

Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA)

Terms of Reference – Development of a Model Safety Policy for Journalists in Guiné-Bissau

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	18 Months
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.

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*

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

A key aspect of this initiative is the development of a model safety policy for journalists, which will serve as a practical, newsroom-level guide to protecting journalists in Guiné-Bissau. A series of engagement forums and capacity-building activities will be conducted to ensure the validation, adoption, and implementation of the model safety policy. These activities will involve journalists, media owners, civil society representatives, government officials, state actors, and security agencies, fostering a collaborative approach to safeguarding journalists. MFWA seeks to engage a consultant to develop this model safety policy, facilitate its validation and implementation, and support stakeholder engagement to enhance journalist safety in Guiné-Bissau.

2. Purpose of the Assignment

The consultant will be responsible for developing a model safety policy tailored to the needs of newsrooms in Guiné-Bissau and facilitate a one-day validation workshop among key media actors. The consultant will facilitate three additional forums aimed at strengthening the implementation of the model safety policy and the broader safety framework. These forums will engage state actors, security agencies, editors, and journalists to discuss practical strategies for enhancing journalist safety, improving collaboration between media and security forces, and integrating the policy into newsroom operations. Finally, the consultant will support dissemination efforts, ensuring that media organizations are well-informed about the model safety policy and encouraged to adopt it as a standard safety framework for protecting journalists.

3. Scope of Work

The consultant will:

- Conduct a desk review of journalist safety policies, existing legal frameworks, and global best practices.
- Develop a structured, adaptable model safety policy, including: Physical safety protocols for field reporting, protest coverage, and high-risk assignments; digital security measures to protect journalists from cyber threats, surveillance, and online harassment; guidelines for emergency response and support mechanisms in case of threats or attacks; provisions for the safety of marginalized groups, such as female journalists and minority reporters; implementation strategies for newsroom adoption, including training and compliance monitoring.
- Organise a one-day validation workshop to review and refine the policy with key stakeholders, including: Journalists, media owners, civil society representatives, and government officials; and The National Coordinating Committee on the Implementation of the Framework for the Safety of Journalists.
- Gather stakeholder input and revise the draft policy to reflect the diverse perspectives of the media sector.
- Ensure the finalized policy is aligned with the National Comprehensive Framework for the Safety of Journalists and international best practices.
- Support MFWA in organizing and facilitating three one-day forums with media stakeholders, state actors and security agencies
- Provide recommendations on how newsrooms and media organizations can effectively implement the policy.
- Support MFWA's efforts to integrate the policy into journalism training programs and newsroom safety protocols.
- Ensure that the final document is available in both print and digital formats for wide dissemination.

4. Methodology

The specific details of the study's design and methodology will be discussed and agreed upon with the project implementation team at the start of the consultancy. However, in general the assignment will involve a desk review to analyse existing safety policies, legal frameworks, and global best practices; stakeholder consultations with journalists, media owners, civil society organizations, and safety experts to gather insights on safety challenges; and a comparative analysis benchmarking the model policy against international frameworks such as those from UNESCO, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), and the IFJ. The consult will present the draft policy to key stakeholders for review, consensus-

building, and final approval at a validation workshop; as well as lead discussions to promote the adoption and implementation of the safety framework at three separate forums organised by the MFWA.

5. Deliverables

The consultant will be expected to produce the following:

- Inception report outlining the methodology, work plan, and initial findings.
- Draft Model Safety Policy
- Validation workshop report summarising discussions, feedback, and key revisions from the workshop.
- Revised and validated (final) version of the policy incorporating all feedback.
- Implementation and dissemination strategy with recommendations on how media organizations can adopt and integrate the policy.

All reports and documents should be submitted in Portuguese, accompanied by an English translation.

6. Consultant's Profile

The consultant should meet the following criteria:

- Advanced degree (Master's or PhD) in Journalism, Media Studies, Human Rights, or a related field.
- Experience in media safety, journalist protection, and digital security frameworks.
- Strong understanding of journalist safety challenges, particularly in West Africa.
- Expertise in policy development, stakeholder engagement, and facilitation skills.
- Strong understanding of media freedom, freedom of expression, and contemporary journalistic challenges.
- Familiarity with the media landscape in Guiné-Bissau is a strong advantage.
- Ability to work independently and meet deadlines.
- Excellent analytical and report-writing skills.
- Fluency in Portuguese (preferred) or English.

7. Timeframe & Duration

The assignment will be conducted 12 months. The consultant is expected to work closely with MFWA and key media stakeholders throughout the process. The tentative effective date for implementation is March 2025.

8. Application Process

Interested qualified consultants should submit:

- Expression of Interest (EOI) outlining relevant expertise and approach.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) detailing qualifications and experience.
- Technical Proposal, including proposed methodology for conducting the analysis and sample reports.
- Financial Proposal detailing consultancy fees.

All applications should be sent to applications@mfw.org with a copy to daniel@mfw.org on or before **Sunday, March 16, 2025**. However, applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, and the process may close once a suitable candidate is selected.

9. Budget & Payment Terms

The consultant should provide a daily rate in their financial proposal. MFWA will cover operational costs (e.g., travel for stakeholder engagements). Payment arrangements will be finalised with the selected consultant.

10. Terms & Conditions

- The consultant will work under the supervision of the MFWA project team.
- All intellectual property rights of the reports will belong to MFWA.
- Confidentiality of all data and findings must be maintained.