

MONITORING OF INDECENT CAMPAIGN LANGUAGE ON RADIO

FINDINGS FOR THE PERIOD MAY 1-15, 2016.

Media Foundation for West Africa
P.O. Box LG 730,
Ghana-West Africa
info@mfw.org
www.mfw.org

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1.0 Introduction

As Ghana's 2016 elections draw closer, public discourse in the media, especially, radio continues to be dominated by, the use of insult and indecent expressions which have the potential of inciting violence if not checked. To help address the worrying phenomenon of insult and indecent expressions in political in campaign discourse on radio, the Media Foundation for West Africa's (MFWA), under its *Promoting Issues-based and Decent Language Campaigning for a Peaceful, Free and Fair Elections in Ghana in 2016* project, is monitoring and reporting the use of hate speech and other indecent expressions on 60 selected radio stations across the country. The project which is being implemented with funding support from OSIWA, STAR-Ghana and the EU (through Socioserve Ghana), is aimed at naming and shaming perpetrators of hate speech and indecent expressions.

The project involves the daily monitoring of expressions used by mainly politicians and activists on the selected radio programmes using a publicly validated monitoring instrument. It also monitors how presenters on the target radio stations handle their programmes to ensure that indecent expressions are not tolerated on their programmes. Each target station is assigned to a trained monitor who is also equipped with a digital recorder to record the programmes monitored.

Using the monitoring instrument, the monitors send daily reports to the MFWA. The reports are analysed by a team of programme staff and researchers at the MFWA with a consolidated report publicised every two weeks. It is hoped that the bi-weekly reports will help the electorate to make informed voting decisions. The reports are also meant to provide credible evidence for the appropriate institutions and groups to take informed remedial actions.

2.0 Findings

This report presents findings of the day-to-day monitoring of indecent expressions captured on 40 out of the 60 target radio stations. Monitoring of the remaining stations will start in June and July 2016. Specifically, the findings cover monitoring undertaken over the period, May 1-15, 2016. The report highlights the categories of indecent expressions which were used over the monitoring period. It also names political candidates or activists who used indecent expressions, the specific expressions used, and the radio stations and programmes on which those expressions were made.

2.1 General Findings

A total of 923 programmes were monitored on the 40 radio stations over the two-week monitoring period. The programmes monitored included news bulletins, current affairs and political discussion shows. The main subject matter that dominated the news and programmes monitored was the Limited Registration Exercise. It was also the discussion of the same issue that many indecent expressions were recorded.

Majority of the programmes monitored were handled by male hosts or presenters. The same was the situation with those who featured (discussants, interviewees, and callers) on the programmes monitored (close to 97 percent of them were males). No gender-specific insult was however recorded.

2.2 Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded

Altogether, 69 incidents of indecent expressions were recorded. The 69 expressions were made up of Seven (7) categories of indecent expressions: unsubstantiated allegations; insulting and offensive comments; remarks endorsing violence; and provocative remarks. The others were remarks inciting or calling for violence; expressions promoting divisiveness; and a tribal slur. As shown in Table 1 below, unsubstantiated allegations maligning some individuals, groups, and political parties was the most commonly used indecent expression followed by insulting and offensive comments.

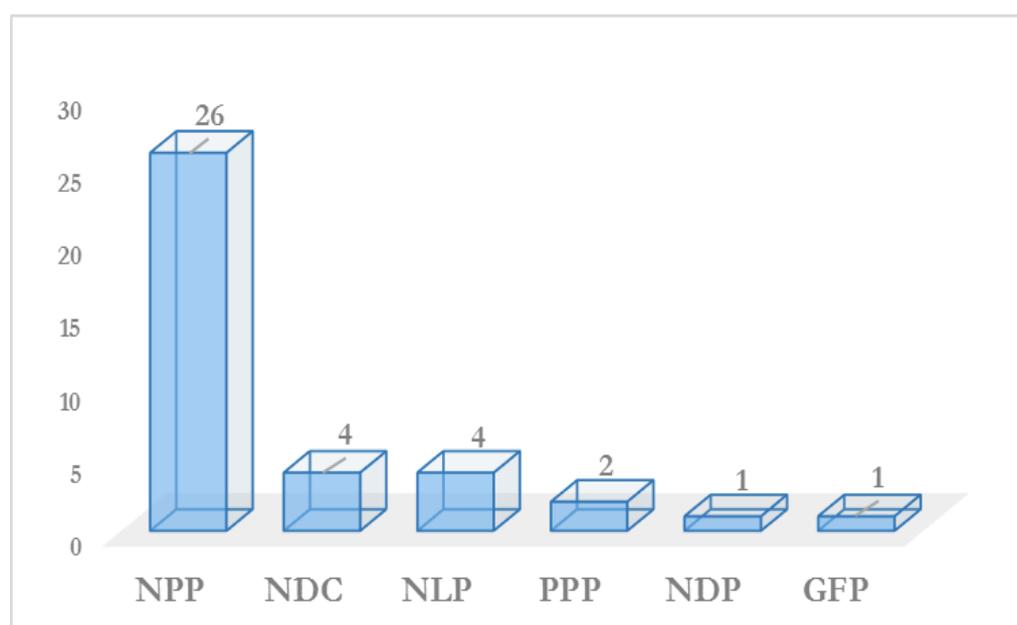
Table 1: Categories and Frequency of Indecent Expressions Recorded

Category of Indecent Expression	Frequency
Unsubstantiated Allegations	29
Insulting and Offensive Comments	22
Remarks Endorsing Violence	9
Provocative Remarks	3
Remarks Inciting Violence	3
Expressions Promoting Divisiveness	2
Tribal Slur	1
Total	69

2.3 Political Party/ Group Affiliation of Individuals Who Used Indecent Expressions

Altogether, 39 individuals were captured making indecent remarks on the programmes monitored. These individuals participated in the programmes monitored as hosts, discussants, interviewees and callers. Out of the 39, 16 were individuals whose political affiliation was not established on the programmes they featured on. The remaining 23 were identified on the programmes as representing six political parties: New Patriotic Party (NPP); ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC), the unregistered New Labour Party (NLP), Progressive People’s Party, National Democratic Party (NDP) and Ghana Freedom Party (GFP). The 23 political affiliates together made 38 (55%) of the 69 indecent expressions recorded over the monitoring period. Figure 1 below presents more details on this finding:

Figure 1: Frequency of Indecent Expressions Used by Political Party Affiliates



Note: Individuals who used indecent expressions but their political party or group affiliation was not mentioned are not included in Figure 1 above

Categories of Indecent Expressions Used by Political Party Affiliates

Officials, supporters and affiliates of the NPP recorded the highest number (30) of indecent expressions – more than twice the total number of indecent expressions recorded by the other five (5) parties put together. They were the major culprits in the use of unsubstantiated allegations and remarks endorsing violence. Also, all the three (3) expressions promoting divisiveness were made by affiliates of the NPP. On the other hand, the only tribal slur recorded was made by an affiliate of the NDC. In Table 2 below, the categories of indecent expressions made by affiliates of the six political parties are presented. Also presented in Table 2 is the breakdown of the categories of indecent expressions used by individuals whose political affiliation was not established on the programmes monitored.

Table 2: Specific Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded by Political Party Affiliates

Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded	Political Affiliation of Culprits							Total
	NPP	NDC	NLP	NDP	PPP	CPP	Not Established	
Unsubstantiated Allegations	11	0	0	2	1	1	14	29
Insulting & Offensive Comments	3	2	4	0	0	0	13	22
Remarks Endorsing Violence	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	9
Provocative Remarks	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
Remarks Inciting Violence	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
Expressions Promoting Divisiveness	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

Prejudicial Comment	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	26	4	4	2	1	1	31	69

2.4 Specific Expressions Used

Below are the names of the individuals who made the 69 indecent expressions. The names are placed under the specific categories of indecent expressions they made. The radio stations on which they used those expressions and the dates on which the expressions were made have also been indicated.

Unsubstantiated Allegations

1. Madam Akua Donkor, flagbearer of GFP – in an interview on Adom FM's Morning Show (Fa Be Wo So segment) which was also broadcast on Tain FM on May 11, 2016.
2. Alixter Nelson (political affiliation not mentioned) – on Montie FM's Pampaso programme aired on May 3, 2016.
3. Mugabe Massie (political affiliation not mentioned), host of Montie FM's Pampaso programme – **two (2)** on the May 3, 2016 edition of the programme.
4. George, a caller (political affiliation not mentioned) – on Okay FM's Ade3 Akye Abia programme aired on May 11, 2016.
5. Uncle Ebo of the NPP – during Happy FM's Democracy programme aired on May 5, 2016.
6. Uncle Ebo of the NPP – on Happy FM's Democracy programme aired on May 9, 2016.
7. Uncle Ebo of the NPP – **two (2)** on Happy FM's Democracy programme aired on May 12, 2016.
8. Ernest Owusu Bempah of the NDP and host of Happy FM's Democracy programme – on the May 5, 2016 edition of the programme.
9. Charles Owusu, a member of the PPP's communication team – on Oman FM's Boiling Point programme aired on May 5, 2016.
10. Nii Bolabi (affiliation not mentioned) – on Oman FM's Ga Adamgbe bii Ngbe Wo yaa aired on May 7, 2016.
11. Daasebre Dwamena, newscaster (affiliation not mentioned) – while presenting a news item on Ashh FM's Anopa Nosia Kasebo broadcast on May 2, 2016.
12. Daasebre Dwamena, co-host supporting the main host with newspaper review (affiliation not mentioned) – **two (2)** on Ashh FM's National Agenda aired on the May 3, 2016.
13. Daasebre Dwamena, co-host supporting the main host with newspaper review (affiliation not mentioned) – on Ashh FM's National Agenda aired on the May 6, 2016.
14. Daasebre Dwamena, co-host supporting the main host with newspaper review (affiliation not mentioned) – **two (2)** on Ashh FM's National Agenda aired on the May 9, 2016.
15. Yaw Adomako Baafi, a Deputy Communications Director of the NPP – **two (2)** on Boiling Point on Oman FM aired on May 10, 2016.
16. A caller, Soyab-Nyuli (political affiliation not mentioned) – on Justice FM's 'What The People Say' programme aired on May 10, 2016.
17. Kwaku Anoga a caller (political affiliation not mentioned) – on Okay FM's Ade3 Akye Abia programme aired on May 12, 2016.
18. Collins Asante of the NPP – during Hot FM's Dwen Ho Biom programme aired on May 4, 2016.
19. Nii Allotey Brew Hammond, National Chairman of PPP – on Top FM's Ghana Dwumadie aired on May 12, 2016.

20. Malik Agyei of the NPP's communication team in the Brong Ahafo Region – in an interview on Oman FM's Premtobre Kaseebɔ aired on May 3, 2016.
21. Charles Siayor of the NPP – on Aguaze morning discussion programme on Ho-based Kekeli Radio aired on May 12, 2016.
22. A serial caller by name Gizo (affiliation not mentioned) – during Ashh FM's National Agenda programme aired on May 10, 2016.
23. Maxwell Mahama of the NPP's communication team in the Brong Ahafo Region – in an interview on Oman Fm's Kaseebɔ aired on May 1, 2016.
24. Faisal Gbanjili of the NPP – during Diamond FM's Diamond Power Drive aired on May 3, 2016.

Insulting and Offensive Comments

1. Alixter Nelson (political affiliation not mentioned) – **two (2)** on Montie FM's Pampaso programme aired on May 3, 2016.
2. Alixter Nelson (political affiliation not mentioned) - during Montie FM's Pampaso programme aired on May 4, 2016.
3. Listowel Nana Kusi Poku of the NLP – **three (3)** during Montie FM's Pampaso programme aired on May 4, 2016 (The host got him to retract one of the expressions before the show could continue).
4. Listowel Nana Kusi Poku of the NLP – on Montie FM's Pampaso programme broadcast on May 6, 2016.
5. Mugabe Massie (political affiliation not mentioned), host of Montie FM's Pampaso programme – aired on May 4, 2016.
6. A caller (affiliation not mentioned) – during Hot FM's Dwen Ho Biom programme aired on May 12, 2016.
7. Kwame Alfred, a presenter of Oxy FM (affiliation not mentioned) – **three (3)** during Happy FM's Democracy programme aired on May 12, 2016.
8. The host of Radio Gold's Kokonsa Reporting programme (affiliation not mentioned) – aired on May 3, 2016.
9. Yussif Danjumah of the NPP – on Diamond FM's Head to Head programme broadcast on May 4, 2016.
10. Appiah Stadium of the NDC – during Montie FM's Pampaso programme aired on May 4, 2016.
11. Appiah Stadium of the NDC – on Montie FM's Pampaso programme aired on May 10, 2016.
12. Bobie Ansah (affiliation not mentioned) – on Montie FM's Pampaso programme aired on May 10, 2016.
13. Samuel Huntor co-host (affiliation not mentioned) – on Montie FM's Adekyee Mu Sem morning programme broadcast on May 10, 2016 (He was stopped by his co-host).
14. Adwoa Boatema, a trotro passenger (affiliation not mentioned) – during the trotro segment of the Adom FM Mid-day News broadcast on May 13, 2016.
15. Kennedy Agyapong, NPP MP for the Assin Central Constituency – on EKOSII SEN on Asempa FM broadcast on May 3, 2016.
16. Daasebre Dwamena, co-host supporting the main host with newspaper review (affiliation not mentioned) – on Ashh Fm's National Agenda, aired on the May 11, 2016 edition of the programme.
17. Kojo Owusu Afriyie (popularly known as Sir John), former General Secretary of the NPP – in an interview on Adom FM's Morning Show (Fa Be Wɔ So segment) which was also broadcast on Tain FM on May 13, 2016.

Remarks Endorsing Violence

1. Kennedy Agyapong, NPP MP for the Assin Central Constituency – on Oman FM's Boiling Point programme aired on May 3, 2016.
2. Kennedy Ohene Agyapong, NPP MP for the Assin Central Constituency – on Asempa FM's EKOSII SEN programme aired on May 3, 2016.
3. Oheneba Asamoah Atuahene of the NDC – during the Punch programme on Kessben FM aired on May 5, 2016.
4. Asiedu Kokuro of the NPP – on Skyy FM's Late Evening Show broadcast on May 5, 2016.
5. Uncle Ebo of the NPP – on Top FM's morning political discussion programme, Yesempa Adwumadie, aired on May 4, 2016.
6. Joe Donkor, a member of the NPP's communication team in the Central Region – on Happy FM's Democracy programme aired on May 9, 2016.
7. Kenneth Agyei Kuranchie, Managing Editor of the Daily Searchlight newspaper and a known member of the NPP – on Oman FM's National Agenda programme aired on May 3, 2016.
8. Kenneth Agyei Kuranchie, Managing Editor of the Daily Searchlight newspaper and a known member of the NPP – on Oman FM's National Agenda aired on May 9, 2016.
9. Nana Ayew Afriyie, NPP Parliamentary Candidate for Effiduase-Asokore constituency – on Oman FM's National Agenda programme aired on May 10, 2016.

Provocative comments

1. Kojo Yeboah of the NPP – on Montie FM's Pampaso programme broadcast on May 6, 2016.
2. Kwame Alfred, a presenter of Oxy FM (affiliation not mentioned), – during Happy FM's Democracy programme aired on May 12, 2016.
3. Daasebre Dwamena, co-host supporting the main host with newspaper review (affiliation not mentioned) – on Ashh FM's National Agenda aired on the May 5, 2016.

Remarks Inciting Violence

1. A caller by name Baba (affiliation not mentioned) – on Happy FM's Democracy programme aired on May 9, 2016.
2. Uncle Ebo of the NPP – on Happy FM's Democracy programme aired on May 9, 2016.
3. Obibini Takyi, a serial caller (affiliation not mentioned) – on Ashh FM's National Agenda aired on May 3, 2016.

Expressions or comments promoting divisiveness

1. Kofi Appiah of the NPP – during Happy FM's Democracy programme aired on May 5, 2016.
2. Faisal Gbanjili of the NPP – during Diamond FM's Diamond Power Drive aired on May 3, 2016.

Tribal Slur

1. Oheneba Asamoah Atuahene of the NDC – during the Punch programme on Kessben FM aired on May 5, 2016.

As a policy, the MFWA does not publish the indecent expressions people make since it amounts to rebroadcasting those remarks. The specific expressions made by people cited in our reports are, however, available at the MFWA for verification by those cited.

2.5 Radio Stations and Incidence of Indecent Expressions

Out of the 40 radio stations monitored, 16 recorded indecent expressions. Accra-based Montie FM recorded the highest number (16) of indecent expressions mainly on its Pampaso programme. Happy FM, also based in Accra, followed with 13 indecent expressions which were mostly recorded on its Democracy programme. Oman FM in Accra and Kumasi-based Ashh FM followed with 12 and 10 indecent expressions respectively. Details of the other stations and the number of indecent expressions recorded on them are presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Radio Stations that Recorded Indecent Expressions

Radio Station	Frequency of Indecent Expressions
Montie	16
Happy	13
Oman	10
Ashh FM	10
Adom	3
Diamond FM	3
Asempa FM	2
Hot FM	2
Kessben FM	2
Okay FM	2
Top FM	2
Radio Justice	1
Kekeli Radio	1
Radio Gold	1
Skyy Power FM	1
Total	69

***Two (2) of the three indecent expressions recorded on Adom FM were also recorded on its affiliate, Nsawkam-based Tain FM.*

As noted in the first report, a significant number of the indecent expressions recorded over May 1-15, 2016 were made by hosts and presenters. Out of the 31 indecent expressions attributed to individuals whose political affiliation could not be established on the programmes monitored, more than half (17) were made by programme hosts and other journalists.

For instance, out of the 10 indecent expressions recorded on Kumasi-based Ashh FM, Daasebre Dwamena, a co-host who supports the main host in newspaper review during the station's morning discussion programme, National Agenda, singlehandedly made eight (8). Kwame Alfred of Oxy FM who featured on Happy FM's Democracy programme over the monitoring period

also registered almost a quarter (4) of the 13 indecent expressions recorded on Happy FM. The host of Montie FM's Pampaso programme, Mugabe Massie, also made three (3) of the 16 indecent expressions recorded on the station.

It is worth noting that during the monitoring period, some hosts/presenters made a conscious effort to demand from some of the individuals named above to retract, withdraw or apologise for indecent expressions made. Even though not all of them succeeded, the effort is very commendable.

3.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Findings as presented above from the two-week monitoring period (May 1-5, 2016), show a prevalence of unsubstantiated allegations in political communications on the selected radio stations monitored across the country. This is worrying as it impugns the reputations of individuals, groups and political parties. Another issue of concern is the situation whereby hosts and presenters are themselves the perpetrators of abusive language on the airwaves.

In consideration of these findings, the MFWA calls on radio hosts and presenters in the country to fully assume their gate-keeping role as moderators and encourage those who feature on their programmes to be savoury in their language. We also urge them to desist from the use of indecent expressions so they can be good examples to those who appear on their programmes.

We also call on all political parties, especially the NPP, to continuously engage and train their communicators to focus on issues-based discussions and desist from personality attacks.