

Institution: University of Sheffield		
Unit of Assessment: D-34 Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management		
Title of case study: Creating a safer global environment for free and independent journalism		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2007–2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Jackie Harrison	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: September 1996–present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014–2019		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Harrison's policy-focused research has identified fundamental gaps in the way that violence against journalists is monitored and understood. It highlights the threat that attacks on journalists (often with impunity) bring to the role of journalism as a core institution of civil society. Through multi-stakeholder engagement, Harrison's research findings have been foundational in shaping the Implementation Strategy of UNESCO's UN Plan of Action (UNAP) on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. This is used to strengthen the cooperation of 193 UN member states in creating a safer global environment for free and independent journalism fundamental to the sustainable goals (SDGs) agenda 16.10. Her research led to more robust monitoring of attacks on journalists and promoted best practice on global measures to improve journalism safety, prevent targeted attacks on journalists, and combat impunity.</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>In 2015, UNESCO introduced the target to 'ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms' to the sustainable development goals (SDGs) agenda 16.10. The indicator SDG 16.10.1 monitors the number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, and torture of journalists as well as other harmful acts. Despite this intervention, there remains a lack of comprehensive, systematic global monitoring of attacks on journalists which prevents effective improvements for journalism safety. Harrison's novel, policy-relevant research into journalism safety, media freedom and the issue of impunity has exposed gaps in the way that attacks on journalists and on journalism itself are monitored internationally.</p> <p>News journalism and civil-democratic power are interlinked: Harrison found that an architecture of freedom of expression, media regulation, laws, and policies underpins the civil power of the news, which can lead to, or undermine, free and independent journalism (R1, R2 & R3). Furthermore, Harrison found that the consequences of the diminishment of the civil power of news journalism through state or state-sanctioned power manifest themselves in attacks on journalists with impunity. These attacks create a culture where journalists self-censor, further increasing the likelihood that the spiral of violence against them continues to escalate (R4) which, as in the context of Turkey between 2013 and 2018, can move from a condition of repression to oppression of journalists (R5).</p> <p>There is a lack of systematic monitoring of attacks on journalists: Harrison's research (R6), highlights SDG 16.10.1 indicator monitoring and data collection limitations. It evidences a lack of conceptual consistency across extensive global datasets, data gaps, privatisation of data collection methods and the need for a mechanism to re-categorise data. Systematic data gathering is supported by strengthening the monitoring capacity of local civil society</p>		

organisations (CSOs) as well as a need to assess the validity of the data. This research has, for the first time, mapped and evaluated the extensive global knowledge base about attacks on journalists developed over time by CSOs and UNESCO (R6).

Multi-stakeholder engagement needs to be better coordinated with academia to address journalism safety and impunity: Harrison's exploration of the 'politics of impunity', moved beyond the usual law-based approach to impunity and identified the establishment of a climate in which violent physical and psychological attacks (online and offline) are used to discredit and silence journalists, thereby undermining the civil-democratic power of news journalism (R4). In 2012 UNESCO created the UN Action Plan (UNAP) on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. Her work showed that global research and multi-stakeholder engagement needs to be coordinated to better support the aims of UNESCO's 2012 UNAP and SDG 16.10 to create a safer global environment for the practice of free and independent journalism (R6).

Journalism should be considered a core institution of the civil sphere: The civil power of the news sustains the communicative bases of societies, giving journalism definitional status as a core institution of the civil sphere [R1]. Her research identifies how news mediates 'our' collective invariant civil concerns of identity, legitimacy and risk and correspondingly how the news provides different and intelligible versions of both civil and anti-civil accounts of these concerns. The research shows how myriad attacks on journalism, attacks on editorial standards and public interest media, state media capture and the blurring of the distinctions between factual reporting and unsubstantiated opinion ultimately contribute to the civil diminishment of the communicative bases of societies.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- R1.** Harrison, J. (2019). *The Civil Power of the News*. Palgrave. Available from HEI on request.
- R2.** Amos, M., Harrison, J., & Woods, L. (eds.) (2012). *Freedom of Expression and the Media*, Nijhoff Law Specials, Vol. 79, Leiden. Boston: Martinus Nijhoff. Available from HEI on request. Harrison was lead editor of the papers that comprised the book following a conference, and single author of a chapter (pp 169-188).
- R3.** Harrison, J. and Woods, L. (2007). *European Broadcasting Law and Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511495298>
- R4.** Harrison, J., & Pukallus, S. (2018). The politics of impunity: A study of journalists' experiential accounts of impunity in Bulgaria, Democratic Republic of Congo, India, Mexico and Pakistan. *Journalism*, 22(2), 303–319. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884918778248>
- R5.** Pukallus, S., Bradley, L., Clarke, S., & Harrison, J. (2020). From repression to oppression: news journalism in Turkey 2013–2018. *Media, Culture & Society*, 42(7–8), 1443–1460. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443720916407>
- R6.** Harrison, J., Maynard, D., & Torsner, S. (2020). Strengthening the Monitoring of Violations against Journalists through an Events-Based Methodology. *Media and Communication*, 8(1), 89–100. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v8i1.2543>

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Violence against journalists is a growing challenge globally. Media professionals face murder, violence, abductions, and incarceration because of their work, with threats that from a range of state and non-state actors. These issues are compounded by a culture of impunity, whereby perpetrators are often not held to account for their actions. For example, from 1992-2018, 1,249 journalists were murdered (CPJ, 2017), with an impunity rate of over 90 per cent (UNESCO 2016). This context threatens independent journalism and undermines the role of journalism in civil society. In recognition of this threat UNESCO launched the UNAP to create a free and safe

environment for journalists and media workers, both in conflict and non-conflict situations, with a view to strengthening peace, democracy, and development worldwide.

Harrison's research has significantly shaped and contributed to:

- the implementation of UNESCO's global multi-stakeholder UNAP;
- the improved measurement of SDG indicator 16.10.1, concerned with monitoring attacks on journalists;
- promoting the use of this and wider evidence and knowledge to help to create the conditions necessary to achieve the aims of SDG target 16.10.

Shaping and contributing to the implementation of the UN Action Plan

Based on her research (R2-3) Harrison identified the need to develop high quality systematic research strategies to inform and advise governments, policymakers and stakeholders internationally on issues of freedom of expression, media freedom, journalism safety, editorial standards, impunity and the role of the factual media in post-conflict settings. She established the Centre for Freedom of the Media (CFOM) in 2008 which, with Harrison as chair, has played a lead role in implementing the UNAP working to lines of Action: Sections 3.2.12; 3.3.7 since 2014 (S1) by:

- inputting her research into UN mechanisms for monitoring and reporting of attacks on journalists to hold states to account via indicator SDG16.1.0.1;
- providing research-based recommendations to UNESCO which were adopted in the final text of the UNAP five-year Consultation Report;
- advising the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to support the UK's efforts to resist moves by states hostile to the UNAP;
- establishing a Journalism Safety Research Network, drawn upon by Harrison to coordinate the academic response to the 5-year consultation on the UNAP.

Improved global data collection for monitoring attacks on journalists and empowering local campaigning and advocacy groups

Harrison's research findings (R6) highlighted technical and methodological difficulties with collecting systemic data on attacks on journalists. In 2018, Harrison disseminated the findings to UNESCO and a wide range of journalism safety CSOs (S2). This resulted in a framework for Free Press Unlimited (FPU) to share these issues with those responsible for data collection in the wider international CSO community. The Director of Policy & Programmes at FPU said: *"When we started working with Professor Harrison almost three years ago, we were faced with several key issues regarding measurement, criteria and interoperability of data on journalists' safety. ... However, now, we are seeing improvement in all those areas and much more interaction between local actors for example within IFEX, the global network of over 100 independent NGOs"* (S3).

National actors are benefitting from the new approach to local data collection to assess their state's progression or regression using the UN indicator. These include the Justice for Journalists Foundation (JFJ). (which monitors violations against journalists in Russia and the post-Soviet states), the Independent Journalists Association of Serbia, and the Nigerian Press Attack Tracker (R6). The Director of JFJ said the research has *"led the way in establishing a novel SDG 16.10.1 monitoring infrastructure that enables JFJ (and also civil society organisations more widely) to effectively record country level statistics on violations against journalists in a way that systematically supports the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda"* (S4).

Co-ordinating research-based policy focussed academic input into the multi-stakeholder implementation of the UNAP

Working alongside the UNESCO Director for Strategies and Policies in the field of Communication and Information, Harrison scoped and developed a new policy-focussed,

international thematic academic programme of research. The Director said: “*She is a key point of contact for UNESCO when it comes to the input of academia into the implementation of the UN Plan of Action and is experienced, accessible and able to translate academic research to a non-academic audience effectively*” (S1).

CFOM became an official partner institution of UNESCO in 2015 and, in 2017, UNESCO invited Harrison to lead the global academic response to the Consultation on UNAP (2012-2017), reporting on challenges and recommendations for its future development. Harrison presented the report at UNESCO’s Multi-Stakeholder Consultation in Geneva. Several of Harrison’s recommendations were directly adopted by UNESCO (S5): including:

- Development of fora where academics and stakeholders meet and exchange views to facilitate stronger interaction and mutual exchanges by leading NGOs and industry-based bodies.
- Creation of opportunities for co-production of research agendas/questions by pooling academic and policy expertise, such as through secondments.
- Awareness-raising among UNAP stakeholders of where and how to find relevant research.

Harrison played a key role in organising and developing fora for academics and stakeholders to meet through her input into the development of an academic conference incorporated at World Press Freedom Day (WPFD) in Ghana in May 2018 and as a stand-alone event in Addis Ababa in 2019 (attended by 200). The resulting declaration document emphasised the use of academic research to contribute to the global multi-stakeholder promotion of journalism safety, specifically lobbied for by Harrison (S6).

The practical relevance and impact of Harrison’s research and expertise in the field (R1-4) was recognised by UNESCO (S1) making her its first ever UNESCO Chair on Media Freedom, Journalism Safety and the Issue of Impunity in March 2018. The Chair’s remit is to promote an integrated system of research, training, information and documentation on media freedom, journalism safety, and the issue of impunity. The Chair is ‘central both to the priorities of UNESCO’s Communications and Information Sector but also to the work of the UK National Commission’ and ‘contributes a valuable research and education perspective which is currently lacking from the UNAP’ (S7).

Informing the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) on its media freedom campaign

In April 2019, FCO announced the development of a UK media freedom campaign, with Harrison invited to advise on key themes including existing research on journalism safety, in the context of Turkey and on the politics of impunity (R1, R4 & R5). The FCO Deputy Director states Harrison’s research: “*made an important contribution to the successful development and continuation of the Global Media Freedom campaign*” (S8). This campaign, for the first time, committed countries to working together on identifying and acting on violations and abuses against members of the media. “*The sustained success of the campaign - now reflected in successive annual Ministerial meetings, most recently in Ottawa and The Hague, and in the growing membership of the Coalition - owes much to the strength of the evidence that shaped its early design*” (S8). Her contributions as an expert witness to the UK Foreign Affairs Committee (FAC) hearing, where she emphasised the need for a stronger and more coordinated approach on journalism safety (R5) informed a FAC report ‘Media Freedom is Under Attack’, launched at a follow-up conference (S9). The FAC Report strongly recommended that the UK go further: to shame and punish in a consistent manner those who violate media freedom—including those who do not enforce protective legal frameworks, to protect journalists from online threats and harassment. The media freedom campaign Harrison contributed to has triggered the creation of a Global Media Defence Fund (GMDF) (<https://en.unesco.org/global-media-defence-fund>) with the goal of enhancing journalist protection. The UK government’s initial pledge of £5m from 2019-2024 with 8 other countries has made this possible.

Establishing and leading a research network on the safety of journalists

Harrison established the Journalism Safety Research Network (JSRN) in 2015, as a core element of the UNAP Implementation Strategy (Line of Action Section 3.3.7) 'to build partnerships with journalism schools and other research centres to monitor and analyse relevant issues'. Since then, it has grown to 200 members from 50 different countries worldwide in 2020. It is now consistently referred to by UNESCO on its website as a key component of the multi-stakeholder contribution to the implementation of the UNAP and the realisation of SDG 16.10 (S1, S10). Non-academic stakeholders in journalism value the JSRN as a way of finding an expert in the field to link in-depth research with those who have practical everyday experience of violence against journalists (S3, S8) and UNESCO routinely uses it to circulate information to academics (S1).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- S1.** Confirmation of testimonial letter from Director for Strategies and Policies in the field of Communication and Information, UNESCO, Paris confirms the impact of Harrison's research in the context of the development and impact of the UNAP.
- S2.** The International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) Technical Consultation on UNESCO's Monitoring of Safety of Journalists Concept Note, 11 May 2018. Harrison cited in footnotes 3 and 4, page 2. This is a technical document which provides a briefing for a second Technical Meeting at UNESCO, Paris, 2018 and led to work with Free Press Unlimited.
- S3.** Confirmation of testimonial letter from Director Policy & Programmes, Free Press Unlimited, Amsterdam confirms the impact of Harrison, Maynard and Torsner's research in the context of SDG16.10.1 global monitoring of the attacks on journalists (R6).
- S4.** Confirmation testimonial letter from Director, Justice for Journalists Foundation (JFJ) confirming that the new events-based methodology and data categorisation approach is highly beneficial for local data collection for the monitoring of attacks on journalists.
- S5.** UNESCO Five Year Consultation on the 2012 UNAP. Outcome Document: Strengthening the Implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, 16 August 2017, p.10, and pp.35-37, Section 3.5.
- S6.** UNESCO website write up about the success of the 2019 academic conference at the World Press Freedom Day 2019 (<https://en.unesco.org/news/world-press-freedom-day-2019-academic-conference-safety-journalists-attracts-over-200>)
- S7.** UNESCO UK peer review comments - invitation for UNESCO chair application [CONFIDENTIAL] (R1-4).
- S8.** Confirmation of testimonial letter from Deputy Director of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (R1, R5 & R6).
- S9.** The JSRN (<http://www.cfom.org.uk/our-networks/journalism-safety-research-network-new/jsrn-who-we-are/>)
- S10.** UNESCO website referring to JSRN as a key resource (<http://bit.ly/3coBunA>).