

Fourth Annual Report Web Update

GTF036 Journalists for Human Rights (JHR)

Journalists for Human Rights' (JHR) five-year programme focuses on building the capacity of the local media in Liberia to report more effectively on human rights and good governance, in turn encouraging greater respect for democracy, government and civil society. Over the past year, JHR has trained journalists, journalism students and media management in human rights and good governance reporting - mentoring the production of 239 stories focussing on relevant, local human rights and governance issues. These stories not only contributed to societal discourse on the issues, but also resulted in tangible change. Nathan Charles, a JHR-trained journalist, investigated poor conditions at a hospital in Bong County, Liberia. His stories resulted in the appointment of a new staff doctor and a chief physician assistant, increasing the access to health care professionals for surrounding communities. Building on the issues surrounding health, JHR-trained journalists Oniel Bestman and Ladymai Hunter investigated conditions at Jackson F. Doe Regional Referral Hospital in Nimba Country through the support of JHR programming. They both reported stories how the hospital had no ambulance services to provide during emergencies. As a result of those stories, an ambulance was donated by the World Bank, enabling emergency health services to be more available. As a result of JHR's training, stories have also resulted in policy change, including a collection of stories from a field reporting trip to a mine in Nimba County contributing to approval of legislation doubling the minimum wage by the Liberian senate and an investigative series looking at the conditions of public schools supposed to be providing free, quality education to children resulting in the formation of a school board to monitor the accountability of the ministry.

JHR just has begun its partnership with the University of Liberia, developing a course in human rights reporting that will become a mandatory part of the curriculum for journalism students, with a JHR trainer leading the course and working closely with the Mass Communications department at the university to provide resources to the staff to continue the course after JHR as completed its programme, ensuring the sustainability of the training for the next generation of Liberian journalists. The Train-the-trainers program also began, identifying 5 top-notch Liberian journalists demonstrating both leadership and a passion for human rights and governance issues to participate in a 9 month program, training them to become trainers themselves, acting as a resource and a support to journalists and journalism students alike after JHR's programming has ended. These initiatives will continue in the next year of operation, focussing on establishing the impact of JHR's work in Liberia.

For further information on this programme, please visit

http://www.jhr.ca/en/aboutjhr_downloads.php

To download the Annual Reports, please choose the tab entitled Liberia Reports.

