



In Ukraine local journalists risk their lives everyday. Small picture: Sashi Kumar from the Asian College of Journalism (ACJ), India, and Werner Eggert

Message from the Director



Werner Eggert

When we at the Interlink Academy look back on our work over the past year, we can do so with pride and satisfaction. Our major multi-year projects in Nepal and Zimbabwe are having a strong impact, and we were also able to further our cooperation in Ukraine covering areas such as investigative journalism and media literacy. This was possible despite the great concerns and fears that plague our partners in Ukraine and other countries.

The small photo on the top of this page shows me with the founder and chairman of the Asian College of Journalism from Chennai in India, Sashi Kumar. We have cooperated for the last two decades, and this year he shared his experience in setting up a journalism school with our partner in Nepal. Bringing together people who care about media freedom and professional journalism is one of our most heartfelt matters of concern.

I would like to recommend reading the article by our alumna Maria Carvajal Alcivar from Ecuador. Maria is physically limited but still has managed to build a remarkable career as a journalist.

Interlink Academy commemorates the 10th anniversary of its founding as indicated by the logo in the masthead. We will celebrate our birthday in style and are preparing a suitable party to mark the occasion. I would be delighted if you celebrated with us. I wish you all a Happy New Year 2024.

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Strengthening Media and Information Literacy in Zimbabwe: CITE's and Interlink Academy's Cooperation

The Interlink Academy and its long-time local partner Centre for Innovation and Technology (CITE) implemented a comprehensive Media and Information Literacy (MIL) project in Zimbabwe. The three year spanning project reaches out to numerous communities in Matabeleland with the help of trained Community Organizers.



The project aims to empower the people in Bulawayo and Matabeleland North and South with essential media and information literacy (MIL) skills. Fake news are an increasing problem in Zimbabwe, and with the elections this year misinformation and disinformation spiked heavily.

Thirty-six community organizers have been selected by CITE, our local partner in Zimbabwe, and trained to meet the challenge of passing MIL skills on to a diverse targetgroup. Teachers, high school students, housewives, small business owners, professionals and many more attend the workshops in the 18 hubs all over Bulawayo and the regions of Matabeleland North and South. They learn how to identify and debunk fake news, access credible sources, protect their data and participate in opinion-making through social media.

On the following pages you will read in detail about the content, progress and challenges of this project in 2023. Interlink Academy trainer Wolfgang Wichmann and community organizers have taken the time to report on the project.



Impressions from our workshops in the regions of Zimbabwe

About Our Partner:

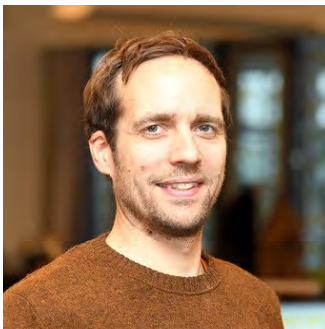
CITE is a Zimbabwean NGO that aims to create spaces for young people, journalists, creatives, and techies to interact with each other and most importantly new technology in the otherwise underdeveloped and repressed media environment of Zimbabwe. Through this, CITE aims to empower the citizens of Zimbabwe and teach them proper access to reliable information. Please visit their website for more information about CITE. You could also download the [project's brochure](#) or visit CITE's [local website](#).



Our team of Community Organisers, CITE and Interlink Academy trainers together on a group photo in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Developing Fact-checking Skills and Combatting Fake News in Matabeleland, Zimbabwe

This year, Interlink Academy's **Wolfgang Wichmann** held trainings for our Community Organisers in Zimbabwe to better detect and battle the spread of fake news. Down below, he reports on his experience in Zimbabwe.



Wolfgang Wichmann,
Interlink Academy

Just a short walk away from fake news that can be spotted within every day life, as the breathtaking scenery of 2023 was an election year in Zimbabwe. And it became the world's famous Victoria Falls and the impressive its way into peoples' daily routines. "In my community I realized that most people are bombarded daily with various images and articles", explained CITE Community Organizer Handsome Sibanda: "They have a difficult time differentiating real from fake." On a local level, community organizers met in January 2023 and learned

about mobile journalism as well as factchecking and combatting fake news.

As a journalist working for Germany's most significant television news show "tagesschau", I had been invited to share my knowledge on debunking fake news with this ambitious team, put together by Interlink Academy for International Dialog and Journalism and its Zimbabwean partner organization Centre for Information and Technology (CITE). We first focused on different types of

or false information is inherent to the latter. This said, there is a great need for an active mindset amongst all recipients: One needs to remain sceptical, especially if a message seems too good to be true. People should be aware that information shared online can potentially be misleading, manipulated, or false. Thus, our team actively discussed relevant steps regarding better informed opinions, questioning given facts and arguments and consciously considering different points of views. We put

together checklists for dubious social media sources and websites and agreed on general guidelines on how to successfully combat fake news.

The participants worked on practical factchecking exercises, such as the ability to use online mapping services like Google Maps to learn basic ways to geolocate a given picture or video still. The concept of the so-called image reverse search found great interest: By uploading a picture to an online platform, this tool can provide a quick answer to the question, whether a given picture is most likely new or if it has been shared before on the internet.

“Reverse image search and geolocation will definitely be a game changer”, summarized CITE Community Organizer Handsome Sibanda after the workshop, as the people in the community soon “can individually fact check for themselves before making decisions on the information they receive.” The participants’ final task was to develop a

training matrix for a 90-minute-workshop on factchecking which the community organizers successfully managed to integrate into their community work.

Only a few weeks after the Training-of-Trainers (ToT) in Victoria Falls, the first factchecking event took place within the actual communities: “Now that we have learned about fact-checking, it’s time to create the world we want and make it a better place”, said Community Organizer Thanduxolo Ndlovu.

Ndlovu trained his community on fact-checking soon after the ToT in January and is optimistic about the prospect of his upcoming work:

“As we are trained on media and information literacy, we are making sure that our explanations are heard so that the very same group we are training will actually be able to share the information they learnt from us. I believe that the word about fact-checking - it’s out.”

At Interlink Academy we try to rely as little as possible on frontal teaching. Instead we focus on a student-centred teaching approach that highly activates our Community Organisers. Down below, you can see Wolfgang Wichmann changing the location to an outside terrasse to discuss in a relaxed and inclusive setting fake-news and factchecking. Part of the process is to record the learnings in an “old-school” paper format. Later on, this works well as a recreateable medium for our Community Organisers in their respective local communities in which proper presentation locations are often scarce.





Our Community Organizers are in a good mood on the way to the Training-of-Trainers workshop in Victoria Falls

Zimbabwean Community Organizers and Participants Contemplate the Media and Information Literacy Training

"I also loved the interactive training sessions because I was also able to participate freely, to not only learn [..]"



Handsome Sibanda

„I benefited a lot from the trainings. The trainers were all very helpful & well prepared. They guided us well and were patient whenever we had difficulty understanding some areas. I also loved the interactive training sessions because I was also able to participate freely, to not only to learn, but also to share and teach others about my experiences and challenges faced in our Plumtree hub. I also learned a great deal when other fellow hub members shared how they dealt with the challenges they faced. I was able to borrow some ideas which I have already started implementing in practice.“

"I learned a lot and managed to have fun whilst doing so."

Loctricia Nleya

„I returned home with my head filled with practical knowledge that I couldn't wait to test and apply. My heart was filled with joy. Not only had I finally managed to visit the Victoria Falls, I had also managed to formulate relationships with fellow trainers. I learned a lot and managed to have fun whilst doing so. The training of trainers retreat that we had at the Victoria Falls really boosted my resolve to make a change. The training covered various aspects of our media and information literacy capabilities that needed strengthening. Importantly, we networked with trainers from other hubs who had practical tips on how to organize the communities. I believe the training rejuvenated all of us and we are ready for the new training challenges.“



"I had a remarkably positive experience as I sharpened my training skills and expanded my knowledge."



Nomqhele Samantha Siziba

„I joined fellow Media and Information Literacy trainers for a week-long Training of Trainers at Victoria Falls. As a resident of Victoria Falls myself, I enjoyed welcoming the MIL trainers from different parts of Matabeleland region to our beautiful city. Throughout the week, I had a remarkably positive experience as I sharpened my training skills and expanded my knowledge. A highlight of the week was when we visited the majestic “Mosi-oa-Tunya”, the local name for Victoria Falls. Although, not my first visit, the sound of the water, the waterfall spray on my face and the glorious rainbow are experiences that do not get old. My experience was beautified by the great company of my fellow MIL trainers as we captured memories on the edges of the cliff above the raging waters.“

"[..] we all understood the mandate given to us by Interlink Academy and CITE."

Prince Kahari

„While there was a general feeling of joy of being in a resort town that houses one of the seven natural wonders of the world (with close to 40 people to interact and share experience with, this already promised to be an amazing experience), the professionalism of the debrief hung over the atmosphere. Just after check in and lunch we delved into the first session with a team building exercise. The four days to follow were loaded with informative sessions on fact checking and content production using photography and video-making and aspects of media and information literacy (that I feel are relevant to the needs of our society especially prior to elections). The last day was emotional as we had to bid goodbyes to colleagues who had become friends over the past five days. However, we all understood the mandate given to us by Interlink Academy and CITE: to share the knowledge and sharpen skills of our diverse communities.“



"[..] my community will benefit especially from fact checking and content creation."



Constentine Mpofu

„As a media and information literacy trainer, the recent debrief meeting in Victoria Falls was refreshing. The session on image search and verification was quite interesting and useful for me. Due to the fact that a lot of false information is shared through images, the session indeed increased my verification skills. The debrief also allowed me to meet other trainers from Matabeleland North and the Bulawayo hubs.

I found the meeting fruitful because we shared ideas and formulated strategies on conducting impactful trainings. I believe that the debrief sharpened my training skills, and people in my community will definitely benefit - especially from fact checking and content creation. As a twitter enthusiast, I also found the session on one shot video refreshingly simplified and relevant for telling community stories.“

Ecuador: Time to Leave My Footprint

Our alumna **Maria Carvajal Alcivar** from Ecuador has had an impressive career as a journalist. In 2013 and 2014, she completed further training in digital journalism in Germany. She emphasizes that people with disabilities especially need self-confidence and recommends to introduce more spaces in society for them to realize themselves.



Maria Carvajal Alcivar,
Alumna

When I first arrived in Hamburg in 2013, I was expecting to start a new international training program to add to my resume. Five years before that, I had been at workshops in Sweden, Colombia, and Costa Rica. It was normal for a journalist with over a decade of experience at that time, but after the first session in the project, I realized that nobody expected that such a profile would fit with a person from

Latin America with a mobility limitation. I have always used two crutches to move around, do my reporting, and, since 2018, be the mother of an adorable girl. Thanks to Werner Eggert and his team, that ten-month fellowship ran smoothly with no major issues for me, and I remember it as one of my best life experiences.

The blended program, with three attendance phases in Germany and several online modules, were crucial to move forward and discover new ways of good journalism. I am a journalist living with a disability who was lucky to develop a career in a world of professionals with no disabilities. I am proud to say that I became the first ever female night editor and international editor at one of the most influential newspapers in my country, and most of the readers who followed my pages never knew I walked slower than my colleagues or that I could only drive an automatic car. But sadly, I am the exception to the rule. It is almost impossible to find people with a visible disability in a newsroom, and their hiring departments have no protocols to hire or retain talent with conditions like

epilepsy or autism. It happens in Ecuador, and I am afraid of all Latin American regions.

The COVID-19 crisis hit many media outlets. The publishing group where I worked for almost 20 years is about to disappear, and many of us have lost our jobs. After a sabbatical to pursue a master's degree, I realized that there was no other way to keep doing journalism than to start my own project. Thanks to a grant from the Google News Initiative, last summer I participated in a media incubator, and the result is a newsletter focused on a specific niche: people with disabilities or their caregivers who are trying to find a job. And one of the core ideas was to develop that content with the help of people living with disabilities. It looks great on paper, but it is really hard to achieve, and I am still working on the process.

I am realizing that there is a huge need for training, but most of all, an injection of confidence. As I gained it in Germany ten years ago. A reason that makes young people with disabilities feel that there is space for them in journalism and newsrooms of any size. Violence, drug trafficking, and economic problems have made it difficult to make this profitable and sustainable. But if writing or broadcasting from an inclusive point of view enriches the content and gives hope that inclusion should start at the production desk. People who use signal language should not be just the interpreters but also the reporters. Blind men and women should produce more great podcasts. There must be a way to give them more opportunities than the ones I had. And my final footprint in this profession seems to be finding its way!



Ten years ago, Maria (fourth from the right) attended her first course in Germany with a diverse group from all around the world

Nepal: CMR Journalism Academy Takes Media Training to the Next Level with Support from Interlink Academy

CMR Nepal Journalism Academy in Kathmandu initiated trainings for mid-career journalists in January 2023. **Ujjwal Acharya**, the Managing Director, believes that the Academy not only provides impactful courses for journalists to digitally transform themselves but also pioneers new approaches to training. Here are his insights.



Flipcharts prepared by CMR Nepal Journalism Academy's trainers during the flipchart visualization course



Ujjwal Acharya, Director, CMR Journalism Academy

As the Managing Director of the CMR Nepal Journalism Academy, I am proud to share the first few solid steps we took in 2023 to embark on our journey in building the capacity for digitally transformed journalism in Nepal. We are committed to transforming mid-career journalists by equipping them with the latest tools and techniques. CMR Nepal has thus already started in its first year to be

a transformative force in Nepal's media landscape. In 2023, we took a big step forward by offering three distinct courses, focusing on data journalism, podcasting, and mobile journalism. These courses aimed not only to impart knowledge but also to instill practical skills, enabling journalists to adapt to the ever-evolving digital realm. The responses from the journalists, both those participating and others in the media industry, was overwhelmingly positive, and we observed how these courses significantly enriched the participants' reporting

and storytelling. One key aspect that sets the Journalism Academy apart is the invaluable partnership with the Interlink Academy in Germany. This partnership has enabled us not only to adopt their methods and receive support in developing courses but also to benefit from the supervision of experienced German trainers.

I can tell that the success of our approach has not gone unnoticed by the industry. Journalists who have undergone training at the CMR Nepal Journalism Academy have not only enriched their storytelling but are also inspiring others and spreading skills in their newsrooms. Although we are not the first to offer journalism training in Nepal, we've become trendsetters. Our approach, combining structured guidance with an enjoyable atmosphere, and a focus on hands-on skills, is distinctive. We are also bringing together, in each of our courses, a diverse set of journalists to ensure they also gain valuable insights from each other and learn from the setting itself. We are on a mission to transform journalism in Nepal by equipping mid-career journalists with the skills needed in today's highly digitalized society and especially media landscape. Our successful courses, unique training approach, and collaboration with Interlink Academy have made us trailblazers in the field. We're committed to continue this journey.

Nepal: CMR Journalism Academy Completes Second Year

Interlink Academy-supported CMR-Nepal Journalism Academy completes its second year in 2023. Officially launched in December 2022 with the objective to support digital transformation of Nepal's media by providing state-of-the-art journalism training to mid-career journalists, the Journalism Academy in Kathmandu started offering courses in January 2023. Here are some milestones in numbers achieved by the Academy in 2023:

7

CMR Nepal Journalism Academy conducted seven courses in 2023. There were two courses each on data-driven journalism, mobile journalism, and podcasting as well as another course on flipchart visualization for the local trainers. Two of those courses were run by and others supervised by Interlink Academy trainers.

The number of mid-career journalists and media content creators who completed in courses conducted by CMR Nepal Journalism Academy in 2023. They represented 40 among 77 districts of Nepal and were working as journalists in 15 districts. Among all trainees, 22 percent traveled from the regions to attend the courses.

77

41 %

The percentage of female journalists participating in courses offered by CMR Nepal Journalism Academy in 2023. The female membership in Nepal's largest journalist union (Federation of Nepali Journalists) is 18.5 percent, i.e. much lower.

The number of media outlets that now have at least one journalists trained by CMR Nepal Journalism Academy in 2023. Among trainees, 10 were freelancers with two of them working for social media-based journalism outlets. Among the media covered, 45% are online media while 15.5% are print and 17% are broadcast media.

40 +

14

The number of trainers produced. Those trainers attended Training of Trainers (ToT) to learn training principles, and methods as well as flipchart visualization to enhance training skills. Eight trainers conducted courses in 2023. Additionally, several trainers from Interlink Academy also traveled to Nepal to conduct courses.



Participants of the first-ever podcasting course in Nepal pose for a photo with their certificate of completion

Nepal: CMR Journalism Academy Organizes Six Courses

Interlink Academy-supported CMR Nepal Journalism Academy in Kathmandu organized six courses for mid-career journalists in 2023. All courses followed the blended learning 6+6+6 format. **Bikash Karki**, Director of Operations at CMR Journalism Academy, reports:



Bikash Karki,
Director of Operations
Journalism Academy

In 2023, CMR Journalism Academy offered six courses to mid-career journalists. We initiated the year with the Mobile Journalism course in January, followed by two courses on Data-Driven Journalism and two courses on podcasting. The second Mobile Journalism course started in December and will conclude in January 2024. All these courses followed the blended learning format, which we call the '6+6+6' training format, adapted from the

Interlink Academy model. The '6+6+6' training format comprises two six-day long face-to-face intensive training sessions, separated by six weeks of e-learning. The underlying principle is straightforward: trainees have the opportunity to implement the essential skills acquired during the first phase at their workplaces during the six-week e-learning phase, and also remain engaged with the

topic through assignments. During the second attendance phase, they share their workplace experiences and acquire new advanced skills. This format has proven successful, as trainees receive continuous support from trainers and peers during the six weeks of e-learning.

General feedback from our trainees highlights that CMR Nepal Journalism Academy's training greatly differs from their previous experiences. They describe it as a more hands-on and enjoyable learning environment, without any dull moments. This is attributed to the pedagogy used and the preparatory work done by our trainers, with support from Interlink Academy.

Interlink Academy aids our trainers in creating a training matrix that outlines activities, methods, learning objectives, and session outcomes in detail. Interlink Academy's trainers supervise our own trainers and are available for support when needed.

The Academy is developing new courses on digital journalism, audience engagement, digital security, and social media for journalists, reinforcing our commitment to supporting the digital transformation of journalism.

Read more about our 2023 courses on the next pages.

Nepal: Mobile Journalism for Mid-Career Journalists



First Mobile Journalism Course: January – March, 2023

CMR Nepal Journalism Academy's first and last course in 2023 was on mobile journalism. The first batch began in January with six days of intensive face-to-face training and thirteen journalists completing the training with another six days of intensive classes in March.

The second batch started in early November with thirteen journalists, mostly from regions outside the capital city,

joining in. They will complete the course in late December.

The given mobile journalism course consisted of modules on learning the use of mobile phones for information collection, photography, videography, photo and video editing and multimedia storytelling. The courses were facilitated by trainers Bikash Karki, Shruti Shrestha and Nasana Bajracharya.



Second Mobile Journalism Course: November – December, 2023

Nepal: Data-Driven Journalism



First DDJ Course: February – April, 2023

Twenty-five journalists completed Data-Driven Journalism (DDJ) training at the CMR Nepal Journalism Academy in 2023. Trainers Umesh Shrestha, Arun Karki and Tilak Pathak delivered the course.

Topics covered were tools and techniques of data acquisition through freedom of information applications, advanced internet search and web scraping, data cleaning

and analysis, understanding data, presenting data through various types of visualizations, data-driven storytelling.

There has been a significant increase in data-driven stories in the media where the trainees are employed following the training. Here are some links to data-driven stories produced by our trained journalists: [eKantipur 1, 2](#) | [Himal Khabar 1, 2, 3](#) | [Swasthya Khabar](#) | [PahiloPost](#) | [HealthPati](#)



Second DDJ Course: May – July, 2023

Nepal: First-ever Podcasting Course for Nepali Journalists



First Podcasting Course: July to September, 2023. The second course took place from September to November

Twenty-four of our communicators participated in the two podcasting courses at the CMR Nepal Journalism Academy in 2023. When the first course began in July 2023, the Academy became the first organization to offer podcasting courses for journalists in Nepal.

The first course was delivered by Interlink Academy's trainer Brigitte Hagedorn together with local co-trainers Shreeram Paudel and Rabiraj Baral. After completion of the first course, the local trainers delivered a second course with supervision and support from Hagedorn. This

is our new approach with Interlink Academy: to develop trainers in topics which are not broadly available in Nepal.

The course covered the fundamentals of podcasting, audio recording and editing using open-source audio editing software, and utilizing podcasting tools. Participants also learned interview techniques, storytelling, podcast publication and promotion strategies. Following the training, some participants began new podcasts and some have improved their existing podcasts. Here are a couple of links to the podcasts: [IDS Podcast](#) | [Digitalk Chautari](#)



Impressions from the first podcasting course with Brigitte Hagedorn

Nepal: Journalists Share Their Training Experience

"Producing images and videos for my news stories has become significantly more manageable."



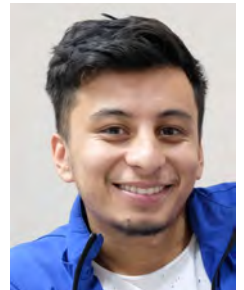
Bunu Tharu, Kantipur

„The mobile journalism training was highly productive and valuable. I can genuinely say that this training was one of the most hands-on experiences I've ever had. The teaching strategy was highly practical and engaging. The instructors were equally knowledgeable and supportive in facilitating the learning process. In a world where mobile devices have become an integral part of our lives, journalism is no exception. Producing images and videos for my news stories and blogs, which I love to do, has become significantly more manageable.“

"The classroom itself was well-equipped, thoughtfully designed to facilitate our learning journey."

Sudip Bhai Subedi, InDepth Story

„My experience was truly exceptional and remarkable in various aspects. To start with, the training was distinctive and engaging due to its unique format. What truly sets it apart was the diverse group of participants coming from various backgrounds, each contributing to a rich tapestry of perspectives and valuing each other's presence. The classroom itself was well-equipped, thoughtfully designed to facilitate our learning journey. The trainers who led the sessions were highly experienced and effectively transferred their knowledge and expertise.“



"The training significantly improved my ability to incorporate data into my stories."



Kamala Gurung, Swastha Khabar

„The training was excellent and highly practical. I've participated in numerous training sessions, but this was the first time I received data-related training. It stood out as it focused more on practical learning. I'm particularly interested in working with data, and this training was the best I've ever had. It significantly improved my ability to incorporate data into my stories.“

"An interesting aspect was the opportunity to gain insights from younger generation in the class."

Laxman Karki, Community Information Network

„In general, the training was quite beneficial. While the topic itself wasn't entirely new, as it had been working before in radio, the podcast format still introduced a fresh perspective. Furthermore, exploring new tools added a new and intriguing dimension to the experience. One particularly interesting aspect was the opportunity to gain insights from the younger generation in the class. This training will certainly facilitate a more effective presence on podcast platforms and enable us to introduce podcasts to our colleagues in the office.“



Nepal: A Truly Transformative Experience, Say Trainees

"I experienced a transformation when I undertook the course ."



Modnath Dhakal, The Rising Nepal

„I experienced a transformation when I undertook the course at CMR Nepal Journalism Academy. The training focused on harnessing data to uncover compelling stories and offered innovative tools and techniques to enhance investigative reporting. Exploring data visualization, coding, data mining, dissecting complex issues, and presenting them in understandable ways were the most intriguing aspects of the training. It also emphasized reducing errors and increasing audience engagement. It will undoubtedly guide me in the field of digital and visual storytelling."

"I can now independently analyze data for my news reports."

Monika Waiba, Ukeraa.com

„The training was excellent, enjoyable, and highly productive. The trainers made it effortless for us to grasp these new concepts, and their approach was invigorating. They encouraged questions and were readily available for support, making the learning experience truly enjoyable. Thanks to this training, I can now independently analyze data for my news reports, a task I used to rely on others before. The knowledge I've gained will remain a valuable asset throughout my life and prove applicable in all my work. Many thanks to CMR Nepal Journalism Academy."



"It not only added a new dimension to my reporting, but also refined the way I present the subject."



Ramesh Kumar, Himal Khabar

„I have been involved in journalism for the last decade and a half. Through data journalism training of CMR Nepal Journalism Academy, I developed the skills of data presentation and reporting based on my interest. In my reports after the training, I started using data presentation to explain the subject easily to the reader. It not only added a new dimension to my reporting, but also refined the ways in which I present the subject. The use of graphs, charts and maps has made the report more factual, reader friendly and effective. As a journalist, I have felt that training in data journalism has had a positive impact on my career as well."

"The training was a truly transformative experience in my journalism career."

Pawan Acharya, Radio Kantipur

„The podcast training organized by CMR Nepal Journalism Academy was a truly transformative experience in my journalism career. It not only equipped me with valuable skills and knowledge but also opened up new avenues in journalism that I had never explored before. Undoubtedly, it was the best of its kind, providing in-depth insights into podcasting, storytelling, and the latest industry trends. It furnished me with the tools to effectively communicate, inform, and engage audiences through this dynamic medium. Thanks a lot for that."

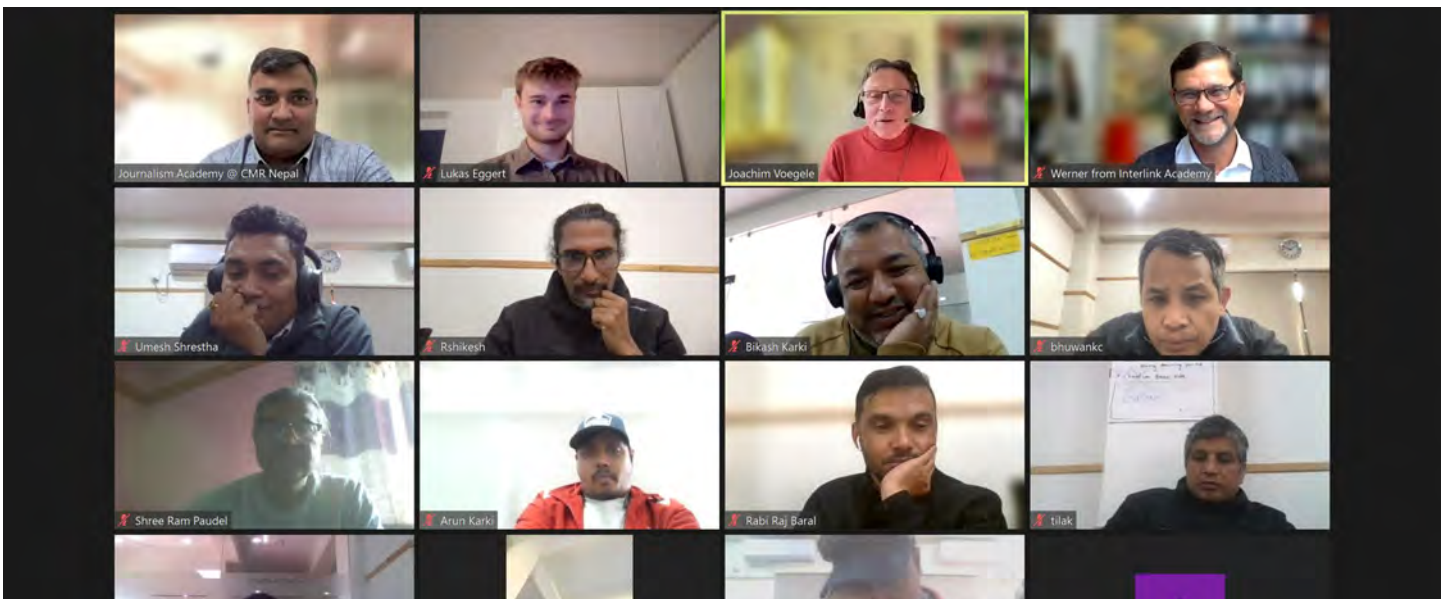


Nepal: Trainers Learn Flipchart Visualization

Interlink Academy organized a five-day Flipchart Visualization course for trainers of CMR Nepal Journalism Academy in Kathmandu where they learned how to make engaging and effective flipcharts during the training. Journalism Academy Director Ujjwal Acharya also participated in the fun-filled and engaging course along with 12 journalism trainers from March 27 to 31, 2023 facilitated by Judith Kohn and Werner Eggert. During the workshop, the trainers learned the correct use of visualization material, fundamental rules and design principles of visualization, using shapes and symbols, legible writing for flipchart, designing and structuring flipcharts, and live facilitation skills.



Nepal: Trainers Discuss E-learning Methods



CMR Journalism Academy trainers are introduced to Interlink Academy's e-learning technique and blended learning approach

Nepal: Impressions from CMR Journalism Academy's Courses



Nepal: Testimonials from Trainers

"... contributed to the delivery of engaging trainings."



„The training provided a valuable opportunity to share knowledge with 14 amazing participants. While the use of mobile technology in journalism is common and practical, the training allowed everyone to explore how to optimize its use and implement good practices, significantly enhancing participants' real-time work. The Training of Trainers (ToT), the flipchart visualization training and resources from the academy greatly contributed to the delivery of engaging training sessions that were enjoyed by all.“

- **Nasana Bajracharya**, Trainer (Mobile Journalism)
CMR Journalism Academy

"The training places emphasis on mutual learning."



„The Journalism Academy's training approach stands out for its distinctive combination of stringent, structured guidance and a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere. More than just conveying concepts and skills, the training places a strong emphasis on mutual learning. It nurtures a collaborative environment where both participants and trainers are in a continuous cycle of growth. This holistic approach not only equips individuals with practical skills but also empowers them to excel in the ever-evolving field of journalism.“

- **Rabi Raj Baral**, Trainer (Podcasting)
CMR Journalism Academy

Promoting South-South Collaboration in Nepal: Asian College of Journalism Boss Visits CMR Journalism Academy

Sashi Kumar, the founder and chairman of the Asian College of Journalism (ACJ), Chennai, India, embarked on a three-day visit to the CMR Journalism Academy in September to foster collaboration and exchange.

During his visit, he engaged with Journalism Academy's management team in three key sessions. During the first and second sessions, the distinguished guest and Ujjwal Acharya introduced themselves and their institution's history, mission, contributions and challenges.

Acharya also highlighted the importance of partnership with the Interlink Academy.

Then discussions also delved into the regional challenges as well as sustainability aspects. Sashi Kumar brought valuable insights from his extensive experience in journalism education, shedding light on strategies for overcoming sustainability challenges.



On the final day, Sashi Kumar held an interesting presentation on evolving media landscape and journalism education for our CMR Journalism Academy's trainers, CMR Nepal members, and ACJ alumni. Our Nepali partner plans for future cooperation with the Indian peers

Trainers from Nepal Attend GIJC 2023 in Sweden



The management and trainers from the CMR Journalism Academy also attended the Global Investigative Journalism Conference (GIJC) in Gothenburg, Sweden from September 19-22.

During the conference, they attended various sessions with the aim of enriching their training courses with experience and ideas learned at the event. They also met with journalists and experts from around the world introducing their institution and fostering potential cooperation.

On their way back, the management and faculty also visited Hamburg, Germany to hold discussions with Interlink Academy team regarding administrative and other matters. They also visited media houses in Hamburg.

Ukraine: Media Literacy Training to Counter Russian Aggression in the Information War



Katerina Sirinyok-
Dolgaryova,
Interlink Academy
Project Coordinator

It has been my honor and privilege to coordinate the MIL Ukraine project in cooperation with the Interlink Academy. This year's project "Media Literacy in the Information War" was devoted to the ambitious goal of countering Russian propagandistic narratives through educating the public and providing it with high quality journalism to enhance people's media literacy skills. Our team of 18 professional journalists, along with two editors, worked on

creating and publishing a [journalistic blog](#). Accompanying this, five experienced media trainers created five MIL self-study electronic courses on [MIL Ukraine Moodle platform](#).

It is important to stress that the project was built on the foundation of the previous MIL initiatives organized and implemented by Ukrainian partners in cooperation with Interlink Academy since 2019. In particular, the MIL Ukraine blog's authors joined our sub-team of investigative journalists and editors, who added analytical and investigative angles to the publications about Ukrainians' daily lives under the conditions of Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine. The stories they wrote are

about ordinary people, who volunteer or serve in the Armed Forces, teach kids, and run their local businesses or civil projects. Along with this, we published investigative pieces questioning and calling on just and accountable governance of Ukraine's local authorities, even during wartimes. These pieces are inspiring, critical and informative – the journalists' works aimed at providing the audience with food for thought and a ground for informed decision making - so important for Ukrainian democracy.

The educational part of the project also had an ambitious goal: to serve people as a platform for strengthening their critical thinking capacity that is vital in the current informational ecosystem of Ukraine. In addition to the five previously created courses on fact checking, writing for social media, online data security and privacy, working with authentic sources, and mobile journalism, the team developed and added five new online courses. These covered the following topics: critical thinking during the Russian-Ukrainian war; conflict journalism: trauma reporting; advocacy and tolerant journalism: stereotypes in Ukrainian local media; countering hate speech in social media; and Russian narratives and propaganda in media. I strongly believe the MIL Ukraine project set a high quality example in the field of countering disinformation and propaganda. I strongly encourage everyone to try out our now [newly available resources](#).



Our MIL Ukraine Team Talks About Their Experience With the “Media Literacy in the Information War” Programme

“They are ABOUT people and FOR people.”



Sophia Bohutska, Dnipro

„Most often, I write reports about interesting people. My stories are a manifestation of what people in Ukraine do in order to not lose their hope during the war. They are ABOUT people and FOR people who are looking for opportunities to live actively and not put their life "on pause". The largest part of my materials was devoted to the life of the front-line territories of Dnipropetrovsk region – Nikopol. This district is under daily shelling by Russian troops from the temporarily occupied territories of the Zaporizhzhia region. In several materials, we literally "lived through" the situation in the local communities that arose after the Russians blew up the Kakhovka HPP. Preparing texts for MIL Ukraine blog is time-consuming, but very rewarding. I am impressed by the direction in which the project is working and grateful for the opportunity.”

“There is a certain shortage of high-quality independent analytics in the Volyn region.”

Anton Buhaichuk, Lutsk

„My participation in the "Media Literacy in the Information War" project was interesting and useful to me as a journalist and contributed to the development of the civil society in the Volyn region. There is a shortage of high-quality independent analytics in the Volyn region, which is why I chose this niche for myself. In my work, I focused on the problems of provision and integration of internally displaced persons, implementation of gender policy, development of strategic documents regarding the development of communities in the Volyn region. In addition, issues of combating human trafficking and fraud schemes, such as phishing on the Internet. All published materials were also reprinted in the partner publication of the Center of Investigative Reporting "The Power of Truth", which helped them to reach an additional audience, and our media to gain more interest from followers.”



“You would never think about the meaning of freedom [...], till the moment somebody steals it from you.”



Kristina But, Melitopol

„Due to the Russian occupation of my hometown Melitopol, I have been displaced to other Ukrainian regions for more than a year now. I dedicated myself to highlighting topics within the temporarily occupied territories and human rights. Perhaps, you would never think about the meaning of freedom in your life and would take it for granted, till the moment somebody steals it from you. At least, that was my case. Every single publication for MIL Ukraine is one that I am proud of. I wrote really important and invaluable articles where I analyzed examples of propaganda that is spreading on temporarily occupied territories of Zaporizhzhia Oblast. Interviews with active people in our region made me feel inspired and optimistic about the Ukrainian future.”



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"I see that these people have become real professionals."



Maksym Opanasenko, Kyiv

„As a mentor for investigative journalists I have been cooperating with Interlink Academy since 2019. During this time, I worked with hundreds of text and video investigations created by young journalists. I see that these people have become real professionals, and some of them already work independently with younger colleagues as mentors and coaches. This year I am also working with investigators as a mentor and editor at the web portal Milukraine.net. The main topic of most materials is the war. We work with investigations about war crimes, destruction, reconstruction of cities, with Russian propaganda and everything related to the enemy. I have great hope that these materials find their audience not only among ordinary citizens, but also among prosecutors and special services, who could use some of them as evidence for cases about Russian crimes.“

"We understand that we have the opportunity to tell the whole world about the war in Ukraine."

Eva Mironova, Zaporizhzhia

„The Interlink Academy’s MIL Ukraine project is important to me because it gives me an opportunity to cover events in Ukraine objectively. The project’s journalists have a wide range of tools and provide freedom of speech, which is extremely important. Currently working on television, I do not always have the opportunity to mention every detail, because TV stories, as a rule, are quite short in terms of chronology. This prevents me from showing the full picture and letting people tell their full stories. Instead, the blog format makes it possible to tell a story broader and deeper with as much details as possible. Journalists themselves choose topics and interesting characters. We understand that we have the opportunity to tell the whole world about the war in Ukraine, and this is inspiring. Working in a friendly environment, in a team of professionals is an extremely important factor. Especially now, when all of us, wherever we are, are traumatized, need support and understanding. Therefore, I am very grateful to my colleagues with whom I work in this project - they are incredible. Especially to the managers, who take responsibility for the project, and our partners who believe in the victory of Ukraine“.



"I investigated how the war affected the level of domestic violence."



Anastasia Zubova, Kropyvnytskyi

“I focused on internal social issues that have arisen over more than one and a half years of living under martial law and war. In particular, I investigated how the war affected the level of domestic violence. In the pre-war period, Ukraine worked a lot on this problem and improved the awareness of the population, the level of appeals and the quality of responses increased. People realize that this problem should not be looked over. However, the issue of domestic violence is not so prevalent during the war. It did not disappear, but people relied less on services and law enforcement agencies, because of the number of other pressing issues.“



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СПІЛЬНОТА
АКТИВНОЇ
МОЛОДІ



ЦЕНТР МЕДІАРОЗСЛІДУВАНЬ

Ukraine: How to Do Media Literacy in the Information War

“Our goal is strengthening democratic values through media literacy”, argues **Svitlana Zapolskykh**.



Svitlana Zapolskykh,
Media Trainer,
Zaporizhzhia

“Media Literacy in the Information War” is a unique project, which is realized in cooperation with the Interlink Academy, which tackles media literacy issue and targets a wider and wider audience from year to year. The online format in 2023 provided more opportunities to involve various groups of people. The online courses this year have

covered the issues of critical thinking: cases from Russian-Ukrainian war, conflict journalism: trauma reporting, tolerant journalism: stereotypes in Ukrainian local media, countering hate speech in social media - Russian narratives and propaganda in media during the war. I co-authored two courses with two of my colleagues – journalists and media trainers Tetiana Mostipan (course “Critical thinking during the Russian-Ukrainian war”) and Yuliia Liubchenko (course “Countering hate speech in social media”). The cases chosen as examples in the courses were mainly based on the material of current events from different sources to demonstrate the variety

of vision, give a clear understanding of the phenomena studied, develop and train skills of orientation and verification in our complex media environment.

As one of the team members, my responsibility was the development of lectures and assignments (tests and creative tasks) related to critical thinking and hate speech. It should be noted, that the scope of propaganda sources nowadays expanded greatly, people have access to doubtful and disputable information and should be aware of this. The project “Media Literacy in the Information War” provides the audience with the opportunity to differentiate and critically analyze data, make individual conclusions and judge the true state of events.

The specialty of the courses developed this year is the focus on the global impact of the Russian invasion, as the cases analyzed are now seen in a wider humanitarian context. The feedback, given by the courses participants, show that the courses are logically structured, the cases are relevant, and that the activities are useful for broad categories of people of different ages and with different experience. Overall, it proves the vital necessity of the project and its contribution to the development of democratic human values.



Melitopol is one of our trainer's place of origin. The Ukrainian spirit remains high whatsoever the Russian occupation



Eva Mironova directly reports from the frontlines. In this picture you see can her reporting next to roadblocks near Zaporizhzhia



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Ukraine: MIL Self-study Online Courses

MIL Ukraine self-study online courses are an efficient way to build up civil society resilience to propaganda. Down below, **Makysm Voloshym** reports on his experience with the creation of content for the platform.



Makysm Voloshym,
Media Trainer,
Chernivtsi, Ukraine

This is my first year working with Interlink Academy. Under such difficult conditions, we managed to create online self-studying courses that, in my opinion, are critically important in this period of war.

Since starting in May 2023, I was as a leading author developing the course "Conflict journalism: dealing with sensitive and traumatic

Russian propaganda narratives", "Psychology and sociology of propaganda: manipulations in the information environment", and "Responding to Russian narratives: debunking fakes, critical thinking and media literacy."

Additionally, as a co-author, I worked with journalist and media trainer Tetiana Mostipan to create the online course "Conflict journalism: dealing with sensitive and traumatic topics". This course enables participants to distinguish conflict-sensitive topics, adhere to ethical standards of such materials, refine interviewing skills for individuals with traumatic experiences, and receive advice on protecting oneself physically and psychologically during journalistic work.

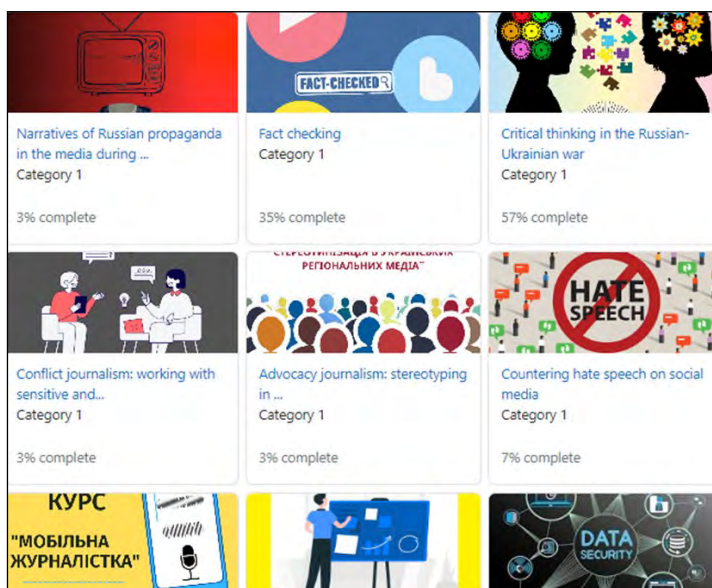
topics," and co-authored the online course "Narratives of Russian propaganda in the media during the war" with Natalia Ostrovska.

Before starting work on the courses, I surfed through a vast amount of information and news from Ukrainian and foreign media. Retaining objectivity while analyzing Russian propaganda in the information environment posed a particular challenge. The audacity and deceitfulness of Russian propaganda messages about biolabs in Ukraine and the distortion of Ukrainian history continues to amaze me.

After working with empirical materials, I identified the target audience for the course and collaborated with colleagues on the methodological foundation.

My goal was to create a platform where students, aspiring journalists, high school students or civic activists could acquire skills and tools to counter Russian propaganda during the war. We focused on aspects of the course that, in our view, best reveal the essence of propagandist narratives and provide a comprehensive understanding of information manipulation by Russia, while also offering students tools to combat these narratives.

Therefore, the course includes four modules: "Historical contexts of Russian narratives: from imperial ideology to contemporary discourses", "Methods of constructing



These are some of the courses available on our [MOODLE](#) platform. Feel free to check them out (in Ukrainian)

In my opinion, such online courses provide an important opportunity to acquire additional knowledge crucial in times of war and offer an interactive and convenient way to do so in a comfortable setting. I appreciate Interlink Academy's support in such important media literacy activities in Ukraine since it is crucial for people's mental resilience during the wartime.



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Global Investigative Journalism Network (GIJN): Longtime Managing Director David Kaplan Retires

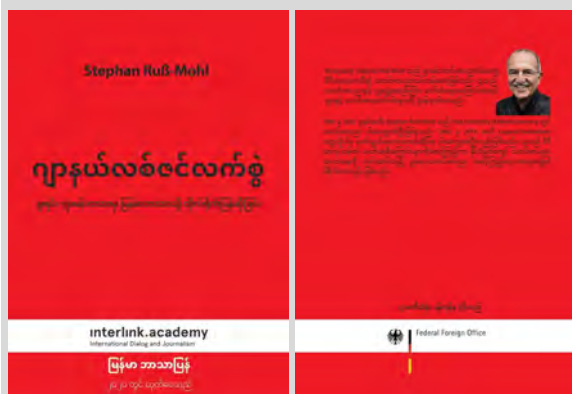


Global Investigative Journalism Network

David Kaplan has retired and the Global Investigative Journalism Conference in Sweden was the last one he organised. David handed over the baton to Emilia Diaz-Struck. David has been a dear friend and colleague, and over the last ten years a strong supporter of the Interlink Academy. In 2019 we had the honor of co-hosting the GIJC in Hamburg with around 2000 attendees. We thank David for all this work for the benefit of global quality journalism and wish him a happy retirement. We wish Emilia good luck and success at the helm of the GIJN.



At the Global Investigative Journalism Conference of 2023, Werner was happy to bump into two alumna of our huge data journalism program: Oksana Stavniichuk (right), who is now working with OCCRP in Kyiv, and Maiia Guseva from Russia, who lives in exile in Germany now.



The Myanmar edition of Stephan Russ-Mohl's fantastic „Journalism“ textbook is now available on the [website of the Interlink Academy](#).

The book is primarily dedicated to the practice and craft of journalism, but also incorporates valuable theoretical approaches from journalism and media research wherever this is useful to broaden the horizon. We recommend it to any interested party who wants to gain a foothold in journalism or even those who have been in the business for many years.

Many thanks to Stephan Russ-Mohl and everyone who contributed to this wonderful publication.

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