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



September 2013



Reporting Impunity:

Report from the Monitoring of Print Media Coverage of Impunity Issues

A Publication of





Stop Impunity Nigeria

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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 multistakeholder 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 fourth report on the monitoring of media reportage of 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 the four thematic areas: '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: 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: The Punch, The Guardian, The Nation, Vanguard, Daily Trust, and Daily Sun, ThisDay, Leadership, Daily Independent and National Mirror.

Ten newspapers, all privately-owned, were selected for the 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 of 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 Editorial Items Published by Newspapers

A total of 324 relevant reports on issues of impunity were identified as published by the ten newspapers in the month of September 2013.

Daily Trust published the highest number with 48 relevant items which accounted for 14.81% of the total items analysed. Following on its heels in second position was Leadership newspaper which published 43 relevant reports on impunity, accounting for 13.27% of the total.

The newspaper which published the third highest number of relevant reports on issues of impunity in September 2013 was Vanguard newspapers which published 36 relevant reports. These account for 11.11% of total items published on issues of impunity in September 2013.

In fourth position was The Punch newspapers with 34 relevant reports on issues of impunity and which represented 10.49% of the total. It was followed by Daily Sun which published 32 relevant items and accounts for 9.88% of the total.

The Nation newspaper published the sixth highest number of relevant items with 30 reports which represent 9.26% of the whole. It was followed in seventh position by The Guardian which published 28 relevant reports on impunity and which accounts for 8.64% of the total relevant items.

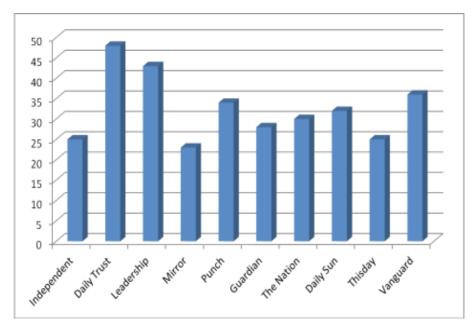
Both Daily Independent and ThisDay titles came eighth: they published 25 relevant reports apiece, with each contributing 7.22% of the total relevant reports on issues of impunity identified and analysed.

National Mirror titles published the least number of reports on issues of impunity with 23 items. This number represents 7.1% of the total relevant items published on issues of impunity during the month in review.

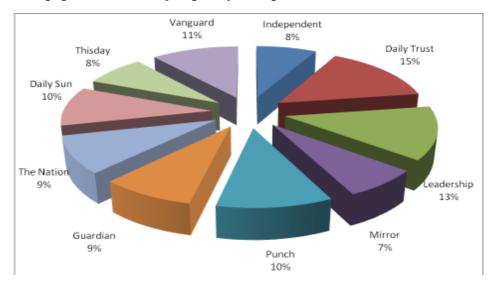
The table below shows the numbers of reports published by the ten newspapers on the different thematic areas of impunity

SN	Publication	Electoral Process	Others	Patriotism E & CR	PFM	Rule of Law	S.I.N. Campaign	Total
1.	Independent	0	0	13	0	12	0	25
2.	Daily Trust	0	0	43	0	5	0	48
3.	Leadership	0	1	19	0	23	0	43
4.	Mirror	0	0	17	1	5	0	23
5.	Punch	2	0	26	0	6	0	34
6.	Guardian	0	0	21	1	5	1	28
7.	The Nation	0	0	22	0	7	1	30
8.	Daily Sun	0	0	27	1	4	0	32
9.	Thisday	1	0	16	1	7	0	25
10.	Vanguard	0	0	27	0	9	0	36
	Total	3	1	231	4	83	2	324

The chart below shows the numbers of reports published by the ten newspapers on issues of impunity in September 2013



The chart below shows the percentages of reports published by the ten newspapers on issues of impunity in September 2013



Reportage on Thematic Areas

The thematic area 'Patriotism, Civic and Ethical Responsibility' got the highest media coverage by the sheer number of reportage on it. A total of 231 of all the identified relevant items or 71.29% of the total were on this thematic area.

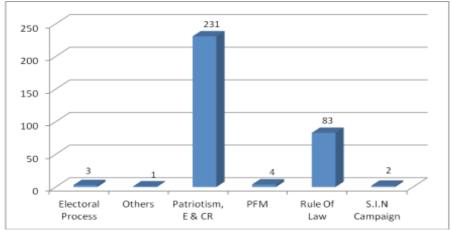
The next best reported thematic area was 'Rule of Law' for which 83 relevant reports which accounted for 25.61% of the total relevant reports analysed.

There were just a paltry four (4) items published on the thematic area 'Public Finance Management' which constituted only 1.23% of the total relevant items.

Identified relevant media reports on the thematic area 'Electoral Process' were three (3) and they made up 0.92% of the total relevant media reports identified as publications on issues of impunity.

The 'Stop Impunity Nigeria (S.I.N.) Campaign' got reported only two (2) times which account for 0.61% of the total relevant items while the omnibus 'Others' had only one (1) report and it constitutes just 0.30% of total relevant media reports identified as publication on issues of impunity.

The chart below shows the numbers of reports published on the different thematic areas of impunity by the newspapers



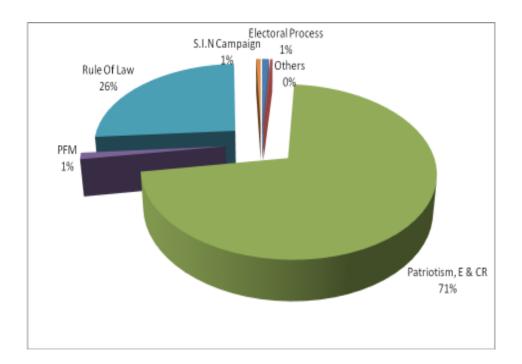
Keys

Patriotism E & CR - Patriotism, Civic and Ethical Responsibility

PFM - Public Finance Management

(S.I.N.) Campaign - Stop Impunity Nigeria Campaign

The chart below shows the percentages of reports published on the different thematic areas of impunity by the newspapers



Space Allotted by Newspapers

The ten newspapers expended a total of 19,729.26 in² space to publish all the identified relevant reports on issues of impunity in September 2013. With an average of 145 in² space making one newspaper page, this translates to approximately 136 pages of reports on issues of impunity in September 2013. It also translates to 4.5 newspaper pages per day of reportage on issues of impunity.

Vanguard newspaper allotted the biggest space to report identified relevant reports on issues of impunity. These titles allotted a total of 6,829.58 in² space to its relevant reports which took up 34.62% of the total space used to report issues of impunity in September 2013.

Leadership newspaper titles allocated the second biggest space to publish relevant items. Their 1,991.8 in² space accounts for 10.1% of the total space allocated to relevant items

Daily Trust newspaper allocated the third biggest space, giving 1,845.77 in² space to publish relevant items. The space allotted by Daily Trust accounts for 9.36% of the total space used to publish identified relevant reports.

The Nation newspaper devoted 1,416.35 in² space, the fourth biggest space, to publish editorial reports on issues of impunity and account for 7.18% of the total space allotted by the ten newspapers to publishing editorial reports on issues of impunity.

Thisday newspapers' 1,395.41 in² space account for 7.07% of the total space used to publish all identified relevant items. It came fifth.

Daily Independent newspapers' 1,314.14 in² space put the titles in the sixth position and represent 6.66% of the total space; National Mirror allotted 1,309.28 in² space which account for 6.64% of the total and put it in the seventh position.

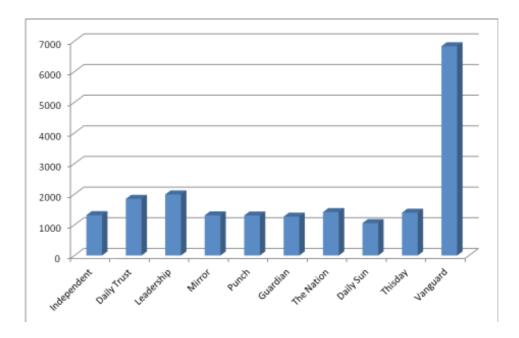
The Punch newspaper titles allocated 1,304.34 in² space which account for 6.61% of the total and putting it in the eighth position. The Guardian newspaper titles allotted 1,266.19 in² space which account for 6.42% of the total space. This puts the newspaper in the ninth position.

Daily Sun devoted the least space of 1,056.38 in² space which accounted for 5.35% of the total space devoted to publishing relevant reports on issues of impunity in September 2014.

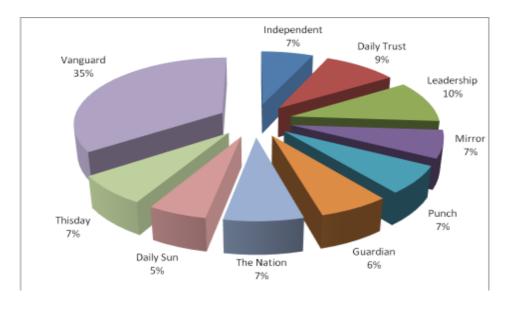
The table below shows the space (in inches square, in²) devoted by the newspapers to publishing relevant reports on the various thematic areas

S.N.	Publications	Electoral	Others	Patriotism,	PFM	Rule	S.I.N	Total
		Process		E&CR		Of Law	Campaign	
1.	Independent	0	0	827.598	0	486.55	0	1,314.14
2.	Daily Trust	0	0	1677.401	0	168.37	0	1,845.77
3.	Leadership	0	256.48	626.36	0	1108.96	0	1,991.8
4.	Mirror	0	0	976.553	45.5	287.23	0	1,309.28
5.	Punch	72.496	0	1008.2	0	223.648	0	1,304.34
6.	Guardian	0	0	990.757	65.2	180.7	29.54	1,266.19
7.	The Nation	0	0	892.2	0	292.71	231.44	1,416.35
8.	Daily Sun	0	0	814.25	13.02	229.11	0	1,056.38
9.	Thisday	30.5	0	863.96	34.44	466.51	0	1,395.41
10.	Vanguard	0	0	6161.782	0	667.8	0	6,829.58
	Total	102.99	256.48	14,839.06	158.16	4,111.5	8 260.98	19,729.26

The chart below graphically shows the space devoted by the newspapers to publishing relevant reports on issues of impunity



The chart below graphically shows the percentages of space devoted by the newspapers to publishing relevant reports on issues of impunity



Space Allotted to Publishing Thematic Areas

The thematic focus 'Patriotism, Civic and Ethical Responsibility' was allotted the biggest space by the newspapers. The ten newspapers allocated a combined 14,839.06 in² space to this thematic area and this took up 75.21% of the total space used to publish all the identified relevant items.

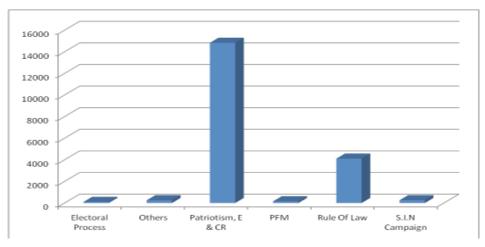
The thematic area, 'Rule of Law' was published by the newspapers combined in 4,111.58 in² space, the second biggest space and this accounted for 20.8% of the total space used to publish relevant items.

Relevant reports on the Stop Impunity Nigeria (S.I.N.) Campaign covered 260.98 in² space and represented 1.32% of the total space used. Relevant items on the omnibus 'Others' were published using 256.48 in² space which represent 1.29% of the total space.

Relevant items published on the thematic area 'Public Finance Management' were given 158.16 in² space representing 0.80% of the total space used.

Editorial reports on 'Electoral Process' were published in 102.99 in² space which accounted for 0.53% of the total space.

The chart below graphically shows the space devoted to publishing relevant reports on the different thematic areas on issues of impunity



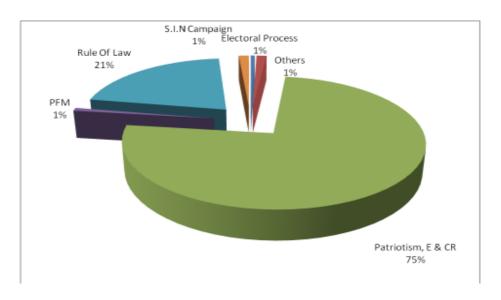
Keys

Patriotism E & CR - Patriotism, Civic and Ethical Responsibility

PFM - Public Finance Management

(S.I.N) Campaign - Stop Impunity Nigeria Campaign

The chart below shows the percentages of space devoted to publishing relevant reports on the different thematic areas on issues of impunity



Prominence of Identified Relevant Reportage

Identified relevant items published in the inside pages of the newspapers were by far more than those on the front pages. This is understandable considering that there is only one front-page to any newspaper while the numbers of the inside pages vary from one paper to another and from one edition to another.

In September, the identified published relevant items published as inside reports totaled 254 and they constituted 78.39% of the total number of relevant items. Those published as front page items were 66 and these accounted for 20.37% of the whole while there were four (4) back page reports which constituted 1.23% of all the identified relevant items published.

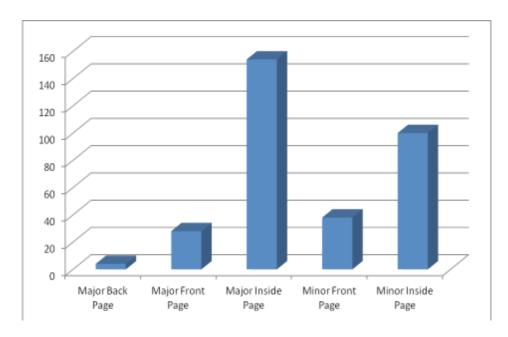
There were 154 major inside page reports published on issues of impunity and they took up 47.53% of the total relevant reports published. Another set of 100 relevant items were published as minor inside page reports and these constituted 30.86% of the whole.

Identified relevant items published as minor front page reports were 38 and they accounted for 11.72% of all the relevant items while another 28 relevant reports were major front page reports. These took up 8.64% of the total relevant items identified as published during the month.

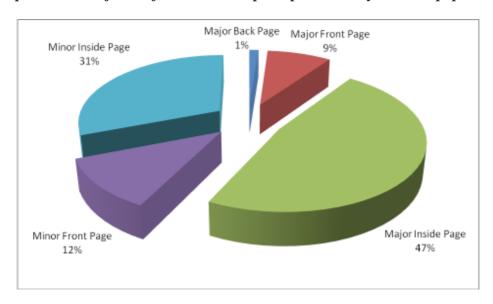
The table below shows the numbers of relevant items and the page prominence where they were published by the newspapers

S.N	Publication	Major Back Page	Major Front Page	Major Inside Page	Minor Front Page	Minor Inside Page	Total
1	Independent	0	4	11	4	6	25
2	Daily Trust	0	5	20	5	18	48
3	Leadership	3	0	18	10	12	43
4	Mirror	0	4	11	4	4	23
5	Punch	0	1	19	2	12	34
6	Guardian	1	3	19	1	4	28
7	The Nation	0	1	13	3	13	30
8	Daily Sun	0	1	18	0	13	32
9	Thisday	0	4	10	3	8	25
10	Vanguard	0	5	15	6	10	36
	Total	4	28	154	38	100	324

The chart below graphically shows the page prominence of identified relevant items published by the newspapers



The chart below graphically shows the percentages of the page prominence of identified relevant reports published by the newspapers



Types of Reports

The type or format in which a report is published also gives it prominence aside the page positioning. In newspapers, news stories, because of their currency, impact and freshness attract the highest prominence as these are the items that readers go for first in newspapers.

On that note, reports on issues of impunity got good prominence as majority of them were published as news stories.

Identified relevant reports published as news stories were 272 in all and that accounted for 83.95% or approximately 84% of the total.

Those published as features were 25 and came next to those published as news stories. These accounted for 7.71% of the total.

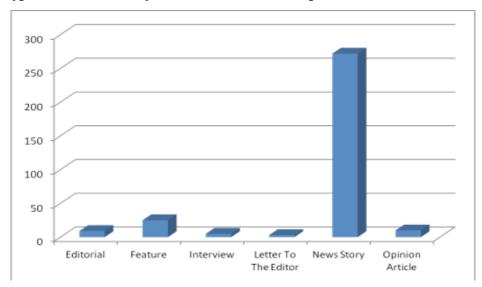
Ten (10) identified relevant items were published as opinion articles and these accounted for 3.08 while identified relevant items published as editorials were nine (9) and took up 2.77% of the total number.

There were five (5) interviews that were on issues of impunity and they make up 1.54% while there were three (3) letters to the editor with subject matters on issues of impunity and these accounted for 0.92% or approximately 1% of the total.

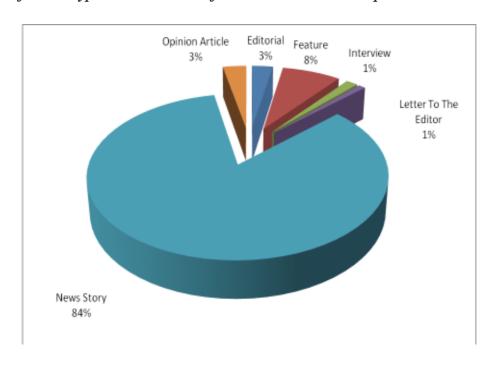
The table below shows the numbers of the different publication formats/ types in which identified relevant items were published

S.N	Publication	Editorial	Feature	s Interview	to the	News Story	Opinion Article	Total
					Editor			
1.	Independent	1	0	1	0	21	2	25
2.	Daily Trust	0	1	2	0	45	0	48
3.	Leadership	0	14	1	0	28	0	43
4.	Mirror	0	0	0	0	23	0	23
5.	Punch	3	0	1	0	30	0	34
6.	Guardian	3	2	0	1	18	4	28
7.	The Nation	0	0	0	1	27	2	30
8.	Daily Sun	1	0	0	0	31	0	32
9.	Thisday	0	7	0	1	17	0	25
10.	Vanguard	1	1	0	0	32	2	36
	Total	9	25	5	3	272	10	324

The chart below shows the numbers of the different publication formats/types in which identified relevant items were published



The chart below shows the percentages of the different publication formats/types in which identified relevant items were published



Diversity of Reports

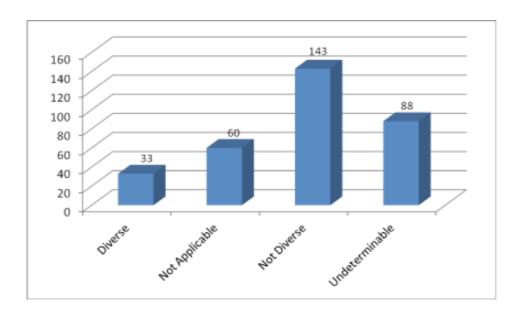
A total of 176 relevant items or 54.32% of the total 324 ought to be balanced with diverse sources and views expressed and represented. However, only 33 of them or 19% were diverse while the other 143 items or 81% were not diverse.

For 60 of the reports on issues of impunity, that is 18.51% of the total 324 relevant items published on issues of impunity in September 2013, the rule of diversity did not apply while for 88 relevant items or 27.16% of all identified relevant items, their diversity was undeterminable.

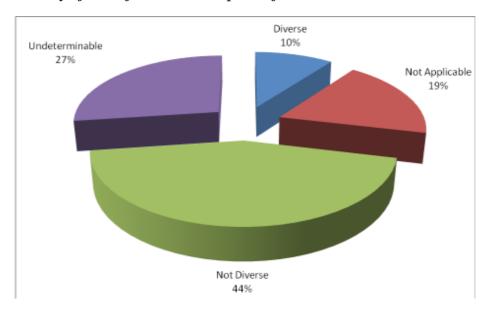
The table below shows the level of diversity of identified relevant items published in September 2013 on issues of impunity

Ser.	Publication	Diverse	Not	Not	Undeter-	Total
No			Applicable	Diverse	minable	
1.	Independent	1	3	10	11	25
2.	Daily Trust	8	6	16	18	48
3.	Leadership	10	14	14	5	43
4.	Mirror	2	1	17	3	23
5.	Punch	2	5	14	13	34
6.	Guardian	3	7	16	2	28
7.	The Nation	0	5	20	5	30
8.	Daily Sun	0	8	11	13	32
9.	Thisday	4	6	6	9	25
10.	Vanguard	3	5	19	9	36
	Total	33	60	143	88	324

The chart below shows the level of diversity of identified relevant reports published in September 2013 on issues of impunity



The chart below shows the percentages of the various categories of diversity of identified relevant reports of the total 324 relevant items



Photographs

A total of 110 photographs were published to accompany the identified relevant reports published during the month.

Leadership newspapers published 25, the highest number and accounting for 22.72% of the total. This was followed by the 19 photographs published by Daily Trust which represented 17.27 of the total.

Daily Independent published the third highest number with 13 photographs which accounted for 11.81% of the total. This Day newspapers' 12 photographs accounted for 10.99% to put it in the fourth position while The Punch's 10 photographs which accounted for 9.09% of the total photographs used placed it at fifth.

Though Leadership newspapers published the highest number of photographs, Daily Trust however used the biggest space to publish its photographs. It used 470.53 in² space. It was followed by ThisDay newspapers as second using 443.86 in² space.

In third place was Leadership newspapers which used 299.76 in² space and in fourth place by The Punch newspapers which devoted 226.12 in² space and fifth position by Daily Independent which allocated 201.66 in² space.

The table below shows the number of photographs published with the relevant items and the space used for publishing the photographs by the newspapers

Ser. No.	Publication	Picture Count	Total Picture Space (in²)
1.	Independent	13	201.66
2.	Daily Trust	19	470.53
3.	Leadership	25	299.76
4.	National Mirror	6	77.421
5.	Punch	10	226.12
6.	The Guardian	8	109.89
7.	The Nation	6	89.04
8.	The Sun	9	173.92
9.	Thisday	12	443.86
10.	Vanguard	2	80.3
	Total	110	2,172.50 in ²

Observations and Recommendations

Issues of impunity continue to be of public concern and a matter of media discourse and the Stop Impunity Nigeria (S.I.N.) Campaign has also continued to attract media attention.

The thematic focus 'Patriotism, Civic and Ethical Responsibility' got the highest media publicity: it got the highest number of media reports and was also published with the biggest space.

During the month, Daily Trust titles published the highest number with 48 relevant items followed in second position by Leadership titles which published 43 relevant items on impunity and Vanguard newspapers in the third place with 36 relevant reports.

The positions in the paragraph above were reversed in terms of space devoted by the three newspapers to publish relevant reports. Vanguard newspapers allotted the biggest space of 6,829.58 in² to report identified relevant reports on issues of impunity: Leadership newspaper allocated the second biggest space of 1,991.8 in² to publish relevant items while Daily Trust newspapers allocated the third biggest space, giving 1,845.77 in² space to publish relevant items.

The three newspaper titles gave the biggest publicity to the issues being monitored in September.

In September, the identified reports published as inside reports totaled 254 and they constituted 78.39% of the whole items published while those published as front page items were 66 which accounted for 20.37% of the whole. There were four (4) back page reports which constituted 1.23% of all the identified relevant items published.

In other words, the bulk of identified relevant reports were published and tucked inside the pages of the papers. However, this can be understood and accepted as there can only be one front page in a newspaper while the inside pages can run into 100.

However, the prominence that was lost by being published as inside page reports was gained with the sheer number of the relevant reports being published as news stories. Identified relevant items published as news stories were 272 in all and they account for 83.95% or approximately 84% of the total relevant items identified and analysed.

This month, a total of 176 relevant items or 54.32% of the total 324 ought to be balanced with diverse sources and variety of views expressed and represented. However, only 33 or 19% of the items that ought to have diverse sources were diverse while the other 143 or 81% were not diverse. Again, the point needs to be made that media reports of issues of impunity often times require balanced views and where this is lacking, then the report is one sided and not balanced. Reporters should make extra efforts to balance relevant reports.



Stop Impunity Nigeria

IMPLEMENTING NGOS









PARTNERS









Website:http://www.stopimpunitynigeria.org





