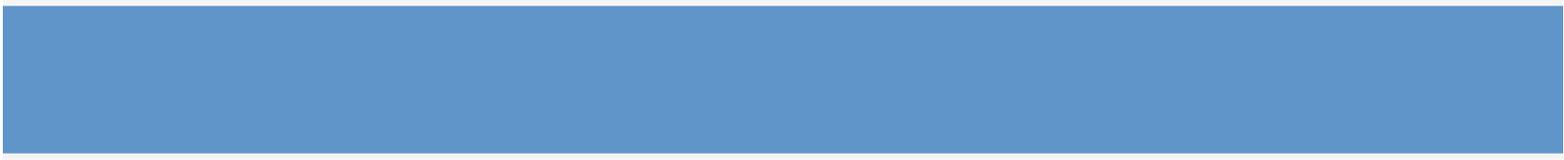


**REPORT ON INDECENT
CAMPAIGN
LANGUAGE ON RADIO**

FINDINGS FOR THE PERIOD JULY- SEPTEMBER, 2016





REPORT ON INDECENT CAMPAIGN LANGUAGE ON RADIO, JULY - SEPTEMBER, 2016.

Introduction

The Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) has been monitoring the use of hate speech and other indecent expressions on 60 radio stations across the country since April 2016. The project: **Promoting Issues-based and Decent Language Campaigning for Peaceful Elections in Ghana in 2016**, is aimed at contributing to issues-based and decent language campaigning on radio before, during and after the December 7 polls.

The project involves daily monitoring of expressions used by politicians, activists and presenters on selected radio stations across the country. The monitoring and reporting is done based on an instrument and coding guide designed by experts and validated by stakeholders. The project also monitors how presenters on the target radio stations handle their programmes to ensure that indecent expressions are not tolerated on their programmes.

Monitors send daily reports to the MFWA which are analysed by a team of programme staff and researchers. A consolidated report is produced and publicised periodically. The reports are meant to provide evidence for appropriate institutions and groups to take informed remedial actions. This report covers findings from the monitoring undertaken over a 12-week period.

The project is being implemented with funding support from OSIWA, STAR-Ghana, the EU (through Socioserve- Ghana) and the Embassy of France in Ghana.

Findings

During the 12-week monitoring period (July to September 2016), a total of **4,603** radio programmes were monitored on the 60 radio stations. Altogether, **97** indecent

expressions were recorded during the period. The findings of the 12-week monitoring period (July to September 2016) show a 72 percent reduction in the use of indecent expressions compared to the first 10 weeks of the monitoring (April 15 – June 30, 2016).

It is worth pointing out that although the number of radio stations monitored during the 12 weeks were 60 compared to 40 in the first six weeks of the monitoring period (April 15 to May 30) and 50 in June, there was a significant decline in the frequency of use of indecent expressions. While **343** incidents were recorded in the first 10 weeks (April-June), **97** incidents were recorded in the 12-week period of July to September, 2016.

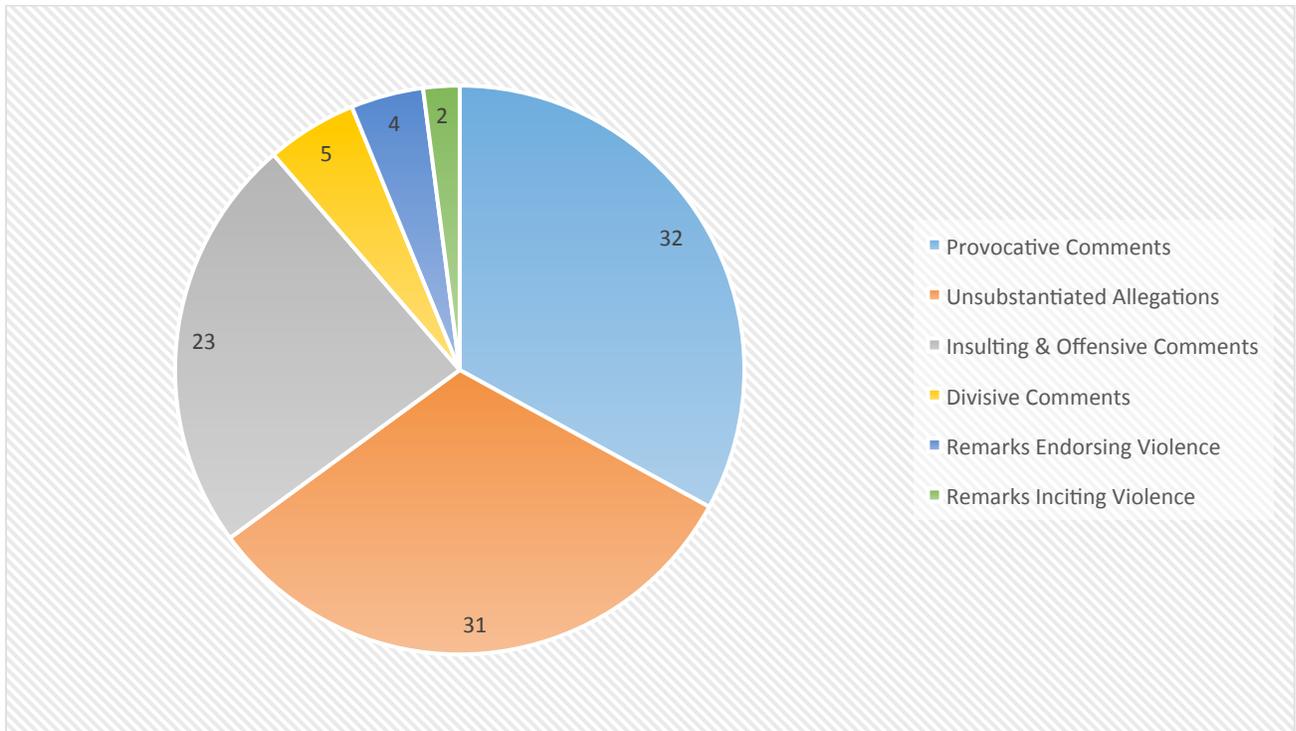
The incidents recorded in the 12 weeks of this report represents an average of eight (8) incidents a week compared to a weekly average of 34 incidents during the first 10 weeks of the monitoring.

While fewer stations were monitored in the first 10 weeks of the project, incidents were recorded on 33 stations during the period. With an increase to 60 stations from July to September, the number of stations on which incidents were recorded reduced to 24.

Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded

The 97 indecent expressions recorded over the monitoring period were made up of six categories of expressions. As shown in figure 1 below, Provocative Comments were the most commonly used indecent expressions followed by Unsubstantiated Allegations.

Figure 1: Categories and Frequency of Indecent Expressions Recorded



Categories of Indecent Expressions Used by Political Party Affiliates

Of the 97 indecent expressions recorded, 78 were made by officials, supporters and affiliates of six political parties and a group identified as New Labour Party (NLP). The remaining 19 were made by individuals whose affiliation could not be established on the programmes monitored. Table 1 below shows the categories of indecent expressions recorded and the affiliation of the individuals who made the indecent expressions.

Table 1: Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded and Political Party Affiliation of Culprits

Category Of Indecent Expressions	Political Party Affiliation of Culprits								Total
	NPP	NDC	NDP	PPP	GFP	PNC	NLP	Unknown	
Provocative Comments	13	6	3	0	2	0	1	7	32
Unsubstantiated Allegations	11	5	3	2	2	1	0	7	31

Insulting & Offensive Comments	7	7	2	0	0	0	4	3	23
Divisive Comments	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	5
Remarks Endorsing Violence	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Remarks Inciting Violence	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total	38	19	8	2	4	2	5	19	97

Radio Stations and Incidents of Indecent Expressions

Twenty-four out of the 60 radio stations monitored recorded indecent expressions. Accra-based Happy FM singlehandedly recorded close to a third (31%) of all the 97 indecent expressions recorded over the 12-week period. Table 2 below provides details of the 24 radio stations cited and the frequency of indecent expressions recorded on each.

Table 2: Frequency of Indecent Expressions Recorded on Radio Stations

Radio Station	Frequency
Happy FM	30
Montie FM	8
Okay FM	8
Oman FM	6
Radio Justice	6
Zaa Radio	5
Neat FM	5
Hot FM	4
Radio Gold	3
Peace FM	3
Tain FM	3

Adom FM	3
Nhyira FM	2
A1 Radio	1
Accra FM	1
Asempa FM	1
Class FM	1
Classic FM	1
Cruz FM	1
Eagle FM	1
Jubilee Radio	1
Marhaba FM	1
Obuoba FM	1
Rite FM	1
Total	97

Conclusion and Recommendations

The 72 percent reduction in the use of hate speech and other indecent expressions on radio recorded between the 10-week (April-June 2016) and the 12-week (July-September 2016) monitoring period is a significant progress.

Another notable observation is the improved commitment by radio show hosts/presenters to disallow the use of abusive campaign language on their platforms. Whereas hosts/presenters of a number of radio stations were consistently culprits in the use of hate speech and other indecent expressions in the first 10-week period, the 12-week findings recorded only one such incident.

In view of the above, MFWA commends all radio stations, presenters, political party communicators and all stakeholders for demonstrating commitment to the promotion of issues-based campaigning ahead of the elections.

The MFWA, however makes the following recommendations as part of measures to improve elections campaign communications for peaceful elections:

- Leaders of the various political parties should encourage their representatives and affiliates to focus on issues-based discussions and desist from using indecent or abusive expressions.
- Radio stations, especially programme presenters/hosts should handle their programmes professionally by desisting from using indecent expressions and insisting on the use of decent expressions by persons who appear on their programmes.
- The National Media Commission (NMC), the Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association (GIBA) and the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) are encouraged to use these findings and subsequent ones to inform remedial actions and processes.