

# Report

2024/25



*Developing media.*  
**Strengthening human rights.**

## **Imprint**

### ***Publisher***

Deutsche Welle  
53110 Bonn  
Germany

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Participant of “Parler Environnement” (“Talking about the environment”) at the project’s final conference in Hammamet, Tunisia. The project brought together media professionals and environmental and climate protection activists from North Africa. The journalists attended production workshops and representatives of environmental protection organizations, received media training on how to place more comprehensible and concise statements in the media and to tailor their core messages to their target groups and platforms.

### ***Printed by***

Warlich Druck Meckenheim GmbH

The paper for this DW Akademie Report was produced from wood that was grown without the use of fertilizers and pesticides and sourced from responsible and sustainable European forestry, where the stock is always replanted.

### ***Published***

June 2025



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***In a time of increasing polarization, independent and diverse journalism is more important than ever.***

**Peter Limbourg**  
Director General, Deutsche Welle

# Editorial

**Dear reader,**

Wherever free media are under pressure, democracy is also at risk — we know this from our work around the world. In many countries, crises, wars and authoritarianism are currently exacerbating the state of press freedom. They make the work of journalists more difficult and dangerous, sometimes even impossible.

Russia's ongoing war of aggression in Ukraine, the war in the Middle East and the accusations and attacks against the media by the US administration under President Donald Trump are just a few examples that pose major challenges for media professionals and media users alike. Authoritarian, technologically advanced states are increasingly sealing off their populations with internet blockades, censorship and repression against free reporting. AI-supported disinformation and the manipulation of public opinion are reaching unprecedented levels, further polarizing and destabilizing societies.

In a time of increasing polarization, independent and diverse journalism is more important than ever.

All over the world, people trust DW's fact-based journalism. Through our work, we enable them to make informed and free decisions. This is also what DW Akademie stands for. As one of the world's leading media development organizations, it is committed to freedom of the press and freedom of expression.

**Peter Limbourg**  
Director General, Deutsche Welle



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*Media for a just and peaceful future*

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***We set the standards***

66 Dedicated to free media around the world







# Our vision

*Media for a just and peaceful future*





© yonel\_puga

Together for media freedom: On May 3, political actors, non-governmental organizations and media professionals from around the world gather to celebrate World Press Freedom Day. DW Akademie and its partner organizations contributed to the UNESCO conference in 2024 (in Santiago de Chile, pictured above) and 2025 with discussion panels and workshops. The topics included environmental journalism, countering disinformation in times of elections and the question of how media development organizations can ensure the economic survival of quality media after the US funding stop-order. One maxim prevails – that the human right to freedom of expression and access to information can only be defended together.





# The concept of *freedom* is at the core of our work

*The war in Ukraine is also an information war.  
In March 2022, a Russian missile hit the TV tower in Kyiv.*



*In an interview, Managing Director Carsten von Nahmen and Director of Media Development Natascha Schwanke described DW Akademie's work in the face of global crises.*

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*From wars, conflicts, increasing extremism and autocratic trends, to hunger, migration and environmental destruction—we are living in a time of crises. How can media help to overcome these crises? And what role does media development play?*

**Carsten von Nahmen:** A decisive one. Only informed societies can overcome crises and conflicts, fight poverty and hunger, deal with the consequences of climate change and create equal opportunities for girls and women. Fact-based, independent journalism also makes a decisive contribution in counter-acting the now ubiquitous online campaigns to spread disinformation and manipulate public opinion.

In this context, our projects have a preventative effect. If citizens have access to reliable information and can distinguish fact from fiction, they can make responsible decisions. If they can express their opinions freely, an open social discourse is created, which can include possible solutions. Social co-determination needs reliable facts—at least if you don't want to leave it up to the enemies of freedom. Freedom is the central concept for our work: Free media, free access to information, free expression of opinion.

*But the media themselves are also under existential threat in many places. And the number of their supporters is falling.*

**Carsten von Nahmen:** That is unfortunately true. In many parts of the world, free media are currently fighting a desperate battle against state repression, censorship and threats, against a lack of funding opportunities and against competition from digital platforms and cheaply produced disinformation.

What's more, the USA, previously the most powerful voice of freedom in the world, has abandoned its post. The abrupt halt to US development aid under President Donald





© Julia Demaree Nikhinson/AP Pool/dpa

*Front row: Tech billionaires at the second inauguration of US President Donald Trump.*

## **DW Freedom—The think tank for media development**

From artificial intelligence to social polarization, constructive dialogue to innovative financing models, DW Akademie's new think tank, DW Freedom, aims to shape the debates around media, freedom of expression and digital transitions in international development cooperation. DW Freedom researches and collects data, builds networks and works with international partners to promote free and open media systems around the world. Once a year, journalists, media specialists, researchers and experts on human rights and international development publish the State of Media Development Report.

➔ [dw.com/freedom](https://www.dw.com/freedom)

Trump has had a dramatic impact on international media development. In many places, this means the end of free media and therefore the end of journalism as we know it.

Media companies and media professionals are now being called upon to break new ground. We support them in developing both sustainable business models and new forms of reporting. The current crisis also represents an opportunity: If the media manage to redefine their role, responsibility and working methods, they can win over their audiences.

### ***What does this look like in concrete terms in your work on the ground?***

**Natascha Schwanke:** Together with local partner organizations, we are working worldwide to promote free media and unhindered access to information. We train local Ukrainian journalists in the embattled east and south of the country, support fact-checking initiatives in the Sahel, help establish independent media in exile for Myanmar, modernize journalism

training in the Republic of Moldova and cooperate with community radios in rural regions of Latin America—to name just a few examples.

With our partners, we create free spaces for individuals and social groups, while providing access to reliable information. We strengthen their knowledge so that they can participate confidently and effectively in overcoming crises.

#### *What challenges do you see for the future?*

**Natascha Schwanke:** We recognize how important it is to forge new, global alliances in media development. We want to further strengthen South-South cooperation; our ongoing regionalization approach is becoming increasingly important in this regard. This means that we are where we are needed, we work closely with local partners, we bring in expertise and we listen carefully when it comes to specific local needs.

Another important task is to assist in the introduction of new technologies—such as artificial intelligence—with an approach that is both critical and constructive. We will step up our efforts in training media users to navigate digital platforms safely, while critically scrutinizing content. We are also committed to strengthening the negotiating power of the media vis-à-vis big tech companies in effectively regulating these companies—without curtailing freedom of the media and freedom of expression. Our think tank DW Freedom provides important input in this regard. We are convinced that a strong, pluralistic media landscape and an independent, efficient media sector are the keys to overcoming the multiple crises of our time. ●

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## **Carsten von Nahmen**

Carsten von Nahmen became Managing Director of DW Akademie in September 2018. He previously reported from the US as DW's senior correspondent, and from 2014 to 2017 was head of DW's News and Current Affairs department and deputy editor-in-chief. He has been active with DW Akademie for many years, including as head of its Middle East/North Africa, Europe/Central Asia and Africa departments.



© Philipp Böll/DW

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## **Natascha Schwanke**

Natascha Schwanke became Director of Media Development and Deputy Head of DW Akademie in March 2019 after heading the Africa department for several years. Prior to this, she worked for DW Akademie as a trainer, consultant and project manager. Schwanke is a trained journalist and has worked for leading radio and television stations.



© Philipp Böll/DW



# *Free media. Free expression. Free societies.*

DW Akademie is Deutsche Welle's center for international media development, journalism training and knowledge transfer. Our projects strengthen the human right to freedom of expression and unhindered access to information. DW Akademie empowers people worldwide to make independent decisions based on reliable facts and constructive dialogue. It is a strategic partner of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and is also active with funding from the German Foreign Office and the European Union.

## 82

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*DW Akademie projects in 2024*

## 3.5

---

*million euros in funding from the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, for work we do on behalf of Deutsche Welle*

*Budget 2024*

## 159

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*partner organizations around the world with which we work closely in 2024/25*

*as of April 2025*

## 37.75

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*million euros in project funding from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the German Federal Foreign Office, the European Union and other donors*

*Budget 2024*

## 60

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*emerging economies and developing countries where we have projects*

*as of April 2025*



Members of DW Akademie's Global Reference Group: (front row, left to right) Htaike Htaike Aung, Blandine Angbako, Natalia Kurkiukova; (middle row, left to right) Faruq Faisel, Soumaya Berjeb, Zenzele Ndebele, Odanga Madung, Michelle Nogales; (back row, left to right) Erick Huerta Velázquez, Nadim Nashif, Hamouda Soubhi. Not pictured: Mira Milosevic

## Powerful voices, new perspectives: The Global Reference Group

*How is DW Akademie's work perceived in our target regions? How can we become even more effective? What strategic decisions do we need to make in order to continue to be internationally successful and relevant?*

These are questions that twelve experts in media and media development from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the MENA region are helping us answer. The first meeting of the Global Reference Group took place in June 2024 and kicked off the new independent advisory body. We want to broaden our perspectives and receive valuable feedback on strategic approaches, equal partnerships and other aspects of our work.



# Our work

*Action with impact*

## ***Wars, conflicts and climate crisis: Information saves lives***

Afghan refugees have been living in northern Pakistan since the 1970s. There, refugees face restrictions and discrimination and often live in poverty. DW Akademie and the news agency Tribal News Network (TNN) are working together to train Afghan community reporters. Together with professional Pakistani journalists, they learn how to use constructive journalism to effectively report on Afghan refugees and their concerns. They have since produced online and video reports about the refugee community, focusing on solidarity and resilience.

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Changing perspectives:  
A world in transition

**40**

Informed and competent:  
Youth and media

**50**

Empowering media makers











*Life continues despite the severe damage suffered by the city of Kherson.*

# 9 out of 10

*Ukrainian media receive international aid. With the end to USAID funding, the most important donor has vanished.*

*Source: Reporters Without Borders*



# Media in Ukraine

*Three years after the invasion*

***DW Akademie and its partner organizations are committed to a free and democratic Ukraine.***

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Since Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022, Ukrainians have built a new normal for themselves amid constant attacks and the ruins left in their wake.

This new normal reflects DW Akademie's cooperation with local partner organizations. At the beginning of the war, the main concern was to maintain media operations in the country. Today, our

activities no longer focus solely on survival, but also on Ukraine's future and the media's role in it.

## ***Focusing on younger generations***

The Carpathian Mountains, which run through western Ukraine, are one of the few areas in the country that has so far been spared from bombings. In free camps, organized by the Ukrainian Railway Company, children and young people there gain some distance from their worries. Many have been displaced from occupied territories, have parents who are fighting in the war or are orphans. DW Akademie and the public broadcaster Suspilne teach them how to

critically question information, how to recognize disinformation and how to safely use digital platforms.

"We want youths to think and analyze, especially in the face of this information war," said Vladyslava Misna, project manager for Suspilne Juniors. "For the future, we need a nation that can reflect on itself."

## ***Future-proof media***

For Ukraine's post-war future, it is also important to look at the media sector's financial challenges. The MediaFit project provides, among other tools, vital support for media outlets in southern and eastern Ukraine, including training media



workers through the Lviv Media Forum. Because media outlets are only as strong as their employees, DW Akademie also organizes trips to Germany for media professionals. These provide a short break from the everyday realities of war, during which journalists can reflect on their work and network.

### **Ukraine after the war**

To strengthen basic democratic values, the country needs an efficient media sector and people require access to reliable information—challenges that Ukrainian media professionals discussed at the international Cafe Kyiv conference in

Berlin in March 2025, facilitated by Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

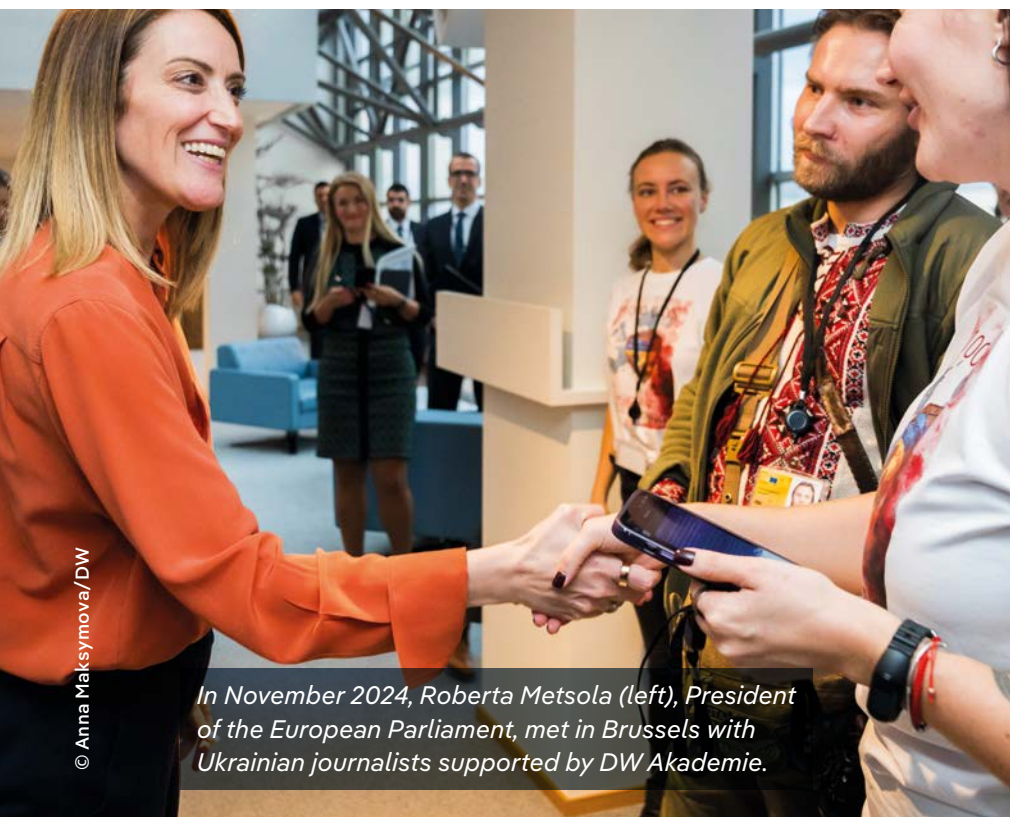
“The country’s democracy and the values of freedom of expression are inextricably linked,” said Sevgil Musaieva, editor-in-chief of *Ukrainska Pravda*. “Lots of media was supported by USAID, but this has ended. It is therefore getting more and more difficult to work and cover the war, especially more in-depth investigations. We are looking for funding, support from the European side.”

Ukrainian media are therefore looking for a future in which people and media in the country can feel free and safe again. ●

# 162

*journalists killed worldwide in 2024. The number of media workers killed in conflict zones (72) has almost doubled compared to 2023*

Source: UNESCO



*In November 2024, Roberta Metsola (left), President of the European Parliament, met in Brussels with Ukrainian journalists supported by DW Akademie.*

© Anna Maksymova/DW

## **Viable media**

Independent journalism needs sustainable business models and an effective editorial strategy. Yet other aspects also influence the economic success of media, such as legal and political framework conditions, technological innovations and the economies of networks. Media viability is crucial in ensuring that citizens trust independent media and have access to reliable information—especially in times of crisis.



# 25

*percent of media development organizations worldwide are actively committed to the protection of vulnerable media professionals*

*Source: State of Media Development Report 2025, DW Akademie*

## Protecting media professionals to ensure independent journalism

*DW Akademie is committed to protecting journalists at risk. Security for journalists has several dimensions.*

In addition to physical safety, legal and financial aspects play an important role. Furthermore, targeted media professionals often need psychological support. Together with its partners, DW Akademie supports editorial offices and media houses so that they can continue to work under pressure. Through protecting their workers, media houses can continue to provide independent information, even where governments or criminals try to restrict media freedom.

*Press representative in front of a destroyed house in Kyiv, March 2022.*

© picture alliance/abaca | Yaghoobzadeh Alfred/ABACA





Freedom of the press is under threat in Central America: A photographer at a protest for media freedom and freedom of expression in Guatemala City in March 2023.

© Johan ORDONEZ / AFP

# A safe space for independent journalism

*In Costa Rica, DW Akademie and its partner the Institute for Freedom of the Press and Expression (IPLEX) opened the Casa para el Periodismo Libre, a center for exiled journalists from Latin America, in August 2024.*

living and working in exile, as well as resources that specifically help protect themselves from persecution, censorship and violence.

## Support for media professionals and independent journalism in Central America

Media workers in Central America are under great pressure from governments, politicians and organized crime. In Nicaragua, many journalists are imprisoned or have had their citizenship revoked. The regime has also closed numerous media outlets. In Guatemala, the judiciary threatens and persecutes critical journalists—sometimes even for private posts on social networks—while authoritarian tendencies in El Salvador have forced even established media into exile.

Costa Rica has become a haven in the region. The strong institutional framework here enables many people to pursue journalism while in exile, but it also presents them

Under the umbrella of the Casa para el Periodismo Libre (in English: House of Free Journalism), exiled journalists can find a space for exchange; further training; support for their legal, psychosocial, economic and personal security; journalism scholarships and multimedia equipment, among other offerings.

Since 2025, a new digital platform has also offered Spanish-speaking journalists access to information on

“

***Writing is somehow difficult, but I still try. If I stop writing, I stop existing.***

Participant of the Space for Freedom project, a part of the Hannah Arendt Initiative, which supports and trains exiled Afghan media professionals.

with new challenges that can only be overcome with coordinated strategies for working safely.

The Casa para el Periodismo Libre in Costa Rica is supported by DW Akademie's Space for Freedom project as part of the Hannah Arendt Initiative. Space for Freedom focuses on the professional livelihoods of refugee media professionals from Afghanistan, Belarus, Russia and Central America. The aim is to enable independent reporting from exile. ●

**801**

***Space for Freedom consultations and trainings offered since 2023 as of April 2025***

**298**

***stipends from DW Akademie's Space for Freedom project given to exiled media workers from Afghanistan, Belarus, Russia and Central America since 2023 as of April 2025***

## ***Hannah Arendt Initiative: A network to protect media workers***

In October 2022, Germany's Foreign Office and the Federal Commissioner for Culture and the Media launched the Hannah Arendt Initiative, a program dedicated to the protection of journalists under threat. Through this network of civil society organizations, DW Akademie works alongside the European Fund for Journalism in Exile (JX Fund), Media in Cooperation and Transition (MiCT) and the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF).

***For more information:***  
[➤ hannah-arendt-initiative.de](https://hannah-arendt-initiative.de)





“

***Awareness is growing that a war is not just bombs and tanks; it's also an information and an economic war.***

**Justin Arenstein**

South Africa, founder and CEO of Code for Africa (CfA), Africa's largest investigative technology and data journalism initiative, and one of the experts contributing to Tackling Disinformation. DW Akademie and CfA have been working together since 2018.

## **Disinformation: The invisible weapon**

*Fact or fake? This is a basic question for journalists around the world. In the age of social media, however, everyone confronts the question.*

Both governments and individuals across the globe use digital platforms to exert influence, stir up mistrust and increase social polarization. While free media around the world are struggling to survive economically, autocrats are reaching an ever-larger audience with seemingly unlimited resources.

Targeted disinformation is an attack on democracy, freedom and social peace. The best antidote is well-trained journalists and media users who can distinguish fact from fiction.



*After the military coup in Burkina Faso in September 2022, a supporter waves the Russian flag. Russia is spreading anti-Western narratives not only in the Sahel region but around the globe.*

Together with its partners, DW Akademie is committed to quality journalism, media literacy and freedom of expression worldwide. The goal is a constructive public dialogue.

With its Tackling Disinformation learning guide, DW Akademie not only contributes to the professional discourse among media development experts, but also provides both a guide for media professionals and a free online course for self learners on the topic of disinformation and fact-checking. A discussion paper presents the three-sphere model developed by DW Akademie and offers strategies to effectively counter disinformation.

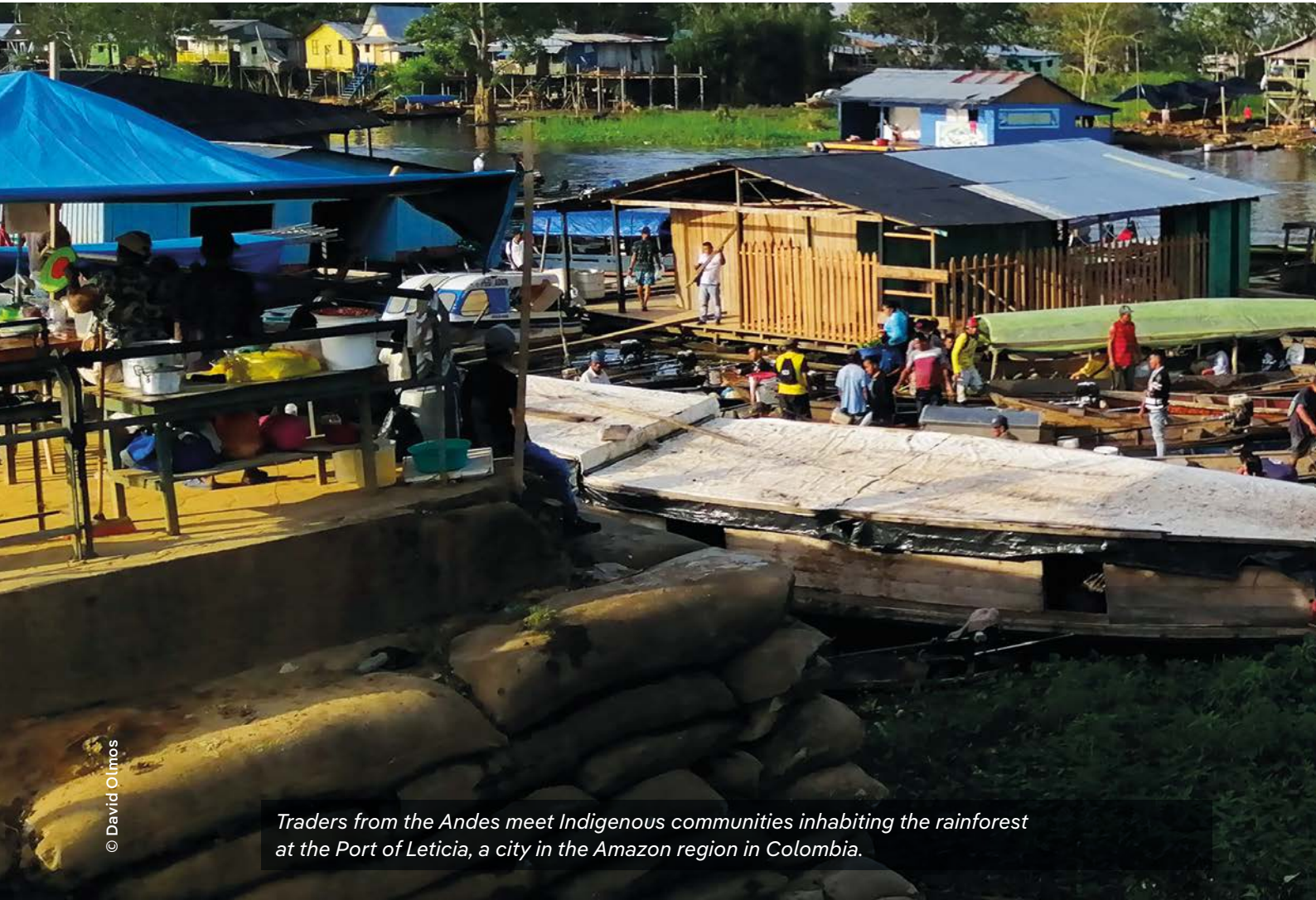


***Information is power and powerful institutions, governments, autocrats and some companies are trying to manipulate public opinion.***

**Tamar Kintsurashvili**

Georgia, journalist and expert for disinformation and fact-checking, is executive director of the Media Development Foundation in Tbilisi. The organization is DW Akademie's local partner in Georgia, training journalists as well as young people in fact-checking. In 2025, DW honored her with its Freedom of Speech Award.





© David Olmos

*Traders from the Andes meet Indigenous communities inhabiting the rainforest at the Port of Leticia, a city in the Amazon region in Colombia.*

# Journalism to save the rainforest

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# Every *minute,*

*an area of the Amazon rainforest the size of a football field is destroyed.*

Source: WWF

***Environmental conflicts are coming to a head in the countries of the Amazon basin. Illegal mining and deforestation are rapidly destroying local livelihoods, with repercussions for the global climate. Media, academia and civil society organizations supported by DW Akademie refuse to silently accept this.***

Colombia is one of the most dangerous countries in the world for environmental activists. Those who resist environmental destruction are often threatened or even murdered. Media workers are also targeted by violent groups. As a result, there are hardly any local media outlets that report on environmental degradation and human rights violations. Furthermore, the major national media outlets often face conflicts of interest, as they are owned by conglomerates that also pursue economic interests in areas such as mining.

Together with its partner organizations from Colombia (Agenda Propia), Peru (Servindi) and Ecuador (Corape), DW Akademie promotes

close cooperation between media and civil society to encourage a public dialogue on environmental conflicts. Indigenous communities are both involved and consulted, while advanced training in environmental journalism ensures high quality reporting. Journalistic research is always developed with its potential impact in mind, focusing on making local conflicts visible at the national level and motivating political decisionmakers to take action for the preservation of the Amazon rainforest.

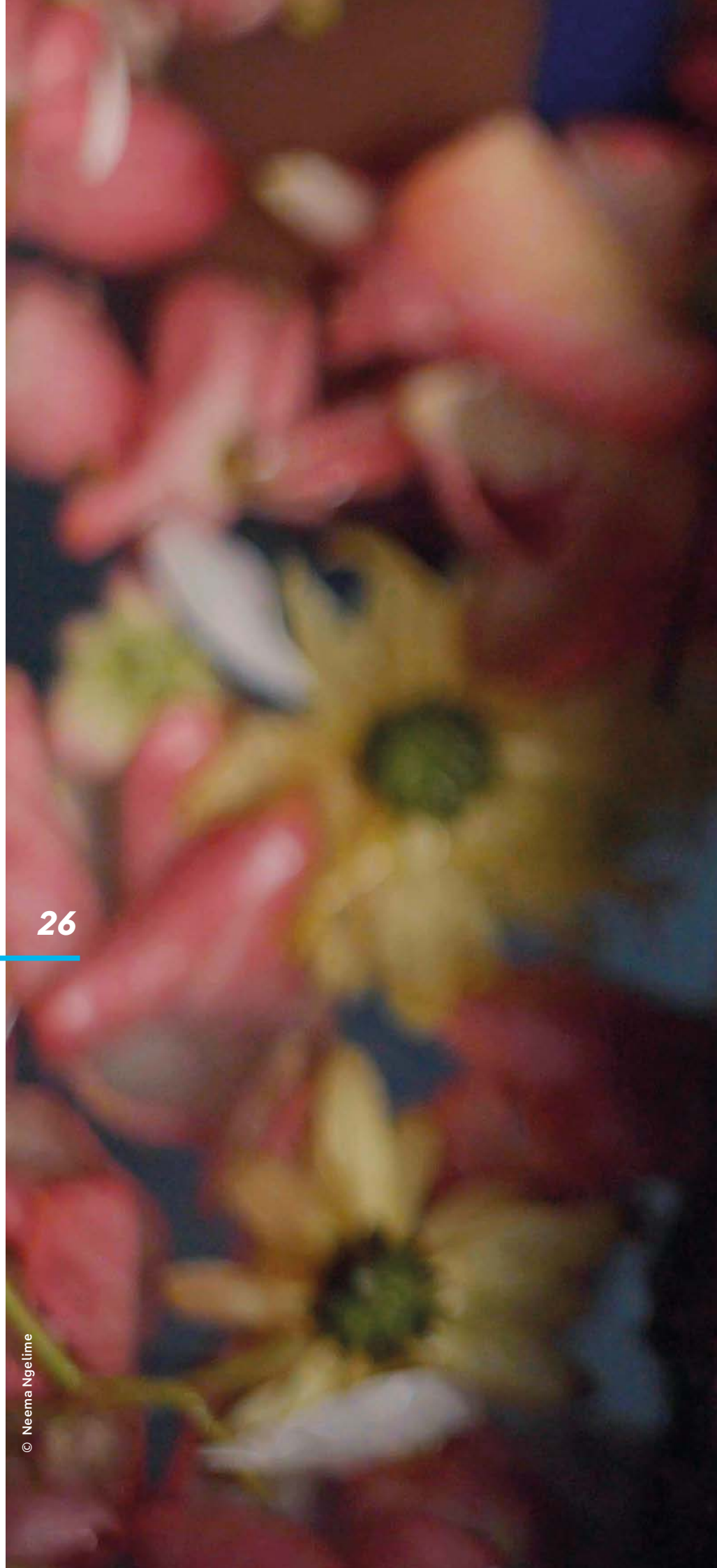


## *Changing perspectives: A world in transition*

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26

Great cinema from East Africa: Four short films from the East African Screen Collective (EASC) were screened in front of an audience of filmmakers and industry experts at the European Film Market, part of the 2025 Berlinale. With the support of DW Akademie, EASC provided the up-and-coming talents with scholarships and advice during the production phase. DW Akademie promotes the practical qualification of filmmakers from the Global South and supports them in producing internationally competitive films and series and making them accessible to a large audience. We see this as an important contribution to freedom of expression and an impetus for social change and dialogue.









approx. **283,000**

people live in and around Kakuma

Source: UNHCR, as of March 2024

# A universe full of stories

*Journalism in a refugee camp*





*A street in the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya.*

*Sikika is a DW Akademie project in the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya. Young refugees can learn how to produce audio segments. Although the program has been well-received by its audience in the camp, young women reporters still face many challenges.*

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Sudi Omar Noor gets up at 4 am when it's still dark in Kakuma, in northwest Kenya. The 23-year-old makes breakfast and prepares lunch for her aunt's household of six. In the Somali society in which Sudi lives, cooking and housework are a woman's domain, and she has plenty to do.

"My mother and younger brothers returned to Somalia," she said. "I stopped going to school four years ago so that I could work and support my family."

***"I dream of being a journalist, and I can't give that up"***

Noor fled Somalia with her mother and seven siblings in 2008. All eight children should have the opportunity to attend school. When she leaves her home at 8 am, she races to catch one of the scarce motorcycle taxis. Once, when she couldn't find one, she had to run. Some boys saw her and started throwing stones at her, yelling that she was a disgrace to Somali society.





# 120

**million people forcibly displaced worldwide**

Source: UNHCR, as of May 2024

As a community reporter, Noor works for the audio program Sikika, which is a joint production between the Kenyan organization COME Initiative and DW Akademie. The 18 reporters, half of whom are women, share information with refugees and residents about life in the displacement camps. Some of the women working at Sikika have similar life stories. She has often thought of just quitting, said Noor. But every time, Sikika's editor Taphine Otieno has convinced her to stay on and continue her work.

### **Breaking the communication hierarchy**

Meanwhile, Noor and her journalist colleagues have settled into the rebuilt shipping container that serves as the editorial office. Inside they prepare interviews with experts, translate quotes and edit stories.

In their work, the reporters are not just redefining gender roles. They are also breaking down the hierarchy of

communication in the camps. Every two weeks, they broadcast their hour-long segment to nearly 300 listener groups throughout Kakuma and the neighboring community of Kalobeyei. They then receive listener feedback after each segment.

One challenge is: "It's always difficult to get interviews with experts from organizations," said Taphine Otieno. "Only a few of them are allowed to speak with the reporters. In order to get permission to speak with a reporter from Kakuma, the expert has to query Nairobi or, in worst case, ask the head of the international organization."

### **Diversity is their asset**

In Sikika, which in Kiswahili has the potent meaning of "being heard," the community journalists report mostly on basic human needs, such as healthcare, nutrition, water and education, but also on sports, culture, and understanding among the various



© FilmAid Kenya

*"He is a friend, teacher and mentor," said Sudi Omar Noor. Taphine Otieno is Sikika's topic coordinator.*

ethnic groups. Along with the indigenous Turkana people, Kakuma is now home to refugees from South Sudan, Congo, Ethiopia and Somalia. People who have fled their homelands due to crisis now often find themselves living alongside members of various warring groups.

The Sikika team members support and encourage one another, said Noor. Together, they overcome daily challenges.

"I would like to be a role model for young girls in the camp," she said. "There are so many terrific people here in Kakuma. We have to tell our communities about them so that others can learn something."

Arriving home, Noor has to get dinner ready. The older generations hold tight to traditional ways of life, she said. Her aunt, nonetheless, supports her decisions. Younger people are also very understanding.

"My cousin sometimes helps me cook," she said with a chuckle as she started preparing the meal. "But we have to close the door so that the other men don't see him." ●

## ***Migration and the media***

DW Akademie works to ensure that refugees and migrants can exercise their right to access information and freedom of expression while promoting dialogue with host societies. In Bangladesh, for example, we have been supporting Rohingya refugees and locals through our partner organizations since 2018. Working together, they produce a weekly radio show on how to better cope with everyday problems.





***By breaking the silence surrounding sexual violence and reducing the stigma associated with seeking help, we are enabling more women to engage with and benefit from community resources.***

**Birhan Gebrekirstos Mezgbo**

Ethiopia, participant in the (Re)Claiming Spaces project that aims to improve rural women's access to relevant information and to strengthen their participation in public discourse. Mezgbo launched the "She Heals, We Heal" podcast, which was aired on local radio stations.











*Michelle Nogales (left) passes on her knowledge to other women.*



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# *“Feminism actually means freedom”*

## How to make feminist journalism a success story

*Michelle Nogales, co-founder of Bolivia's first feminist online magazine, reports on women and the LGBTQ+ community. Nogales explains why feminist journalism shows “the people's reality.”*

sexual identities. So, feminism for us actually means freedom. We are trans-feminist, meaning we focus on women's issues including LGBTQ+ people. The rights of transgender people in Bolivia are systematically violated.

Most of this is not shown by Bolivia's big media which monopolize information and give only very partial information. We show another reality that exists, that is even the majority's reality in Bolivia.

### *Why do “women's stories” matter?*

**Michelle Nogales:** Bolivia is a really patriarchal country. There are a lot of women who are involved in leadership but chances are you've never heard about them because history made them invisible. So, it is really important to us to tell stories about women.

### *What is feminist journalism about?*

Feminist journalism means to give a point of view that is not one-sided but inclusive. A space where we can talk about our diversity, about our different ethnicities, about diverse

### *What is Muy Waso's secret to success?*

I think the most important thing was to never stop, to keep on working but also to be in a constant learning process. We didn't know how to produce a podcast but we did our research, took some workshops and just did it. We weren't professionals in video-making either and now we are on our way to being the first multi-media and multi-format media from Bolivia.

*Michelle Nogales is a member of DW Akademie's Global Reference Group (p. 13).*



## ***Against the stigma***

Moroccan society ostracizes unmarried mothers and their children, who are also stigmatized by their own families. Sex before marriage is taboo in the predominantly Muslim country. Men are not held accountable, yet unmarried mothers can even be prosecuted. If a child is born out of wedlock, the mother cannot expect any financial support from the father or the state. This puts many women and children in a desperate situation. More and more people, however, are trying to put an end to this discrimination, both in court and in civil society. But there is still a long way to go.





***I now represent a large community of single mothers. Through radio, I can protect their rights and those of their children. I'm not afraid anymore and I'm not ashamed to be a single mother.***

**Naïma Hamdani,**

Morocco, radio presenter Mères en ligne (Mothers on Air).

The Moroccan NGO 100% Mamans, with the support of DW Akademie, trains single women to become journalists for its community radio station.





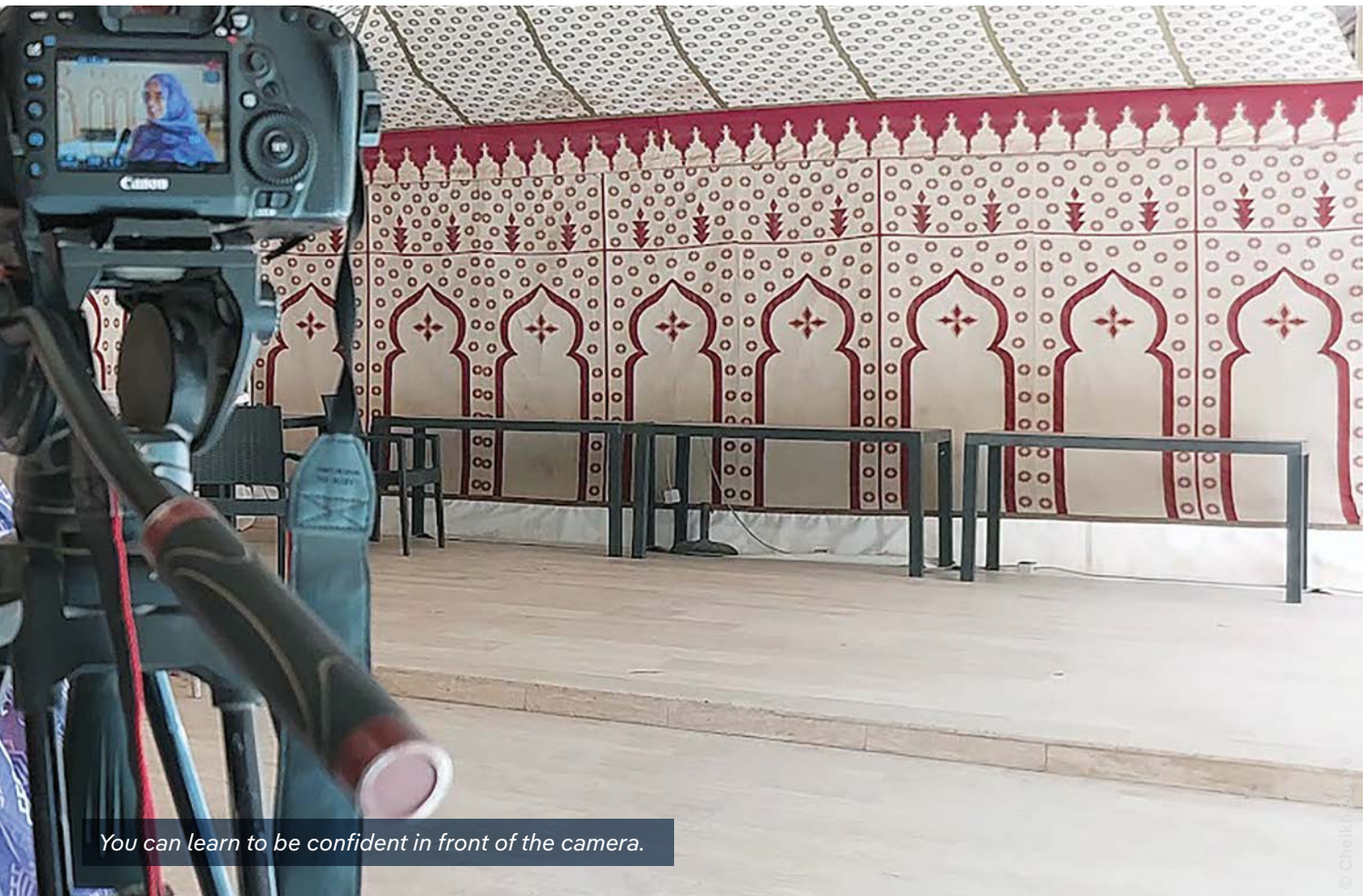


# Communication is the key: DW Akademie offers

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*Do you want to gain confidence in front of the camera? Are you already a communications professional and want to further develop your skills? Do you belong to an organization that wants to bring its message to the public in an understandable way? Then benefit from DW Akademie's expertise!*





*You can learn to be confident in front of the camera.*

### **Tailor-made training courses — your needs count!**

For interviews on radio or television, public appearances and speeches, only a few people have a natural talent. For most, they mean stress. In the media, you usually only have a few seconds to get to the heart of your message. Our effective training courses help you to deal with such situations confidently, to radiate competence at all times and to make your message more accessible with convincing storytelling.

If you want to expand your journalistic skills, our practical training courses in TV moderation, podcasting or event moderation are a good choice.

We are happy to prepare you for your communication task! Our training courses can be booked at any time. Contact us at:

➔ [dw-akademie.medientraining@dw.com](mailto:dw-akademie.medientraining@dw.com)

### **International Communications Consulting**

In addition to our media development activities, the Communication Consultancy team supports partner organizations and local customers in building effective communication, fighting disinformation and bringing facts to the fore. It offers its comprehensive know-how in strategy development—for example to civil society organizations and universities in the Global South—so that their views are heard and discussed in public.

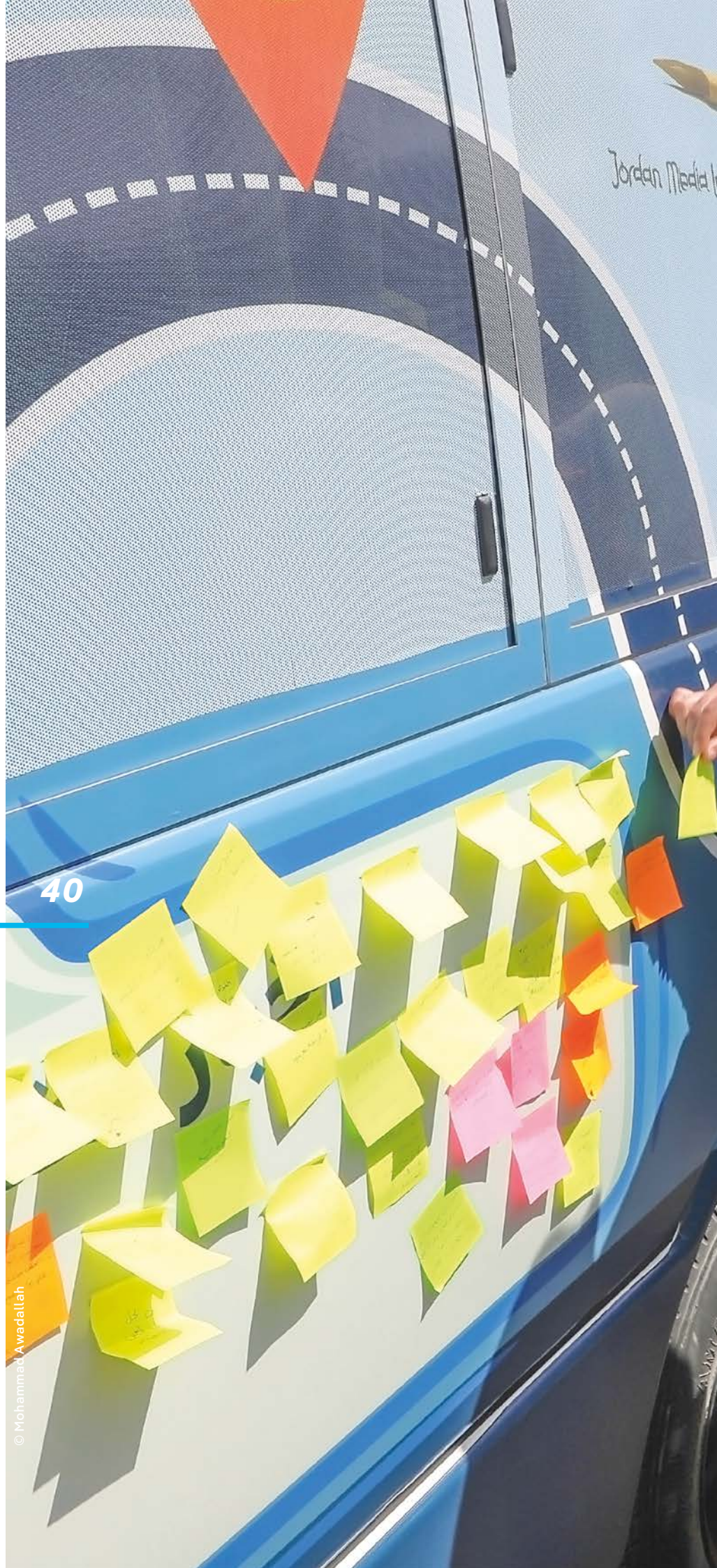
Would you like to learn more about the work of Communication Consultancy and the specific consulting services and trainings? Write to us:

➔ [dw-akademie.communication-consultancy@dw.com](mailto:dw-akademie.communication-consultancy@dw.com)



## *Informed and competent: Youth and media*

Jordan's population is overwhelmingly young, with more than half of Jordanians under the age of 24. Digital technologies and social media play a central role in Jordan—for better or worse. The trend toward polarization and radicalization is worsened by the spread of disinformation, which first became apparent during the pandemic and, more recently, since the Israel-Hamas war. Institutional media literacy education remains limited in Jordan, especially in regions far from the capital. The bus from Jordan Media Institute and DW Akademie traveled across the country in 2024, including visiting universities. The project has informed more than 3,200 interested citizens about media literacy and its role in responsible Internet use.











*Together we are not alone: Local students visit a youth exchange forum.*





# *Cambodia* Media and information literacy for Indigenous youth

*In a DW Akademie project, young Indigenous people from the highlands of Cambodia are learning how to protect themselves from online fraud and disinformation.*

---

In a community center in Ta Veng, a simple wooden hut on stilts, an all-too-familiar scene unfolds on stage one Saturday afternoon. A young man discovers a scooter for sale online

at a temptingly low price and happily transfers his savings. He then waits in vain for an answer, while the supposed seller disappears without a trace. The 92 students follow along with curiosity and laugh aloud as the actor stares theatrically at his cell phone, desperately awaiting a message. What is being staged here is a bitter reality many in the audience know all too well. The play is part of a youth exchange forum on online scamming and disinformation.

Ta Veng is one of several Indigenous villages in Ratanakiri Province, reached via a winding road across sweeping hills, rainforests and farmland. According to the last census, in 2019,





*Using theater to educate people about online fraud: The scenes reflect the real experiences of young people from the province of Ratanakiri.*

© Deborah Urban/DW Akademie

at least 22 Indigenous groups live in Cambodia, a large proportion of which are native to Ratanakiri and Stung Treng provinces.

In both provinces, DW Akademie and its local partner organization Khmer Youth Association (KYA) supported a project to improve media literacy. The aim is to empower youth leaders from Indigenous communities as multipliers, enabling them to pass on their skills to other young people and make them more resilient to disinformation.

Indigenous communities are often socio-economically disadvantaged, with limited access to education and reliable information. For many of Ratanakiri's young people, traveling from their community to school is often a great challenge. Many of

the Indigenous children and young people do not read or write Khmer, the national language, well enough for basic understanding, nor do they attend secondary school. They often must support their parents in agricultural work and therefore drop out after primary school. This makes them particularly vulnerable to disinformation, as digital technologies have reached even Ratanakiri's most remote villages and are very popular among their residents.

"The biggest problems that young people often face are phishing and disinformation," reported Sophen Yeng, project manager from KYA. Media and information literacy (MIL) is therefore a relevant topic for young people.

### Multipliers teach the safe use of social media

"MIL can fundamentally change their behavior towards media consumption," Yeng explained. "The improved skills and knowledge also have a cascading effect on the entire community."

The project therefore relies on MIL multipliers identified by KYA and trained by DW Akademie. Together, they produce videos in the MIL trainings which are published on KYA's social media accounts or in the communities. The final event is the youth exchange forums, where the videos are discussed in a larger circle. Theatre performances have proved to be an effective means of communicating complex MIL issues with the





*In dialogue: Young people discuss the challenges of social media and the internet with a community leader during a youth exchange forum in Ta Veng.*

ideas for the scripts developed during the trainings.

“The video productions and the youth exchange forum were the most interesting for me,” said Sreypich Som, an MIL multiplier from Ratanakiri. “It allows us to showcase our talents in dealing with problems, propose solutions, and learn how to protect ourselves from the dangers of social media.”

A local community leader joined the audience at Ta Veng to discuss the play with young people. This not only allows participants to talk to each other, but also to make their concerns heard in their communities. ●

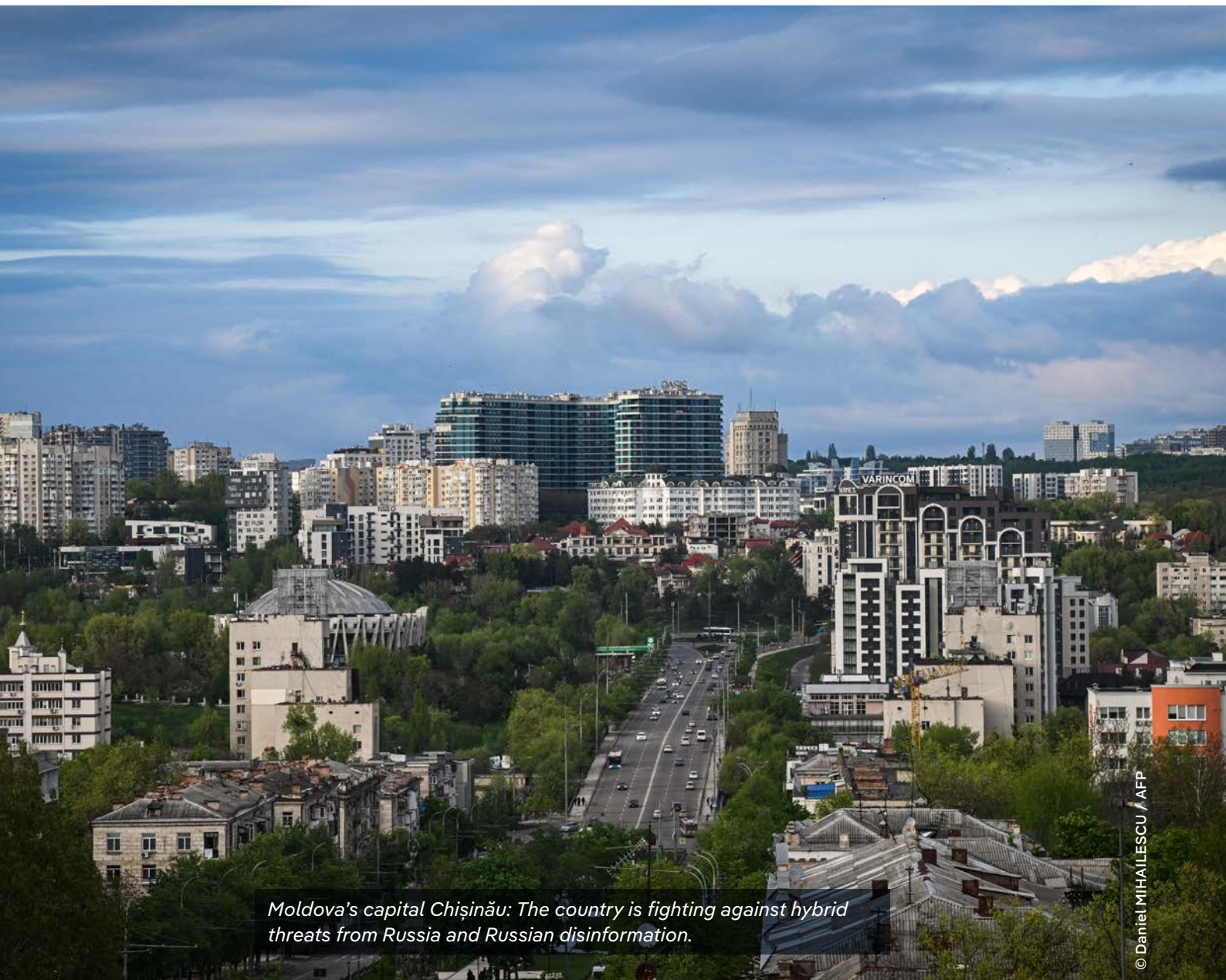
## ***Navigating the media***

Competence is more important than ever in times of social media, where fake news spreads faster than facts and hate speech polarizes and poisons social dialogue. Media and information literacy (MIL) is the ability to access, analyze and critically reflect on (social) media, as well as to create media content oneself. It is a prerequisite for citizens to exercise their rights to freedom of expression and access to information. Our innovative projects promote these rights and empower people to understand and use media responsibly.



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# Moldova: Media in the classroom



*Moldova's capital Chișinău: The country is fighting against hybrid threats from Russia and Russian disinformation.*

© Daniel MIHAILESCU / AFP



*Together with the Moldovan Ministry of Education, DW Akademie has set out to teach students directly in the classroom on how to use media competently.*



“I notice that the students love it when I give them the tasks. Even when it’s homework,” said Lina Gorceag, a teacher at the Principesa Natalia Dadiani secondary school in the Moldovan capital Chişinău. She is one of 20 Moldovan teachers who have included media and information literacy (MIL) in their Romanian curriculum since 2023.

In Moldova, where one in five children grows up with only one parent or without parents, school is often the only place where children can be encouraged to engage critically and competently with media. With so much propaganda and disinformation from Russia, young media users need to know how to access reliable information and recognize fake news.

Together with the Independent Journalism Center (IJC), DW Akademie has entered into a strategic partnership with the Moldovan Ministry of Education and Research

and educational institutions to integrate MIL into the Romanian and English school curricula. MIL has already been included in the national curriculum as a compulsory subject since 2020 and by the end of 2025, around 1,500 pupils at lower and upper secondary levels in the Republic of Moldova will have strengthened their media skills and armed themselves against disinformation. Through the partnership, teachers also learn how to engage their students interactively to enhance their MIL skills. ●





10

media outlets  
already working  
together in the  
Young Media  
Network—with  
more to come!

Young journalists from the Western Balkans meet at DW Akademie's Brave New Media Forum in Belgrade in 2024.

## Young Media Network: Media for and by the next generation

*In times of disinformation and hate speech on the web, Gen Z journalists from four countries in the Western Balkans are taking a stand. They work closely together as part of a regional youth media network.*

Keti Simić works at a local Serbian newspaper and makes Instagram content for younger users.

“Regional youth organizations are almost non-existent here in the Balkans,” she said. “The great thing about the Young Media Network is that I can find contacts with young journalists from other cities and neighboring countries.”

The network aims to improve the quality of media content for children and young people and educate them about the dangers of the digital world. It also wants to give young people more opportunities to bring their concerns into the public sphere.

Nine media outlets from Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina and North Macedonia founded the network in November 2022. Young journalists from local newsrooms, student portals and public broadcasters play an important role. All media are advised by DW Akademie as part of the program. Since 2017, hundreds of young media professionals have participated in training sessions and exchanged ideas at the annual international Brave New Media Forum event.

## Learn German on the go and free of charge with news and a telenovela

*Whether you're just starting out or already advanced, the DW Learn German platform is aimed toward learners at all levels.*

Since October 2024, learners of German have been able to train their listening comprehension with the new "Kurz und Leicht" format. From Monday to Friday, learners can watch the latest short video news that is simplified linguistically for beginners, with the full transcript and glossary available to read along. For advanced learners, there is still the slowly spoken news. DW has thus strengthened its unique selling point of producing news for German learners.

The telenovela "Nicos Weg" (Nico's Way) offers 228 lessons at level A1 and above so users can start learning German or deepen their language skills. Learners meet the young Spaniard Nico upon his arrival in Germany and accompany him as he navigates everyday life in a new country. The course is available in 16 languages, including Arabic, French, Farsi and Ukrainian. Social media offerings such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and TikTok also enable interaction.

Teachers who want to use the free teaching resources in the classroom can download comprehensive accompanying material. Worksheets, didactic tips or even entire lessons can also be used both on- and offline.

**DW Learn German:** ➔ [dw.com/learngerman](https://www.dw.com/learngerman)

approx. **1.3**

*million registered users of the DW Learn German platform as of April 2025*

approx. **3.9**

*million fans and followers of DW Learn German on social networks as of April 2025*

**58**

*percent of DW Learn German users are between the ages of 21 and 35 as of April 2025*





## *Empowering media makers*

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Telling stories that move people and providing reliable information—these are the core tasks of media professionals worldwide. However, journalists reporting from remote rural areas face particular challenges. Poor or no internet access makes journalistic work on the ground more difficult. But, digital technologies can help, such as the apps Colmena and Voice Deck (in Uganda, pictured) supported by DW Akademie.

50











*A water station near the city of Tamale in northern Ghana.*



# Change

*through local reporting in Ghana*

*Northern Ghana's rural residents face unique challenges. Journalist Moses Abaah Apiah tells their stories—and was honored for his work.*

---

Moses Abaah Apiah actually wanted to study computer science. He already had a scholarship to study at the Shenyang University of Technology in China. But then his uncle, who wanted to pay for Apiah's plane ticket and living expenses, died. What followed were detours that eventually led Apiah to journalism. In 2021, he took part in a DW Akademie training course on mobile journalism, media ethics and reporting on rural development.

Maxwell Suuk, DW's Ghana correspondent, described the central role of local journalists in remote regions: "If they didn't exist,

you would never hear anything from there." Media professionals in rural northern Ghana face different challenges than their colleagues in the cities. The pressure to produce content with the simplest means is enormous. Economic hardship makes it difficult to balance professional ethics and the need to earn a living. Training opportunities are scarce outside urban areas such as Accra, which also has an impact on the quality of local journalism.

During the training, Apiah and eight other participants practiced using audio and video apps as well as working in front of





© Nana Kyei Abankwah/DW

*Journalism in rural regions remains close to the people.*



*Moses Abaah Apiah has been recognized for his reports.*

approx. **4**

**billion people, half of the world's population, suffer from severe water shortages at some point throughout the year**

Source: United Nations World Water Report 2025

the camera. Apiah also learned to put people at the center of his reporting.

“My first story after the training was about a disabled man who ran his liquid soap business from an old hand-operated tricycle,” he said. “After the story, a politician became aware of the man and bought him a new tricycle.”

### Reporting with impact

Apiah has also reported on the lack of water in the municipality of Asongi-Kunkua, where well drilling has been abandoned in the past five years. Following the publication of his reporting, new drilling was ordered. Another article was about law students whose school had no

drinking water facilities on the premises. A water supply company then provided a 1000-liter multi-purpose tank.

In September 2024, the Upper East Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) awarded Apiah the Most Promising Journalist of the Year Award for his commitment. He also received an award for best reporter on topics related to water and sanitation (WASH).

### Focus on solutions

“Water and sanitation issues are close to my heart because access to clean water is a fundamental right,” said Apiah.





*Hawa Mahana (left) and Moses Abaah Apiah at a training held by DW Akademie.*

When not reporting on water issues, he mainly deals with local conflicts. “DW Akademie’s trainings have given me the tools to approach sensitive issues with sensitivity and to ensure that my reporting promotes dialogue and mutual understanding instead of increasing tensions,” he said.

Apiah himself lives in the Bolgatanga district, but often reports from another, Bawku. There are always disputes between the two districts over land and administrative issues, but in his reports Apiah concentrates on possible solutions. One article illustrated the resilience and determination of widows and women in general in the midst of these local conflicts.

“Without the training of DW Akademie,” he said, “my own

determination and motivation would not be so pronounced. Now I am ready to make all sides heard, to avoid inflammatory language and thus to promote solutions and peaceful coexistence.”

## ***Journalism: Credible quality***

DW Akademie supports media professionals in shaping the future of journalism with training and continuing education programs. We support schools for journalists because they play a leading role in the further development of the sector. They are drivers of innovation for journalism whose work benefits both the public and media companies.



*The “Survive and Thrive: The Media Viability Podcast” newsletter subscriptions surpassed*

# 18,600

*on LinkedIn.  
as of May 2025*

## More than survival: Podcast highlights successful business models for media

*On DW Akademie’s “Survive and Thrive: The Media Viability Podcast,” media managers from around the world discuss financing models and recipes for success, along with what they learned from missteps and bad decisions. Launched in 2023, the second season ran in 2024.*

How do media survive in a difficult media landscape? What motivates media professionals to keep going? Among the guests who have answered these questions so far are Zahra Nader, exiled founder and editor-in-chief of award-winning Zan Times from Afghanistan; Salam Omer from KirkukNow in Iraq, which reports from conflict regions; and Zenzele Ndebele, founder of the non-profit news portal CITE Zimbabwe.

“Survive and Thrive” is published monthly and can be found on all major podcast platforms, along with a video of the podcast on YouTube. The transcript, further information and resources are available on the DW Akademie website and on our LinkedIn newsletter.



# “

***The best way  
to predict the future  
is to create it.***

### **Zenzele Ndebele**

Zimbabwe, founder of the online news portal CITE and member of DW Akademie’s Global Reference Group. In episode five of the second podcast season, he talked about how to stay afloat while focusing on local communities and embracing generative AI.



# 43

*languages in which the MethodKit for Podcasts is available*

© Julia Minner/DW Akademie



## Got an idea for a new podcast? Get start-up help from professionals

***With MethodKit for Podcasts, DW Akademie supports podcasts worldwide—from development to production.***

Together with the Swedish organization MethodKit and 20 global podcast experts, DW Akademie developed a set of 61 cards, each highlighting a crucial aspect of podcast development. The kit stimulates

discussion and helps with concept development as well as considering production details. As a training tool, it helps trainers working with media professionals on new audio formats but it can also be used independently.

DW Akademie has also developed various training modules that have been implemented in various African

countries, Cambodia and Ukraine. The podcast kit can be used online and offline and is available in English, Kiswahili, Amharic, Burmese, Oromo, Arabic, Chichewa, French, Mooré, Spanish, Ukrainian, Khmer and German, among others. Digital kits are available for free at [methodkit.com/podcasts](https://methodkit.com/podcasts)



# I'm inspired!

**Nazira Inoyatova**

Uzbekistan, program director of Aytoradio and Media School  
Uzbekistan participant, a partnership between Modern  
Journalism Development Center (MJDC) and DW Akademie.





DW Trainees report through wind and rain.

© Curtis Schuck

## DW Trainees on assignment abroad

*DW Trainees hail from different cultures and countries. They have joined the DW Akademie program to become the next generation of journalists.*

The budding journalists of the 2024/25 trainee cohort arrived from seven nations to work with DW. Over 18 months of practical seminars and editorial assignments, the trainees have learned the journalistic skills necessary to produce television, online and radio news. Beyond working in both Bonn and Berlin, a two-month assignment in one of

DW's foreign studios is mandatory. In addition, trainees have the choice of a month-long elective assignment, which can be at the ARD studio in Madrid or at the UN in Jamaica. The main goal of the program is for trainees to understand what makes DW correspondents' work so remarkable and to experience how colleagues from other media companies work.

And after the traineeship? Almost all of them stay with DW as editors, reporters or correspondents. ●

# 12

*DW trainees per cohort*





*Adnan Sidibé (hinten rechts) und seine Kommilitoninnen und Kommilitonen bei der feierlichen Eröffnung des französischsprachigen Master-Studiengangs in der Französischen Botschaft in Berlin im September 2024.*

© Stephanie Englert/DW

# Master's degrees: Qualification ensures quality

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*DW Akademie's master's programs give students an in-depth look at digital media production, as well as comprehensive journalistic experience and media management skills. They are aimed at young people from all over the world who want to use their knowledge to shape the future of the media sector in their home countries. All students have already gained some professional experience in the media industry, media development or in editorial offices.*

"80 percent of those affected by the climate crisis are women," read a Facebook post by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). "Not true," concluded Adnan Sidibé who was honored for his research with the coveted "Fact-Check of the Year by a Professional Fact-Checker" award in 2024. Sidibé has been working for Fasocheck, DW Akademie's long-standing partner organization in Burkina Faso. Meanwhile, Sidibé is on a scholarship with the new French-language "Master francophone en journalisme international" (MFJI).

### **Studying in French in France and Bonn**

The new French-language master's degree program in international journalism (MFJI) started in the 2024 academic year. The program, aimed at media professionals from the French-speaking world, is a result of a partnership between DW Akademie and the Université de Tours in France. After the first year in Bonn, MFJI students continue their education in Tours for the second year. The program concludes with a professional internship in the students' home country and is accompanied by a scholarship.

### **International Media Studies: Comprehensive and practice-oriented**

The students in the English-language master's program in International Media Studies (IMS) come from all over the world, including Ghana, Bangladesh, Colombia and Lithuania. Over the course of two years, they gain insight into the interrelationships between media, politics and development. After graduating with a master's degree, graduates work as media experts worldwide and contribute to strengthening the media and freedom of expression in their home countries.

The International Media Studies program is offered through DW Akademie, Bonn University and the Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences. ●

# 10

*students from Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire make up the first intake of the "Master francophone en journalisme international" degree program*

# 292

*alumni of the International Media Studies master's program since 2011 as of April 2025*

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# From idea to market: Start-up incubator MEDIA LOVES TECH





***A DW Akademie program and its Tunisian partner organization Al Khatt support digital media innovations in Tunisia.***

MEDIA LOVES TECH has supported between eight and 12 start-ups annually since 2018—from idea to prototype to market entry. Participating start-ups have tackled challenging topics such as climate change in North Africa and how to help business

journalists obtain reliable financial data. A panel assesses the viability of the projects, the commitment of the teams and the feasibility of the projects in reaching their goals.

The top prize in 2024 went to H'art Network. The team developed an innovative and safe platform designed for children aged eight to 16 who want to create online videos, audio recordings or online newspapers. There is demand in Tunisia for creative media literacy tools, but at present, no comparable offering exists. ●

**60**

***start-ups in Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria supported by MEDIA LOVES TECH (2018–2024)***



***Innovation for public dialogue***

The digital transformation of public dialogue comes with opportunities and risks. Modern technology offers us endless opportunities to share information and engage in public discussions. Its limitations lie in unequal access, language barriers, algorithmic bias and government regulation. DW Akademie promotes innovations in the digital world to improve public dialogue without barriers and protected from restrictions and manipulation.

# Our numbers

*We set the standards*

Close cooperation with local partner organizations in 60 developing and emerging countries is our strength. To enable us to work even more closely together, we are continuously opening or expanding DW Akademie's field and regional offices. Our ten field offices complement our ten regional offices to form a global network of media development experts. Our decentralized organizational structure guarantees that we are where we are needed most.

© Network of Information Centers (NIC)







● Regional office

● Partner countries *(on behalf of BMZ)*

|              |                         |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| Bangladesh   | Morocco                 |
| Bolivia      | Myanmar                 |
| Burkina Faso | Namibia                 |
| Cambodia     | Pakistan                |
| Colombia     | Palestinian territories |
| Georgia      | Serbia                  |
| Ghana        | Tunisia                 |
| Kenya        | Uganda                  |
| Lebanon      | Ukraine                 |
| Mexico       | Uzbekistan              |
| Moldova      |                         |

● Project countries

|                        |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Afghanistan            | Kyrgyzstan           |
| Albania                | Latvia               |
| Armenia                | Libya                |
| Belarus                | Lithuania            |
| Bhutan                 | Malawi               |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Mali                 |
| Brazil                 | Mongolia             |
| Cameroon               | Montenegro           |
| Costa Rica             | Niger                |
| Côte d'Ivoire          | North Macedonia      |
| Ecuador                | Peru                 |
| El Salvador            | Russia               |
| Estonia                | Senegal              |
| Ethiopia               | Sierra Leone         |
| The Gambia             | South Africa         |
| Guatemala              | Syrian Arab Republic |
| Honduras               | Tanzania             |
| Jordan                 | Thailand             |
| Kazakhstan             | Zimbabwe             |
| Kosovo                 |                      |

# Dedicated to free media around the world

10

DW Akademie offices and

10

field offices

82

DW Akademie projects  
in 2024

60

emerging economies and developing  
countries where we have projects  
as of April 2025

159

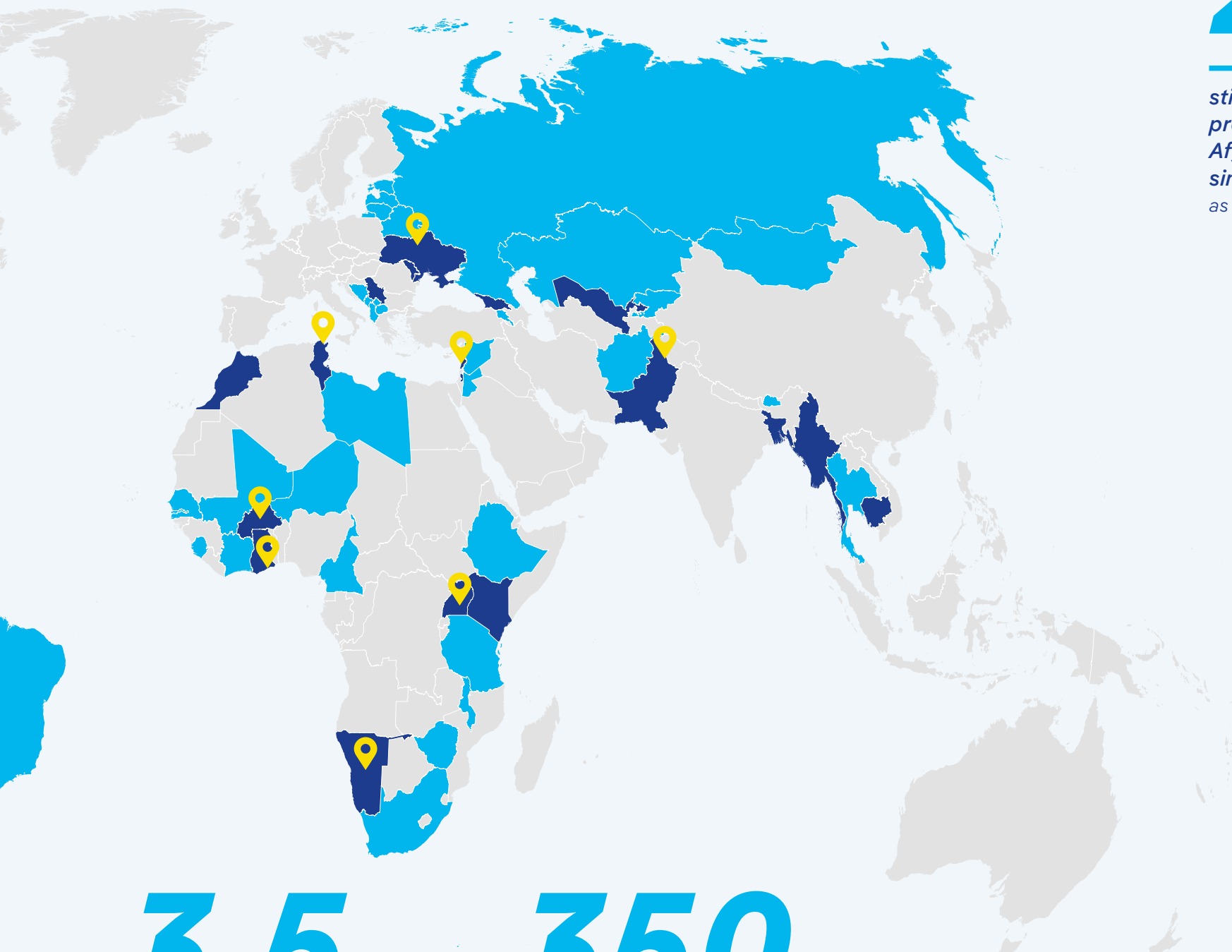
partner organizations around  
the world with which we work  
closely in 2024/25  
as of April 2025

37.75

million euros in project funding from the  
German Federal Ministry for Economic  
Cooperation and Development, the German  
Federal Foreign Office, the European Union  
and other donors  
Budget 2024







298

stipends from DW Akademie's Space for Freedom project given to exiled media workers from Afghanistan, Belarus, Russia and Central America since 2023  
as of April 2025

801

Space for Freedom consultations and trainings offered since 2023  
as of April 2025

10

students from Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire make up the first intake of the "Master francophone en journalisme international" degree program

292

alumni of the International Media Studies master's program since 2011  
as of April 2025

10

media outlets already working together in the Young Media Network—with more to come!

12

DW trainees per cohort

3.5

million euros in funding from the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, for work we do on behalf of Deutsche Welle  
Budget 2024

350

people around the world whom we employ on a full or part-time basis  
as of April 2025

43

languages in which the MethodKit for Podcasts is available

60

start-ups in Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria supported by MEDIA LOVES TECH (2018–2024)

23

community radio stations, local media outlets and media organizations from 13 countries in Africa and Latin America involved in the development of the Colmena app, that works like a digital newsroom

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