

Background and Purpose

In a country like Egypt, many problems go unnoticed to the relevant decision-makers in the absence of democratic structures and fair legislations. However, in the age of social media and rapid transmission of information, there can be new roles assigned to the media. It is no longer about covering conventional pieces of information, but rather a rigorous process of investigating in-depth stories, narratives and problems. Investigative journalism carries a strong normative dimension since it does not only deal with the way in which our society functions behind the façade, but also make propositions the way it society ought to be governed. Aware investigative journalists should have ethical standpoints in which they carry the responsibility of exposing issues that affect the livelihoods of people, knowing that while their exposure might not directly attribute to the punishment of those in charge, but it can rather create awareness and momentum around those issues.

With the absence of objective media that is concerned with improving the livelihoods of communities, there is a need in Egypt to capacitate young interested journalists to the idea of investigative journalism. Since the media seems to suffer from intellectual and ideational poverty, as does the society at large, there is a stronger need to create an alternative wave. This needs to be a wave that is serious, aware and conscious of the ample opportunities that they can offer. This also requires that investigative journalism is situated within the larger context of development, human rights and social justice. It is only a tool within a wide spectrum of methods and approaches, thus they also need to be informed about notions of freedom of expression, acceptance of difference, and minority rights.

This project will also aim at capacitating a selected number of young journalists with knowledge and tools to become thriving investigative journalists. Those young investigative journalists will be selected based on their display of strong interest, clear political standpoint, tolerance, and commitment. They will first be covering a wide range of issues focusing primarily on human rights and social justice. Afterwards, they will delve into the more technical tools and aspects of investigative journalism. Within the course of the program, they will implement an investigative journalism piece that is to be guided and assessed by specialists.

Depending on the issues they decide to take up in the course of the program, once it is materialized FES can use its wide-range of partners and contacts to share it. It could be of particular interest to our partners from political parties and NGOs who can take it up in their own capacity. With the strong normative dimension, it should be utilized to try and incur a difference and improve the livelihood of particular communities.



Duration and Phases

The project is conducted in five phases throughout the years 2015-2017.

- In a first phase, a manual will be created after consultation with a number of specialists on the knowledge and information that needs to be covered by investigative journalists. The manual will discuss the role of investigative journalists and the need of that kind of journalism in Egypt and introduce key concepts such as human rights, minority rights and freedom of expression.
- This will be followed by a call for applications where applicants are to be assessed on a number of attributes and their commitment.
- The third phase is a training phase, providing methodological trainings based on the created manual as well as technical trainings on the different aspects of investigative journalism to selected participants.
- The fourth phase will concentrate on practical application through fieldwork, interviews, and research on cases that had been selected and covered during the training phase.

The last phase is a policy phase, aiming at linking the participating journalists up with members of partner NGOs and political parties

Target groups

Media outlets and journalists

Partners

- Faculty of Mass Communication
- Independent investigative journalists from renowned media outlets

Phase	Time / Period	Step / Activity	Result and Use
Manual production	April –September 2015	Series of workshops with different stakeholders	Agreement on the contents and objectives of the manual
		Finalizing the manual	Manual specifically tailored for the Egyptian context, shedding light on the legal framework
Call for applications	October-January 2016	Assessment of applicants on a number of attributes and their commitment	A group of young journalists from Upper Egypt selected for the training and capacity building program
Methodological and technical training	Throughout 2016	Series of methodological trainings based on the manual	Selected young journalists equipped with tools and knowledge to use media as a tool of exposing issues
		Series of technical trainings on the different aspects of investigative journalism	
Practical application Policy Phase	2017	Fieldwork, interviews, and research on cases selected during the training Network meetings with members of partner NGOs and political parties	Competent reporting on an increasing number of issues that would otherwise be neglected
	2017		Increased pressure exerted on the relevant decision-maker to resolve the issues of concern.