

## Calling on African media to map the media meltdown

A coalition of African editor guilds and media owner organisations has partnered with Code for Africa's (CfA) media research unit, CivicSignal, to build a [database](#) tracking title closures, staff losses and other market impacts.



Source: © IMASA [IMASA](#) A coalition of African editor guilds and media owner organisations has partnered with Code for Africa's (CfA) media research unit, CivicSignal, to build a database tracking title closures, staff losses and other market impacts

The anonymised insights will help shape industry strategies to mitigate the human impacts on media work and prepare stakeholders for future disruptions.

The legacy media sector in Africa is experiencing widespread layoffs. Major media outlets in three of the largest media markets in Africa - South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria have cut more than 1,000 jobs since 2020.

The accelerating meltdown of the global media industry has been extensively reported in the Global North focusing on layoffs in North America and Europe. However, the impacts across Africa have received little attention.

### Job losses

South Africa's *Media24* announced it will cease printing most of its newspapers, sell several titles and cut about 400 jobs, while *The Daily Maverick* has announced it will retrench five per cent of its permanent employees.

At the Independent Media Group, 259 jobs are at risk following a round of retrenchment that saw about 14 employees laid off in 2023.

This year, the Nation Media Group and the Standard Group in Kenya retrenched 180 and 300 workers, respectively.

In Nigeria, *The Punch* and *The Nation* have cut jobs, while the closure of the state-owned *National Light* in December 2023, affected around 200 staff.

The Association of Independent Publishers (AIP) reports that 10% of its 204 members have shut down since 2016, and overall print runs dropped from 7.5 million to 2.5 million monthly.

## **Timely survey**

CfA has launched an initial survey to gather data on media closures and retrenchments in partnership with AIP, Eastern Africa Editors Society (EAES), Kenya Editors' Guild (KEG), and African Editors Forum (TAE

The surveys will assess redundancies' scale, pace, and impact, identify affected roles, skills, and demographics, and pinpoint emerging trends and hotspots.

Saneg's executive director, Reggy Moalusi, emphasises that saving jobs is crucial for democracy, as few journalists would struggle to hold those in power accountable.

KEG chief executive Rosalia Omungo notes that media companies are also renegotiating employment terms of retained staff.

"This survey is timely. Accurate data and comparative insights are necessary to plan a way forward for the many reporters and editors who have lost their jobs."

AIP executive director Kate Skinner adds that community media face even greater challenges than mainstream media. She believes the survey will help develop nuanced solutions.

CivicSignal's manager Amanda Strydom notes that the industry needs to save itself.

"We need evidence about who is most at risk and what solutions can be developed. This initiative will build resilience by connecting people to opportunities based on actionable insights."

Participate [here](#).

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