



EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON JOURNALISTS AND THE MEDIA SECTOR IN THE ARAB WORLD AND THE MIDDLE EAST

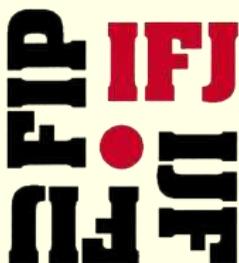
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**Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Journalists and the Media
Sector in the Arab World and the Middle East**

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Introduction: Journalism and media sector before the Covid-19 Pandemic

The global crisis that the press and media sector faced during the first decade of this century was delayed in the Arab region, but it began to accelerate since 2010.

Technical developments, especially smart phone technologies, the spread of social networks, easy Internet access and its low cost, are elements that together caused profound changes in the behavior of readers and viewers, exemplified by the massive migration of traditional journalism to digital spaces.

Much has been written about the role that these technologies and social networks have played in sparking the first wave of revolutions and popular movements in the countries of the region in 2010.

As the advertising market caught up with readers and viewers into the digital space, the economic model on which the press and media sector was built began to collapse.

Therefore, when news about the Covid-19 pandemic began to spread in early 2020, the region's press and media sector was facing its worst moment.

On the one hand, there is the economic crisis that hit the press sector and led to the disappearance of more than 80% of press institutions during the past decade.

In Iraq, for example, the number of newspapers increased after the change of the Iraqi regime in 2003, having more than 170 newspaper compared to 21 at the beginning of the pandemic¹.

Newspapers in Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon have disappeared with close percentages. In Morocco, the size of the advertising market in the sector decreased by 55% in 2018 compared to the size of revenues in 2010, and this collapse accelerated in 2019 and 2020². In Egypt, the debts of the



¹ [Report](#) on the financial conditions of printed press in the Arab world, Al-Jazeera Net, May 7, 2020

² Covid-19 impact on the press sector and exit measures from the crisis, Report of the National Press Council, Morocco, May, 2020.

national (state-owned) press institutions in early 2020 amounted to about one billion and three hundred million dollars³.

The crisis was not limited to printed press outlets only, “a few weeks before the start of the Covid-19 crisis, the National Bureau of Radio and Television Broadcasting tried to cut off broadcasts on some TV and radio channels, and the reason is that the debts of these institutions reached record numbers. In fact, one of the stations did not pay a penny in exchange for taking advantage of the services of the Bureau since its emergence⁴”.

On the other hand, the thousands of digital press institutions that have emerged during the last decade suffer from high economic fragility and often degrading operating conditions, with the exception of a tiny minority of low quality content. As for traditional press, it is still unable to adapt to the digital environment in terms of the form of press products and their content in a way that matches the interests and tastes of readers and viewers.

Furthermore, the impact of political and economic power centers on their editorial independence, including the exposure of female journalists and journalists who try to pursue a critical and independent editorial line without being subjected to any sorts of threats, intimidation and imprisonment because of their work.

All these factors combined have led to a severe deficit in the ability of the press to build citizens’ confidence in traditional media institutions and their continued abandonment of these outlets, which deepened its economic crisis.



1- The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the press and media sector

Dozens of reports and research have indicated what appeared to be a positive impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the media sector, namely, citizens turning to traditional media institutions to obtain reliable information and news about the pandemic and the official procedures and guidelines that should be followed.

State-owned media institutions (public media) in a number of countries also

³ Financial conditions for printed press in the Arab world, previous source.

⁴ Financial conditions for printed press in the Arab world, previous source.

witnessed unfamiliar support and trust from citizens. Especially those that have taken the initiative to provide programmatic courses that meet the needs of citizens. This included educational programs for school students, in light of the ban measures affecting the educational system. However, after several months of the start of the pandemic, and at the beginning of summer, there were indications of a decline in citizens' follow-up of traditional media institutions and their abandonment.

All else, the pandemic has had a severe impact on the press, private media, and the social and professional rights of those working in it.

The print media sector was the most affected, as most countries in the region asked newspapers and magazines to stop printing for fear of their contribution to the spread of infection. There by, newspapers continued to be closed in various countries at a rate of ten weeks. Despite the demand from employers to preserve the jobs of journalists and workers as well as their wages. In the absence of financial support packages from the state for the sector, layoffs were made, wage deductions, and some institutions completely stopped working.

At the end of last April, the International Federation of Journalists conducted a global survey on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on field journalists.

1308 journalists working on permanent contracts or working independently (Freelance) participated in the survey from 77 countries around the world and also working in various press platforms: newspapers, televisions, digital journalism and others.

The questionnaire revealed that three out of four journalists face restrictions on their work by official bodies, disruption of their movement, or intimidation as a result of their coverage of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Two-thirds of the respondents also mentioned that their wages were reduced, lost their work, production contracts were canceled, or that their economic situation had worsened due to the pandemic:

- The vast majority of freelance journalists have lost their income or lost job opportunities.

- More than half suffered from stress and anxiety.
- More than a quarter of them lacked the necessary equipment to conduct their work safely from a distance, and the same percentage expressed the lack of safety and protective equipment for their field work.
- Dozens of journalists have been arrested, or were subjected judicial warrants or were assaulted for covering topics related to the pandemic and its economic and social impacts. For example, Jordanian authorities arrested the director of Ru'ya Channel (the most popular private station in the Kingdom) and its news director, due to a report that showed the difficult economic situation of day-to-day laborers and that they and their children suffer from hunger. The mentioned individuals were released after several days. In Iraq and Egypt, the authorities closed the offices of international media organizations or deported foreign journalists because of their coverage of the pandemic news there.
- More than a third of journalists have changed their journalistic specialization to focus on covering the news of the Covid-19 pandemic and preparing reports on its effects.

The vast majority of respondents said that the pandemic has caused a decline in levels of press freedom.

As mentioned previously, the print press sector is the most affected by the effects of the pandemic due to the long closures and being the most vulnerable sector economically even before the start of the pandemic. As for workers in the sector, the most affected were technical workers, printing workers, and those working independently (freelance). Female journalists also faced additional discrimination and additional loss of income as women.

The “remote work” model, which was the main work model during health closures, and partially continued afterward in most media institutions, also posed a great challenge to the work of journalists. Since this model is not codified in most countries of the region, journalists have found themselves facing psychological and professional pressure to adapt to working remotely. The challenges of working remotely for journalists range from the lack of adequate equipment, the lack of a strong and suitable internet for work, weak data

protection systems, and extend to greater challenges such as the balance between private and professional life, longer working hours, and the problem of maintaining the quality of the journalistic product⁵.



2- The losses incurred by the sector and its sub-sectors during the pandemic: official statistics and union estimates

The press and media sector in the Arab States region lacks specialized studies and statistics for various aspects of the economic and professional sector, which makes it lose basic tools that enable it to clearly understand the media market, the needs and trends of viewers and readers, and lacks the basic knowledge necessary for rational planning for future

development. Therefore, the absence of accurate information about the losses of the sector due to the pandemic is not an exception in this context. However, an assessment can be reached through information and partial assessments issued by media institutions or bodies, or through comparison with statistics and assessment of sector losses around the world.

There are many expressions that have been circulated to predict the economic consequences of the pandemic on the press and media sector, such as the catastrophe, the Great Depression, or the catastrophe of the Great Extinction, also a comparison to the asteroid collision with the Earth that led to the extinction of the dinosaurs.

A quick review of the available figures can support these expectations. An estimated study of the International Association of Media Broadcasting Companies indicated that 98% of its members suffered from a decrease in advertising revenues, and that 88% of members were exposed to canceling advertising campaigns due to the pandemic. According to a paper⁶ prepared by the International Federation of Journalists on the impact of the pandemic

⁵ World Decent Work Day: Building the power of unions to secure a healthy work environment for the "telework" model. International Federation of Journalists, press release, 7 October 2020.

⁶ IFJ paper on the impact of the pandemic on press freedom.

on press freedom, the average loss of income in the press sector around the world between March and June was estimated at 50%.

As for the Arab countries, the pandemic and subsequent closures on the outskirts of the month of Ramadan have led to exceptional economic consequences, by virtue of the fact that the advertising revenues of media institutions during the month of Ramadan (which this year came at the end of April) represent nearly 30% of their annual revenues. For example, according to the Advertising Division in the Federation of Egyptian Industries, 99% of Egyptian companies⁷ withdrew their advertising campaigns for the month of Ramadan.



In the countries of the region, the rate of decline in imports for the print press sector ranged between 70-80%, and by 40% for the entire sector. In a number of countries, administrators, technicians, and printing press workers were temporarily suspended from work without wages. A number of journalists' unions also reported that journalists were subject to a wage cut of between 20-50%. In Jordan, journalists' wages were reduced according to the defense decision / emergency law, similar to those working in other sectors, by 30-50%. In countries such as Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Algeria, the salaries of thousands of journalists were delayed for several months. In Tunisia, the Tunisian Journalists Syndicate reported in early May that 190 journalists lost their jobs less than two months after the start of the crisis, and that hundreds of others were at risk of losing their jobs.

The union also stated that most of the major advertisers decided to transfer the budgets allocated for advertising until at least the month of September into social contributions and donations. In Morocco, a report by the National Press Council stated that the losses of the press sector during the first three months of the pandemic were \$ 24.3 million. In Egypt, the chairman of the board of directors of Al-Ahram, the largest Egyptian newspaper, stated that the advertising revenues of Egyptian newspapers fell by 75%⁸. In Algeria, "the National Agency for Publishing and Distribution, a public body, has resorted to reducing the

⁷ How will the Corona crisis affect the "Ramadan Announcements" season? [Masrawy](#) newspaper, April 7.

⁸ Abdel Mohsen Salama: Newspaper ads have decreased by 75% due to the Corona crisis. [« Al-Yawm Al-Sabeaa » newspaper](#)

granting of advertisements by more than 80%, according to the indicators of major newspapers, while it is completely absent from the small headlines of limited circulation⁹. The press sector in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council has not escaped this crisis, countries in which the press sector is considered to be the strongest in the region, economically speaking. Most newspapers have laid off hundreds of journalists and cut off the wages of others, which reached 50%¹⁰.

In contrast to the collapse of the advertising market in traditional media, digital media in western countries witnessed a growth in their revenues that depend on readers, whether as a result of the number of new subscribers who pay a monthly subscription allowance, or who have registered as new members for a one-time or recurring membership fee. In some cases, news organizations recorded previously unwitnessed growth in the second quarter of this year (April-June)¹¹. However, digital press institutions in the limited region that adopt this economic model in their work have not witnessed any similar increase in their revenues. This is a very worrying sign of the future of digital journalism in the region.

On the other hand, while the revenues of the press and traditional media sector and the largest employer of journalists and media workers in the region have collapsed from the returns of the advertising market, statistics indicate an increase in the returns of digital ads on social networks, and the rate of increase is 10%¹². Facebook's revenues¹³, which increased by 22% in the third quarter of this year (June-September), with revenues reaching \$ 22.47 billion.

Therefore, a return to prophecies regarding the long-term impact of the pandemic on the press sector. There is no doubt that it will result in permanent closure of press institutions in most countries and loss of jobs, and the picture of the extent of these losses may begin to become clear towards the middle of next year.

However, there is no doubt that the press will continue its work, but would need to accelerate the procedures for changes in the way it operates, the quality and level of its journalistic products, in order to be able to build trust with readers and viewers, which is the cornerstone of any plan to grow revenues through its digital platforms.

⁹ Al Jazeera Net, [a previous source](#).

¹⁰ For example, the news of "Corona ousts Kuwaiti media institutions", [The New Arab](#), 24 June 2020.

¹¹ Global Digital Subscription Snapshot, Report by [FIPP](#), 3Q.

¹² What were the impacts of the Coronavirus on the global advertising sector? [Al-Quds Newspaper](#), 1 July 2020

¹³ Facebook Posts Record Revenue Despite Ad Boycott, [WSJ](#), Oct, 29, 2020



3- The response of Arab governments concerning the sector during the pandemic

Most of the governments in the region have dealt with the press sector and its workers as one of the vital sectors in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. With the exception of printing paper newspapers that were suspended in most countries during quarantine periods, media institutions were allowed to continue their work. Countries of the region also granted permits for movement and press coverage during quarantine periods, similar to those working in other vital sectors. For their part, media organizations asked journalists to continue working remotely, except for those who must be present at the headquarters of media institutions, such as journalists who run programs on screens, news broadcasters and field correspondents. However, the region's recognition of the importance of the press and media sector in facing the pandemic in terms of informing citizens about the events and ongoing developments around them, as well as spreading health awareness and advice on how to deal with it, often stopped at the level of rhetoric.

The sector also did not receive an economic aid package to help it overcome the consequences of the pandemic, except in a modest way in Morocco, and to a much lesser extent in Tunisia.

In Morocco, the National Press Council in May developed a road map for reviving the press sector, which included several axes, including developing public support, supporting legibility, organizing the commercial advertising market, training and qualifying workers in the sector and providing incentives to create a competitive media industry¹⁴.

In June, the Moroccan government announced an additional \$ 20 million aid package for the press sector, which will be divided into several needs, of which 7.5 million dollars are allocated to cover the wages of journalists and workers in press institutions, and a similar amount is to cover part of the debts of these institutions to suppliers¹⁵.

In Tunisia, the Tunisian government approved in May a series of urgent and exceptional measures to support the press sector, during a narrow ministerial council that was designated to consider supporting the media sector and

¹⁴ Covid-19 pandemic exacerbates losses for the Moroccan press, [The New Arab](#), July 12.

¹⁵ "\$ 20 Million to Save the Moroccan Paper Journalism," [The New Arab](#), 27 June.

solidarity with media institutions to confront the repercussions of the Coronavirus crisis. The aid included a state guarantee of 50 percent of the broadcast fees in 2020 for all private radio and television channels. It has also allocated nearly half a million dollars for a subscription plan for digital copies of newspapers, and the establishment of a fund for government awareness and educational campaigns published in newspapers with a value of approximately one and a half dollars, and a similar amount to help media institutions in digital transformation.

However, this plan was severely criticized by the sector due to its limitations. The National Syndicate of Tunisian Journalists (SNJT by its French acronym) harshly criticized this government plan as being “improvised and projected decisions”, (and that it) is not transparent and does not rise to the level of the expectations of journalists. SNJT also declared its absolute rejection of the policy of subservience in exchange for food that the government wants to devote in the sector, thus striking to the wall all offers that were included in previous agreements that were reached with the prime minister”¹⁶.

4- The most important violations that sector was subjected to during the pandemic

Occupational safety for journalists and media sector workers

In terms of individual and trade union responsibility for the safety of journalists and media workers, the issue of occupational safety has occupied, since the beginning of the pandemic, an important area in the efforts of unions and regional and international professional organizations. Since there is a regional program for the International Federation of Journalists, in cooperation with journalists’ unions in the Arab region, which specializes in occupational safety and includes a network of occupational safety trainers present in most countries, occupational safety plans for journalists and media workers for the prevention of the pandemic have been developed and widely published. The plans included topics such as safety during field coverage, safety within media institutions, and safe movement, in addition to a section on health and psychological safety in covering pandemic news. This was followed by the



¹⁶ Statement of the National Syndicate of Tunisian Journalists (SNJT) on May 7, 2020

organization of digital workshops on occupational safety in various countries to train and advise journalists.

As for the employers, there were various complaints about their default and failure to respect their duties in terms of developing professional safety guidelines for the media organization, and the failure to provide adequate equipment and tools for field coverage or remote work. There was also no clear rights plan for health insurance coverage in the event of sickness (or death) as a result of infection at work.

There are records (not thoroughly examined) of hundreds of journalists being infected and some of them dying due to the virus, but there is no accurate documentation of who was infected during their professional work. As for death, there is one documented case of the Egyptian journalist, Mohamed Mounir, who became infected during his arrest for his work, and died several days after his release.

As for government measures to enhance the safety of journalists and media workers, there was only one action, which was a clear request from newspapers to stop printing and distribution, or to encourage them to do so in order to limit the spread of the pandemic, despite the absence of clear evidence that the distribution and sale of newspapers pose a risk in terms of spreading the infection.

Layoffs

Thousands of journalists lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic, especially in the print media sector during the first weeks of the pandemic. Since then, journalism jobs in the private media sector have continued to drain. There are no indications that there are new job opportunities that can compensate for this loss.

According to press institutions, it had no escape from these measures in light of the almost total stopping of revenues and the failure to approve a package of assistance from countries for the media sector.

It should be noted that Morocco witnessed the lowest cases of layoffs in the press sector in the region, and this can be explained mainly by the aid package that the press sector received from the state, as part of the support was allocated to help cover wages.



Freedom of the press and editorial independence

The violations of press freedom and critical reporting by governments and political and economic power centers are among the biggest challenges facing journalists and media in the region. These violations existed before the pandemic, but additional restrictions were added during Covid-19 outbreak. As governments have warned journalists against publishing “incorrect” news related to the pandemic, or distracting national efforts, or threatening national interest and unity in their media coverage, using laws restricting freedom of expression in their pursuit of the sector, such as emergency laws and cybercrime laws. Governments hoped that this threat would increase self-censorship of journalists and move away from journalistic investigations that could lead to political and judicial prosecution. The example of the imprisonment of the director of the Jordanian channel Ru’ya TV and the editor of the news section as a result of broadcasting a report on the living distress faced by day-to-day laborers is one example of persecution. It is also one of the few examples of media organizations that have tried to shed light on the social and economic impacts of government policies in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic.

5- Endeavors to rebuild the sector and recovery policies

The economic crisis facing the media sector, as mentioned in the introduction, is not a consequence of the pandemic, but rather has deeper causes and has its roots in the political and economic structures that control most of the countries in the region. As governments deal with the press and media sector as a spokesperson on their behalf, he must be a marketer for their policies and forsake his monetary and oversight role over the performance of the executive authorities and those who hold public office. The region’s governments use a legal system designed to tighten control over the public press sector (which in many countries is called state media). As for the private media sector, it uses, in addition to regulatory

and legislative restrictions, to keep it under control, economic tools and financial envelopes to ensure its loyalty and obedience.



The direct and indirect government control over the advertising market is one of the most important tools for controlling the private media sector, in addition to its control over official advertisements. Furthermore, governments use intimidation to direct the private sector to the media institutions that it wants to give advertisements, where the criterion of loyalty is the priority and not the quality of the content or the size of the readers and listeners.

With regard to the media sector, one of the most important consequences of the pandemic is the accelerating shift in the habits and behaviors of readers and viewers towards following digital content. This will inevitably lead to advertisers catching up with them, and an important part of the advertising revenues that the sector lost during the pandemic will not return to it afterwards. Which means more media institutions would be closed and more job losses would occur in traditional media.

It is important to note here that the growth of the digital advertising market does not mean that this growth will benefit the national press and media sector. As noted by the report issued by the National Press Council in Morocco, more than 80% of digital advertising revenue is acquired by major technology companies (Google, Facebook, Apple, Amazon, Microsoft, and others). Revenues of digital advertising in Morocco, which amounted to about 600 million dirhams, went back to the press sector of less than 120 million Dirham.

Accordingly, there is an urgent need to open a comprehensive dialogue between governments and legislative bodies on the one hand and between representatives of the press and media sector about the role of the press and independent media as the original right of citizens as one of the main outlets for their right to obtain the necessary information and knowledge that they need to make decisions about their present and future.

Furthermore, based on proven facts and statistics, it has been internationally recognized, that independent journalism has a pivotal role in achieving

sustainable development goals¹⁷. The recognition by governments of the role independent press could play in meeting the basic rights of citizens present and contributing to achieving sustainable development, including social justice, is followed by a series of legislative and regulatory reforms related to media laws and legislations, as well as other laws relating to the regulation of media and advertising market laws to enable the press to build an economic model suitable for the digital age.

6 - Recommendations

The comprehensive crisis facing the press and media sector in the countries of the region, which was deepened by the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, requires a complete review of official government policies towards the media sector, and the work programs as well as the priorities of trade union organizations in order to put the sector on a path of recovery and sustainable development.



Recommendations to governments

First - Guarantee of freedom of the press and its independence: On March 30, 2019, after their meeting in Tunis, simultaneously with the Arab summit meeting, journalists' unions in the Arab region sent a message calling on Arab leaders to take urgent measures to reform the regulatory and legislative environment necessary to guarantee freedom and independence of the press. The message stated that: "The peaceful movements of Arab peoples that started years ago and are still continuing are an expression of a historical path towards achieving individual and collective freedoms, and sustainable development based on economic, social and environmental justice. It is, until now, the beginning of a process that may require achieving its goals for decades. The Arab peoples and states occupy the appropriate position they deserve as the cradle of human civilization. The qualitative and independent press has a fundamental role in preserving the peace, permanence, and correction of the march by providing spaces for free expression and a public space open to citizens,

¹⁷ See, for example, "Why is Independent Journalism Important to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals." [English-language essay](#), UNESCO, February 2, 2019. As well as the research paper "Introduction to Media Development to Support Just and Peaceful Societies and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals," issued by [UNDB - Norwegian Governance Center](#) in English, February 2019.

which helps them make appropriate and important decisions that shape their present and future.

The issue of providing legal guarantees for freedom of the press in the countries of the region, where most of its countries still impose severe restrictions and penalties for freedom of journalists because of their professional work, is a top priority, not only because obtaining accurate and complete information is one of the basic rights of citizens, the free circulation of information and the ability of citizens to monitor the performance of public officials (through the press) is one of the foundations of the development process. Enabling the press to produce quality journalistic content through which it can build trust with readers and viewers is one of the foundations of the future economic model of journalism.

Second - Adopting national mechanisms to provide economic support for the public media outlets: In light of the continuing shortage of the financial resources of the private press from the revenues of advertisements, and future signs that indicate the continuous increase in the share of international companies in the national markets, the International Federation of Journalists launched, in consultation with trade union organizations around the world during the Covid-19 pandemic, a “Global Initiative for Quality Journalism”¹⁸.

To illustrate, the initiative calls on governments around the world to impose taxes on international technology and publishing companies and to allocate a percentage of tax revenues to support the independent press sector within transparent standards and conditions that guarantee the independence of the media and the respect of the rights of its workers.

¹⁸ Take a look at the text of the initiative [here](#)

Recommendations to unions



First - Developing trade union structures to accommodate changes in the structure of the media sector: Despite the change and development that has taken place in trade union structures and structures over the past years, there is still an urgent need for more efforts in this direction. Many unions were able to transcend the traditional hierarchical structures and transformed into dynamic and structurally branched trade union organizations, allowing the largest possible number of members to engage in union

activity, whether in regional branches or at the level of press institutions. The openness of trade unions towards the organization of freelance journalists, people working in the digital press sector and new media professions is also slow. The biggest challenge is to bypass the model of union organization as organized by national law (the Journalists Syndicate Law - which is a common model in the Levantine countries) that slows and restricts the ability of trade unions to change and adapt to the developments taking place in the sector.

Second - Opening a dialogue with the executive and legislative authorities and employers: This dialogue focuses on providing aid packages and material incentives that save a large part of the sector from an imminent collapse and help it transform into a digital business model. All on the condition that any support that would be obtained is based on a number of principles, the most important of which is preserving jobs in the sector and the absence of any kind of political interference in the press institutions that deserve support. This support can take a variety of forms, including support funds for the press sector from the general budget, establishing independent bodies to manage the public advertising budget (which is considered one of the most important sources of financial support the private press sector).

Furthermore, another solution would be allocating budgets to conduct citizen awareness campaigns across the media sector on various issues, including health related Pandemic and other issues as well as allocating budgets or tax incentives that encourage citizens and companies to participate in media outlets or outlets. Introducing tax reforms that include imposing copyright and intellectual property rights taxes on companies that manufacture or import technical devices (computers, mobile phones,

electronic tablets, and everything used to access press contents), and other ideas.

Third - Keeping pace with the digitization of the sector: There is a need to accelerate digitalization in all aspects of union work, whether in terms of daily work, trade union organization, union campaigns, and in particular the attraction of young women and men, the majority of whom work in the digital press sector under fragile working conditions and degrading work contracts.

Fourth - Exerting efforts to strengthen the governance of the media sector: The review confirms how the countries of the region are dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic and its action or rather lack of action to support the media sector that the countries in which the state approved an aid package (Morocco and Tunisia) where the governance of the sector in these countries is considered to be advanced compared to other countries of the region, in terms of the presence of Syndicates representing journalists, employers' associations and signed collective agreements between the two parties. In addition to the existence of independent correctional bodies and press councils for self-organization and the existence of a systematic framework that organizes social dialogue between unions, employers and the executive authority.



While there are journalists' unions in other countries, the complete absence of associations that represent the owners of media institutions and publishers is noticeable, as well as the absence of sectoral collective agreements, the absence of independent correctional bodies and self-organizing councils that regulate the work of the press sector, and consequently the absence of a clear framework for social dialogue between the various parties. This means that there is a clear weakness in the power of the media sector to negotiate with the executive authority and a severe weakness in the governance structure.



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