

REPORT ON INDECENT CAMPAIGN LANGUAGE ON RADIO

FINDINGS FOR THE PERIOD DECEMBER 1- 31, 2016



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1.0 Introduction

Since April 2016, the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) has been monitoring and reporting on incidents of hate speech and other abusive expressions on radio. The exercise is meant to discourage the use of indecent campaign language on radio during the electioneering period. Findings from the monitoring have so far shown a steady decline in the use of such indecent expressions, and the findings in the month of December are no exception.

December 2016 recorded a total of five incidents of indecent expressions including Provocative Comments, Unsubstantiated Allegations and Remarks Endorsing Violence. This report presents details of the five indecent expressions – in terms of the categories of expressions used, the Official, supporters and affiliates of the political party cited, the radio stations on which such acts were perpetrated and a recommendation to streamline political communication.

The monitoring and reporting of hate speech and other indecent expressions form part of the MFWA's election project titled: **Promoting Issues-based and Decent Language Campaigning for Peaceful Elections in Ghana in 2016**. The project involves the monitoring of selected programmes on 60 radio stations across the country to track and report on the use of abusive expressions by politicians and activists. It also assesses the performance of hosts in their handling of programmes and whether or not they tolerate such language on their programmes.

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

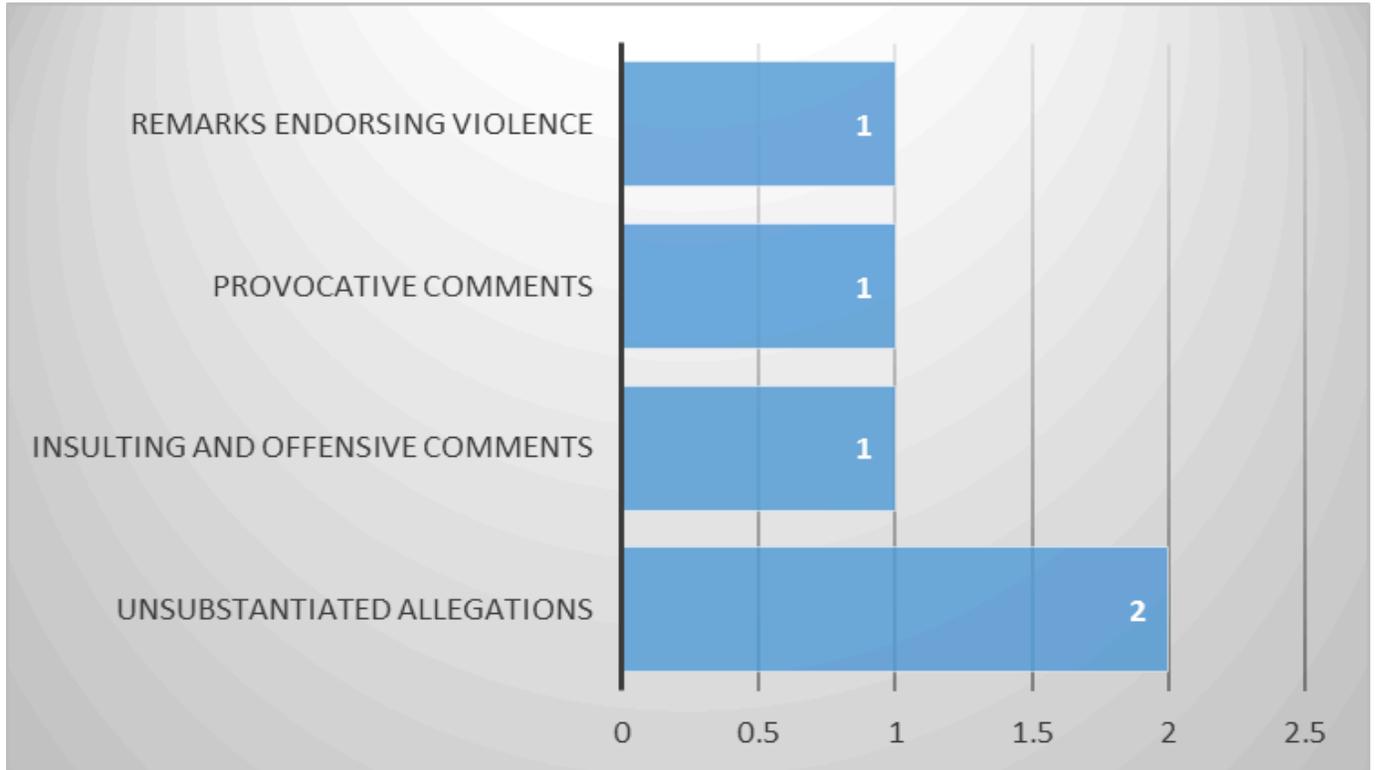
2.0 Findings

During the monitoring period (December 1-30, 2016), a total of **1,297** programmes were monitored on the 60 target radio stations across the country. The programmes monitored included news bulletins, current affairs and political discussion shows. Five indecent expressions were recorded on all the **1,297** programmes monitored. During the monitoring period, four (4) individuals were cited for use of indecent expressions – all of them males. However, none of the indecent expressions recorded was gender-specific derogatory remark.

2.1 Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded

The five indecent expressions recorded were made up of four (4) categories of expressions: Unsubstantiated Allegations, Insulting & Offensive Comments, Provocative Comments and Remarks Endorsing Violence as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Categories and Frequency of Indecent Expressions Recorded



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

Four individuals were cited for making the five indecent remarks recorded. These individuals participated in the programmes monitored as either panelists or interviewees. All the four individuals are either officials, supporters or affiliates of political parties – the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

Presented in Table 1 is a breakdown of the categories of indecent expressions used by officials, supporters and affiliates of the NPP and the NDC.

Table 1: Specific Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded by Political Party Affiliates

Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded	Affiliation of Culprits		
	NPP	NDC	Total
Unsubstantiated Allegations	1	1	2
Insulting and Offensive Comments	0	1	1
Provocative Comments	0	1	1
Remarks Endorsing Violence	0	1	1
Total	1	4	5

2.3 Specific Expressions Used

Below are the names of the individuals who made the five 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. Mugabe Masse, supporter of the NDC and host of *Pampaso* on Montie FM - on December 2, 2016.
2. Kennedy Agyapong, NPP MP for Assin North Constituency - in a studio discussion during the broadcast of *Boiling Point* on Oman FM on December 1, 2016

Insulting and Offensive Comments

1. Mugabe Masse, supporter of the NDC and host of *Pampaso* on Montie FM - on December 5, 2016

Provocative Comments

1. Kwabena Bobie Ansah, supporter of the NDC and host of *Adwene po* - on Ahotor FM on December 19, 2016.

Remarks Endorsing Violence

1. Joseph Yamin, Deputy National Coordinator for National Disaster Management Organisation – in a phone interview during the broadcast of *Pampaso* on Montie FM on December 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 60 radio stations monitored, only three recorded indecent expressions. Details of the specific indecent expressions cited on all the three radio stations are presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Frequency and Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded on Radio Stations

Radio Station	Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded				
	Unsubstantiated Allegations	Insulting & Offensive Comments	Provocative Comments	Remarks Endorsing Violence	Total
Montie FM	1	1	0	1	3
Oman FM	1	0	0	0	1
Ahotor FM	0	0	1	0	1
Total	2	1	1	1	5

3.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Similar to findings of October and November monitoring, findings from the December monitoring also show a further decline in the use of hate speech and other indecent expressions on radio. This sturdy decline is commendable and also contributed to reducing tension in the country before, during and after the elections.

The MFWA believes that with the continuous sensitization and support of all stakeholders, especially, the media, political parties and the general public, the use of abusive expressions will not characterize our political discourse on radio even after the elections.

We therefore encourage all stakeholders to consciously and continually focus on issues-based political discussions devoid of inflammatory remarks on radio.