

CITIZEN JOURNALIST TRAINING BOOTCAMP Report

Venue	: Triangle Hall
Date	: 12 December 2019
Facilitator	: Alfandika Last (PhD, Wits)
Conveners	: Media center and Tell Zimbabwe
Theme	: Telling our own stories for community development through citizen journalism

Introduction

Introductory remarks were given by the Tell Zimbabwe and Media Center on the objectives of the bootcamp. Also, welcome remarks were given by the invited counsellor of the Triangle ward. Participants were informed that this was an apolitical gathering and was meant to ensure that issues of triangle that are not being covered by mainstream media are discussed at the ward level. It was also noted on the onset that the training was the beginning to a long term engagement that will ensure a relationship between Tell Zimbabwe, Media center and the triangle community.

Brief about Citizen journalism

Citizens in rural areas have adopted the internet to create alternative space for multiple viewpoints. In many occasions, rural development received limited coverage from the mainstream media. The issue of limited access to mainstream media has forced rural communities to seek alternative platforms showcasing rural communities and development. The information and communication technology (ICT) and digitalization innovation is providing more platforms and empowering people the opportunity to voice out and engage actions on issues that they felt worth advocating for and long been neglected by the mainstream media by utilizing new media platforms including among rural communities and their sustainability. Citizen journalism is making an attempt to address this problem by enabling rural communities to obtain and report news, and, to facilitate coverage of their concerns and interest, by connecting those communities and a virtual news outlets prospects to ensure their voice is also heard to initiate actions and mobilization towards a more sustainable rural community.

Objective of the Bootcamp

The purpose of the bootcamp was to train citizen journalists in the triangle community on what is citizen journalism, reporting news as citizen journalists, ethics, safety and security of citizen journalists, dealing with fake news in citizen journalism and photography, video and reporting using mobile phones. The bootcamp sought to further impart useful skills to citizen journalists on writing a news story using 5W and an H for diverse platforms.

Intended learning outcomes

At the conclusion of the citizen journalism training, attendees would be expected to demonstrate the following abilities:

1. Understanding of what is citizen journalism and how is it different from professional journalism
2. Gathering, Writing and Distributing news stories based on facts and news values
3. Understanding of ethics in citizen journalism news gathering and distribution
4. Form social media groups and be able to write short stories based facts and news values
5. Take photographs, small videos and distribute them to tell a story based 5Ws and H

The training covered the following topics

1. Conceptualising Citizen Journalism

- Here participants were assisted to define what citizen journalism is,
- The term 'citizen' was defined as different from the term 'subjects' and further defined in the context of Triangle Community

2. Different types of Citizen Journalism

- Different types of journalism were discussed citing examples of Institutionalised; non-Institutionalised; Semi Independent Citizen Journalism; and Independent Citizen Journalism

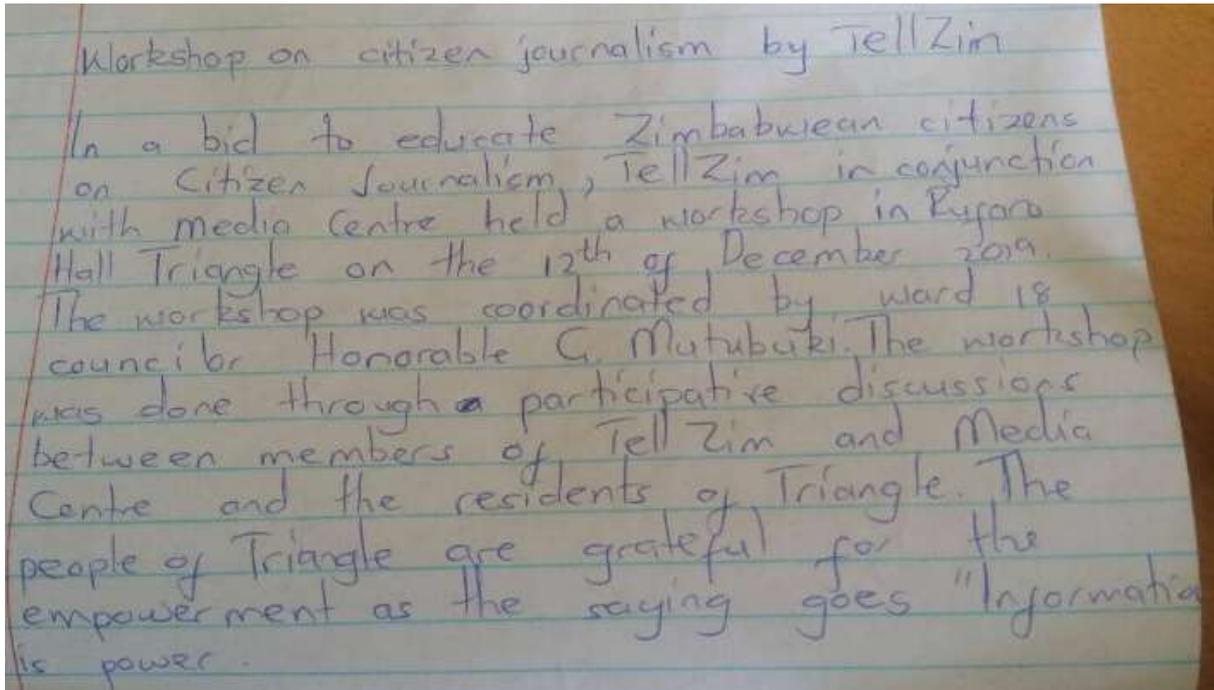
3. Differences and similarities between Citizen Journalism and Professional Journalism

- The facilitator lead a discussion on the similarities and differences between citizen journalism and Professional journalism. Major differences and similarities were clearly outlined during the presentation.
- Participatory nature of Citizen Journalism and the decentralized nature of Citizen Journalism was discussed noting that it is not profit driven among several others

4. Practicing citizen journalism

- The facilitator lead a practical session on citizen journalism that:
 - Participants were placed in 6 groups
 - There were instructed to develop stories based on Who, What, where, when and how?
 - Groups then presented the stories.

Sample story 1



Story 2

Pane mota yaita tsaona padulies musi wa 12 December nguva dzamangwanani anhasi at 6.48. chingave chikonzero chenjodzi iyi mtyayiri anga achimhanyisa motokari yake zvakapfurikidza. Hapana munhu akuwara kana kufamuchiitiko ichi

Story 3

There was an accident near Chiredzi hospital at around 10am where two men died on the spot, when a car bumped into a lorry because the lorry driver was drunk.

Story 4

In a twist of events counsellor Gilbert M was bombed at Gibbo Stadium while addressing an MDC youth rally. It was on the 3rd of December when the bomb was placed under the podium by an angry ZanuPF youth with personal issues relating to previous maize distribution schemes

Participants developing stories



5. Ethics in citizen journalism

- A discussion on ethics of journalism was conducted with emphasis on the contextualised local culture, values and beliefs.

6. Safety and security for citizen journalist

- The safety and security of citizen journalist was discussed with emphasis that, 'No story is worth dying for' therefore safety precautions must always be observed in Citizen Journalism.

Follow up Activities

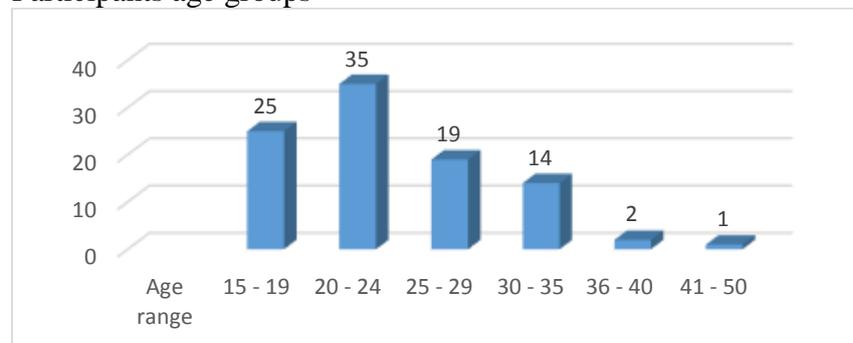
- Participants will form into groups and practice writing a story using the steps learnt and the stories are reviewed by others.
- Participants will use their own phones to take a few photographs that tells a story and share among themselves
- Participants will Form a social media group to 'tell their own stories' on WhatsApp

Monitoring and evaluation

Attendance

The meeting was attended by 134 participants. Of the attendance 49 were male while 85 were female. As the table below illustrates 25 were in the age category of 15-19years, 35 were in the age category of 20-24 year, 19 were in the category of 25 -29 years, 14 were in the category of 30-35years, while 2 where in the category of 36-40 years. 1 participant was in the category of 41-50 years.

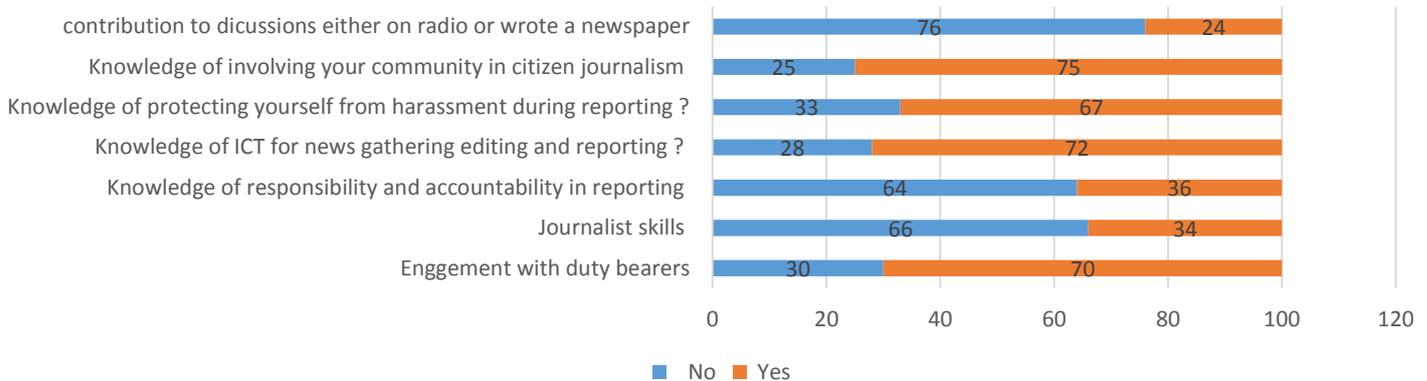
Participants age groups



Of the participants 15 where employed while 24 where students. 46 of the participants where unemployed. The rest of the participants did not want to disclose their employment status.

Impact assessment

Pre-Training



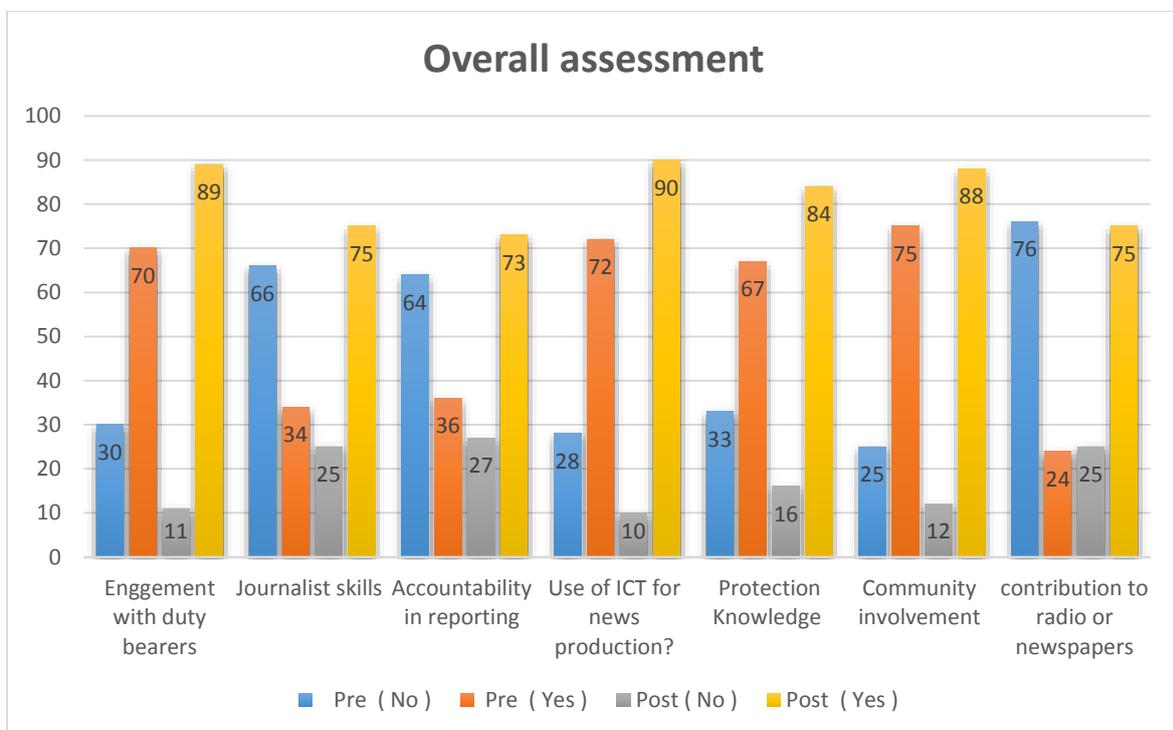
Assessment forms distributed before the commencement of the bootcamp revealed the level of understanding of the participants on citizen journalism issues. Only 30% of the participants noted that they engaged with duty bearers as the counsellors and the Member of parliament while 70% of the participants noted that they did not engage the duty bearers on issues affecting them. About 34% of participant noted that they had understanding of the skills of gathering and reporting news. 66% however noted that they did not have the journalist skills. In the same vein 64% of the participants noted that they lacked the knowledge on accountability when reporting will 36% had some understanding on responsibility and accountability in reporting.

Most participants (72%) noted that they could use their mobile phones and other ICT gadgets to gather and report on news. 28% noted that they had no knowledge to use ICT in news gathering. On knowledge to protect themselves from harassment 67% noted that they where aware of protecting themselves while 33% noted that they didn't have that knowledge. 76% had not made any contribution to local newspapers and to radio stations while 24% demonstrated that they had some form of discussions on radio and contributed to news. In reporting 75% noted that they got their news from communities while 25 said they didn't have that skills set.

Post Training Assessment



The table below depicts changed attitude by the participants as the results above depict. 89% noted that they now could engage with duty bearers after the bootcamp due to the skills sets they had learned. However, 11% still where not confident to engage duty bearers. In terms of citizens journalist skills 75% felt they had been capacitated to become citizens journalists. 73% felt that they had been capacitated with the knowledge on accountability and reporting. 88% felt they could engage communities in citizen journalism. However, 25% of the participants still felt that they could not engage in radio discussions or respond to editors in the newspapers.



Based on the responses form the participants the uptake to engage duty bearers in issues that affect citizens as service delivery increased by 19%. Journalist skills increased by 9% for

gathering and reporting news. Also, accountability and reporting in reporting also increased by 9%. Participants better understood how to utilise their mobile phones to capture news and this was reflected by 19% increase in this indicator. The knowledge by citizens journalist to protect themselves from harassment during reporting also increased by 17%. The need to report on stories that has community involvement also increased by 13%. The bootcamp greatest impact was on ensuring that more citizen journalists would engage in discussions in newspapers and in radios. There was a 51% uptake in this regard.

Success stories

- At planning stage, the project had projected to train 70 citizen journalists. However, due to the ground work that was done and its outreach, more participants showed up at the meeting resulting in 134 being trained.
- This was made possible due to the spacious venue that was chosen, being a community hall and also the innovation to adjust to costs to remain in line with the budget specifications.
- WhatsApp group was created that will ensure continuity of the engagement by the citizen journalists. This group includes the local counsellor and part of the police and will go a long way as a news source to the community.
- Some of the participants showed interest to involve other members of the community that did not take part in the training demonstrating the value they picked from the training.

Participants List