

IMPACT REPORT
2025

Good journalism needs allies



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A photojournalist stands on the ruins of a house destroyed by Russian shelling in the Vozdvyzhivka territorial community, Zaporizhzhia.

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IMS (International Media Support) is a non-profit organisation supporting local media in countries affected by armed conflict, human insecurity and political transition. We push for quality journalism, challenge repressive laws and keep media workers of all genders safe so they can do their jobs. Peaceful, stable societies based on democratic values rely on ethical and critical journalism that aims to include, not divide.

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GOOD JOURNALISM | BETTER SOCIETIES



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Ukrainian journalists are playing a pivotal role in the country's war reconstruction and recovery.

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Social media influencers in the Philippines are joining the battle against disinformation.

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The number of active women journalists in Afghanistan increased by 60 percent in 2024.

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Good jobs need structure

Amid wars, humanitarian crises, trauma and tragedy, IMS media partners keep telling stories that matter – journalism that changes lives and creates better societies. In 2025, that job got even harder.

PHOTO: DOAA ALBAZ



Jesper Højberg, IMS Executive Director.

As I read through this impact report about our partners' achievements and struggles in the past 18 months, I am humbled by their sheer determination to persevere and be pragmatic.

A 25 percent cut to the world's media development budget in early 2025, following the closure of USAID, dealt a blow to independent media in some of the world's most fragile and vulnerable societies.

It is a stark reminder to everyone that we must never rely on a few political regimes for survival. As with a global over-reliance on the US for security, it is high time that all donors step up and address a similar imbalance of US funding in media development.

Improving business viability

While many of our partners are low on cash, they are not low on hope. As one of them, Ukraine's Recovery Window net-

work, put it: "Despite everything, we still see enormous potential in networking, uniting and sharing resources during this challenging time."

In this time of disruption, our partners continue to be nimble and flexible; to forge new alliances; and to learn from each other across countries and continents. Amid their determination to turn a setback into a comeback, they need strong allies and a funding bridge, so they can survive the immediate crisis.

Meanwhile, IMS is hard at work paving the way for their long-term viability, helping them become less dependent on donor grants, enhance their business models and to find ways of unlocking new sources of financing.

In the Philippines, for example, our local team are working with media partners and other stakeholders to harness a long history

of local philanthropic support for community development and private investment to local independent media. This pilot engages with local philanthropic organisations and CSOs to build a fund in support of quality journalism in the conflict-plagued Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.





Disinformation threat

So why does it matter whether independent media survives? For one thing, the health and sustainability of independent media is intrinsically linked to the global security agenda.

A Palestinian journalist does a piece to camera.

Journalism Long allies



REMEDIES AGAINST DISINFORMATION				
TYPE	INTERVENTION	How much is known?	How effective does it seem?	How easily does it scale?
	1. Supporting local journalism	MODEST	SIGNIFICANT	DIFFICULT
	2. Media literacy education	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT	DIFFICULT
	3. Factchecking	SIGNIFICANT	MODEST	MODEST
	4. Labelling social media content	MODEST	MODEST	EASY
	5. Counter-messaging strategies	MODEST	MODEST	DIFFICULT
	6. Cybersecurity for elections and campaigns	MODEST	MODEST	MODEST
	7. Statecraft, deterrence and disruption	MODEST	LIMITED	MODEST
	8. Removing inauthentic asset networks	LIMITED	MODEST	MODEST
	9. Reducing data collection and targeted ads	MODEST	LIMITED	DIFFICULT
	10. Changing recommendation algorithms	LIMITED	SIGNIFICANT	MODEST
<div><div>PUBLIC INFORMATION</div><div>GOVERNMENT ACTION</div><div>PLATFORM ACTION</div></div>				

Source: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace report, Countering Disinformation Effectively.

“Despite everything, we still see enormous potential in networking, uniting and sharing resources during this challenging time.”

Recovery Window network, Ukraine

Amid major geopolitical shifts, the world is also grappling with an acute information integrity challenge at a time when social media giants have recklessly abandoned factchecking, opening the floodgates to disinformation.

Numerous governments are responding to global instability with a scramble to increase defence spending. But how useful are extra fighter jets, frigates and frigates in the face of global information warfare?

Smart and strategic thinking governments will recognise that increasing military expenditure alone will not bolster global stability.

They will recognise the foreign policy threats posed by information manipulation and interference, knowing that if independent media falls, malign actors will fill the information void.

In a recent report, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace notes that the global decline in local media outlets has eroded civic engagement and trust and helped disinformation to proliferate. Accordingly, as shown on this page, it lists support for local journalism as the number one remedy against disinformation.

Investments in media development and good journalism are therefore investments in global security because:

- Good journalism is a vital antidote to disinformation.
- Good journalism helps to combat foreign political interference in elections.
- Good journalism helps to counter propaganda from malign actors.

We are helping our media partners around the world battle disinformation with good journalism and by supercharging their prebunking, debunking and factchecking skills.

A compelling example among many occurred during last year’s election in Moldova, when IMS partners gained the upper hand against disinformation by rapidly deploying accurate fact-based social media posts in the 36-hour window before falsehoods typically take hold [page 8].

Accountability journalism

Journalism that scrutinises the actions of governments and powerful entities serves the public interest and plays a key role in making societies function better.

A case in point is our Iraqi media partner’s investigative journalism, which has resulted in the Kurdistan Regional Government shutting down illegal oil refineries after a surge in cancer cases linked to toxic smog [page 10].

Corruption-busting investigative journalism is critical to countries’ paths to modernisation and economic prosperity.

For example, the survival of Moldova and Ukraine’s independent media has implications for those countries’ long-term aspirations to gain European Union membership and for efforts to reform and combat corruption.

That’s why IMS is working with, among others, independent and trusted Ukrainian investigative journalism partners to find alternative funding sources and continue their vital watchdog role [page 12].

Life-saving information

We know good journalism can be as life-saving in emergencies as bags of rice, tents and medical kits.

IMS supports Myanmar media partners in delivering crucial, credible, fact-checked information to their audiences in the aftermath of a deadly earthquake and aftershocks. And IMS-supported short-wave radio broadcasts became a lifeline amid wiped out telecommunications infrastructure [page 20].

In Somalia, hyperlocal broadcasts about drought resilient agricultural techniques are giving audiences the knowledge to improve harvests without rainfall, thus improving food security [page 16].

Gender equality

As efforts to improve diversity, equity and inclusion face major backlash globally, IMS is doubling down to embed gender equality across our programmes. In this spirit, we continue to rally behind brave Afghan women journalists [page 28]; to back our media partners in Indonesia as they tackle sexual harassment [page 30]; and to support Somali media partners as they improve the gender balance in their reporting [page 32].

Independent media: a public good

At IMS, we will continue to advocate to governments and donors that independent media should be viewed and treated as a public good on a par with roads and hospitals.

Since 2001, our mission has been to support public interest journalism in countries plagued by conflict, humanitarian crises and authoritarian rule.

We have always been in independent media’s corner.

Can they count on you, too?

Jesper Højberg
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

How IMS media partners are impacted by the US funding cuts

-25–50%

Worst-hit countries: Myanmar, Moldova, Yemen, Cambodia, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan and Ukraine



CAMBODIA

Seven out of eight IMS partners received between 25–50 percent of their total budgets from the US. In the short term, partners are continuing operations with staff cuts.

-10–50%

MYANMAR

Fourteen out of 17 IMS partners received a 10–50 percent cut to their total budgets from the US. Three expect to close within six months without new funding sources.



-50%



ZIMBABWE

Seven out of 23 IMS partners were hit with funding cuts. Four media outlets received more than 50 percent of their budget from US sources and say they may have to close within six months without new funding.

-20–80%

MOLDOVA

Thirty-eight out of 42 IMS partners received a 20–80 percent cut to their total budgets.



-50%



AFGHANISTAN

Three out of six IMS partners were hit by funding cuts. Two had more than 50 percent of their total budgets from the US. Many exiled Afghan journalists in Türkiye and Pakistan now find themselves in legal jeopardy, having lost the income necessary to obtain residence permits.

-25–50%

YEMEN

Five out of six IMS partners were receiving 25–50 percent of their budgets from the US.



-50–90%



UKRAINE

Five out of six IMS partners received 50–90 percent of their budgets from the US. According to Ukraine's Institute of Mass Information, 60 percent of Ukraine media outlets risk ceasing operations.

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IMS partners affected by the funding cuts including 82 media outlets

Exile media face a double whammy from funding cuts and clampdowns after the US administration falsely labelled USAID as “criminal” and “corrupt”. The loss of funding has jeopardised their legal status and residency in host countries.

Only facts: influencers fight disinformation in the Philippines

The Philippines has long been dubbed patient zero in the global battle against disinformation, but an IMS media partner aims to improve media literacy among gen Z with some unexpected recruits.

Fake eyelashes and sparkles have become a secret weapon in the fight against disinformation in the Philippines.

IMS media partner Probe Productions has trained a star-studded line up of popular YouTube and TikTok influencers, including drag queens, to counter disinformation.

The training covered research, fact-checking and digital verification techniques to scrutinise the authenticity of social media posts, pictures and videos.

The professional development has helped the group transition from mere entertainers to truth ambassadors and affirmed their platforms as powerful tools for public education and audience trust.

In the Philippines, fake news is not just random nonsense but coordinated and politically motivated content, especially during

election cycles. Studies show that young people and senior citizens are the most susceptible to disinformation.

Probe Productions collaborated with popular Philippine drag queens Brigiding and Your Tita Baby to make the truth sexy.

In one video debunk, Your Tita Baby takes a deep dive into a fake news story that the Philippines Central Bank is secretly holding a stash of gold bars belonging to the Marcos family – a political dynasty connected to current president Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

An angry mob of mostly elderly protesters marched to the bank in May 2024, demanding it release the so-called Tallano gold to the people.

The myth began circulating on Facebook as early as 2011, according to prominent Philippines media outlet Rappler.

Aside from the two drag queens, the group of influencers who received training includes Macoy Dubs, Mighty Magulang, Dr Carlo Trinidad, Chef Gelo Guison and Mathilda Airlines.

They have travelled to schools in far-flung communities to teach students about media literacy and develop their critical thinking skills, so they don't blindly share misleading content.

While the proliferation of fake news and disinformation in the Philippines has resulted in many simply avoiding the news, Your Tita Baby is taking seriously the responsibility to inform citizens in a fun but credible way.

"Drag is more popularly and traditionally viewed as a medium for entertainment. Partnering with an organisation

(like Probe) that is credible, reliable and one who practices high standards of ethos, it does not only enrich me as a netizen but also establishes a higher purpose for my drag and platform," Your Tita Baby said.

"I used to do content just for fun. I was my own audience. But now, there are followers and fans involved, and when followers express how much they look up to me, especially those who see me as their representation, content creation has become a platform and a responsibility. It is still a lot of fun though, but with purpose."

Fake news and disinformation were expected to ramp up in 2025 as Filipino voters headed to the polls in May for Senate mid-term and local elections.

Probe and its team of truth ambassadors were ready and waiting.

PHOTO: PROBE



NAIA Black has joined Probe in the battle against disinformation in the Philippines.

“Partnering with an organisation (like Probe) that is credible, reliable and one who practices high standards of ethos, it does not only enrich me as a netizen but also establishes a higher purpose for my drag.”

Your Tita Baby

Elections and disinformation

2024 was a super election year with billions of voters in more than 70 countries heading to the ballot box. IMS and its media partners globally were on the frontlines prebunking, debunking and factchecking amid an onslaught of disinformation, deepfakes, bots and foreign political interference.

Prebunking in Moldova

It typically takes 36 hours for a disinformation campaign to reach its peak and contaminate public debate.

An IMS pilot project in Moldova used that window to gain an upper hand by rapidly deploying accurate, fact-based information before falsehoods took hold.

The M-MIIND initiative launched early in 2024, ahead of an important election year – Moldova’s presidential election in October and a referendum on European Union membership.

IMS media partners took part in the multi-donor-funded pilot project which used prebunking techniques to ensure audiences received fact-based reporting before they encountered misleading claims.

Using early warning alerts from Ukrainian tech company LetsData, journalists produced 1,300 prebunked social media posts and articles from 350 alerts.

LetsData’s AI-based algorithm analyses online content 24/7 and generates automated alerts that help detect emerging disinformation threats or recurring harmful patterns. This strengthened IMS partners’ preparedness and allowed them to rapidly respond.

“Typically, there is a window of about 36 hours between the onset of a disinformation campaign and its peak reach,” says IMS strategic adviser Roman Shutov.

“We encourage our partners to use this

time effectively to reach their audiences quickly with accurate information – so that the true story is heard first.”

A study by the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre published in *Nature* in October 2024 confirmed that both prebunking and debunking can be effective when countering fallacious statements. IMS is looking to expand prebunking practices to other countries, based on the Moldova trial.

Roman Shutov hailed the pilots’ success saying by the time the disinformation campaign reached its peak, the fact-based narrative had already taken the lead.

“This indicates that the voice of truth had become louder than the voice of disinformation,” Roman Shutov said.

Key lessons for media partners were to adopt a social media-first approach to their fact-based reporting because this was the playground of foreign information manipulation and malign actors.

A recent example of successful prebunking anticipated disinformation around EU Commissioner Marta Kos’s February visit to Moldova to sign an agreement for



PHOTO: PIERRE CROM/GETTY IMAGES



PHOTO: PIERRE CROM/GETTY IMAGES

Top: Incumbent pro-EU President Maia Sandu gives a press conference.

Bottom: A voter casts her ballot in Moldova's presidential election and referendum.

financial assistance to strengthen the country's energy independence.

After following LetsData alerts of disinformation trends on that issue, journalists produced coordinated, fact-based reporting that substantially outflanked the disinformation.

On digital platforms, fact-based reporting reached over 44,000 views, compared to 50 views of the misleading claims.

Telegram was the exception, where rogue actors achieved 108,000 views compared to fact-based reporters' 32,000, highlighting a monitoring gap in that channel.

"Unprecedented interference"

The referendum and presidential election were marred by "unprecedented outside interference" aimed at derailing Moldova's bid to join the EU, according to the country's first woman president, Maia Sandu. Moldova narrowly voted to approve pro-EU constitutional changes.

Moldovan police alleged that fugitive oligarch Ilan Shor, 37, channelled \$39 million from Russia to Moldovan voters in September and October, and Russian cash mules were allegedly flying in large amounts of euros to buy votes, according to media reports.

Ahead of the vote, President Sandu was the target of a barrage of fake news stories and misogynistic hate trolling as well as deepfakes trying to discredit her leadership, according to media reports.

Such deepfakes are a "new stage of Russia's hybrid warfare against Moldova," Sandu's national security adviser, Stanislav Secieru, told Politico.

SRI LANKA VOTES

On the cusp of the Sri Lankan presidential election, a video went viral on social media with a headline claiming that K.D. Lankantha from the National People's Party had said: "Like Bangladesh, we were going to set parliament on fire."

Factchecking by IMS media partner Hashtag Generation debunked the misleading headline, concluding that Lankantha, now the agriculture minister, did not say anything about any attempts to set fire to the parliament. This was one example of factcheckers countering disinformation during the election campaign.

It's been a tumultuous few years for Sri Lanka, which has grappled with an economic crisis and mass protests in 2022 that forced President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to resign.

IMS' media partners in Sri Lanka, Hashtag Generation and Hari TV, teamed up to combat the trend of increased political disinformation. They tried to amplify the audience reach of factchecked stories to help restore audiences' trust in news media and combat news avoidance.

IMS supported 47 factchecking projects that reached a combined audience of close to 1.1 million users online across Facebook, YouTube and TikTok in 2024.

In June 2024, almost 40 journalists completed a Hashtag Generation factchecking and debunking boot camp, funded by IMS, to teach them strategies to detect disinformation.

Supporters of Sri Lanka's new president, Dissanayake, celebrate his victory outside the election commission in Colombo, Sri Lanka.



PHOTO: THARAKA BANAYAKA/NURPHOTO VIA GETTY IMAGES



PHOTO: JAKUB PORZYCKI/NURPHOTO VIA GETTY IMAGES

WhatsApp factchecking frenzy for Niger youth

Young Nigeriens who attended an IMS disinformation training workshop are applying their newfound factchecking skills to community WhatsApp groups.

An IMS partner and community radio presenter in Niger has trained dozens of young people to be "guardians of good information".

Abdoul Rahim Hassane, a radio host of the IMS-supported youth programmes "Echoes of Youth" and "Voice of Tapoa", saw an avalanche of fake news stories, rumours and disinformation circulating on WhatsApp, Facebook and TikTok.

After undertaking IMS training on disinformation and media literacy, he saw a need to share his new knowledge and skills with others in his community of Say, a rural town in Niger's southwest.

In December 2024, 32 young people attended his digital verification skills workshop.

"This training allowed me to understand for the first time that disinformation is a weapon that can shake the community's tranquillity and cause social tensions," 28-year-old participant Hassane Souleymane said.

The introduction to online factchecking and digital verification tools armed the young people with valuable skills that they are now applying to questionable content circulating on WhatsApp groups and other social media networks.

"It helps us today to be guardians

of good information in our WhatsApp groups," said Hadjara Boubacar, 22, another participant.

Some examples of factchecked WhatsApp content included rumours about the government and Chinese investors building an iron manufacturing plant in their town of Say.

The participants verified the information circulating was false and that there had been no official announcements nor media reports about such a project.

There was also a photograph of a violent public meeting that was widely distributed in WhatsApp groups with the headline: "Violent demonstration against the military in Niamey".

The information guardians in Say verified the origin of the photograph and confirmed the image was more than two years old and the demonstration did not take place in Niger.

Abdoul Rahim Hassane says that since his workshop, there has been more demand for such training and local authorities are seeking funding to hold regular training sessions.

IMS partners annually train hundreds of young people in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger to detect disinformation circulating online.

Cancer investigation shuts down polluting Kurdistan refineries

Investigative reporting by an IMS media partner prompted the Kurdistan Regional Government to crack down on illegal refineries linked to cancer clusters.

For 20 years, illegal oil refineries have dotted the landscape of the Kurdistan region of Iraq, pumping out toxic smog.

Amid shady industrial practices and a surge in cancer cases across the region, Salah Baban, a journalist from the Network of Iraqi Reporters for Investigative Journalism (NIRIJ), worked on a major investigation entitled “Neighbourhoods under a poisoned sky”.

The investigation revealed that small and medium crude oil refineries, often belonging to influential figures, were not operating with proper environmental safety standards and their pollution was directly affecting human health.

The story followed the plight of a former car mechanic Othman Mohammed, 42, who had developed malignant cancerous nodes in his neck. Seven of his family members also developed cancer, including two younger brothers as well as nieces and

nephews living in the same area.


“If thorough examinations were conducted on the region’s inhabitants, we would discover the extent of the catastrophe we are living in, with primitive refineries emitting their toxins day and night without any treatment,” Othman Mohammed said.

The investigation found that almost 10,000 new cancer cases were diagnosed in 2023, up from 7,831 in 2019.

Doctors and medical specialists say the region is experiencing a higher occurrence of cancer that they believe is linked to pollution and does not correspond to population increases.

Apart from airborne toxins such as ultrafine particles, carbon monoxide and others, refineries were also discharging heavy metals into the soil, polluting crops and entering the food chain.





“If thorough examinations were conducted on the region’s inhabitants, we would discover the extent of the catastrophe we are living in...”

Othman Mohammed

Authorities intervene

After the investigation was published, pressure mounted on authorities, which led to Erbil governor Omid Khoshnaw announcing in August 2024 the shutdown of 138 refineries.

This was not an empty promise. By late 2024, 130 illegal oil refineries were closed, a testament to the powerful impact of this journalism investigation. NIRIJ's story was syndicated widely across Iraq and the wider Middle East, prompting follow-up reports by other media outlets.

Reporter Salah Baban himself became a key voice on the issue and was invited to deliver lectures at two universities in Baghdad.

The momentum has continued into 2025. In January, the Kurdistan Regional Government announced a comprehensive suite of further environmental protections directly linked to the investigation.

These measures include a renewed crackdown on the remaining illegal refineries, a ban on using contaminated water for irrigation and fines for owners of neighbourhood generators that fail to use state-of-the-art filters to reduce harmful emissions.

In May, NIRIJ published a follow-up environmental investigation about the lack of accountability over millions of dollars allocated to a special environment support fund in Kurdistan.

Oil companies were mandated to pay into this fund annually as part of their contract with the Kurdistan Regional Government. A NIRIJ reporter followed the paper trails and shone a light on how the local environment was being short-changed.

Investigative reporting under threat

With some 20 staff reporters, NIRIJ specialises in investigative reporting covering a broad range of topics including corrup-

tion, government mismanagement, political and gender-based violence and human rights and justice issues.

NIRIJ's important accountability journalism is at risk following a US funding cut.

Although NIRIJ receives significant funding from IMS and the European Endowment for Democracy, crucial grants from two US organisations were cancelled. The funding shortfall equates to an estimated 40 percent of its budget.

Despite the significant impact of investigations on the environment and oil projects in the Kurdistan region, NIRIJ also lost a grant to work specifically on the Kurdistan region.

This resulted in the media outlet halting several larger projects that require more funding for Kurdish language editors and technical supervision.

Long-term collaboration

NIRIJ was founded in 2011 and has been supported by IMS since its inception. IMS provides core financial support to the network to ensure its independence.

NIRIJ also provides skills development training to Iraqi journalists and works to establish a professional investigative journalism culture.

With IMS support, the network launched a new website in 2024, featuring a new logo, font and video explainers to rebrand the outlet. These measures nearly doubled its website readership from 16,000 in 2023 to 36,000 in 2024.

The investigations also reach a wider audience through syndication across Iraq and Middle East media outlets.

Looking ahead, IMS is working with NIRIJ on visual storytelling, social media branding and expanding the reach of their core media products via social media platforms.

Rising emissions from power plants and oil refineries, along with poor waste management, have contributed to a dangerous decline in air quality.

Wartime watchdogs under threat



“We are in survival mode now.”

Anna Babinets, editor-in-chief, Slidstvo.Info

PHOTO: SLIDSTVO.INFO

Ukraine’s burgeoning investigative journalism landscape had the rug pulled out from beneath it following US funding cuts. A strategy meeting hosted by IMS and its media partners produced a recovery blueprint. Ukrainian investigative journalists need the international community to step up.

In war-torn Ukraine, investigative journalism exposes defence embezzlement, reconstruction corruption, leaky sanctions and human rights atrocities. Accountability journalism is also critical for the country’s future.

Ukraine’s journey to European Union membership is dependent on efforts to crack down on corruption and foster a vibrant independent media landscape where journalists have the freedom to report without fear or favour.

The US funding freeze hit nine out of 10 Ukrainian media outlets, with budget cuts of 50–90 percent. Five out of six IMS media partners are affected.

IMS and strategic partner Regional Press Development Institute, which had 50 percent of its budget cut, held a strategy workshop with Ukrainian investigative reporters, donors and other media development organisations in Kyiv in March.

Among the attendees was independent investigative agency Slidstvo.Info’s editor-in-chief, Anna Babinets. She has been forced to contemplate slashing newsroom jobs or cutting salaries after more than 80 percent of the outlet’s budget evaporated.

“We are in survival mode now,” she said.

“Things were already stressful because of the full-scale invasion, with five men drafted to the army out of a team of 15. Since our establishment in 2012, this is by far the hardest time for us. I am angry.”

Bihus.Info, another of Ukraine’s leading investigative media outlets, was also at the strategy meeting.

“We are burning through savings from previous crowdfunding campaigns and scrambling to create new ones,” director Iryna Shpakovska said.

A subsequent seven-page recovery blueprint concluded that media outlets needed to find new funding sources.

“There is an acute need for institutional support to ensure the continued operation of investigative journalism in Ukraine,”

the plan says.

Ukrainian investigative media outlets have vowed to ramp up collaborations and cost sharing on items such as legal services, translations and accounting.

There will also be a focus on building communities and loyal audiences to seek reader support for investigative journalism. But due to households struggling financially from the war and limited disposable income, crowdfunding campaigns and reader sponsorship are not a silver bullet.

According to a Regional Press Development Institute survey, newsrooms require between \$600–\$16,000 (at national level) a month to survive.

Funding priority areas are:

- Core support covering salaries for journalists, editors and videographers, office rent, utility bills, etc.
- Production costs such as transport, access to information, equipment and maintenance of websites and social media.
- Professional development on business viability, particularly fundraising strategies and alternative income streams.
- Professional development in open source, social media intelligence and geospatial intelligence gathering, including integrating AI into production cycles and using satellite photos.

IMS FLEXIBLE GRANT PROGRAM

In late May, IMS and the Regional Press Development Institute launched a flexible grant programme to support investigative journalism in Ukraine. The initiative provides lump-sum payments to experienced, impact-driven investigative newsrooms affected by funding cuts, enabling them to continue producing high-quality articles and video reports.

Reconstruction with good journalism

They carry notepads and cameras, not hammers and wrecking balls, but Ukrainian journalists are playing a pivotal role in the country's war reconstruction and recovery. But their work is under threat because of US funding cuts.



PHOTO: MYKOLA TYMCHENKO/RECOVERY WINDOW

Amid the rubble of bombed apartment buildings and public infrastructure across Ukraine, investigative journalism is playing a key role in recovery efforts.

IMS partner Recovery Window media network brings together 130 independent regional and national media outlets, NGOs and thinktanks to monitor and report on all aspects of recovery and reconstruction in Ukraine.

In 2024, the network produced 842 recovery-focused journalism projects.

Collectively these reports, stories, analyses, investigations and explainers reached 24 million readers through social media, websites and other platforms.

"I see this as journalism's contribution to bringing hope and instilling a sense of engagement in a society where people are fatigued by news about the war – even inside Ukraine," Anastasiia Rudenko, editor-in-chief of Rubryka, said.

Anastasiia Rudenko was one of the network's co-founders, and Rubryka's website of solutions-focused stories reaches more than 2 million visitors every month.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

- Among highlights of recent coverage, Rubryka looked at how the strategic processing of demolition waste can save money and reduce landfill. It reported on a circular project in Kharkiv where bricks, wood and surviving windows and doors from demolition sites are being reused in restoration work. Recycled construction waste is also being used to build roads and reinforce dams.
- Rubryka reported on how a team of researchers trained an AI model to assess images of destroyed buildings and debris and identify which materials in the rubble can be reused.
- Reports by network members Larp Media and Pershyi Kryvorizkyi helped speed up the launch of a second pipeline supplying water to Kryvyi Rih after Russia destroyed the dam of the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant. The project will provide clean water to all communities of the Kryvyi Rih district.
- An investigation by Sil.media put the spotlight on inappropriate temporary modular housing with shared bathroom facilities. As a result of the reporting, the city of Poltava signed a deal with a foundation to build permanent housing for displaced families.

Budget cuts hit hard

The Recovery Window network lost 80 percent of its budget from US funding cuts overnight.

"This has drastically limited our ability to serve as a resource hub for dozens of editorial teams across Ukraine. Our network... comprises investigative centres and the most progressive media outlets in every region – those that have been vetted for independence and values and can be trusted," Recovery Window said.

"The funding halt has suspended our programmes that supported content production, regional reporting, explainers and peer-to-peer learning formats, including thematic cooperation and collaboration events. We no longer have the resources

for any of this."

The network said it has limited capacity to help struggling member's editorial teams hit by cuts. Partners in Kharkiv and Zaporizhzhia regions can no longer publish printed versions of their publications due to frozen grants.

"Many of these editorial teams are in an extremely difficult situation – some have lost up to 90 percent of their funding and have only been able to partially replace a small fraction of it. As a result, many are being forced to downsize their teams or work pro bono. This, of course, threatens their very existence," the network said.

The network continues to freely publish recovery-related news on the Recovery Window aggregator.

"I see this as journalism's contribution to bringing hope and instilling a sense of engagement in a society..."



Young girls in Yemen have returned to the classroom after a community's water supply problem was solved following accountability journalism.



The ongoing repair works of the so-called "Road of Death" in Taiz governorate.

Reporting improves Yemeni roads and water access

Investigative reporting by an IMS media partner in Yemen pressured authorities to fast-track a long overdue rural road safety project.

In mountainous rugged terrain in rural Yemen, drivers dived with death every time they got into their vehicles. Conditions during the rainy season in Taiz Governorate also further exacerbated poor conditions on "The Road of Death", as it became known locally.

While there is no accurate official data on the number of road fatalities, the story said: "most families in the area carry in their memories tragic stories associated with the

ruggedness and danger of the road."

Important accountability journalism by IMS media partner Al Reef revealed the neglected state of the unpaved road. To date, only 3,744 km of rural roads nationwide have been paved, representing only 6.4 percent of the total road network, according to the Yemen Economic Reimagine Initiative.

After the media coverage, local authorities faced public pressure to shift gears

and fast-track the stalled road improvement project.

Authorities had previously laid the foundation stone, but they had failed to follow through and had not issued the necessary tenders, leaving the project stalled.

Al Reef played a critical role by highlighting the lack of progress, which led to a public outcry.

As a result, the local government issued two tenders in late December 2024. The bids opened and contractors were selected a week later.

Since then, construction work has officially commenced and is still ongoing.

Meanwhile, Al Reef's reporting about a water crisis in the Himyar al-Jabal community also resulted in swift action.

The story detailed how the lack of water was disrupting the education of young girls who were forced to walk vast distances while carrying 20-litre containers on their heads.

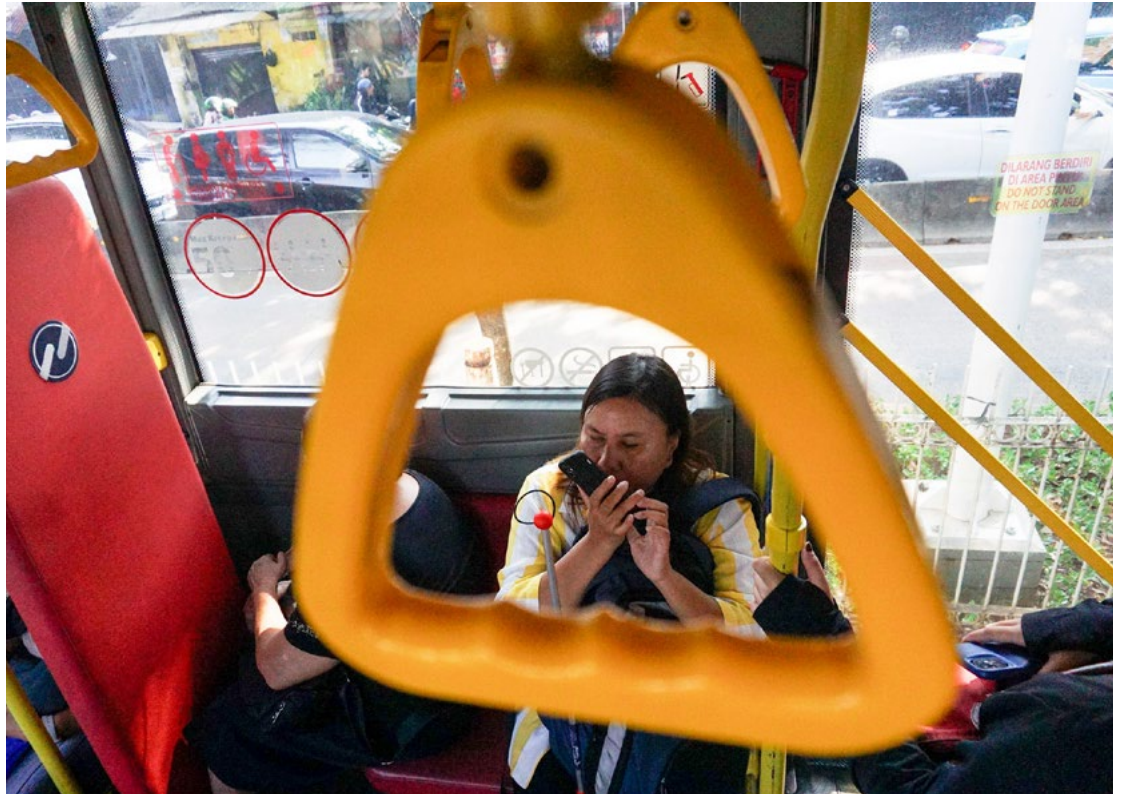
"The lack of water has led to a high rate of illiteracy among women, especially girls, as they have become busy fetching water instead of going to school, and many of them suffer from spinal problems as a result of the great physical effort while fetching water," local resident Ahmed Suleiman said in the story.

The media coverage drew the attention of businesspeople and philanthropists from the region who donated money to the community-led effort to shore up a new water supply.

As a result, girls have been able to return to their classrooms because their families no longer need them to collect water.

Al Reef has lost close to 18 percent of its budget from the US aid cuts. As a result, it has had to downsize its team by three members. The laid-off staff are continuing to work on journalism projects in a voluntary capacity.

Solutions-focused storytelling in Indonesia



Tempo has investigated how Jakarta is making public transport more accessible for people with disabilities.

Established Indonesian investigative journalism outlet Tempo has embraced constructive journalism training from IMS. Now, solutions-focused stories are helping to generate more paid subscribers.

In traffic-choked megacity Jakarta, public transport can be difficult for residents with disabilities to access because of a lack of lifts and ramps at bus platforms and train stations.

As part of its foray into constructive journalism, IMS media partner Tempo assessed how disability friendly Jakarta's public transport system is ahead of last year's gubernatorial election.

Constructive journalism is an innovative editorial approach that moves beyond traditional negative and adversarial prob-

lem-focused reporting. Instead, stories have a solutions focus.

More than 55,000 people in Jakarta have disabilities. Tempo followed the journey of passengers with visual impairments and wheelchair users who received help to tap on with their public transport cards and were assisted onto trains.

The special report noted that some stations and bus stops were well equipped for people with disabilities but there was still plenty of work to do, including offering quiet spaces for people with autism

who can experience sensory overload.

The series of stories resulted in Jakarta gubernatorial candidates making election campaign pledges to improve the accessibility of Transjakarta buses and provide extra public transport staff to assist wheelchair users and people with vision impairments.

Sixty-five Tempo journalists and 25 editors undertook IMS' constructive journalism training on solutions-focused storytelling, diverse perspectives and democratic dialogue.

Tempo found that the strategy has increased audience engagement and opened possibilities for increased public involvement in their newsroom.

Readers can't get enough

From mid-2024 to March 2025, Tempo produced 51 constructive journalism projects covering 12 major topics. Those constructive stories have been read by 1.5 million

readers in addition to 1.1 million viewers of Tempo's visual programmes.

Constructive stories consistently rank in the top 10 of the 400 daily news articles Tempo produces. This new type of storytelling contributes 10–20 percent of web traffic.

Recent analysis from the Constructive Institute in Århus, Denmark, found 19 percent of Tempo's story output was constructive journalism. It aims to increase this to 30 percent.

Constructive journalism has also resulted in 400 new paid subscribers for Tempo.

Tempo is now helping to train other Southeast Asian journalists in the practice.

"Investigative news, which has been Tempo's hallmark, is now strengthened by more constructive coverage," Tempo deputy editor-in-chief Bagja Hidayat said during a recent boot camp in the Philippines.

"Constructive journalism is the new face of Tempo."



PHOTO: RADIO ERGO

Back to school for Somali kids

Reporting by two IMS-linked media outlets has resulted in five schools securing funding for teachers and classrooms.

Ali Abdullahi Muhyadin was out of school for three months and the 13-year-old feared it would be closed forever.

The modest, tuition-free Bar school in Barlin, a camp for internally displaced people in Mogadishu, was forced to shut after the death of its benefactor, which disrupted the education of about 230 children.

More than 3 million children in Somalia are not in school, according to the United Nations Children's Fund. The agency also noted that lessons at school give displaced children a sense of resilience and normality during a crisis. After specialised humanitarian broadcaster Radio Ergo reported the school's closure and funding shortfall, a local charity came to the rescue.

Development Organisation for Somali Young Generation took over the school's operations and managed to raise funds from local businesses to erect three proper classrooms. They re-opened the free school and Radio Ergo did a follow-up report on the positive impact for the community.

"I am very happy to have got my education back. While the school was closed, I was getting anxious," Ali Abdullahi Muhyadin said. "But now I'm back at school... I've even got my books and pens."

His widowed mother, a displaced pastoralist, earns \$5 a day from cleaning jobs and couldn't afford to pay \$15 fees to pri-

vate schools nearby.

The family's livelihood was wiped out from the impact of climate change – they lost 90 goats during the 2017 drought, forcing them to flee to Barlin camp.

Adults have also benefited from the school. Ruweyda, who was displaced by clan conflict, said she was happy with the free literacy classes she was accessing at the school. She could now read text messages on her phone. "I learned how to read Somali here... I can now read whatever people send me. Thank God, I was in the dark but now I'm educated," Ruweyda said.

Meanwhile, a story by Wadaag, a content sharing platform of IMS partner Somali Media Association, highlighted the lack of free education in Afgooye district in southern Somalia. The story was syndicated across 40 community radio stations. As a result of the reporting, Somalia's federal and regional state education ministries launched four public schools in Afgooye district.

For the first time, low income and internally displaced families could enrol their children in a school. Officials recruited 120 previously unemployed teachers, and 3000 out-of-school children were able to head into the classroom.

Radio improves food security and education

For rural Somali farmers on the frontline of global warming, learning about drought-resilient agricultural techniques from IMS-supported radio has been a gamechanger.

Isaq Abdullahi Madoobe lost his entire harvest to drought, and his seven goats died in sudden floods in 2023. In Somalia, one of the poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa, climate change's impact and conflict are increasingly intertwined, according to the thinktank, International Crisis Group.

The United Nations Children's Fund estimates that between January 2022 and June 2024, drought and food insecurity contributed to the deaths of 71,000 Somalis, mostly children under the age of five years.

IMS-supported humanitarian broadcaster Radio Ergo is helping communities survive and thrive despite the challenges of rising temperatures and erratic rainfall crippling agricultural production.

Last year, Isaq Abdullahi Madoobe was able to shore up his family's livelihood and earn enough money to send his children to school by farming smarter, thanks to agricultural knowledge gained from Radio Ergo broadcasts. "The radio has greatly changed my life," he said.

The broadcasts have helped him to better nurture his fruit trees – guava, papaya and lemon – to improved harvests. He has learned to stop cutting down trees, to use crop rotation and non-sowing periods to rest fields, as well as to dig wells to access groundwater during dry spells. He can now

plant a variety of vegetables and staple crops such as maize, sorghum and beans.

"Now I deliver my harvest to seven villages," he said. The farm produce can now support his three sons, three daughters and his elderly parents, who live with them. "Now my life is good, and I'm content," he said.

Ensuring that people can continue to earn a decent living off the land is critical to the survival of communities, the country's economy and peace building as well as countering dangerous sea journeys across the Mediterranean Sea, experts say.

The Al-Shabaab insurgency has spanned more than 18 years and has gained a foothold in rural areas by exploiting Somalia's climate vulnerabilities.

For example, the insurgents used water access during drought to gain social control and recruit unemployed youth into its ranks, according to a report by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

The country also faces ongoing security threats from "long-standing clan-based conflicts, primarily stemming from disputes over climate-sensitive resources such as water and grazing lands," CGIAR said.

IMS supports the operations of Radio Ergo.



PHOTO: RADIO ERGO

PHOTO: NOUR GELLE/GETTY IMAGES/ANADOLU AGENCY/GETTY IMAGES



Somalian communities are trying to improve their firefighting capabilities.

Local reporting helps put out fires in Somalia

An IMS media partner's reporting on the lack of firefighting capabilities in a large Somali town resulted in community fundraising to buy a firetruck and train a firefighting crew.

A huge inferno ripped through the Dervish market in Beledweyne town, Somalia, in August 2023, causing extensive property damage and claiming the livelihoods of traders.

The town had no formal firefighting

equipment and residents had to scramble to cart water from nearby villages as the fire spread quickly. The damage to the town's commercial hub was devastating for the local economy.

Subsequent reporting in April 2024 about the town's lack of firefighting capabilities by IMS media partner Somali Media Association (SOMA) resulted in a community-led effort to develop a local fire response system.

Local business owners in Beledweyne kicked off a fundraising drive to buy a fire truck. They also recruited and trained 20 community firefighters.

The story had been syndicated to 40

local radio stations as part of SOMA's Wadaag content sharing platform.

According to Beledweyne business owners who were interviewed for Wadaag's follow-up story, the fire engine has since been used multiple times to put out fires in homes and businesses. It has helped reduce financial losses.

The community is now trying to raise funds for a second fire truck.

Fire safety is a huge challenge in many developing countries because buildings are constructed with lower-quality, non-fire-resistant materials and lack fire safety features such as sprinklers, emergency management experts say.

A powerful 7.7 magnitude earthquake rocked Myanmar in late March, killing close to 4,000 people. Almost 5,000 additional people were injured in the quake, according to UN figures.

The Southeast Asian nation was already grappling with a civil war following the February 2021 military coup that toppled Aung San Suu Kyi's civilian government.

Many journalists were left homeless in Mandalay, the quake's epicentre. IMS is supporting 20 reporters with financial assistance to cover accommodation and equipment so that reporters can continue their work.

Myanmar independent media scrambled to cover the disaster and recovery efforts. There was a huge uptick in rumours, disinformation and fake, AI-generated videos in the aftermath of the earthquake.

IMS' long-term partner The Red Flag received funds to increase efforts to debunk incorrect and misleading social media posts and multimedia content.

The Red Flag cooperated with the Myanmar Fact-Checking Network, consisting of 16 media outlets, by providing daily alerts, mentoring and editorial support. The network set up an emergency newsroom to deal with the avalanche of earthquake-related disinformation.

There was a surge in opinion-based and misleading online posts claiming that pro-democracy groups or the military junta

were trying to exploit the disaster to gain territorial control.

"Other forms of misinformation included fake news linking the earthquake to religious beliefs, health-related falsehoods and unsubstantiated warnings about future earthquakes or tsunamis," a representative from The Red Flag said.

"Sadly, we also saw online money scams attempting to capitalise on the earthquake situation."

Multiple media organisations within the Myanmar Fact-Checking Network are

struggling to retain staff due to US funding cuts.

"The factchecking newsroom is still struggling to produce quality content at a faster speed for the emergency due to the human resource shortage," a representative from The Red Flag said.

Myanmar independent media also reported on how the junta has slowed the distribution of aid by tying up international organisations with bureaucratic red tape.

Reporting on the Myanmar earthquake

IMS media partners provided life-saving information and vital factchecking in the aftermath of a deadly earthquake.

Short-wave radio to the rescue

The Myanmar earthquake damaged 6,700 mobile communications base stations, which disrupted internet access and people's access to life-saving information.

Short-wave radio became a lifeline for many in rural Myanmar in the quake's aftermath with credible factchecked information on safety, hygiene, accessing emergency relief, aid distribution and details about ongoing military airstrikes in some areas.

IMS covered broadcasting costs to help Mizzima News to continue its short-wave broadcasts. Its short-wave service was about to close when the earthquake hit due to US funding cuts. The broadcasts are in Burmese as well as other Myanmar ethnic minority languages.

Mizzima broadcasts half hour news programmes twice daily over short-wave radio, reaching more than 110 cities, towns and villages.

The radio news programmes amplified reach over other channels. During March, for example, 138,000 viewers on YouTube, 1.25 million Facebook users and 676,000 Spotify listeners were reached.

Mizzima News has been forced to cut staff salaries to cope with a funding shortfall caused by the US cuts and as a result some staff have left the organisation.

"We will survive and continue the work," Mizzima News editor-in-chief Soe Myint said defiantly.



Mandalay residents clearing rubble with their bare hands after the deadly earthquake.



Credible information during war and unrest

Two children ride a bicycle past the heavily damaged houses in Darayya, Syria.

Day in and day out, IMS media partners in humanitarian crises, war and reconstruction zones bring life-saving, credible information to their audiences.

Syria

For decades, Syrians lived in a so-called “Kingdom of Silence”, where critical voices faced brutal suppression and censorship stifled the free flow of information.

Syrians endured 14 years of conflict, until Bashar al-Assad’s regime was finally ousted in December 2024.

The political upheaval saw state institutions collapse, and a fractured Syrian society is now seeking to carve out a new era of stability while turning around an economy affected by years of sanctions.

Independent media in Syria and exiled news operations are relishing the greater editorial freedom.

As the country embarks on a recovery and reconstruction journey, public interest journalism is even more important to the lives of Syrians.

IMS media partners such as Irada, Radio Rozana and Enab Baladi are reporting on issues such as:

- Ongoing fatalities and injuries from land mines.
- Hepatitis A and cholera outbreaks.
- Basic services such as sanitation, water and electricity supply.
- Warnings about vicarious trauma for people watching torture videos from Syrian prisons that are circulating on social media.
- Efforts to rebuild housing for Syrians displaced to tent cities.
- Grassroots community efforts to get food and emergency supplies to massacre-hit coastal communities that are slipping through the cracks.
- Urgent need for blood donations.

But at a time when good reporting and accountability journalism are needed most as a building block for democracy, many independent media outlets are struggling for economic survival.

Palestine

During war, accurate information can be the difference between life and death.

In January 2025, a Palestinian father loaded his seven children onto a donkey cart, thinking it was safe to travel home to eastern Khan Younis because a ceasefire was starting.

Little did he know that the ceasefire had been delayed by three hours and that Israeli military aircraft laden with bombs were still circling the sky above Gaza. The cart was hit and the father and two children were killed, according to Al Jazeera.

As bombs rain down, the death toll climbs, aid is blockaded, families go hungry and the healthcare system collapses, IMS media partners continue to courageously report the plight of those affected by the war on Gaza.

Among the partners is Wattan News Agency, an award-winning, independent

media network in Palestine. Its offices have been physically destroyed and three journalists’ entire families killed.

But Wattan News Agency continues to report on the unfolding humanitarian crisis, delivering credible, life-saving information to its audiences.

Recently, it devoted an entire TV programme to trauma and mental health, encouraging viewers to seek help and access available services, including group therapy sessions and counselling. It has also reported on how the trauma of war affects children in Gaza, and efforts by local educational organisations to use dance, games and art activities to help children’s social and emotional learning and build their resilience.

Wattan’s reporting also puts the spotlight on the special needs of vulnerable groups including women, children, elderly, divorcees and people with disabilities.

It told the story of displaced cancer patients who are unable to access the medical treatment they need, as well as displaced people with disabilities trying to navigate damaged roads and rubble with mobility scooters.





A Palestinian journalist talks with children.

“Damascene moment”: media in Zimbabwe shore up future

IMS is helping Zimbabwe media organisations become financially viable.

TellZim, a community newspaper in Zimbabwe, had long struggled to generate enough advertising revenue to keep the lights on and the printing presses rolling.

Two years ago, TellZim, which publishes a newspaper in Masvingo, Manicaland, Midlands and parts of Mashonaland and East provinces, was generating a mere \$100 per month through advertisements in their WhatsApp groups.

That changed in 2024 after TellZim became one of the six organisations to receive training under the Media Innovation Programme, a media viability initiative by IMS, implemented by IMS partner, Fojo Media Institute.

Fojo trained the organisations in audience research, marketing and digital strategies.

“The Media Innovation Programme opened our eyes to the strategic and innovative opportunities in which we could unlock revenue,” said Golden Maunganidze, director of TellZim.

“This was a Damascene moment for us at TellZim. We understood our audience better, we were able to harness digital media better and engage in marketing, which helped us.”

After the training, TellZim offered to sell advertising opportunities to local schools, politicians and businesses. They increased their revenue to \$1,000 in May 2024.

At the end of August, they had further increased it to \$2,000 after adding two major businesses to their list of advertisers: national supermarket chains OK and

Electrosales Pvt Ltd.

Fojo Media Institute received financial and technical support from IMS to implement the Media Innovation Programme.

Community radio gets ad boost

IMS partner Zimbabwe Association of Community Radio Stations (ZACRAS) successfully lobbied the national government, the Zimbabwe Media Commission and the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe to allow community radio stations to run paid advertisements.

These not-for-profit stations struggled to cover the costs of their operations and by law were not permitted to run advertisements.

The community radio stations are now allowed to run paid advertisements for four

minutes every hour, following ZACRAS’ campaign for change.

This change has given the radio stations a financial boost and improved production and content distribution.

IMS contributed technical and financial support to both Fojo and ZACRAS.

CASH INJECTION

- Community radio station Madziwa FM invested in an internet package from Starlink.
- Ntepe Manama is now able to pay citizen journalists for their contributions.
- Kasambabezi and Twasumpuka set up marketing departments to solicit advertisements.



PHOTOS: LEFT: TELLZIM; RIGHT: ZACRAS

Media partner diversifies revenue stream with study abroad service

An IMS media partner in Pakistan has generated \$14,000 in extra revenue by diversifying its income sources.



An IMS media partner has a side business advising Pakistan students on study abroad options.

Tribal News Network, one of the oldest independent digital news organisations in Pakistan, used to rely on grants for about 70 percent of its income. But after receiving guidance and coaching from IMS' business viability advisers on areas such as business strategy, marketing and customer acquisition, the media outlet embarked on a new venture in late 2023.

Career Paths is a higher education consultancy service that offers advice and support to Pakistani citizens who wish to study abroad. The venture has generated around PKR 4 million (\$14,000) in annual revenue to support the media outlet's news operations.

Career Paths acquired clients through social media marketing and advertising on the media outlet's digital platforms.

"For seven months during the year when we did not have any active grants, the income from Career Paths helped us to cover the salary of senior management," co-founder Tayyeb Afridi said.

Since 2011, Tribal News Network has

provided news coverage for marginalised tribal regions of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. It also runs a radio service and provides training and mentorship to local journalists.

"There are times when the primary source of a media outlet's revenue is not sufficient or becomes unavailable. It is important to have alternative sources of revenue to prepare for such times so the journalism can be continued," Tayyeb Afridi said.

"IMS is helping media understand that there are alternative revenue streams to keep public interest journalism intact, especially in markets where social media monetisation and grants might not be viable options for local media."

Tribal News Network was indirectly affected by US funding cuts. It had been commissioned to undertake environmental journalism training with 60 women aged 18-35. However, the training programme was shelved.



Weddings fund Burkina Faso radio

An IMS media partner in Burkina Faso has a creative side business that generates extra cash to help fund the radio station's operations.

For an IMS radio partner in Burkina Faso, community celebrations are helping to keep the broadcasters on air.

IMS worked with the radio partners to establish an economic model in a very difficult environment with no other development partners in the vicinity. In 2024, the station generated around 500,000 West African CFA francs (€762) by renting out 50 chairs, a pavilion, loudspeakers and a mini mixing desk.

The station stores the equipment at the local town hall and community members can hire the gear for weddings, bap-

tisms and festivals. NGOs and government officials are also hiring the equipment for events and meetings.

The revenue generated by the side business is enough to cover some of the radio station's core expenses, including building maintenance, fuel for travel and renewal of technical equipment.

The money also supports radio staff experiencing financial hardship or health problems.

The radio station's equipment-hire venture is making the station more financially sustainable.

Support for jou

As of May 2025, Israel's war on Gaza has killed at least 178 journalists, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, making it the deadliest period for journalists on record.



PHOTO: DOAA ALBAZ (LEFT). PHOTO: ABED RAHIM KHATIB/ANADOLU VIA GETTY IMAGES (RIGHT)



Journalists in Gaza

IMS media partner Filastiniyat has been at the forefront providing life-saving support and emergency assistance to Palestinian journalists who are not only reporting in difficult circumstances but are also displaced along with their families and communities.

In 2024, Filastiniyat dispersed emergency cash grants ranging from \$225–500 to 888 reporters, the majority of whom were women journalists.

It also distributed 410 personal hygiene packages, almost 300 packages of winter

clothing and 250 sleeping mattresses and bedding.

Filastiniyat has funded workstations for women journalists in Khan Younis and a caravan in Deir al-Balah to serve as sleeping quarters and a workplace for women

reporters, giving them safe spaces to work and rest.

Supporting freelance journalists has been another focus of Filastiniyat, which has commissioned stories from 100 journalists, videographers and photographers.



“Genocide has irrevocably changed us all. Yet, what remains unshaken is our pride in every journalist.”

Filastiniyat director-general Wafa' Abdel Rahman



PHOTO: CAMBODIA/PRING SAMRANG

Journalist Mech Dar arrives at Phnom Penh Municipal Court for further questioning on 23 October 2024.

Cambodia pressured to release detained reporter

Journalist Mech Dara, famed for helping to expose human trafficking rings and multi-billion-dollar online scam centres in Cambodia, was arrested in September 2024 in south-west Cambodia.

Authorities accused him of incitement and “provoking serious social chaos” with five social media posts about operations at a rock quarry on a sacred mountain, according to the BBC and CNN.

Independent media has long been in decline in Cambodia’s backsliding democracy and the country fell to 151 (out of 180) in Reporters Without Borders’ Global Press Freedom Index in 2024, down from 147 in 2023.

Former Prime Minister Hun Sen ruled the country with an iron fist for nearly four decades and media repression has continued since his son Hun Manet took power in 2023.

For more than a decade, Dara’s dogged reporting exposed corruption, human rights atrocities and environmental damage in the Southeast Asian nation.

IMS and its media partners in Cambodia rallied to support award-winning Cambodian investigative journalist Mech Dara, who was detained and charged with “incitement”.

In 2023, then-US Secretary of State Antony Blinken gave him a Hero Award for his investigation into modern slavery.

Following Dara’s arrest, IMS partners including Cambodian Centre for Independent Media, independent journalism network CamboJA and Cambodian Centre for Human Rights, rallied to help him as part of a journalist safety working group.

The group organised a joint statement with some 50 national and international organisations.

“We urge the Cambodian government to immediately drop the charges against Mech Dara, release him from prison and

stop all forms of harassment against media organisations and journalists. The arrest of Dara is a clear attempt to intimidate and silence him and other journalists in a country where press freedoms are routinely curtailed,” the joint statement said.

The group raised his arrest with the EU delegation to Cambodia, the visiting head of USAID and the Australian Embassy, thus helping to generate international diplomatic pressure.

The group also provided him with a lawyer, visited his family and frequently checked on him in prison.

In late October, he was granted bail and

left prison, traumatised, four kilogrammes lighter and severely ill with the flu.

After his release, the working group also provided security cameras for his home, a phone and laptop as well as psychological support. The group has continued to offer assistance to him.

Dara has since quit journalism, saying he is haunted by memories of sitting in an overcrowded jail cell with 100 other inmates in orange jumpsuits.

He has become a farmer.



PHOTO: CAMBODIA/PRING SAMRANG

Journalists grapple with anxiety and depression in war-torn Ukraine

War reporting is taking a tremendous psychological toll on journalists in Ukraine. Despite demand for assistance, IMS partners providing a mental health programme have been hit with US funding cuts.

“Due to the irregular schedule and fast pace of work, I sometimes don’t even notice the fatigue setting in. There’s rarely time to rest, and burnout eventually follows,” said Olha Zvonariova, a correspondent at Ukrinform, Ukraine’s national news agency.

She is one of more than 600 journalists and media workers who has participated in the IMS-supported Mental Support for Media programme since 2023.

Ukrainian journalists say it has been important to learn about resilience strategies to combat vicarious trauma, as well as to support sources and ensure interviews are not retraumatising for survivors.

“At times, journalists must act like psychologists to build trust with their inter-

viewees. We often internalise their pain as our own,” Olha Zvonariova said.

Mental Support for Media, a collaboration between the Souspilnist Foundation and the BrainCult Center for Mental Health, has been a gamechanger to help reporters deal with the emotional trauma of reporting.

“A survey” of participants found after the programme:

- 85 percent experienced lower anxiety levels.
- 95 percent showed decreased symptoms of depression.
- 79 percent reported reduced burnout.

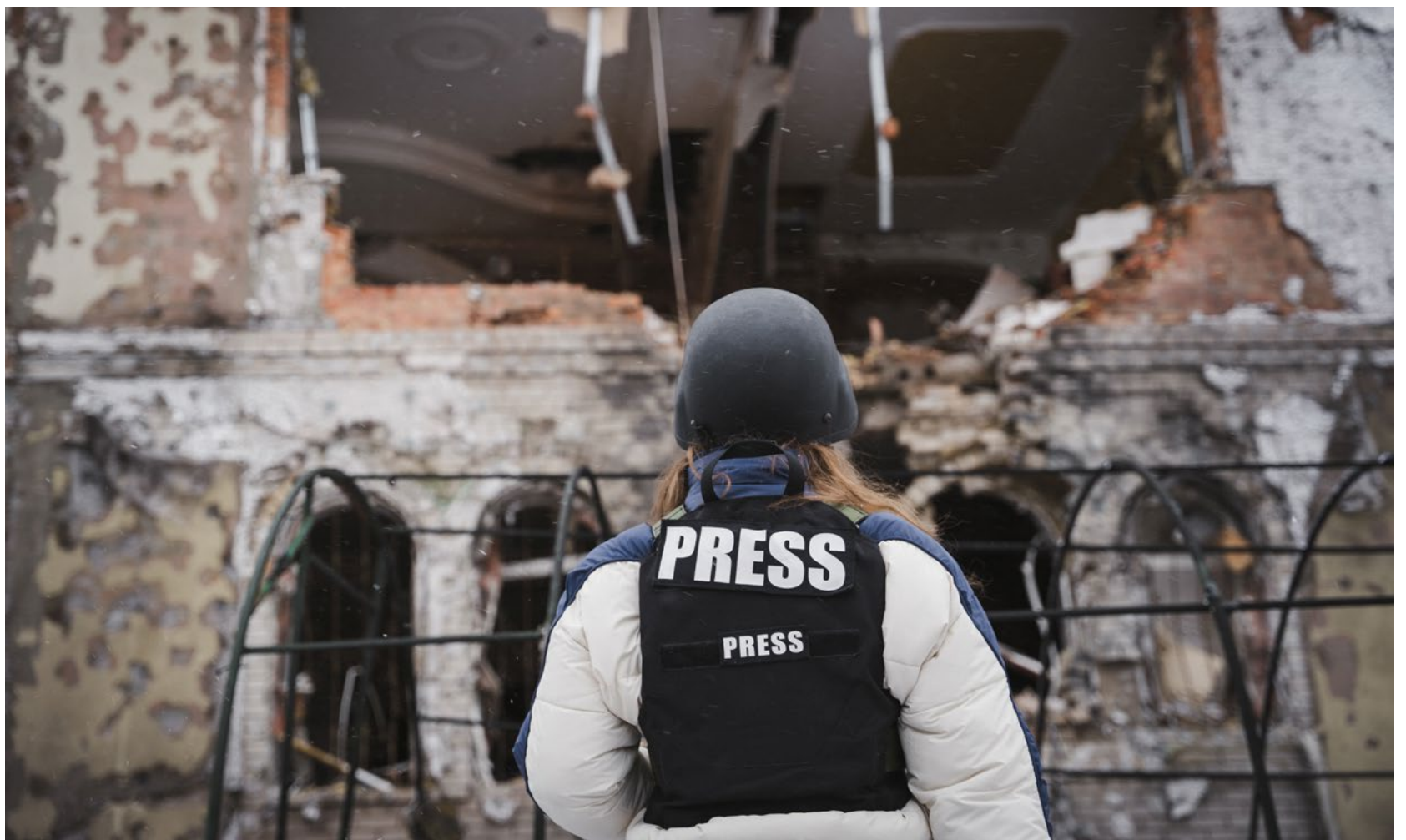
The programme helps to destigmatise and normalise mental health support in newsrooms.

“There hasn’t been a strong culture of seeking psychological help in Ukraine, and the same was true in journalism,” said Andrii Sydorenko, coordinator of Mental Support for Media.

“They now share this experience with others, promoting the message that reaching out for support is both necessary and courageous.”

The programme is urgently seeking new institutional partners due to the US funding cuts.

A journalist surveys a damaged house after a Russian drone attack in Sumy, Ukraine.



More women journalists



In near impossible circumstances and at great personal risk to their lives, Afghan women journalists continue to courageously report with support from IMS and its local partners.

Mursal, whose real name cannot be revealed for safety reasons, is one of hundreds of Afghan women journalists writing “Afghanistan’s history” every day.

Afghanistan is the worst country in the world to be a woman, according to the 2023–24 Women, Peace and Security Index.

“We want to push back,” Mursal said. “We want to stand up for all the Afghan women who are scared, murdered, beaten and living in prison in their homes.

“We document the current history of

the Afghan women. One day, these stories will make sense for the world outside this prison called Afghanistan.”

Being a woman journalist in Afghanistan is not only a life-threatening occupation but also frustratingly difficult from a logistical perspective.

Women journalists generally cannot report from the scene of breaking news events in public places or interview the Taliban. They also must cover their faces.

In some areas, women are banned from

attending official press conferences.

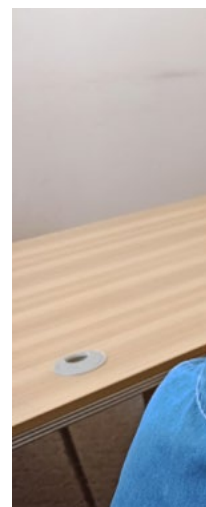
Nonetheless, in 2024 the number of active women journalists in Afghanistan increased by 60 percent from 557 the previous year to 893.

The growth is partly a result of IMS local partners’ successful efforts to – in some provinces – persuade the de facto authorities to relax restrictions on women journalists and encourage media organisations to hire women reporters.

While 893 is a far cry from the 1,400 women reporters operating before the Taliban’s return, the trend is heading in the right direction. But there is still room for improvement.

Women journalists are active in only 25 of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces. This means women’s voices from a quarter of the country, mostly in the eastern provinces, are being silenced under the Taliban.

IMS and its partners are assisting the professional development of current and



reporting in Afghanistan

aspiring women journalists.

In 2024, almost 500 women journalists, both in-country and in exile, participated in training workshops that covered skill development, safety and trauma awareness and mental health support.

Since 2022, IMS local partners have built a strong network of women-led advocacy groups. In 2024, these groups operated in 12 provinces.

The groups advocate for women journalists' rights with the de facto authorities, media outlets, international organisations and other relevant stakeholders.

Among the concrete results, a women's advocacy group was able to persuade local de facto officials in Daikundi to reverse a ban on women working in the media.

When two radio programmes in Khost province dedicated to women's issues were suspended, IMS local partners intervened in the case. The suspension was lifted and the programmes could go back on air.

In some provinces, the advocacy groups have convinced the de facto authorities to lift restrictions and allow women journalists to report outside the office without a male chaperone.

In other provinces, these groups have received permission for women journalists to cover press conferences, which they could not do previously.

IMS partners have provided emergency assistance and mental health support to 220 women journalists. This has included financial support and legal assistance for journalists arrested.

IMS' partners are also making changes to improve gender equality.

One partner, which cannot be named for safety reasons, has introduced gender quotas for staffing, programme guests and interviews.

Another partner is developing a women's leadership training programme and has created a new management position

for a woman senior staff member.

Rashida, who also cannot reveal her real name for security reasons, knows firsthand the heartbreak of unfulfilled dreams.

She had always wanted to make documentaries but now it's too complicated for Afghan women reporters to work with a camera.

"Therefore, I write, write and write –

"This is my life now.
I dream about a better
life, but today I fight."

trying to illustrate how brave and committed the young, educated Afghan women are despite the fact that we are scared 24/7," she said.

"This is my life now. I dream about a better life, but today I fight."

IMS partners in Afghanistan have indirectly been hit by US funding cuts as less money is available for emergency support.



Breaking the silence on sexual harassment in Indonesia

Indonesian university professors have been sacked and suspended for sexually harassing students after an IMS media partner put the spotlight on campus sexual violence.

The Lapor Tempo app.

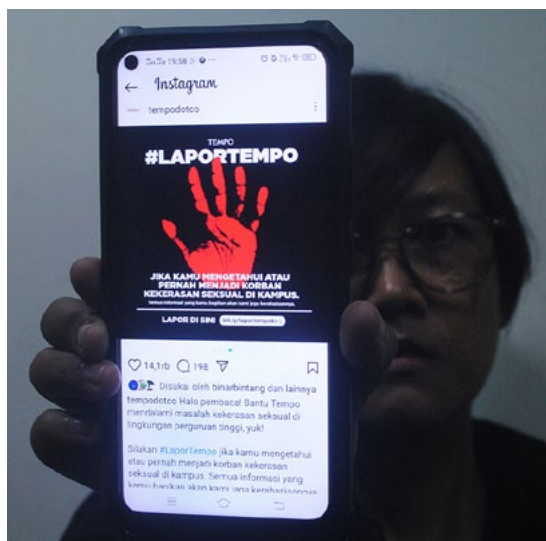


PHOTO: TEMPO MEDIA

For years, survivors of sexual harassment on Indonesian university campuses suffered in silence amid cover ups and inadequate investigations protecting perpetrators.

Experts say the global #MeToo movement was slow to gain ground in Indonesia – a conservative society with a strong patriarchal culture – a hangover from 32 years of authoritarian rule which ended in 1998.

Tempo, an Indonesian media organisation well known for its investigative journalism, set up a special app empowering survivors to share their experiences with journalists.

The app, called “Lapor Tempo” (Report to Tempo), was part of Tempo’s foray into constructive journalism – solutions-focused reporting – and a push for greater public participation in reporting processes. The app was designed to give whistleblower protection to survivors to ensure their safety.


In the two months since its launch, Lapor Tempo received 52 tips spanning 35 universities. The app empowered survivors to tell their stories, seek justice and heal.

“I didn’t talk about it. I kept it inside, but I felt depressed,” one Indonesian university student told Tempo.

More than half of the complainants were dissatisfied with the way their cases were being handled by authorities. Allegations ranged from catcalling and inappropriate behaviour from lecturers to a forced abortion.

Tempo’s subsequent reporting scrutinised police and university responses to victims’ reports:

- Universitas Gadjah Mada in Yogyakarta fired a lecturer after dozens of students made abuse allegations. The university had previously tried to cover up the incidents. Tempo reported that survivors have appealed to Higher Education officials in Indonesia to remove the perpetrator’s civil servant status, a move which would stop him from teaching elsewhere.
- Universitas Pembangunan Nasional “Veteran” in Yogyakarta suspended a lecturer for two years and ordered him to pay compensation to a student who claimed he abused her when she visited his office to inquire about her studies. Tempo reported the student was yet to receive any money and had not had her counselling costs reimbursed but campus officials were handling the case.
- A student from Islamic University Riau was sexually assaulted by a senior lecturer. Tempo reported on the inadequate police investigation by local officers and the students’ efforts to escalate the case to national police.



Indonesia's National Commission on Violence Against Women conducted a survey in 2024 and found 1,133 cases of sexual violence on campus.

IMS provided financial support and training to Tempo for its constructive journalism stories.

Tempo's reporting went beyond framing campus sexual violence as a problem. Its coverage was also solutions focused, looking at examples of universities that were taking appropriate action.

It reported on how Hasanuddin University in Sulawesi responded.

The university's sexual violence and prevention taskforce suspended a perpetrator for three semesters. The taskforce, headed by a law professor, conducted a thorough investigation and looked for evidence, obtaining video surveillance of the alleged incident. Tempo suggested universities without legal faculties should collaborate with local legal aid organisations.

Hotline for journalists

Another IMS partner, Aliansi Jurnalis Independen, a journalists' organisation that fights for press freedom, launched a whistleblower hotline where journalists experiencing sexual harassment or abuse could make complaints.

The alliance put together an educational cartoon video raising awareness about what constitutes inappropriate behaviour and how reporters can confidentially report cases and access support and counselling.

After receiving support from 12 organisations, including legal aid and counselling services, the alliance was able to expand the hotline beyond its members to all journalists, including student reporters and citizen journalists.

IMS worked with the alliance on developing the hotline and whistleblower platform according to international standards. It also provided financial support and mentoring.

“I didn't talk about it. I kept it inside, but I felt depressed.”

New tool to improve balance in Somali m

IMS Somali media partners are working to improve the gender balance of their reporting.

In Somalia, women are underrepresented as reporters, experts and subjects of news. But some of the media outlets that have historically featured mainly men's perspectives in their reporting are slowly recognising the need to include more women's voices.

The underrepresentation of women in media is being tracked by a new tool developed by IMS media partner Somali

Women Journalists Organisation (SWJO). The tool makes it possible for media outlets to monitor the quantity and quality of ways in which they include women's voices across platforms.

IMS has partnered with SWJO over the past eight years to support women journalists and amplify women's voices in mainstream Somali media.

The tool also aims to track the ways in which women are represented:

- Are their voices included only as victims or also as experts?
- Are women featured only in stories intended for women audiences?
- Are they also included in general news coverage and features?

Somali women walk down a street.



gender edia

The idea for the tool resulted from a baseline study IMS conducted which found that there was a gap between perception and reality: while Somali media managers believed that they were being inclusive, the reality was that their coverage showed otherwise.

In a country which ranks fourth from the bottom of UN Women's list of gen-

der equality in the world, it is crucial that media outlets make a concerted effort to change the status quo.

Participating Somali media outlets have begun to use the tool since a workshop in Mogadishu in December 2024.



National Press Club General Secretary Nayyar Ali speaks at a demonstration to protest cyber law amendments that threaten press freedom.

PHOTO: ED RAM/GETTY IMAGES

Pakistan national press club elects woman leader

The National Press Club in Islamabad elected a woman journalist to the post of general secretary for the first time in the club's history.

Nayyar Ali, a special correspondent and TV presenter with Samaa News, took on the leadership role in March 2024. She was re-elected in 2025 and will continue in the job for another year.

"Honoured to be elected as the first female secretary of any press club in the country," Nayyar Ali said after her initial appointment.

The club represents 3,200 journalists across the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

Pakistan is a conservative society and women often face barriers when it comes to taking on high profile roles in public life. The country ranks 145 out of 146 countries on the World Economic Forum's global gender gap report 2024.

Nayyar Ali's candidacy is a testament to the courage of women journalists and the consistent advocacy of IMS partners to help lay the groundwork for cultural change in media sector dominated by men.

IMS partner IRADA collaborated with Nayyar Ali to organise a national dialogue at the press club to commemorate the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists in 2023.

At that time, Nayyar Ali was a finance secretary at the press club. The same year, IRADA also worked with her to organise a series of capacity-building workshops for journalists on information disorder and digital journalism.

IMS has contributed funds and advisory support to partners IRADA, Freedom Network and the Women Journalists Association to advocate for greater gender diversity, equity and inclusion in the leadership and membership structures of journalist unions and press clubs.

IMS is not involved with the internal activities of the press club, but it does engage with it to support journalists' safety and gender representation in media.



Top honour for Pakistan climate reporting

An IMS media partner's reporting on the impact of climate change in vulnerable mountain communities received a prestigious prize.

Pakistan is home to one of the highest concentrations of glaciers outside the polar regions, but the breathtaking landscapes are ticking timebombs for local villagers.

Melting ice can cause glacial lakes to suddenly burst their banks. Farms, livestock, bridges and transportation routes in the country's Gilgit-Baltistan region can be wiped out with little warning.

The impact of climate change could push up to 9 million Pakistani people into poverty, the World Bank estimates.

IMS media partner Ibex Media Network has long reported on the impact of global warming on remote mountain communities through podcasts, documentaries and news reports. Its monthly average reach is 4 million users across all platforms.

In December, Ibex won the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development's Dr Andreas Schild Memorial Mountain Prize 2024 for its climate change reporting.

"Our storytelling is helping remote mountain communities: by documenting and amplifying local solutions for climate adaptation and mitigation, sharing best practices with communities to reduce their carbon footprint and raising awareness of disaster preparedness measures," Abdul Mujeeb, the CEO and co-founder of Ibex Media Network, said.

"We feel women are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis, so we have created a collaborative digital space for women from local communities."

One recent Ibex report delved into the silent distress felt by many remote mountain communities because of repeated environmental disasters.

The report noted that the prolonged disruption of roads can deepen the sense of isolation, leaving communities cut off from essential services, including healthcare.

"Imagine having sleepless nights because the next flood could hit your home, or a sudden glacial lake outburst could wash away your property."

"Communities in fragile ecosystems like that of Gilgit Baltistan are grappling with anxiety, depression and trauma. These mental health issues are the result of repeated displacements and loss of livelihoods."

Abdul Mujeeb, who attended the award ceremony in Kathmandu, Nepal, said the award has increased their determination to use their public interest journalism to support local climate action.

Ibex recently lost 10 percent of its budget because of the US funding freeze.

"We have had to abandon a planned content series and drop our plans to expand our team," Abdul Mujeeb said.

Despite the difficult financial climate, Ibex is determined to keep reporting on the unique landscape in its patch – where some 10,000 glaciers across the Karakoram, Hindu Kush and Himalayan Mountain ranges are receding, according to experts.

"We feel women are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis, so we have created a collaborative digital space for women from local communities."

Moroccan city cleans up its act

An IMS-supported youth radio programme in Morocco has spurred authorities to tackle a major garbage disposal problem in the city of Fez.

Fez Morocco.



For three years, uncollected garbage piled up in the streets of the Moroccan city of Fez, and residents lamented the lack of action by local authorities.

In September 2024, youth broadcasters from the IMS-supported Munathara Initiative interviewed city councillor Ali Laqseb about the public health and envi-

ronmental impact of the city's waste management problem.

The episode gained traction and reached almost 300,000 listeners and the programme generated public discussion.

Following mounting public pressure on social media, Ali Laqseb raised the issue at a council meeting two weeks later and

the council finally picked a new contractor to begin garbage collections.

For the past two years, the Munathara Initiative has worked with Moroccan youth.

In 2024, the programme trained 33 young people across five regions, in broadcasting, interview techniques and journalism skills. These young people then led the

production and presentation of podcasts and radio episodes on topics of their own choosing.

An additional outcome was six participants have since secured media-related jobs or internships based on the skills they developed during the training.



PHOTO: ILIAS GUN/ANDOLU VIA GETTY IMAGES

People fish by casting nets from boats in Niger River in Mali.

Mali radio inspires riverbank clean-up

A series of radio broadcasts in Mali inspired a community-led riverbank clean-up movement. A local mayor joined the effort, securing a grant worth €60,000.

The enormous Niger River snakes its way through landlocked Mali – a vital water source in the western Sahara Desert.

Climate change and infrequent rain in Mali are impacting livelihoods dependent on the river for transport of goods, fishing and water for livestock.

In the riverside town of Bourem, an IMS-supported community radio station kicked off a public debate about the severe plastic pollution on riverbanks and the impact on local ecosystems, food security and quality of life.

The radio broadcasts focused on finding solutions to fixing the problem.

Youth and women clubs connected to the radio station rallied together to put the issue at the top of the community's agenda.

The mayor's office in Bourem noticed the community discussions via the radio broadcasts, became involved and applied for funding from a local World Bank supported NGO to scale up efforts.

The mayor's office secured 40 million West African CFA francs (€60,000).

The project spanned three months and 200 young people and women from two neighbourhoods participated in clean-up activities in the city and on the riverbanks.

IMS funds the radio station's modest



operating costs and provides professional editorial feedback to broadcasters.

The radio director said that other non-governmental organisations have taken an interest in the Bourem community after seeing the power of radio to mobilise people into action.

Radio shows have also helped educate local residents about proper waste management and the environmental impact of litter.

Spotlight on water reporting

Beirut-based Daraj Media has juggled multiple reporting priorities amid war and Lebanon's political instability and collapsing economy. But they have never taken their eyes off big picture stories like water and the environment.

PHOTOS: DARAJ/MOOR ON INSTAGRAM



IMS partner Daraj Media, a pan-Arab independent media outlet, has taken a deep dive into the issue of water in the Middle East and how its scarcity can drive conflicts. It launched Moor, an online platform, to report on water and related environmental issues. Its reporting, podcasts, graphics and videos are aimed at a youth audience.

“Moor opened the way for Daraj to work with young digital creators who focused on repackaging heavy journalistic content into accessible, snackable and highly engaging content focused on the under-25 target audience,” Daraj chief executive Alia Ibrahim said.

The project spans a broad range of issues from environmental degradation and connected social justice problems to household water consumption and the wellbeing of a single teenager having her first period in a refugee camp. Moor content also counters climate change related disinformation.

Daraj has long embraced constructive and solutions-focused stories that are

weighted in scientific and research-based evidence.

Daraj's main newsroom in Beirut has worked on Moor in collaboration with smaller partners in Jordan such as ShezoMedia and Yemen's Etreek.



Etreek filmed a series on Instagram aimed at reducing household water consumption.

In a three-part series, ShezoMedia looked at rubbish polluting a waterway in the town of Salt, Jordan. Shahabil, a character from the past, arrives in the present to raise awareness about environmental issues. As a result of the Instagram videos, authorities took responsibility for the clean-up.

While Daraj has not been affected by US funding cuts, ShezoMedia has experienced a 50 percent budget reduction and Etreek lost 100 percent of its funding.

“The damage is undeniable, neither they nor we could continue the production of the formats that have been very successful in the pilot stage and if we don't manage to raise funds those successful projects will have to be killed,” Ibrahim said.

“It is just a matter of time before we find ourselves incapable of providing even the little support we give to our smaller partners. They will have to shut down and

the loss will be not only theirs, but ours too and the whole ecosystem.”

Ibrahim said it was heartbreaking to build strong collaborations and working relationships that hit a brick wall because of external factors.

“We've put time and resources into building those networks and now, day in day out we're seeing what we have built fall apart, not because the product wasn't good enough, not because it failed, not because it's unsustainable or scalable, not because it's not worth investing in, but because the little resources that were available until recently and that allowed it to exist are dying out,” she said.

IMS has provided core financial support to Daraj, including emergency assistance to fund staff relocations from red zones during the war as well as equipment so its operations could continue.

It has also provided advisory support and mentoring in business development helping Daraj design and implement a crowdfunding campaign.

From the West Bank to Hollywood

IMS funded 25 documentaries in 2024.



Basel Adra, Rachel Szor, Hamdan Ballal and Yuval Abraham, winners of the Best Documentary Feature Film award for No Other Land.

“Making documentary films also contributes to the history books. Who knows, one day, we may be able to learn from this history and hopefully do better.”

Rasmus Steen, head of IMS Documentary Film

The Oscar goes to: No Other Land

IMS is extraordinarily proud that No Other Land won the Oscar for Best Documentary Feature.

The film is about the unique friendship that develops between Palestinian activist Basel Adra and Israeli journalist Yuval Abraham as they document how the Israeli military and settlers displace Palestinians from their villages in the occupied West Bank.

It is the fifth IMS-supported documentary film to be nominated for an Academy Award and the first to win.

“The film may not change the situation right here and now, but it can create a much stronger awareness of the harsh everyday

life of ordinary Palestinians living under Israeli occupation. By documenting the current situation, at least we ensure that future generations have access to authentic narratives. Making documentary films also contributes to the history books. Who knows, one day, we may be able to learn from this history and hopefully do better,” said Rasmus Steen, head of IMS Documentary Film.

The Guardian dubbed it “essential viewing” and said it “offers a vision of a shared Palestine forged in solidarity”.

The film has sparked debate globally and garnered significant international press coverage including the New York Times, Al Jazeera and France24.

The film has been screened in more than 1,000 cinemas worldwide, including the IMS-organised screenings in Geneva for the United Nations headquarters, the Nobel Peace Center in Oslo and the International Journalism Festival in Perugia.

IMS also initiated distribution to 35 cities in Denmark and 16 in Sweden, with dedicated educational screenings reaching 16,000 students in Denmark.

In the aftermath of the Oscar win, the film’s co-director Hamdan Ballal was violently attacked by Israeli settlers in his home in Susya. He was taken into custody by the Israeli military. IMS added its voice to the chorus globally condemning his detention and demanding his release. Hamdan Ballal was released 24 hours later.

IMS’ financial assistance and mentorship for documentary films would not be possible without support from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, SIDA and Norad.

Since IMS began promoting documentary filmmaking in 2005, we have supported over 300 documentaries from more than 30 countries.



A scene from the film *No Other Land*.

Deaf Cinema Club in Jordan

People with hearing loss in Jordan are now enjoying a lineup of carefully curated film screenings accompanied by Arabic sign language interpretation after IMS partnered with Deaf Cinema Club.

The first-of-its-kind club in Jordan also hosts post-screening discussions and Q&A sessions with filmmakers.

Eighty members of the club watched the first film screening, *Their Algeria* by Lina Soualem, at Shoman Cinema in Amman.

Deaf Cinema Club aims to make the world of cinematic storytelling more inclusive.

With 350,000 people in Jordan living with hearing loss, the club hopes to

gain financial support to offer even more screenings.

“This is the first time in my life I have watched a film and completely understood it,” one participant said.

“I never thought I could enjoy a film like this. It felt like it was made just for us,” another member said.

Deaf Cinema Club, Jordan.



PHOTO: DEAF CINEMA CLUB



The poster for the film *The Brink of Dreams*.

The Brink of Dreams wins Cannes award

Another IMS-supported film took home the Cannes L'Oeil d'Or award for best documentary at the Cannes Film Festival.

The Brink of Dreams is a coming-of-age story which follows a group of young Egyptian girls as they start a street theatre group and begin to rebel against traditional

gender roles in their remote village.

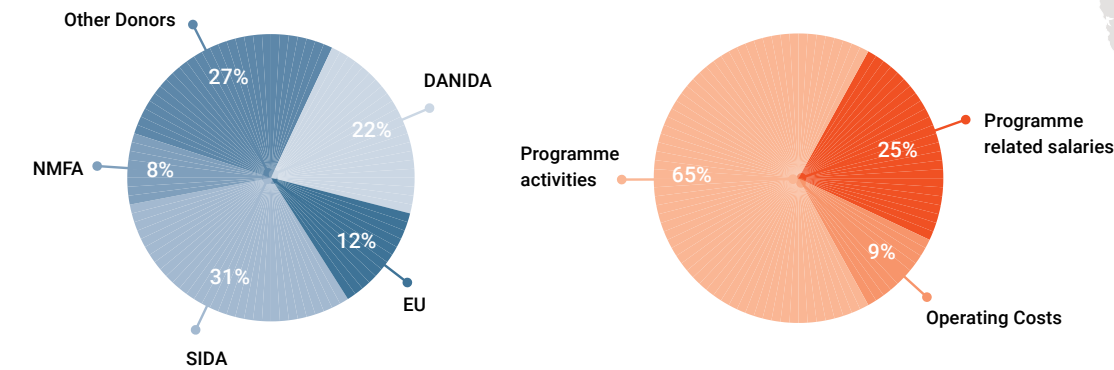
It was directed by Egyptian filmmakers Nada Riyadh and Ayman El Amir.

IMS financially supported the film and played a key role in securing regional distribution and mentoring the filmmaking team.

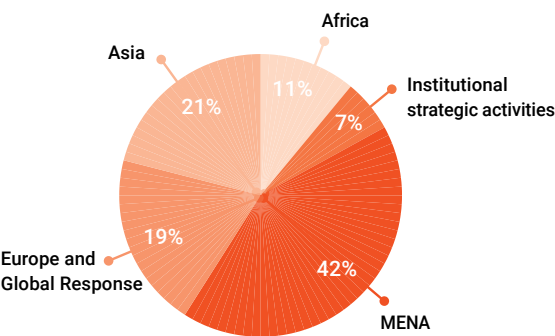
Financial overview 2024

Support from donors and the public makes it possible for IMS to react quickly to new and continuing crises. Continuous flexible core funding for strategic and operational development enables IMS to improve and adapt in a rapidly changing world. Meanwhile, reserve funds allow IMS to cover bridging programmes and additional development activities when there are shortfalls.

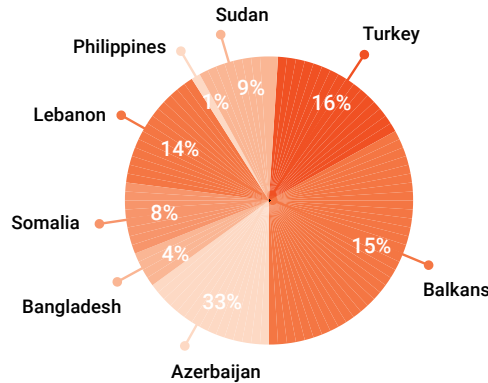
Funding			Expenditures		
	EUR	%		EUR	%
DANIDA	8,705,710	22%	Programme activities	25,919,726	65%
EU	4,749,012	12%	Programme related salaries	9,783,721	25%
NMFA	3,285,156	8%	Operating Costs:		
Other donors	10,620,375	27%	- Staff Costs	2,575,369	6%
SIDA	12,181,070	31%	- Cost of HQ office & Facilities	972,232	2%
IMS own funds raised	138,837	0%	- Development Activities	277,048	1%
			- Other operating Costs	152,066	0%
Total donor category	39,680,603	100%	Total expenditures	39,680,161	100%



Regional expenditures



Rapid response expenditures



Thank you to our donors

IMS' biggest institutional donors are:



In 2024, our work was also made possible through support from:

- Danish Union of Journalists

Finnish Union of Journalists

Ford Foundation

Open Society Foundation

UNESCO

Swiss Agency for Development; Foreign
- Commonwealth and Development Office (UK)

French Agency for Development, US Department of State Bureau of Democracy

Human Rights and Labor (USDRL)

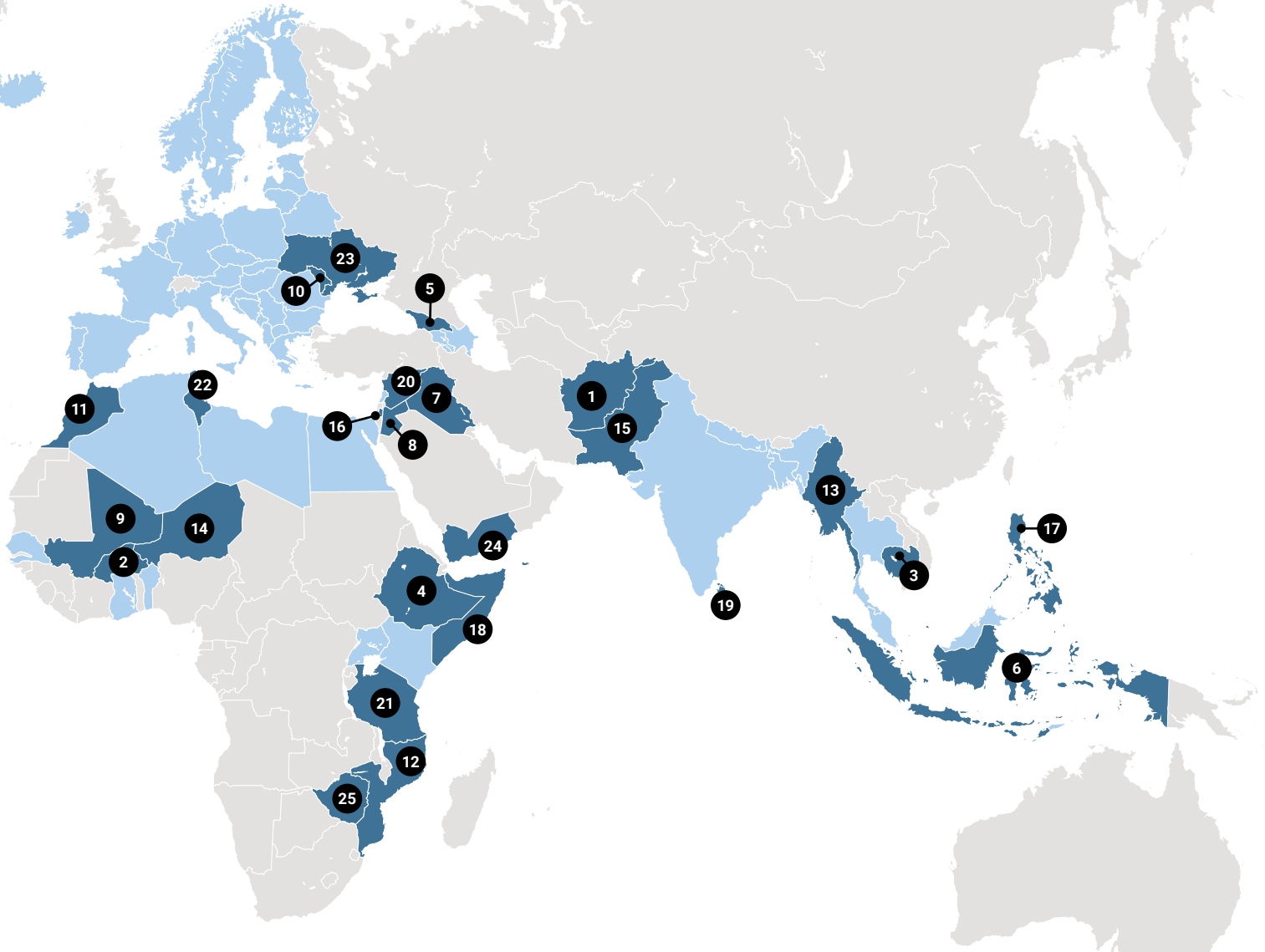
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Where we work

IMS works where the need for reliable, fact-based information is greatest and the risks to independent media are most perilous: in countries experiencing armed conflicts, humanitarian crises, rapid political change or authoritarian rule.

255

PARTNERS RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM IMS IN 2024.



Programme countries

In 2024 IMS worked with partners in 25 long-term programme countries. Engaging over long periods of time enables the organisation to build up relationships as well as react to opening and closing civic spaces.

- | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------|
| 1 Afghanistan | 8 Jordan | 15 Pakistan | 22 Tunisia |
| 2 Burkina Faso | 9 Mali | 16 Palestine | 23 Ukraine |
| 3 Cambodia | 10 Moldova | 17 Philippines | 24 Yemen |
| 4 Ethiopia | 11 Morocco | 18 Somalia | 25 Zimbabwe |
| 5 Georgia | 12 Mozambique | 19 Sri Lanka/ Maldives | |
| 6 Indonesia | 13 Myanmar | 20 Syria | |
| 7 Iraq | 14 Niger | 21 Tanzania | |

Thematic interventions, regional programmes and short-term engagements

In addition to long-term country programmes, IMS engages in global and regional programmes, thematic interventions and short-term projects, and also responds to crises through IMS' Rapid Response mechanism.

Staff facts

IMS has a diverse staff of dedicated, creative and highly motivated professionals based at our Copenhagen headquarters and around the world.

 **174**
STAFF MEMBERS

 **46.5**
AVERAGE AGE

 **50**
NATIONALITIES

*IMS' two decades' experience
bear witness to the fact that
comprehensive, locally led media
development can help keep free
media operating, even in the most
forbidding of circumstances.*

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