



Fund for Innovation and Transformation

Fonds pour l'innovation et la transformation



ALTERNATIVES

A Platform Against Violence on Women Journalists in Sudan

Context

In 2019, Sudan ranked 175 out of 180 countries in the Reporters Without Borders World Press Freedom Index. The country continues to repress and restrict the activities of journalists working in traditional media, as well as those who work online. Women journalists are especially vulnerable – subjected to attacks that are both violent and sexual in nature. A 2016 Human Rights Watch report showed that Sudanese security forces often use sexual violence, intimidation, and other forms of assault to silence those who publicly defend human rights. The lack of available data and information on this issue is hindering systematized responses from media outlets or international agencies.

The Innovative Solution

Supported by FIT, Alternatives along with local partner Al Alag tested an innovative solution aimed at improving the safety and protection of women journalists in Sudan. The initiative provided them with tools (a whistleblower's tool and a longitudinal questionnaire) to collect and analyze information on violence prevention so that they can build an empirical evidence base and craft prevention strategies. This would allow them to appropriately guide both Sudanese and international agencies seeking to intervene.

Advancing Gender Equality

The innovation provided evidence-based analysis to inform civil society and policymakers of the ways women journalists are discriminated against and subjected to violence. This analysis was used to develop prevention strategies and protocols to test within the project. The analysis considered variables that may explain these types of violence from multiple dimensions (social, economic, ethical, educational, cultural, etc.). The intersectional analysis and association between gender and other explanatory variables of violence (sex, age, education, religious affiliation, ethnicity, etc.) contributed to a better understanding of the risk of victimization. Emphasis was also placed on processes such as gender mainstreaming, skills assessment, and capacity building of local partners on gender issues.



COUNTRY
Sudan

AMOUNT
\$246,710

TESTING PERIOD
15 months
Ended June 2021



GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE (GE3)

THEME: GENDER EQUALITY

Testing Framework

Through a relational database, the monitoring and evaluation system collected real-time data via multiple sources and analysis methods. Project updates were collected through forms tailored to each activity that considered the changing socio-political and economic context in the country. Statistical analysis, and content analysis by coding and theme model were used.

Results and Impact

A total of 405 people were directly reached by the project and sensitized to the tools. A longitudinal survey was applied to 321 women; the reporting tool was used by 14 women; 44 people were trained in data collection through the use of research tools on violence; 10 people were trained in data analysis and 8 people participated in the workshop on the formulation of the violence prevention strategy. The longitudinal questionnaire was the preferred tool for collecting data on violence. This tool allowed Alternatives to gain a deeper understanding of women journalists' perceptions, personal experiences, and knowledge about violence. Interestingly, the whistleblower tool did not have the expected impact mainly due to 1) the reduction of cases of press freedom violations in the context of the transitional regime 2) the lack of confidence in the existing complaint mechanisms due to the absence of rights and governmental institutions guaranteeing the follow-up of these complaints. The whistleblower tool, comprised of a detailed incident report form completed by Alalag staff, requires a greater learning curve and a favorable legislative context.

Key Lessons

1. Online analysis tools are not always transferable to field partners, especially in an environment where Internet access and regular power outages can cause major problems. A hybrid electronic/paper approach is sometimes the best approach as applied in this project. Enumerators were needed to enable the efficient collection of data, as the application of the paper format implied a huge amount of work in systematizing the information.
2. The appropriation and adaptation of content must be done with respect to local cultural specificities. However, these adaptations have limitations that are more ideological than scientific. The exclusion of the question on religion, ethnicity and sexual orientation excluded the possibility of better understanding these exclusionary factors in the reality of violence.
3. There is a need to involve more men in these initiatives, as male allies are needed to transform the patriarchal context.

"The pilot project has helped transform the reality of women journalists in the country. Before it was not possible to talk openly about violence against women journalists. It was a subject that was avoided because of reprisals, however it was our daily reality. The project allowed us to create synergies that, with the political change and the adoption of important legislative changes on women's rights, give us hope for change in the future. Most importantly, it allowed us to express ourselves and break the silence on the issue. -Tayseer Elbadawi, Project Coordinator in Sudan.

PARTNER ORGANIZATION

Al Alag

TARGET PARTICIPANTS

395 journalists (384 women, 11 men)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Fund for Innovation and Transformation Alternatives](#)

ABOUT FIT

The Fund for Innovation and Transformation supports Canadian small and medium-sized organizations (SMOs) testing innovative solutions that advance gender equality in the Global South.



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