

Dates: 7 – 9 December 2016

Country: Mauritania



Fahmy Mint El Alem is a student at the University of Nouakchott, Mauritania. Even though she says she is occupied with her studies, she dedicates her time to two civil society organisations in the West African country. One of organisations Fahmy is active in, is fighting for the rights of prisoners. The other CSO is campaigning for better conditions for women and girls living with cancer.

"People we are working with have reduced visibility and live in very specific circumstances. That is one of the reasons why I wanted to learn how to get attention of the media and make them write about problems of prisoners and seriously ill women," says Mint after attending the Media Diversity Institute (MDI) workshop in Nouakchott, on 7 – 9 December 2015.

MDI workshop dedicated to development of media relations and communications skills for 16 CSOs in Mauritania, aimed to equip civil society activists with knowledge, techniques and tips on how to attract journalists' attention.



Isaac, one of participants at MDI workshop, says that most of the Mauritanian media report on civil society activities only if they meet official objectives. “But what I have learned here is how to get in contact and to keep communicating with journalists even if we organise a small activity for local people with disabilities,” says Isaac. For Binta Sao, a member of the Mauritanian Association For Human Rights (AMDH), one of the most memorable exercises at the workshop was the one on how to give an interview for different types of media – print, radio and TV. » I learned a lot from this training, especially how to pass my and my organisations’ messages to the media and public,” says Binta Sao.

There are numerous civil society organisations in Mauritania, based in capital Nouakchott but also in other parts of the country. According to [some official figures](#) , there are more than 6000 organisations and associations in Mauritania. Last year, some Mauritanian CSOs caught the world media’s attention claiming that a new [anti-slavery](#) law could restrict freedom of NGO sector.

MDI has organised a workshop for CSOs activists as part of the project " [My Vote Matters Too](#) " dedicated to political participation and representation of women and other marginalised groups in the media in Mauritania and Morocco, supported by the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office.