigeria. He is also a practitioner of MIL. His main work is to empower youth with the capacity of critical thinking and to provide quality information on traditional and social media platforms.

Mr. Akpan's journey with MIL started in 2002, while working as a producer of children and educational programmes for two television stations (MITV and MCTV) in Lagos, Nigeria. In these eighteen years, he has witnessed the growth of MIL worldwide and its mainstreaming into Nigerian society.

His expertise was further enhanced through UNESCO's MIL Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) launched in partnership with the Athabasca University, Canada. The MOOC enabled him to acquire a holistic approach to MIL and also brought him closer to UNESCO's actions in the field of MIL.



Mr. Akpan engages students on MIL in a classroom. Photo: ©UNESCO

According to Mr. Akpan, empowering people through MIL is becoming an essential prerequisite for fostering equitable access to information and knowledge and promoting free, independent and pluralistic media and information systems. “The adapted UNESCO MIL curriculum has supported my engagement with the children and the society at larger on MIL. It is a great tool to impart critical thinking and democratic discourse for the benefit of the society.”

Nigeria’s media scene is one of the liveliest in Africa. State TV and hundreds of radio stations have the capacity to reach tens of millions of viewers and listeners. Moreover, along with the wide spread of mobile phones and networks, millions of Nigerians are actively on the social media platforms. This has entailed challenges such as disinformation and hate speech, as elsewhere in the world.

Mr. Akpan believes that the MIL Coalition of Nigeria (MILCON) founded in 2017 with UNESCO’s support can play a vital role to address some of these challenges. UNESCO has continued to support the Coalition, in facilitating the coordination of interventions on MIL in Nigeria. MILCON promotes synergy amongst stakeholders towards advocating on national policies, integrating the MIL curriculum into schools and promoting a media and information literate society.

Acting as an MIL educator, Mr. Akpan works directly with pupils, students and teachers. He points out the difficulty in educating them about ‘critical thinking’, especially when it comes to appropriate resources for children. The MIL games and non-formal guide produced by UNESCO have played an important role in helping educators, like Mr. Akpan, to interact better with the users. In his words, “We are happy to hear that children are showing great excitement for these materials, and they discuss specific topics around the games and the genre of films in classrooms.” As one of the students expressed: “MIL is exciting. I have been watching cartoons as a kid but today I learn critical thinking through MIL games produced by UNESCO.”

To reach a larger percentage of the population of Nigeria, MIL clubs have been established in all regions of the country. This enables an increasing number of students to be creatively involved in MIL trainings. Mr. Akpan believes that MIL clubs serve as viable means and platforms for expanding civic education movement and non-formal MIL learning in primary and secondary schools.

The development and mainstreaming of MIL programmes in Nigeria could not be realized without the efforts from various organizations and individual enthusiasts like Mr. Akpan. The dramatic development in media, technology, and communication has brought significant changes, shaping individual lives and the society as a whole. Building a media and information literate society is under the shroud of collective responsibility and efforts to construct a strong bulwark of peace. “There is still a long way to go”, said Mr. Akpan.



Palestinian journalist, Mohammad Awad (right) and his colleagues working together to establish a network in order to improve their safety during emergencies and coordinate responses when journalists face attacks. Photo: ©UNESCO Rammallah Office

New network of Palestinian journalists to contribute to safety in the field

Mohammad Awad, a young journalist from Gaza, is part of a group of Palestinian journalists being trained to better respond to the risks of reporting in dangerous areas. The training, carried out throughout 2019, is part of an initiative to create a network of safety officers within news organizations in the West Bank and Gaza.

The network is being developed by UNESCO and the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate, and will provide emergency support for journalists, and help mainstream much-needed safety and risk awareness protocols in news organizations.

Mohammad is a reporter covering social and humanitarian issues in Palestine, particularly in Gaza. The need for more professional media content, based on fact-checking and in-depth investigations, is important to portray the real situation on the ground, including the attacks against journalists, he explains. This was one of the reasons that prompted Mohammad to become a journalist about ten years ago.

However, reporting can turn into a matter of survival when covering high-risk areas in Gaza. The escalation of conflict compromises the safety of journalists, who are often insufficiently prepared to react to danger. Some journalists report without any safety gear, which makes them more vulnerable. "There are many awful stories about journalists working in



“There are many awful stories about journalists working in the field being shot, injured or even losing their lives due to the lack of safety measures,” Mohammad Awad notes.

the field being shot, injured or even losing their lives due to the lack of safety measures or gear, such as vests, helmets and first-aid kits,” Mohammad notes.

Together with his co-workers, Fares, Nidal and Fadi, he is part of the first team of safety officers to be established in Gaza and the West Bank.

In April 2019, Mohammad participated in a Crisis Management and Risk Analysis course organized by UNESCO. More than 30 journalists, including 10 female journalists, from about 20 media organizations participated in two specialized training workshops held in Gaza and the West Bank.

Professional safety experts trained Mohammad and his colleagues to identify risks and prepare them to react in case of emergencies, looking at issues such as how to devise an escape route or how to communicate with senior management to keep them informed about the situation. They also learned from other colleagues’ life-threatening experiences. Mohammed is of the view that journalists joining the safety officers’ network will greatly benefit from these exchanges.

Along with his colleagues, Mohammad produced a plan of operations that outlines a distribution of duties to ensure that safety officers are fully supported by their news organizations, including their management team. The plan also includes workshops to exchange and coordinate responses between safety officers operating in the West Bank and Gaza.

When asked what media can do to better assess and mitigate risks, Mohammad underlined that media outlets have a duty to inform their reporters about the dangers involved in an assignment and to ensure proper preparation. “Advocacy through TV, print and radio is also needed to bring attention to the importance of journalists’ work in the field, which would contribute to further raising awareness about the importance of providing them with adequate protections,” he added.

“Gaza is in great need for such support,” Mohammad concluded “and our team is committed to working closely with UNESCO to ensure that this network is fully functional. I am proud to be among the first teams to set an example for others to follow”.



Sara Fadul, Director of the University of Khartoum Radio. Photo: Personal archive

Media reform in Sudan: The beginning of a new era for freedom of expression

Following the 2019 Sudanese revolution and the signing of the August 2019 interim Constitutional Declaration, Sudan undertook an historic democratic transition.

Substantial commitments in favour of media freedom and safety of journalists were made, and UNESCO Office in Khartoum has upscaled work in the Communication and Information field, initiating an assessment based on UNESCO’s Media Development Indicators as a contribution to developing a Roadmap for Media Reform, as well as an assessment based on UNESCO’s Internet Universality Indicators (IUI).

For a long time, the lack of democracy did not allow media actors to “play [their] true role, which is to reflect the problems faced by the Sudanese citizens”, explains Ms. Lubna Abdalla, the President of the Sudanese Women Journalists Association.

She recalls the difficulties faced by journalists trying to obtain information from governmental institutions. Ms. Abdalla hopes that the current shift will mean “access to information for all journalists and the development of laws that protect democracy and press freedom, which will inevitably contribute to the progress of society.”

To her, the main challenges in this area are laws restricting press freedom. By conducting an assessment of Sudanese laws and policies, UNESCO has laid the groundwork for a



Mr. Abdelgadir Mohammed Abdelgadir, UNESCO expert, journalist and human rights activist, during a workshop in Kasala, Eastern Sudan. Photo: ©UNESCO

“The [current] legal and regulatory frameworks are not consistent with [Constitutional] guarantees or with international human rights standards,” explains Mr. Abdelgadir Mohammed Abdelgadir, UNESCO national expert.

comprehensive reform of media legislation in line with international standards. The resulting Media Reform Roadmap will lead to the creation of a National Action Plan.

Such a reform is also deemed necessary by Ms. Sara Fadul, the Director of the University of Khartoum Radio who observes that the existent legal framework laws was “put in place in favor of the State rather than in favor of the media and the public”.

They are inherited from a time when Sudan “was suffering from government interference, security control and censorship”. One of the consequences is that today, still, “publication violations are treated as criminal offenses rather than civil cases”.

As a result, “reforming the media sector must be accompanied by deep and real reforms of the legal system in Sudan”.

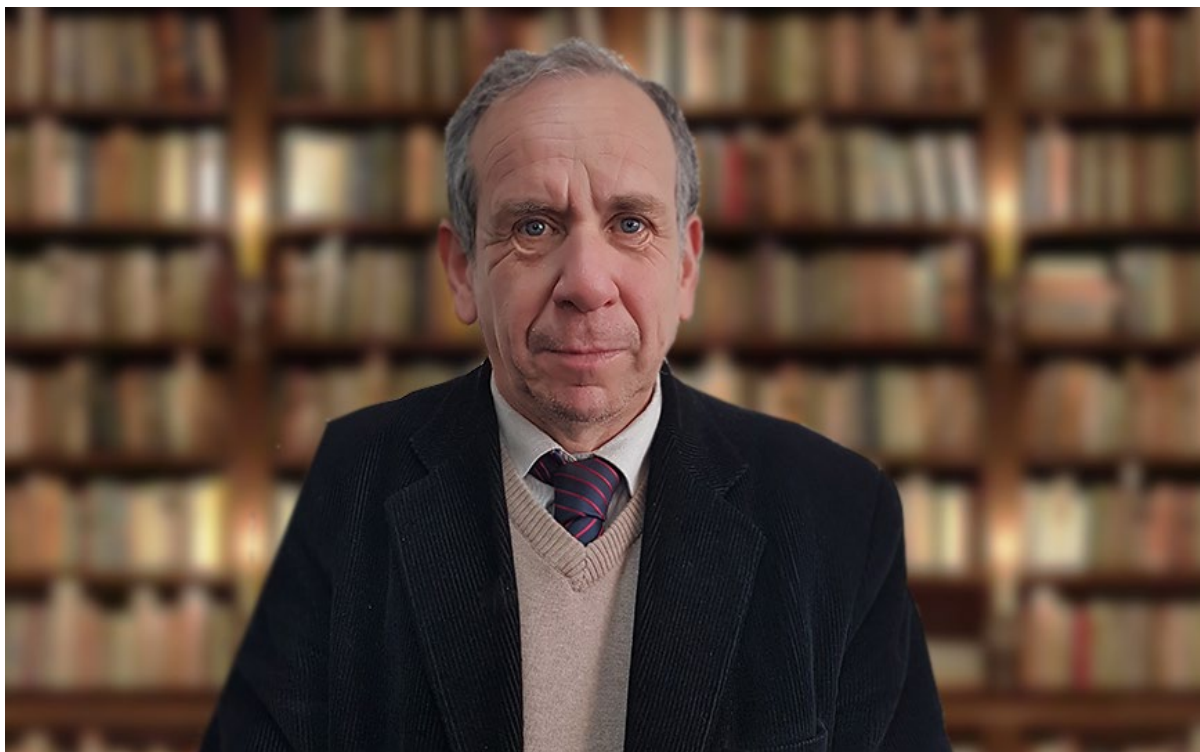
Mr. Abdelgadir also points out a holistic approach to reform would need the promotion of media independence and self-regulation, as well as investments on training for journalists and media workers, and in and modernization of public broadcasting service. “The reach and diversity of broadcast media relevant to populations in the regions” need to be increased, he adds, “especially in rural areas”.

To success in a reform, Ms. Fadul stresses the importance of “participation and discussion” engaging professionals from all concerned sectors, from decision-makers to researchers to training centers.

That is why she praises UNESCO’s multistakeholder approach, especially regarding its organization of seminars, meetings, workshops and conferences to reflect on the main issues surrounding the media sector in Sudan.

She also underlines the importance of addressing all aspects of media work during said events, including “media content, development, freedom of expression, sources, rights and responsibilities of journalists, along with a focus on the technical and economic aspects of implementing operations”.

From the shift that kicked off the reshaping of the Sudanese political landscape to the ongoing media reform process, she hopes for “more space for freedom of expression” and “conditions that enable media workers to practice their work professionally in a democratic situation”.



Thanks to the application of international human rights standards, Judge Luis Charles decided in favour of freedom of expression and information by overturning a lawsuit requiring three Uruguayan media outlets to grant a right of reply.
Photo: Personal archive

Judges in Latin America rule in favour of Freedom of Expression

Judge Luis Charles was instrumental in a major ruling in favour of freedom of expression when he decided, on 4 November 2019 that Radio Uruguay, Montevideo Portal and La República were not required to grant a right of reply to the advisor of a presidential candidate who had felt wronged by the publication of information about his past.

Three months earlier, as Uruguay was engaged in electoral campaigns for the presidency of the country, the three media outlets had published a letter disclosing information on the functions exercised by an advisor to a presidential candidate during the civic-military regime of 1973-1985.

Despite having been contacted by for an interview to offer his version of the facts, the advisor had instead resorted to suing the media outlets to demand a right of reply, arguing that the information in the letter was detrimental to him and that he therefore had the right to ask for a space to rectify it.

The three media outlets involved argued that granting the advisor a right of reply implied the information they had disclosed was offensive and inaccurate.

However, to their surprise, a first instance judge ruled in favour of the advisor and demanded a right of reply be granted; a decision which Radio Uruguay, Montevideo Portal and La República immediately appealed. It was then that Judge Luis Charles took up the case.

Three months later, the Court of Appeals ruled in favour of the media outlets, as it considered the content of the articles published was in the interest of the public, that the information was accurate, and that the three media had not intended to harm the complainant.

According to Judge Charles, judicial principles such as the right of reply are a guarantee of individual rights. While he does not believe it is appropriate to speak of abuses or misuses of these principles, Judge Charles believes that it is the very role of justice systems to determine when these principles are relevant.

Judge Charles is one of the numerous judicial operators who participated in trainings on international standards of freedom of expression and access to information organized by UNESCO in Latin America and the Caribbean since 2014. According to him, the wide scope of the trainings gave him access to comparative judicial doctrine and jurisprudence and enabled him to reinforce his knowledge of international standards as well as to access different decisions pronounced on the issue of the media and the right to reply.

“The technical independence of judges is a guarantee of rights, and the way of administering justice in a society remains one of the most important elements to measure democracy” recalled Judge Charles.

Since 2014, UNESCO, the Ibero-American Judicial Summit and the Organization of American States have provided training to some 15,000 judicial operators and judges such as Judge Charles on regional treaty obligations and other international provisions pertaining to free expression, public access to information and safety of journalists.

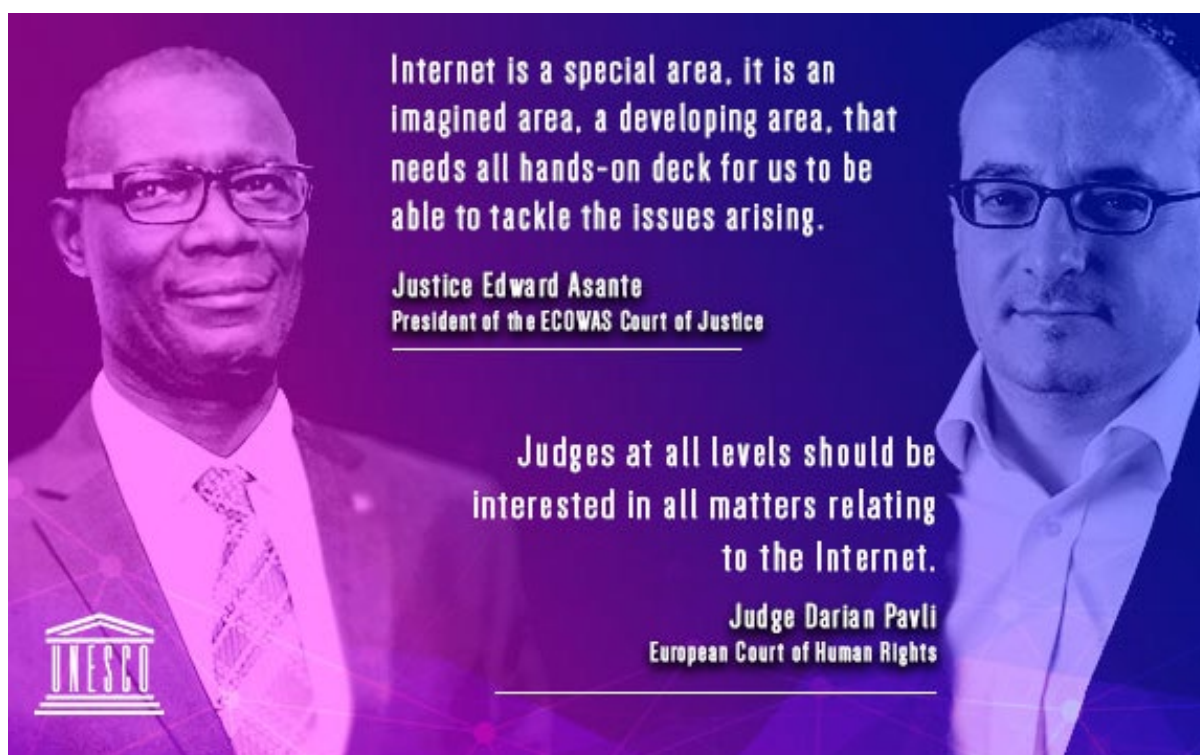


Photo: ©UNESCO

Rule of Law as a key concept in the digital ecosystem during Internet Governance Forum - Interview

During the 2019 Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Berlin, UNESCO invited judicial operators on November for a session to discuss the challenges for judicial authorities in dealing with digital rights and digital ecosystems. UNESCO conducted interviews with Hon. Justice Edward Asante, President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Court of Justice, and Judge Darian Pavli, from the European Court of Human Rights, who took part in this session.

How do you see the importance for yourself, but also for other judges, to be attending the IGF meeting today to increase interaction between judicial operators in this space of discussion on internet governance?

Justice Edward Asante (ECOWAS Court of Justice): It is very important for me personally, and for other judges, to be here because it is a very big space comprised of so many people dealing with law and non-law persons. The perspective of everybody is very important. Judges deal with laws generally, but then, dealing with the internet is a special area, it is an imagined area, a developing area, that needs all hands-on deck for us to be able to tackle the issues arising. Because if we leave it, it is going to be a big problem for the whole international community, so it is very important that we are here so that we understand how other people deal with the internet.

Judge Darian Pavli (European Court of Human Rights): Judges at all levels should be interested in all matters relating to the internet, because it is too important not to have an interest in it. In my view, individual rights, human rights, and how they are affected by the internet, are complex issues from a legal perspective but not only. They are often also complex from a technical perspective. These notions have social implications and security ramifications, and affect practically every aspect of life today. So, if someone is going to make decisions on things that are related to the internet, it will of course make a lot of sense to try to understand it better.

In your view, what are the most challenging or most interesting issues (such as hate speech, child online protection, freedom of expression, privacy issues, issues of jurisdiction, technical issues) that you are facing in your court or in your personal experience?

Justice Edward Asante: I think generally freedom of expression issues are very relevant to the internet, and in particular to social media. Because people have their freedoms, they post anything they want on Twitter, on Facebook, and on other platforms. And then some of this content may be very disparaging to other people, some may be hate speech, which also tramples on other people's rights. But then to even ascertain the liability for the posting, where the person who did the posting is, who is liable, is another special issue which I think we need to look at.

Judge Darian Pavli: At a personal level, I have had an interest in these issues for some time now, and I've followed and worked in particular on questions such as blocking of content from the government sites, intermediary liability, and anything that impacts freedom of expression. Every single one of the issues that you mentioned - be it the balance between free speech and respect for dignity and non-discrimination, what we call generally "the hate speech challenge", other aspects of data protection, government blocking - every single one of those we have had cases at the European Court of Human Rights, and I know that we have more cases pending on these issues, and I am sure we'll have many more in the future.

How does your court view the challenge of jurisdiction in the digital space?

Justice Edward Asante: Talking about jurisdiction, my court is a human rights jurisdiction, it is an international court, a regional court that deals with matters that happen within Member States from 15 Western African countries. In a way, one may say that if the issue happens in a Member State, once it happens there, they may have jurisdiction. But it is trickier than that because the internet is a global issue. And I think that that is why we are here and that we are listening to the various views of other stakeholders on this matter.

Judge Darian Pavli: I would say, not just national judges, but even international judges, have to decide on the question of jurisdiction. In the case of a court such as the European Court of Human Rights, it is a court that judges the responsibility of states, or state interference with individual rights. And of course, very often the very first question that comes up, especially

in a cross-border context, is that of jurisdiction, and that is something that we have to decide on. Just to bring one example: one case decided recently by my court is that of *Tamiz v. the United Kingdom*, and one of the issues that the British Courts had to decide was whether to accept a defamation lawsuit brought by a British politician who intended to sue Google, which as we know is based in California. And so, the first question before that British judge, was whether he should allow the defamation lawsuit to go forward. And of course, when it is time for consideration or review [by the European Court] of that decision by a British judge, in Strasbourg, the question of jurisdiction is part of the package as well.



Multi-Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists

About

The Multi-Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists (MDP) serves to further strengthen UNESCO's work at a global, regional, and national levels, by channelling funds towards emerging priorities and the most pressing needs to achieve its mandate on freedom of expression. It enables UNESCO's Communication and Information Sector to address complex issues through the design and implementation of holistic medium and long-term interventions at national, regional and global levels. The clear advantage of this mechanism is that it allows UNESCO and its partners to achieve greater impact and sustainability, whilst reducing fragmentation of activities in the same field.

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