A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT DIALOGUE ON THE RESEARCH OF THE EFFICACY OF MEDIA TRAINING ON EXTRACTIVE SECTOR REPORTING ORGANISED BY THE CENTRE FOR JOURNALISM INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (CJID). THE EVENT WAS HELD ON 24TH NOVEMBER, 2022 AT TREASURE SUITES AND CONFERENCES, ABUJA.

PREAMBLE

Media and investigative journalism are key components of bottom-up accountability. One of the most important roles the media plays in improving governance is to act as a watchdog. Across the world, the media has been able to shed light on the questionable actions of government officials and conflicts of interest. Such a role is built on the important ideal of independent media outlets and journalists, with these actors being seen as having a duty to citizens to provide information when political leaders abuse their power. In addressing corruption and the use of public resources derived from natural resources, watchdog institutions and investigative journalism are key to ensuring these funds lead to public services.

During the presentation, he made the following points:

- There are three major geological units in Nigeria; Basement complex, Younger granites and sedimentary basins.
- Nigeria has the second-largest reserve for gas in Africa.
- Virtually all the states in Nigeria have mineral resources.
- There are different classifications of mineral resources in Nigeria which includes; Metallic minerals, industrial minerals, energy minerals and gemstones.

The event witnessed the presentation of the background overview of the extractive sectors in Nigeria by Dr Deita Bassi, Technical Director of Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI).

The dialogue session was organised to engage media stakeholders and Civil Society Organisations, to share ideas and validate the key findings from the research on the Efficacy of Media Training to Cover Extractive-linked corruption, to promote the evidence and for future partnerships among actors.
PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH

There was a presentation on the key findings from the research on the Efficacy of Media Training on extractive sector reporting, by Akintunde Babatunde-Deputy Director, Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development, and Israel Boboye-Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development. They presented the research while pointing out the data collection processes. The key findings from the research include;

- The media training had propelled increased initiatives for more stories in the extractive sector.
- The training had built a high reporting propensity to be able to report in-depth stories (investigations, explainers, analysis etc), and this has yielded some impacts such as policy recommendations, awards and stakeholder engagements.
- To improve the quality of journalism, there is a need to think about capacity building, as it helps effective reporting.
- Media organisations have also appraised the positive role of media training as it results in effective reporting, more sophisticated ideas, and advanced journalism practice which has helped to drive policies to hold the government accountable.
- The provision of grants motivates journalists to report stories.
- There is usually an information gap between journalists and newsroom managers.

- Most times, there is a conflict of interest in what journalists propose and what they execute.

OBSERVATIONS AND PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

Various observations were raised as regards the place of media training and the future of extractive sector reporting in Nigeria. These are;

- The location of these mineral resources is situated in remote places, making it difficult for journalists to access these sites.
- Newsrooms do not hire professionals to produce credible explainers to foster more engagement of extractive sector reports.
- There is a lack of communication between reporters and newsroom managers.
- There seems to be a disconnect between outside trainers and media organisations.
- The relationship between reporters and other newsrooms is also quite important for wider reach.
- Politics in newsrooms is a major problem.
- Although capacity development is central, newsrooms face challenges with finances. There is however a pushback from newsroom managers thinking training institutions are trying to teach them how to run their newsrooms.
- Editors sometimes do not show up for training like this.
RECOMMENDATIONS/INTERVENTIONS

- A percentage of journalists' grants can go to the newsroom to foster more collaborative work.

- There must be capacity building also for editors in a bid to understand the registers for reporting.

- We need to start looking for comparisons beyond the traditional newsrooms, i.e going global to adopt innovations.

- Journalists should involve editors in these commissioned reports for a smooth editorial process.

- Trainers need to interface with newsrooms based on their realities.

- When organisations are giving grants, they should communicate with someone internally in the newsroom, to ensure the reporter delivers.

- There is a need to understand the dynamics and politics of media organisations.

- We need to start rethinking the positions of our journalists and start seeing them as knowledge producers and training them for knowledge management.

- Media houses need to prioritise training to build journalists' capacities.

- Training institutions should market training to newsroom managers, asking them to nominate appropriate people for the workshop.

- It is important to bring the newsroom managers on board, but the passion of the reporters must first be established.

- There should be step down trainings organised by journalists who attended these trainings.

Recommendations on How to Hold Journalists Accountable

- Training institutions have to know the journalists they are dealing with.

- Journalists should be constantly engaged and followed up.

- Journalists should be trained based on the sector they report on.

- Verify that letterhead submitted for recommendation are valid by getting in contact with the organisation.

- It is important to engage the gate-keepers, for instance, the media organisation a journalist reports for should be made to sign an MOU.

The contents of this communique were agreed on by all stakeholders present and adopted.

Dated this 24th of November, 2022
Witnessed by Representatives of:

Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI)
Ministry of Mines and Steel
The Guardian Paged Initiative
Dataphtye, Media Career Development Network
DEVATOP