

The First Philippine Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists (PPASJ) in the Philippines

What is the PPASJ?

The **Philippine Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists (PPASJ)** is a national plan based on the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. It is a road map to promote the safety and protection of journalists and safeguard press freedom in the country.

Why is there a need for the PPASJ?

In the Philippines, a climate of impunity for crimes against journalists and media workers exists, despite initiatives of media, civil society and government to address the situation.

From April 1986 to July 2019, 164 work-related cases of journalist killings were documented by the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility. Physical and digital attacks and threats likewise persist. These continuing challenges heighten the need for the PPASJ.

Flagship Areas

Five flagship programs emerged from the multi-stakeholder consultations that identified various prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership initiatives:

- 1. Integrity and Professionalism**
- 2. Conducive Working Conditions**
- 3. Safety and Protection Mechanisms**
- 4. Criminal Justice System**
- 5. Public Information, Journalism Education, and Research**

Flagship Areas

1. Integrity and Professionalism

Key Actions:

- Working for the creation of an independent, multi-sector and multi-stakeholder National Press Council
- Promoting and strengthening self-regulation within and among media houses and adherence to ethical standards by individual journalists

Flagship Areas

2. Conducive Working Conditions

Key Actions:

- Working to establish an industry-wide association of journalists and other media workers to ensure compliance with international standards and national laws/policies including labor and social welfare laws
- Advocating with media houses/owners to fulfil their duties and obligations and observe occupational health and safety (OSH) standards
- Moving for the operationalization of the Industry Tripartite Council (ITC) for the media sector at the national and local levels

Flagship Areas

3. Safety and Protection Mechanisms

Key Actions:

- Strengthening mechanisms and capacities for journalists and media workers as well as media houses and responding to attacks and threats against journalists, media workers and media houses
- Developing and/or enhancing safety-focused gender sensitivity programs for journalists and media workers
- Institutionalizing regular dialogues between media and state security forces

Flagship Areas

4. Criminal Justice System

Key Actions:

- Reviewing and working for the reform of laws impeding and endangering freedom of expression and the press
- Developing legal support mechanisms and partnerships, establishing legal defense funds and networks for journalists and media workers, and encouraging coordinated campaigns among journalists under related legal attacks or legislative offensives
- Developing and conducting policy advocacy in partnership with the Supreme Court, Department of Justice, Public Attorney's Office, National Bureau of Investigation, and the National Prosecution Service

Flagship Areas

5. Public Information, Journalism Education, and Research

Key Actions:

- Working to raise public awareness and appreciation for the role of free and independent media in democracy and development
- Strengthening regional memberships of existing nationwide associations of MIL and Communication teachers to promote the teaching of journalist safety in schools
- Identifying and documenting good labor practices in the newsroom in the context of journalist welfare and safety, as models for replication

How was the PPASJ developed?

The PPASJ is a unique multi-stakeholder blueprint developed in an inclusive, participatory and stakeholder-driven process.

Inputs from media, government, academe and civil society were documented during multi-stakeholder consultations at the national and regional levels, journalist safety training sessions, and dialogues with state security forces in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao from 2018 to 2019.

Who led the development of the PPASJ?

The PPASJ was developed under the **Safeguarding Press Freedom in the Philippines** project (2018-2020), which seeks to enhance the enabling environment for the exercise of press freedom and establish safety mechanisms for journalists and media workers that are locally anchored and sustainable.

Implementing partners are the **Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication (AIJC)** and **International Media Support (IMS)**.

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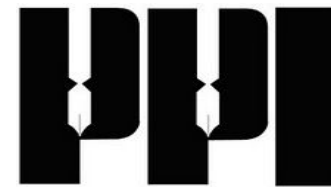
IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS



**ASIAN INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM
AND COMMUNICATION**

Who led the development of the PPASJ?

AIJC and IMS forged partnerships with media organizations to form the **Journalist Safety Advisory Group (JSAG)**. Providing strategic advice and guidance on the Philippine Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists, **JSAG** comprises the **Center for Community Journalism and Development (CCJD)**, **Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR)**, **National Union of Journalists in the Philippines (NUJP)**, **Philippine Press Institute (PPI)**, AIJC, and IMS.



National Launch

National Launch of the Philippine Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists, November 22, 2019

The national launch of the PPASJ promoted the formal adoption and ownership of the Plan. A multi-stakeholder coalition was mobilized for the Plan's implementation and sustainability.

What's next?

Regional Orientations on the PPASJ **Pampanga, Cebu, Davao and Cotabato**

The regional orientation seeks to promote local ownership of the Plan. A local multi-stakeholder coalition will be mobilized for the Plan's implementation and sustainability.