

# MONITORING OF INDECENT LANGUAGE ON RADIO

FINDINGS FOR THE PERIOD SEPTEMBER 1-30, 2020



with funding support from:  **OSIWA**

## 1.0 Introduction

The media are a significant and effective instrument for political campaigning during electioneering years. They serve as an arena for debate and discussions so voters can discern the credibility of claims made by contestants and be able to make an informed decision on a candidate or party based on what they hear about them through the media.

Thus, it is imperative that the media's role in granting the public access to information, awareness creation, facilitating public debates and discussions be carried out with strict adherence to professionalism and ethical standards.

Unfortunately, debates or discussions among political party activists, communicators or supporters on media platforms during election years are often characterised by the high preference for vitriolic language often manifested in character assassinations, unsubstantiated allegations and unwarranted provocation, among others.

To help focus public discourse on radio in the 2020 electioneering period on issues and not personality attacks and other forms of vitriolic expressions, the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA), is implementing a project titled, *Promoting Decent Language and Issues-based Campaigning for Peaceful Elections in Ghana in 2020*. The project is aimed at contributing to peaceful elections through issues-based campaigning devoid of hate speech and indecent expressions that could heighten tension and incite people to violence.

The project involves the daily monitoring of selected programmes on selected radio stations to track and report on the use of hate speech and other indecent expressions by politicians and others who feature on the programmes. It also monitors how presenters on target radio stations handle their respective programmes to ensure that indecent expressions are not tolerated on their programmes. The project is currently being implemented with funding support from the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA).

### 1.1 Methodology

The project involves the daily monitoring of expressions used by political activists and other political actors who feature on radio programmes such as news bulletins, political discussions and current affairs discussions. It also involves assessing and reporting how presenters or hosts of selected programmes on radio stations handle their programmes and whether or not they tolerate the use of hate speech and other indecent language on their programmes.

This report covers monitoring of **20 radio stations** in Ghana from September 1-30, 2020. Below are the 20 radio stations that are being monitored under the current phase of the project.

**Table 1: List of Radio Stations being Monitored under the Current Phase**

| Region               | Radio Stations |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Greater Accra Region | Oman FM        |
|                      | Power FM       |
|                      | Peace FM       |
|                      | Happy FM       |
|                      | Asempa FM      |
|                      | Adom FM        |
|                      | Ahotor FM      |
|                      | Accra FM       |
|                      | Okay FM        |
| Ashanti Region       | Wontumi Radio  |
|                      | Ash FM         |
|                      | Fox FM         |
|                      | Otec FM        |
| Eastern Region       | Obuoba FM      |
| Upper West Region    | Radio Progress |
| Upper East Region    | A1 Radio       |
| Bono Region          | Tain FM        |
| North East Region    | Eagle FM       |
| Northern Region      | Radio Justice  |
|                      | North Star FM  |

The monitoring is done based on a validated [monitoring instrument](#). Twenty language monitors have been recruited (one monitor per station) and trained on the use of the monitoring instrument. Each monitor is assigned a digital recorder for purposes of recording the programmes they monitor. Monitors send daily reports to the MFWA which are analysed by a team of programme staff and researchers for a consolidated report to be produced.

This report presents findings from the daily monitoring of selected programmes on the 20 radio stations. It specifically cites the number of indecent expressions recorded, the categories of indecent expressions used, names of individuals who made indecent remarks and their political party affiliation. It also names radio stations on which indecent expressions were made, as well as the conduct of the programme hosts/presenters. The report ends with some recommendations for relevant stakeholders.

## 2.0 Findings

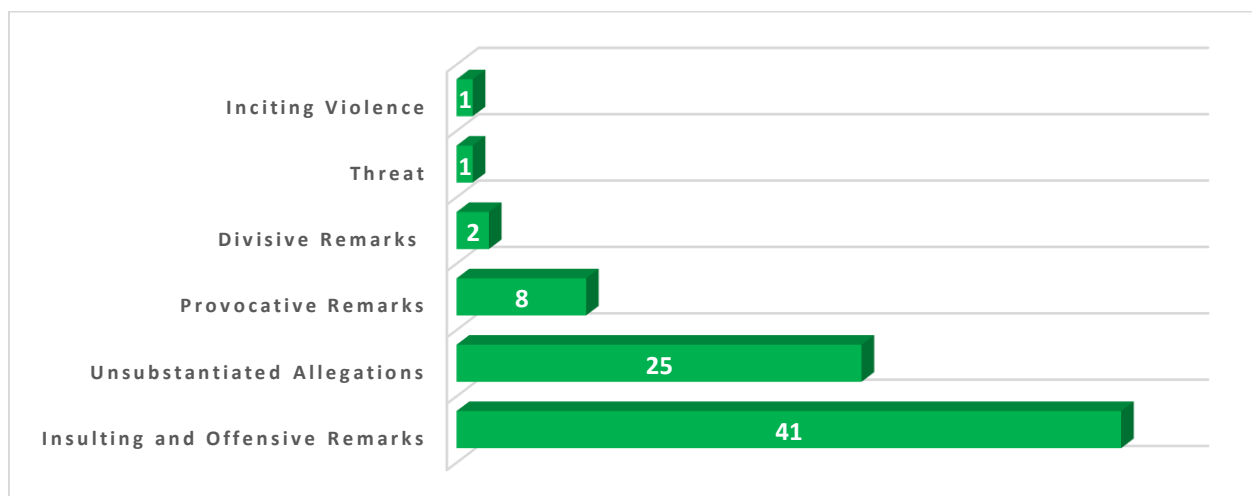
Over the monitoring period (September 1 - 30), **1,586** radio programmes were monitored on the 20 radio stations. The programmes monitored were news bulletins, political and current affairs discussions aired on the 20 radio stations. Most of the programmes were moderated by males. Over 96 percent of the individuals who participated in the programmes as discussants, guests and texters were also males.

Altogether, **78 abusive and indecent expressions were recorded**. The abusive expressions were recorded during discussions on topics such as the Agyapa Royalties deal; Adongo and Former President John Dramani Mahama's Akyem Sakawa mafia Facebook post; the NPP and NDC 2020 manifestos; and the Re-opening of Kotoka International Airport and cost of mandatory Covid-19 test; The other topics were the Exhibition of new voters register by the Electoral Commission (EC) and challenges with the exercise; the EC's announcement of filing fees; Campaign activities by the two main political parties (touring of some regions); Nurses and Midwives strike action; Okada legislation; and the activities of a successionist group in the Volta region.

### 2.1 Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded

The 78 indecent expressions that were recorded were made up of six types of indecent expressions – Insulting and Offensive comments; Unsubstantiated allegations; Provocative remarks; Expressions or Comments promoting divisiveness; Threats and Comments inciting violence.

Figure 1 below indicates the frequency of use of each of the categories of indecent expressions recorded.



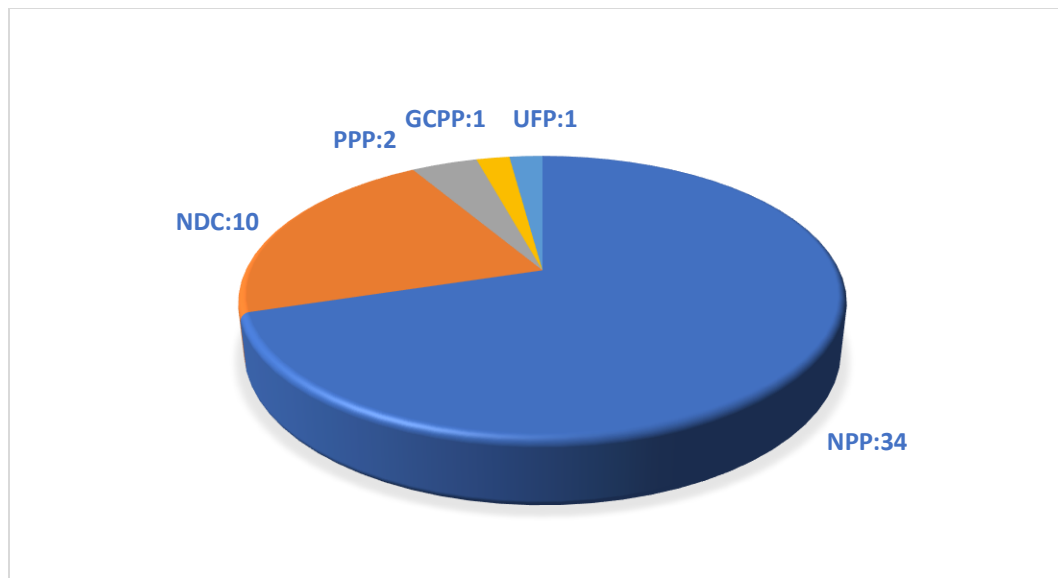
**Figure 1: Frequency of Indecent Expressions Recorded**

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

In all, **41 individuals made the 78 indecent expressions**. These individuals featured on the programmes monitored as hosts, discussants, interviewees, callers and texters. The political party affiliation of seventeen (17) of the individuals who made abusive remarks could not be established. This is mainly because only persons who represent or are introduced as members of a political party are coded against their respective political parties. Forty-eight (62%) out of the indecent expressions recorded were made by political party officials, supporters and affiliates. The remaining 30 (38%) were made by the seventeen individuals whose political affiliation could not be established.

Officials and affiliates of five political parties namely the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the People's Progressive Party (PPP), the Great Consolidated Popular Party (GCPP), and the United Front Party (UFP) were cited for the indecent expressions.

**Figure 2** below gives a graphical representation of the frequency of indecent expressions recorded by affiliates of the five political parties.



**Note: Individuals who used indecent expressions but their political party or group affiliation was not mentioned on the programmes monitored are not included in Figure 2 above**

In **Table 2** below, the categories of indecent expressions made by affiliates of the five political parties, as well as the individuals whose political affiliation could not be established are presented.

**Table 2: Specific Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded by Perpetrators**

| Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded | Political Affiliation of Perpetrators |           |          |          |          |               |           |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|-----------|
|   | NPP                                   | NDC       | PPP      | GCPP     | UFP      | Not Mentioned | Total     |
| Insulting and Offensive Remarks             | 17                                    | 3         | 1        | 0        | 1        | 19            | 41        |
| Unsubstantiated Allegations                 | 12                                    | 6         | 1        | 0        | 0        | 6             | 25        |
| Provocative Remarks                         | 4                                     | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 4             | 8         |
| Divisive Comments                           | 1                                     | 0         | 0        | 1        | 0        | 0             | 2         |
| Threat                                      | 0                                     | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 1             | 1         |
| Inciting Violence                           | 0                                     | 1         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0             | 1         |
| <b>Total</b>                                | <b>34</b>                             | <b>10</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>30</b>     | <b>78</b> |

## 2.4 Specific Expressions Used

Below, the names of the individuals who made the indecent expressions, as well as the radio stations and the dates on which the expressions were made, are placed under the specific type of indecent expression used.

### Insulting and Offensive Remarks

1. Kwabena Kwakye, host of Oman FM's *Boiling Point* programme – **two (2)** during the September 1, 2020 edition of the programme which was also broadcast live on Kumasi based Ashh FM.
2. Bernard Antwi Boasiako also known as Chairman Wontumi, NPP Ashanti Regional Chairman - **two (2)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 1, 2020.
3. Gordon Asare-Bediako, the co-host of Oman FM's *Boiling Point* – **one (1)** during September 1, 2020 edition of the *Boiling Point* programme which was also aired on Kumasi based Ashh FM.
4. Nana Oteatuso Kokobeng II, a Governance Watcher (Political Analyst) (political affiliation not mentioned) - **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 2, 2020.



5. Bernard Antwi Boasiako also known as Chairman Wontumi, NPP Ashanti Regional Chairman – **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 3, 2020.
6. Mugabe Maase, host of Power FM's *Inside Politics* programme – **one (1)** during the September 3, 2020 edition of the programme.
7. Bernard Antwi Boasiako also known as Chairman Wontumi, NPP Ashanti Regional Chairman – **two (2)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 4, 2020.
8. Mugabe Maase, host of Power FM's *Inside Politics* programme – **two (2)** during the September 4, 2020 edition of the programme.
9. Pastor Kwaku (political affiliation not mentioned) – **one (1)** during Ashh FM's *Keynote* programme aired on September 7, 2020.
10. Pius Enam Hadzide, Deputy Minister of Information (NPP) – **one (1)** in an interview on Okay FM's *Adee Akye Abia* aired on September 7, 2020.
11. Gordon Asare-Bediako, co-host of Oman FM's *Boiling Point* – **two (2)** during September 7, 2020 edition of the *National Agenda* programme.
12. Kennedy Ohene Agyapong, NPP MP for Assin Central – **one (1)** during September 8, 2020 edition of the *Boiling Point* programme which was also broadcast live on Kumasi based Ashh FM.
13. Nana Kwabena Bobie Ansah, host of *The Citizen Show* – **one (1)** during Accra FM's *The Citizen Show* aired on September 8, 2020.
14. Kennedy Ohene Agyapong, NPP MP for Assin Central – **one (1)** during Net2 TV's *The Dialogue* programme aired on September 9, 2020. This programme was broadcast live on Accra based Oman FM and Kumasi based Ashh FM.
15. Bernard Antwi Boasiako also known as Chairman Wontumi, NPP Ashanti Regional Chairman – **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 9, 2020.
16. Alhaji Gauf, NPP Communication Team Member for Bono Region - **one (1)** during Tain FM's Morning Political Show *Anpa Nkomo* aired on September 11, 2020.
17. Samuel Agyarko, Western Regional Chairman for Aggrieved Customers of Menzgold (political affiliation not mentioned) – **one (1)** in an interview on Accra FM's *Evening News* aired on September 14, 2020.
18. A caller identified as Baba (political affiliation not mentioned) - **one (1)** during Accra FM's *Citizen Show* aired on September 16, 2020.
19. Richard Boadu, PPP Ashanti Regional Communication Officer - **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 17, 2020.
20. Gordon Asare-Bediako, co-host of Oman FM's *Boiling Point* – **one (1)** during September 17, 2020 edition of the *Boiling Point* programme.
21. Kwabena Kwakye, the host of Oman FM's *Boiling Point* programme – **one (1)** during the September 17, 2020 edition of the *Boiling Point* programme.
22. Peter Antwi Boasiako, NPP Communication Team Member – **one (1)** during Accra FM's *Ghana Yensom* programme aired on September 17, 2020.
23. Kwaku Agyekum Asare, NDC Communication Team Member – **one (1)** during Accra FM's *Ghana Yensom* programme aired on September 17, 2020.
24. Mugabe Maase, host of Power FM's Afternoon Political Show *Inside Politics* programme – **one (1)** during the September 18, 2020 edition of the programme.
25. A serial caller identified as Kosovo (political affiliation not mentioned) – **one (1)** during Accra FM's *Ghana Yensom* programme aired on September 21, 2020.
26. Anthony Nukpen, NDC Greater Accra Regional Organiser- **one (1)** during Power FM's Morning Show *Dwaboase* aired on September 22, 2020.

27. Kennedy Ohene Agyapong, NPP MP for Assin Central – **one (1)** during Oman FM's *Boiling Point* programme aired on September 22, 2020. The programme was also broadcast live on Kumasi based Ashh FM.
28. Oheneba Boamah Bennie, host of "What is trending segment" on Power FM's Afternoon Political Show *Inside Politics* programme – **one (1)** during the September 23, 2020 edition.
29. Prince Kumi also known as Maxi, an NPP member - **two (2)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV on September 25, 2020.
30. Bernard Antwi Boasiako also known as Chairman Wontumi, NPP Ashanti Regional Chairman – **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 25, 2020.
31. Kamaldeen Abdulai, Deputy Communications Director (NPP) - **one (1)** during Peace FM's *The Platform* aired on September 28, 2020.
32. Dela Edem, NDC Communication Team Member – **one (1)** during Power FM's *Inside Politics* programme aired on September 28, 2020.
33. Listowel Nana Kusi Poku, Former Special Assistant to Alan Kyeremanteng's campaign team (Executive Secretary of Good Governance Advocacy Ghana and General Secretary of United Front Party (UFP)) – **one (1)** during Accra FM's *The Citizen Show* aired on September 29, 2020.
34. Mugabe Maase, host of Power FM's *Inside Politics* programme – **one (1)** during the September 29, 2020 edition of the programme.
35. Prince Kumi also known as Maxi, an NPP member - **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV on September 30, 2020.

## Unsubstantiated Allegation

1. Ernest Owusu Bempah, Ghana National Gas Communication Director (Former NDP communication director) – **one (1)** during Asempa FM's *Ekosii Sen* programme aired on September 4, 2020.
2. Kulibali Adama, NPP Tain Constituency Secretary - **one (1)** during Tain FM's Morning Political Show *Anɔpa Nkɔmmɔ* aired on September 7, 2020.
3. Issifu Kassim also known as Nation, NDC Communication Director for Tain constituency - **one (1)** during Tain FM's Morning Political Show *Anɔpa Nkɔmmɔ* aired on September 7, 2020.
4. Bernard Antwi Boasiako also known as Chairman Wontumi, NPP Ashanti Regional Chairman – **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 9, 2020.
5. Alhaji Gauf, NPP Communication Team Member for Bono Region - **one (1)** during Tain FM's Morning Political Show *Anɔpa Nkɔmmɔ* aired on September 9, 2020.
6. A caller by name Margaret Koramah (political affiliation not mentioned) – **one (1)** in an interview on Accra FM's *Evening News* aired on September 10, 2020.
7. Bernard Antwi Boasiako also known as Chairman Wontumi, NPP Ashanti Regional Chairman – **two (2)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 14, 2020.
8. Afa Suale, PPP Communication Team Member - **one (1)** during Radio Justice's *Super Morning Show* aired on September 15, 2020.
9. 10. Bernard Antwi Boasiako also known as Chairman Wontumi, NPP Ashanti Regional Chairman – **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 15, 2020.
10. Samuel Nkrumah also known as Oga, NDC Communication Team Member for Tain Constituency- **two (2)** during Tain FM's Morning Political Show *Anɔpa Nkɔmmɔ* aired on September 16, 2020.



11. Yaw Adomako Baafi, NPP Former National Communication Director – **one (1)** during Oman FM's *Boiling Point* programme aired on September 22, 2020. The programme was also broadcast live on Kumasi based Ashh FM.
12. Kennedy Ohene Agyapong, NPP MP for Assin Central – **one (1)** during Oman FM's *Boiling Point* programme aired on September 22, 2020 which was also broadcast live on Kumasi based Ashh FM.
13. Albert Kwasi Anderson, NPP Communication Team Member – **one (1)** during Obuoba FM's Morning Show *Obuoba Kasa* programme aired on September 22, 2020.
14. Kwabena Kwakye, host of Oman FM's *Boiling Point* – **one (1)** during September 22, 2020 edition of the *National Agenda* programme.
15. Isaac Anohene, NDC Tain Constituency Communication Team Member - **one (1)** during Tain FM's Morning Political Show *Anɔpa Nkɔmmɔ* aired on September 23, 2020.
16. Baba Jamal Konneh, NDC Director of Elections in the Eastern Region – **one (1)** in an interview on Obuoba FM's Morning Show *Obuoba Kasa* aired on September 24, 2020.
17. Bernard Antwi Boasiako also known as Chairman Wontumi, NPP Ashanti Regional Chairman – **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 24, 2020.
18. A caller known as Rhaman One (political affiliation not mentioned) - **one (1)** during Tain FM's Morning Political Show *Anɔpa Nkɔmmɔ* aired on September 24, 2020.
19. Issifu Kassim, also known as Nation, NDC Tain Constituency Communication Director - **one (1)** during Tain FM's Morning Political Show *Anɔpa Nkɔmmɔ* aired on September 25, 2020.
20. Kulibali Adama, NPP Tain Constituency Secretary - **one (1)** during Tain FM's Morning Political Show *Anɔpa Nkɔmmɔ* aired on September 28, 2020.
21. Kwame Baffoe, also known as Abronye DC, NPP Bono Regional Chairman - **one (1)** during September 29, 2020 edition of the Oman FM's *Boiling Point* programme. The programme was also broadcast live on Kumasi based Ashh FM.
22. Nana Oteatuso Kokobeng II, a Governance Watcher (Political Analyst) (political affiliation not mentioned) - **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 30, 2020.
23. Charles Nyame, Public Relations Officer for the Coalition of Aggrieved Customers of the Gold Coast Fund Management (GCFM) (political affiliation not mentioned) - **one (1)** during Accra FM's *The Citizen Show* aired on September 30, 2020.

## Provocative Remarks

1. Bernard Antwi Boasiako also known as Chairman Wontumi, NPP Ashanti Regional Chairman – **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV on September 23, 2020.
2. Citizen Kofi Owusu, host of *Adekye Mu Nsem* read a text from Marvelous located at Sogakophe – **one (1)** during Ahotor FM's *Adekye Mu Nsem* programme aired on September 23, 2020.
3. Nana Oteatuso Kokobeng II, a Governance Watcher (Political Analyst) (political affiliation not mentioned) - **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 25, 2020.
4. Kennedy Ohene Agyapong, NPP MP for Assin Central – **three (3)** during Oman FM's *Boiling Point* programme aired on September 24, 2020.
5. Christian Donkor, lecturer with ICAG (political affiliation not mentioned) - **one (1)** during Oman FM's *6pm News* aired on September 26, 2020

6. A caller referred to as Yaw (political affiliation not mentioned) – **one (1)** during Accra FM's *Citizen Show* aired on September 28, 2020.

## Inciting Violence

1. An NDC Communication Team Member for Eastern Region identified as Dr. Abodwese – **one (1)** during Obuoba FM's Morning Show *Obuoba Kasa* aired on September 7, 2020.

## Divisive Remarks

1. Kofi Owusu Omar, GCPP Ashanti Regional Chairman - **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV on September 3, 2020.

2. Yaw Adomako Baafi, NPP Grassroots President (NPP Former National Communication Director) – **one (1)** during Oman FM's *Boiling Point* programme aired on September 22, 2020. The programme was also broadcast live on Kumasi based Ashh FM.

## Threat

1. Nana Oteatuso Kokobeng II, a Governance Watcher (Political Analyst) (political affiliation not mentioned) - **one (1)** during Wontumi Radio's *Morning Show* which picked the feed from Wontumi TV aired on September 24, 2020.

*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 Incidents of Indecent Expressions

12 out of the 20 radio stations monitored recorded indecent expressions. Kumasi-based Wontumi Radio recorded the highest (22) indecent expressions on its morning show. Accra-based Oman FM recorded (19) indecent expressions across four programmes – *Boiling Point* (14), *National Agenda* (3), *Evening News* (1) and *Dialogue* (1). Kumasi-based Ashh FM recorded (11) indecent expressions across three programmes – *Boiling Point* (9), *Keynote* (1) and *Dialogue* (1). Nsawkaw-based Tain FM and Accra FM based in Accra recorded ten (10) indecent expressions each over the period. Power FM also based in Accra, recorded 8 indecent expressions – 7 on its afternoon political show titled, *Inside Politics* and 1 on its Morning Show titled, *Dwaboase*. The frequency of indecent expressions recorded on all the 12 radio stations are presented in Table 3 below:

**Table 3: Radio Stations that Recorded Indecent Expressions**

| <b>Radio Station</b> | <b>Frequency of Indecent Expressions</b> |
|----------------------|--|
| Wontumi Radio        | 22                                       |
| Oman FM              | 19                                       |
| Ashh FM **           | 11                                       |
| Accra FM             | 10                                       |
| Tain FM              | 10                                       |
| Power FM             | 8  |
| Obuoba FM            | 3  |
| Asempa FM            | 1  |
| Ahotor FM            | 1  |
| Radio Justice        | 1  |
| Okay FM              | 1  |
| Peace FM             | 1  |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>78</b>                                |

*Note: \*\* Nine (9) of the indecent expressions recorded on Accra-based Oman FM were also recorded on Kumasi-based Ashh FM.*

### **Assessment of Moderation of Programmes by Hosts**

During the monitoring, Moderators/Hosts/Presenters were assessed on how they conducted themselves on their respective programmes and also, handled their programmes to ensure that hate speech and other indecent expressions are not used on their platforms. Progressively, a number of moderators made efforts to prevent the use of indecent expressions on their platforms. The MFWA commends such moderators and encourages all others to be professional in the discharge of their duties.

However, from the monitoring period (September 1-30, 2020), some moderators directly engaged in the use of indecent expressions. Specifically, Mugabe Maase, host of Accra-based Power FM's *Inside Politics* programme, made 5 indecent expressions. Kwabena Kwakye, host of Oman FM's *Boiling Point* and Gordon Asare Bediako, co- host of Boiling Point recorded 4 indecent expressions each.

### 3.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

In consideration of the above findings, the MFWA makes the following recommendations:

- Leaders of the various political parties, especially the NDC and the NPP should encourage their representatives, affiliates and communicators to focus on issues in their discourse on radio and desist from using indecent expressions.
- Radio stations, especially presenters/moderators should handle their programmes with professionalism by desisting from using indecent expressions and insisting on the use of decent expressions by persons who appear on their programmes.
- Radio stations and programme managers must know the reputation of guests/discussants and their penchant to use abusive language on their shows and avoid inviting such individuals.
- 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.
- The electorate are encouraged to follow and consider the findings from the monitoring reports to know which political parties engage in issues-based public discourse to help inform and guide their voting decisions.



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