

Sustaining independent media in times of turmoil



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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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Sustaining independent media in times of turmoil

Systemic problems require systemic solutions. This is why IMS remains committed to a collaborative approach in the struggle for media freedom.

Jesper Højberg, IMS Executive Director

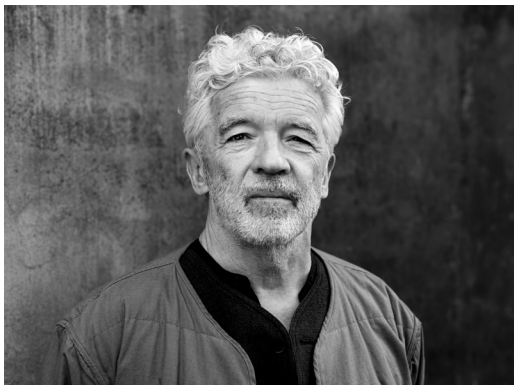


PHOTO: LERNE POSSELT

When information flows freely and without manipulation, people are freer, safer and better able to act with purpose.

To protect this flow, societies need independent public interest media. Without it, other rights and freedoms erode, regardless of time and place. UNESCO underlines that a free and safe environment for media workers “strengthens peace, democracy and sustainable development worldwide”. Independent public interest media also helps markets function more transparently, reduces corruption and instability and supports a fairer distribution of resources.

That is why IMS has worked for 25 years toward one overarching goal: to help independent media in some of the world’s most restrictive environments play their crucial role, even as powerful forces undermine their ability to operate and grow.

Today, together with more than 200 partners, we continue to support practical solutions that help independent media become more resilient.

Our work is based on two key insights: in the struggle for media freedom, collaboration is essential and systemic problems need systemic solutions.

Beyond providing financial, capacity and advisory support to individual media outlets, we bring the right actors together to identify and agree on responses to the challenges facing both individual media outlets and media freedom more broadly. Above all, independent media need political, legal and financial environments that enable their work rather than holding it back.

In short, our way of working is catalytic. By supporting individual media outlets, facilitating dialogue and collaboration among media, civil society and authorities and backing locally anchored coalitions, we connect locally defined priorities to national, regional and global agendas while bringing learning and leverage back to local action.

Ultimately, the many and complex challenges to information integrity are best addressed by building lasting partnerships and institutions that strengthen safety, accountability and collaboration over time.

On the following pages, you will find a small but compelling collection of examples of tangible responses to systemic media freedom challenges. Diverse as they are, these examples point to the same conclusion: patient, pragmatic and deliberate work is essential to developing practical and lasting solutions for independent media operating in restrictive contexts.

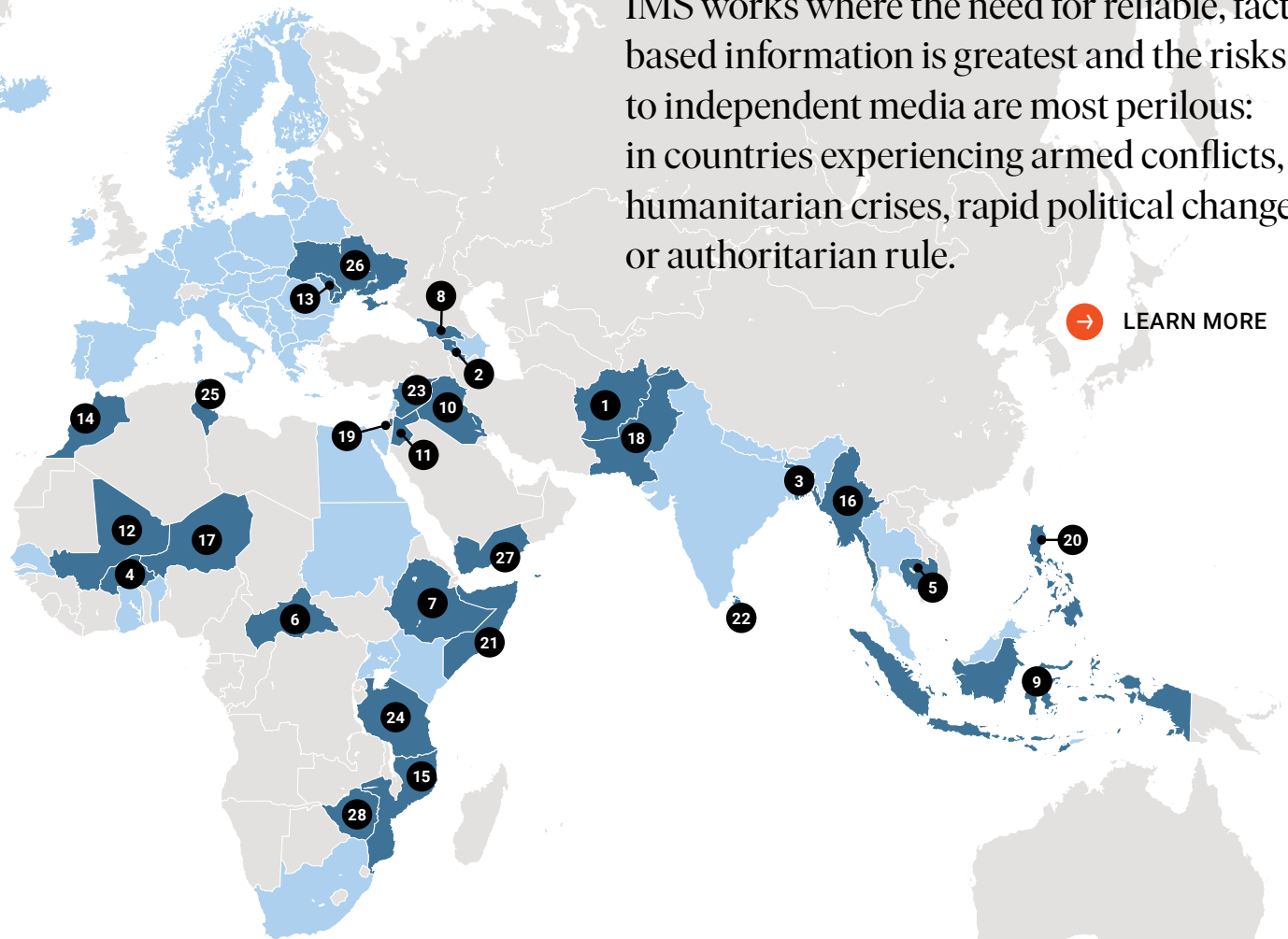
Where we work

236

COMBINED STRATEGIC AND
ACTIVITY PARTNERS RECEIVED
SUPPORT FROM IMS IN 2025.

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.

[→ LEARN MORE](#)



● Programme countries

● Thematic interventions,
regional programmes and
short-term engagements

1 Afghanistan

2 Armenia

3 Bangladesh

4 Burkina Faso

5 Cambodia

6 Central African
Republic

7 Ethiopia

8 Georgia

9 Indonesia

10 Iraq

11 Jordan

12 Mali

13 Moldova

14 Morocco

15 Mozambique

16 Myanmar

17 Niger

18 Pakistan

19 Palestine

20 Philippines

21 Somalia

22 Sri Lanka/
Maldives

23 Syria

24 Tanzania

25 Tunisia

26 Ukraine

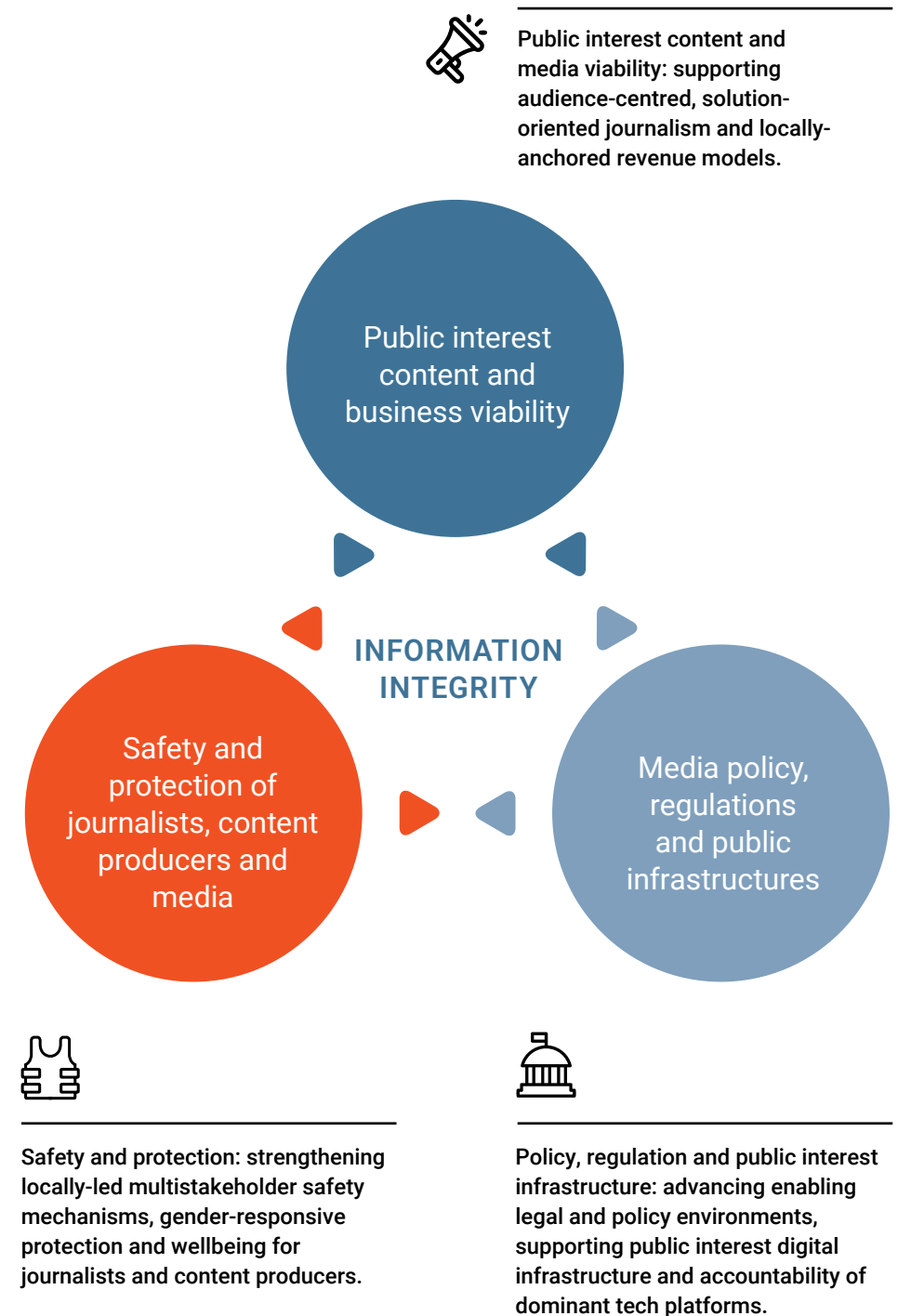
27 Yemen

28 Zimbabwe

Our areas of work

IMS' comprehensive approach to media development addresses not only the quality of the journalism and other content produced, but also how producers can reach and engage with diverse audiences, underpinned by viable operations, within an environment of enabling laws, policies, infrastructure and safety measures.

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Viability

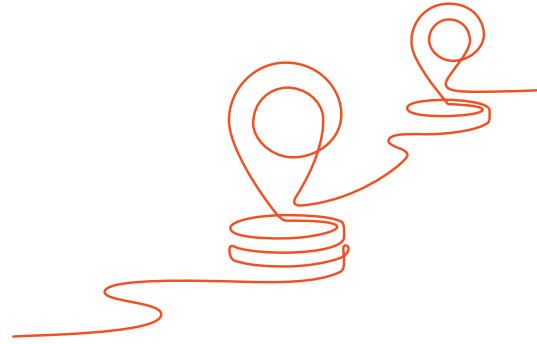
PROBLEM

Media outlets' financial viability is severely undermined by oppressive authoritarian governments, big tech's predatory business practices and retraction of global official development assistance.

SOLUTION

IMS helps media outlets develop their business capacity with resilient revenue models and unlock private sector capital by mapping sources of local capital and helping outlets build bridges with them and regional coalitions.

[→ LEARN MORE](#)



Unlocking local capital

The lack of funding for independent media is a structural problem that needs structural solutions. To get there, we need bold investments that can accelerate the business capacity of our media partners, stimulate local resource mobilisation and innovate financing products to ensure an invigorated capital supply in the journalism marketplace.

That is why we have been on a quest to unlock local capital.

[↓ DOWNLOAD REPORT](#)

Where is the money

Where is the money? is a report that provides a deep analysis and multistakeholder reflection on how public interest media in the four selected regions can best be supported over the next decade. The question is not whether interventions are needed to tackle the economic crisis facing journalism, but how this support should be structured.

[↓ DOWNLOAD REPORT](#)



Catalysing private capital

Across the globe, media outlets are collapsing under the weight of failing business models, vanishing advertising revenues and escalating political pressure. Catalysing private capital: Financing the future of public interest media responds to a rising demand from the media development field to understand how private capital can complement and strengthen traditional donor funding. The private sector alone will not save journalism, but it cannot remain on the sidelines.

[↓ DOWNLOAD REPORT](#)



Community-driven journalism strengthens editorial independence

A hyperlocal media outlet diversified its funding and improved its editorial independence by focusing on a growing audience segment.

In 2025, IMS worked with KaltimToday, a hyperlocal media outlet in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, to strengthen its business sustainability by transforming its revenue model. Previously relying on government budgets for over 80 percent of its income, KaltimToday has reduced this dependency to around 40 percent. This was achieved by shifting toward an audience-based model, building and engaging a generation Z audience to lead to alternative revenue streams.

With hands-on mentoring from IMS to help translate insights into practical initiatives, KaltimToday built Suara Zetisen as a replicable model for hyperlocal media seeking to strengthen both editorial independence and financial sustainability.

Suara Zetizen demonstrates how public interest journalism can generate commercial opportunities without compromising editorial values. Instead of depending primarily on advertising, the model combines community-driven journalism with multiple revenue streams, including local sponsorships, commissioned branded podcasts, merchandise sales and sponsored public events. KaltimToday used a values-based approach when pitching to potential sponsors, showing how community trust can be a strong commercial asset.

Suara Zetizen's editorial priorities were built around community discussions and polls. The small, multidisciplinary team repurposed content across multiple platforms, including articles, podcasts, short videos and social media content, to keep production efficient and affordable. By building trusted relationships with audiences and local partners, KaltimToday reduced its dependence on government advertising while strengthening its relevance to younger audiences.

In the context of local media in Indonesia, this represents a significant breakthrough, as many outlets struggle to transition away from traditional revenue sources such as government advertising. It also provides a replicable example for other hyperlocal media seeking to balance independence with financial viability.

IMS delivered targeted training and coaching on revenue diversification, audience engagement and business model innovation, equipping KaltimToday to rethink its strategy. Through this support, IMS guided the outlet in identifying generation Z as a key growth audience and in designing an audience-centric approach.

In addition, IMS facilitated strategic reflection and iterative learning, enabling KaltimToday to test and refine new revenue streams. This combination of technical assistance and mentorship ensured that capacity-sharing inputs led to measurable and sustainable results.

Suara Zetizen demonstrates
how public interest journalism
can generate commercial
opportunities without
compromising editorial values.

Developing a plan of action to handle disinformation

Svetlana Buza is the executive director and co-founder of Media Alternativă, which operates TV8 Moldova, an IMS partner since 2023. TV8 is one of Moldova's biggest TV channels in terms of audience and employs over 100 people.

How has TV8 worked to counter disinformation?

It was really important for us that we have targeted measures against disinformation because our goal in this process is not only to debunk but to target specific audiences.

In 2024, TV8 received a grant for developing a new TV channel focused on the Russian language, the public most impacted by Russian propaganda. We worked with some smaller, local media institutions from regions with Russian language consumers. We provide partners with knowledge about how to build stories about disinformation and how to produce more qualitative content.

IMS created a national network of different media outlets in Moldova. We have three meetings annually and we discuss our challenges. In this coalition are a few national TV channels and the main online media outlet.

What solutions has the coalition developed?

From the beginning of 2025, we expected that Russia will blackmail the Republic of Moldova, especially regions of Moldova formerly occupied by Russia, by interrupting gas to these regions. In this coalition, we developed a plan of action to address this informational damage. All of the media partners had the freedom to decide what we cover and what we don't cover. All of us provided qualitative explainers about the situation.

IMS measured the impact of disinformation and activity to address disinformation. We saw after three months' media campaign, because of collaboration between the partners of this coalition, that our news and media content were more effective than the Russian disinformation campaign.

How did the coalition address disinformation during Moldova's 2025 parliamentary elections?

We had a good collaboration with partners from the IMS project. Ziarul de Garda provided really brilliant investigations about Russian propaganda and Russian influence on the elections. We published it on TV8 in prime time. We amplified the impact of good, qualitative content created by our colleagues from other outlets.

What makes IMS different from other donors?

I think now IMS is the only donor that has long term projects. In this time of uncertainty, especially when we speak about a TV channel, it's really very hard to plan your activity for the next year without having clarity on how you will cover your expenses.

IMS is one of the main supporters of TV8. Especially after what happened with US funds, IMS was a crucial support for independent media in our country in 2025.

“We saw after three months' media campaign, because of collaboration between the partners of this coalition, that our news and media content were more effective than the Russian disinformation campaign.”

Svetlana Buza, executive director and co-founder, Media Alternativă

Supporting local media resilience across Europe

The Pluralistic Media for Democracy programme is addressing news deserts around Europe through financial and peer support.

Across Europe, many local, regional, community and investigative media operate under severe pressure. Advertising revenues have declined, audience attention has fragmented, platform dependency has increased and new technologies are reshaping how information is produced, distributed and monetised. In many contexts, the result is not only weaker media organisations, but weaker local information ecosystems.

The Pluralistic Media for Democracy programme (PM4D) was created in response to this reality. PM4D combines financial support with mentoring, audience research, peer learning, business development and capacity building. IMS' contributions included more than two dozen virtual training sessions; a framework for planning, tracking and measuring impact; and developing and publishing training materials in six languages.

In 2025, 46 projects across 16 countries received grants totalling €1.4 million. More than 70 percent of the reporting organisations cited audience growth, 79 percent strengthened direct audience engagement channels, 68 percent introduced new content formats and 63 percent documented community-level impact. In addition, 84 percent highlighted the value of capacity development and peer learning.

Case studies of supported media outlets show how local media are engaging underserved communities, involving young people in journalism, experimenting with AI, developing innovative audience engagement approaches and diversifying revenue streams.

“PM4D offered an opportunity to show our audiences areas such as Saint-Jacques through nuanced and human-centred narratives.”

Mona Bru, Made in Perpignan

Among the PM4D grantees was French-language outlet Made in Perpignan, which trained young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to report on local issues through their own perspectives.

“PM4D offered an opportunity to show our audiences areas such as Saint-Jacques [among France’s poorest neighbourhoods] through nuanced and human-centred narratives,” says Mona Bru of Made in Perpignan.

She adds: “The poverty and remoteness remain a fact, but just going there with the young trainees gave us new ideas and revealed that there are other non-poverty-related stories to report on from those parts of our district.”

In the autumn of 2025, the outlet launched a TikTok presence with videos produced by the young trainees. Since the project launched in September 2025, its TikTok profile grew ten-fold, with videos made for the March 2026 municipal elections likely contributing to this growth.

PM4D is operated by Journalismfund Europe, with funds from the European Commission and the King Baudouin Foundation and implementation by IMS.

Journalist trainee Alexis Robert interviewing farmer Yannick Cazal as part of Made in Perpignan's PM4D project to engage with youth rarely represented in media, December 2025.



Safety

113 

113 UKRAINIAN REPORTERS RECEIVED A
COMBINED 565 HOURS OF COUNSELLING
FROM IMS-SUPPORTED PROGRAMMES.

565 

PROBLEM

The safety of journalists is in acute crisis globally, especially in countries ruled by authoritarian regimes, and especially for women and gender-diverse journalists, offline and online. From harassment and intimidation to repressions and assassinations, independent journalists are being silenced.

SOLUTION

IMS develops and advances approaches and tools to improve journalist safety in some of the world's most challenging environments, from initiating or strengthening national safety mechanisms to facilitating vital safety training for newsrooms and individual journalists.

Mental health boost helps Ukraine media stay the course

As the war following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine enters its fifth year, journalists and photographers are learning vital strategies to cope with the emotional toll of conflict reporting through an IMS-supported mental health programme.

For journalists covering the Ukraine war, learning to understand the body's nervous system and how to deal with trauma is just as essential as a flak jacket.

Many experience psychological distress. According to a recent survey, 92 percent of journalists are experiencing burnout, 93 percent have symptoms of depression, while nearly half face moderate to severe anxiety.

IMS is funding counselling sessions and has expanded the size of the Mental Support for Media programme while encouraging media partners to prioritise the welfare of their newsroom staff and reduce the stigma of seeking help.

IMS was also involved in designing the programme and helped fill funding gaps and kept it going after the 2025 Trump administration cuts to media development.

In early 2023, the programme was launched in Ukraine as a result of a four-year collaboration between the Souspilnist Foundation and the BrainCult Center for Mental Health.

“The programme became a true lifeline for our team... [it] helped restore our desire to stay engaged and involved in our work,” Anna Tseluiko, Editor-in-Chief, Prykhyst Media Group said.

In 2025, 113 Ukrainian reporters received counselling with individual consultations, totalling 565 hours of therapy.

Qualitative feedback shows the programme helped reduce anxiety and burnout and improve resilience.

The mental toll of reporting directly threatens the sustainability of independent media in Ukraine.

“The programme became a true lifeline for our team... [it] helped restore our desire to stay engaged and involved in our work.”

Anna Tseluiko, Prykhyst Media Group

“These sessions... helped me get rid of the acute pain associated with traumatic memories... my reaction to triggers has changed significantly,” journalist Slovianski Vidomosti said.

Other media workers who underwent the programme said it helped to make life somewhat easier.

“My anxiety levels decreased... I developed a more positive view of the future,” Kateryna Holovchenko from Liuk Media said.

Challenging online sexist hate speech for safer digital spaces

An open-source tool is making it easier to detect sexist hate speech across multiple Arabic dialects, making it easier to analyse large volumes of data while reducing harmful exposure.

Online violence against women and gender diverse journalists has reached unprecedented heights in the digital age, threatening gender justice in freedom of expression, which remains a distant goal according to UN Special Rapporteur Irene Khan due to gendered censorship, systemic sexism and rising authoritarianism. Gendered disinformation, sexist hate speech and other forms of tech facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) increasingly silence voices online, reducing visibility and constricting diversity of perspectives, in turn eroding information integrity. A recent [global report](#) by UN Women, UNESCO and ICFJ found that 45 percent of women journalists surveyed had self-censored on social media due to online abuse, while 22 percent reported self-censorship at work.

Compounding this challenge are three key barriers, according to Yara Alrafie, Programme Officer in Digital Social Innovation at the Jordan Open Source Association (JOSA). Primarily, there is a shortage of reliable data on the scale and nature of online hate speech targeting women and gender-diverse people. Secondly, researchers, journalists and content moderators often experience significant mental health impacts from repeated exposure to abusive and violent content. Thirdly, many online moderation systems struggle to recognise harmful content expression through local dialects, slang and culturally specific references, allowing abuse to go undetected.

To address these barriers, JOSA, with support from IMS, developed Nuha, an open-source, AI-powered classifier that detects, analyses and documents patterns of sexist and misogynistic hate speech across multiple Arabic dialects. By automating the detection and classification of abusive content, Nuha enables researchers, journalists and civil society organisations to analyse large volumes of data more efficiently while reducing direct exposure to harmful material. Its localised approach allows it to identify forms of abuse that global platforms often miss, making it particularly effective in Arabic-speaking contexts. Nuha generates evidence and data visualisations that can be used by journalists, women's rights organisations and public authorities to document abusive online trends and hold perpetrators and platforms accountable. When a Jordanian lawyer was targeted with an online smear campaign in 2022, receiving rape and death threats, JOSA used Nuha to document the abuse and engage with social media platforms to remove content that violated community standards.

By producing better data, reducing exposure to harm to those monitoring online abuse and improving detection of locally specific forms of online hate speech, Nuha contributes to creating safer and more inclusive digital spaces. Nuha demonstrates how localised, AI-enabled solutions can contribute to tackling TFGBV and safeguard information integrity from gendered perspectives.

Nuha generates evidence and data visualisations that can be used to document abusive online trends and hold perpetrators and platforms accountable.

Enabling environment

2024/98–146/2025

JOB OPPORTUNITIES CREATED FOR
WOMEN JOURNALISTS IN AFGHANISTAN
THROUGH IMS PARTNERSHIPS.

PROBLEM

Restrictive laws, weak regulatory frameworks and increasing dominance of global technology companies undermine media viability, pluralism and the free flow of information.

SOLUTION

Coordinated, inclusive and evidence-based approaches can influence policies and regulations, even in complex environments. Through coalitions, supporting institutional capacity and promoting alternative digital infrastructures, IMS contributes to the political, economic and technological conditions necessary for independent media to thrive.

Safeguarding newsrooms from gender- based harassment in Zimbabwe

Gender Media Connect contributed to a sexual harassment policy that is now being implemented in newsrooms around Zimbabwe.

According to ZimFact, nearly one in three women journalists in Zimbabwe have experienced harassment in the newsroom, a violation that IMS and partner Gender Media Connect (GMC) have advocated for authorities and local media outlets to address.

Sustained efforts to promote newsroom awareness on sexual harassment in the media have culminated in concrete action from the Zimbabwe Media Commission (ZMC). IMS' support to GMC and local partners enabled awareness-raising, consultations and stakeholder engagement that contributed to the development of the first ZMC sexual harassment policy for all newsrooms in 2024.

“The sexual harassment policy is key in newsrooms and other workplaces.”

Jaya, Zimbabwean reporter

The policy represents an important step towards addressing systemic barriers to women’s participation in the media. Its relevance is underscored by a [WAN-IFRA Women in News report](#) cited by [UNESCO](#), which found that 53 percent of women in Zimbabwean newsrooms have faced sexual harassment – higher than the regional average.

Zimbabwean reporter Jaya¹ endured years of sexual harassment in the workplace. In 2025, Jaya accessed a lawyer to mount a legal case against the perpetrator, through a women journalists’ protection fund set up by IMS and GMC to tackle online and offline gender-based harassment. As well as legal support, the fund provides survivors with access to counselling and safe houses.

For Jaya, the introduction of a national media sexual harassment policy by the Zimbabwe government in 2024 means survivors no longer have to struggle in silence. “The sexual harassment policy is key in newsrooms and other workplaces, but so many journalists are afraid to report because it is a tiresome process,” she said. According to [WAN-IFRA’s study](#) across 21 countries, 69 percent of those who experienced harassment did not report it and 35 percent of incidents saw no action being taken after being reported.

Jaya’s newsroom has taken action and is now raising safeguarding standards. It has installed surveillance cameras and hired security teams. It is also using monitoring technology in the filing system so reporters can see if their stories are deleted for no reason by a supervisor who is acting inappropriately.

There are signs that change is also underway within the Zimbabwean police force, who have engaged IMS and media partners to educate them on police processes to better handle sexual harassment cases when survivors come forward. This development came about from the 2025 annual stakeholders conference in Harare that brought together media bodies and law enforcement.

1.
NAME CHANGED TO
PROTECT PRIVACY

Fostering inclusion for Afghan women through media

In 2025 alone, IMS' partnerships in Afghanistan have resulted in over 10 million women and girls being reached with critical information and nearly 150 women reporters landing newsroom jobs.

Women and girls remain among the most affected by Afghanistan's humanitarian crisis and the country's ongoing gender-based restrictions. According to the 2025/2026 Georgetown Institute's Index on Women, Peace and Security, Afghanistan ranked last out of 181 countries.

Despite the systematic restrictions, Afghan women journalists are using their voices every day to report and inform, covering stories on topics from health to climate change. Through IMS' partners in media, advocacy and safety, women journalists are supported in navigating and overcoming the challenging circumstances.

In 2025, advocacy work by IMS and its local partners helped create 146 job opportunities and internships for Afghan women reporters. This is an increase from the 98 jobs that were created in 2024. A recent survey of 49 media outlets found that 80 percent employed women. Women journalists currently report from 26 out of 34 provinces.

IMS and partners support the inclusion of women reporters in Afghan media outlets through gender-responsive newsroom budgeting, factoring in office space, secure equipment, transport costs and the possibility for work-from-home arrangements when the security situation becomes fragile.

IMS is also involved in providing Afghan journalists across all 34 provinces with safety consultations, emergency assistance, psychosocial support and internal relocation assistance. IMS and its partners are in frequent discussions with media outlets, the European Union, the United Nations and others to improve conditions for women journalists and to enhance solidarity from the international community.

In 2025, intervention by IMS and its local partner Afghan Journalists Safety Committee (AJSC) resulted in 13 media outlets resuming operations after facing risk of permanent closure. Collectively, IMS-supported partners ensured that around 10 million Afghan women and girls gained access to critical information, including health advice from doctors, financial literacy classes and tips from entrepreneurship experts on how to set up a business.

Women journalists currently report from 26 out of 34 Afghan provinces.

Through the partnership between IMS and partners, 1,983 Afghan journalists and media workers (of which 1,153 are women) received professional development to address skills gaps in 2025. AJSC alone provided training to 64 media outlets that resulted in the development of newsroom policies on gender equality, zero tolerance to harassment and safety, while 37 media outlets strengthened capacities on creating inclusive work environments. IMS provided technical guidance on policy development and how to approach gender-related capacity building.

As 2026 marks five years since the Taliban's return to power, prioritising work to improve conditions for women and girls in Afghanistan is paramount. IMS and its partners remain committed to building on the progress made in 2025, ensuring Afghan women and girls are seen, heard and included – in their newsrooms, their communities and their country's future.

AJSC

AFGHAN JOURNALISTS SAFETY COMMITTEE
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د افغان خبريالانو خونديتوب کمیته

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د افغان خبريالانو د خونديتوب کمیته

“Coalition building is our response to that reality”

Alia Ibrahim is the co-founder and CEO of Daraj Media, Lebanon, an IMS partner since 2017. She discusses the role that coalitions have played in Daraj’s work and ability to continue navigating the changing media landscape.

Over the last decade, independent media has become a meaningful force in the Arab region. While the landscape remains difficult, independent outlets today have audiences, influence and the ability to challenge dominant narratives. This visibility, however, also makes them vulnerable. Fragmented organisations with limited resources can easily find themselves duplicating efforts, competing for the same opportunities or becoming isolated targets for political and economic pressure.

Coalition building is our response to that reality.

The Syria Papers Coalition [a Daraj-led group of journalists, archivists, technologists and legal experts working for accountability in post-Assad Syria] is perhaps the clearest example. We created it, not simply to produce journalism, but to foster coordination among organisations working in the same space and reduce duplication, share knowledge, identify gaps and make better use of scarce resources.

Equally important, it was about resilience: a connected ecosystem is harder to marginalise, intimidate or dismantle than a collection of isolated organisations.

The same philosophy shaped MOOR (Water Project), where we worked with smaller media organisations in Yemen and Jordan to produce environmental and sustainability journalism. The results demonstrate that local organisations, when given the opportunity and support, can produce highly relevant content with strong audience engagement.

The Advertising Alliance of Independent Media (AIM) emerged from another challenge facing independent media: sustainability. It brought together a group of independent publishers to explore how collaboration could increase access to advertising and commercial opportunities. The advertising market in the Arab world is worth \$11 billion annually, yet independent media receives virtually none of it. AIM has since evolved into TNN – the Network of Networks – which is currently piloting growth strategies for Daraj and Raseef22.

Across all these initiatives, IMS has played an important enabling role. It has consistently understood that strengthening independent media requires more than supporting individual outlets; it requires supporting the ecosystem around them. IMS has been willing to invest in collaborative experiments, help incubate new models and provide the space for organisations like Daraj to test approaches that may ultimately benefit the wider field.

For us, coalition building is not a project or a methodology. It is a long-term strategy for ensuring that independent media in the Arab world becomes more resilient, more sustainable and more influential. It has always been central to our thinking and is very much in our DNA. We also have a strong track record of building coalitions organically and in ways that create genuine win-wins – both during moments of crisis and when new opportunities arise. If the first decade was about proving that independent media could exist, the next decade will be about proving it can thrive. We believe that the future will be built through coalitions.

“A connected ecosystem is harder to marginalise, intimidate or dismantle than a collection of isolated organisations.”

Alia Ibrahim, co-founder and CEO, Daraj Media

Digital infrastructure for democracy

IMS partner Good Commons is a collective promoting public interest infrastructure projects from around the world.

The consolidation of digital infrastructure into a handful of tech companies is a threat to information integrity globally. When a few dominant companies own social media and AI platforms, search engines, data centres and undersea cables, it creates the conditions that can limit the reach of media outlets, spread disinformation and put journalists' safety at risk.

Public interest infrastructure, designed and scaled in local communities, is needed as an alternative to those owned by dominant tech companies. However, better and safer digital infrastructures are founded on more than local data centres, open-sourced platforms and domestically produced chips. Solutions need to protect fundamental rights, support democratic participation and safeguard independent journalism.

To protect access to information and press freedom, a range of donors and communities need to invest in both hard- and software designed around inclusion, accountability and safety.

IMS is a co-founder of Good Commons, a collective that connects and promotes public interest infrastructure projects around the world. Good Commons illustrates a design methodology that applies to any digital tool: start with a specific community and a specific problem; build with and for the people who will use it; establish security and privacy by default; and measure success by whether people are better connected and able to make informed decisions.

Good Commons members are making an impact through this approach: Good Commons co-founder JamiiAfrica started as a message board in Tanzania in 2006, and grew into one of the most consequential civic platforms in Africa. People can anonymously report corruption, governance failures and local grievances in Swahili, and those reports have prompted legislative responses. At times the platform has outperformed both local news outlets and major social media platforms in reach and public trust.

A range of donors and communities need to invest in both hard- and software designed around inclusion, accountability and safety.

Mutante is an independent, participatory journalism initiative in Colombia that, since 2018, has helped individuals, experts and officials address complex problems like sexual violence, inequality and climate change. They reach people on mainstream social media but have developed their own moderation practices to engage local communities in constructive dialogue and action. Mutante are training other media organisations and NGOs in their methodology.

Good Commons learns from community media, public interest technologists, researchers and designers building tools, spaces and principles that have information integrity, inclusion, accountability and trust at heart. This is how we avoid reproducing dependency and harms, towards creating a genuinely democratic digital future.

Information integrity solutions

The IMS Information Integrity Solutions Papers address a range of key threats to information integrity. The papers present a range of practical, experience-based solutions to some of the most urgent challenges facing information integrity today.

[→ LEARN MORE](#)



Coalitions and alliances

Coalition building is a platform upon which the collective good is advanced.

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Good journalism

Access to accurate and reliable information in the form of public interest journalism is crucial to building better societies and economies.

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Safety of journalists and media freedom

The safety of journalists and media freedom are best achieved when all stakeholders work together locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

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Policy and regulation with the public interest at heart

IMS strengthens independent media and civil society to hold governments and platforms accountable.

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Sustainable innovative financing

Independent media need public funds distributed as core support to ensure financial stability, enabling media outlets to operate while they work to diversify revenue and build a financial runway for other forms of investment.

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Alternative platforms that serve the public interest

Alternative platforms must be designed and scaled with information integrity built in from the start.

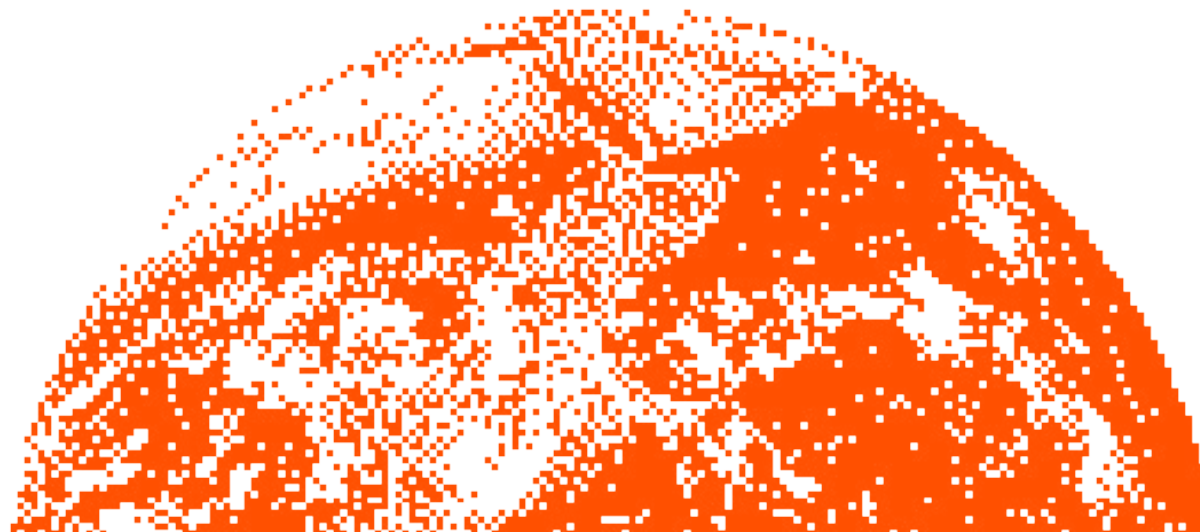
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Prebunking led by community-based coalitions

Countering disinformation should include efforts to debunk it before it captures significant public agendas.

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What our partners say

The IMS-tailored support covers key areas of the media work; content production, capacity building and infrastructure upgrade. Other donors support only one-sided dimension.

Managing editor, media outlet, Middle East and North Africa

Working with the IMS team has always been different and easier, as they are well-informed and have a deep and insightful understanding of the local media sector.

Executive director, media association, Africa

IMS stands out through its partnership-based approach, trust and strong understanding of the local media environment. Rather than focusing only on project implementation, IMS invests in strengthening organisational capacity, encourages dialogue and is open to partners' feedback and evolving needs.

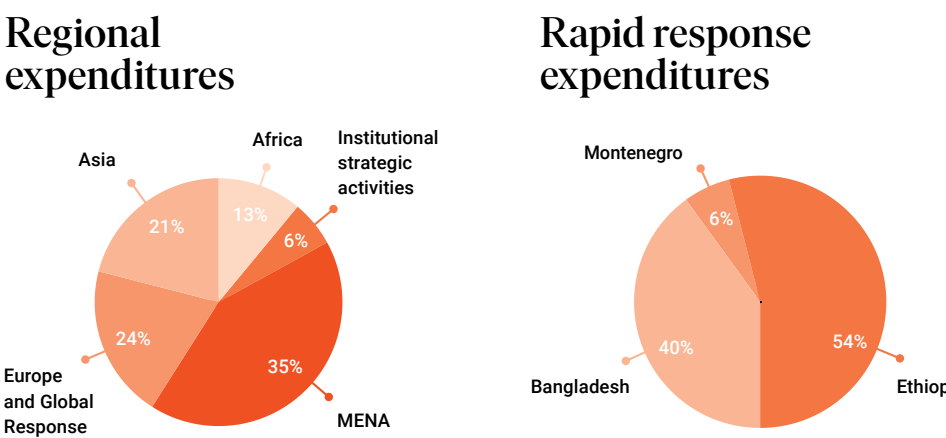
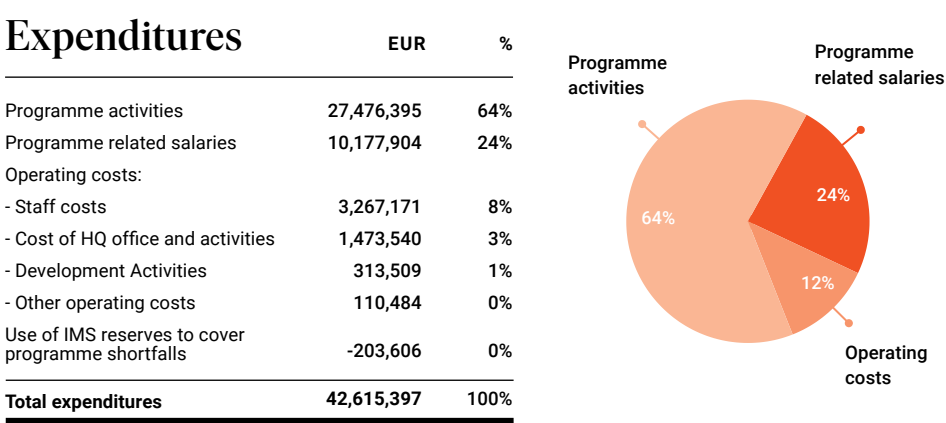
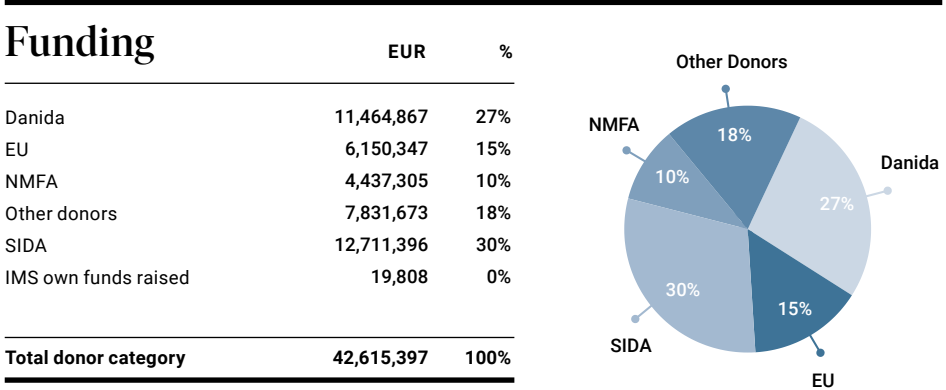
Editor-in-chief, media association, Eastern Europe

IMS does not only provide funding, but also understands the quality of journalism, newsroom needs, safety concerns and the long-term sustainability challenges of the local media. This makes IMS a very valuable and trusted partner for us.

Project manager, media outlet, Asia

Financial overview 2025

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.



Thank you to our donors

IMS' biggest institutional donors are:



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In 2025, our work was also made possible through support from:

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and Development Office (UK)

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ford Foundation

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation

French Agency for Development

IMS supporting members
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*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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