REPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE PHILIPPINES

A Field Guide for Journalists and Media Workers

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Red Batario
Main Author and Editor

Yvonne T. Chua
Luz Rimban
Ibarra C. Mateo
Writers

Rorie Fajardo
Project Coordinator

Alan Davis
Foreword

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The Philippine Human Rights Reporting Project aims to root better human rights awareness and protection within and via the media to society at large. The project is an active collaboration between the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), the Center for Community Journalism and Development (CCJD), the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP), and MindaNews.

The project delivers specialized training on human rights issues: It commissions, publishes and disseminates stories and investigative reports - and organizes events and outreach activities to promote understanding that better awareness and protection of human rights is the cornerstone of a free and fair society.

For more information, visit www.rightsreporting.net

The Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) helps support democratic development and the rule of law in regions of crisis and transition through professional media development. IWPR establishes sustainable networks and institutions, develops skills and professionalism, provides extensive reliable reporting, and builds cross-cultural and regional dialogue and debate.

IWPR provides intensive hands-on training, extensive reporting and publishing alongside other initiatives to build the capacity of local and regional media with a strong focus on human rights, international justice and the rule of law. IWPR was initially launched to help combat the rise of nationalist media and hate speech in the Former Yugoslavia and now exists as an international network for media development, with four not-for-profit divisions in Europe, the US and Africa supporting training and capacity-building programs for local journalism, with field programs in more than 20 transitional states.

IWPR is registered as a charity in the United Kingdom, a non-profit organization under Section 21 in South Africa, and is tax-exempted under Section 501(c)(3) in the United States.

For more information, visit www.iwpr.net

The Center for Community Journalism and Development (CCJD) was formed by a group of journalists and development workers in July 2001 as a facility for journalists working with communities, citizens, and institutions for social change.

CCJD's goals include:

Developing a new journalistic paradigm that would enable citizens and communities shape the news agenda by enhancing the skills of community journalists and raising the professional standards of media

Providing platforms for discourse between media and citizens for meaningful participation in governance and civic life through public journalism initiatives

Increasing popular understanding of peace, development, social justice and governance issues through better and involved journalism

The CCJD was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission on October 11, 2001 as a non-stock, non-profit organization.

For more information, visit www.ccjd.org

MindaNews or the Mindanao News and Information Cooperative Center (MNICC) is a cooperative of independent, professional journalists who believe and practice people empowerment through media. It believes that Mindanao is not all bad news and that the responsibility of its members as journalists and information providers is to ensure a mixed balance of reports beyond the usual fare published in national newspapers or aired on radio and television. Its mission is to professionally and responsibly cover Mindanao events, peoples and issues to inform, educate, inspire and influence communities.

It envisions being the leading provider of accurate, timely and comprehensive news information on Mindanao and its peoples, serving economically, politically and culturally empowered communities. MindaNews' services include the MindaNews publications, a one-stop-shop for books; MindaPrints, the coop's computer and printing services; MindaNews Video and Photo Bank; and training for media practitioners, journalists, students, communities, non-government organizations and cooperatives.

For more information, visit www.mindanews.com

The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) is a nationwide organization of journalists and media workers committed to securing the interests of the Filipino working press.

It binds journalists to a covenant to ethical conduct and commitment to public trust. It also seeks to promote and safeguard the economic interest and social well-being of the working press, upgrade professional skills, raise the standards of journalistic ethics, carry out welfare program for its members, and foster fraternal solidarity with all journalists everywhere.

The NUJP is active in campaigns against journalist killings, criminal libel and other forms of attack against press freedom. It also pushes for the people's access to information right through legislative action and education campaigns.

NUJP has an extensive training program for journalists, which includes modules on conflict reporting, election reporting, sensitive HIV and AIDS reporting, human rights reporting, child sensitive reporting and crime reporting.

NUJP maintains a Safety Office in cooperation with the International Federation of Journalists to document cases of attacks against members of media, and provide safety training and assistance to journalists under threat. NUJP also has a scholarship program for children of slain journalists.

For more information, visit www.nujp.org.

FOREWORD

MEDIA & HUMAN RIGHTS – NOW MORE THAN EVER

By Alan Davis

Director, Philippine Human Rights Reporting Project

The tradition of international journalism training has been to teach practitioners to be objective, accurate and impartial reporters of news. Anything else has long been viewed as wrong and misguided.

Yet journalism must reflect the society it is in. Most of those who wrote the handbooks and head the journalism faculties are from the West and forget their societies are well-established and stable. They have very strong civil societies, sound checks and balances, and a good rule of law.

Yet not all countries and regions do – and it is for the media in these countries to help develop and protect human rights and the rule of law. If they do not, who will - and who in turn will help protect them? Rights do not simply appear. Even if they are formally agreed in Geneva or New York and are enshrined in international law, rights do not automatically happen. Laws are man-made, observed –and broken. Every society needs its pioneers and defenders if it is to progress and be free and fair.

Lest we forget, the first ever journalists in the West were the pamphleteers who campaigned against what they saw as unjust laws. Journalism and advocacy thus have the same parents. Lest we forget too, these same Western journalism teachers are now wrestling with the collapse of traditional media patterns, outlets and behavior and are trying to make sense of what is happening and their place in it.

So let us not follow but lead: Things always change –and if we are not challenging and changing, we are not learning or progressing. Ten years ago nobody talked of global warming or developmental journalism or the global food crisis/credit crunch: Today we all do. A generation ago, BBC journalists

used to approach senior politicians with the question: "Is there anything else you wish to tell us, sir?"

That was the way it was then –but should it be so now? Just because something appeared right from one perspective at one point, does it remain right and appropriate today?

What is news anyway? Is 'news' whatever the president, prime minister, mayor or film star simply says or does? Is it news when a pop star divorces or tries to adopt another baby? Who decides?

We do. The media has a lot more power than it thinks it does - and it is up to all of us to constantly determine, debate and argue what is 'news'. Consciously or subconsciously, we all decide what is news every day. We constantly decide what to keep in and what to leave out: We frame every story; we make people appear all powerful by constantly referring to them – just as we make others invisible by ignoring them. Ultimately we are gatekeepers of what makes the news –what is somehow deemed 'important' – and what is not.

Ultimately if we believe in a free, fair and democratic society, we need to help build it and not just imagine we can be witnesses to it. It may not happen otherwise. Better human rights' reporting is a good a start as any. Who can argue the Philippines or the world needs less and not more human rights awareness or protection? Championing human rights doesn't make you a worse journalist. On the contrary, it may provide the moral compass you need to help remember what ultimately matters.

People matter.

REPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS AS NEWS

"…the distinguishing mark of government these days is not so much corruption or incompetence as a grim determination to displace the straightforward with the devious, and to smother thought with slogans. That government succeeds partially is due not only to its power over mass media but also to our ignorance: too many of us are not aware of our rights and of the ways we can enforce them…"

– Jose W. Diokno

One needs only to examine the content of Philippine newspapers, radio, television broadcasts and on-line publications to determine that this same ignorance afflicts the news media tasked with the grave responsibility of informing and explaining to the people that which is complex and challenging like human rights.

Consequently, covering and reporting human rights are reduced to simplistic narratives of the struggle between good and evil that is then set on a stage where dramatic depictions of human despair become a sensational representation of the day's headline. It sells… but tells only part of the complex human rights story.

Complexity is usually not a favorite word among journalists, driven perhaps by need to adhere to one of journalism's basic principles: strive to make the significant interesting and

relevant, meaning a lot of hard work wading through concepts and jargon. To a larger extent, it may also be attributed to what had been said of media and human rights by Dr. Pradip Nunan Thomas, director of Studies and Publication at the World Association for Christian Communication in London: in a media context and culture "mainly dominated by the strength of the image, all that lies beyond the image might as well not exist."

Another big challenge facing journalists reporting on human rights is maintaining their independence when a tremendous amount of pressure is mounting everyday for them to pledge loyalty to a particular cause whether it is on the side of the continuing battle against human rights violations or waging war. As Thomas said, "While journalists can do good, it is not their purpose. Most journalists may well sign up to the notion that democratic pluralism and respect for human rights form the core of a unifying political ideology, but few wish to be told to follow a particular policy or strategy."

Aidan White, Secretary General of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), in his preface to the book Journalism, Media and the Challenge of Human Rights Reporting, argued that journalism's principles like truth-telling, independence and awareness of the impact of text and visual images on people "bolstered by political freedom and open government provide the backbone of democratic pluralism, but reporters are right to ask what becomes of scrutiny when journalism is the creature of political or social movements, no matter how well-meaning they may be."

The Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) thus explains: "The media is an essential check on power, and as such it is a crucial pillar of human rights protection. Yet the media also depend on human rights in order to operate effectively."

By virtue of their profession, journalists are often witnesses to human rights abuses. They have an ethical obligation to report on such abuses, whether it is the unlawful detention or

mistreatment of prisoners, deportations, illegal executions or massacres. The spotlight of the media is a primary mechanism for mobilizing the political will to obtain redress.


Photo by Jonald Mahinay

The IWPR also pointed out that "Because journalists are the first to bear witness to and report serious human rights abuses, it is frequently their work that provokes legal authorities to investigate. In recent years, prosecutors have cited press reports as evidence in their efforts to try war crimes suspects from Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. With the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, the importance of human rights reporting will continue to grow."

The Philippines is a signatory to the UDHR and other international human rights instruments and treaties but remains remiss in implementing its legal obligations. The findings of Philip Alston, UN Special Rapporteur on Extra-judicial Killings, in 2006, spoke volumes about the sad state of human rights in the country.

This also seriously impinges on the practice of journalism in the Philippines, which, at one point in 2005-2006 was named the second most dangerous place after Iraq for journalists because of the unabated killing of reporters and broadcasters in the provinces. Press associations, unions and media NGOs have put the number of Filipino journalists killed since 2001 at 77.

The International News Safety Institute (INSI), a Brussels-based non-profit working for the safety of journalists worldwide, reported in a study conducted over a 10-year period that of the 1,000 journalists and media staff killed around the globe, 657 women and men were murdered. They were killed for reporting wrongdoing, investigating human rights violations, and for trying "to shine a light into the dark recesses of their societies."

Such dire conditions offer journalists reporting human rights daunting challenges and at the same time tremendous opportunities for expanding the impact of the craft on both journalistic practice and societies as well.

In an information age where everything is linked somehow, somewhere, it is understood that human rights concepts and principles cannot achieve social significance until explained fully and communicated accurately to a wide audience by making the significant and complex interesting and relevant. Increasing public awareness can lead to action for human rights.

Journalists, by reporting on what they have observed and learned, play a very important role in generating public opinion, satisfying citizens' access and right to information. Despite shortcomings, many incidences of violations of human rights have been reported by the news media over the years. In some instances, these have led to state actions addressing human rights issues but, as evidenced by the findings in the Alston report, many violations have gone unaddressed.

But, lamentably, journalists are also often caught in a bind when reporting human rights violations especially in conflict areas. Too many instances have been noted of journalists themselves depending on human rights for protection. The IWPR emphasizes that "journalists are not singled out for special treatment under humanitarian law. However, human rights conventions accord all civilians certain protections. In theory, parties to a conflict should allow journalists to work freely in conflict zones and refrain from harassing or detaining them."


Photo by Romy Elusfa

Said Pradip Nunan Thomas, "While we should be grateful for every story reported in the media on human rights, why is it that some stories are reported and not others? The absence of such stories in the world's media points to the fact that human rights reporting is not by any stretch of the imagination interest-free. The inability of the world's media to see the larger picture of human rights is a tacit acknowledgement that not every life is precious and worthy of being safe guarded…"

Given the reality of journalists being imprisoned or harassed by all sides in a conflict, reporting becomes extremely hazardous despite pressure from news agencies, human rights organizations and governments for the protection of journalists.

How then should journalists view the larger human rights stage from a news reporting perspective?

This field guide attempts to answer that question by providing journalists, the main users of this modest volume, practical advice and steps in covering, developing, and reporting human rights stories given the dominant understanding of human rights as linked to its violation. It is not surprising therefore that people would readily explain the nature of human rights in terms of violations (examples, "extra-judicial killings," torture," "physical abuse," "illegal detention").

It should also be pointed out that in a rapidly-changing environment where demand for speedy information is at a premium, journalists are often reduced to stereotyping,

selectivity, sensationalism when reporting war and peace, to cite one obvious example. Stories emphasize despair by building on grim realities. While there are some barely noticeable changes, reporting conflict in Mindanao, for instance, still reflects the news media's propensity for portraying the dominant stereotype of Muslims as fanatical and violent.

The field guide is by no means a treatise on changing the media and human rights environment. Rather it hopes to encourage journalists to think seriously about how they cover some issues, especially those relating to human rights, about their responsibility to do so as accurately as possible. It also aims to serve as a reminder that human rights news reporting has both political and social impacts and journalists must try to avoid, for example, reinforcing the loaded terminology used by those holding power.

The guide is divided into four main sections designed as tips and steps, what to seek out and what to avoid, how to dig deeper into an issue without getting sidetracked by too much information, how to determine human rights themes and how to discern rights-based issues in day-to-day events.

This section, Reporting Human Rights as News, is the introductory part that provides the context and background for the whole book. Section 2, Human Rights and the News Media, is a short discussion of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), international human rights instruments, treaties and obligations, press freedom as a human right, and human rights definitions as these relate to the news media and the practice of journalism in the Philippines. It will also provide on-line resource links to human rights documents, laws, instruments, etc.

Section 3, The News Process, invites journalists to explore other ways of covering, developing and reporting human rights for newspapers and other similar media, television, radio and on-line publications. With each medium having a particular requirement for information delivery, how does one select and

develop a story? What should a reporter look out for when in the field? How does the story fit with recent events in the area or region? Some themes that reporters face on a daily basis that could be developed into multi-dimensional human rights stories:

- Demolition of slum dwellings (including urban renewal, resettlement, sidewalk clearing)
- Denial or lack of decent working conditions/ minimum wages
- Prejudice against the disabled and elderly
- Discrimination against persons with HIV/AIDS
- Racial and ethnic discrimination
- Child abuse (including sexual abuse)
- Child labor
- Children in situations of armed conflict
- Human trafficking
- Food scarcity
- Domestic violence
- Parading of victims and suspects before the news media
- Illegal detention and custodial deaths
- Police and military atrocities
- Denial of access to information

Section 4, Journalists' Safety and Human Rights Lifeline, provides safety advice, important references, list of human rights organizations, humanitarian agencies (including telephone hotlines in case of emergencies), links to media and press associations or groups (local and international), and tips on how to form localized human rights media circles for alerts purposes.

The Philippine Human Rights Reporting Project hopes that it will become part of the journalist's toolkit especially when out on assignment, a constant companion with some ready advice when needed, a handy reference when short of accessible information, and a compass when lost in the complex maze of human rights definitions and jargon. It is for all journalists who are committed to their craft and are serious about exploring the challenging terrain of human rights in the same manner that it is also for those who think that human rights reporting is not exciting.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE NEWS MEDIA

Why Do Journalists and the News Media Need to Know Human Rights?

Human rights in the Philippines exist in a paradox. At one end is the continuing rise of human rights activism expressed through civil society groups, a resurgent Commission on Human Rights, and the media. On the other is the continuing violation of those same rights expressed dramatically in extrajudicial killings that included the targeting of a high number of journalists.

Knowing and understanding one's rights not only prevent abuse but also contributes to strengthening the promotion, protection and fulfilment of human rights as underlined in international agreements, treaties and obligations.

Having a fair understanding of human rights also greatly informs the journalist's reporting not only of events but of continuing human development challenges. In some instances it may also help ensure the personal safety of journalists and media staff.

What Are Human Rights?

Carlos Medina, Executive Director of the Ateneo Human Rights Center, in the Source Book on Human Rights, provides these definitions:

• Human rights are rights which all human beings have by virtue of their humanity. Unlike ordinary rights, their existence or availability does not depend on the happening of any act or event, or on the grant of any individual or government. They are inherent rights, i.e., they belong to man simply because he is a human being.

• Human rights cannot be sold, mortgaged, donated, forfeited or transferred by man or taken away by the state. Neither can they be lost through time by a person's failure to exercise or assert them.

Photo by Charlie Magno

• Human rights are also fundamental rights. They are entitled to special protection because many other values depend on them. It does not follow, however, that all these rights are absolute. For instance, a person may be deprived of his right to life after due process of law. Like ordinary rights, reasonable limitations are permissible in the case of human rights.

• Human rights are enjoyed by all human beings regardless of sex, race, color, creed, language, political opinion, national or social origin, or status of life.

What Are Ordinary Rights?

• Ordinary rights are acquired or created by some act or event and can be alienated or extinguished by other acts of events. People possess these rights not because of their humanity but by virtue of some transaction which people may enter into or the occurrence of an event. For example, a person's right to drive his car and to deny others its use is based on his ownership of the car as a result of his having bought it. Without a sale or other prior transaction (lease, donation, and others) he would have no right to the use of the car at all.

• Individuals may have these rights in different measures. A person may own a bigger and more expensive car than another. Or an accident victim who is wealthy may be entitled to bigger damages from the wrongdoer than a victim who is homeless and unemployed.

In the essay, Human Rights and Journalism, the Institute for War and Peace Reporting traced the beginnings of human rights:

• 18th and 19th centuries -- several European philosophers proposed the concept of 'natural rights', rights belonging to a person by nature and because he was a human being, not by virtue of his citizenship in a particular country or membership in a particular religious or ethnic group.

• 1864 first Geneva Convention signed after Henri Dunant, founder of the Red Cross, expressing concern for the plight of the sick and wounded, worked for its establishment. In the late 19th century, and into the 20th, these rights progressed further as political and religious groups worked to end slavery, serfdom and exploitative labor practices.

• October 1945 – Charter of the United Nations entered into force to "reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small."

• 1946 – the Nazi military and political leadership in Germany were put on trial in Nuremberg for the crimes they committed

against civilians and a new legal concept was born: crimes against humanity. These proceedings would lead to the expansion of the Geneva Conventions in 1949 to protect civilians during wartime, specifically outlawing attacks on civilians and civilian property.

• 1948 – the United Nations established the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), enshrining respect for basic human rights as a necessary condition of any country seeking to be part of a modern international community. Article 19 of the Declaration specifically addresses media freedom by guaranteeing the freedom of opinion and expression, including the right to "seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers."

• Cold War – slowed down the development of international human rights institutions, although it was human rights conventions that helped open up the Soviet Union. Out of this effort, leading independent international organizations committed to human rights were established.

• 1990 – the Islamic Conference Organization declared, "human beings are born free and no one has a right to enslave, humiliate, oppress or exploit them and there can be no subjugation but to Allah the Almighty."

• 1993 – the UN created the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to monitor and enforce human rights worldwide.

It also established war crimes tribunals to prosecute crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Subsequently, the UN has aided Cambodia, East Timor and Sierra Leone in their efforts to establish tribunals to try war crimes suspects.

• July 2002 – the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court entered into force, establishing permanent court to try those accused of serious crimes such as crimes against humanity and genocide.

Human Rights Documents

Much has been accomplished in expanding the body of international human rights over the last 60 years. The normative system and common standards for human rights across nations have been substantially formed leaving a bigger task at hand: implementing legal obligations and articulating these norms and standards into concrete realizations by all human beings regardless of race, religion and political persuasion. Another important task is to incorporate international human rights into the legal systems of nations and then to enforce these at various levels with sanctions for those who commit violations.

People have been concerned with rights and freedoms since the advent of civilization. Although the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 is the more popular human rights document, the concept of human rights did not begin with it.

Said Mary Robinson, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: "Human rights are inscribed in the hearts of people; they were there long before lawmakers drafted their first proclamation."

Photo by Jes Aznar

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

Adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948, the UDHR is the most translated document in the world and acts as its conscience.

It is also the global standard for human rights and covers the right to life, liberty and security; freedom from torture; the right to free movement as well as the right to free expression (Article 19).

It makes clear that all individuals have a "birthright" and are not subject to the whims of the state.

The UDHR was followed by two legally binding Covenants:

• International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Further information -- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, OHCHR-UNOG 8-14 Avenue de la Paix, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland Telephone (41-22) 917-9000 URL: www.unhchr.ch

• International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Further information -- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, OHCHR-UNOG 8-14 Avenue de la Paix, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland Telephone (41-22) 917-9000 URL: www.unhchr.ch

Collectively, they form the basis of international human rights protection and are known as the International Bill of Rights.

Seven Core International Human Rights Conventions

1. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)
2. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
3. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
4. Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
5. Convention Against Torture and other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment and Punishment (CAT)
6. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
7. International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW)

Photo by Leo Esclanda

Human Rights Enshrined in the Philippine Constitution

The Philippines has ratified or signed, with some exceptions, all major human rights treaties. Section 2, Article II of the 1987 Constitution states: "The Philippines renounces war as an instrument of national policy and adopts the generally accepted principles of international law as part of the law of the land, and adheres to the policy of peace, equality, justice, freedom and cooperation and amity with all nations."

The Philippine Constitution also goes beyond the statement of principles by incorporating Article XIII, entitled "Human Rights and Social Justice, which states that, "Congress shall give the highest priority to the enactment of measures that protect and enhance the rights of all the people to human dignity, reduce social, economic, and political inequalities, and remove cultural inequities by equitably diffusing wealth and political power for the common good."

Quick Facts

Characteristics of Human Rights and State Obligations

All human rights are universal, indivisible, inter-dependent and inter-related. The international community must treat human rights everywhere in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing, and with the same importance or emphasis.

When the State ratifies human rights conventions it unconditionally accepts the international human rights legal system. In the UNESCR, the State is obligated to progressively achieve the full realization of the rights recognized in the Covenant.

These State obligations are:

1. Respect and ensure the recognized rights of everyone, without distinction of any kind.
2. Refrain from violating those rights or restricting/ interfering with the exercise of the rights other than as permitted by the Covenant.
3. Ensure rights and freedoms by removing obstacles to, and creating the conditions necessary for, their enjoyment.
4. Ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of rights.
5. Adopt necessary legislative or other measures necessary to give effect to covenant rights.
6. Specifically prohibit, with criminal sanctions, violation of some rights, including the right to life, the right not to be tortured or subjected to slavery or servitude, as well as rights against gender-based violence.
7. Bring into conformity with human rights treaties legislation such as those relating to arrest, detention and trial, electoral laws and family law, which are relevant to the enjoyment of rights.

8. Strictly apply limitations on these rights and freedoms i.e. as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedom of others.
9. Adopt other measures of a non-legislative kind which are necessary to make rights effective and to remove obstacles to their enjoyment – such as the right to legal assistance, preferential treatment, or other positive action to overcome discrimination or to bring a disadvantaged group to a position equal to that of the rest of the population.
10. Ensure that any person whose rights or freedoms are violated shall have an effective and enforceable remedy even against persons acting in an official capacity.
11. Ensure that any person claiming such remedy shall have his/her right thereto determined by competent judicial, administrative or legislative authorities, or by any other competent authority, and to develop the possibilities of judicial remedy.
12. Enforce, through competent authority (judicial, administrative, legislative) such remedies when and as they are granted. Essential requirements of these remedies are that they must be effective, they must end violation, they must overcome or compensate for their (violations') effects, and they must ensure against further violations.
13. Provide all other effective legal remedies and legal protection in respect of each recognized right and freedom.
14. Inform all the people about their rights by publishing the treaties and relevant information in local languages.

The Right to Development

The United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development touches on development as a human right and specifies obligations for states and governments pertaining to this. Some components that should have overriding influence on governance and development:

- The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.
- The human right to development also implies the full realization of the right of peoples to self-determination, which includes, subject to the relevant provisions of both International Covenants on Human Rights, the exercise of their inalienable right to full sovereignty over all their natural wealth and resources.
- The human person is the central subject of development and should be the active participant and beneficiary of the right to development.
- All human beings have a responsibility for development, individually and collectively, taking into account the need for full respect for their human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as their duties to the community, which alone can ensure the free and complete fulfilment of the human being; they should therefore promote and protect an appropriate political, social and economic order for development.
- States have the right and duty to formulate appropriate national development policies that aim at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals, on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and the fair distribution of the benefits resulting therefrom.

THE NEWS PROCESS

This section invites journalists to explore other ways of covering, developing and reporting human rights for newspapers and other similar media, television, radio and on-line publications. With each medium having a particular requirement for information delivery, how does one select and develop a story? What should a reporter look out for when in the field? How does the story fit with recent events in the area or region?

The Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) also emphasizes that "reporting on human rights requires the same adherence to high standards as reporting on any other subject. But because of the great sensitivity, journalists need to be especially careful and sensitive about the possible dangers and pitfalls."

It further cautions that in most conflicts any side may commit violations and journalists may be at risk of reporting more on abuses committed by one side because they are seen as the "aggressors" or maybe because there is more information about the alleged crimes. Journalists should be prepared to report any human rights violations by any group in the same way that they should take care in distinguishing between a policy of human rights violations and an isolated instance of human rights abuse.

Journalists should do well to keep those in mind as well as other important aspects of human rights especially those relating to the respect, fulfilment and protection of economic, social, and cultural rights.

This section presents three major themes that, hopefully, will guide journalists towards a more informed human rights reporting. These themes are built around (1) peace and security with emphasis on extra-judicial killings; (2) poverty; and, (3) environment. The last two, more often than not, tend to be underreported from a human rights lens.

It's Not Just About the Beggars on The Streets

When 2008 opened, the count of poor Filipinos stood at 22 million. When the year drew to a close, however, about nine million more had fallen into the depths of poverty, the consequence of soaring food prices, by as high as 40 percent for rice alone.

Photo by Barry Ohaylan

In the Philippines, stories of poverty and hunger do make it to the news. But because the media—and the general public for that matter—largely equate human rights with political and civil rights, they almost always ignore the human rights dimension of economic and social issues, including poverty, much unlike when they report on, say, extrajudicial killings.

Yet economic, social and cultural rights directed toward human development are as important and interrelated, and underreporting them hardly justified. The growing ranks of poor Filipinos, for example, means more people being deprived of their right to an adequate standard of living, including freedom from hunger, and a host of other human rights.

Not only are the poor those with the lowest incomes, they are also the most deprived of health, education and other aspects of human wellbeing. People need to be told. Journalists

should learn to go beyond reporting just the "poverty line" and, like development workers, put in indicators of wellbeing such as literacy, infant deaths and life expectancy in stories about poverty.

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights lists economic and social rights as:

- Right to an adequate standard of living
- Right to adequate food
- Right to clothing
- Right to decent housing
- Right to work
- Right to education
- Right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health
- Right against discrimination
- Equality between men and women

A slew of international agreements and national legislation have been adopted to enforce these rights. The Philippines is signatory to a range of conventions, from those on the minimum wage and equal remuneration to those on the rights of the child and elimination of discrimination against women. The Declaration of Principles of State Policies and Bill of Rights in the 1987 Constitution and enabling laws reaffirm the country's commitment to promote and protect human rights.

Sadly, the Philippines and many countries still fall short of realizing the rights—for lack of resources or political will—necessitating the United Nations to time and again set time-bound targets like those in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs restate the world's commitment to economic, social and cultural rights. Specifically, the MDGs hope to achieve the following by 2015:

- Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability

Food

Photo by Jes Aznar

Freedom from hunger, along with the right to decent clothing and to adequate housing, is integral to the right to an adequate standard of living. But stamping out hunger and poverty in the Philippines—the MDG target to halve the proportion of people who live on less than $1 a day by 2015 in particular—is easier said than done. The global economic slowdown, escalating food prices and global warming have undermined the gains in the fight against hunger and poverty.

But even before the onset of the food and energy crises, extreme poverty has gripped many regions in the Visayas and Mindano where the incidence of poverty was already higher than the national figure. And while child malnutrition had been on the decline, wide disparities also existed across regions. The media, however, tend to miss these inequalities, which have retarded attempts to fully realize human rights.

The extent of hunger or malnutrition is one of the best indicators of the extent of the deprivation of the right to adequate food. But focus must be trained on food supply, production and distribution as well. This inevitably leads to how the agrarian system is used to promote food security.

Ironically, it is in the rural areas, where food production largely takes place, that poverty is most acute and widespread: Four out of five are poor, eking out a living from subsistence farming and fishing.

For decades, government has attempted through land reform to address the landlessness that has bound many households to penury. After all, studies have documented the positive impact of land reform: higher farm income and yield, improved land tenure, access to market and credit, and reduction of poverty incidence among beneficiaries.

But flawed policies, including the recently ended Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program enacted by a landlord-dominated Congress, have left more than half a million farmers still waiting for their piece of land. An extension of the program has yet to be approved by the legislature.

Housing

About 4.5 million Filipinos are homeless; they live in parks, along sidewalks or have no form of shelter whatsoever. The country's homeless are mostly squatters or illegal settlers in the urban centers.

But the right of housing does not simply mean a roof over one's head. Adequate housing also means ready access to basic amenities—water, waste disposal, sanitation facilities, electricity, emergency services, among others. Or as the UN Center for Human Settlements-Habitat describes adequate shelter: "Adequate privacy, adequate space, adequate security, adequate lighting and ventilation, adequate basic infrastructure

and adequate location with regard to work and basic facilities—all at a reasonable cost." The MDGs enjoin the Philippines and other countries to halve by 2015 the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

Security of tenure is also fundamental to the right to adequate housing. This means legal protection against forced eviction, harassment and other threats.

Work

Photo by Sonny Espiritu

Full and productive employment has been identified as a step toward eradicating extreme hunger and poverty; hence, the importance of vocational and technical programs. But the country's high unemployment and underemployment rates—nearly 8 percent and 18 percent in January 2009—and chronic inability to create jobs make full employment a distant possibility.

The extent of domestic unemployment, however, is masked by the swelling number of migrant workers, who today accounts for about a tenth of the population. But with overseas employment come a host of other problems: brain drain, discrimination, clandestine employment, economic refugees, illegal immigration and trafficking. More recently, the recent financial turmoil has left thousands of overseas workers jobless.

At home or abroad, Filipinos enjoy a range of basic rights when it comes to work: freedom to choose work, a living wage, safe and healthy working conditions, equal employment and promotion opportunities, rest, reasonable limited working hours and paid vacation.

Workers are also guaranteed the right to form a trade union and to strike, as well the right to social security. The different forms of social security include medical care, sickness benefit, unemployment benefit, old age pension, employment injury benefit, family benefit, maternity, invalidity benefit and survivors' (widows or widowers) benefit.

As a rule, international and national laws prohibit child labor and other forms of exploitation.

Education

The word is out: The Philippines is lagging behind in achieving universal primary education by 2015. Universal primary education is not only an MDG but also laid down in the World Declaration for Education for All. Free, compulsory primary education forms the heart of the right to education.

Poverty has kept many Filipino children out of school. So have disability, work, illness, armed conflict, disaster and other emergencies. In fact, school participation rate has consistently dropped at both the elementary and the secondary levels. On the other hand, the number of children who do not complete elementary education has grown, prompting the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization or UNESCO to call the Philippines a "high enrolment, low survival" country.

The right to education also provides that secondary education be generally available and accessible to all and

progressively free, and higher education equally accessible to all. The right to education likewise gives parents the right to freely choose schools other than those provided by the government, as long as these conform to the minimum standards set by the government.

Attention must be drawn to literacy, school attendance and school dropouts, and issues relating to these such as the distance of schools from home. Public spending on education becomes better understood when compared to how much other countries invest in education.


Photo by Charlie Magno

Factors that determine a child's ability to learn such as health, nutritional status, wellbeing, safety and protection from abuse and violence should not be overlooked. Language is equally important, especially the use of mother tongue or first-language which local and international studies have repeatedly shown to enhance a child's learning, especially in the early years.

As important as enrolment is the quality of education. This encompasses the quality of educational infrastructure, quality of the curriculum, quality of books and other learning materials and their availability, and the quality of teaching, including teacher training and compensation.

Health

The MDGs highlight the need to reduce deaths of children who are under five, improve maternal health, and combat HIV/AIDs, malaria and other diseases. Until the economic crisis struck, the Philippines had reported gains in reducing the under-five mortality rate (The goal: by two thirds between 1990 and 2015). But the government had acknowledged even then it was unlikely they would meet the MDG target on maternal mortality or access to reproductive health services. And the incidence of HIV/AIDs in the Philippines, it conceded, had gone from "low and slow" to "hidden and growing."

The right to health focuses specifically on public health, both physical and mental health. It mandates accessible health care for all in the shortest possible time.

The country's growing population is too serious a problem to gloss over because it is correlated to poverty. The high maternal mortality rate, aggravated in part by unmet family planning needs, is tied to the population issue. Unwanted pregnancies, including teen pregnancies, induced abortions, abortion-related deaths and disabilities and child deaths are also partly due to the lack of access to reproductive health services. A 2007 survey shows that only half of married women use any family planning method, natural or artificial, for lack of access. A 2006 study found that less than a third use modern methods.

Aside from those mentioned in the MDGs, a few more items should merit media scrutiny:

- Public spending on health
- Supply of essential drugs
- Infant and child immunization
- Life expectancy
- Access to safe water
- Access to adequate waste disposal facilities
- Access to trained medical personnel, especially by infants, mothers and by others who need treatment of common diseases and injuries

- Prevention, treatment and control of epidemic, endemic occupational and other diseases
- Environmental and industrial hygiene

Discrimination

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees every person equal protection against any discrimination. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is more specific, prohibiting discrimination because of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Women, children, indigenous peoples, the disabled and the elderly are among the groups most vulnerable to discrimination. Discrimination against the disabled, in particular, is severe in the fields of education, employment, housing, transport, cultural life, and access to public places and services.

That is why these groups have been singled out for protection by international conventions and domestic legislation. The Philippines, for example, ratified in 1981 the Convention on

the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In addition, the MDGs call for the promotion of gender equality and women empowerment, as well as the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education.

Persons with HIV/AIDS have also been singled out for protection by the MDGs because HIV is acknowledged to be more than a public health issue. The stigma attached to HIV/AIDS can affect the right to work, right to go to school, right to protection from abuse or violence, and the right not to suffer discrimination.

Human rights 'hook'

Journalists need to spot the human rights "hook" so they can work this into their stories. Their reports should categorically state what rights are involved to lead the audience to the issue. Many citizens are unaware of even the most fundamental rights and what they mean.

The human rights angle should be linked to standards. Reference should be made to international conventions the government has signed and the national standards it has set by way of legislation or other forms of policy. This helps remind the audience that government should be held to account for the deprivation or violation of a basic human right. Stories should explicitly say so if the government is not meeting its commitments.

Reporting on human rights is no different from reporting on most other topics. It pays to put what is called the "human face"—a person, family or community most affected by the issue. But putting a human face should not be mere tokenism, used to just open their stories and forgotten after the lead. A case study approach used throughout the story is better than an example mentioned only in passing in the lead.

Even with a case study approach, journalists should always pull out to the big picture to demonstrate the extent of the issue. This is where background or historical context comes in. Journalists will find it useful to compare the situation over time, say, five or 10 years ago or even longer.


Photo by Jes Aznar

Cultural, political and social contexts should also be woven into the story and, when necessary, handled with sensitivity. However, provide background that is enough but not too much to drown the news.

Statistics help illustrate the magnitude of the problem but should likewise be reported in context. It would also help the audience if journalists explain how statistics are put together, especially if the method of gathering them is open to question.

When reporting on social and economic issues, scrutinize and report disaggregated data—by gender, age, ethnicity, geographic distribution, socioeconomic status, disability. Breaking down data according to categories helps journalists spot vulnerable or disadvantaged groups and highlight disparities and inequities. The next step is to zero in on these groups.

Social and economic issues tend to be packed with jargon. Cohort survival? Gross enrolment? Net enrolment? Journalists should pause to define and explain.

Other than the media, many actors have a hand in the production of news stories about human rights, including governments, nongovernmental and intergovernmental organizations, public relations firms and other interest groups. On many occasions, pre-packaged information, including those packed with spins, is readily available from these groups.

Reports, especially by the government, should be treated with caution. Even the UN has noted that countries tend to avoid including negative developments or frustrated aspirations in their documents. Governments also turn to technical policy language—propaganda in short—when they are the violator. The Philippine government is no exception.

Journalists need to be reminded of their role to provide accurate, reliable and timely information on human rights issues. The quality of their reporting will be affected if they rely more on secondary sources than on their own investigation. And regardless of their source, journalists should stick to the discipline of multiple sourcing, double-checking and seeing corroboration. Triangulating different sources helps.

Journalists should learn to also evaluate measures taken to advance and safeguard human rights and see if these conform to commitments government has made to its citizens and the UN. There are still many policy gaps in the field of human rights, and the media must develop the skills to do policy analysis. For example, discriminatory provisions are still found in existing laws and must be repealed. The Family Code, for one, gives the husband the final decision in cases of disagreement over conjugal property and parental authority and legal guardianship over the person and property of a common child.

There is certainly no way one can report on poverty and violation of basic human rights without discussing the extent of corruption in the country. Survey after survey has highlighted pervasive corruption in the Philippines, earning it the title of being Asia's most corrupt in recent years and, according to the

Photo by Charlie Magno

Commission on Human Rights, bringing it to "humanitarian crisis" levels. Corruption, said CHR Chair Leila de Lima in a speech, has led the country "into our quagmire now—the poor are less educated, have less access to health and economic opportunity, and are less able to uplift themselves from their own poverty."

But stories about human rights need not always be glum. There is space and airtime for good news in and out of government that have the power to encourage and inspire citizens to uphold and further human rights. In the field of education alone, there is plenty to write about: school feeding for the poor, alternative learning systems, private sector adoption of public schools, parental involvement in fixing schools, and citizen participation in monitoring and distributing textbooks.

More importantly, journalists should not forget to extensively mine these themes for more compelling stories.

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Put People at the Center of The Story

In October 2005, a tailings pond of the Rapu-rapu Polymetallic Project in Bicol in Southern Luzon overflowed and spilled cyanide waste into Bacon Bay east of Sorsogon province. The accident happened just four months after the mine opened, and after much warning from environment groups as reported by the media that mining was endangering fragile Rapu-rapu island, a haven of marine biodiversity. The tailings spill drew criticism against Lafayette Philippines Inc, the company that operated the mine, after it caused a fish kill in the surrounding waters and endangered food security and health.


Photo by Keith Bacongco

This was not the first time such a disaster has been reported by the media. Nearly a decade earlier, in 1996, another mine tailings spill in another island—the Marcopper disaster on Marinduque—became the subject of media reportage for the magnitude of its destruction and grave effects on the health of the local population. The media, especially television, recorded how mine waste turned the seawater gray and how children developed a variety of respiratory and skin diseases from the toxins in the air and water.

There have been many other stories similar to Rapu-rapu and Marcopper over the years. Journalists have approached such stories from the scientific, financial or economic point of view. The most effective environment stories, however, are those told with a human rights perspective.

Reporting from a human rights perspective means putting people at the center of stories, highlighting the dangers to health, livelihood, communities and cultures. Reporting from a human rights perspective also means focusing on collective actions and successes of people and communities working to protect the environment and preserve indigenous culture.

Unlike such rights as the right to education, the right to life, or the right to property, there are no specific statements pertaining explicitly to the environment in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). As such, journalists rarely cite human rights provisions when the subject of news coverage is environmental destruction. Toxic fumes spewed into the air, or mine wastes dumped into the water are not reported as human rights violations but rather as regulatory failures.

What are known as environmental rights are incorporated into the various provisions of the UDHR, such as the right to health and the right to information. Various declarations drafted by governments and peoples from environmental summits and conferences over the past 40 years, as well as resolutions approved by United Nations bodies have strived to make more explicit the concept of "environment rights."

These declarations include the UN's 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Declaration of the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972, the Declaration on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and the Declaration on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. The Philippines is a signatory to all these.

Another example is the Commission on Human Rights resolution 2003/71 on Human Rights and the Environment as part of sustainable development.

Photo by Keith Bacongco

These international instruments provide journalists with three main concepts or frameworks for reporting on the environment using a human rights point of view:

1. The right to a clean and safe environment. A central theme in environmental reportage has been the recognition that people and communities have the right to enjoy a good quality of life, and that the enjoyment of human rights depends on an environment that promotes mental, physical and social health.

This principle is articulated in Article 25 of the UNDHR which recognizes "the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being," as well as in Article 12 of the ICESCR, which protects the right to "the highest attainable standard of health." The Stockholm declaration of 1972 asserts that "the protection and improvement of the human environment is a major issue which affects the well-being of peoples and economic development throughout the world; it is the urgent desire of the peoples of the whole world and the duty of all Governments."

2. The right to act to protect the environment. Countless government agencies, civil society groups and community organizations have adopted the cause of the environment, and have taken steps to protect it. Often, however, acting to protect the environment comes with risk of harassment, arrest, detention, even summary execution by powerful forces.

To engage in mass action is a right stated in Article 20 of the UNDHR, "Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association." The Stockholm declaration says, "to defend and improve the human environment for present and future generations has become an imperative goal for mankind." To protect the environment is also a duty of the state, according to the Declaration on Environment and Development drafted in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, which must cooperate "to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem."

3. The right to information and to take part in decision-making concerning the environment. As part of human rights, countries, people and communities are entitled to information on projects that affect their environment. They must be consulted and involved in making decisions that will affect them and their children.

This basic right is provided in Article 19 of the UNDHR, which states that "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." The Rio declaration of 1992 also institutionalized access to information when it urged states to adopt the practice of environmental impact assessment "for proposed activities that are likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment."

A series of Philippine environmental laws that date back nearly three decades have set up an environmental impact statement system designed to regulate projects and activities considered harmful to the environment. These include Presidential Decree (PD) No. 1586, and Executive Order No. 192, Series of 1987, Department Administrative Order (DAO) No. 21, Series of 1992 of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Journalists must be aware that these laws have identified certain projects as hazardous or "environmentally critical." They fall under four major categories:

Heavy industries – non-ferrous metal industries, iron and steel mills, petroleum and petrochemical industries and smelting plants

Resource extractive industries – major mining and quarrying projects, forestry projects that include logging and major wood processing, and fisheries projects that include dikes for fishpond development.

Infrastructure projects – dams, roads and bridges, all sorts of power plants, and reclamation projects.

Golf course projects – huge, sprawling recreational development projects that have a huge dependence on water sources

Environment laws have also identified areas considered "environmentally sensitive." These are:

- National parks, watershed reserves, wildlife preserves, and sanctuaries
- Areas identified as potential tourist spots
- Habitat for any endangered or threatened species of indigenous Philippine wildlife
- Areas of unique historic archeological or scientific interest
- Areas occupied by indigenous peoples
- Calamity-prone areas
- Critical slopes
- Prime agricultural lands
- Aquifers or the underground layer of water
- Bodies of water used for domestic purposes, for fishing and those inside protected areas
- Mangroves and coral reefs

Bearing in mind these three main concepts as frameworks for environmental reporting, journalists, should be on the lookout for story ideas and key questions under each of the main concepts.

On the right to a clean and safe environment:

- What are the consequences on the environment of projects such as mines, dams and factories?
- Do these projects come with proper waste disposal facilities?
- Are these waste disposal facilities adequate to contain the amount of waste?
- How will bodies of water be affected?
- If the air will be affected, what levels of contamination are expected?
- How will the community's food supply be affected?
- Are there protected areas in and around project sites? How will they be affected?

On the right to act to protect the environment:

- Which environment advocates and community groups are opposing the project and why?
- Who are these advocates and what are their backgrounds?
- What measures are they taking to stop the project?
- Are environment advocates being harassed or threatened for their opposition to these projects?
- Who are responsible for threats?

On the right to information:

- Have there been genuine consultations with the affected community?
- Did the consultations satisfactorily address the community's concerns?
- Was the community furnished a copy of the Environmental Impact Assessment, a vital document that will explain the consequences to the environment?
- Was the community informed of the plans?

- What measures have been instituted to periodically update the community on the operations of the project?
- What concessions and agreements have been reached?

Mining projects in the Philippines

One of the more urgent issues in environmental reporting in the Philippines is mining. The country expects to see a revitalized mining industry as the government attempts to make the country a world mining leader by 2010.

Photo by LRC-KsK

This has translated into an aggressive promotion by the government of mining opportunities to attract foreign investors. In particular, officials cited the nine million hectares in the Philippines abundant in, among others, gold, copper, chromite and nickel. Officials have also been offering the country as a site for potential cement and quarrying activities.

The Mining Act of 1995 opened the doors to increased mining activity. Environment advocates called for the scrapping of the law but in December 2004, the Supreme Court upheld its constitutionality and even allowed 100 % foreign ownership of mining projects.

Disasters such as Rapu-rapu and Marcopper have drawn attention to the hazards of bringing in more mining projects.

Over the past century, such projects have left a legacy of abandoned mine sites, damaged communities, and depleted resources that journalists only need cite to make their stories more informed, more relevant, and more comprehensive.

The following are key questions that journalists covering the mining sector and mining projects should incorporate into their stories for a deeper understanding of the issue:

- What companies, foreign and local, are engaging in mining activities?
- What are these companies' track records? Have they been involved in environmental disasters in the past?
- Who are the individuals who own or man these mining operations?
- What benefits are these companies getting from the government? In the case of Rapu-rapu, for example, the government offered Lafayette a seven-year tax holiday which also translates into loss of revenue for the community and the government.
- How many have been displaced from their homes because of the mining activity?
- What hazards to health have been noted or predicted?
- What effect will these projects have on protected areas?
- When reporting on a particular area, what experience has this town or village had with mining in the past?

Indigenous Peoples and communities

Indigenous communities play a key role in protecting the environment. While it is true that dams, mines, roads and bridges, and tourism projects have wiped out many indigenous communities over the past decades, a number of them still remain in the remote reaches of the Philippines.

An estimated 10 percent of the population belonging to these have kept their traditions, customs, and lifestyles intact

Photo by Ruby Thursday More

despite colonization and modernization. But it has been recognized that the key to the protection of indigenous culture is the preservation of indigenous land and territory.

The 1987 Philippine constitution recognizes indigenous people's rights to their ancestral land. In 1997, a landmark law called the Indigenous People's Rights Act (IPRA) recognized and protected indigenous people's (IPs) rights, which include the right to own ancestral lands; the right to self-governance and empowerment; social justice and human rights; and the Right to Cultural Integrity.

But indigenous communities have found it difficult to assert themselves given the onslaught of so-called development projects such as mines, infrastructure and tourism projects. In particular, there have been disputes between mining companies and IPs as both assert their rights to the land. Often, though, poor and uneducated IPs have proven no match for big moneyed companies.

Disputes between such projects as mining operations and indigenous communities are expected to intensify in the future. Journalists can play a significant role by adopting the human rights framework in reporting on indigenous peoples.

The Rio declaration of 1992 contains a provision which pertains specifically to IPs. Principle 22 states that "Indigenous people and their communities and other local communities have a vital role in environmental management and development because of their knowledge and traditional practices. States should recognize and duly support their identity, culture and interests and enable their effective participation in the achievement of sustainable development."

Key questions that journalists should bear in mind when reporting on indigenous people:

- What practices, customs and traditions are likely to disappear as indigenous communities are overrun by various projects?
- What efforts are indigenous communities taking to resolve clashes with big business over disputed land?
- What is the community's history of resistance to big projects? Is this history preserved in lore, song and dance?
- What efforts are being taken by local governments as well as big business to aid indigenous communities?
- What is the state of social services in indigenous communities? Will big projects help or exacerbate such social services?

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Critical Analysis Key to Compelling Story


Photo by Keith Bacongco

If current events were to be used as a gauge to determine the adherence of the Philippines to human rights principles, then the country has failed miserably. Extra-judicial killings, abductions and enforced disappearances continue to make almost daily headlines not only locally but internationally as well.

Philip Alston, the United Nations special rapporteur on extra-judicial, summary, or arbitrary executions, in February 2007 linked extrajudicial killings and the harassment of political activists to the Philippine military's counter-insurgency operations. The Armed Forces of the Philippines has categorically denied the allegations.

Journalists who had covered the legal Left, underground Left, secessionist groups in the north and south, church institutions, and non-governmental organizations to which human rights groups were automatically lumped by authorities in the sunset years of the Marcos regime up to the presidency of Corazon Aquino, would have preferred that the human rights beat is scrapped altogether.

Sadly, extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances remain unchecked under a supposedly democratic form of government. By all appearances, the human rights beat is here to stay. It has evolved through the decades weathering regimes of autocracy, coup-prone democracy, and the current scandal-ridden administration. It has witnessed the evolution of the Commission on Human Rights from an ad hoc presidential task force to an independent body. Today the human rights beat has its own press corps whose members struggle daily to come up with fair, accurate, credible, nuanced, and well-researched human rights stories.

In Davao City on March 30, 2009, the Commission on Human Rights led by its Chair Leila de Lima, convened a public inquiry into the unexplained killings since 1998 of 814 people, including 73 children believed to be the handiworks of vigilantes, the Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI) reported.

"Many of the victims were people purportedly with criminal records, giving rise to suspicions that the killings were the work of the so-called Davao Death Squad (DDS), a shadowy vigilante group," the PDI report said.

The report recounted the experience of De Lima during a speaking engagement in January 2009 also in Davao City where she mentioned the DDS.

"I noticed (that people in) the audience were looking at each other. During lunch break, two judges approached me and said there were hardly any cases filed with them because there were no witnesses and the investigations did not progress. They are also worried that people seem to accept or like the situation," the PDI report quoted De Lima as saying. The same report said that what De Lima found "most alarming" was "the growing culture or mentality of public acceptance of the executions."

Known for his unorthodox and controversial statements against criminals, Davao Mayor Rodrigo Duterte has denied the existence of the DDS and insinuations the local government has

permitted it to launch a series of sanctioned assassinations.

Photo by Rene Lumawag

"If there is an iota of evidence that we are involved in the killings, I will submit to you, at the end of the day, my resignation as city mayor of Davao, especially in the matter of the killings of minors," Duterte was quoted by a PDI report on March 31, 2009.

Alarmingly, the killings of Filipino journalists also persist. In the 1980s, the battle cry of Filipino journalists was "Don't Shoot Journalists." In 2009, the cry still resonates.

In its second annual Global Impunity Index released in the Philippines on March 23, 2009, the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) ranked the Philippines 6th in a list of 14 countries with five or more cases of unsolved murders of journalists. The CPJ said the 2009 Global Impunity Index was launched in the Philippines to commemorate the 4th anniversary of the killing of Midland Review journalist Marlene Esperat, who was fatally shot on March 24, 2005, in front of her children inside their house in Tacurong City in Sultan Kudarat.

The Philippine government, through Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, said the latest CPJ report was "an unfair depiction of what is happening based on measures that are inadequate." He said "the government will not force quick convictions simply for the sake of announcing achievements."

From the mid-1970s through the 1990s, extrajudicial killings were called either "salvagings" or "summary executions." During the same period, what is labeled now as enforced disappearance was then identified as "involuntary disappearance."

Whatever the tag maybe, one of the most current and comprehensive description of extrajudicial killing is that of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which defines it as "the deliberate and unjustified execution of a person perpetrated or allowed by persons whose actions are supported by the state or some other official authority but who are acting outside the legal system." The High Commissioner for Human Rights emphasizes that "these killings frequently have political motivation."

Law professor Ibarra M. Gutierrez III, director of the University of the Philippines Institute of Human Rights, enumerated several characteristics of the extrajudicial killings in his Characterization of Extrajudicial Killings and Enforced Disappearances under International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law, namely:

- Killings may take place under a variety of circumstances
- May occur while the victim is in custody or after she/he has been made to disappear
- May occur in the course of military operations
- May be committed by uniformed members of security forces or unofficial 'death squads"

Professor Gutierrez said the legal framework for extrajudicial killings "involve violation of right to life as well as procedural safeguards and substantial rights related to criminal prosecutions, e.g. presumption of innocence and speedy and impartial trial." He said the "principal duty to uphold the legal framework belongs to the State and its institutions."

The State is responsible for extrajudicial killings whenever "the government or its agents are directly responsible for committing the extrajudicial killings" and "where the government has not done everything within its powers to prevent or respond to killings carried out by others," Gutierrez said.

Under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, those responsible for extrajudicial killings specifically violate the following articles:

- Article 3: Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.
- Article 5: No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- Article 8: Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.
- Article 9: No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.
- Article 10: Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.
- Article 11: (1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense; (2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offense on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offense, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Essentially, what the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says is that every human being's life and freedom must be protected from the claws of abuse, regardless of his or her ethnic origin or association, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation or preference.

Beyond crime reporting: Digging deeper on peace and security issues

CHR Chair Leila De Lima had asked an intriguing question on the purported climate of peace and order during the March 30, 2009 hearing in Davao City.

"If it were so peaceful and orderly, had it not occurred to anyone how paradoxical it is to make such claim while killings remain rampant? It is completely incongruous to say it is peaceful and orderly when vigilantism is so common place, so pedestrian, it is almost a way of life around here," De Lima was quoted by the PDI report on March 31, 2009.

If a journalist were to answer De Lima's puzzling question through writing an article about the series of mysterious killings and the human rights situation in Davao City, it goes without saying that he or she must stick to high standards of reportage which is a minimum requirement for responsible reporting on any subject matter.

A journalist reporting human rights is surely aware of the frustrations, obstacles, and perils that accompany his or her research work and subsequent reporting. His or her best defense against law suits is a nuanced, careful, factual, and well-researched article sensitively presenting all sides of an issue.

In the book Reporting for Change: A Handbook for Local Journalists in Crisis Areas published by the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, journalists were cautioned to "avoid being identified with any particular group involved" in a human rights issue. "Take precautions not to be used by one party or another and make sure that your reports are based on sound evidence," it said.

A journalist must be analytical, critical, and careful not to become an unwitting propagandist of any side to a conflict or any group advocating a specific cause, for example a liberation movement or an armed group. The reporter doing a human rights story must not lose his or her perspective; he or she is primarily a journalist, not a herald of any particular group.

A reporter planning to write an in-depth piece about the Davao City killings should go back to the Davao City police blotters and case reports to review the history and statistics to enable him or her to get educated clues as to the trend and background of the seemingly unrelated killings. Do majority of the victims belong to a specific economic background or social profile? If yes, why is this so? In what locale are the killings more prevalent? What do these data mean?

A human rights reporter, while doing initial research, should also ask the following questions: Who were the victims and their family members? Who were their friends, associates, and enemies? What did a victim do to earn a living? What could be the possible motives for the killings? Who stands to benefit from the killings?

Aside from interviewing the usual official and unofficial sources and informants such as authorities of the government, military, police, church agencies, and human rights organizations, a reporter must be willing to invest time and energy into poring over the voluminous police blotters and case reports as far back as when the mysterious killings started. This tedious research effort may be enlightening and yield preliminary data as to the socio-economic nature of the killings. What weapons were usually used by the assailants? Are the weapons readily available in the market? Or only a specific group has access to them. What were the commonalities among the victims, such as the time and place of the killings and life history of the victims.

If an initial trend or pattern has been established on the Davao City extrajudicial killings, the reporter should move beyond covering the finding of dead bodies in the city, and begin looking into the hidden, complex processes that resulted in the string of extrajudicial killings. Repeatedly, he or she should ask why the assailants specifically target particular victims. Why were there no witnesses to pinpoint possible suspects? Were the witnesses fearful of reprisal if they talk to investigators or journalists?

If possible, a human rights reporter should interview a private investigator or a criminal lawyer who could give a different take or angle from the official, and often sanitized, version of the extrajudicial killings or enforced disappearances. Interviewing an able and credible source who is not a member of a government institution enables a journalist to analyze data away from the prism of institutional mindset and far from the spin of media handlers.

Spend time reading and studying medico-legal reports. The Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism's book on Uncovering the Beat said: "Medico-legal findings sometimes disagree with the preliminary findings of the detectives. In some cases, this may indicate a cover up."

Since the police blotter and case reports could be sanitized versions of crimes, a human rights reporter should initiate contacts, for interviews, with family members and associates of the victims. During the interviews, a human rights reporter must bring an extra dose of healthy skepticism. Carefully look for inconsistencies in the stories of the interviewees. These loopholes may provide a break in the lead that a reporter is trying to find.

Interview ordinary citizens for a "man-on-the-street" view of a human rights case. Do they believe in the official government explanation of a particular case? Supplement these views with interviews with academic experts on crimes, psychology,

sociology, political science, or forensic medicine to get ideas on the motives and possible "hidden" messages of the assailants. Ask them about the impact of the extrajudicial killings on a local community and on the psyche of the local populations. Why do Davao City residents appear to accept passively the serial killings in their city? Are they not afraid that they could be the next target? Academic experts, usually overlooked by journalists, are able to paint the big picture of a particular issue.

After the series of interviews from all possible sources and informants, a human rights reporter must go back to official sources and interview them again using his or her set of findings. Make sure to strictly observe the confidentiality requested by all sources and informants. Corroborate with official sources any information, tip, or material given on a background or off-the-record basis. Remember, official sources are not always the best sources.

Check, double check, and triple check. Think and behave like wires reporters. Despite their every-second deadline, wires reporters will not file a story if he or she has not checked, double checked, and triple checked controversial statements or data. The life, integrity, and credibility that you save may be your own.

A reporter who is also covering the courts in a given locale should interview a judge on why prosecutors fail to file cases on the extrajudicial killings. A local judge may lead a persistent

reporter to possible other sources and informants in the legal profession, such as a cooperative prosecutor or knowledgeable criminal lawyer.

If possible, interview officials of independent lawyers' organizations such as the local chapter of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines who can shed light on the legal implications of these extrajudicial killings or enforced disappearances.

The general and broad recommendations listed above may seem difficult for a reporter, especially one working for the print medium harassed by daily deadlines and harangued by demanding editors. However, a reporter must strive to accomplish them because "the media, by reporting on what they have seen, witnessed, and learned, play a key role in alerting public opinion," according to Kayoko Mizuta in her article "Human Rights and the Media" in the book Media and Human Rights in Asia.

In writing a credible, careful, accurate, fair, nuanced, factual, and well-researched article -- not only about human rights but on any topic as well -- a journalist respects and observes an individual's right to information. This should be the main motivating factor for a journalist in writing an excellent piece, rather than the fear of retribution or a law suit.

"It (media) helps meet the basic needs for and the right to information of citizens alongside the right to freedom of opinion and expression. Many incidences of human rights violation have been brought to light and documented in recent years by the news media. In many cases, news reports have served to set in motion mechanisms or procedures for putting an end to human rights violations," Mizuta said.

Recommended story ideas for print journalists covering human rights

What happens to the families of the victims of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances? Who assists those left behind by victims of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances to recover from the psychological trauma of their experience? How do they cope? It would be interesting to work on a comparative story of several families victimized by extrajudicial killings or enforced disappearances, and tell readers about the varying levels of coping strategies. Why are some successful and the others find it difficult? What is the difference between the coping strategies of adult family members (spouse and parents) as opposed to the young ones (children)?

Photo by Charlie Magno

In the case of the families of the victims of enforced disappearances, can they recover at all from the trauma even without a closure, for example finding their loved ones?

From a sociological perspective, what is the societal function of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances?

From a political science angle, how do extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances promote peace, order, and security? How do they serve national interests? Do they undermine civil society? If yes, how?

Do extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances weaken the justice system and respect for the rule of law?

What motivates an individual to undertake extrajudicial killings or enforced disappearances? What could possibly prompt them to do such activities? How do they feel after doing such activities? The objective here is to try to deepen people's understanding of why this phenomenon occurs and how it can be addressed and so should be included in the story with the proper context.

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Stories with a Human Rights Angle Make for Good Radio News Features

Radio has been called a medium of the present, a source of immediate information when listeners want to know what is happening around them at the moment. Radio listeners often have their radio sets playing in the background while they are doing something else. It is sound that they constantly hear but not necessarily listen to.

Photo by Cesar Usapdin

In radio news, the challenge is to make the audience stop what they are doing, concentrate and listen intently as the reporter broadcasts the news. Radio is often the easiest medium to swiftly platform the voices and opinions of ordinary people.

News on radio usually takes three forms. One is the on-the-spot or live report that is aired while an event is still happening or has just been concluded. The reporter may not have time to write a full script or think of all the questions that need to be asked of interviewees at the scene.

Another form is the short news report, usually no more than a minute long that gets aired as part of an hourly roundup of the latest stories. Short news reports may or may not contain sound clips, or portions of interviews conducted by the reporter.

And then there are also radio news features that are longer, pre-produced, contain narration and sound clips, ambient sound, and may also have soft news (feature or human interest stories) as subjects.

Stories with a human rights angle often get into radio news, breaking news stories that include slum demolitions, reports of disappearances or killings of journalists and activists, protest or mass action by civil society groups on a variety of issues, congressional hearings, and armed conflict. Press conferences on significant issues are also a staple on radio news.

Radio news is written very differently from print. Radio news is written for the ear, the words and sentences simple and conversational. Radio news reports are not written like a newspaper's inverted-pyramid style where most of the basic information—who, what, when, where, why and how—are all crammed into the opening paragraphs. Broadcast journalists select, not compress, information to put into their stories.

News on radio is very much like story telling. In a radio news story, the reporter must be careful to avoid overloading the listener with too much information. Instead, the reporter must grab and keep the listener's attention with a lead that is interesting yet simple and easy to understand, and stripped of hard-to-digest complex ideas or sentences. The lead tells the listener what is happening to whom and where. The body of a radio report presents the "why and how" as well as background or history of the event. Broadcast news stories in general must also have a strong ending, a memorable line that sticks in the listeners mind. Often, the closing line answers the question, "what now" or "what happens next?"

Radio news features are even more flexible. They can open with a case study—a person, group or community that characterizes a story—and slowly build up into conflict points or issues that the report focuses on.

Stories with a human rights angle make for good radio news features. Human rights stories highlight people, their experiences and struggles and evoke myriad emotions that can be captured well with sound.

Radio is called a blind medium because the audience can't see the words and pictures. But there are also those who say the audience does "see" radio in their imagination—they see people and events in their mind's eye if it is a good radio reporter who tells the story.

A radio news reporter can help the listener "see" or visualize the story by:

Giving listeners a sense of place, describing the setting and the atmosphere: If an urban poor community is about to be demolished, or a village is caught in the grip of armed conflict, radio reporters should tell listeners what the place looks like physically, how far or near from the center or the nearest village, how long it takes to get there, or what a visitor sees when he gets to the area.

Humanizing the story, connecting listeners to characters in the story: Radio reporters must seek out and interview ordinary people who can explain in detail and in concrete terms how they are affected by an issue, without the jargon that is heard from government officials. A child worker who has stopped schooling can best explain why he or she has to miss classes. An environmental activist or a journalist who has received death threats can explain the fear he or she faces, and the reasons for the threats.

Finding relevant details that will make a story memorable:. Radio reporters should unearth and present facts about people, places or events that make the story interesting. They should talk to sources or observe scenes and places for unique pieces of information that can add significance, humor, irony, emotion, or drama to a story. A story about the killing of a peasant leader, for example, becomes ironic when it is reported that he was gunned down on the feast day of the peasant patron saint San Isidro.

Unlike print or online reporters, radio reporters do not have the luxury of time to write carefully thought out stories. Unlike print or online reporters whose stories can be read slowly, retrieved, reviewed and reread many times, broadcast reports cannot be replayed. Hence, radio news stories must be clear, easy to understand, and interesting enough to grab listeners' attention.

Radio reporters get only one chance to tell the story, and write quickly on deadline.

It will help them a lot to build up a storehouse of knowledge that they can draw from when reporting under time pressure. This storehouse of knowledge can add depth and context to radio reports. In particular, radio reporters need to know:

- Legal concepts and processes
- Social issues such as education, health, poverty, environment
- International covenants, instruments and declarations relating to human rights
- Local government issues and processes

Human Rights Stories Offer Good Visual Material for TV Reporters

Seeing is believing: Nowhere is this more applicable than in television. Among all news media, television commands credibility because viewers see the news with their own eyes, as it happens.

A summary killing is captured close-up on a mobile phone video facility. Nobody can deny the effect and impact that will have and the strong possibility it may help identify and bring to justice the killers. In this age of mobile phone video technology and YouTube, anybody can report for TV –and for a worldwide audience.

Television news reporting is telling the story through pictures (mainly video footage, but sometimes also graphics and still photographs) as well as sound (the reporter or anchor's narration, stand-upper, sound bites and natural sound). Television news is most effective when the reporter makes use of these elements wisely.

Human rights stories offer TV reporters good visual material as well as substantial, in-depth information. Stories with a human rights angle are people-oriented stories that explore the human condition and struggle to survive in an increasingly complex world.

Visuals and visual stories

It is often out of sheer luck that a television crew will find itself at the right place at exactly the right time to enable them to capture good, action-packed or dramatic footage. At other times it's a matter or quick thinking, planning and strategizing, or simply keeping one's ear to the ground.

Two news items show how television crews happened to film by chance incidents of human rights violations by the police. In 2005, a television crew whose office happened to be very close by were able to film an anti-carnapping squad flagging down a vehicle somewhere in Ortigas in Pasig City and shooting the vehicle, killing three suspected car thieves. In an eerily similar incident four years later, a television crew who happened to be passing by a Quezon City street chanced upon anti-carnapping police also firing at a parked car, again killing three suspected car thieves.

The footage enraged the public and, in the 2009 incident, shocked the Commission on Human Rights which ordered an investigation into police conduct. The footage represented visual evidence of law enforcers disregarding the rights of suspects.

Visual stories make compelling television, and stories are said to be visual when they either contain or suggest action, drama, movement, and emotion that can be captured by the TV camera. This is why reporting on armed conflict and related activities is a favorite TV subject. The sight of soldiers in full battle gear lining up and then boarding a military plane or truck evokes thoughts and fears of war, even if the camera does not capture the fighting itself.

The same is true for crime stories. The images and sounds of a police car with sirens blaring often would be enough to capture the audience's attention.

Another favorite TV news subject is the case study, a person considered as the human side of an issue. Often, the case study is a victim—whether of crime, calamity, conflict or crisis—whose words,

body language or facial expression can paint a visual image of the problem. Viewers are used to seeing TV cameras linger on the face of a teary-eyed subject, sometimes waiting for a tear to fall. Without a word being said, such images convey pain and sorrow.

At times, it is not the action or the drama of a scene, or even a subject, but rather the vista or the setting itself that grabs viewers' attention. Stories about the environment allow television crews to present the beauty of the landscape and the destruction that environmentally hazardous projects can cause.

Good television journalists work closely with camera people to come up with good sequences. In film language, a sequence is a series of shots that convey a message or a point, similar to words strung together to form an idea or a sentence.

TV journalists must ensure they have a variety of shots in order to keep the viewers' attention. There must be variety in terms of content as well as distance. A sequence about a subject or a case study must show him or her in different settings relevant to the story. A story about a journalist under threat, for example, must have visuals of the journalist at work in the field, in front of a computer writing the story, or interacting with editors and colleagues. A story about the health hazards of a coal-fired power plant should have shots of the structures of the plant, houses or a community visible close by, and fumes emanating from giant smokestacks.

Aside from the content of shots, TV journalists must also ensure they have a variety of shots of a single scene, usually done in terms of distance or depth of field. A wide-shot shows an entire scene and all the elements in it—people, structures, natural environment and the like. Wide shots establish what the scene is all about. Medium shots bring the camera and the viewer closer to the subjects. The elements of the shots are more visible than in a wide shot. Close-ups allow the viewer to examine subjects in detail, and may include facial expressions or facial features. Close-ups are considered the most powerful shots TV journalists could use.

Writing TV scripts

Like radio news, television stories are written for the ear—they should be simple, direct and easy to understand in one hearing. There is a saying, however, that television journalists have to "write a little less," and allow the visuals to speak and tell the story.

Writing scripts for television news is called writing to pictures, where narration and sound bites must match the images being shown. To be able to write to pictures effectively, TV journalists must first:

Review the footage they have shot so they know exactly what kinds of shots they have collected and whether they have all they need. If there are gaps in the footage, TV journalists may have to reshoot, or if pressed for time, can then resort to using archival footage, stills or graphics.

Make a shot list or list down the shots collected alongside the time code. In most cameras, footage shows a time code or the time in the tape or disc the footage was placed in. A shot list enables the reporter as well as the video editor to locate the shot that is needed without having to scan through the entire thing.

Identify the sound bites for the story. Sound bites are portions of on-camera interviews that go with the story. They are usually no more than 20 seconds long, and are complete sentences. They are also usually the answers to the how and why questions that the journalists posed.

Writing to pictures means writing the news guided by the pictures and sounds. Some journalists write their TV news or feature scripts by first selecting the shots and then putting them down in order in the script, like a storyboard in text. After they have laid out their shots, they write the text and narration. Others prefer to write

the text or narration first, and then select from their shot list what visuals will go with the words. Both methods will work, and it also depends on how much time the reporter has to do the story.

Some useful tips that television journalists should remember:

1. Television stories should open with the best shot the journalist has. It is the shot that gives viewers a hint of what the story is about.
2. TV reporters and editors must remember to include natural sound. Natural sound is the sound occurring or heard in a specific scene without which the scene loses depth and meaning.
3. Text or narration must match the pictures. Words being heard on the air must refer to the visuals being shown. Viewers get confused if the words and pictures don't match.
4. Words and pictures, however, do not have to literally match. The task of the journalist is to explain what viewers are seeing on their screens, providing information not supplied by the footage.

Text and narration must not repeat or state what the viewer can already see. It must supply other information not visible to the audience. For instance, a script should avoid saying "a man in green colored shirt and denim pants was found dead with gunshot wounds in the sidewalk" when the video is displaying just that. Instead, the script should provide the added information collected by the reporter and turn it into "A man in his 40s was found along a sidewalk on Rizal Avenue by vendors who were setting up their stalls at 5 this morning."

Don't Miss Out on The Nuances

The printed newspapers, to a very large extent, are the sources of initial information of other news media, such as broadcast or even the local offices of international news agencies. Thus, print journalists and editors set the primary tone for the coverage of a particular issue. This one of the strengths of the print medium reporter, which he or she must utilize in and capitalize on in breaking credible, accurate, fair, nuanced, factual, and well-researched human rights stories despite the tyranny of the daily deadline.

Make sure your article has an accompanying photo. A photo that matches a newspaper article goes a long way in making an impact. Sometimes, a photo says a lot more than an article.

Before writing, do ask anything that is unclear several times until it becomes clear to you. It is better to ask everything several times and get it correctly, rather than issue a correction or a denial of an erroneous report the following day. Check all the answers. Record everything to prevent you from misquoting a source or an informant and to protect yourself later when a source or an informant denies his or her statements.

Verify facts several times and as much as possible through multiple sourcing. You have more elbow room to do this compared to a broadcast journalist who may be asked to report on the spot a breaking story or on an hourly basis. Practice what human rights

organizations do: before a human rights group issues a report or a statement, it interviews numerous people to get their facts correctly and accurately.

Be sensitive in gathering data and information. When interviewing, avoid harming the sources or informant or inflicting pain, especially on the family members of the victims of extrajudicial killings or enforced disappearances.

Absolutely take all the possible safety precautions to protect the safety of your sources, informants, translators, drivers, and guides. The Institute for War and Peace Reporting said that many sources and people interviewed by journalists are put in a dangerous situation once reporters leave an area where human rights violations may have occurred.

Schedule and security considerations permitting, attempt to interview sources and informants separately to avoid group pressure that can distort or magnify a story. For a print journalist, this is an opportunity to get quotes that will be different from the other members of the media.

When talking to sources and informants, clearly and always identify yourself as a journalist to prevent misunderstanding and potential problems such as other parties mistaking that you work for a human rights organization.

Establish the credibility of your source and informants by taking down their full names, occupation, age, and other basic details that may or may not be used in your story. If possible, get a contact number or an email address where they can be contacted later if needed. The Institute for War and Peace Reporting said human rights journalists must assume that they may only have one chance to meet a source or an informant, and the opportunity to get his or her personal details.

When a source or an informant describes the alleged assailants, do make sure to get as clear as possible the names of those present during the crime, names of those present, their position and or ranks, and similar details such as uniform or insignia.

When interviewing a human rights victim, politely and sensitively request him or her to repeat their story to check for possible inconsistencies that might pose as problems when you begin writing your story. If almost all sources and informants on a given human rights case are saying "exactly the same story," watch out for possible story concoctions for media consumption.

Print journalists tend to conduct longer interviews than other journalists, be sensitive to the needs of your sources or informants, especially if they are human rights victims. Go on a break as long as necessary to relieve stress, if possible. Human rights victims reliving their ordeals may experience trauma.

If possible and when safety is not an issue, do interview the accused human rights violator to improve and strengthen your story. Do explain to the accused that you are endeavoring to establish the truth by getting his or her side also.

The Institute for War and Peace Reporting wisely alerts human rights journalists: "The underlying basis of the criminal justice system is innocent until proven guilty. Remember to undertake your journalism with a cautious and precise mind, sceptical both of the justifications of the accused and of the claims of the accusers."

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ORGANIZATIONS, RESOURCES, AND REFERENCES

The following materials and websites are highly recommended to print journalists:

www.crimesofwar.org

www.icrc.org (International Committee of the Red Cross)

www.un.org/law (United Nations)

www.ohchr.org/english (UN High Commissioner for Human Rights)

www.hrw.org (Human Rights Watch)

www.amnesty.org (Amnesty International)

www.icc-cpi.int (International Criminal Court)

www.humanrightsreporting.com (of the Columbia University School of Journalism)

www.dartcenter.org (of the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma)

A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide, Samantha Power (HarperCollins)

Crimes of War – What the Public Should Know, by Roy Gutman and David Rieff

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Making The Most of The New Media

The new media has proved its capability to enhance journalistic work and widen freedom of the press, and journalists pushing human rights issues should not miss out on this important resource.


Photo by Ruby Thursday More

The nature of the medium itself, the Internet in particular, is its strength. Media experts already concede that breaking news will be online even before it will be on radio or television. Blogging and, now, micro-blogging (e.g. Twitter and Plurk) have made it even easier and faster to post reports. Real-time reporting, once the exclusive domain of wire agencies, is done these days by journalists and non-journalists who have seen the value of going online.

Space and airtime constraints, oft the foe of print and broadcast journalists, are a non-issue for online news organizations as long as they invest in enough bandwidth. Journalists are also not straight-jacketed into one format. Instead, they have ample opportunity to share their findings in multiple media—text, graphics, audio, video—all in just one story or in a package of stories.

The search for information has been made easier by the enormous online presence of institutions that have an interest in human rights, including the United Nations, governments, nongovernmental and intergovernmental organizations, media and other groups. Relevant resources on human rights that journalists

come across—and there are a lot of these—can be readily shared to the audience by way of hyperlinks and downloads.

The new media has also given journalists access to a bigger and new audience hitherto untapped by traditional media, including the young, to whom they can provide a forum for engagement through interactive elements such as chats, comments and shout boxes. The audience can even join in the reportage -or what is now known as "crowd-sourcing" or open sourcing. In fact, self-publishing and social networking tools in our now Read-Write Web make everyone a potential journalist.

And the Internet has edged out other media in terms of permanence. Stories can be displayed for as long as the media organizations want to leave them in the virtual world. They remain accessible when they are archived online.

But the very benefits of the online medium are also the same things that can go against it.

The breaking news culture and real-time reporting mean reporting is event-determined. Alas, human rights issues are often difficult to fit into the breaking news format. If ever they do, stories may end up lacking in depth as reporters lose "thinking time" and research opportunities in the rush to publish their stories. Because online newsrooms tend to have a small staff, the chance to enhance stories before or shortly after they are published may be absent.

Whether they write human rights stories "real time" or not, journalists should remember to provide context. Even as the events become "old" as days, weeks or months pass, they should strive to uncover new information or new perspectives to help the audience understand what really happened. These can come in the form of retrospective "specials," "dossiers" and other features.

The "lost thinking time" in a breaking news culture essentially means time lost for editorial and ethical reflection. Accuracy, fairness and balance, which are core journalistic values, may be sacrificed in the interest of speed and may consequently cause harm, even violate someone's rights such as privacy and due process.

While new multimedia technologies make it easier to find and collect information, the information can indeed be overwhelming. The exponentially expanding material online, including user-generated content, has also led to the rise of the "journalism of aggregation," with information taken directly from other news sources, often without much deliberation on the content that is re-posted. The constant challenge is for newsrooms to make sense of what is important. Of course, given the newsrooms' limited resources, the problem is how to vet everything that appears online.

Evaluating online information is no different from assessing information obtained through interviews or documents. The following checklist has long been in use:

- Authority: Who wrote it, why, and what are their credentials? Who published it and why? With whom are the author and publisher affiliated?
- Objectivity: What opinions or biases, if any, are expressed? Is there a sponsor that might have influenced the content? Is the site a mask for advertising or an agenda? Could it be satire or a hoax?
- Timeliness: When was it produced and last updated? Is it up-to-date?
- Sourcing: What is the source of the information and is it reliable?
- Verification: Find at least one other reputable source, preferably not online, that provides similar information.

The converged media environment requires multi-skilled journalists and entails retooling of journalists from the old media. But as journalists are increasingly filing stories for newspapers, audiovisual and online media often simultaneously, this again means little time or space left for ethical reflection.

For journalists who have taken to the online medium, a number have taken up blogging to express personal opinion on issues they normally would not or do not have the opportunity to in the traditional

or mainstream media. Media experts warn of risks when a reporter expresses an opinion. Advises the Poynter Institute, a U.S. journalism training institute: "Beware: Expressing an opinion on a topic you're covering—otherwise objectively—runs the risk of compromising your reporting and/or relationship with your sources. Yes, journalists have opinions on the stories they cover, but good journalists are defined by their ability to not let their opinions interfere with their coverage of the story. They are guided by the principle of independence." Opinion blogs and news blogs should be clearly differentiated.

Newsrooms that involve the audience in the reporting process need to exert extra effort in controlling the online product. The key here is editing. "Unedited" journalism can be dangerous. The audience, after all, may include interest groups with a hidden agenda that they can get into stories via open sourcing. And while contributions from the audience are greatly valued, submissions should be clearly labeled and evaluated to help safeguard the institution's journalistic credibility.

Linking to outside material raises a host of ethical issues. Journalists should examine the links and place them in proper context before linking. The nature of linked material should also be disclosed, accompanied by an acknowledgment that the material can change quickly and substantially.

When newsrooms commit mistakes in the online environment, they are obligated to correct them and be transparent about the error as they would in old media. The error should be corrected as promptly and clearly as possible and user alerted to the changes and corrections.

The new media has indeed drastically altered the world of journalism. But the process of gathering, filtering facts and putting together an accurate, reliable and comprehensive account, on deadline or otherwise, remains the same. So do the three main principles: Telling the story as fully and truthfully as possible, acting as independently as possible, and causing as little harm as possible. There is no excuse for shoddy and unethical reporting.

(A number of pointers in this article come from the Poynter Institute and Society of Professional Journalists.)

sensitively request him or her to repeat their story to check for possible inconsistencies that might pose as problems when you begin writing your story. If almost all sources and informants on a given human rights case are saying "exactly the same story," watch out for possible story concoctions for media consumption.

Print journalists tend to conduct longer interviews than other journalists, be sensitive to the needs of your sources or informants, especially if they are human rights victims. Go on a break as long as necessary to relieve stress, if possible. Human rights victims reliving their ordeals may experience trauma.

If possible and when safety is not an issue, do interview the accused human rights violator to improve and strengthen your story. Do explain to the accused that you are endeavoring to establish the truth by getting his or her side also.

The Institute for War and Peace Reporting wisely alerts human rights journalists: "The underlying basis of the criminal justice system is innocent until proven guilty. Remember to undertake your journalism with a cautious and precise mind, skeptical both of the justifications of the accused and of the claims of the accusers."

REFERENCE:

No author. (2004). Reporting for change: a handbook for local journalists in crisis areas.
London, Washington, D.C., and Johannesburg: The Institute for War and Peace Reporting.

ORGANIZATIONS, RESOURCES, AND REFERENCES

The following materials and websites are highly recommended to print journalists:

www.crimesofwar.org

www.icrc.org (International Committee of the Red Cross)

www.un.org/law (United Nations)

www.ohchr.org/english (UN High Commissioner for Human Rights)

www.hrw.org (Human Rights Watch)

www.amnesty.org (Amnesty International)

www.icc-cpi.int (International Criminal Court)

www.humanrightsreporting.com (of the Columbia University School of Journalism)

www.dartcenter.org (of the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma)

A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide, Samantha Power (HarperCollins)

Crimes of War – What the Public Should Know, by Roy Gutman and David Rieff

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Saar, Erik and Novak, Viceca. Inside the Wire. New York. Penguin, 2005.

Stover, Eric and Nightingale, Elena. The Breaking of Bodies and Minds. Washington, DC: American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1985.

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HUMAN RIGHTS LIFELINE AND JOURNALISTS' SAFETY

The world is increasingly becoming more dangerous for journalists, especially for those who examine and report human rights. Here are some guidelines adapted from the Reporter's Notebook and Safety Guide of the International News Safety Institute (INSI) Asia-Pacific Office and the Center for Community Journalism and Development (CCJD):

Dealing with surveillance

- Always be alert
- Familiarize yourself with your own neighborhood
- Take note of suspicious looking persons or vehicles
- Surreptitiously take photographs of the above
- Report presence of suspicious persons or vehicles to colleagues, friends, family
- File a complaint with the police
- Surveillance can also be detected in chokepoints like traffic lights, busy intersections, bridges, narrow streets
- When driving be on the lookout for vehicles, especially motorcycles, following you
- Keep car windows up and doors locked
- Keep your car in good running condition
- When driving on wide avenues, try to stay close to the center island
- Avoid walking in deserted or dark streets or alleys
- If you think you are being followed, head for the nearest police precinct
- In a taxi, constantly check for vehicles that may be closely tailing you. Ask the driver to loudly honk the horns and head for the nearest police station

Dealing with death threats

- Write down the exact wording of the threat including details about how the threat or threats were received. Doing this enables you to provide the police with a thorough report
- Threats should not be taken lightly. Immediately inform

superiors, colleagues, and family about the incident
- Create a lot of noise about the threat. Seek support from press associations and other media groups. Ask news organizations to publicize it
- Save threats sent through SMS in your phone memory so that you can have a support document when reporting to proper authorities
- If the threats are imminent, consider temporarily moving to another place
- Ask for police protection only when absolutely necessary and if the police in your area can be trusted

Securing the newsroom

- Inform your editors or immediate superiors of your whereabouts or itinerary for the day; let them know who you will be meeting and at what time and where
- While on dangerous assignments work out a system with the news desk so that you can be in constant communication with the office or that you could reach them immediately
- Sensitive files, documents, compact discs, video and audio recordings should be secured. Ideally these should be stored in a secure place outside the newsroom

- As much as possible limit phone interviews to non-sensitive information
- Have a buddy system in place (to keep track of each other's whereabouts)
- Newsrooms should conduct regular safety training for the staff

Keeping your family safe

- Instruct family members and household help not to give out information through the phone or to strangers
- Conduct regular drills with the family members on taking cover from gunfire, etc.
- Tell family members to take note of the presence of suspicious vehicles or persons
- Keep doors securely locked; make sure that these have deadbolts
- Designate a safe room within the house where family members can seek cover in case of an attack. The room should have a sturdy door, a telephone line, water and food, flashlight, first-aid kit, and a possible escape route
- Entrust house keys to a trusted neighbor; do not leave under doormats or in flowerpots
- If possible, get a watchdog
- Enlist the help of neighbors in detecting surveillance

Going on Dangerous Assignments

Before going off on assignment to a conflict zone or the scene of a devastating natural event, keep in mind the following quick tips:


Photo by Alan Davis

- Be prepared – physically and mentally
- Stay healthy – so you can hike, run and endure discomfort
- Know the place, the people and the dispute
- Don't go out alone
- Think twice about moving across open ground
- Seek local advice
- Meet contacts in public places
- NEVER CARRY A WEAPON or travel with journalists who do
- Carry picture ID
- Carry sweets or candies
- Carry emergency funds
- Keep emergency numbers handy
- Familiarize yourself with the weapons used in the area of conflict
- Stay alert
- Do not wear uniforms especially ones that resemble those worn by security forces
- Wear protective clothing as appropriate
- NEVER EVER ASSUME
- Know your rights, e.g. Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian laws
- After the assignment … do not be embarrassed to seek counselling

Covering wars and conflict

- Get out fast when clearly threatened
- Do not cross the battle zone, it could be very dangerous
- Be careful about reporting from both sides of a conflict
- Avoid bias for one or the other side
- Never draw maps of military positions or establishments in your notebook nor should you show unusual interest in military equipment
- Do not take obvious notes in public nor pull out a microphone or notebook without permission

When there's firing, INSI's Survival Guide says journalists should:

- Take cover from view; do not wear anything bright
- Let your shiny equipment become dirty or muddy to lessen light reflection
- Do not take cover in position where someone has recently been firing
- A hole or a dip in the ground may provide enough cover
- In a building find a room without exterior walls such as a hotel bathroom
- Do not peek from your cover
- Even if you are behind a wall, lie flat on the ground
- When you take cover, immediately assess your situation and plan a route of escape
- When withdrawing, keep low while running and try to put vegetation or structures between you and the firing position
- Leave equipment behind if this is hindering your escape

Covering demonstrations and other civil disorders


Photo by Charlie Magno

- Plan in advance
- Establish pre-arranged contact points with the rest of your team (photographer, camera operator, producer, etc.) if you are separating
- Always carry press identification but conceal it if it attracts unwarranted attention
- Bring a cellular phone with emergency numbers pre-set for speed dialling
- Position yourself upwind if there is a possibility that tear gas will be used
- Bring eye protection such as swimming goggles or industrial eye protection
- Carry first aid kits and know how to use them
- Wear loose natural fabric clothing as this will not burn as readily as synthetic ones; remember there is always the possibility of gasoline bombs being exploded
- Carry a small backpack with enough food and water to last for a day in case you are unable to get out of the area
- If you are a reporter you don't have to be in the crowd as long as you can see what's happening
- If you are a photographer or camera operator, try to shoot from a higher vantage point
- Work with the team and keep a mental map of your escape route if things turn bad
- Have an immediate newsroom debriefing after the coverage to extract lessons from the coverage

Covering natural and human-induced catastrophic events

- Assess the situation
- Learn as much as you can about the type of disaster (earthquake, tsunami, chemical spill, etc.) you are going to cover
- Wear appropriate protective clothing and gear
- Bring bottled drinking water
- Follow warnings of authorities and disaster experts
- Do not cross police lines
- Do not get in the way of rescue and relief workers
- Do not touch or sniff canisters or containers that may contain hazardous chemicals
- Refrain from smoking (there may be fractured gas lines in earthquake devastated zones)

When Targeted

What to do when you are stopped at a checkpoint or roadblock

- Always be polite
- Avoid confrontation
- Identify yourself as a journalist
- If on foot, approach the checkpoint with only necessary papers on hand
- When in a vehicle, keep windows and doors locked; do not alight unless ordered to do so
- Never try to film without permission
- If soldiers or militia manning the checkpoint are hostile or nervous, offer sweets or cigarettes
- When showing your identity card, let them also see pictures of your wife or children to bring out the more human aspect of your work
- Let them know that people know where you are and that you are expected back

- Make them understand that you are not a threat
- Stay polite but be alert especially for soldiers who seem to be listless and would not look you in the eye
- Checkpoints are allowed only under exceptional circumstances such as red alert situations where the survival of the state is at stake or lives of people are in grave danger
- The area where checkpoints are established should be properly lighted and clearly visible signs should be mounted

The Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) handbook "Your Human Rights!" provides some important tips when faced with arrest. So, if you have been arrested, what do you do?

- Stay calm. Know your rights: you have the right to remain silent and to be assisted by a competent and independent lawyer of your choice
- You have the right not to be subjected to torture, intimidation, deceit, other forms of coercive harassment
- You have the right to be informed of these rights and to be told that anything you say may be used against you in court
- Ask a relative, colleague or bystander to witness your arrest. Send a text message to your family, office, colleagues or lawyer informing them of your arrest. You can also call them so they may listen to your arrest process
- Ask for official identification (names, unit, designation) of arresting officers
- Ask for a copy of their authority to arrest you. Take particular note of the name on the arrest warrant and the offense for which you are being arrested
- If there is any defect in the warrant, register your objection to being arrested but do not use force
- If you are lawfully arrested, you may be searched for dangerous weapons or anything which may be used

as proof that you committed the crime for which you are being arrested; ask where you will be taken
- If your are detained, you must be treated as a human being and must be entitled to due process

What to do when you are abducted

- To survive an abduction you must retain mental alertness and a positive attitude
- Do not antagonize your abductors, do as you are told
- Mentally converse with someone (your partner, colleague) to help you keep the situation in perspective
- Use whatever methods you have for relaxing like mentally picturing what you will do when you return home
- Try to seek some improvements in your condition especially if you are being held for more than a day
- Make it difficult for your captors to treat you inhumanely by talking about your family
- If you are being brutally treated, try to mentally converse with loved ones or talk to your God
- Do not believe in promises that you will soon be released

When Attacked, Injured or Stressed

Administering first aid

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) regularly circulates pamphlets and handbooks on first aid that can be of great help to journalists and media staff on field assignment. Here is an abbreviated version:

Airway, Breathing and Circulation (ABC)

In the case of an unresponsive casualty, the first priority is to ensure that the airway (the air passage to the lungs) is open. If it is obstructed by a foreign body (food, pieces of denture, blood clot), try to remove the object with your fingers. Then lift the casualty's chin up so that the jaw is perpendicular to the ground. This position will prevent the tongue from blocking the airway.

If there is blunt trauma or you have other reason to suspect a spinal injury, make sure that the head is held straight (nose in line with breastbone) to prevent further damage.

Any unresponsive casualty who is breathing unassisted should be carefully rolled onto his side (the "recovery position") and stabilized in this position by flexing his upper knee and placing it on the ground in front of the other leg. Then his chin should be gently tipped back to keep the airway open. This position will prevent him from asphyxiating if he vomits.

The second priority is to check for breathing difficulties (a feeling of "shortness of breath" or a breathing rate over 20 or less than 10 per minute in an adult). Although there is nothing you can do about this (unless you have special training), you will at least be able to identify those who have a high priority for evacuation.

Circulation is assessed by measuring the pulse rate. If the pulse rate is fast (more than 100/minute in an adult) following injury, you should assume significant bleeding externally and/or internally. Your priority is to stop any visible bleeding. Most bleeding will stop if pressure is applied (for example, by means of a dressing) and the affected limb is elevated.

With life-threatening bleeding from a limb that cannot be controlled by pressure and elevation, it is acceptable to improvise a tourniquet as a last resort (i.e. tightening a belt or other material around the limb above the wound and thus stopping the flow of blood). If you see massive bleeding as you approach the casualty, get someone to press on the wound with a dressing while you quickly assess the airway and breathing.

Broken Bones and Burns

Bleeding and pain from broken bones can be reduced with splints. You can improvise a splint from items of clothing (scarves, belt, folded blanket) and rigid materials (a piece of wood, for example). An injured leg can be splinted with the other leg, if it is uninjured.

Relief of pain from burns can be obtained by pouring cold (clean) water on them for 10 to 15 minutes. However, this should be avoided in cases of extensive burns as it will cause the casualty's body temperature to drop. Thin plastic wrap (of the type used for sandwiches) is a simple and effective dressing, but do not wrap the burn tightly. Do not use this material to cover the face. Do not cover chemical burns at all.

Finally, consider whether the casualty is suffering from cold (remove wet clothing, dry him and cover him with blankets) or heat (remove/loosen clothing, spray with water and fan him).

Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation

When the patient stops breathing and the heart stops beating, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) (or "basic life support") is a useful skill to have! However, it is only one link in a necessary chain of events that involves access to a defibrillator

(to deliver an electric shock to the heart) and more advanced treatment. If you are in a remote situation without easy access to more advanced medical support, the reality is that the patient will probably not survive. In these circumstances, resuscitation (artificial respiration and external cardiac compression) should be discontinued after a maximum of 20 minutes.

Coping with post-traumatic stress

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder afflicts more than a quarter of journalists who have had extensive experience covering wars, disasters, and conflict over prolonged periods. Journalists, media staff, editors, and management of news organizations should recognize the serious health and psychological implications of PTSD.

Here are some pointers for journalists in recognizing the symptoms and what can be done:

Symptoms

- Involuntary flashback to events
- Overwhelming feeling of anger, guilt, sorrow, or helplessness
- Continuing and repeated nightmares
- Being impatient with normal social or family life
- A feeling of being emotionally numb
- Short attention span and irritability
- Lessening or loss of sexual desire

Actions

- Regularly and routinely debrief after each dangerous assignment
- Journalists should talk among themselves about their horrific experience
- Provide easy access to treatment to journalists exhibiting PTSD symptoms
- News organizations to make changes in macho culture that prods journalists to cope alone
- Voluntary access to independent and knowledgeable counselling

Your HR Lifeline

Human rights bodies, non-government organizations, humanitarian agencies and media support organizations often have emergency desks and telephone hotlines that journalists in distress may access. Should you find yourself in such a situation, please get in touch with any of the following:

- Committee to Protect Journalists
- ICRC 24-Hour Hotline (Assistance for Journalists on Dangerous Assignments): +41 79 217 32 85
- International Media Support (IMS)
- International News Safety Institute (INSI) Brussels Headquarters: + 32 2 235 2201/Contact Person: Sarah de Jong, Deputy Director/ Email: sarah.dejong@newssafety.org. Also check website: www.newssafety.org
- International News Safety Institute (INSI) Asia-Pacific Office: +63 2 376 5550 and mobile: +63 917 891 3354/ Contact Person: Red Batario, Regional Coordinator/ Email: red.batario@newssafety.org
- International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) Asia-Pacific
- International Press Institute (IPI)

- Philippine Commission on Human Rights (PCHR)
- Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG)
- Freedom Fund for Filipino Journalists c/o Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility,
- Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA)
- National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP)
- Philippine National Police Task Force Usig
- Philippine National Police Human Rights Desk
- Reporters Without Borders (RSF)

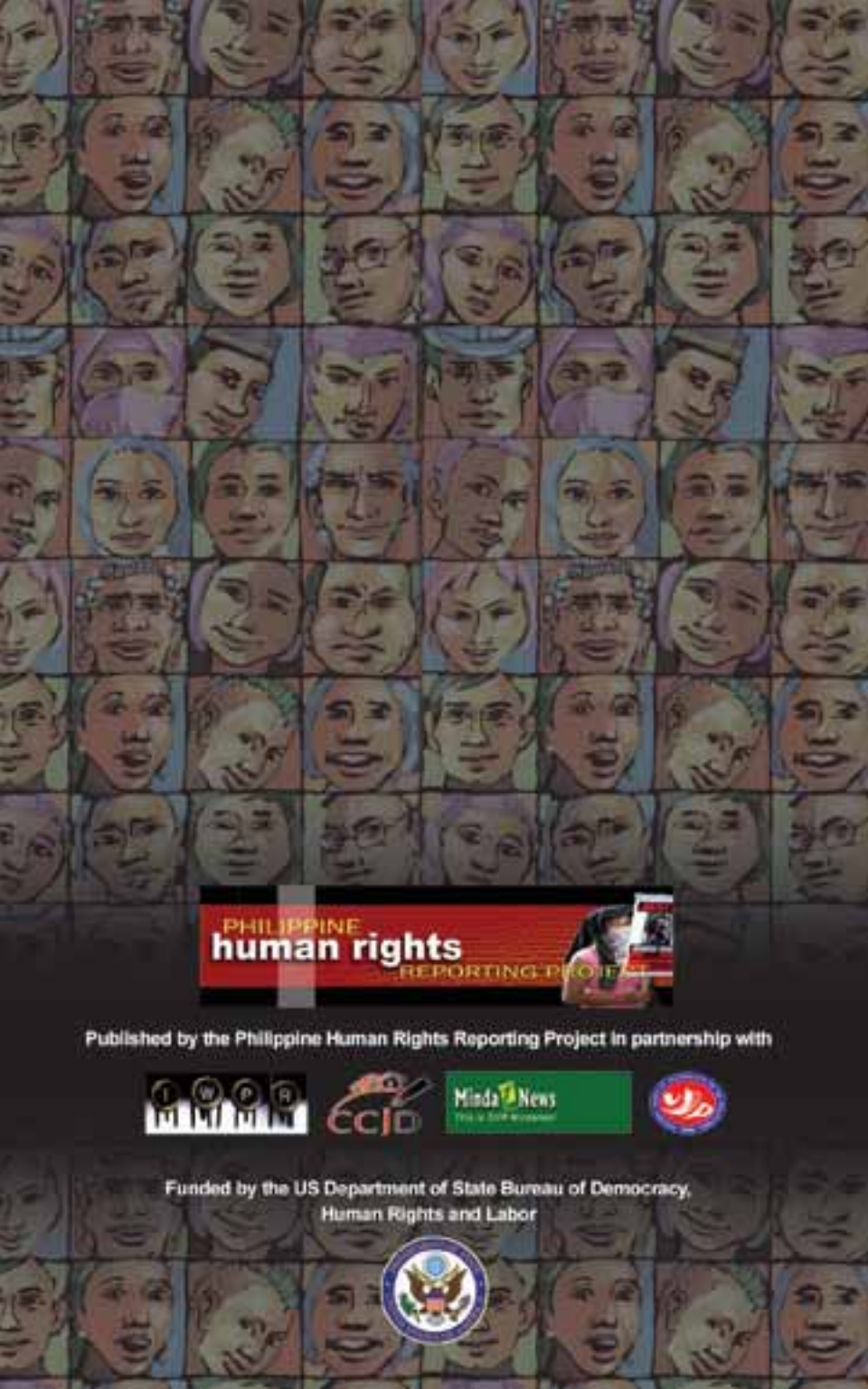
Sources and Reference Materials:

- Staying Alive: Safety and Security Guidelines for Humanitarian Volunteers in Conflict Areas (International Committee of the Red Cross)
- Reporter's Notebook and Safety Guide: A Handy Companion for Journalists and Media Staff on Dangerous Assignments (International News Safety Institute-Asia Pacific Office and Center for Community Journalism and Development)
- Your Human Rights! A Handbook of the Free Legal Assistance Group
- Sourcebook on Human Rights (UNDP and UP National College of Public Administration and Governance)
- Indigenous People's Rights Monitor through HR Monitoring Centers in the following areas:
- Cordillera Office: DINTEG-Cordillera Indigenous People's Legal Center, 10 Rimando Road, 2600 Baguio City, Telefax: (+63 74) 445 2586, email: d1integ@yahoo.com.ph
- Mindanao Office: Kusog sa Katawhang Lumad sa Mindanao (KALUMARAN), Room 102, Kalinaw Center for Interfaith Resources, Francisco Ave., Juna Subdivision, Matina 8000 Davao City, Telefax: (+63 82)299 4964, email: kalumaran@yahoo.com
- National Technical Coordinating Office: Room 304 NCCP Bldg., 879 EDSA Quezon City, Tel. (+63 2) 413 8543; email: ihpr_manila@yahoo.com

- Programming for Justice: Access for All- A Practitioner's Guide to a Human Rights-Based Approach to Access to Justice (UNDP Asia-Pacific Rights and Justice Initiative, UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok, UN Service Building, Rajdamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok, 10200 Thailand)
- Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: The Grassroots View (Philippine Human Rights Information Center, 27-B Masikap St., Barangay Pinahan, Quezon City; Tel. +63 2) 927 9855

PERSONS TO CONTACT IN AN EMERGENCY

Name	Phone Number
Name	Phone Number
Name	Phone Number



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