

Libyan News Agency to Cover Vast Southern Region

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Supported by IWPR, the service is already becoming an authoritative news source on the poorly-reported south.

A news agency for southern Libya is rapidly expanding its coverage of this vast and under-reported region. The Germa news agency was launched in March, with close support from IWPR.

The agency's general manager, Abubaker Mohamed Abushrea, explained his decision to partner with IWPR on setting up the venture by saying it filled a crucial gap in the Libyan media sector. Since most of the media are located along the more heavily-populated Mediterranean coast, that is where the coverage is. Significant developments in the southern interior are ignored or reported inaccurately.

"We were tired of seeing events in the south misrepresented in the Libyan media," said Abushrea, who also runs a local radio station called Sawt Sabha Alhurra FM (Free Voice of Sabha). "We had wanted to create our own news agency for a long time, but we didn't have the resources to do so."

According to Laila al-Ghuol, a female journalist now working as an editor at Germa, "The south has suffered from an absence of media and a lack of political dialogue, and there's a desperate need for media here to re-envision their role and to present what's happening in the south realistically and honestly to the rest of Libya."

Based in the city of Sabha, and named after an ancient term for southern Libya, Germa which currently employs 16 reporters and editors working across the region.

IWPR trainer Omar Assaf has been working full time at the Germa agency since March, holding a series of training "boot camps" on editorial issues like how to cover breaking news, training, newsroom management, and technical issues.

He works directly alongside reporters and editors on stories that are published on Germa's **online news site** and on its **Facebook page**.)

Further training in radio and video news production is scheduled for later this year, as Germa seeks to become a fully multimedia news outlet.

This startup venture is already making a name for itself. Its stories are increasingly being picked up by other Libyan media as it grows into a prime source of news about the southern region.

"The importance of Germa is that it's the first outlet of its kind to report news from this region," al-Ghuol said. "The agency will help ensure the timely and accurate news reporting from the south, and this in turn will highlight the issues and problems we face in this region of Libya, which for years was marginalised and cut off from the rest of the country."

Location: [Libya](#)

Topic: [Media](#)

Focus: [Libya](#)

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