

ANNEX 1: QUALITY OF INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING OVERVIEW (LEARNING BRIEF)



Overview

The On Nigeria 1.0 Media Monitoring methodology aims to accurately quantify and assess various features of the corruption and anti-corruption-related media landscape in Nigeria. Media Monitoring involves three sub-streams of data collection and analysis: (1) *traditional* media monitoring, (2) quality of *investigative* reporting, and (3) *social* media monitoring. The methodology – especially the quality of investigative reporting sub-stream – has evolved considerably since the beginning of On Nigeria.¹ Section 2 of this annex briefly summarizes the 1.0 methodology for sub-streams 1 and 2, and notes how those methods changed over time. Section 3 explains how the quality of investigative reporting methodology has been applied to different analyses.

On Nigeria 1.0 Media Monitoring Methodology

TRADITIONAL MEDIA MONITORING SUB-STREAM

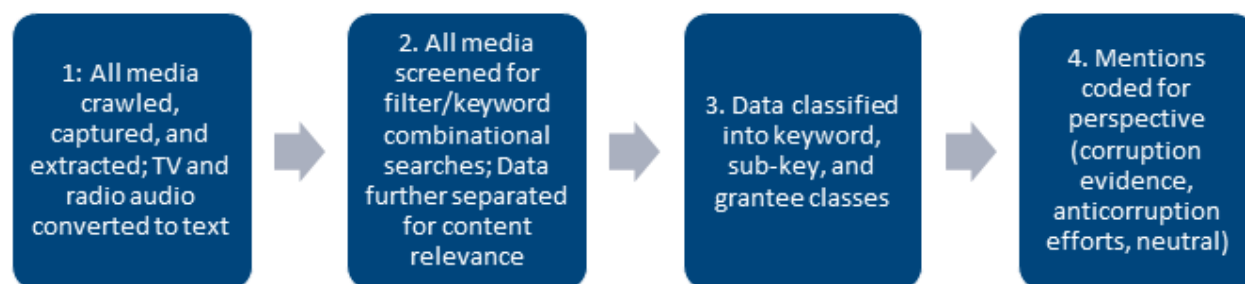
Under On Nigeria 1.0, Traditional media monitoring tracked reporting by traditional print, radio, television, and online media outlets over time. EnCompass subcontracted Playspread LLC, based in Lagos, to conduct the media monitoring. The media monitoring sample targeted 24 media sources in 2016 and 26 sources from 2017-2020, which EnCompass selected purposively in conjunction with Nigerian media experts at Playspread and the On Nigeria team. The sample covered the most widely read and broadcast media sources in Nigeria, and media outlets that were On Nigeria grantees, and ensured regional representation of Nigeria’s main media markets. Although purposively drawn, the selection of media sources was designed to capture a broad swath of Nigerian journalism and be of sufficient size to reflect national trends in corruption reporting.

¹ **Note:** The Media Monitoring methodology is in the process of being redesigned to align with On Nigeria 2.0.

Traditional media monitoring measured the level of coverage of corruption issues and anticorruption actions, including the degree to which civil society’s and citizens’ anticorruption work was amplified through media coverage. Data consisted of (1) numerical frequencies of keyword mentions, which captured the quantity of corruption-related reporting on different topics; (2) the overall tone (perspective) of articles—whether articles were focused on instances of corruption or anticorruption wins; and (3) an assessment of the quality of investigative journalism.

EnCompass, with input from Playspread the On Nigeria team, and eventually, On Nigeria grantees, selected corruption and anticorruption-related keywords for each On Nigeria 1.0 module; media monitoring screened for these keywords alongside 35 corruption-related filters and a set of cross-cutting keywords. Relevant keywords, also referred to as “mentions,” were reported and analyzed on a quarterly basis. Media monitoring data are analyzed in Excel, using descriptive statistic to capture trends over time. Exhibit 1: Media Monitoring Process shows the steps Playspread used to collect, screen, and classify the data prior to analysis.

Exhibit 1: Media Monitoring Process



QUALITY OF INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING SUB-STREAM

Under On Nigeria 1.0, the EnCompass team, in collaboration with a professor in the School of Communications at Lagos State University and a team of graduate students, reviewed and coded all articles collected via the traditional media monitoring process. Articles coded as investigative were then assessed for quality. The first iteration of the quality of investigative reporting analysis focused on the 2016 traditional media monitoring dataset. To be included in the investigative reporting analysis, articles had to be coded as both in-depth and proactive. Such reports qualified as an investigative report, and were subsequently measured on five standards of investigative quality: (1) public interest, (2) report originality, (3) neutrality of investigation, (4) research quality, and (5) source variety² (see Exhibit 2 and Annex 2). In 2016, only 6 of 1,266 articles in the dataset qualified as an investigative report.

² To develop standards for quality, EnCompass conducted a literature review of reports and guides detailing investigative reporting. Sources from this review included the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA), and International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR), among others. The five domains for quality used in this analysis are based on common themes that emerged from the literature review

In the course of the 2018 quality of investigative reporting process, data quality checks revealed a difference in the number of articles qualifying as investigative reports based on the coding conducted by the Lagos School of Communications team and the coding conducted by EnCompass. To reconcile these differences, in the 2018 process, EnCompass team members and the Lagos School of Communication team applied an updated methodology, classifying all articles from the traditional media monitoring sub-stream into six defined categories: (1) investigative; (2) news story- potentially investigative; (3) news story- news; (4) news story- feature; (5) op-ed/editorial or letter to the editor; and (6) press release reprint and or publication of speech, after which articles were analyzed and scored on the five standards of investigative quality.

Exhibit 2: Quality of Investigative Reporting Standards

Categories	Standards for quality
Public Interest	Investigative report is reflective of the needs and interests of a specific population (i.e., group of people sharing common characteristics), which it connects to the broader public interest. ³ Or, the report relates a specific issue to the average citizen or broader issues of governance (management of public affairs).
Report Originality	The article presents new information evidence that is the result of original, rigorous, reporting (e.g., the media source states that they are breaking the story, or that they dug deeper into an ongoing story to find additional information previously not public that changes the story) ⁴
Neutrality of Investigation	The investigation leading to the report is conducted in a way that does not make assumptions at the outset; this means good faith of sources is not presumed (any source may provide false information), and no information is used without attempt at verification. These attempts at verification are presented, even if unsuccessful (e.g., a document could not be obtained despite journalistic attempt, or contradicting sources were not willing to comment). This does not mean the published investigative report cannot present a hypothesis, but it does document how investigation provided opportunity to disprove hypothesis. ⁵
Research Quality	The report presents compelling evidence from multiple types of sources, including both human sources and documents (legal or government documents, business records, vital statistics, think tank or academic reports ⁶). These sources are clearly identified, verified, and have direct knowledge of topic. Sources of questionable reputability may be included but should not be basis for the article and thus do not fulfill this standard (consider treatment of these sources under neutrality standard, above).
Source Variety	Report's sources (either human or document) present a wide variety of viewpoints, i.e., article presents all sides of a story or sources represent the opinions of all stakeholders. ⁷

In October 2021, this updated process was applied again, resulting in the full analysis of the quality of investigative reporting available in Learning Brief 3. For more on the Media Monitoring methodology under On Nigeria 1.0, including the social media monitoring sub-stream, please refer to Annex 4 of the 2019 Synthesis Report.

³ Reporting on Corruption A Resource Tool for Governments and Journalists Reporting on Corruption, UNCAC, 2013. p 14

⁴ UNCAC. Reporting on Corruption A Resource Tool for Governments and Journalists Reporting on Corruption, UNCAC, 2013. p 14-15

⁵ UNESCO. Story-Based Inquiry: A manual for investigative journalists. p. 9

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001930/193078e.pdf#193103>

⁶ Center for International Private Enterprise. Investigative Reporting: A toolkit for Reporters. 2009. p 38.

https://icirnigeria.org/resources/uploads/Investigative_Reporting_Toolkit-English.pdf

⁷ Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. How to Become a Mouthpiece for the People: A Manual for Investigative Journalism. 2016. p 31

Applications of the Quality of Investigative Reporting Approach

2018 INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING QUALITY TECHNICAL MEMO

In November 2019, the EnCompass team presented the *On Nigeria 2018 Quality of Investigative Reporting Findings: Technical Memo*. The memo summarized the findings of the 2018 Quality of Investigative Reporting media monitoring activity, in comparison to the 2016 media monitoring activity. The technical memo includes the results of the traditional media monitoring processes for the 2016 and 2018 media articles. An analysis of the 2018 media articles was conducted to identify the proportion of investigative and potentially investigative articles. These articles were further analyzed by each of the investigative reporting quality standard domains.

LEARNING BRIEF 3: 2017-2020 INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING QUALITY REPORT

In October 2021, the EnCompass team produced the *On Nigeria 2.0 Learning Brief #3–Quality of Investigative Reporting (2016–2019)*. This learning brief presents findings and conclusions from an analysis of media monitoring data from 2016–2019 with a specific focus on the quantity and quality of corruption-related investigative reporting supported by media and journalism grantee organizations and non-grantee media sources in Nigeria. In April 2022, the EnCompass team added the media monitoring data from 2020 to the report, presenting the data for all four years. The EnCompass team shared the updated report, *On Nigeria 2.0 Learning Brief #3–Quality of Investigative Reporting (2016–2020)*, with the Program Team.

INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING QUALITY REPORTS UNDER ON NIGERIA 2.0

As On Nigeria 1.0 shifts to the next phase of work, On Nigeria 2.0, the media and journalism module continues to be a priority, with a renewed commitment to support approaches aimed at improving investigative reporting on corruption-related issues. EnCompass will continue to measure the quality of corruption-related investigative journalism over time. The On Nigeria 2.0 traditional media monitoring and investigative reporting methodologies better align with the new modules and the Learning Questions from the On Nigeria 2.0 Evaluation and Learning Framework. Updated analyses will be presented in forthcoming learning briefs on an annual basis.

