

# Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA)

## Terms of Reference – Baseline Study

Project Title	Promote and Protect Democracy by Safeguarding Freedom of Opinion and Expression and Combating Mis/Disinformation in Guiné-Bissau.
Project Location	Guiné-Bissau
Project Duration	1.5 Years
Project Funder	European Union

### 1. Background:

The Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) is a regional, independent, non-partisan, non-governmental organisation that works to promote freedom of expression and media development across West Africa. In the last 27 years, the MFWA has worked with both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders and partners at the national, regional and international levels to contribute to improving the media and freedom of expression landscape in West Africa. More details about the MFWA can be found on our website [www.mfwa.org](http://www.mfwa.org).

The MFWA, together with two other consortium partners – Reporters sans Frontières, and Fondation Hironnelle, have been awarded a grant by the European Union for 18months media sector support project in Guiné-Bissau. The project is titled: ***Promote and Protect Democracy by Safeguarding Freedom of Opinion and Expression and Combating Mis/Disinformation in Guiné-Bissau*** and has an overall objective of *enhancing media ethics, journalist safety, and media independence by strengthening self-regulatory frameworks; strengthening journalists’ capacities, and by promoting awareness among young people and the public of the opportunities offered by the media and the risks of mis/disinformation.*

The project aims to foster a responsible and secure media environment in Guiné-Bissau by promoting adherence to self-regulatory ethical standards, enhancing journalist safety through model policies and strengthened partnerships, and building the capacity of journalists and civil society organizations in media freedom, freedom of expression, and combating mis/disinformation. Additionally, it seeks to improve public awareness, particularly among young people, about media opportunities and the risks of mis/disinformation through media literacy initiatives and widespread campaigns.

In the end, we seek to have the following broad outcomes:

- a. Enhanced responsible and secure media environment through adherence to self-regulatory media ethical standards
- b. Enhanced safety and security of journalists through the development and implementation of model safety policies and strengthened partnerships with international and regional networks
- c. Strengthened capacities of journalists and public interest media organisations from civil society in the fields of media freedom and freedom of expression, mis/disinformation and hate speech.
- d. Improved CSO and public awareness, particularly among young people, about media opportunities and the dangers of mis/disinformation through media and information literacy initiatives and widespread media campaigns



## 2. Purpose of the baseline study

The purpose of the baseline study is to determine, through qualitative and quantitative analysis, the current context in relation to the main elements, objectives and intended results (targets) of the project. The study will help establish baseline values for key indicators as well as serve as a reference for monitoring and evaluation purposes. In addition, findings from the study will also be used for ensuring evidence-based advocacy with stakeholders and partners.

In line with the objective and intended outcomes/results of the project, the baseline studies should, help establish the following:

- Examine journalists' awareness of the country's media code of ethics.
- Assess the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs), media, and youth to identify and counter mis/disinformation.
- Assess public trust in media as a reliable source of information.
- The state of media freedom and professional journalism practices in Guinea-Bissau, including regulatory frameworks, press freedom indicators, and challenges facing journalists.
- Evaluate the financial viability of media organizations, examining revenue models, funding sources, and economic challenges impacting media sustainability.
- Analyze working conditions in the media sector, focusing on employment security, wages, and professional development opportunities for journalists.
- Assess the safety and security of journalists, documenting incidents of harassment, violence, or censorship affecting media professionals.
- Evaluate existing training and capacity-building initiatives for media practitioners, identifying gaps and opportunities for skills enhancement.
- Examine the landscape of broadcast media ownership and regulation, assessing the implications for media pluralism, diversity, and independence.
- Evaluate journalists' perception of safety and security in their work environment.
- Determine the proportion of media organizations implementing a safety policy for journalists.
- Analyze media partnerships with other regional and international media organizations.

## 3. Scope of Work

The consultant(s) will be expected to:

- Conduct a desk review of existing literature, reports, and legal frameworks related to media freedom, journalism practices, and media sustainability in Guinea-Bissau.
- Design and implement qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, including surveys, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions with journalists, media owners, policymakers, and civil society actors.
- Analyze the financial and economic conditions affecting media organizations, including advertising trends, donor support, and business models.
- Assess the professional standards and ethical practices within journalism, with a focus on misinformation, disinformation, and editorial independence.
- Map the ownership structure of broadcast media outlets and evaluate the regulatory environment governing media operations.
- Identify capacity gaps and training needs for journalists and media professionals.



- Provide recommendations for strengthening media freedom, improving working conditions, enhancing safety measures for journalists, and ensuring sustainable media financing.

#### **4. Methodology**

The specific details of the study's design and methodology will be discussed and agreed with the project implementing team at the beginning of the consultancy. But generally, the study will involve different data collecting methods: desk review, direct observation, quantitative survey, interviews, and if possible, focus group discussions. The development of the methodology will involve the following steps: The key project documents (full proposal, log frame) of the project will be shared with the consultant. The consultant will then do a desk review of all documentation; prepare a questionnaire and interview guide with the project manager and coordinator; and prepare a work plan jointly with the project team. The assignment will be undertaken in-person in Guiné-Bissau working in co-ordination with the Project Co-Ordinator and under the supervision of the project manager.

#### **5. Timeframe**

The baseline study will take place during the month of March 2025. The workplan will spell out specific dates and tasks and milestones. A draft report will be submitted at the end of March and MFWA will have one week to submit comments with a final report that considers, the comments of the MFWA, being submitted by April 15, 2025.

#### **6. Final Report**

The final report to be written in Portuguese or English (depending on the linguistic competence of the Consultant) must include the following sections:

- Executive summary (max. 4 pages)
- Introduction
- Objectives of the baseline study
- Methodology used
- Analysis of the main results (per the results indicators outlined under section 2 of this TOR)
- Conclusions and recommendations

#### **7. Requirements for the Assignment**

We are looking for a consultant who meets the following requirements:

- A research degree (PhD preferred) in relevant field (Journalism, Social Sciences, etc)
- Proven experience in conducting project-based research, especially, in the field of media and freedom of expression
- In-depth knowledge and experience on media development and freedom of expression issues especially in the West Africa context. Familiarity with the Guiné-Bissau context will be an advantage.
- Demonstrable record of previous experience in similar assignment will be an added advantage



## 8. Terms and Conditions

Consultants who meet the requirements should submit an **expression of interest**, which should include the following:

- A suitability statement, including commitment and availability for the entire assignment
- Curriculum vitae clearly spelling out qualifications and experience
- A brief statement on the proposed study methodology, including a draft work plan
- Sample or links to at least two previous reports written by the consultant

## 9. Budget

A financial proposal containing a proposed daily fee should be submitted. Logistical and operational costs such as flight costs and accommodation will be covered separately by the MFWA

## 9. Submission

The expression of interest should be sent to [applications@mfw.org](mailto:applications@mfw.org) copying [daniel@mfw.org](mailto:daniel@mfw.org) on or before February 28, 2025.

