

# Report reveals the impact of Covid-19 on journalism

The Thomson Reuters Foundation has released a [report](#) containing the voices of journalists working across the Global South and Emerging Economies highlighting the challenges faced by the profession during the pandemic.



Source: REUTERS/Amanda Perobelli

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Reveals the lived experiences of journalists**

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

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

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

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

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

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

The report is available for download at <http://covid-report.trust.org/>.