
Press Freedom and Media Integrity in Morocco [25 minutes]

Warm-up:

1. What is the media? Take 30 seconds to write down a definition of the term.

2. Read the following Dictionary.com definition:

[T]he means of communication, as radio and television, newspapers, magazines, and the Internet, that reach or influence people widely.

Is the dictionary definition the same as the one you discussed? If not, what was different, and why do you think that might be?

3. Fill out the following phrase:

“The role of the media is _____.”

Now, do some research on the role of the media. Does what you wrote down line up? What’s different, and what’s similar?

Background:

In this lesson, we will explore the factors that impede Moroccan media from fulfilling its role. In this reporting, grantee Jackie Spinner writes for the *Christian Science Monitor* in the project [“Morocco as a Moderate Islamic Hub.”](#) This story, titled, [“How Morocco Has Weakened Its Press, Pushing Readers to Social Media for News”](#) is part of that project.

Introducing the Reporting:

Resource 1: “How Morocco Has Weakened Its Press, Pushing Readers to Social Media for News”

Read Jackie Spinner’s story from the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Write down your answers to the following reflection questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. What is **self-censorship**? What is leading journalists to self-censor in Morocco? What could lead you to self-censor in your own life?
2. The article quotes Professor El Kadooussi saying, “Citizens have noticeably migrated to the digital space, which actually offers myriad less-constrained venues and platforms for criticism and investigation.” What are the benefits of using social media for controversial reporting and conversation? What are the drawbacks?
3. Spinner writes, “The problem is exacerbated by how media are funded and supported in Morocco. Businesses with ties to the monarchy control the advertising dollars that fund the news outlets. When a news outlet publishes content that is considered unfavorable or critical of the government, advertisers pull out.” How are the media you consume funded? What do you think their funding sources can tell you about them?
4. The article quotes translator and magazine founder Achraf El Bahi saying, “For anything to change, for media integrity, it’s going to be the job of civil society. Journalism in Morocco needs people willing to support it.” How are the roles of the media and citizens interrelated? What problems do you see with the media in your community? What can you do to support change and integrity?