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## IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON JOURNALISTS IN GLOBAL SOUTH AND EMERGING ECONOMIES REVEALED IN NEW REPORT

*The Thomson Reuters Foundation publishes unique study combining frontline journalists' voices with insights from industry leaders and media experts*

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A [new report](#) containing the voices of journalists working across the Global South and Emerging Economies, highlighting the challenges faced by the profession during the pandemic, is released today by the [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#).

It is the first such study combining in-depth research into the insights of industry leaders, advocates and media experts with the first-hand experiences of reporters on-the-ground in these regions, to explore the major issues impacting the profession.

The 55 contributing journalists, who are alumni of the Thomson Reuters Foundation's [training programmes](#), are from 26 countries including Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Romania and the Philippines. Their insights illustrate the reality of how journalism outside of North America and Western Europe is being affected. Also included is extended expert commentary from journalists working in Egypt, India, Kenya, Malawi, Mexico, Moldova, Brazil and Zambia.

The report offers a contextual overview of the impact of COVID-19 on media and society, and how newsrooms have responded to this crisis, before highlighting critical issues faced by the profession, including:

- Changes to the structure of newsrooms and methods of reporting;
- Misinformation and the global 'infodemic';
- Increased threats to media freedom;
- An acceleration of journalism's financial 'freefall';
- Journalists' mental health and well-being.

Insights documented include how journalists have fared under disrupted working practices, a lack of PPE equipment, deliberate threats to derail independent reporting and working with limited resources or specialist knowledge.

Crucially, the report also identifies best practice and innovative approaches developed to strengthen journalism and to support journalists during the pandemic, detailing recommendations shaped by the experiences of TRF alumni.

Authored by [Damian Radcliffe](#), Professor of Journalism at the University of Oregon, the objective of the report is reveal the lived experiences of journalists in the Global South and Emerging Economies – whose voices are too often silenced or unheard - and in identifying the challenges raised, provide valuable industry insights for all those who seek to protect and promote a free and vibrant media.

This report forms part of TRF's wider work to advance media freedom and strengthen the future of journalism. Over the last 40 years, the Foundation has supported independent media and trained journalists around the world, working with over 15,000 reporters in more than 170 countries.

[Antonio Zappulla](#), CEO of the Thomson Reuters Foundation, says: *"2021 will be a defining moment for free press. The sweeping devastation of the global pandemic is exacerbating existing issues that have already caused fissures in the media industry. However, up until now, little has been documented on how the crisis has affected the profession specifically in the Global South and Emerging Economies.*

*"The Foundation believes that societies around the world should be free, fair and informed. The media is fundamental to achieving this. The challenges faced by these journalists as a result of COVID-19 must be addressed to safeguard a diverse and healthy media ecosystem, and more broadly, our fundamental civil liberties that are threatened if independent journalism is compromised."*

Damian Radcliffe, author of the report, and Carolyn S. Chambers Professor in Journalism and Professor of Practice at the University of Oregon, says: *"If we want to understand the impact of COVID-19 on journalism around the world, it is fundamental that we hear directly from journalists themselves. This report gives TRF alumni the platform to speak openly about the challenges they've faced, the resilience they've needed, and how the profession might be strengthened.*

*The irony is that whilst the pandemic has battered journalism from multiple angles, it has also firmly underlined its importance. As we all try to navigate our way through the COVID crisis, the work of journalists - and journalism - is more important than ever."*

### **About the Thomson Reuters Foundation**

We are the corporate foundation of Thomson Reuters, the global news and information services company. We work to advance media freedom, raise awareness of human rights issues, and foster more inclusive economies. Through news, media development, free legal assistance and convening initiatives, we combine our unique services to drive systemic change.

### **About TRF's Media Freedom Work**

We believe the media is a crucial pillar of any free, fair and informed society. Media outlets are facing unprecedented economic and technological challenges and there is an alarming increase in attacks on journalists around the world. We work with journalists, media managers, legal practitioners, policymakers, regulators, technologists, academia and businesses to foster a free and prosperous media ecosystem that can play a vital role in supporting democracy and development. Our Media Freedom work centres on the following pillars; Media for Democracy and Development, Defending Media Freedom and Strengthening the Future of Journalism.

As part of this work, TRF delivers journalism training including editorial judgement, elections coverage, video news, interviewing skills, mobile journalism and court reporting.

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