Egypt Media Experts Survey Report
Draft

The findings reported below are extracted from the survey of expert users (owners, editors, writers/journalists, freelance writer, director, production, speaker/presenter, administration and editor in chief) carried out by Information International for the benefit of ACRI. The survey included a sample of 150 experts from Cairo.

The method of sample selection relied on systematic random sampling, based on the list of employees in each organization in Cairo where the survey's implementation was approved. The stratified sampling procedure was then used in order to select the final number of participants. The team of researchers did not face any problems and the refusal/response rate was very low; only three media experts (إعلاميين) refused to participate.

The findings from the survey are presented in two parts. The first part presents an overview of the major findings from the survey, while the second part presents detailed findings from the individual items in the survey. Appendix A presents the detailed findings for each item from the survey and will be referred to during the discussion of the main findings from the survey below.

I. OVERVIEW OF KEY FINDINGS FROM SURVEY

Main Findings: Dimension Analysis

When items are combined to measure a dimension of a specific principles (e.g. items 1 to 9 as measures of "guarantees of media independence", a dimension of the general "independence" principle), 4 dimensions proved to be problematic.

The most important grievance resided in the "Absence of Censorship" dimension [independence]. Although still problematic, the least important complaint occurred in "Personal independence" [independence].

Items Rated Most Negatively

An important finding is that the state of the media in Egypt tends to be negatively evaluated by expert users. Out of the 26 core items, 21 were negatively evaluated.

The domains with the most negative feedback lead to the following conclusions:
1- Journalists do not have effective access to government documents of interest to the public
2- Government censorship significantly hinder the independence of the media
3- The defamation law is misused in practice to threaten the media
4- Journalists do not have adequate salaries
5- Journalists do not enjoy sufficient legal protection to do their job.

All of these items refer to the independence principle.

Items Rated Most Positively

On the more positive end of the analysis, the domains with the most positive feedback lead to the following conclusions
1- Journalists decide on the content of their publication/broadcast (ind)
2- In general, journalists are governed by clear professional standard (int)
3- Journalists are not subject to threats of physical harm (ind)
4- Journalists generally have sufficient qualifications to perform their duties competently (com)
5- In general, journalists are governed by clear ethical standards (int)

Frequencies of specific items

The table below presents the highest frequencies on items dealing with clusters of questions.

			Good/ fine/ significant	Neutral	Poor/ weak/ insignificant
Guarantees	To what extent are the accessible government documents :	6. accurate	15.9%	15.9%	68.3%
		7. comprehensive	14.4%	15.9%	69.7%
		8. Received in a timely manner	7.6%	7.6%	84.8%
		9. Available without favoritism (towards some journalists but not others)	11.4%	6.8%	81.8%
Censorship	To what extent the media is able to report openly on the following issues:	20. Political	19%	27.2%	53.7%
		21. Religious	27.2%	25.2%	47.6%
		22. Corruption	21.8%	15%	63.3%
		23. Social	64.8%	16.6%	18.6%
Media outlets' independence	To which degree is the media influenced/pressured by:	26. Government (e.g. head of state, ministers, officials)	89.9%	6.8%	3.4%
		27. foreign governments (e.g. embassies, officials)	37.4%	20.1%	42.4%
		28. political groups	38.2%	27.8%	34%
		29. Religious/Sectarian groups	20%	23.6%	56.4%
		30. Social groups (e.g. tribal, ethnic, etc.)	9.6%	18.5%	71.9%
		31. Civil society organizations	8%	19%	73%
		32. Advertisers	72.3%	12.1%	15.6%

		33. Businesses not related to advertisement	23.5%	20.5%	56.1%
		34. Military, security services or police	82.4%	4.9%	12.7%
	To which degree are the following types of pressures used to undermine the independence of the media:	36. Financial	91.7%	4.8%	3.4%
		37. political	89.2%	6.8%	4.1%
		38. Legal/judicial	71.4%	19%	9.5%
		39. Social	30.8%	26.7%	42.5%
		40. Threats of physical harm	28.6%	24.3%	47.1%
Diversity	To what extent does the content of the media accurately reflect the:	59. Gender diversity of society	46.5%	25.7%	27.8%
		60. Political diversity of society	39.3%	22.8%	37.9%
		61. Ethnic diversity of society	22.1%	30.9%	47.1%
		62. Religious/Sectarian diversity of society	25.5%	25.5%	48.9%
		63. Cultural diversity of society	42.8%	22.8%	34.5%
Open access	To what extent are the following factors used by the government to select employees in public/official media:	68. Political views/ affiliations	70.9%	10.6%	18.4%
		69. Gender	38%	32.4%	29.6%
		70. Qualification criteria	16.1%	17.5%	66.4%
		71. Ethnicity	13.2%	33.9%	52.9%
	To what extent are the following factors used by private media organizations to select employees in the media profession:	72. Political views/affiliations	58.6%	17.9%	23.6%
		73. Gender	34.3%	30.7%	35%
		74. Qualification criteria	53.5%	16.2%	30.3%
		75. Ethnicity	17.1%	37.6%	45.3%
Eth stan.	In your profession, how likely do you think journalists accept favors or bribes		33.9%	24&	42.1%

Opinions on Most Needed Reform in Media

The questionnaire administered to the media experts included a series of "reform" questions. Participants were asked to rate the importance of reform in most of the subsections of the state of the media questionnaire.

Participants indicated the following items as those that require the highest need for reform:

Item	X
10. Legal reforms are needed to enhance the independence of the media.	1.23
67. Reforms are needed to strengthen the competence and qualifications of journalists	1.24
16. Reforms are needed in the regulatory framework to enhance the independence of the media.	1.27
42. Reforms are needed to increase the independence of media establishments from governmental influences	1.28
51. Reforms are needed to guarantee the personal independence of journalists	1.30

Note: Scores represent the average (mean) for each item on a scale from 1 to 5. Scores below 3 reflect a positive evaluation of the item, while scores above 3 reflect a negative evaluation.

All the items pertained to independence, except for item 67 which refer

II. DETAILED FINDINGS FROM SURVEY

Independence of the Media

Respondents cite concerns with the lack of independence of the media. The fundamental guarantees on the independence of the media are not afforded to journalists to ensure that they can properly do their job. The absence of a regulatory framework, personal independence for the media, and the existence of censorship undermine the independence of the media. Additionally, the respondents cite many influences and pressures utilized to challenge the media's independence.

Fundamental Guarantees on The Independence Of The Media
- Respondents do not think that journalists enjoy freedom of expression without fear of reprisal (56%) and sufficient legal protection to do their job (68%).
- There is a mixed opinion on whether journalists are able to independently organize their own professional associations (39% agree, 36% disagree, 23% neutral).
- According to respondents, journalists have effective access to non-governmental documents (49%), but not to governmental documents (76%).
- Respondents do not think that the accessible government documents are received in a timely manner (84%), available without favouritism (81%), comprehensive (69%) and accurate (68%).

Explicit and Fair Regulatory Framework For Media Activity
- Sixty-three percent disagree that the authority responsible for regulating the media renders fair decisions.
- A plurality do not think that the law and regulations outlining the requirements for obtaining a media license are clear (43%, 34% disagree).
- Fifty-six percent report that the law and regulations does not clearly state what constitutes defamation, and 76% agree that the defamation law is misused in practice to threaten the media.
- According to respondents, sanctions against journalists and media organizations are arbitrarily imposed (51%).

Absence of Censorship
- Respondents agree that both government censorship (79%) and self-censorship (61%) significantly hinder the independence of the media.
- Fifty-one percent think that censorship is not regulated by explicit directives (51%).
- The respondents believe that the media is not able to openly report on corruption (63%), politics (53%), and religion (47%), but can openly report on social issues (64%). Eighty-four percent indicate that journalists are able to report openly on other issues including, economics (53%), sports (30%), and scientific issues (15%).

Media Outlets' Independence from Governmental And Nongovernmental Influences
- Respondents think that the media is influenced by the government (89%), the military/security services (82%) and advertisers (72%).
- A majority of respondents do not think that the media is influenced by civil society organizations (73%), social groups (71%), religious/sectarian groups (56%), and businesses not related to advertisement (56%).
- Only 42% think that foreign governments do not pressure the media, but 37% think that foreign governments do have an influence.
- There is a mixed opinion on whether the media is pressured by political groups (38% agree, 34% disagree, 27% neutral).
- Respondents indicate that other factors influence the media (100%), including the editors-in-chief (100%).
- Respondents agree that there are certain types of pressures used to undermine the independence of media, including financial (91%), political (89%), and legal/judicial pressures (71%). According to respondents, social pressures (42%) and threats of physical harm (47%) are not used to undermine the independence of the media.

Personal Independence of Journalists
- Seventy-seven percent agree that journalists decide on the content of their publication/broadcast.
- Respondents agree that journalists are subject to threats of termination of work (60%), physical harm (49%), and arbitrary criminal prosecution (49%). However, a plurality report that journalists are not subject to threats of economic sanctions (38%, 31% disagree, 29% neutral).
- Forty-three percent agree that journalists have adequate salaries, but 33% disagree.
- Respondents think that civil society groups do not protect journalists' rights (75%).

Reforms
- Both legal (96%) and regulatory framework reforms (95%) are needed enhance the independence of the media. Reforms are also needed to increase the independence of media establishments from governmental (95%) and non-governmental influences (77%).
- Ninety-two percent agree that reforms in censorship practices are needed, but 52% disagree that any reforms are necessary to guarantee the personal independence of journalists.

Integrity of the Media
There is a concern with the integrity of the media. According to respondents, journalists lack integrity as a result of their failure to adhere to the professional and ethical standards that

govern the media. The media does reflect a few facets of Egypt's diverse society, but does not accurately reflect its ethnicity or religious diversity.

Clear Professional And Ethical Standards
- Forty-five percent agree that journalists are governed by clear professional standards (45%), but 39% disagree that journalists effectively adhere to these standards (30% agree, 29% neutral).
- There is a mixed opinion on whether journalists are governed by clear ethical standards (39% agree, 36% disagree, 24% neutral), but 42% report that journalists do not effectively adhere to ethical standards (30% disagree).
- Forty-two percent disagree that journalists are likely to accept favours or bribes.

Diversity Of The Media
- Respondents agree that the media accurately reflects society's gender diversity (46%) and cultural diversity (42%). A plurality thinks that the media does not accurately reflect society's religious/sectarian diversity (48%) and ethnic diversity (47%). There are mixed views as to whether the media accurately reflects the political diversity of society (39% agree, 37% disagree, 22% neutral).

Reforms
- To enhance the integrity of the media, respondents agree that higher professional standards (94%) and ethical standards (92%) are necessary.
- Ninety-five percent agree that more diversity within the media would enhance the media's integrity.

Competence of the Media
Respondents remain concerned with the overall competence of the media. The questionable qualifications of working journalists and the use of additional factors to select employees compromise the competence of the media.

Adequate Qualifications Of Working Journalists
- There are mixed opinions on whether journalists have sufficient qualifications to perform their duties competently (39% agree, 38% disagree, 21% neutral).
- Respondents disagree that journalists receive specialized training (46%).

Open Access To The Profession
- Respondents agree that certain factors are used by the government to select employees in the public/official media including, political views/affiliations (70%) and gender (38%). A majority think that qualification criteria (66%) and ethnicity (52%) are not used by the government in its selection process for the public/official media.
- Respondents agree that political views/affiliations (58%) and qualification criteria (53%) are factors used by private media organizations to select employees in the media profession, but respondents disagree that ethnicity (45%) is a factor in this process. There are mixed opinions on whether gender is a factor used by private media organizations in the selection of media employees (35% disagree, 34% agree, 30% neutral).

Reforms
- Respondents agree that reforms are needed to strengthen the competence and qualifications of journalists (98%). Ninety-three percent agree that reforms of existing laws and regulations are necessary to create equal chances of access to the profession.

III. Missing Data Analysis:

An analysis of missing data yielded significant findings that warrant attention. The overall pattern of missing responses did not exceed 2%. This indicates that the questionnaire, on the whole, did not create unexpected complications for participants. However, closer attention to the pattern of missing data points to

1- **Item 8** "To what extent are the accessible government documents received in a timely manner" had the lowest rate of missing data; 6% of participants could not assess this item.

2- **Item 75** "To what extent is ethnicity used by private media organizations to select employees in the media profession" had the highest rate of missing data with 20% of participants reporting their inability to assess this item. Either participants felt the item to be too sensitive or they did not feel confident enough to provide an assessment on that question

3- **Item 56** "In your profession, how likely do you think journalists accept favors or bribes" had the second highest rate of missing data, with 19.3% of participants reporting their inability to assess the item.

These three items were amongst the most problematic for our samples. Other items with missing data may be of interest to authors, and are provided in appendix C, p.5.

IV. LIMITATIONS

It is important to note that the study does not allow sweeping generalizations about the state of the media; the survey used a random sampling, but the sample size is too small to allow for confident generalizations.