

Supporting the development of a free, diverse and gender-inclusive independent media



| Key challenges

Free, pluralistic and quality independent journalism is a central pillar of democracy as it provides citizens with information enabling them to actively participate in democratic life. The COVID-19 pandemic has further demonstrated the crucial role of media and journalists to provide reliable information in times of crisis, and especially to remote or vulnerable communities. Yet, today's media face unprecedented challenges.

- Digitization is disrupting business models and increasing the dependence of traditional media companies on public and private support. This threatens media independence and risks undermining public trust in the media sector.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed both the gap in the media's capacity to counter disinformation and the precarious and unsafe working conditions for many media personnel worldwide.
- Gender equality in media is stagnating and even regressing in many countries.

Women occupy only 27% of top media management jobs, and constitute less than 25% of persons seen, heard or read about in media.

With your support, UNESCO will...

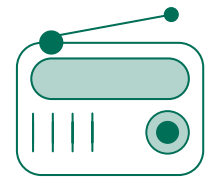
- Support policies and law reforms to foster media pluralism and independence, thereby contributing to upholding the concept of information as a common good.
- Produce national, regional and global reports on media development, with a particular focus on the post-pandemic situation, using UNESCO policy assessment frameworks.
- Strengthen media viability, including through supporting media to develop sustainable financial models and foster diversity in management and content.
- Provide financial and technical support to grass-roots media development projects, through the UNESCO International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), which helps sustain and incentivize projects that foster media diversity and independence.
- Support radio as an important component of media pluralism, by leading the global commemoration of World Radio Day (13 February).
- Advance gender equality in and through the media by strengthening media management policies and practice, and promoting gender-responsive representation and coverage in produced content.
- Build the media's capacities to ensure professional and ethical coverage of emergency and crisis situations and key issues such as climate change, migration and terrorism.
- Improve journalism education by developing learning material and curricula in collaboration with journalism schools and promoting the Global Initiative for Excellence in Journalism Education.



Support media pluralism and strengthen professional and ethical reporting on issues of both global and local concern.

Recent UNESCO achievements include...

- Supporting 147 new media development projects in close to 80 countries, for a total amount of USD 4.1 million, between 2018 and 2019.
- Mobilizing thousands of public, private and community radio stations to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, by broadcasting awareness-raising messages in more than 40 languages that promote healthy behaviours and debunk rumours about the virus.
- Supporting more than 30 media organizations to strengthen editorial policies on youth and gender equality in media and providing training to enhance gender equality in media to more than 90 media institutions.
- Leading and promoting the 2020 World Radio Day (WRD) which was observed through hundreds of events in 130 countries on the theme of 'Radio and Diversity'.
- Developing a policy series on Community Media Sustainability to support enabling environments for media pluralism.
- Developing the capacities of media workers at 59 local radio stations in 10 African countries through the "Empowering Local Radio with ICTs" project.
- Developing publications to advance gender equality in media, including a collaboration with UN Women on how to work with media to prevent gender-based violence, and UNESCO guidelines for media professionals on how to report on violence against women and girls.
- Countering 'fake news' by developing the 'Handbook on Journalism, "Fake News" and Disinformation', which has been translated into 30 languages and gives journalists and media professionals worldwide guidance on countering disinformation.



2020 World Radio Day (WRD) was observed through hundreds of events in 130 countries.

Partner with UNESCO

Contact: Guy Berger, Director for Strategies and Policies in the field of Communication and Information, Secretary of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), g.berger@unesco.org, and Mirta Lourenço, Chief of Section, Media and Information Literacy and Media Development, m.lourenco@unesco.org

More information: [Media Development and the IPDC](#), [Media Pluralism and Diversity](#), [UNESCO's Multi-Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists](#)