

# Reporting Impunity: Report from the Monitoring of Print Media Coverage of Impunity Issues



*November 2013*



**Stop Impunity Nigeria**

# **Reporting Impunity:**

## **Report from the Monitoring of Print Media Coverage of Impunity Issues**

*A Publication of*



*For the*

**Stop Impunity Nigeria**

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Mr. Ayode Longe, MRA's Programme Manager, coordinated and supervised the monitoring project as well as the writing of this report, while Miss Eseohé Ojo, MRA's Communication Officer, edited the report. MRA is grateful to them for their various contributions.

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## *Preface*

On May 16, 2013, the Stop Impunity Nigeria (S.I.N.) Project launched a national campaign against impunity. The Campaign is a collaborative effort by a multi-stakeholder group of civil society organizations, religious bodies and a Federal Government agency, aimed at re-orienting Nigerians and promoting new ethical values to free the country from the debilitating effects of impunity.

Given the critical role of the media in such a campaign, the implementing organizations also decided to monitor print media coverage of impunity issues for several months to see how the media was reporting the issues, beginning from June 2013. The broad purpose of the exercise is to provide independent and objective data on media coverage of issues of impunity.

For each month, the project monitors the amount of coverage given to relevant events as well as debates and discourse on issues of impunity; focusing more particularly on the thematic areas of the Stop Impunity Nigeria campaign, namely “Public Finance Management”, “Electoral Process”, “Rule of Law”, as well as “Patriotism, Ethical and Civic Responsibility”.

But the project also monitors the coverage of impunity issues in general as well as the reporting of the activities being carried out by the Stop Impunity Nigeria implementing organizations in the course of the campaign.

The Campaign therefore sought to monitor media coverage of issues of impunity in 10 selected daily newspapers. Specifically, the exercise consisted of the following:

- ◆ Identifying the types of impunity issues that are covered by the selected newspapers.
- ◆ Tracking, analysing and documenting the amount of space given to issues of impunity in the selected newspapers and how comprehensively these issues are reported and analysed.
- ◆ Tracking, analysing and documenting the frequency of media reportage of the thematic focus of Stop Impunity Nigeria Campaign.

- ◆ Tracking, analysing and documenting the pattern of reporting of issues of impunity, such as the prominence given to such issues, and the order in which they are reported relative to other issues and events in the selected newspapers.
- ◆ Reviewing coverage of issues of impunity in the selected newspapers to determine if the issues are getting adequate coverage.
- ◆ Identifying gaps in the coverage of impunity issues and finding ways of addressing them in order to increase and improve media reporting of the issues.
- ◆ Publishing regular reports, which will draw attention to patterns of reporting, the inadequacy or otherwise of analysis, commentaries and news, and provide a framework for increased reporting of issues of impunity in the media.

Media coverage of impunity issues is critically important in the context of the Stop Impunity Nigeria campaign because despite the advancements in information technology, conventional media remains one of the most important tools for public enlightenment. This is because the media has a great capacity to reach masses of people, providing them thereby with information on any issue, and influencing their thought processes and opinions.

The media is obviously, therefore, a very powerful tool in advocacy. The media can set agendas for the public simply by reporting an issue and they can influence public debate by what they choose to cover and the way they frame the issues. The media can also pressure policy-makers or decision-makers and ordinary citizens to act in a certain way. They can also project certain values which people then imbibe.

In particular, the media can play a critical role in raising public awareness and understanding of the issues of impunity which the Stop Impunity Nigeria Campaign is concerned with. In adopting a strategy of co-opting this media capacity, the Campaign is also seeking to build a body of knowledge about how the media actually covers the issues.

But the overriding expectation of the Campaign is that reports of the findings from the monitoring exercise will provide a barometer for the media as an institution as well as individual media organizations, to measure their performance in reporting on issues of impunity and undertake voluntary adjustments to improve the coverage of such issues, as part of their contributions to the campaign against impunity in Nigeria.

We hope that these monthly reports can help to make this a reality.

**Edetaen Ojo**

Executive Director, Media Rights Agenda



# Introduction

This is the sixth report in the monitoring of media reportage on issues of impunity by ten selected Nigerian newspapers.

The exercise tracked news and other types of reports in ten selected newspapers, collated and analyzed the contents.

The broad purpose of the exercise was to provide independent and objective data on media coverage of issues of impunity. The project monitored the amount of coverage given to debates and discourses on issues of impunity; focusing on four thematic areas namely 'Public Finance Management', 'Electoral Process', 'Rule of Law', and 'Patriotism, Ethical and Civic Responsibility'. It also monitored reportage of the 'Stop Impunity Nigeria (S.I.N.) Campaign and the omnibus 'Others'.

The project framework was designed in the context of the Stop Impunity Nigeria (S.I.N.) Campaign being carried out by four implementing partners namely, Media Rights Agenda (MRA), Human Development Initiative (HDI), Community Life Project (CLP) and Centre for Social Justice (CSJ). The S.I.N. Campaign also has the National Orientation Agency (NOA), Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the National Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) as collaborating organisations.

It monitored these issues daily on the ten selected daily newspapers namely: The Punch, The Guardian, The Nation, Vanguard, Daily Trust, and Daily Sun. Other newspapers are ThisDay, Leadership, Daily Independent, and National Mirror.

Ten newspapers, all privately-owned, are selected for monitoring but they cut across different types of ownership including political, ethnic and economic diversity.

The objective of the exercise is to monitor media coverage of issues of impunity in the selected newspapers.

Specifically, the exercise

- ◆ Identified the types of impunity issues that are covered by the selected newspapers.
- ◆ Tracked, analysed and documented the amount of space given to report issues of impunity in the selected newspapers
- ◆ Tracked, analysed and documented the frequency of media reportage on the thematic focus of Stop Impunity Nigeria (S.I.N.) Campaign.
- ◆ Tracked, computed, analysed and documented the prominence given to reportage of issues of impunity in the selected newspapers.
- ◆ Reviewed media coverage of issues of impunity in the selected newspapers to determine if they are getting adequate coverage.
- ◆ Reviewed media coverage of issues of impunity in the selected newspapers to identify existing gaps and addressing them and
- ◆ Reviewed media coverage of issues of impunity in the selected newspapers to identify and proffer ways of increasing media reportage of issues of impunity, among others.

# Findings

## Relevant Reports Published

In November 2013, a total of 292 articles published by the ten newspapers were found relevant to the monitoring exercise: they were discourses on issues of impunity.

Leadership newspaper published the highest number of relevant items on issues of impunity. In November 2013, a total of 44 items were found relevant published by Leadership newspapers. This number accounts for 15% of total relevant items published by the ten newspapers for the month.

Coming second place was National Mirror newspaper with 42 relevant items which constituted 14.38% of total items identified.

The Punch newspaper published the third highest number of relevant items. The Punch's 39 relevant items constituted 13.35% of the total. Daily Independent followed in fourth place with 29 relevant items which accounted for 9.93% or approximately 10% of the total.

The newspaper that published the fifth highest number of reports on issues of impunity was Vanguard newspaper with 28 relevant items which accounted for 9.58% of the total.

In sixth position was ThisDay newspaper which published 24 relevant items that accounted for 8.21% of total relevant items published. The Guardian newspaper followed with 23 relevant items which accounted for 7.87% of the total.

The Nation newspaper as well as Daily Trust titles published 22 relevant items apiece and these each constituted 7.53% of the total relevant items.

Daily Sun newspaper published the least number of relevant items; its 19 items found relevant to the monitoring exercise constituted 6.50% of the total published on issues of impunity in November 2013.

*The table below shows the numbers of relevant items published by each of the ten newspapers on the various thematic focuses*

S.N.	Publications	Electoral Process	Others	Patriotism, E&CR	PFM	Rule Of Law	S.I.N Campaign	Total
1.	Independent	1	0	19	3	5	1	29
2.	Daily Trust	0	0	16	2	4	0	22
3.	Leadership	1	0	33	1	8	1	44
4.	Mirror	1	0	19	8	14	0	42
5.	Punch	0	0	14	9	16	0	39
6.	Guardian	0	0	9	4	5	5	23
7.	The Nation	2	0	9	6	3	2	22
8.	Daily Sun	0	0	12	4	3	0	19
9.	Thisday	0	0	19	4	1	0	24
10.	Vanguard	2	1	15	2	8	0	28
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>292</b>

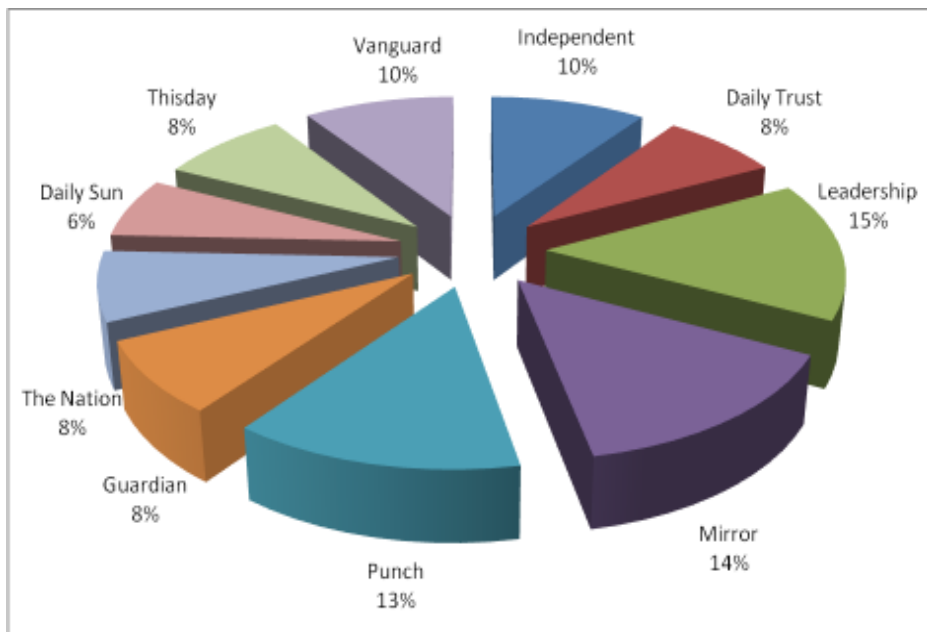
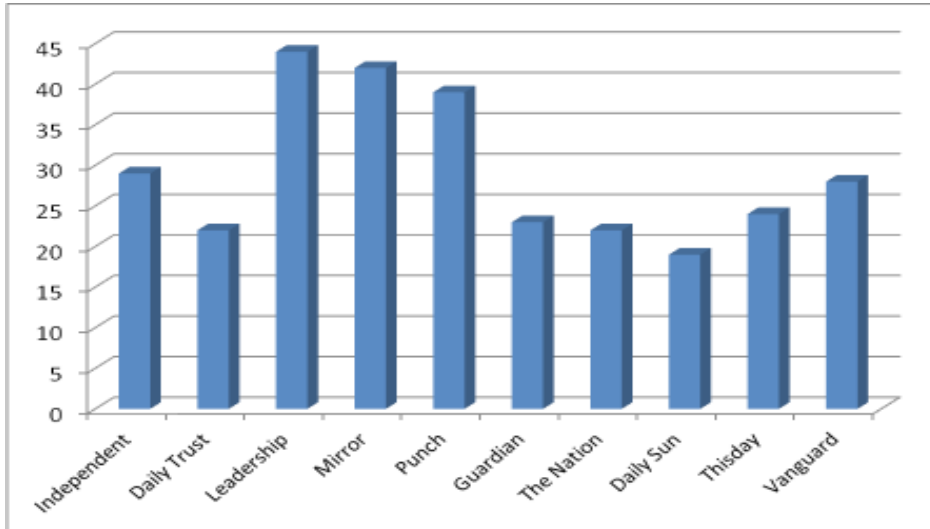
#### Keys

Patriotism, E & CR - Patriotism, Ethical and Civic Responsibility

PF Man. - Public Finance Management

S.I.N Campaign - Stop Impunity Nigeria Campaign

*The chart below shows the numbers of relevant items published by each of the ten newspapers on issues of impunity*



## Reports on Thematic Areas

Like in the previous months, identified relevant reports on the thematic area ‘Patriotism, Ethical and Civic Responsibility’ received the highest reportage with 165 media reports. This number gave it 56.50% of total items published on issues of impunity in November 2013.

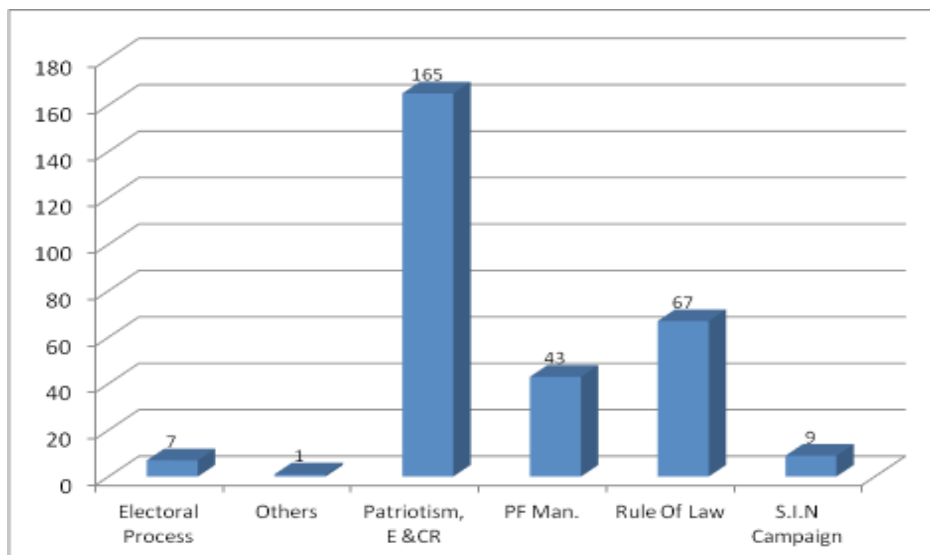
Published articles on the thematic focus ‘Rule of Law’ were 67 in number and they accounted for 22.94% or approximately 23% of total relevant items published.

There were 43 items published on ‘Public Finance Management’ which constituted 14.72% of total relevant items published.

Stop Impunity Nigeria (S.I.N.) Campaign was reported nine (9) times and this gave it 3.08% of the total published on the issue of impunity.

Reports on ‘Electoral Process’ were seven (7) and they accounted for 2.39% of the total; while on the omnibus ‘Others’ category there was only one (1) report which constituted 0.34% of total relevant items identified as published in November 2013.

*The chart below shows the numbers of relevant items published on each of the thematic areas of issues of impunity*



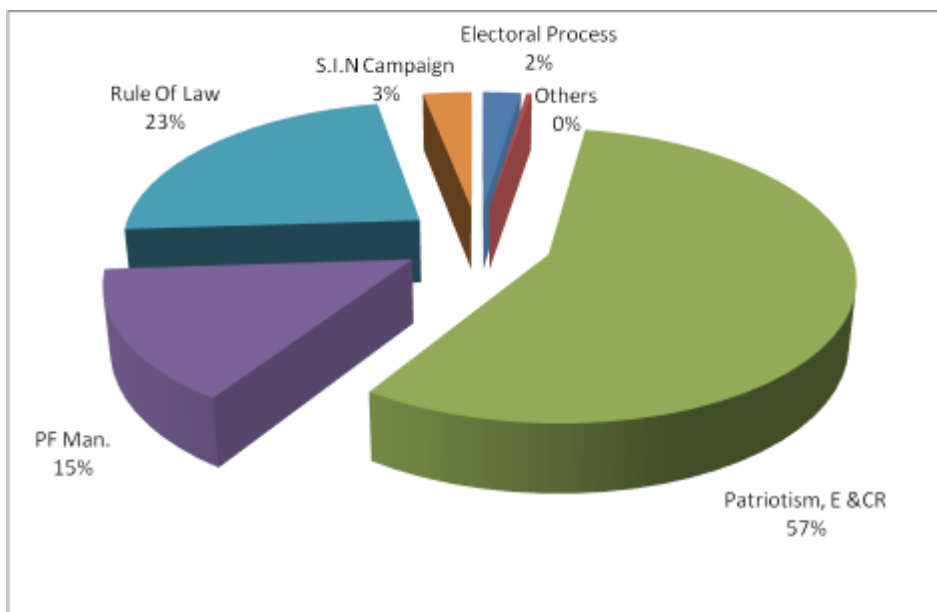
Keys

Patriotism, E & CR - Patriotism, Ethical and Civic Responsibility

PF Man. - Public Finance Management

S.I.N Campaign - Stop Impunity Nigeria Campaign

*The chart below shows the percentages of relevant items published on each of the thematic areas of issues of impunity*



## Space Allotted by Newspapers

In November 2013, the ten newspapers expended a combined 13,374.56 in<sup>2</sup> space to publish identified relevant items on issues of impunity.

National Mirror newspaper led others devoting 2,109.09 in<sup>2</sup> space to publishing identified relevant items on issues of impunity. That space represented 15.76% of the total space allotted by all the newspapers combined.

Coming second place was The Punch newspaper which devoted 1,830.6 in<sup>2</sup> space to publishing relevant items identified in the titles during the month. The space gave it 13.68% of the total space used for publishing relevant items by all newspapers monitored.

Leadership newspaper allotted the third biggest space to publishing relevant items: the 1,585.04 in<sup>2</sup> space it devoted translated to 11.85% of total space allotted by the ten newspapers. In fourth place was Daily Independent newspaper which expended a total of 1,432.13 in<sup>2</sup> space to publish identified relevant items on impunity which represented 10.70% of the total space used in November.

ThisDay newspaper allocated 1,373.25 in<sup>2</sup> space to publish relevant items on impunity which accounted for 10.26% of the total space used by all ten newspapers to publish relevant items on issues of impunity.

The Guardian newspaper came sixth: they expended a total of 1,264.62 in<sup>2</sup> space to publish items on issues of impunity and this accounted for 9.45% of total space used by all ten newspapers to publish relevant items on impunity.

The Nation newspaper followed, allotting 1,244.79 in<sup>2</sup> space which accounted for 9.30% of the total space used by all ten newspapers to publish relevant items on impunity.

Vanguard newspaper allocated 1,059.38 in<sup>2</sup> space which represented 7.92% or approximately 8% of the total space allocated by all the newspapers.

Daily Trust allocated 788.63 in<sup>2</sup> space, 5.89% or approximately 6% while Daily Sun which allocated the least space used 687.03 in<sup>2</sup> space accounting for 5.13% of total space used by all ten newspapers to publish relevant items on impunity in November 2013.



*The table below shows the amount of space devoted by each newspaper to publish identified items on each of the thematic areas (in Square inches, in<sup>2</sup>)*

S.N.	Publications	Electoral Process	Others	Patriotism, E&CR	P.Fin Mgt	Rule Of Law	S.I.N Campaign	Total Space
1.	Independent	133.8	0	651.67	364.68	268.38	13.6	1,432.13
2.	Daily Trust	0	0	502.46	66.37	219.8	0	788.63
3.	Leadership	62	0	1159.45	71.6	281.89	10.1	1,585.04
4.	Mirror	18.75	0	841.36	642.84	606.14	0	2,109.09
5.	Punch	0	0	523.88	538.36	768.36	0	1,830.6
6.	Guardian	0	0	174	375.2	382.31	333.11	1,264.62
7.	The Nation	97.4	0	496.56	297.305	180.72	172.81	1,244.79
8.	Daily Sun	0	0	374.37	226.45	86.21	0	687.03
9.	Thisday	0	0	747.6	436.95	188.7	0	1,373.25
10.	Vanguard	168.5	18	422	102.22	348.66	0	1,059.38
	<b>Total</b>	<b>480.45</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>5,893.35</b>	<b>3,121.97</b>	<b>3,331.17</b>	<b>529.62</b>	<b>13,374.56</b>

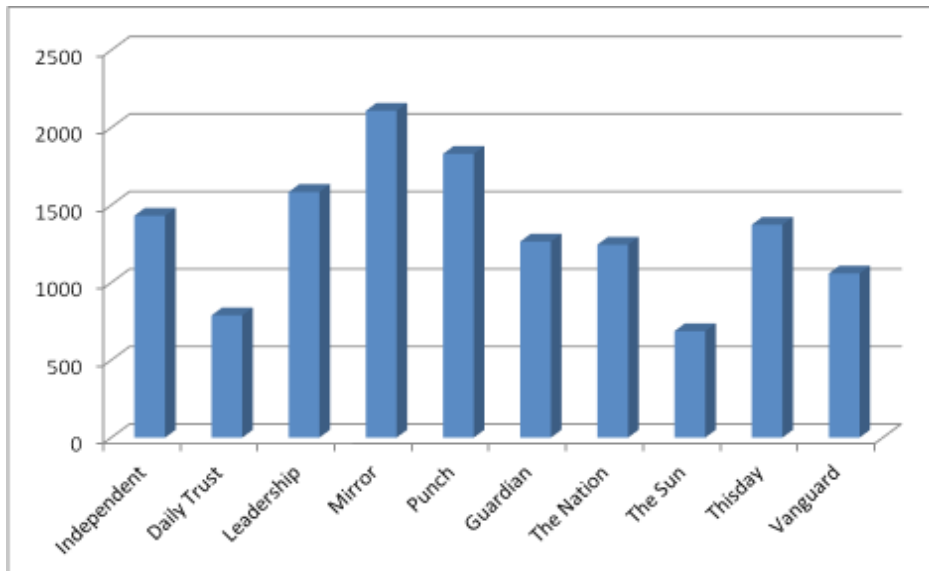
#### Keys

Patriotism, E & CR - Patriotism, Ethical and Civic Responsibility

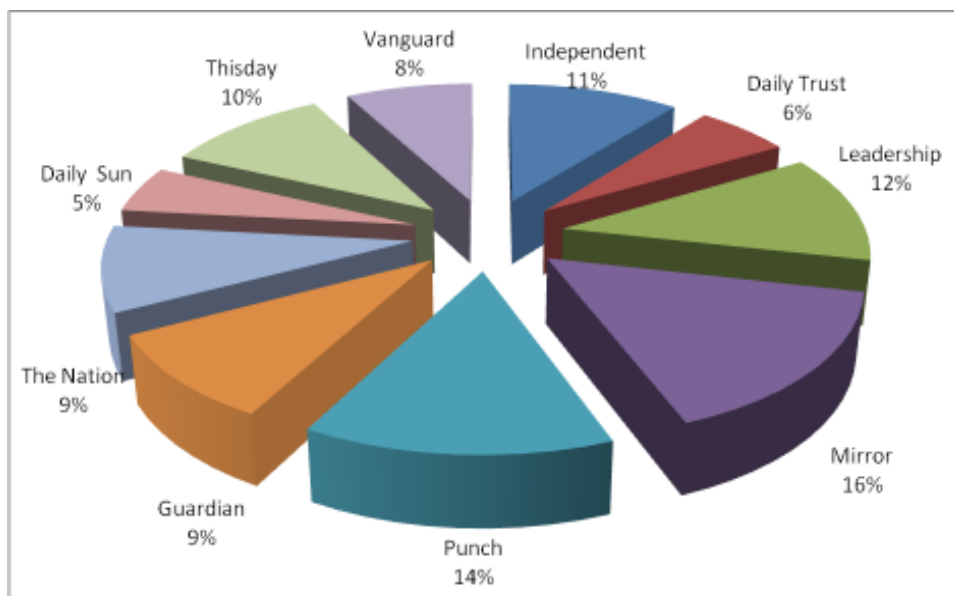
PF Man. - Public Finance Management

S.I.N Campaign - Stop Impunity Nigeria Campaign

*The chart below graphically shows the amount of space devoted by each newspaper to publish relevant identified items*



*The chart below graphically shows the percentages of space devoted by each newspaper to publish relevant identified items*



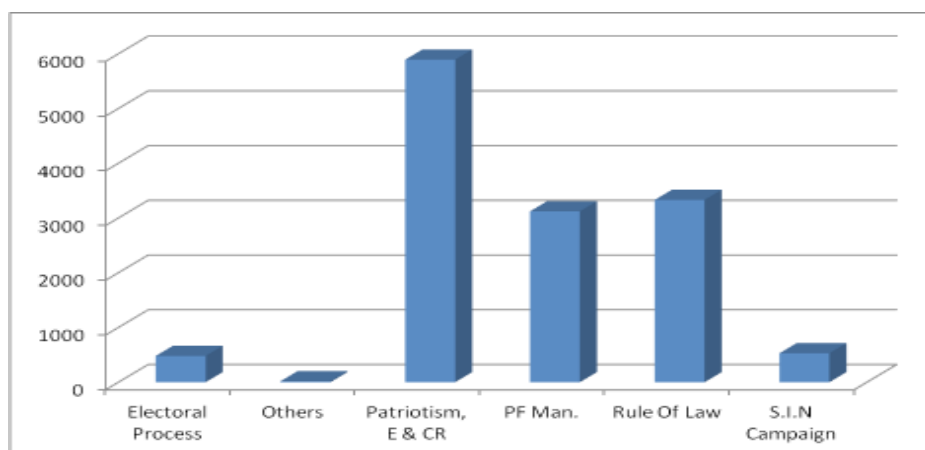
## Space Allotted Thematic Areas

Reports on the thematic area ‘Patriotism, Ethical and Civic Responsibility’ were allocated the biggest space: they got 5,893.35 in<sup>2</sup> space in November 2013. The space accounted for 44.06% of all the space allotted by the newspapers to the thematic areas.

Published items on the thematic area ‘Rule of Law’ were given the second biggest space with 3,331.17in<sup>2</sup> space which took up 24.90% or approximately 25% of the total space. Following closely in third position, items published on the thematic area ‘Public Finance Management’ were given 3,121.97in<sup>2</sup> space which accounted for 23.34% of the total space used to publish identified items on issues of impunity.

Reports with focus on the Stop Impunity Nigeria (S.I.N.) campaign were published in 529.62in<sup>2</sup> space and this accounted for 3.95% or approximately 4% of the total space used by the newspapers, while those on the thematic area ‘Electoral Process’ were published in 480.45 in<sup>2</sup> space which accounted for 3.59% of the total space. The space given to publish items on the omnibus ‘Others’ was 18in<sup>2</sup> space. This accounted for a paltry 0.13% of the total space allocated to the thematic areas.

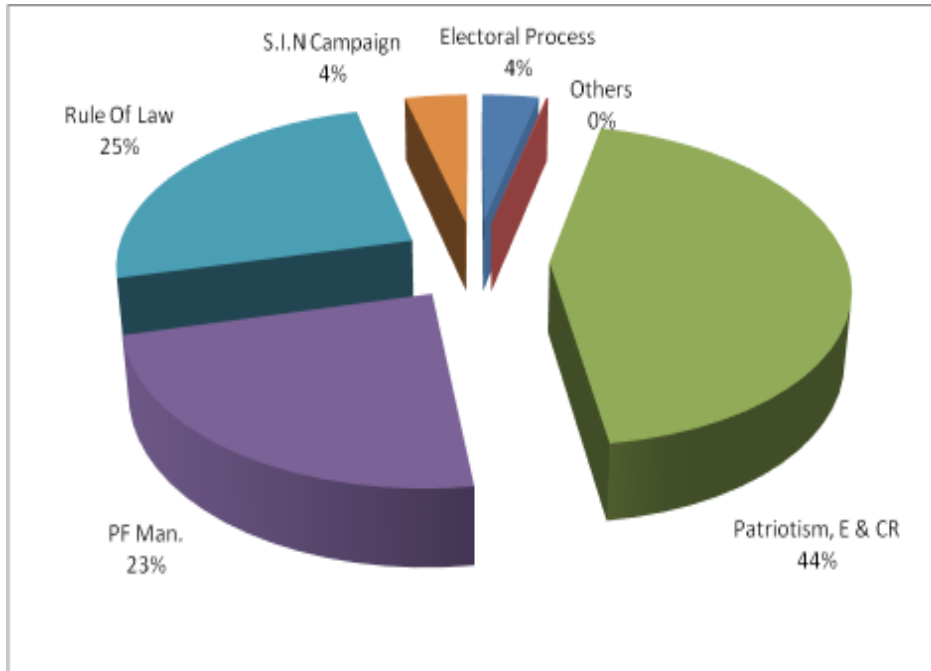
*The chart below shows graphically the amount of space allocated to publishing each of the thematic areas of focus in the Stop Impunity Nigeria (S.I.N) Campaign*



### Keys

- Patriotism, E & CR - Patriotism, Ethical and Civic Responsibility
- PF Man. - Public Finance Management
- S.I.N Campaign - Stop Impunity Nigeria Campaign

*The chart below shows graphically the percentages of space allocated to publishing each of the thematic areas of focus in the Stop Impunity Nigeria (S.I.N) Campaign*



## **Page Prominence**

Relevant items which were published as 'Major Inside Page' stories were the most and accounted for more than half of the total: there were 151 such and they constituted 51.71% of the total identified relevant reports published.

Relevant items published as 'Minor Inside Page' stories were 91 in all and constituted 31.16% of total relevant items. In other words, the total number of items published as inside page reports were 242 and constituted 82.87%, approximately 83% of relevant items.

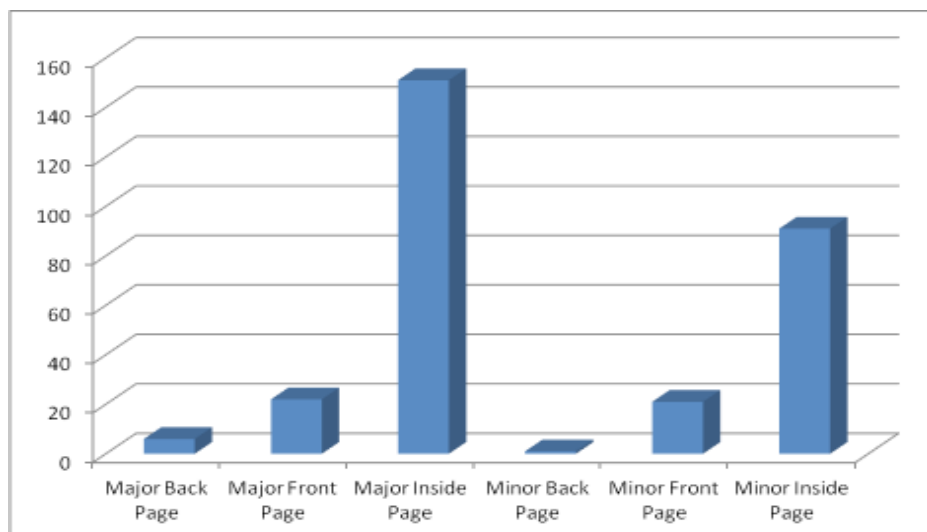
Relevant items published as 'Major Front Page' reports were 22 and constituted 7.53% of total relevant items. There were another 21 relevant items published as 'Minor Front Page' reports which constituted 7.19% of total relevant items published in November 2013.

There were six (6) 'Major Back Page' reports found relevant to the monitoring exercise, they constituted 2.05% while there was only one (1) 'Minor Back Page' report found relevant and it constituted 0.34% of total relevant items on issues of impunity.

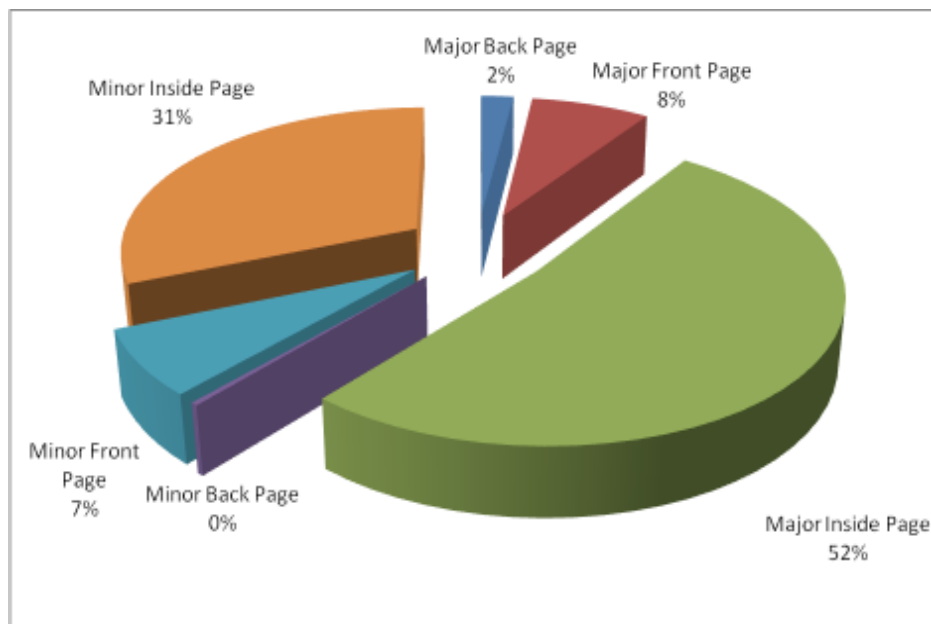
*The table below shows the position of published relevant items on impunity in November 2013.*

S/N	Publication	Major Back Page	Major Front Page	Major Inside Page	Minor Back Page	Minor Front Page	Minor Inside Page	Total
1.	Independent	0	5	14	0	2	8	29
2.	Daily Trust	0	3	9	0	4	6	22
3.	Leadership	1	1	14	0	6	22	44
4.	Mirror	0	2	26	0	3	11	42
5.	Punch	2	5	22	0	2	8	39
6.	Guardian	2	0	12	0	1	8	23
7.	The Nation	1	4	14	0	0	3	22
8.	Daily Sun	0	0	13	0	1	5	19
9.	Thisday	0	0	17	0	0	7	24
10.	Vanguard	0	2	10	1	2	13	28
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>292</b>

*The chart below shows the numbers and position of published relevant items on impunity in November 2013.*



*The graph below shows the percentages of the position of items found relevant to the monitoring*



## **Publication Formats**

Published items on the issue of impunity got a lot of media attention as majority of them were published 'News Stories'. News stories have the elements of timeliness, importance, currency, impact, prominence, conflict, and human interest etc. These elements draw readers to news stories more than other publication formats. It therefore means that majority of identified relevant items on issues of impunity will attract more readership than the other formats in which the identified relevant items were published. A total of 212 relevant news stories were identified as published by the newspapers. This number represents 72.60% of the total identified relevant items on impunity.

Coming a very far second were items on issues of impunity published as 'Features' which totaled 30 in all and accounted for 10.27% of the total.

'Opinion Articles' were 26 in number and they constituted 8.90% or approximately 9% of total items identified as published on issues of impunity.

Identified relevant items published as newspaper 'Editorials' were 17 and represented 5.82% of total relevant items on issues of impunity.

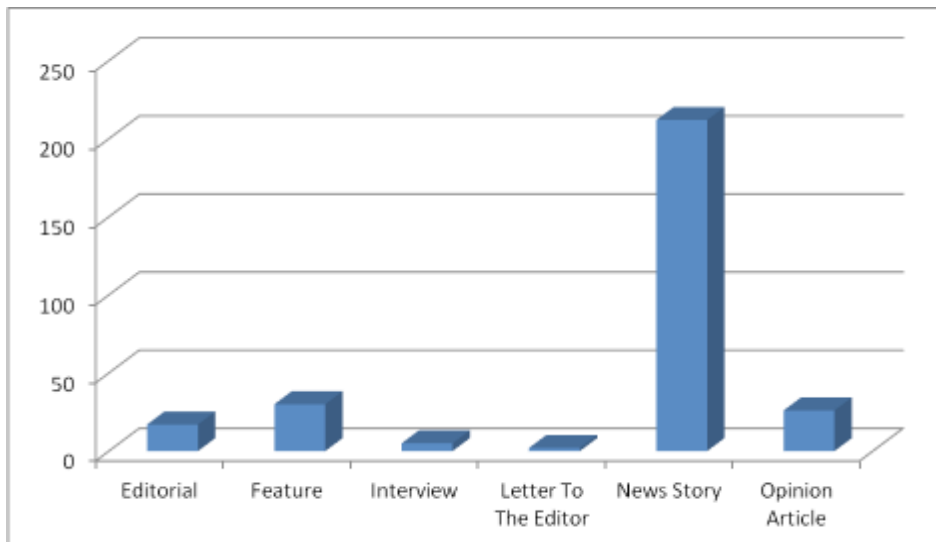
Five relevant items were published as 'Interviews' and represented 1.71% of total items while two relevant items on issues of impunity were published accounting for 0.68% of the total.



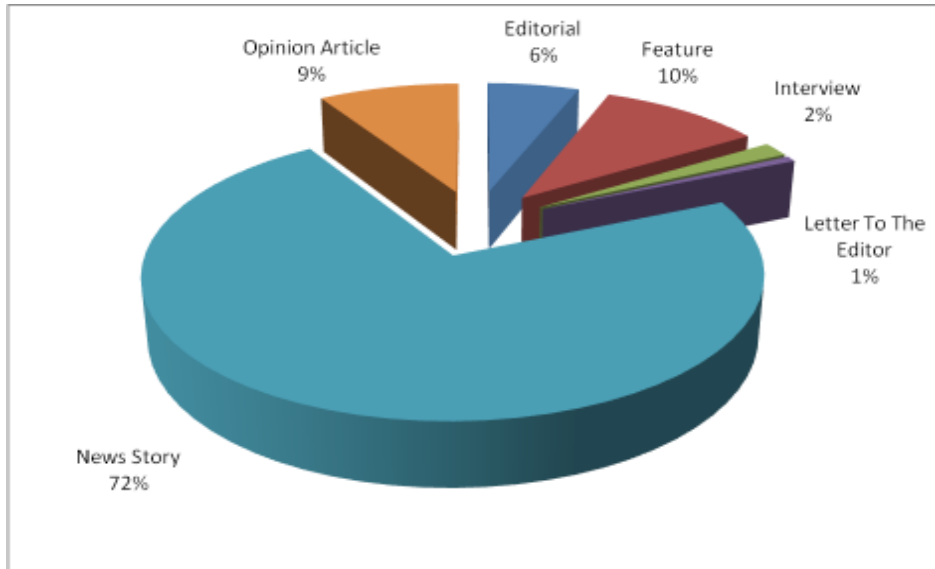
The table below shows the different publication formats in which identified relevant items were published and how many of each

S.N	Publication	Editorial	Features	Interview	Letter to the Editor	News Story	Opinion Article	Total
1.	Independent	4	2	1	0	20	2	29
2.	Daily Trust	0	0	0	1	19	2	22
3.	Leadership	0	8	0	0	36	0	44
4.	Mirror	1	8	4	0	28	1	42
5.	Punch	3	0	0	0	31	5	39
6.	Guardian	2	8	0	0	10	3	23
7.	The Nation	1	0	0	0	15	6	22
8.	Daily Sun	2	0	0	0	16	1	19
9.	Thisday	4	2	0	0	13	5	24
10.	Vanguard	0	2	0	1	24	1	28
	<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>292</b>

*The chat below shows the different publication formats in which identified relevant items were published*



*The table below shows the percentages relevant items were published in the different publication formats*



## DIVERSITY

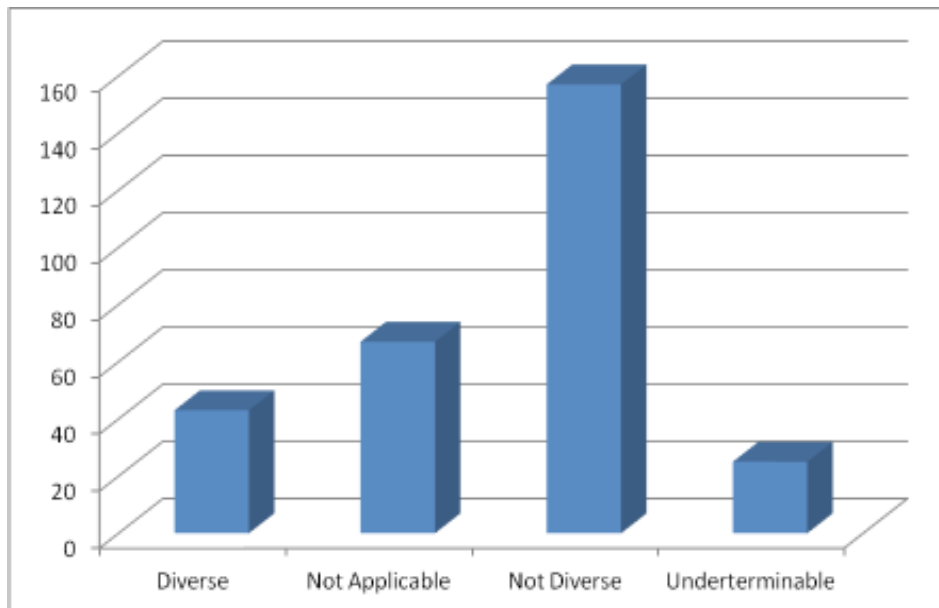
The majority of identified relevant materials on issues of impunity were not diverse: out of a minimum of 200 relevant reports that ought to be balanced with diverse views and voices reflected, a total of 157 representing 78.5% of all relevant items that ought to be diverse were not diverse; only 43/21.5% of them that ought to be diverse were actually diverse.

For 64 relevant items or 21.91%, approximately 22% of the total relevant items published on issues of impunity, the principle of diversity was not applicable while for 25 others or 8.56%, their diversity were undeterminable.

*The table below shows the level of diversity of published relevant items*

S/N	Publication	Diverse	Not Applicable	Not Diverse	Under-terminable	Total
1.	Independent	4	11	9	5	29
2.	Daily Trust	1	3	12	6	22
3.	Leadership	16	2	25	1	44
4.	Mirror	13	5	24	0	42
5.	Punch	1	12	20	6	39
6.	Guardian	5	2	16	0	23
7.	The Nation	0	9	11	2	22
8.	Daily Sun	0	8	10	1	19
9.	Thisday	0	12	9	3	24
10.	Vanguard	3	3	21	1	28
	<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>292</b>

*The chart below shows the level of diversity of published relevant items*



## Use of Photographs

A total of 136 photographs occupying 2,328.84 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) were published by all ten newspapers in November 2013.

The Nation newspaper published a total of 26 accompanying photographs using 315.2 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) space while National Mirror published 23 accompanying photographs which took up 383.31 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) space.

The Punch published 18 accompanying photographs using 232.15 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) space.

Leadership newspaper published 15 photographs that occupied 248.47 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) space; Vanguard published 14 accompanying photographs using 240.46 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) space and ThisDay newspapers published 13 photographs which occupied 286.87 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) space.

The Guardian newspaper published 11 photographs with 190.8 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) space; Daily Independent published eight (8) photographs which occupied 229.68 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) space; Daily Sun published even (7) photographs occupying 158.04 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) space; Daily Trust published just one (1) accompanying photograph which occupied 43.86 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) space.

*The table below shows the number of photographs published by the ten newspapers and the total space they occupy*

<b>Ser. No.</b>	<b>Publication</b>	<b>Total Picture Count</b>	<b>Total Picture Space</b>
1.	Independent	8	229.68
2.	Daily Trust	1	43.86
3.	Leadership	15	248.47
4.	National Mirror	23	383.31
5.	Punch	18	232.15
6.	Guardian	11	190.8
7.	The Nation	26	315.2
8.	Daily Sun	7	158.04
9.	Thisday	13	286.87
10.	Vanguard	14	240.46
	<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>2,328.84 Sq. in.</b>

## Observations and Recommendations

In the month of November 2013, a sum total of 292 items on issues of impunity were identified as published by the ten newspapers.

Leadership newspaper published the highest number of relevant items on issues of impunity. A total of 44 items published by the Leadership newspapers were found to be relevant. This number accounted for 15% of the total relevant items published by the ten newspapers for the month.

Like in the previous months, identified relevant items on the thematic area 'Patriotism, Ethical and Civic Responsibility' received the highest reportage with 165 media reports on it accounting for 56.50% of the total relevant items published

During the month, the ten newspapers expended a combined 13,374.56 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) space to publish the identified relevant items on issues of impunity. National Mirror newspaper allotted the biggest space leading the others with 2,109.09 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) space to publishing identified relevant items on issues of impunity. That space represented 15.76% of the total space allotted by all the newspapers combined.

Reports with focus on the thematic area 'Patriotism, Ethical and Civic Responsibility' were allocated the biggest space with 5,893.35 Sq. inches (in<sup>2</sup>) space which accounted for 44.06% of all the space allotted by the newspapers to the different thematic areas.

Relevant items which were published as 'Major Inside Page' stories were the most and accounted for more than half of the total: there were 151 of such and they constituted 51.71% of total identified relevant reports published.

Published items on the issue of impunity got a lot of media attention as the majority of them were published as 'News Stories'. News stories, as have been noted in this report, have the elements of timeliness, importance, currency, impact, prominence, conflict, and human interest etc., elements which draw readers to

news stories more than other publication formats. A total of 212 items out of the 292 were identified as 'News Stories'. This number represented 72.60% of the total identified relevant items on impunity.

The majority of identified relevant materials on issues of impunity were not diverse: out of a minimum of 200 relevant reports that ought to be balanced with diverse views and voices reflected, a total of 157 representing 78.5% of all the relevant items that ought to be diverse were not diverse; only 43 of them or 21.5% of items that ought to be diverse were actually diverse. This has been the trend from when the monitoring began; a majority of the identified relevant items on impunity which ought to be diverse are not diverse.

For balance, fairness and objectivity, diversity of voices and opinions on reports on issues of impunity is very important and journalists, as well as media houses need to take this into consideration and work towards it.



# Stop Impunity Nigeria

## IMPLEMENTING NGOS



Community Life Project



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