



A Handbook on Reporting Terrorism

MEDIA
COUNCIL OF KENYA

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INTERNATIONAL
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International Media Support (IMS) is a nonprofit organisation that works to support local media in countries affected by armed conflict, human insecurity and political transition.

mediasupport.org
info@mediasupport.org

Cover Photo: Kenyan security personnel and journalists duck behind a vehicle as heavy gunfire erupts from the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya, Monday September 23 2013.

Photo taken by: Jerome Delay/POLFOTO.

A Handbook on Reporting Terrorism

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Abbreviations

- AJEA** - Annual Journalism Excellence Awards
- CNN** - Cable News Network
- CPJ** - Committee to Protect Journalists
- CVE** - Countering Violent Extremism
- GOK** - Government of Kenya
- IMS** - International Media Support
- KDF** - Kenya Defense Force
- MCK** - Media Council of Kenya
- NCTC** - National Counter Terrorism Centre
- NPS** - National Police Service
- RSF** - Reporters sans Frontières
- RVE** - Radicalization into Violent Extremism
- UN** - United Nations

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Preface

Sadly, violent extremism and terrorism have left their mark on Kenyan society over the past several years. The killings of innocent people at Westgate in 2013, Mpeketoni in 2014 and Garissa in 2015 are some of the recent testimonies to this.

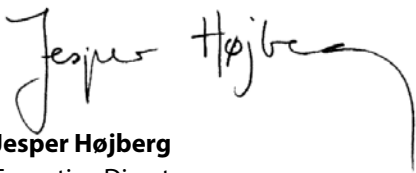
When a society experiences dramatic and devastating developments such as terror attacks people have an urgent need for information. They want to know what is happening and how they and their communities may be affected. Later - when the immediate crisis has passed - there is also the need to understand why the events developed as they did and what can be done to prevent future attacks.

The news media have the difficult yet vital role of informing the public and providing analyses of such events.

Covering the complexities of terrorism and extreme violence are a challenge for journalists everywhere. It can be difficult to get access to information. Deadlines need to be met while there is also pressure on journalists to deliver news in real time. Maintaining professional ethics might be difficult, but all the more necessary. Victims must be respected. Sensationalism should be avoided.

So far very little has been done to strengthen the capacities of journalists in this field both in Kenya as well as globally. Together with the Media Council of Kenya, International Media Support has worked to address the challenges that journalists face when covering terrorism and violent extremism and to strengthen the role of media in preventing and countering violent extremism. One of the results of this cooperation is this handbook.

We are confident that the handbook will be an important reference and guide for Kenyan journalists in covering terrorism and violent extremism, both to strengthen the professional ethics in covering this area as well as ensuring the public has access to the information it needs on such developments.



Jesper Højberg

Executive Director

International Media Support (IMS)

Foreword

Terrorism and violent extremism are global challenges that have pushed nations to search for strategic interventions. No country in the world is immune to the threat of terrorism: it is real, pervasive and multifaceted, but it should be carefully assessed to ensure that it is neither exaggerated nor underestimated. The state has the obligation and primary responsibility to prevent and combat terrorism and violent extremism, as well as to respect and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In doing so, the state needs to draw on the support of society in general, especially the media, to successfully counter this phenomenon. Kenya has suffered its fair share of terror related attacks including the Westgate Mall attack, Garissa University College attack and an attack on Kenyan soldiers in El Adde. In all these instances, there were accusations and counter accusations between the media and security agencies on inaccurate reporting and sensationalism and violations of media freedom on the other hand through intimidation and denial of vital information.

Given this environment, the Council partnered with International Media Support (IMS) to conduct trainings for journalists and security officers with the aim of mitigating this adversarial relationship between the media and security agencies.

We hope the guidebook will be a valuable tool for those involved in information dissemination around the issues of Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism.

Haron Mwangi, PhD

Chief Executive Officer & Secretary to the Council



1. Introduction

“Without communication, terrorism would not exist.”

- Marshall McLuhan

Kenya has witnessed acts of terror attacks since 1975; however the past decade has been particularly deadly with the country experiencing a rise in both the number and deadliness of terror attacks on its soil. The attacks at Westgate Mall, the al Shabaab attacks and those attacks on Garissa and Mpeketoni have all garnered extensive media coverage by both national and international media.

Fear of terrorism has pushed security high on the national agenda and numerous initiatives have been taken to mitigate and eventually put an end to terrorism.

As a result, there has been some serious soul-searching among Kenyan media workers as well as media ethicists and the Media Council of Kenya in how to cover such horrific events effectively and ethically yet timely and sensitively.

The introduction of a tougher approach in fighting terrorism has also led to new security legislation and administrative procedures which, among other areas, seek to put more control on how the media cover issues related to terrorism and violent extremism in Kenya. The laws partly targeted media because it was viewed as a platform through which terrorist groups advance their course.

The justifications for increased control of media coverage of terrorism and harassment of the media in the war on terrorism and violent extremism include the reference to the risks that poor quality and lack of ethics in journalistic work is supporting the course of the terrorism by giving exposure to the terrorist acts, spreading fear and indirectly contributing to public legitimization of terrorists' actions.

A report by the Media Council of Kenya based on monitoring of media coverage of terrorism gives some ground to this justification. It concludes that there is a tendency for media to emphasise the dramatic and most violent and conflicting accounts on war against terror and ignores historical, cultural and social explanations for terrorism and the war against it.

It is important to note that there is an inherent tension or contradiction between the journalist and the terrorist: the journalist wants the story and the terrorist wants the publicity and to instill fear. And in most cases, in the process of reporting and covering these important stories, the journalist instills or aggravates fear and the terrorist achieves what they want – attention, publicity and intimidation.

In her book *Mass Mediated Terrorism: The Central Role of the Media in Terrorism and Counter Terrorism*, Brigitte Nacos explains how terrorists exploit global information networks to proliferate their violent achievements, known as the “propaganda of the deed”.

This raises yet another question: how should journalists effectively cover stories without putting innocent civilians (or security forces) in harm's way, without instilling fear in the community and giving attention to publicity seeking terrorists?

Some of the key concerns the handbook addresses include:

- Providing a platform for terror groups especially through live coverage – what laws might this violate?

¹Brigitte L. Nacos, “Mass-Mediated Terrorism: The Central Role of the Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism.” New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc, (2007), 6.

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- Laws on national security and freedom of expression
 - Ethical considerations in reporting such as accuracy and fairness
 - How to strike a balance between objective coverage and sensationalism
 - Sources: reliability and credibility
 - National security versus media freedom
 - Effective media and security relations.

2. Defining terms and trends of Terrorism, Radicalism and Violent Extremism in Kenya

Before discussing how to report on terrorism and violent extremism it is important to understand what the various terms mean. We have largely drawn from the Brave Program (www.braveprogram.org) and the “National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism” by the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC).

Extremism

The strict adherence to a set of narratives or belief systems (whether political or religious) that constitute assaults on the mainstream values, orientations and principles of the Kenyan society. Extremist narratives exist on a continuum—at the extreme right and extreme left of ideological spectrums across political, racial, tribal and religious lines. When extremists resort to acts of coercion in the pursuit of their objectives, it degenerates to violent extremism [“This includes terrorism and other forms of identity-motivated violence from hate crime to genocide”]

Radicalism

Standing at a distance from the mainstream political or religious thinking. Radicalism is seen as open-minded and open-ended as opposed to extremism which is close-minded. Extremists harbour distinct willingness to use violence while radicals do not, at least along the trajectory path of radicalization, until towards the end when it transforms into violent extremism.

Radicalization

Radicalization is a process through which an individual or groups of individuals are transformed by an ideology or belief system shifting mind-sets away from the mainstream. Radicalisation helps to fulfill a sense of meaning, belonging, acceptance, purpose, value, having special power, dignity and respect as well as being a defender of a religion, race, tribe, political thinking or a cause. When the process leads to violence, then it is referred to as Radicalization into Violent Extremism (RVE) process.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2012 includes numerous definitions including the following:

Radicalization - A person who adopts or promotes an extreme belief system for the purpose of facilitating ideologically based violence to advance political, religious or social change commits an offence and is liable on conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding thirty years.

Incitement - A person who publishes, distributes or otherwise avails information intending to directly or indirectly incite another person or a group of persons to carry out a terrorist act commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding thirty years.

“Terrorist act” means an act or threat of action—

- (a) which -
 - (i) involves the use of violence against a person.
 - (ii) endangers the life of a person, other than the person committing the action.

²Kate Ferguson, p. 4 <http://www.braveprogram.org/>

-
- (iii) creates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or a section of the public.
 - (iv) results in serious damage to property.
 - (v) involves the use of firearms or explosives.
 - (vi) involves the release of any dangerous, hazardous, toxic or radioactive substance or microbial or other biological agent or toxin into the environment.
 - (vii) interferes with an electronic system resulting in the disruption of the provision of communication, financial, transport or other essential services.
 - (viii) interferes or disrupts the provision of essential or emergency services.
 - (ix) prejudices national security or public safety; and
- (b) which is carried out with the aim of—
- (i) intimidating or causing fear amongst members of the public or a section of the public; or
 - (ii) intimidating or compelling the Government or international organization to do, or refrain from any act; or
 - (iii) destabilizing the religious, political, Constitutional, economic or social institutions of a country, or an international organization:
- Provided that an act which disrupts any services and is committed in pursuance of a protest, demonstration or stoppage of work shall be deemed not to be a terrorist act within the meaning of this definition so long as the act is not intended to result in any harm referred to in paragraph (a)(i) to (iv).

“Terrorist group” means

- (a) an entity that has as one of its activities and purposes, the committing of, or the facilitation of the commission of a terrorist act; or
- (b) a specified entity;

Countering radicalization – efforts to delegitimize violent extremist ideologies, and to deter recruitment into terrorist groups or campaigns. It involves targeted efforts to reduce the access to citizens by influential individuals and groups whose deliberate mission is to expand support for terrorism.

Countering violent extremism – is the employment of non-coercive means to delegitimize violent extremist ideologies and thus reduce the number of terrorist group supporters and recruits.

De-radicalisation – refers to concerted efforts directed at radicalized individuals to cause them to change their views to reject violent extremist ideologies and to seek to act within Kenya’s legal and constitutional bounds. It is often aimed at prisoners convicted of terrorist or violent extremist crimes, or voluntary returnees from active participation in terrorist groups.

Disengagement – refers to individuals deserting, defecting or demobilizing from terrorist groups and activities. This is a behavioral or declarative act and does not necessarily include the psychological and social dimensions of de-radicalisation.

Rehabilitation – is a process that aims to ensure that disengaged and de-radicalized violent extremists and terrorists, particularly returnees from AlShabaab and like groups, are given the counseling, critical reasoning tools, and knowledge to shift their mind-sets and enable them to be peaceful and law-abiding citizens.

Reintegration – refers to actions that support the social, ideological, psychological, and economic wellbeing of rehabilitated individuals as they return to live with their families and communities, and that ensure that they remain peaceful and law-abiding in the long run.

Self-radicalisation – refers to the process whereby an individual becomes a violent extremist without any specific terrorist group engaging him directly; it often occurs through access to extremist propaganda via media and the Internet. These are also referred to as “lone wolf” terrorists.

3. Professional ethics: Responsibility of the media

The traditional role of journalism is to enable the public to make well-informed decisions. However, serious professional journalism is difficult work at the best of times. In a society threatened by terrorism and/or violent extremism, journalists face much greater difficulties and will likely operate in a climate of fear and threats.

But covering such an environment is also when professional journalism is most important and the role of the media is critical in providing the public with full, reliable and factual information.

Ultimately, our job as journalists is to tell stories: stories of people, real people who are often living in horrific situations. But how can we do so in what may prove to be extremely challenging, emotionally and potentially dangerous contexts? What international standards and best practices exist for journalists covering violent extremism or terrorism?

Many of these standards are based on the most essential of journalism ethical standards such as accuracy, impartiality, fairness and balance while others have grown from an increasing awareness of the tenets of conflict sensitive journalism. Good journalism should be accurate, impartial, balanced and responsible so that: Accuracy + Impartiality + Responsibility = Reliability. Ultimately, reliability often comes down to our own credibility.

Our credibility as media during conflict is our currency. If we destroy that credibility we have nothing and may as well stop doing our jobs. We need to earn that credibility and then maintain it. So, we need to:

- Be accurate
- Be impartial
- Be responsible

Journalists must understand the inherent power and authority given to much of what they do. They should also be aware of their role as third parties and they should understand that there will always be those who will try to control news content to their benefit. Journalists must be aware of the phenomenal consequences their reports may produce despite pressures of accuracy, deadlines, objectivity, and even patriotism.

Journalists must also ensure that the basis of any story they pursue is solid information and facts rather than simply the emotional side that conflict can bring out in all of us. We must operate on principle and not prejudge the outcome.

There are several policy and legal documents that exist to guide the practice of journalism and some of the most important aspects include the following:

Relevant sections of the ***Code of Ethics for the Practice of Journalism (Second Schedule of the Media Council of Kenya Act 2013)*** on coverage of terrorism and countering violent extremism include the following:

Article 3: Accountability

3(1) Journalists shall defend the independence of all journalists from those seeking influence or control over news content.

(2) A person subject to this Act shall -

- (a) Gather and report news without fear or favour, and resist undue influence from any outside forces,

-
- including advertisers, sources, story subjects, powerful individuals and special interest groups.
- (b) Resist those who would buy or politically influence news content or who would seek to intimidate those who gather and disseminate news.
 - (c) Determine news content solely through editorial judgment and not the result of outside influence.
 - (d) Resist any self-interest or peer pressure that might undermine journalistic duty and service to the public;
 - (e) Recognize that sponsorship of the news shall not be used in any way to determine, restrict or manipulate content;
 - (f) Refuse to allow the interests of ownership or management to influence news' judgment and content inappropriately.

Article 4: Integrity

(1) Journalists shall present news with integrity and common decency, avoiding real or perceived conflicts of interest, and respect the dignity and intelligence of the audience as well as the subjects of news.

(2) A person subject to this Act shall -

- (a) Identify sources whenever possible. Confidential sources shall be used only when it is clearly in public interest to gather or convey important information or when a person providing information might be harmed;
- (b) Clearly label opinion and commentary;
- (c) Use technological tools with skill and thoughtfulness, avoiding techniques that skew facts, distort reality, or sensationalize events;
- (d) Use surreptitious news gathering techniques including hidden cameras or microphones, only if there is no other way of obtaining stories of significant public importance.

Article 10: Obscenity, taste and tone in reporting

- (1) In general, persons subject to this Act shall not publish obscene or vulgar material unless such material contains news.
- (2) Publication of photographs showing mutilated bodies, bloody incidents and abhorrent scenes shall be avoided unless the publication or broadcast of such photographs will serve the public interest.
- (3) Where possible an alert shall be issued to warn viewers or readers of the information being published

The worst example of this happened when The Star of 17 June 2014 had a front page picture captioned "Policemen remove the body of a man killed by gunmen in Mpeketoni, Lamu County on Sunday evening". The People Daily carried the headline "I saw them kill kill kill..." and was accompanied by photos of eight bodies of men dead from the attack.

Article 12: Covering ethnic, religious and sectarian conflict

News, views or comments on ethnic, religious or sectarian dispute shall be published or broadcast after proper verification of facts and presented with due caution and restraint in a manner which is conducive to the creation of an atmosphere congenial to national harmony, amity and peace.

Article 15: Intrusion into grief and shock

- (1) In cases involving personal grief or shock, inquiries shall be made with sensitivity and discretion.

Article 21: Use of Pictures and names

- (1) As a general rule, the media shall apply caution in the use of pictures and names and shall avoid publication when there is a possibility of harming the persons concerned.
- (2) Manipulation of pictures in a manner that distorts reality and accuracy of news shall be avoided.
- (3) Pictures of grief, disaster and those that embarrass and promote sexism shall be discouraged.

Article 23: Acts of violence

- 23(1) The media shall avoid presenting acts of violence, armed robberies, banditry and terrorist activities in a manner that glorifies such anti-social conduct.
- (2) Newspapers shall not allow their columns to be used for writings which tend to encourage or glorify social evils, warlike activities, ethnic, racial or religious hostilities.

Article 24: Editors Responsibilities

- 24(1) The editor shall assume the responsibility for all content, including advertisements, published in a newspaper.
- (2) If responsibility is disclaimed, this shall be explicitly stated beforehand.

Article 25: Hate speech

- 25 (1) Quoting persons making derogatory remarks based on ethnicity, race, creed, colour and sex shall not be allowed.
- (2) Racist or negative ethnic terms shall be avoided.
- (3) Careful account shall be taken of the possible effect upon the ethnic or racial group concerned, and on the population as a whole, and of the changes in public attitudes as to what is and what is not acceptable when using such terms.

In addition to the Code of Ethics for the Practice of Journalism media practitioners and journalists in Kenya are required to understand other various laws that deal with covering sensitive issues including national security.

The Constitution of Kenya

Article 34 (1)

This provides that freedom and independence of electronic, print and all other types of media is guaranteed, but does not extend to any expression specified in Article 33 (2) that requires that the right to freedom of expression does not extend to -

- a) Propaganda for war
- b) Incitement to violence
- c) Hate speech; or
- d) Advocacy of hatred that-
 - (i) Constitutes ethnic incitement, vilification of others or incitement to cause harm; or
 - (ii) Is based on any grounds of discrimination specified or contemplated in Article 2 (4) which provides that: Any law, including customary law that is inconsistent with this Constitution is void to the extent of the inconsistency, and any act or omission in contravention of this constitution is invalid.

As noted, the provisions on national security are not an open cheque for the state to trample on freedom of expression or access to information (as provided for in Art 35 of the Kenya Constitution), and must be exercised within international best practices as provided for by the Tswana and Johannesburg Principles on freedom of expression and national security.

Article 238 of the Constitution provides that national security is the protection against internal and external threats to Kenya's territorial integrity and sovereignty, its people, their rights, freedoms, property, peace, stability and prosperity, and other national interests. Thus, on national security grounds, freedom of expression and other rights can be limited.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2012³

Article 30(a)

Publication of offending material

- (1) A person who publishes or utters a statement that is likely to be understood as directly or indirectly encouraging or inducing another person to commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding fourteen years.
- (2) For purposes of subsection (1), a statement is likely to be understood as directly or indirectly encouraging or inducing another person to commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism if:
 - (a) The circumstances and manner of the publications are such that it can reasonably be inferred that it was so intended; or
 - (b) The intention is apparent from the contents of the statement.
- (3) For purposes of this section, it is irrelevant whether any person is in fact encouraged or induced to commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism.

30 (f)

Prohibition from broadcasting

- (1) Any person who, without authorization from the National Police Service, broadcasts any information which undermines investigations or security operations relating to terrorism commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years or to a fine not exceeding five million shillings, or both.
- (2) A person who publishes or broadcasts photographs of victims of a terrorist attack without the consent of the National Police Service and of the victim commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment for a period not exceed three years or to a fine of five million shillings, or both.
- (3) Notwithstanding subsection (2) any person may publish or broadcast factual information of a general nature to the public.

35(3) c states that: the rights and fundamental freedoms of a person or entity to whom this Act applies may be limited for the purposes, in the manner and to the extent set out in this section “the freedom of expression, the media and of conscience, religion, belief and opinion to the extent of preventing the commission of an offence under this Act;”

This section was highly cited by the Government during the Garissa University Terrorist attacks while cautioning media against showing photos of the dead or interviewing suspected terrorists.

The National Intelligence Services Act 2012

Section 33(1) provides that:

- (1) The freedom of expression set out under Article 33 of the Constitution may be limited in respect of a member of the Service under the conditions set out in subsection
- (2) Limitation of the freedom of expression shall be to the extent that it is done—
 - (a) In the interest of national security, public safety, public order, public morality or public health;
 - (b) For the purpose of protecting the integrity of Service operations;
 - (c) For the purpose of protecting the reputation, rights and freedoms of the members or private persons concerned in legal proceedings;
 - (d) For the purpose of preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence;
 - (e) For the purpose of regulating the technical administration or the technical operation of

³The entire Act can be found here: <http://www.kenyalaw.org:8181/exist/kenyalex/actview.xql?actid=No.%2030%20of%202012>

telecommunication, wireless broadcasting, communication, Internet, satellite communication or television; or

- (f) For the security and protection of information within the Service ties members of the service from sharing information as where matters of the national interest including national security, public safety, public order, public morality or health are concerned.

Note that the Government, in not disclosing much information on the casualties in the war in Somalia or the Westgate Mall attacks, could have invoked these clauses. It is also significant to note that in a state of war, information on the number of casualties is often treated as a tool of war (propaganda) and each party tries to minimize its casualties as much as it can get away with. Often this places a big dilemma for journalists seeking the truth. But as has been seen, a number of media houses and journalists have quoted members of the investigating teams during these terrorist attacks. The familiar phrase has been “according to sources familiar with the investigations” which may expose the officers sharing the information.

Programming Code for free-to-air radio and television services (Kenya Information and Communications Act Cap 411A and the Broadcasting regulations 2009 Section 10)

Section 10.2

- a) The coverage of crimes in progress or crisis situations such shall not put lives in great danger than what is already inherent in the situation. Such coverage should be restrained and care should be taken so as not to hinder or obstruct efforts by authorities to resolve the situation.
- b) Coverage should avoid inflicting undue shock and pain to families and loved ones of victims of crimes, crisis situations, disasters, accidents, and other tragedies.
- c) The identity of victims of crimes or crisis situations in progress shall not be announced until the situation has been resolved or their names have been released by the authorities. The names of the fatalities should be released only when their next of kin have been notified or their names released, by the authorities.
- d) Coverage of crime or crisis situations shall not provide vital information or offer comfort or support to the perpetrators.
- e) Broadcasters are encouraged to adopt standard operating procedures consistent with this Programming Code to govern the conduct of their news personnel during coverage of crime and crisis situations.

4. The Public’s Right to Information: What, how and when to report

Article 35 of Access to information provides that

- (1) Every citizen has the right of access to-
 - a) Information held by the State; and
 - b) Information held by another person and required for the exercise of protection of any right or fundamental freedom
- (2) Every person has the right to correction or deletion of untrue or misleading information that affects the person
- (3) The State shall publish and publicise any important information affecting the nation

The Do’s and Don’ts

When seeking and publishing information on terrorism, radicalization and countering violent extremism, journalists should:

- Provide context and don’t oversimplify. Such events don’t happen in a vacuum.
- Don’t speculate – on anything! Deal in facts only and what is known and can be verified. The media are expected to refrain from making dangerous speculations about terrorists’ plans, government

-
- response, hostages' messages, and other matters. Speculations might hinder crisis management.
- Give as much information as you can – both what is known and what is NOT known
 - Verify and use multiple sources
 - Choose words and questions carefully
 - What we report should not jeopardize human life and in many of these cases we need to cooperate with security forces/government officials to avoid putting others in harm's way
 - Don't use panicky and sensational headlines
 - Don't use inflammatory, inappropriate or derogatory words
 - Don't generalise
 - Include facts and figures wherever you can
 - Ensure your story is well-rounded and includes input from all or both sides of the story.
 - Do NOT include your opinion. You are not part of the story.

Before assigning or reporting a news story, reporters and editors might consider asking themselves the following questions:

- If I were chronicling events directly affecting my family and me, would I alter the wording in any way?
- Are graphic descriptions or images necessary to the angle of the story?
- Could any of the reporting in this story prove harmful to the subjects of the story?
- If so, is this information necessary for the story?

Stay calm. Be clear, accurate and compassionate. Choose words carefully to avoid enflaming a situation or causing additional stress or panic. Describe the scene and be specific. Broadcasters should watch their tone and be aware of volume, pitch and pacing.

Decency and human respect prescribe that the authorities must first notify the families about their loss before mentioning the victims' names on the airwaves, never mind showing their pictures.

Choose language for its ability to inform your community and that does not serve to sensationalize.

Rely on facts, not on characterizations. Your job is to tell your audience what happened (or is happening) with as much precision as possible. If you don't know something, tell your audience that too.

Journalists need to:

- Understand the complexity of the problem. Look at the underlying problems and drivers, triggers and societal impacts;
- Think about analysis beyond reporting;
- Strike the balance between responsibility to report and national security;
- Voice for who or against whom?
- Promote social cohesion, peace and patriotism without being the voice or mouthpiece of any actor/agent;
- Distilling identities of perpetrators. Avoid generalisations;
- Tell stories about communities' resilience, good GoK interventions and returnees.

⁴<http://dartcenter.org/content/self-study-unit-2-covering-terrorism?section=all>

TOBIAS CHANJI - Standard correspondent Kwale County

"My fear was that he now knew that I know him and he might come for me."

Tobias Chanji did not know what would become of the story he set out to do. He had done many most stories on radicalization and violent extremism previously and now decided to conduct an interview with a member of the Al-Shabaab.

He met a youth who had just returned to the country from Somalia where he was actively militarized and radicalized.

Shockingly, the youth knew Tobias quite well and had been reading his articles in the newspapers. Initially, the youth was reluctant but after three weeks he eventually accepted but on condition that Tobias was not to be seen with him by anyone and also to be assured of his safety. He threatened of dire consequences if anything went wrong.

The interview was done with the youth revealing details on how they were recruited, explaining how they were transferred, stating how the training was, and changing of names and Somalia's environment. He even revealed some of recruiters both deceased and alive.

5. Reporting terrorism: Words to avoid

This is where we need your help. What words have you seen your colleagues use that may simply serve to incite violence or incite hatred or fear? What words should be avoided in our coverage of violent extremism and terrorism and what words or phrases are OK?

Here are some that we suggest you avoid:

- *Fiery cleric*
- *Jihadist*
- *Islamist*
- *Kaffir*
- *Kiongozi tatanishi wa kidini*
- *Kafiri*
- *Hanisi*
- *Watu wa bara*
- *Militia*
- *Downis (In reference to people from "Down Kenya")*
- *Nywele Ngumu*

6. Getting it right: The Importance of verification

If we boil down our job as journalists to the essential tasks, we would find that what we do entails the following: finding, collecting and presenting facts. That's it. But an essential part of that is verifying those facts, or what we perceive or may believe are facts for there is little that is more dangerous than putting rumors out as fact or telling stories that are incomplete and that have not been fact-checked. Not only is this sloppy journalism, but it puts us all at risk.

American journalists and authors of *The Elements of Journalism*, Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel explain it this way: "In the end, the discipline of verification is what separates journalism from entertainment, propaganda, fiction, or art.... Journalism alone is focused first on getting what happened down right."

But what does that actually mean for you?

Again, borrowing from Kovach and Rosenstiel, it means the following:

- Never add anything that was not there
- Never deceive the audience.
- Be transparent about your methods and motives.
- Rely on your own original reporting (not someone else's).
- Exercise humility.

Ultimately, verification is the process of checking the accuracy of the facts we've gathered. Are the five Ws and the H (What, Who, When, Where, Why and How) confirmed? How can we assess the reliability of our sources? Rely on primary sources – people who were actually at the scene rather than something you saw on Twitter and you have no idea who the Twitter account belongs to.

Some more tips on verification

- Don't allow your audience to be deceived by acts of omission. Tell them as much as you can. The same can be said about communicating with your editors, your sources and your colleagues.
- Tell your audience what you know and what you don't know. Never imply that you have more knowledge than you actually do. It WILL come back to haunt you.
- Tell your audience who your sources are and how they are a position to know something and what their potential biases or underlying motive might be (if they have one).
- Never, ever assume anything. Nothing. Everything must be based on information you have gathered. This is where you need to exercise humility – recognize and acknowledge what you do not know. And question all assumptions!

An excellent resource on verification is *The Verification Handbook*⁵

In cases where there may be hostages, reporting and publication should be done in such a way as to limit information on possible hostages that could harm them. This would include: number, nationality, official positions, how wealthy they may be, important relatives they have.

In addition, information that deals with military or police and specifically any movements (or suspected movements) during rescue operations (or suspected rescue operations) should be limited.

Finally, ensure that your outlet has a policy that limits or agrees not to air live unedited interviews with terrorists.

7. Social Media, photojournalism and going live

Social media

Another inherent tension in media is that of between speed and accuracy. We all want to be first, especially in this era of social media. But if we don't get it right, there's no point in being first.

For all intents and purposes, using social media is going live.

There are tools available to verify digital content. Perhaps one of the best resources is *The Verification Handbook*. In many cases of the stories you will be covering, you'll see photos on social media and these are not verified. Images can be taken out of context or manipulated and you need to be suspicious of anything that looks too good to be true. You should also remember that tools exist to help you check

⁵<http://verificationhandbook.com/downloads/verification.handbook.pdf>

whether an image has been around before. Two of these are: *TinEye* and *Google Reverse Image*. Both can be used to verify the source of the photographs.

Social media is probably best used for crowdsourcing and asking the community through your website and social media to help you provide information and sources that can help you get accurate information. But again, what you'll get is unverified information. It is your job to verify any information gotten from social media just as you would with any other source.

And beware when using Twitter -- if your only context for understanding a Twitter account is the content of its tweets, you should not be reporting from it. If you don't know how to determine whether an account is actually associated with an individual or group, don't report on its content.

Professional journalists – be they from traditional media or online – are bound by ethics. Our job is to break news but we must, at all times, observe ethics. This includes using news items from net citizens; all of these items must be verified before going to press or on-air.

In fact, a number of media enterprises in Kenya including the *Nation Media Group*, *Standard Group* and *Radio Africa Group* have developed social media and blogging policies for their journalists to ensure they maintain professionalism even within their private space. Journalism is a public life and requires of its professional members to maintain decorum in their dealings. The media companies believe that these guidelines will help their journalists in the use of online platforms without undermining their professionalism and compromising the company's credibility.

Finally, we began this section by mentioning the tension between speed and accuracy and this is particularly important when we talk about putting information out on social media. All other rules and guidelines mentioned above are still relevant and we need to be careful on the language we use, the information we put out and that what we do put out is verified.

Going live

The main reason for not going live is to prevent putting anyone in danger. But going live from a hostage taking or terrorist incident and showing live pictures in particular can give terrorists valuable information – who is where (e.g. security forces preparing to storm a building), what entries or exits remain open (or are closed), etc. In addition, hostages may also have access to such information and may act in such a way that could put them in even more danger.

The media should not broadcast live terrorist incidents that include hostage taking. This is in order not to jeopardize human life and not to impede a government's attempts to rescue the hostages. This is not to say that the media should not cover such incidents. Rather, there should be a delay of a few minutes during which an experienced editor inspects the coverage and authorizes what should be on air and what should not, as was the case when hostages were released from the Iranian embassy in London in 1980.⁶

Photojournalism

As mentioned above, there will be plenty of images floating around on social media and it is your job to verify that these images are what they claim to be and they have not been doctored or altered in any way. *TinEye*⁷ and *Google Reverse Image*⁸ are excellent tools for this.

⁶<http://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/1579/1734>

⁷<http://en.uptodown.com/windows/search/tineye-reverse-image-search>

⁸<https://ctrlq.org/google/images/>

In addition, bear in mind the tips suggested by Garry Bryant, a staff photographer with the Deseret News, in the US. Bryant developed the following checklist that he goes through when he arrives at a scene of crime or terrorism. You should also ask yourself these questions not just when taking photos or images, but even if you are simply reporting from the scene. The questions include:

- Should this moment be made public?
- Am I acting with compassion and sensitivity?
- Will being photographed send the subjects into further trauma?
- Am I the least obtrusive distance as possible?⁹

Finally, pay attention to your equipment – what does it look like? What might it look like to someone 10 meters away? 50 meters away? 100 meters away? Tripods and other equipment can be mistaken for weapons and personal safety is paramount when covering terror-related stories.

Joseph Mathenge, Photojournalist Media Council of Kenya and CNN AJA Awards Overall Winner

Covering terrorism related events is one of the most challenging things to journalists-While many advise that media should be cautious in

Photos from the Westgate Shopping Mall attack in Nairobi by photographer Joseph Mathenge won the Media Council of Kenya Annual Journalism Excellence Awards 2014 and the CNN journalist of the Year in 2014.

Joseph Mathenge was not deterred by the sound of gunfire, coming from the Westgate Shopping Mall. To be able to capture images in the midst of a terror attack requires both skill and enormous bravery. The freelance Kenyan photojournalist displayed these attributes when he put his life on the line to record what were to become iconic images. His photographs show the security forces moving into the Westgate Shopping mall, when shoppers came under attack from terrorists in 2013.

Best Practice – When covering military or police movements, be sure you don't put yourself, the security forces, bystanders or anyone else in danger. If you are live ensure you are not giving away any important tactical information that viewers or listeners could use against the security forces.

8. Dealing with victims, survivors and families

Part of our job requires us to interview victims, survivors and families and this is perhaps the most difficult task facing any journalist. It requires an inordinate amount of sensitivity and there are both ethical and practical challenges related to this.

Worse is a situation where a journalist has to interview families or friends of victims, approaches them professionally only to realize he or she is there to break the bad news; they were not aware in the first place.

Ethically, there are the inevitable concerns over the appropriateness of approaching someone in a state of shock and grief. The natural instinct is to protect their privacy and ensure they are being assisted. In any other situation we would do so. But when our boss is demanding quotes and it is our job to report and obtain quotes, it conflicts with our natural sense of respect and dignity. How do we reconcile the ethical conflict?

⁹The final MCK Westgate Report p.22/

And then there are practical considerations. For example, a person who has been injured needs medical treatment before anything else. It is imperative that no one obstructs a victim's access to medical treatment or a medic's access to the victim. Everyone else including reporters must wait.

A person who has just lost a relative, friend or colleague is in a state of shock and most likely not in their right state of mind. They may not know what they are saying. They may be in a state of disbelief. Alternatively, they may be suffering physical symptoms of shock like shortness of breath, weakness, dizziness, dehydration, and thus unable to speak to strangers other than medical or security professionals. A person in shock may be angry and a strange reporter insisting on an interview may well bear the brunt of unbridled anger. Treat those as you'd like yourself or members of your own family to be treated. You can get the quotes or information you need elsewhere.

Of course there is also intense professional pressure on you to convey the scene and an event with accuracy and vividness and to convey the reactions and emotions of people at the scene and people directly affected. If you are unable to interview victims or others affected you may consider the following as possible alternatives and don't forget there are always alternatives but you need to look around you and think creatively. These alternative sources include:

- Eyewitnesses
- Emergency personnel (although you should ensure you are not impeding on their work)
- Paramedics, nurses, medical staff on the scene (if they can spare a moment)
- Hospital officials
- Someone who can speak on behalf of an affected family
- Someone assisting the injured or grief-stricken person.

If your editor is yelling down the phone at you to move faster and get quotes, find one of these alternatives so that you are able to give your editor something. Random eyewitnesses are ideal as they may not be emotionally connected and so may be able to express things more coherently. In addition, because they may have been caught up in the drama they are probably keen to talk about what they saw. They also may have noticed more details than victims couldn't, didn't or are unable to remember.

Some tips on how to approach a victim or relative if they have agreed to speak:

- Explain to them how important their story is and how many other people will benefit from hearing their story.
- In case you will be interviewing a relative of a victim, please avoid a phone interview at all costs if it is the first time you are interacting, especially if the event is still fresh. It is better to request a meeting, offer to travel to the place where the interviewee is, and then proceed once there is a face to face meeting.
- Your most important role at this point is as a LISTENER.
- Be patient and don't rush them.
- Empathy is key here. Without pretending to be going through the same pain and loss, do show that you grasp the enormity of the pain, the depth of the tragedy. Do NOT fake compassion.

The Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma has done extensive work on reporting trauma and interviewing victims and survivors. Some of their tips include the following:

- Avoid "devil's advocate" questions or questions that might imply blame or that they could have done more.
- Use a supportive phrase like "I'm sorry this happened to you" rather than the more abrupt "How do you feel?" or the discordant "I know how you feel" which will immediately lose credibility.
- Resist the "pack" mentality, especially when media throngs are covering a subsequent development, event, arrival, etc. Pool resources where possible to limit demand on individuals and communities.
- Try to make your approach as respectful and gentle as possible, despite your pressing deadline or a newsroom impatient for your copy or images. Treat these people as you would like to be treated if the situation was reversed ... this is particularly critical if you are an "out-of-towner", as your radar

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- may not be as attuned to local sensitivities as it could be.
- Avoid, wherever possible, being the one to relay news of a death to an individual or family. The appropriate authorities should do that and relatives have a right to receive such news in private.
 - Remember victims, survivors and their families and friends are struggling to regain control in their lives after a devastating experience ... allow them to have some say in when, where and how they're interviewed or photographed/filmed.

For more tips, see the Dart Center's excellent tip sheet on *Working with Victims and Survivors: Minimise Further Harm*.¹⁰

We also need to remember to show sensitivity to victims and loved ones not just during terrorist incidents but also after they are over.

In "Words Sting," an essay written for the Poynter Institute, Kay Lapp James, managing editor of the Central Wisconsin Newspapers group, offers advice for covering victims:

1. Don't assume that the grieving person won't share. When I first started as a reporter, I found the idea of calling someone who had lost a loved one repulsive. I was sure the person would not want to talk and would be angry if I asked. Every person grieves differently. Some will need and want to talk; some will not.
2. Ask why and how. We process our pain through talking about what happened.
3. Don't use the words "still" or "even today." This implies that grieving has a defined time period and that extending that period is unusual or unnatural.
4. Be wary of the word "closure." It implies that grief comes to an end — that the person no longer needs to grieve. Some grieving people do use the word closure; be sure you ask the person to define what he or she means by it. If the person doesn't use the word, don't add it to the story. [Similarly, terms and ideas of stages of grieving vary by age, culture, etc.]
5. Don't confuse closure with "reinvestment." Many who grieve find that doing something — building a playground, erecting a memorial — eases the pain. The force behind that is usually to keep the person's name and memorial alive.¹¹

9. Interacting with security agencies

The relationship between media and security forces is fraught with tension everywhere. The media and security forces are involved in what is an often complex and seemingly unresolvable relationship of dependence and antagonism. Each has different, if not completely antagonistic, goals. This is particularly evident during times of war or when there are serious threats to national security such as terrorism. The military strives to protect operational security and the lives of armed forces. The media, on the other hand, view operational security as an interference into what is often maintained as the journalist's right to report the event and to satisfy the public's need to know.

Both police and media have preconceptions about each other based on a history of rumors which is not unique to Kenya. There have been many incidents of security agents in Kenya harassing and mistreating journalists whose only 'crime' was to do their professional work. This often comes about because more often than not, security agents have not been sensitized on the important role journalists play in society including helping combat all manners of crime.

In Kenya, the overall working relationship between media and security agents working on countering violent extremism, radicalization and terrorism has not been good or cordial. Despite this, the Kenya Defense Forces tends to be more organized in terms of information sharing and their relationship with the media more than the National Police Service.

¹⁰<http://dartcenter.org/content/working-with-victims-and-survivors-minimise-further-harm>

¹¹<http://dartcenter.org/content/self-study-unit-2-covering-terrorism?section=all>

The interests of Government and those of the general populace rarely coincide and all too often repression is justified on grounds of protecting “national security” or maintaining “law and order”.

Media workers often view police officers as law enforcers, order managers, crime busters and duty bearers and thus having a responsibility to maintain rule of law even during operations that include giving out information on the operations. Officers are thus duty bound to share information to the media as long as that information does not put people or the operation at risk.

Security officers hold privileged information important for them to maintain a cordial working relationship with the media to avoid improper disclosure of information. It’s important that journalists understand the procedures for information disclosure by the security officers and authorized people to give information. And, of course, information should be used responsibly without compromising the life of the officer, journalists, survivors or an ongoing operation.

There are several compelling reasons why the National Police Service and other security agencies ought to be in the forefront trying to forge better relationships with the media:

- The media can be a useful partner in the war against terrorism;
- The media often play an agenda-setting role and therefore cannot be ignored;
- The media is generally regarded as being more reliable as a source of information, views and opinions and therefore an excellent medium for positive messages;
- The media has the potential to make you look good or bad.

Police and the media can co-exist while serving two similar yet so different tasks – the key is to develop a strong relationship prior to critical incident. Both sides have to be educated on the policies of their counterpart and perhaps most importantly, both sides have to respect those policies.

Regular meetings between security/police forces and media will help to regulate rules and terms of engagement. Joint training classes will also greatly assist in bridging the gap. Improved media and security working networks and sessions are vital as they can help improve information flow and trust.

Police can also help bridge the relationship gap by being more open with the media. Regular and credible information sharing on the process and stages of security operations can help cement relationships and improve access to information.

One risk for journalists covering terrorism and security-related news is increased conflict with the Kenyan security institutions. There is a tendency for increased tensions and conflicts between police, military and other actors working on national security and the media whenever the terrorists attack or when the security agents are pursuing individuals involved in extreme violence. Such incidents have been experienced during the terrorist attacks on Westgate Mall in Nairobi, the attack on the Garissa University, in Lamu County at the border of Kenya and Somali and in Mombasa County several times.

During the Westgate Mall attack for example, the Kenya Defense Forces directly accused the media of aiding the attackers and compromising the lives of the security officers through life coverage of the military installations and positions. While there are flaws in the way the media cover security risks, which has contributed to lack of trust in the media from security agents, the tensions and conflicts can also be explained by the lack of understanding among security institutions of the role of media in a democratic society and vice versa. This again can lead to biased media coverage due to the lack of access to information that is provided, as well as direct threats against journalists who run the risk of imprisonment and restrictions of their rights.

There are a number of areas that can be flashpoints in this relationship between security forces and the media. These include the following:

- Inadequate liaison and communication flow and communication from the police to the media during major incidents. For example, journalists have indicated that there was no official communication from the police following the attacks at the Westgate Shopping Mall in Nairobi and Mpeketoni in Lamu County.
- There tends to be a lack of mutual respect. Police feel journalists do not know how to manage information and are always excited with information while journalists feel police do not know how media operates, deadlines and such.
- The power of the camera to influence events and public opinion. The use of photos often brings tension and suspicion between journalists and security agencies. See the Joseph Mathenge case study above.
- Danger of misrepresenting information by the media. People tend to believe that the media will blow up issues especially with regards to the number of casualties. As such, there is a need for the media to regain the trust of their audience.
- Media tend to be suspicious of press officers due to the belief that their role is simply to portray the police/security forces in a positive light.

Understanding security agents' stance on information disclosure

While security agents are expected to share information and in some cases observe information disclosure, they won't observe these in cases where such will compromise national security. Such information includes, but is not limited to, deployment, operational details, numbers and troops deployed, war casualties, weapon details among others.

A number of international best standards including the Tshwane Principles¹² of 2013 have recognized these requirements. For example, Principle 9 requires that:

(a) Public authorities may restrict the public's right of access to information on national security grounds, but only if such restrictions comply with all of the other provisions of these Principles, the information is held by a public authority, and the information falls within one of the following categories:

1. Information about on-going defense plans, operations, and capabilities for the length of time that the information is of operational utility.
2. Information about the production, capabilities, or use of weapons systems and other military systems, including communications systems.
3. Information about specific measures to safeguard the territory of the state, critical infrastructure, or critical national institutions against threats or use of force or sabotage, the effectiveness of which depend upon secrecy;
4. Information pertaining to, or derived from, the operations, sources, and methods of intelligence services, insofar as they concern national security matters; and
5. Information concerning national security matters that was supplied by a foreign state or inter-governmental body with an express expectation of confidentiality; and other diplomatic communications insofar as they concern national security matters.

In addition, security requires some restrictions on information sharing depending on rank and position. Thus, in many cases information within the security sector is vertical implying that the higher the office, the greater access to information and by extension secret documents. This is contained in the force standing orders which indicate that only gazette officers release information to the media. Such documents include: notes, letters, maps, charts drawings, carbons, films, photographs, slides, recording tapes, printing plates and so on.

¹²<https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/global-principles-national-security-10232013.pdf>

During training, security personnel are inculcated with the following information:¹³

- a. *The Need to Know* - A fundamental principle of security is that knowledge or possession of classified materials of any grade should be limited to those who are both authorized to receive it and need to know it in order to carry out their duties. Rank and appointment do not of themselves entitle anyone to knowledge or possession of classified information.
- b. *The Need to Hold* - Classified materials are retained by an individual officer after it has ceased to be necessary for the efficient discharge of his duties. The materials are therefore reviewed at regular intervals.
- c. *Security of Reproduction and Reproduction Processes* - Only authorized personnel may be employed to produce and reproduce classified documents. Commanders have responsibility to pay particular attention to those offices or facilities where productions of official information materials are conducted emphasizing the need for:
 - Regular and frequent inspection of such facilities by intelligence officers.
 - All officers are billed on need for precautions to prevent extra copies being produced either inadvertently, or for unauthorized purposes
 - Unauthorized persons are not allowed access to or recorded information.
 - When in use recording machines are kept away from telephones as far as possible.
 - Recording machines are not allowed near security communications, equipment (eg. Cypher machines and radios.
 - As a safeguard against the threat of eavesdropping, machines are forbidden in rooms in which classified information is being discussed or other buildings which might be used for the installation of intercept equipment.
 - All classified material should be erased from tape as soon as possible and when no longer required, tapes are cut into small pieces and then disposed of as classified waste.
 - Photocopy machines are carefully handled in such a way necessary to prevent copies being made accidentally.
 - All soft copies used for classified material are kept in secure containers out of normal duty hours, and destroyed as classified waste when they become unserviceable.
 - In general, all materials used in producing classified documents, e.g, flash drive, plates, trial copies and all hard drives are treated as classified matter.
 - When documents are being passed, they are carried under cover to prevent unauthorized persons from seeing them.
 - Extract from, or copies of top secret and secret documents are made only on the authority of a responsible officer who is himself entitled to originate such documents.

Police: On the challenges of working with media

- Journalists tamper with or don't respect crime scenes and often insist they have a right to be there resulting in police pushing them aside.
- Journalists tend to undermine security and only respect senior officers resulting in officers on the ground feeling slighted.
- Journalists may not want to identify themselves using proper documentation e.g press card.
- Journalists mistrust security agents and tend to doubt information given and are concerned they are being used to spread the police agenda.
- Media publish fabricated or poorly verified stories.
- Power of the camera to influence events and public opinion. Use of photos brings tension and suspicion between journalists and security agencies.

¹³Paper presented by major General Chris Olukolade, the Director, Defence Information; at the African regional conference on freedom of information implementation held at the Reiz Continental Hotel CBA district Abuja, 18-19 March 2014.

Journalists: On the challenges of working with security agencies

- Police tend to overreact and deal differently with criminals and terrorists but often there seem to be links between them.
- Do police understand that leaving a crime scene unsecured will hardly hinder a journalist's curiosity, just like any other human being?
- Police give wrong information to justify actions and human rights violations.
- Police seem to be bitter with journalists and sometimes call them names.
- Journalists feel police do not know how media operates, deadlines and such.
- Lower ranking police officers have problems with journalists because they deal with the higher ranking police officers (journalist have access to their bosses).
- Breach of rule of law especially during operations and gross violation of human rights
- Police cannot always deliver information as quickly as needed by the journalists. For example, journalists have indicated that there was no official communication from the police following the terrorist attacks at the Westgate Shopping Mall in Nairobi

Ideally, there should be other efforts made at engaging the news media and security and government officials. These include:

- Government and military officials should learn about the requirements and expectations of the news media. They could therefore understand how reporting can exert a major influence on the course of events. They should understand under what operational and technological constraints the media work.
- News organizations and the journalists working for them should recognize the impact of their broadcasts on military security.
- Those working in broadcasting and on social media, particularly where communications can be transmitted instantaneously should be more aware of the media's ability to influence events before, during, or following a period of tension. There also exist dangers of manipulation and disinformation.
- Education about the role of the media in peace and war times should be part of military training at all levels. This should include education about new technologies and their effects both on how the media operate and how they might affect military and diplomatic operations.
- Efforts should be made to have joint seminars or training sessions involving representatives from the military, government and the media so that all can at least work with a basic knowledge of how the others operate. Their relationships would then be founded on experience rather than hearsay.
- Media participation in military exercises and military training courses should be encouraged to help increase awareness of mutual problems among the military and the media.

Some tips

- Remain polite at all times, state that you are a journalist and keep your credentials with you
- Remain calm and professional
- Obey orders from law enforcement
- Carry mobile number of someone senior in the army or police. Threaten to report a would-be attacker to authorities.
- Avoid confrontation: Always pay attention to the behavior and mood of those making the arrest before engaging them in a discussion.
- Ask yourself why you're covering this story? What is your motivation? Your editor's?
- Know and understand the implications of laws pertaining to media and security
- Need to balance national security and professionalism
- Verify and cross check information
- Be sure to maintain confidentiality of those sources who have requested such and would be endangered if they are revealed (but most sources should speak on the record)
- Do not put your sources at risk
Avoid glorifying acts of terrorism

Be sure to conduct a thorough risk analysis of the situation you're about to enter and understand the implications and how to manage the risks.

10. Staying Safe (Physical, digital and psychosocial safety)

The coverage of the Westgate terror attack brought the issue of journalists' safety to the fore and started a discussion about the issue in Kenya. Since then, the *Safety Protocol and Manual for Kenyan Journalists*¹⁴ has been produced and provides an excellent resource for journalists. This section will therefore provide only highlights on the three aspects of safety: physical, digital, psychosocial. For more in-depth information you are encouraged to see the safety manual or check out other resources. Some excellent ones include:

- *RSF's Safety Guide*¹⁵ covers all aspects of safety including physical, digital and psycho-social.
- *RSF's online survival kit*¹⁶ that provides information on everything from basics about digital security to metadata to encryption and lots more
- CPJ also has a comprehensive journalist security guide.¹⁷

The Safety Protocol and Manual for Kenyan journalists includes a charter for media owners, managers and editors that address journalists' safety. Here are the Protocol's ten points:

The State, media enterprises, owners, employers, managers and editors bear the greatest responsibility to ensure effective protection for free speech and the safety – and security of journalists. Thus they are duty bound to establish a safe and enabling environment for journalism, which is the declared and proper goal of the UN's Action Plan on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.¹⁸ In this regard, they should establish security units in their newsrooms to implement monitor and ensure compliance in respect of these requirements.

1. Assess and understand the element of risk and ensure the journalist is fully aware, issue him/her with incident reporting guidelines and allow him/her the choice of refusal.
2. Journalists on dangerous or risky assignments should be given a hostile environment training course, which teaches First Aid, basic rules to follow and psychosocial support.
3. Offer regular assignment-specific safety advice and training.
4. Insure journalists, including regular correspondents, against bodily harm, loss of life, property and equipment.
5. Provide legal protection and litigation support to fight impunity.
6. Provide relevant and adequate resources such as transport, protective gear and finances to journalists on dangerous or risky assignments.
7. Offer continuous well-being, including debriefing and counseling, particularly post-coverage of distressful assignments.
8. Have a comprehensive security management strategy, including an elaborate intervention and protection strategy for journalists such as an evacuation or relocation plan and a dedicated in-house security manager.
9. Establish a joint fund to cater for the safety of freelancers and correspondents on commissioned assignments. The fund would be supported through an annual levy on all media houses and/or Media Council of Kenya revenues generated from financial penalties imposed on "errant" media houses and journalists.
10. Establish specific protection measures to address gender and cultural-sensitive issues such as sexual harassment.

¹⁴https://rsf.org/sites/default/files/guide_journaliste_rsf_2015_en_0.pdf

¹⁶<https://rsf.org/en/online-survival-kit>

¹⁷<https://cpj.org/security/guide.pdf>

One way to provide support to minimize the vulnerability of journalists is to include briefings before, during and after coverage of an event. This is what they would include:

a) Before-assignment

- Before any assignment manage the existing stress since covering any event when your stress levels are high already compromises your quality for self-care.
- Always have a bottle of water which helps to calm you down and serves as a symbol of reminder to take care of the self.
- Have a security briefing with your supervisor and have their number on speed dial, in case of emergency or being emotionally affected.

b) During-assignment

- Always ask yourself: am I safe?
- During an interview of traumatic events, take pauses, drink your water and take deep breaths allow emotional release
- Always ask yourself, am I respecting the person I am interviewing? It helps in your recovering when u have respected your interviewees
- Be aware of your emotions during the assignment

c) After-assignment

- Write down your events and things that aroused your emotions • Have someone to re-live your story with
- Ask yourself, how well have I taken care of myself, what I need to improve on
- Be aware of your emotional, physical, mental and spiritual reaction
- Seek help if and when getting stretched.

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“Terrorism brings you face to face with your mortality. You breathe in the reaper’s vapors, reminding you that you are alive, but part of the awful symmetry of the circle of life. You remember that one day it could be you and it could be this.”

John Allan Namu, former KTN news anchor and investigative reporter

“The subject of media and terrorism is fairly new, so this handbook is timely. The book will ensure that there is a common understanding between journalists and editors on how to cover this matter.”

Margaret Matunda, Qwetu FM

“This is a very important resource to help journalists cover terrorism and related activities. I believe the handbook has covered the key areas. The concerns the handbook seeks to address are well articulated, especially on how to strike a balance between giving terrorists publicity and informing the public.”

Erick Oduor, Secretary General, Kenya Union of Journalists

