

# Global Investigative Journalism: Strategies for Support

*A Report to the Center for International Media Assistance*

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**The Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA)**, a project of the National Endowment for Democracy, aims to strengthen the support, raise the visibility, and improve the effectiveness of media assistance programs by providing information, building networks, conducting research, and highlighting the indispensable role independent media play in the creation and development of sustainable democracies around the world. An important aspect of CIMA's work is to research ways to attract additional U.S. private sector interest in and support for international media development.

CIMA convenes working groups, discussions, and panels on a variety of topics in the field of media development and assistance. The center also issues reports and recommendations based on working group discussions and other investigations. These reports aim to provide policymakers, as well as donors and practitioners, with ideas for bolstering the effectiveness of media assistance.

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David E. Kaplan is an investigative journalist and media consultant based in Washington, D.C. Over a 30-year career he has reported from more than two dozen countries, writing on organized crime, terrorist groups, the banking industry, and the intelligence community. In June 2007, he left as chief investigative correspondent for *U.S. News & World Report*. A former Fulbright scholar in Japan, Kaplan is co-author of the book *YAKUZA*, widely considered the standard reference on the Japanese mafia, and author of *Fires of the Dragon*, on the murder of journalist Henry Liu. Prior to *U.S. News*, he served as a senior editor for the San Francisco-based Center for Investigative Reporting; during his tenure there, the CIR staff won more than 35 journalism, film, and video awards. Kaplan's stories have won or shared more than 15 awards, including honors from Investigative Reporters and Editors, the American Bar Association, and the Overseas Press Club.

*Disclosure:* The author has been an international media trainer for nearly 20 years and has led workshops and seminars for many of the groups noted in this paper, including the International Center for Journalists, International Research and Exchanges Board, and Investigative Reporters and Editors. He also serves on the Board of Advisors of the Bosnian Center for Investigative Reporting and is a member of the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists.

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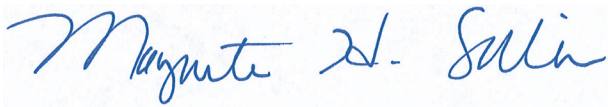
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# Preface

The Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA) at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) commissioned this study on investigative journalism around the world to determine the size and strength of the field and what types of assistance are needed to help the field thrive and expand its work, which is critical for democratic and transparent societies.

CIMA is grateful to David Kaplan, a veteran investigative journalist and media consultant, for his research and insights on this topic.

We hope that this report will become an important reference for international media assistance efforts.



*Marguerite Sullivan*  
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# Executive Summary

Fueled by globalization, international aid, and the efforts of journalism groups, the worldwide practice of investigative reporting has grown dramatically since the fall of communism began in 1989. The field's emphasis on public accountability and targeting of crime and corruption has attracted millions of dollars in media development funding from international donors, who see it as an important force in promoting rule of law and democratization. Support of investigative journalism, however, has been identified as a major gap in international media assistance, marked by funding that is largely uncoordinated and episodic and that makes up but a small fraction of that spent on overall media development. Veteran trainers and organizers broadly agree that sustained programs, support of nonprofit investigative journalism centers, and adherence to high standards can produce impressive results both in fostering public accountability and in building a professional news media.

This report explores the rapid growth of investigative journalism overseas and suggests ways to best support and professionalize its practice in developing and democratizing countries. Among its findings:

- A substantial investment into investigative journalism programs can have significant positive impact in a wide range of countries, including those in the Middle East and former Soviet Union. Such funding will be most effective if long-term and integrated into broader initiatives that

include legal reform and freedom of information.

- Nonprofit investigative reporting centers have proved to be viable organizations that can provide unique training and reporting, while serving as models of excellence that help to professionalize the local journalism community.
- The centers are part of an expanding global network of training institutes, reporting organizations, journalism associations, grant-making groups, and online networks that have great potential to effect change. Different programs will be appropriate for different regions and markets.
- Commercially based training, even in the West, plays little role in furthering investigative journalism, leaving nonprofit organizations to take the lead. Although university-based training has potential, it appears limited in scope outside the United States and Western Europe.
- Because of its emphasis on longer-term, high-impact journalism, investigative reporting projects can be difficult to evaluate. Training and reporting projects aimed at creating a culture of investigative journalism should be evaluated based on their quality and impact, not broad numbers of people trained and stories produced.

- Better coordination and communication are needed between those in U.S. government-funded programs and the investigative journalism community. Key points of contact include Investigative

Reporters and Editors, the world's largest trainer of investigative journalists, and the Knight chairs in investigative and international journalism at the universities of Illinois and Texas.

# Scope and Methodology

This report examines the worldwide expansion of investigative journalism, with a focus on strategies to help support and sustain it in developing and democratizing countries. The research draws in particular on several key sources:

- A fall 2007 CIMA global survey of nonprofit investigative training and reporting centers, in which 37 organizations in 26 countries responded to a detailed questionnaire.
- Discussions and interviews at the Fourth Global Investigative Journalism Conference in Toronto, May 24-27, 2007; the Investigative Journalism Conference in Istanbul, Nov. 3, 2007; and the Investigative Reporting in East and Central Europe Conference in Budapest, Nov. 9-11, 2007.
- Interviews with more than 30 trainers, funders, reporters and managers involved in international investigative journalism.
- *Investigative Journalism in Europe*, Vereniging van Onderzoeksjournalisten (VVOJ), 2005.
- *The Growing Importance of Nonprofit Journalism*, Charles Lewis, The Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, 2007.
- A broad literature search of training materials, Web sites, academic curricula, books and articles on investigative journalism worldwide.

# Overview: Investigative Journalism Goes Global

In the United States, investigative journalism is best known for helping topple a president for abuse of power. But in American journalism schools, those hoping to emulate Watergate reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein are quickly taught that they belong to a century-old tradition, to a craft that dates back to the nation's proud muckrakers, such as Ida Tarbell and her *History of the Standard Oil Company* and Lincoln Steffens and his *Shame of the Cities*. These crusading journalists helped set a standard for tough reporting in the public interest, taking on corrupt politicians, organized crime, consumer fraud, and corporate abuse.

This vital tradition has now spread worldwide. Great reporting everywhere has always used investigative elements, but since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the practice of investigative journalism has grown dramatically overseas. Enterprising newspapers and magazines in Brazil, China, and India now field investigative teams. The number of nonprofit investigative reporting groups has jumped from only three in the late 1980s to some 40 today, with vibrant centers in such diverse places as Romania, the Philippines, Jordan, and South Africa.<sup>1</sup> Four global conferences on investigative journalism since 2000 have attracted some 2,000 journalists from more than 50 countries.<sup>2</sup>

Consider some of the efforts in recent years:

- In 1998, following a yearlong Knight Fellowship at Stanford

University, Chinese journalist Hu Shuli co-founded *Caijing*, a privately backed business biweekly. Through investigative reporting on China's financial markets, the Beijing-based magazine has become required reading among China's elite, helping spark crackdowns on stock manipulators, market reforms, and the breaking of taboos for reporting on natural disasters, epidemics, and financial crime.<sup>3</sup>

- In 2000, a team from the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism ran an eight-month investigation into the hidden assets of Philippine President Joseph Estrada, detailing how the populist Estrada had amassed luxury homes, lavished money on mistresses, and held secret stakes in a dozen companies. The series goaded the Philippine media into action, helped form key charges in an impeachment trial, and ultimately led to Estrada's downfall months later.<sup>4</sup>
- In 2003, the Georgian TV channel Rustavi-2 was heralded as the voice of that nation's peaceful "Rose Revolution," helping overturn a rigged election and force the resignation of President Eduard Shevardnadze. Rustavi-2's staff, trained by Western journalists, had built much of its credibility through investigative reporting on government corruption and organized crime.<sup>5</sup>

## Defining the Craft

In most U.S. newsrooms, investigative reporting is seen not as an elite practice but as an integral facet of daily journalism, practiced by beat reporters as well as special project staff. That helps explain why the largest association of investigative journalists, the University of Missouri-based Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE), also ranks among the world's largest trainers of professional journalists, with regular workshops in newsrooms in the United States and overseas. IRE trainers define the craft broadly: systematic, in-depth, and original research and reporting, often involving the unearthing of secrets, heavy use of public records, and computer-assisted reporting, with a focus on social justice and accountability.<sup>11</sup>

Sometimes called enterprise, in-depth, or project reporting, investigative journalism should not be confused with what has been dubbed “leak journalism”—quick-hit scoops gained by the leaking of documents or tips, typically by those in political power. And while investigative reporting is often associated with the subjects of crime and corruption, mere coverage of those topics is not necessarily investigative. Nor, of course, is investigative journalism limited to those areas. Investigative techniques are widely employed on subjects as varied as education, medicine, finance, racism, and the environment.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the most effective way to teach investigative skills in some countries, say veteran trainers, may be through topics that host governments see as less controversial, such as business, consumer, and health reporting.

- In 2006, a team investigation by reporters with three Balkan investigative reporting centers revealed how corrupt deals over electricity pushed power rates sky-high and contributed to massive outages in the region. The series, “Power Brokers,” earned the first Global Shining Light Award, given for international investigative reporting under threat.<sup>6</sup>

The central role these investigative journalists are playing in the emergence of an independent, watchdog news media overseas has been widely recognized. In much of the developing and democratizing world, their contributions include fostering accountability and transparency, battling

corruption, exposing organized crime, strengthening civil society, fueling reform, and calling for justice. Equally important, they act as role models and mentors, establishing investigative traditions in newsrooms and helping set the standard for professional reporting in their societies.

“In countries where corruption and other abuse of power by public office holders are still rampant, investigative reporting has never been more important,” noted a UNESCO call for training in 2006.<sup>7</sup> “There is no more effective check on corrupt officials, bribe takers, embezzlers, and those who waste public funds than a hard-nosed investigative journalist,” wrote World Bank staffers in 2001.<sup>8</sup> In the African Peer Review Mechanism, an innovative project in which

25 African governments are engaged in “peer review” and self-criticism, the first three country reports—on Ghana, Kenya, and Rwanda—each identified the need for more investigative reporting in fighting corruption and fostering accountability.<sup>9</sup>

Building an investigative media incurs serious risks, however. In many countries, investigative reporters face among the toughest obstacles of any in journalism. Reporters at Rustavi-2 were harassed, beaten, jailed, and ultimately murdered. Journalists with the Philippine center have been repeatedly threatened, and they have watched with dismay as their colleagues in smaller cities are slain with impunity. Others regularly face criminal libel cases, government spying, and the threat of violence. Conditions taken for granted by Western journalists—access to public records, corporate reports, and honest police and prosecutors—are almost nonexistent in some countries.

The importance in fostering an investigative news media has not been lost on the funding

community. Since the early 1990s, Western governments, private foundations, and other institutions have spent millions of dollars to help spread the practice worldwide. As with much international media assistance, however, this funding appears largely uncoordinated and episodic, with an impact difficult to measure, and it has left both funders and recipients at times frustrated. The amounts, moreover, are but a fraction of those spent on overall media development. A March 2007 report by the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) identified investigative journalism as one of seven key gaps in media development funding.<sup>10</sup>

Given the importance voiced to supporting an investigative news media, this report is an initial attempt to map international assistance and to help identify the most promising strategies for future support. It is based in part on a 2007 CIMA survey of 39 nonprofit investigative journalism centers around the world, a review of the available literature, and interviews with a broad range of trainers, funders, and media development experts.

## The Case for International Assistance

Comparatively small amounts of development aid appear to have gone to support investigative journalism. A precise figure is difficult to estimate, but consider the budget size of nonprofit investigative reporting and training centers surveyed by CIMA. Of 37 centers responding to CIMA's questionnaire, 21 were located in developing or democratizing countries. Of those 21, budget figures were provided by 16, including that group's most prominent and successful centers—in the Philippines, Brazil, and the Balkans. Their combined budgets for 2006: a modest \$2.6 million.

Compare that \$2.6 million to the estimated \$142 million spent annually by U.S. donors on international media assistance, and the tens of millions more spent by other funders overseas.<sup>13</sup> Clearly, additional funding goes to investigative reporting projects outside the centers—to other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), universities, and fellowship programs—but trainers interviewed for this report were unanimous in their view that support for investigative work has been limited, episodic, and seldom seen as an integral aspect of media development. As the United Kingdom's Mary Myers concluded in her DFID report on gaps in media development funding, “Donors could do more to support investigative journalism, particularly by in-country journalists.”<sup>14</sup>

*Trainers interviewed for this report were unanimous in their view that support for investigative work has been limited, episodic, and seldom seen as an integral aspect of media development.*

Some critiques of international media development argue that donors should favor training that is locally based, self-sufficient, and market driven.<sup>15</sup> But, particularly for investigative reporting, say journalism scholars, this has never been the case—in the United States or Western Europe. Nonprofit professional associations and training organizations—such as Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE), the Poynter Institute, and the European Journalism Centre—provide much of the training for mid-career journalists. In the United States, these

efforts are supported heavily by foundations and individual donors, and in Europe, government funds often play a key role.<sup>16</sup>

Relying on market-driven training for investigative skills—particularly on such core topics as crime and corruption—is especially precarious in democratizing

and developing countries, according to investigative reporters there. “In new democracies, you have strongly vested interests in the media—from disenfranchised elites holding onto power to newly enfranchised elites just taking advantage of commercial opportunities,” explains Sheila Coronel, former director of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ). “There are very few institutions which stand for the public interest.”<sup>17</sup> A major obstacle,

investigative reporters note, is that local media ownership itself often represents part of the problem, with many owners tied to the same corrosive power structure as corrupt politicians, security forces, and organized crime. Research by the Romanian Center for Investigative Journalism, for example, found that as many as half of all media owners in Bucharest have been under investigation for racketeering or money laundering.<sup>18</sup> Journalists with the Bosnian Center for Investigative Reporting have documented a similar pattern in local media there.<sup>19</sup> Such owners are unlikely to sponsor workshops on how to investigate crime and corruption.

Nor is it clear that local demand can sustain a professional training effort. The PCIJ, for example, is widely credited with successfully spreading the practice of investigative reporting within the Philippines—and with helping introduce it across the rest of Asia. Yet, despite the PCIJ’s high profile and success, it has relied heavily on grants to subsidize its training—and most of those funds have been raised, quite deliberately, from overseas. “If we got a lot of money from local foundations, it would have put us in a tough spot,” explains Coronel. “They’re connected to business, and we’d be attacked for being on the payroll of families or politicians.”

The challenges can be daunting, particularly in countries where economic development is relatively low. In 2004, for example, the local chapter of Transparency International co-published a guide to investigative journalism in Zambia, and cited a litany of barriers to enterprising reporters:

- unclear editorial policies;
- a lack of institutional support;

- a lack of resources, especially transportation, communications, equipment, and low salaries;
- sources unwilling to divulge information;
- legal impediments, such as the State Security Act and the lack of a Freedom of Information Act.<sup>20</sup>

What is needed, argue some experts, is an integrated and sustained approach. “One-shot workshops are pretty well seen as ineffective,” says Mark Nelson, a media expert at the World Bank Institute and former *Wall Street Journal* reporter. “They don’t result in any institutional sustainable impact. You’ve got to work at several different levels to build the environment—you need the will *and* the means to carry it out.”<sup>21</sup>

George Papagiannis, who spent years at Internews building up training programs, agrees that a long-term strategy is essential. “You need to establish ongoing training, coaching, mentoring, not just for reporters but for editors,” he says. “You need an understanding across the board—investigative reporting is a long-term investment. If you want to create a true cadre of reporters who can do this kind of journalism, it takes a sustained investment over not weeks but years.”<sup>22</sup> Mark Whitehouse, director of IREX’s Media Development Division, agrees. “Training should be comprehensive and long-term to really get change,” he says. “In some respects it makes sense to have fewer participants over a longer period of time.”<sup>23</sup>

Some veteran trainers make a distinction depending on a country’s level of economic

development. To a nation with a growing economy and a vibrant and sophisticated press, such as Brazil, the best combination of outside aid may be short-term workshops, consulting, and targeted funding. For less developed countries, long-term projects with staff on the ground will likely be most effective.

All agreed that support to individual projects needs to be integrated into a broader program to develop an investigative news media. “Resource deficits in media houses,

skills deficits among journalists and the need for protection in cases where reporting may attract direct threats to the lives or freedom of journalists need addressing,” wrote DFID’s Myers. “This involves a holistic ‘package’ not only of training, but of protection of individual journalists, incentives, reliable information streams (e.g. Internet access), institutional support to the better-quality media outlets, legal backup and support to centres such as the Philippines [Center for Investigative Journalism].”<sup>24</sup>

### *A Model for Muckracking: The Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism*

Few nonprofit groups win the kind of accolades showered on the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. “The people who impressed me the most were the PCIJ,” says Roderick Macdonell, who ran the World Bank’s investigative reporting program for five years.<sup>25</sup> “They were doing just incredibly courageous work, and under threat at times,” adds Suzanne Siskel, who ran the Ford Foundation office in Manila during the late 1990s. “They always kept their integrity; they always were doing very innovative work.”<sup>26</sup>

Founded in 1989 with a few hundred dollars and a single typewriter, the PCIJ has grown into the gold standard for investigative reporting in Asia. The Center is best known for its series on the hidden wealth of President Joseph Estrada, which forced his resignation, but the PCIJ’s impact goes far beyond that scandal. Its reporters have broken hundreds of stories in print, radio, TV, and online, produced eight documentaries, and written two dozen books, meticulously documenting official corruption and corporate abuse. Its trainers have almost single-handedly educated a generation of investigative journalists in the Philippines and spread their know-how across Asia. The Center’s alumni, moreover, are now ensconced at major TV stations, newspapers, online sites, and universities.

PCIJ’s co-founder and longtime executive director, Sheila Coronel, offers several reasons for the Center’s success. First, she says, there was a reformed legal environment following the end of the Marcos regime in 1986. Another factor was the Philippines’ long tradition of a lively and competitive press—with a diversity of owners—which gave the PCIJ a market for its stories. Third was public support. “People paid attention,” stresses Coronel. “There were Congressional hearings; people were fired for what we wrote. There were enough checks and balances for investigative reporting to generate either reform or some action.”<sup>27</sup>

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Key to its efforts was building a public constituency. “We didn’t realize this in the beginning,” says Coronel, “but when we started getting threats, we went around talking about our work and why it’s important—to Rotary Clubs, parishes, universities, civic groups.” At one point, Coronel notes, she spoke to 300 priests. “It’s important for people to understand why you’re doing this, who your sources are, what methods you use.” Some of the most important meetings were with those in government. “A lot of them really believe in what we’re doing—even in the military and the most corrupt agencies. If you’re in a new democracy, where the rules are all new, it’s all still being figured out. You need to be able to stake out your position and explain that to people.”

Coronel also credits the Center’s methodical, painstaking approach to reporting. “If you do this kind of work you cannot afford major mistakes,” she explains. “We set high standards for what we published. Stories were put through multiple levels of editing. We’ve waited months just to get the other side of the story—including Estrada.”

Another major factor, she adds, is an endowment from the Ford Foundation, which has provided as much as 30 percent of the PCIJ’s annual budget of some \$500,000. Despite its success and high profile, the PCIJ typically generates only about 20 percent of its income from fees for training journalists and selling their stories to media outlets. “Grants don’t pay for much overhead or salary,” she says. “An endowment gives you the flexibility so you don’t have to constantly think of your next month’s rent.”

The Ford Foundation’s Siskel adds a final reason for the PCIJ’s success: leadership. Coronel, now director of the Stabile Center for Investigative Journalism at Columbia University, deserves great credit, says Siskel, but “it wasn’t just one person. They were very bold and very brave, and they stuck to their principles. The kind of courage they had is something you can’t really teach anybody.”<sup>28</sup>

# Mapping the Field

A detailed census of investigative journalism worldwide is beyond the scope of this report, but interviews and a review of recent efforts reveal an impressive level of activity and interest. The most ambitious survey to date appears to be *Investigative Journalism in Europe*, a 355-page study by VVOJ, the Dutch-Flemish association of investigative journalists. Released in 2005, the report is based on 200 interviews with journalists in 20 countries, including Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine. Despite wide disparities in professional training, press freedom, libel laws, and access to information, the study found vibrant examples of investigative reporting in nearly every country surveyed. The study also noted, unsurprisingly, that countries with greater degrees of press freedom—and lesser degrees of corruption—were more likely to host investigative reporting. For example, the four Nordic countries, which typically earn top rankings for press freedom and lack of corruption, all are home to investigative reporting associations.<sup>29</sup>

Most striking, perhaps, is the study's finding of no clear relationship between financial health and an investigative tradition. Mid-size Danish and Swedish newspapers, often strapped for resources, hosted strong investigative reporting, while large French papers did not. "Both within countries and in cross-country comparisons there are no obvious relations between budgets and investigative journalism," the study noted. "Some small and poor media are very active; some big and rich media are not." The key ingredients for investigative work, according to those interviewed: good management, creative newsrooms, and an ability to accept risk.<sup>30</sup>

## Donors and Development

A review of the field for this report shows continued interest by major donors in the last two years. Many of the grants are modest in size and short-term in duration, but the breadth of programs is considerable.

- Among U.S. government-backed programs, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is providing program support in the Balkans, Egypt, and Cambodia, and has sponsored workshops in Nepal and South Africa. The State Department has funded long-term projects in the Balkans and Azerbaijan, and workshops in El Salvador, Indonesia, and Nepal. State Department foreign-visitor programs also bring several dozen investigative journalists to the United States each year for seminars and newsroom visits. The Asia Foundation and the Pakistan Press Foundation teamed up to offer a series of five training workshops on investigative reporting in 2006. The National Endowment for Democracy has made grants to groups in the Balkans, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Venezuela.
- Scandinavian governments have funded a variety of programs. Denmark's parliament has allocated a two-year grant to the Amman-based Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism, while its Foreign Ministry recently renewed a major grant to the Danish nonprofit SCOOP, giving 1.3 million Euros for a four-year program to support investigative work in

Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. The Norwegian Foreign Ministry is supporting the Balkan Investigative Reporters Network, and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency is backing a Vietnamese training program and the Bosnian Center for Investigative Reporting.

- The United Nations Development Programme has sponsored workshops in East Asia, Bangladesh, and Iraq, and funded an investigative handbook for Arab journalists. The UN Democracy Fund has supported an Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project with investigative journalism centers in the Balkans. UNESCO ran an innovative eight-month program for 20 Mongolian journalists and published model curricula for teaching investigative reporting.
- Private foundations continue to play a central role. The Soros Foundations have supplied critical support to the Global Investigative Journalism Conferences, investigative journalism centers, and investigative reporters on topics ranging from criminal justice to minority health care. The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation made a major endowment gift to the U.S.-based IRE and is funding international work at several U.S. journalism schools, including online training for Latin American journalists.<sup>31</sup> The United Kingdom's Thompson Foundation supported a series of workshops in Jordan this year, as did the Carnegie Foundation

in Nigeria. Germany's Konrad Adenauer Foundation funded a guide to investigative reporting focused on South Africa.

## Investigative Implementers

Although the range of activity is broad, international efforts to support the spread of investigative reporting appear largely uncoordinated and without a central strategy. As in media development generally, a lack of communication among donors and competition among implementers is often blamed. Complicating matters is a bifurcation among those active in investigative media development—between U.S. officials and investigative journalists themselves, who have largely steered away from participation in government-backed programs. Most notable is the absence of IRE, the world's largest trainer of investigative journalists, which trained over 6,000 journalists in 2006.<sup>32</sup> The independent-minded IRE refuses to accept any federal funding. The result: despite IRE's central role in the field, several U.S. media development officials interviewed for this report knew little or nothing about the organization.

Supported by membership and training fees, foundation grants, and volunteer staff, IRE has played an increasingly prominent role in international media. The organization has helped start or inspire investigative reporting centers in a half dozen countries, co-sponsored four global conferences and scores of workshops, and reached thousands of journalists abroad through its online resources and consulting. In 2007 alone, IRE trainings were held in Budapest, Cartagena, Istanbul, Johannesburg, Lagos, London, Sarajevo, and Toronto. IRE's annual

conferences, which regularly attract up to a thousand journalists, were once largely domestic affairs; they now draw some 10 percent of their attendees from overseas, including top journalists from China, Mexico, and Nigeria.

Feedback from IRE staff and trainers could prove helpful to U.S. media development officials. Each year, for example, the State Department brings some 20 investigative journalists to the United States under its International Visitors Program. While many of the visitors are of high caliber, the criteria by which embassies select investigative journalists are not always clear. Past participants have included radio talk show hosts, TV news anchors, and marketing staff—unlikely subjects for serious investigative training. In 2007, after repeated urging by IRE, the State Department finally timed the program so that participants could attend IRE’s annual training conference—exposing them to more than a hundred panels of journalists sharing tips and techniques.<sup>33</sup>

While IRE steers clear of federal funding, other U.S.-based media development organizations have received government grants and contracts for important investigative reporting projects in recent years. In Cambodia, Internews is in its third year of managing an investigative journalism program on corruption issues, according to George Papagiannis, who oversaw the project until late 2007.<sup>34</sup> Launched with a \$225,000 USAID grant, the program, he says, is “designed for quality, not quantity.” Each year’s group began with a two-week training of 24 participants, who were then winnowed down to eight to 10 people from a half dozen outlets. Sessions on investigative techniques and media law were reinforced by

follow-up training from the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, with help from a 77-page handbook the team produced on investigative reporting in Cambodia.<sup>35</sup>

Key to the program’s success were the hiring of a mentoring coach, Putsata Reang, a bilingual Cambodian-American journalist from the *San Jose Mercury News*, and regular outreach to the reporters’ editors. Despite government arrests and harassment of the press, the journalists produced dozens of stories that have had major impact, including reform of hiring practices at the Ministry of Education, the payment of long-delayed pensions to demobilized soldiers, and the sacking of the Labor Minister tied to a human trafficking case.<sup>36</sup> Perhaps most important, says Papagiannis, is the example they set for the rest of the Cambodian media. “There were limits,” he admits, “but we’re training the next generation.”

A 2003 human trafficking project in the Balkans had similar impact. Run by the International Center for Journalists and backed by a State Department grant of \$200,000, the yearlong program brought together a dozen reporters with representatives of law enforcement and NGOs, including women’s groups—many of whom were hostile to the media over its sensational coverage of the issue. Significantly, the project obtained Lexis-Nexis access for the reporters—a tool many lack in their newsrooms—and brought in as a trainer Paul Radu, an organized crime expert from the Romanian Center for Investigative Journalism. The project produced more than 70 stories and changed the character of coverage in the region, say participants, and led the State Department to fund a similar ICFJ program in the Caucasus.<sup>37</sup>

## Networking Investigative Journalists

Organized largely by volunteers, the Global Investigative Journalism Conference has at times a missionary feel to it, with passionate reporters working overtime to spread the gospel of investigative journalism worldwide. Beginning in 2001, four of the conferences have been held—two in Copenhagen, followed by Amsterdam and Toronto. Started by the U.S.-based IRE and its counterparts in Denmark, the conferences have attracted nearly 2,000 journalists from some 50 countries. The gatherings have a practical bent, with a focus on training and networking, including workshops on computer-assisted reporting and how-to panels on investigating organized crime and corruption, multinational corporations, natural disasters, and more.

The second global conference, in 2003, helped inspire the formation of new centers in the Netherlands, Ghana, and Eastern Europe, and led to creation of the Global Investigative Journalists Network (GIJN).<sup>44</sup> It was hoped that the GIJN, armed with a Web site and listserv, would be a catalyst for greater activity. Some 40 groups have indeed joined it, but a lack of funding has limited the incipient network's use. A program to revitalize the network and improve its Web presence has started under the University of Illinois' new Knight Chair in Investigative and Enterprise Reporting, former IRE Executive Director and GIJN co-founder Brant Houston.<sup>45</sup>

An earlier, complementary global network—the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists—was formed in 1997 by the Washington, D.C.-based Center for Public Integrity and its then-director, Charles Lewis. The ICIJ invited award-winning reporters from dozens of countries to join and work on Center-sponsored investigative projects. The consortium has grown to 100 journalists in 50 countries and produced high-profile, award-winning reports on tobacco smuggling, military aid and human rights, and more.<sup>46</sup> Equally important, the network has informally linked top journalists worldwide, who have shared sources, teamed up on stories and trainings, and worked to protect their most vulnerable members. The consortium also presents the ICIJ Award for Outstanding International Investigative Reporting, a biennial \$25,000 award for the best work in the field.<sup>47</sup> Like IRE, though, the Center will not accept government grants, and finding adequate funding has proven a challenge.

Funding also remains a hurdle for the global conferences, which are now sponsored by a different country's investigative reporting association each year. Those hosting the conference face the task of raising tens of thousands of dollars, much of it going to subsidize travel so that leading journalists from developing countries can attend. Several government agencies—typically of the host country that year—have given reporters funds to attend, among them the Canadian International Development Agency, as have local news media and the Soros Foundations. The next conference is planned for Lillehammer, Norway, in 2008, hosted by the Norwegian investigative reporters association, SKUP.<sup>48</sup>

ICFJ also incorporates investigative seminars into its programs for visiting groups in the United States, has published multilingual guides to investigative reporting,<sup>38</sup> and encourages its Knight fellows overseas to work on investigative projects. The group is currently conducting an intriguing experiment in Egypt this year, building a virtual newsroom with teams of local reporters. Done in association with the American University in Cairo and backed by the local USAID mission, the program incorporates Arab journalism mentors and distance learning, and includes “built-in legal protection” for the first time, according to ICFJ Vice President Patrick Butler.<sup>39</sup>

The Journalism Development Group’s Center for Investigative Reporting, based in Sarajevo, Bosnia, has also built up an impressive record. The center focuses on American-style investigative reporting, not training, and its staff has produced scores of stories that have sparked prosecution of public officials, changes in the selection process of judges, and tougher regulation of food safety, public works, and private universities. Backed by a \$340,000 UN Democracy Fund grant, the Bosnian center is currently running an ambitious regional effort with investigative centers in Eastern Europe to report on organized crime and corruption. The project’s series on energy traders recently won the first Global Shining Light Award for international investigative reporting under threat.<sup>40</sup>

*Sustainability remains a major challenge for investigative journalism programs.*

Another significant project is in Bulgaria, where the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) worked with local BTC ProMedia to launch a *60 Minutes*-style weekly program on national TV in 2003. The project, backed by USAID, built on a similar IREX program in Albania. Called Na Chisto (Clean Hands), by 2007 the show boasted a 22–25 percent market share with more than 400,000 viewers on a regular basis, according to BTC ProMedia. Na Chisto’s muckraking approach to corruption and abuse of power has led to parliamentary investigations and prompted the firings of, among others, a university president, a prison director, and the head of the Bulgarian postal service.<sup>41</sup>

Sustainability remains a major challenge. An innovative program in Tbilisi, Georgia, run by the

ICFJ and Eurasia Foundation, created the Caucasus Investigative Reporting Center and trained more than 20 reporters in investigative techniques during 2005–06. Initial funding came from the State Department and the British government’s Global Conflict Prevention Pool, as well as from ICFJ’s Knight program. Despite the program’s success, a lack of support has left the Center “in suspended animation,” according to former program director Jody McPhillips.<sup>42</sup> A similar ICFJ project, also backed by State, is now underway in Azerbaijan, with local partners that include the respected *Echo* newspaper and ANS-TV, the only semi-independent TV station in Baku.<sup>43</sup>

## The Importance of Nonprofit Journalism

The growth of investigative reporting centers is part of an important, larger trend toward nonprofit journalism, according to Charles Lewis, founder of the Center for Public Integrity. In an influential 2007 paper for the Joan Shorenstein Center at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, Lewis argues that growing market pressures on the traditional news media are highlighting the need for an expanding nonprofit media sector that will act more directly in the public interest.<sup>54</sup> Lewis points out that nonprofit media are already more prevalent than widely thought. The Associated Press, for example—with 4,000 staff in 97 countries—is a nonprofit corporation. Similarly, National Public Radio, one of the United States' fastest growing news outlets, now boasts 36 bureaus with 30 million weekly listeners. Other nonprofit media include the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *St. Petersburg Times*, *Congressional Quarterly*, *National Geographic*, and *Consumer Reports*, to name a few.<sup>55</sup>

The irony of investigative journalism's expansion overseas is that it is under siege in its birthplace, the United States. Buffeted by the loss of ad revenue, cutbacks on reporting staff, and shorter deadlines in the Internet era, American investigative reporting has taken a considerable hit, with investigative teams disbanded, project time shortened, and veteran investigators leaving the field.<sup>56</sup> In recognition that the commercial media are not fulfilling their watchdog role, in October 2007 a wealthy California couple pledged an unprecedented \$10 million annually to a new investigative nonprofit called ProPublica. Headed by the former editor of the *Wall Street Journal*, the group will offer its reporting projects free of charge to leading news organizations.<sup>57</sup> Other major donors have taken notice as well. Gifts of \$5 million each were made in 2007 to endow investigative reporting and training centers at Columbia and Brandeis universities.

Under U.S. law, nonprofit corporations receive several advantages, including tax-deductible contributions from donors and not having to pay taxes on income received by the organization (although employee salaries are taxed). A strong tradition of philanthropy also helps support the growing nonprofit sector in the United States. Such conditions vary overseas, however, and may influence the viability of nonprofit journalism centers there.

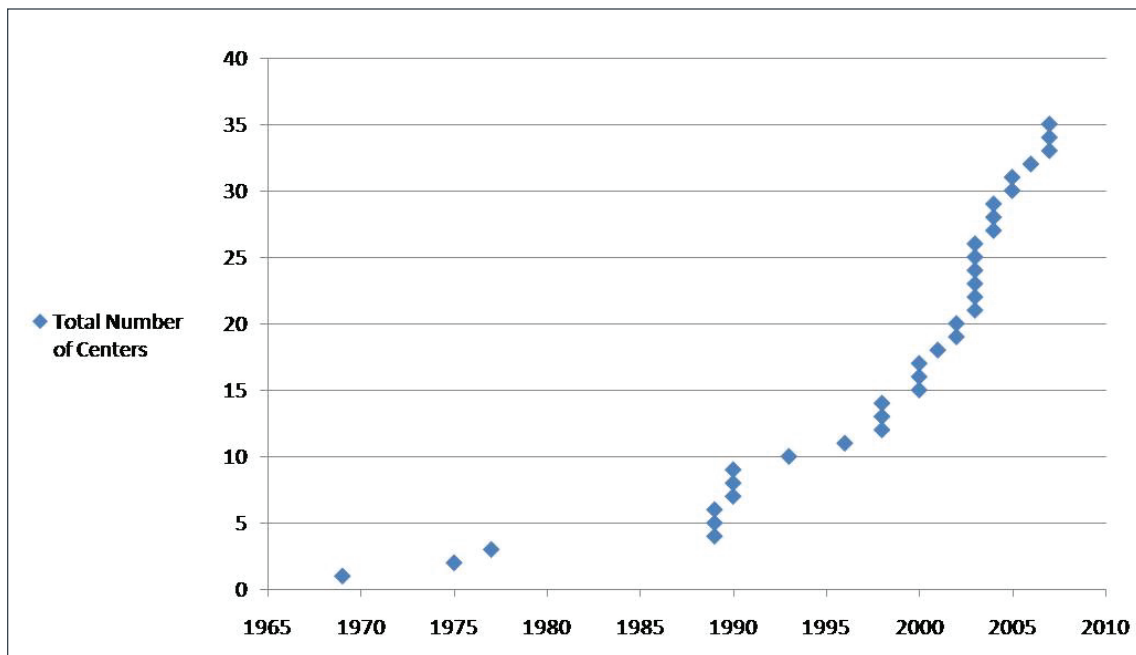
## Centers of Excellence

The development of investigative journalism overseas owes much to a growing network of nonprofit centers, according to veteran trainers and reporters active in the field. The centers are a diverse group that includes reporting organizations, training institutes, small grant-making bodies, and regional networks that link journalists in person and online. Some centers combine several of these roles.

To better understand the scope and activities of these organizations, in fall 2007 CIMA launched a survey of their activities, priorities, funding, and other

reporting organizations, 14 that serve as professional associations or training institutes, five that do both reporting and training, and two that act as foundations by giving “micro-grants” to journalists.

The first of the nonprofits was the Washington, D.C.-based Fund for Investigative Journalism (FIJ), founded in 1969 to provide grants to reporters working on investigative projects. Among FIJ’s early recipients was a young freelance journalist named Seymour Hersh, who used his stipend to research a tip about an alleged massacre by U.S. troops in Vietnam. The resulting



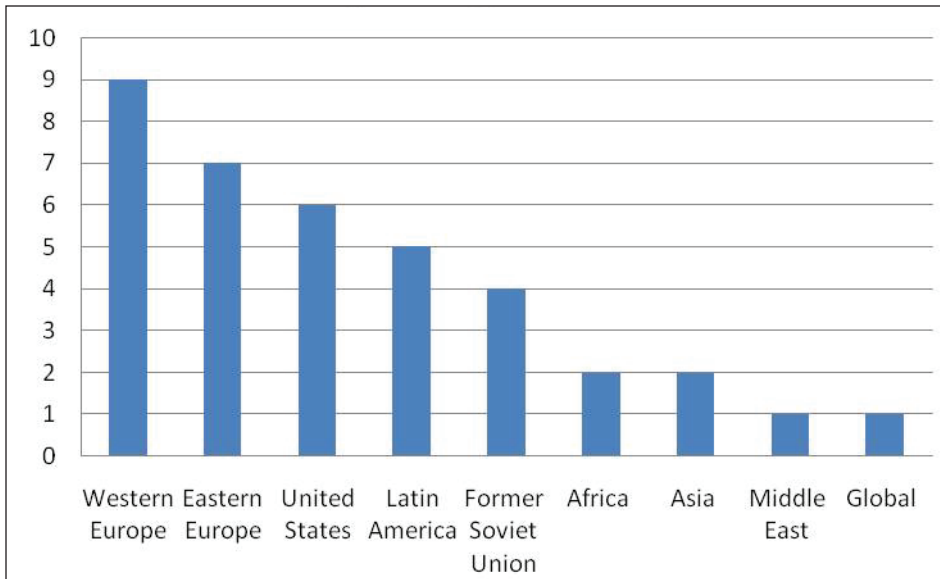
Nonprofit Investigative Journalism Centers Worldwide

basic attributes. Research for the project identified 39 nonprofit investigative centers in 26 countries. Of these, 37 (95 percent) responded to CIMA’s survey. The list includes 16 groups that are primarily

story revealed perhaps the most notorious incident of the war—the killing of villagers in My Lai and its subsequent cover-up by Army officials.<sup>49</sup> FIJ was followed in 1975 by Investigative Reporters and Editors, a

professional association founded to train, protect and advocate for investigative journalists, based at the University of Missouri Journalism School. Among IRE’s first acts was responding to the car bombing of *Arizona Republic* reporter Don Bolles—by coordinating an unprecedented team investigation that completed Bolles’

turn, was followed in 1989 by the similarly structured Center for Public Integrity, based in Washington, D.C., and the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism in Manila. All three reporting centers worked with major media and earned reputations for groundbreaking, award-winning investigative work. By the early 1990s, the



Distribution of Investigative Reporting Centers

work on organized crime and public corruption in Arizona. The project, joined by 38 journalists from 28 newspapers and broadcast stations, shined a spotlight on local officials and the Mafia for months, helped push forward multiple indictments in the case, and put U.S. organized crime on notice that killing reporters would come at a high price.<sup>50</sup>

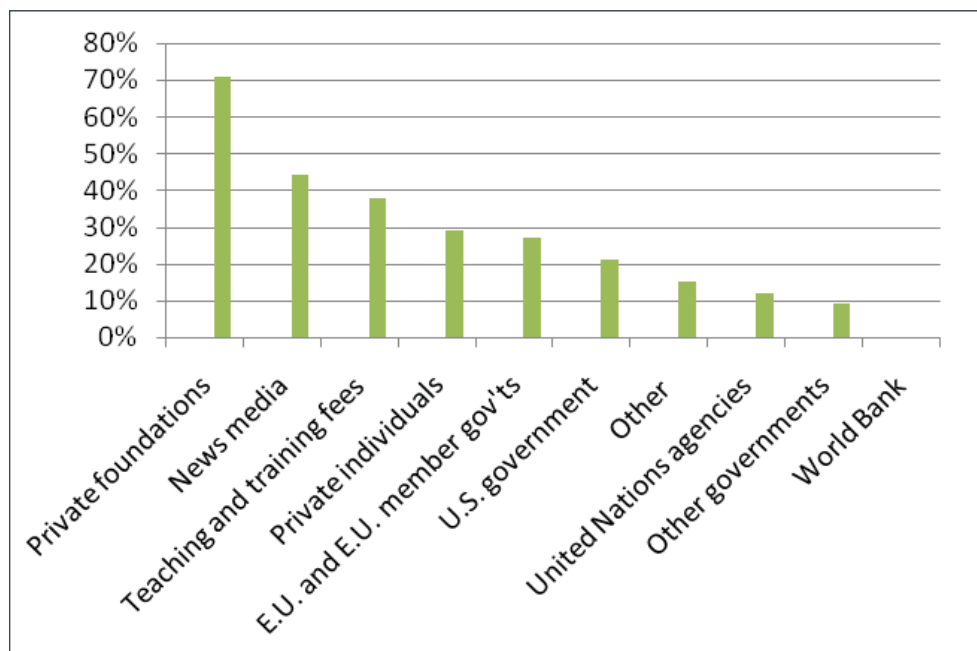
The founding of IRE was followed two years later by that of the Center for Investigative Reporting, formed by freelance journalists in the San Francisco Bay area to do investigative stories that the rest of the news media were failing to cover. CIR, in

concept had spread to Northern Europe, with IRE-like associations founded by journalists in four Scandinavian countries. A handful of similar groups followed—in Mexico, Nepal, Bulgaria—but the real growth has occurred in the last eight years, with over half the centers appearing since 2000. In 2007 alone, new centers were formed in Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Chile, and Colombia, and journalists were considering similar projects in India, Indonesia, and Turkey. Spurring the growth of the centers appears to be a combination of international media development funding, globalization, and the organizing of four Global Investigative Journalism Conferences since 2001.

The various groups range widely in staff and budget, from one-person operations in the developing world to the multimillion-dollar Center for Public Integrity. Many of the groups have minimal staffs—38 percent have only one to two employees—and nearly half have annual budgets below \$100,000. But most also serve as coordinators and facilitators for much larger reporting and training projects. The Forum for African Investigative Reporters (FAIR), for example, has only two part-time staff but serves as a base for reporting projects linking journalists across the continent.

group in Katmandu, Nepal. The Bosnian Center has served as the nerve center for a series of cross-border projects in Eastern Europe on the energy industry, transnational crime, and corruption. Journalists from the Romanian Center have worked as trainers in a dozen countries. SCOOP, a project of the Danish Association for Investigative Journalism, has given 150 grants to journalists in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union for work on stories.

The centers have proved to be a viable model for several reasons. In developing and



Funding Sources for Investigative Journalism Centers

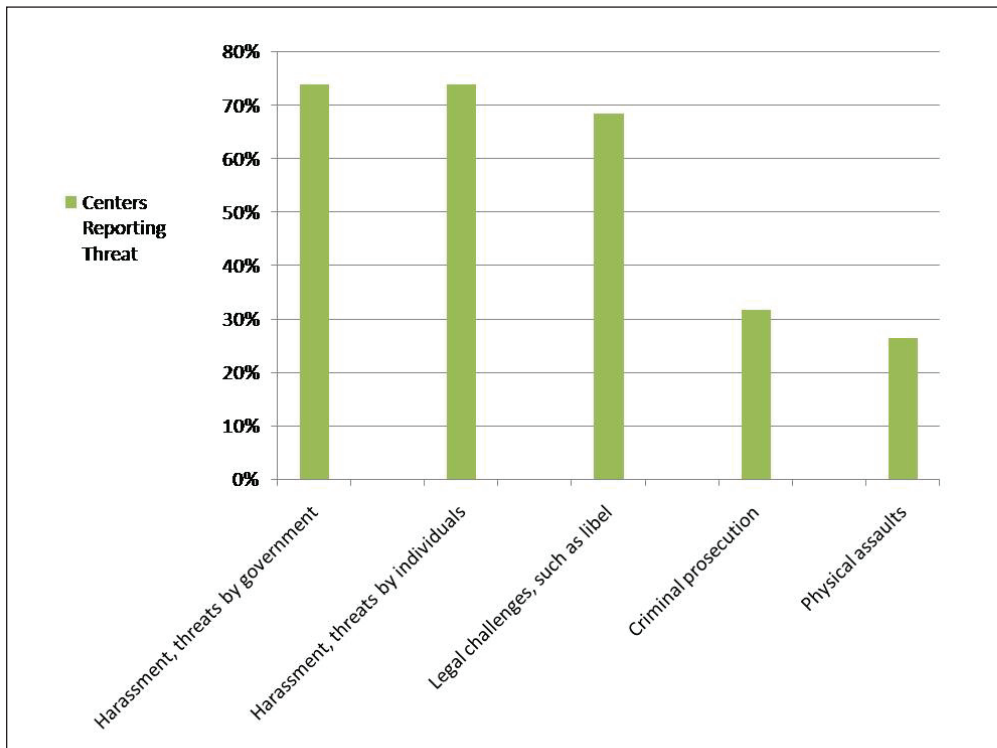
FAIR also helped organize the first pan-African Investigative Journalism Summit in September 2007—attended by 41 journalists from 15 countries.

The more established centers have regional and international impact. The Philippine Center has done trainings across Southeast Asia and inspired the creation of a similar

democratizing countries, they often serve, quite literally, as centers of excellence, offering firsthand proof that top-flight reporting can be done on crime, corruption, and accountability. “The role of the Center is as a catalyst—to show that this kind of reporting is possible and to encourage others to do it,” says Sheila Coronel, co-founder of the Philippine Center. The PCIJ’s work has

indeed inspired the creation of investigative teams at Filipino TV news stations and newspapers. Drew Sullivan of the Bosnian Center for Investigative Reporting (known by its local acronym CIN) calls it “leveraging standards into the local media.”

of programs that are top-down attempts to instill an investigative culture into a nation’s news media. “Local journalists should be willing to make this happen,” she says. “You need local buy-in. There’s no assurance your stories will be published or that you’ll



Harassment, Threats Faced by Investigative Reporting Centers

Newspapers in Sarajevo, he notes, have started telling their reporters they want CIN-type stories—well-documented, in-depth pieces that stand apart from the opinionated, thinly reported fare that fills many dailies.<sup>51</sup>

Despite their growing popularity, the centers are not always an appropriate model. Several organizations are dormant or no longer in operation, including once-vibrant centers in Bulgaria, Georgia, and Mexico. The reasons for their failure are varied—lack of funding, lack of fundraising, managerial problems, small markets. Coronel cautions to be wary

steer clear of the law. It requires genuine commitment—and you can’t program that from Washington.” A more effective strategy in some countries, such as Pakistan or Bangladesh, may be to work directly with a receptive major news outlet. “In some places it would not work,” she says, “but it might as a unit within a newspaper, where you have an enlightened editor or publisher who’s interested.”

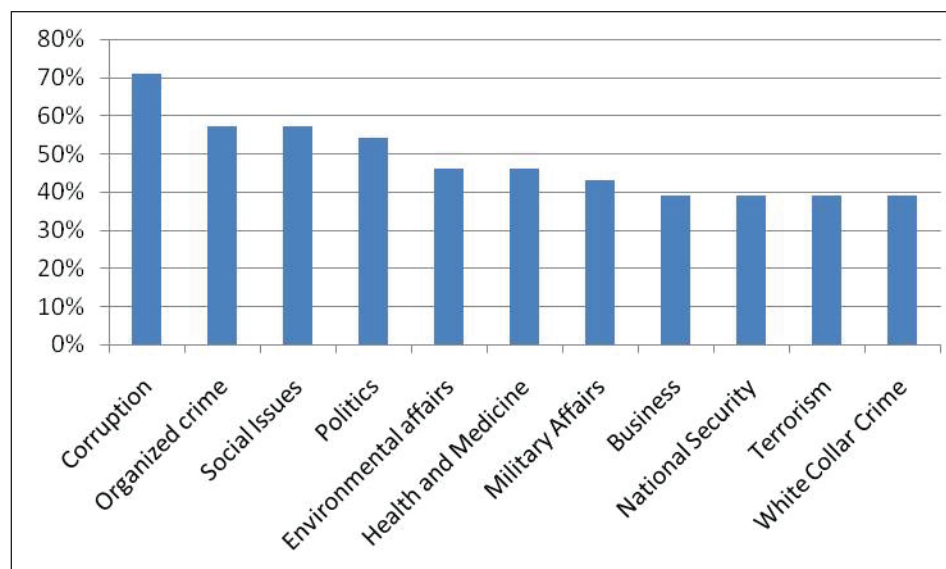
William Orme of the United Nations Development Programme’s Democratic Governance Group likewise warns of

inapplicable models, particularly where basic journalism skills are lacking and the legal environment is onerous. Orme calls for more support to investigative reporting, but says the conditions must be right. “There’s a totally different dynamic” in parts of Africa, he cautions. “You can’t do investigative reporting in a country that has enforced criminal libel statutes on the books.”

Funding remains critical to the centers’ success. As a group, they are heavily dependent on donors—74 percent cited

center’s annual budget. Asked to rank what kind of assistance is most important to them, the various center respondents listed three kinds of funding at the top of the list, well ahead of such priorities as legal and physical protection, training, and equipment.

Groups in developing and democratizing countries generally displayed the same priorities as those in developed countries: at the top were general funding and project-specific funding, followed by support to attend training workshops and conferences.



Reporting Priorities for Investigative Journalism Centers

grants and donations as a major source of income, followed by commercial income and fees at 23 percent and membership fees at 11 percent. Even the best-run, most entrepreneurial centers have to fundraise for over half of their budget, much like other NGOs. Key to the Bosnian Center’s success, for example, was a three-year, \$1.8 million grant from USAID in 2004. The PCIJ received a Ford Foundation endowment that provides as much as 30 percent of the

Next came access to databases. (Many international databases on business, legal documents, and public records can run into the thousands of dollars in fees.) Those in developing countries tended to rank the need for legal protection and computing equipment higher than those in the developed world. Interestingly, physical protection was ranked at the bottom for both groups, drawing the most concern from respondents in the Balkans. Despite that, the

level of harassment and threats against the centers was generally high, with 74 percent reporting such troubles from government as well as individuals, and nearly as many reporting legal challenges. Thirty-two percent also cited criminal prosecution and 26 percent physical assaults.

Those centers engaged in reporting tend to be Web-savvy, multimedia news operations, working on a per-story basis with major news media. More than half produce an

array of stories for print, broadcast, and the Web, as well as books and research reports. Asked to rank the kinds of stories they report, corruption topped the list, followed by organized crime and social issues such as poverty, unemployment, women, and minorities. Three-quarters of the 37 groups surveyed also conduct training; two-thirds offer computer-assisted reporting classes. Most of the training is face-to-face; only a handful—19 percent—offer online training to other journalists in the region.

### **ABRAJI: A Success Story**

For Brazil's increasingly sophisticated investigative reporters, the time was right. All they needed was a spark. That came with the brutal 2002 murder of Tim Lopes, a fearless TV Globo reporter who went undercover into Rio de Janeiro's notorious favela slums to document drug gangs and child prostitution. Lopes' killing galvanized Brazilian reporters into forming the Associação Brasileira de Jornalismo Investigativo (ABRAJI)—the Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalists. Backed by the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas at the University of Texas at Austin, ABRAJI began with a simple listserv, allowing reporters across Brazil to exchange ideas. "Especially with the big size of Brazil, the Internet played a key role in the start-up," recalls founding member Fernando Rodrigues, an award-winning journalist with *Folha de S. Paulo*. "We could talk to each other every day."<sup>52</sup>

With help from the Knight Center and the U.S.-based Investigative Reporters and Editors, ABRAJI held a series of conferences and planning meetings, and began to grow quickly. By 2007, it had become one of the world's largest, most active associations of investigative journalists, with over a thousand members. ABRAJI workshops and conferences have trained more than 2,500 journalists in organized crime and corruption coverage, personal security, computer-assisted reporting, and more. The listserv is still buzzing, with some 2,000 people registered. ABRAJI is also coordinating a coalition of 18 organizations—including lawyers' and judges' groups—pushing for a national freedom of information act.

Rodrigues attributes ABRAJI's success to several factors. First, the group has been fueled by often passionate and sustained volunteer efforts. Second, Brazil has a large and sophisticated media sector, and its news managers, recognizing the need for professional training, welcomed ABRAJI from the start. "It came not from a fringe movement but from a wide range of news media," says Rodrigues. "It attracted people from all parts of Brazil and all parts of journalism—radio, TV, newspapers. That helped a lot to legitimize the idea."<sup>53</sup>

# The Role of Journalism Schools

Gauging the presence of investigative reporting in journalism education is difficult at best. A global census of journalism education is underway that has so far identified some 2,300 programs worldwide—and researchers say the total could surpass 3,000. The project should eventually shed light on how many programs include coursework on investigative reporting, but there are no data yet.<sup>58</sup> Complicating matters, some investigative journalism courses overseas are steeped in theory and bear little resemblance to what is taught in modern journalism departments or practiced by professionals in the field. One indication that university education has played a minor role in professional development overseas comes from the CIMA survey of nonprofit investigative training centers. Although 15 of the groups share some affiliation with local universities, only two draw their training materials from the schools. For the rest, their materials are developed in-house or come from professional organizations such as IRE.

Still, U.S. universities and nonprofit media groups have made progress working with individual schools overseas to modernize

*Some investigative journalism courses overseas are steeped in theory and bear little resemblance to what is taught in modern journalism departments or practiced by professionals in the field.*

their curricula. The International Center for Journalists set up a U.S.-style program that features investigative reporting at the Caucasus School of Journalism in Tbilisi, Georgia, and its staff is now working with China's prestigious Tsinghua University on a global business journalism program that includes in-depth reporting. IREX is also working with universities across the Middle East on developing a modern journalism curriculum that includes investigative elements.

A tool that may prove invaluable to schools overseas was released in June this year by UNESCO. Titled *Model Curricula for Journalism Education*, the 150-page guide is targeted at journalism faculty in developing countries and emerging democracies. The

guide stresses the importance of classes on in-depth and investigative techniques, and includes a detailed course plan on the subject by the University of the Philippines' Yvonne Chua, former training director of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. The document is being translated into French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, and other languages, and has the potential for major impact on journalism education abroad.<sup>59</sup>

## *Distance Learning and the World Bank*

Development experts at the World Bank Institute, the bank's training arm, began to focus on investigative journalism in the mid-1990s. As the bank prioritized battling corruption, the importance of an independent, investigative press seemed obvious to its staff. But as the institute backed workshops across the developing world, costs began to mount. To economize, the bank turned to distance learning, setting up an innovative series of videoconferencing programs based out of its Washington, D.C., headquarters.

Overseen by Canadian investigative journalist Roderick Macdonell, the free courses proved popular and the program boomed. Macdonell and colleagues could reach some 150 journalists through face-to-face workshops each year—but with videoconferencing, the numbers quadrupled. "It has gone from a cottage industry rate of production to industrial levels," he wrote as the program took off.<sup>60</sup> From 2000 to 2004, the Institute's program trained more than 1,500 journalists in some 35 countries, mostly in French- and English-speaking Africa, but also in Asia and Latin America. The weekly classes consisted of 10 sessions per course, stressing multiple sourcing, use of public records, and Internet resources.<sup>61</sup>

Despite being highly regarded and sparking scores of hard-hitting stories, the program appears to have been a victim of its own success. Complaints piled up from host countries about overly aggressive journalists coming out of the trainings, according to bank officials. Finally, in 2004, the bank leadership killed the program. "There was a feeling that the World Bank shouldn't be doing that much media training," says Macdonell, "and that others should pick it up." No one did.<sup>62</sup>

## Standards and Quality

With the rapid expansion of investigative reporting internationally, the importance of emphasizing standards and quality has never been greater. Even among some well-regarded investigative reporters in developing and democratizing countries, stories are often produced with few sources and little attempt to explain to readers and viewers where information is coming from. In some countries, the term “investigative journalist” is widely misused; beat reporters, attracted by the cachet of the term, refer to themselves as investigative journalists while serving up single-sourced scandal stories filled with unproven allegations.

Worse, the term has been appropriated by extortionists posing as reporters, who dig up dirt on companies or individuals and threaten to write about them unless paid off. Others use investigative skills for political hit jobs, working in the service of political bosses or organized crime. Such abuses have led to the terms *denuncismo* in Latin America—the journalism of denunciation—and *kompromat*, or comprising propaganda, in the former Soviet Union. Asked why he and others founded the Romanian Center for Investigative Journalism, Paul Radu noted similar problems with the state of journalism in his country. “Most of the investigative articles were used for blackmailing, advertisement racketeering, commissioned articles, or were just an edited form of some official files,” he told Charles Lewis.<sup>63</sup>

Establishing high standards is critical not only to professionalizing the media but to having a positive impact on the

public. “Unless you meet some minimum standards, you’re not going to have an effect—on clarity, on accuracy, on fairness, on reader-friendliness, on newsworthiness,” argues Drew Sullivan of the Bosnian Center for Investigative Journalism. “There’s good reporting and reporters are doing courageous work, but unfortunately investigative reporting in this part of the world is not meeting those minimum standards often enough.”

Ethical issues also pose a major problem. The overuse and abuse of undercover cameras, misrepresentation, and payment of money for information all are nettlesome issues that must be dealt with, say veteran trainers. Such ethical and professional shortcomings affect not only investigative reporting but all of the news media and need to be part of basic journalism education.<sup>64</sup>

The presence of investigative programs and nonprofit centers with high standards can help establish a benchmark against which to measure the rest of the news media. Outside audits—preferably done by experienced investigative editors—are one tool that could help ensure that reporting programs are operating at a professional level. Integrating ethics training into investigative programs could help, as well. Another tool used to good effect is sponsoring an awards competition. Offering awards—with a cash prize—highlights and rewards the best, most responsible work while helping to build the status and popularity of investigative reporting. Such awards are being offered by NGOs in Indonesia, South Africa, and Georgia, among others.

# Monitoring and Evaluation

Measuring the impact of investigative journalism programs poses unique problems. Broader journalism training programs can count the number of participants enrolled and the quantity of stories produced. Journalism schools can boast of how many of their alumni work in major media. Content analysis might be useful for coverage of specific topics such as corruption or crime, but not for in-depth investigative stories. The Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism's series that brought down President Estrada for corruption took eight months and consisted of only three stories. Yet their impact was profound, both on the government and on the media.

The challenge is that donors are investing in changing newsroom culture by building mentors, role models, and centers of excellence—and these can't be measured well over the period of a grant. How does one produce a Woodward and Bernstein? As former World Bank Institute trainer Roderick Macdonell wrote, "It's much like asking a journalism school what impact it has had on society."<sup>65</sup>

Another difficulty is gauging the impact of investigative reporting on a news organization as a whole. Use of public

records, computer-assisted reporting, and other techniques used in investigative training have wide application in the newsroom. "Sometimes you use those techniques as explanatory, not investigatory, journalism," explains IRE former Executive Director Brant Houston. "On demographics, the environment, crime—there are all sorts of other stories that good investigative techniques can spawn."

*The Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism's series that brought down President Estrada for corruption took eight months and consisted of only three stories.*

One way to evaluate investigative programs, say veteran editors, is to examine the impact on a per-story basis, shown most dramatically in the case of the PCIJ's investigation of Estrada. Have a project's stories resulted in change? Have policies or practices been reformed, or officials held accountable? Have they generated public attention or been honored with awards?

Another method is to attempt to gauge whether the environment for investigative reporting has improved. "Is there a market for your work?" asks Patrick Butler of the International Center for Journalists. "Are media owners and managers supportive?"<sup>66</sup> A program's impact on editors and other news managers is key, agrees Houston. "You can train a reporter all you want," he says, "but if the editor isn't on board, good luck."

# Findings and Recommendations

- **Provide greater support of investigative journalism programs.**

Despite its frontline role in fostering public accountability, battling crime and corruption, and raising standards in the news media, investigative reporting receives relatively little in international development aid—and comprises a significant gap in media development funding. A substantial increase in funding of this vital area could have a major impact overseas.

- **Think long-term.**

Improving investigative journalism overseas requires sustained program support over years, not weekend workshops. On-the-ground trainers working closely with committed local media can produce impressive results.

- **Integrate investigative journalism into broader media reform.**

Investigative reporting programs have a greater chance of success when integrated into broader initiatives that include legal reform and freedom of information.

- **Support investigative reporting centers.**

Central to any strategy should be support to the world's nonprofit investigative reporting and training centers. The centers have proved themselves dynamic agents of change and form an increasingly vital link in world journalism. Endowments, long-term funding,

and training in business and fundraising skills can make a major contribution by ensuring stability and a longer-term focus.

- **Consider different models for different countries.**

Investigative reporting centers vary in size and function, and include reporting groups, training institutes, professional associations, and funding vehicles. Different models will be appropriate in different places. International programs should also partner with motivated and established local media, particularly in regions where centers may not work.

- **Encourage global networking.**

Better networking among the various investigative centers can substantially increase their access to reporting, databases, training materials, and other resources, and further cross-border collaboration among them. The underfunded Global Investigative Journalists Network has the potential to become an international secretariat and nerve center for the profession, with a central Web site, listserv, and resource center.

- **Support investigative training conferences.**

Investigative reporting conferences play a key role in training and networking journalists, particularly from developing countries, helping to cost-effectively broaden the

scope of their reporting. Especially useful are fellowships for journalists in developing and democratizing countries to attend the annual Global Investigative Journalism Conference and regional conferences.

- **Evaluate based on quality.**  
Training and reporting projects aimed at creating a culture of investigative reporting should be evaluated based on their quality and impact, not broad numbers of people trained and stories produced.
- **Insist on high standards.**  
Because of their influence and high visibility, investigative reporting programs should represent the highest professional standards—in reporting, editing, and ethical conduct. Outside audits by veteran investigative editors could help ensure that the high standards are adhered to. Sponsoring or subsidizing awards competitions can also draw attention to and encourage top-flight investigative work in a given region.
- **Support regional reporting funds.**  
The creation of regional funds like the Washington D.C.-based Fund for Investigative Journalism and the Danish-backed SCOOP program should be strongly considered. By offering small grants to independent

journalists, the funds can have a major impact for a relatively small investment, but high standards should be built into the process.

- **Coordinate with investigative journalism groups.**  
Managers and implementers of U.S. government-backed programs on investigative reporting should make it a point to consult with experts at IRE, the world’s largest association of investigative journalists, at the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas at the University of Texas, and at a new program to network nonprofit investigative journalism groups begun by the Knight Chair in Investigative and Enterprise Reporting at the University of Illinois. Although IRE will not accept federal funding, feedback from its staff would help ensure the most practical and professional programs.
- **Prioritize and improve U.S. visits.**  
The State Department should ensure that investigative reporting continues to be a regular feature of its journalism visitor programs. At the same time, officials should add more rigorous criteria to the selection of who they invite as investigative journalists to the United States, and coordinate those visits so that participants can attend IRE training conferences or workshops.

# Appendix: Investigative Journalism Training and Reporting Centers

## International

### *Global Investigative Journalism Network*

**Web site:** <http://www.globalinvestigativejournalism.org>

**Telephone:** (573) 529-3581

**Location:** Knight Chair in Investigative & Enterprise Reporting  
College of Communications  
University of Illinois  
119A Gregory Hall, M/C 462  
810 South Wright Street  
Urbana, IL 61801  
USA

## Africa

### *Forum for African Investigative Reporters*

**Web site:** <http://www.fairreporters.org>

**Telephone:** +27-83-659-0778

**Location:** Room 7009, Richard Ward Building  
University of Witwatersrand  
Johannesburg, Gauteng 2050  
South Africa

### *Ghana Center for Public Integrity & Focal Media*

**Web site:** <http://gcpi.virtualactivism.net>

**Telephone:** +233-24701807 or +233-24609589

**Location:** P.O. Box OS318  
Osu, Accra  
Ghana

## Asia

### *Centre for Investigative Journalism Nepal*

**Web site:** <http://www.cijnepal.org>

**Telephone:** +977-1-4472807 or +977-1-4461668

**Location:** PO Box 25334  
Katmandu, Nepal

### *Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism*

**Web site:** <http://www.pcij.org> and <http://www.pcij.org/blog>

**Telephone:** +632-4104763

**Location:** 107 Scout de Guia Street  
Quezon City 1101  
Philippines

## Eastern Europe

### *Balkan Investigative Regional Reporting Network*

**Web site:** <http://www.birn.eu.com>

**Telephone:** +387-33-215-293

**Location:** Kulina Bana 10  
Sarajevo 71 000  
Bosnia-Herzegovina

### *Bosnia Center for Investigative Reporting*

(Centar za istraživačko novinarstvo, CIN)

**Web site:** <http://www.cin.ba>

**Telephone:** +387-33-560-040

**Location:** Ferhadija 27  
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**Telephone:** +359-9555221

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***Bulgarian Investigative Journalism Center***

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**Telephone:** +359-887-728-705

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***Media Focus—Center for Investigative Journalism***

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**Telephone:** +381-11-3619-159

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***Romanian Centre for Investigative Journalism***

(Centrul Roman pentru Jurnalism de Investigatie)

**Web site:** <http://www.crji.org>

**Telephone:** +40740309073

**Location:** Bucharest, Romania

**Former Soviet Union**

***Azerbaijani-American Journalism Academy***

**Location:** Baku, Azerbaijan

***Caucasus Media Investigations Center***

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Baku, AZ1000

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***Investigative Journalism Center of Moldova***

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Moldova

***Investigative Journalists NGO (Armenia)***

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**Telephone:** +374-10-563363

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***Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism***

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***Center for Journalism and Public Ethics (Centro de Periodismo y Ética Pública)***

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***Chilean Center for Investigative Journalism and Information***

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**Location:** 2 Jose Miguel de la Barra 412 Santiago, Chile

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Lima, Peru**Middle East*****Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism (ARIJ)*****Web site:** <http://www.arij.net>**Telephone:** +962-6-4640406**Location:** P.O. Box 20513

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Jordan

**United States*****Center for Investigative Reporting*****Web site:** [http://www.](http://www.centerforinvestigativereporting.org)[centerforinvestigativereporting.org](http://www.centerforinvestigativereporting.org)**Telephone:** (510) 809-3160**Location:** 2927 Newbury Street, Ste. A  
Berkeley, CA 94703

USA

***Center for Public Integrity*****Web site:** <http://www.publicintegrity.org>and <http://www.publicintegrity.org/icij>**Telephone:** (202) 466-1300**Location:** 910 17th Street NW, 7th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20006

USA

***Fund for Investigative Journalism*****Web site:** <http://www.fij.org>**Telephone:** (202) 362-0260**Location:** P.O. Box 60184

Washington, D.C. 20039

USA

***Investigative Reporters and Editors*****Web site:** <http://www.ire.org>**Telephone:** (573) 882-2042**Location:** 138 Neff Annex

University of Missouri

Columbia, MO 65211

USA

***ProPublica*****Web site:** <http://www.propublica.org>**Telephone:** (212) 225-3400**Location:** New York, NY

USA

***Schuster Institute for Investigative Journalism*****Web site:** [http://www.brandeis.edu/](http://www.brandeis.edu/investigate)  
[investigate](http://www.brandeis.edu/investigate)**Telephone:** (781) 736-4249**Location:** Brandeis University

515 South St. Mailstop 043

Waltham, MA 02454-9110

USA

***Stabile Center for Investigative Journalism*****Web site:** <http://jrn.columbia.edu>**Telephone:** (212) 854-6748**Location:** Graduate School of Journalism,  
Columbia University

2950 Broadway, New York City

NY 10027

USA

**Western Europe*****Centre for Investigative Journalism*****Web site:** <http://www.tcij.org>**Telephone:** +44-207-040-8220**Location:** City University

G215 Gloucester Building

Gloucester Way

London EC1V 0HB UK

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***Danish Association for Investigative Journalism***

(Foreningen for Undersøgende Journalistik, FUJ)

**Web site:** <http://www.fuj.dk>

**Telephone:** +45-35-20-80-20

**Location:** Pressens Hus  
2 Skindergade 7  
Copenhagen DK-1159  
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***European Journalism Centre***

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**Telephone:** +31-43-325-40-30

**Location:** Ave Ceramique 50  
Maastricht 6221  
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***Finnish Association for Investigative Journalism***

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***Föreningen Grävande Journalister***

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***Investigative Reporters Network Europe (IRENE)***

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***Norwegian Foundation for Investigative Journalism***

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***Pascal Decroos Fund for Investigative Journalism***

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***Dutch-Flemish Association for Investigative Journalism***

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NL-3503 RP Utrecht  
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## Endnotes

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- <sup>10</sup> Mary Myers, *Media and Information for Accountability: What are Other Donors Doing, What Works, What are the Gaps?*, Department for International Development, United Kingdom, March 2007.
- <sup>11</sup> For a lengthy discussion of investigative reporting definitions, see Vereniging van Onderzoeksjournalisten (VVOJ),

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<sup>12</sup> See IRE's resource center for a look at the diversity of investigative reports: [www.ire.org/resourcecenter](http://www.ire.org/resourcecenter).

<sup>13</sup> Peter Graves, *U.S. Public and Private Funding of Independent Media Development Abroad* (Washington: Center for International Media Assistance at the National Endowment for Democracy, 2007).

<sup>14</sup> Myers, *Media and Information for Accountability*, 39. Here is Myers' full list of gaps in media development funding: media and information in disaster zones, communications audits at country level, support to investigative journalism, support to NGOs and civil society organizations to better use media, more and better research at all levels, improving accountability around climate change, and increased and more flexible funding.

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<sup>21</sup> Interview, Mark Nelson, Senior Operations Officer for Capacity Development, World Bank Institute, October 11, 2007.

<sup>22</sup> Interview, George Papagiannis, Vice President for Policy and Government Affairs, Internews Network, September 26, 2007.

<sup>23</sup> Interview, Mark Whitehouse, Director of Media Development, International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), August 31, 2007.

<sup>24</sup> Myers, *Media and Information for Accountability*, 39.

<sup>25</sup> Interview, Roderick Macdonell, former Director, Investigative Journalism Program, World Bank Institute, October 22, 2007.

<sup>26</sup> Interview, Suzanne Siskel, Director of Community and Resource Development, Ford Foundation, October 17, 2007.

<sup>27</sup> Interview, Sheila Coronel, October 1, 2007.

<sup>28</sup> For more on the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, see <http://www.pcij.org>; also see: Charles Lewis, *The Growing Importance of Nonprofit Journalism*, The Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, Harvard University, 2007, <http://www.crji>.

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<sup>31</sup> The Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas, at the University of Texas at Austin, is running an innovative, Spanish-language online course in investigative techniques. Its first session enrolled 89 journalists from 16 countries, including Cuba. For more information, see [http://knightcenter.utexas.edu/distancelearning\\_article.php?page=8643](http://knightcenter.utexas.edu/distancelearning_article.php?page=8643).

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<sup>35</sup> Putsata Reang and Moeun Chhean Nariddh, *Investigative Reporting: A Handbook for Cambodian Journalists*, Internews, 2007, [http://www.internews.org/pubs/gov/cambodia\\_investigative\\_200705/cambodia\\_investigative200705.shtm](http://www.internews.org/pubs/gov/cambodia_investigative_200705/cambodia_investigative200705.shtm).

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<sup>37</sup> Interview, Vjollca Shtylla, Senior Program

Director, New Initiatives, International Center for Journalists, August 29, 2007.

<sup>38</sup> ICFJ has published two guides: *Dig Deep & Aim High: A Training Model for Teaching Investigative Reporting*, 2000; and *Ten Steps to Investigative Reporting*, 2000.

<sup>39</sup> Interview, Patrick Butler, Vice President of Programs, ICJF, August 29, 2007.

<sup>40</sup> Interview, Drew Sullivan, November 8, 2007.

<sup>41</sup> Response to CIMA survey by BTC ProMedia (Broadcasting Training Center); Interview, Mark Whitehouse, August 31, 2007.

<sup>42</sup> Email from Jody McPhillips, ICFJ Program Manager, September 28, 2007. The Caucasus Investigative Reporting Center's Web site was still functioning as of November 2007: <http://www.circ.ge>.

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<sup>44</sup> For more on the Global Investigative Journalism Network, see <http://www.globalinvestigativejournalism.org>.

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<sup>46</sup> For more on the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, see <http://www.publicintegrity.org/icij>.

<sup>47</sup> For more on the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists' award, see <http://www.publicintegrity.org/icij/award.aspx>.

<sup>48</sup> For more on the 2008 Lillehammer conference, see <http://www.skup.no/GIJ2008/1941>.

<sup>49</sup> For more on the Fund for Investigative Journalism's history, see <http://fij.org/about>.

<sup>50</sup> For more on Investigative Reporters and Editors' Arizona Project, see <http://www.ire.org/history/arizona.html>.

<sup>51</sup> Interview, Drew Sullivan, November 4, 2007.

<sup>52</sup> Interview, Fernando Rodrigues, Executive Director, Associação Brasileira de Jornalismo Investigativo (ABRAJI), October 17, 2007.

<sup>53</sup> For more on ABRAJI, see Marcelo Soares, "Tim Lopes's Murder Sows a Seed," *Global Journalist*, 3rd Quarter, 2003; Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas, "Brazilians Create New Organization," December 18, 2002, [http://knightcenter.utexas.edu/knightcenternews\\_article.php?page=160](http://knightcenter.utexas.edu/knightcenternews_article.php?page=160); also see ABRAJI's Web site, <http://www.abraji.org.br> (in Portuguese).

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<sup>62</sup> For more on the World Bank's foray into investigative reporting, see World Bank Institute Learning Programs, "Topic: Information, Governance and the Media, The World Bank," the World Bank Institute, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/WBI/WBIPROGRAMS/PSGLP/0,,contentMDK:20282843~menuPK:461615~pagePK:64156158~piPK:64152884~theSitePK:461606,00.html>;

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