



**NEW
NARRATIVES**

CLEAN AIR REPORTING PROJECT in Ghana

Endline Project Study

Prepared for New Narratives Ghana
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Abbreviations

AMA	Accra Metropolitan Assembly
CA	Clean air
CAF	Clean Air Fund (Ghana)
COL	Community/Opinion leaders
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DVLA	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority
ESG	Environment, Social, and Governance
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GHG	Greenhouse gas
KIIs	Key informant interviews
KNUST	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology
MCAG	Media Coalition Against Galamsey (illegal small-scale mining)
MDAs	Ministries, departments, and agencies (government)
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies
MMDCEs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MP	Members of Parliament
MTTD	The Motor Traffic and Transport Department
NCDs	Non-Communicable Diseases
NN	New Narratives
NPA	National Petroleum Authority
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN COP	United Nations Conference of the Parties (UN meetings on climate change)
WHO	World Health Organisation
UNER	University of Energy and Natural Resources

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This endline study is the first step in the New Narratives Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) component of their project '**Excellence in Clean Air Reporting**' developed with and supported by Clean Air Fund Ghana. This report has been prepared by Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Consultant, Ms. Sarah Jane Danchie with invaluable research assistance from Obaa Akua Konadu-Osei.¹ Additionally, critical guidance, inputs and advisory was provided from M&E Consultant, Ms. Birgitte Jallof. This work was funded by New Narratives through a grant from the Clean Air Fund Ghana. Additionally, this work would not have been possible without teamwork and dedication from the New Narratives Ghana team comprising Mr Ato-Kwamena Dadzie (Country Lead), Ms Abena Asante (Project Administration), and Ms Prue Clarke (Co-Founder and Executive Director, New Narratives).

The consultants and the New Narratives team would like to extend their profound gratitude to several key stakeholders including clean air resource persons, media practitioners, and the men and women community/opinion leaders, women and youth representatives from Adabraka, Darkuman and East Legon (locations across Accra) who contributed invaluable time, ideas, and wealth of experiences. The New Narrative fellows – Nii Adjei Mensahfio, who supported the New Narratives team to organise the stakeholder consultations and logistics for the interviews and focus group discussions deserve special thanks as well.

Executive Summary

The report concludes that within a short space of time, the project has made commendable gains in raising awareness within and among media houses, effectively working with a relative handful of journalists and media houses that are the most credible and/or have largest audiences and most influential audiences. On the other hand, the impact on the communities overall is less pronounced. Although, it appears that those community members who were part of the first phase of the project appear to have more understanding into the importance of the issue, despite their limitations in addressing the issue completely. The project has generated interest, awareness and understanding of the importance of clean air issues among those who were involved directly and some who were involved indirectly. Consequently, the gains can be seen as the beginning of a journey on the right path to generating and demanding more actions, accountability and solutions from the duty bearers (government, MDAs/MMDAs) to addressing Ghana's serious air pollution scourge.

As a part of the New Narratives (NN) project '**Excellence in Clean Air Reporting**', this end of project M&E report has been prepared by independent consultants in collaboration with New Narratives' team. Clean Air Fund Ghana (CAF) has engaged New Narratives Ghana to implement this project. This was a pilot project, designed to support fact-based, people-centred journalism on issues of air pollution in Ghanaian media. Together with the baseline study exercise completed at the beginning of the project, this endline project report forms a critical part of the project's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) process. The aim of this study is to help to assess the impact and effectiveness of a project. It provides valuable insights into the outcomes and achievements of the project, helping stakeholders make informed decisions for future improvements.

The report documents the key findings from the second and final of two M&E exercises. This work used mixed research methods mainly primary research as well as secondary research.

¹ Small team from The Social Investment Consultancy Africa (TSIC) also including project support assistants Zainab Kangale, Itome Edache, Adjoa Kudoadzi and Jacob Prah in the later stages, given the additional elements to this phase.

The desk research consisted of a brief review of NN interim project progress report and the outputs produced by the NN reporters, also known as “fellows.”² The primary research included conducting 11 key informant interviews (KIs) with key stakeholders from the media and clean air landscapes and twelve focus group discussions (FGDs) with key representatives from 3 communities across Accra. In each community, there was an additional group added which included participants who did not take part in the first baseline exercise; thus they were relatively new to the project. This FGD was “mixed” and included a mix of men, women and youth representatives. During this round, we also added an FGD with 8 NN fellows and two online surveys: one survey was for all 12 of the NN fellows, the other survey was open to journalists who were not NN fellows, and therefore were not directly involved in this project. We called this group the non-fellow journalists. There were 42 respondents to the survey from this group.

Overall, a total of 193 stakeholders were consulted during this phase. They were mainly through FGDs (70%), then online surveys (27%), the remainder were consulted through KIs. The stakeholders included can be divided up into 3 main groups: 1) Public; 2) CA practitioners – those working on CA issues, and they make up the resource persons for the NN project; and 3) Media practitioners - key players from 9 media houses and organisations in Ghana.

In addition to the few content and process related limitations to this assignment, that were outlined at the baseline stage³, it should be noted that the previous limitation about the lack of participation from government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs), this limitation was improved during this phase, as we were able to hear from 2 agencies. Also, the number of KIs was down from 15 to 11, only 50% of the stakeholders targeted were able to take part due to scheduling constraints with our limited timeframe to conduct KIs. However, overall due to the mitigation measures taken, and ongoing triangulation of findings, the consultants do not find that these limitations have had much of a material impact on the subsequent outcomes of the stakeholder consultation exercise and the final results of this report. Nonetheless, the limitations should be acknowledged and noted to improve on subsequent exercises to make them more comprehensive and rigorous exercises.

The report then provides background context to the project and its vision, goals, objectives and desired theory of change in order to situate the purpose of this baseline exercise. The following provides a high-level summary overview of the key findings from the research and highlights the endline project conditions of the project under each project objective.

Objective 1: Increase the quantity and quality of stories on air pollution, its impacts, causes and solutions in leading Ghanaian news media

Baseline conditions observed: Until now, reporting on clean air issues in Ghanaian news media has been, at best, limited, covering broader related issues such as climate change or environmental issues rather than specifically reporting on clean air issues. Participants found it difficult to cite any CA articles, or campaigns. Only a few stakeholders from media, CA

² New Narratives co-funded two reporters - one at Joy and one at GNA. Each beat reporter did 40 stories. The fellows did 40+ stories. For a total of 121 stories.

³ The baseline phase noted the following limitations to the assignment: the complexity of the ecosystem in which the project is operating within, the finite budget and timeframe to conduct the exercise, also the final limitation is a potential for sampling bias. The baseline report is available from New Narratives, Executive Director

practitioners, and from the community groups were able to cite a past article or campaign relevant to CA issues in the past year or up to 5 years ago.

Endline conditions: The number of stories on clean air increased significantly as a result of this project, given the negligent starting point, the project has done very well to ensure that among the climate change or environment news item, issues related to clean air were among the most regularly reported on. All journalists and practitioners noted this significant increase. However, community stakeholders still found it difficult to cite any news article/news item related to clean air. Only a few were able to cite related news items that they observed during this project timeframe. Nevertheless, those that had participated in the project at the baseline stage have a better sense of the role that media can play and who should be doing more to address these issue.

Objective 2: Create a link between clean air stakeholders and media outlets to enhance the effectiveness of their campaigning and policy influencing.

Baseline Conditions observed: Links between clean air stakeholders are largely non-existent. Critical players such as CA practitioners are working in silos. Critical implementing agencies such as local government agencies are no longer working on CA issues as previously. Community participants are not engaged in a meaningful way on CA issues.

Endline Conditions: Links between clean air stakeholders have been better established. Government CA practitioners see the need and feel the media can help them to play their role better. Some CA stakeholders report better interactions with other newer actors. However, the youth CA were not able to deepen their interaction with government agencies, they were able to improve community action on addressing the issues. Community stakeholders feel that nothing has changed in terms of government action and authorities working together to address air pollution.

Objective 3: To enable targeted news media to effectively report on air pollution-related issues and increase public, civil society, and decision-makers' awareness regarding air pollution.

Baseline conditions observed: Stakeholders' awareness and knowledge on the sources and impact of air pollution is fairly good. However, enhanced knowledge and awareness was demanded and needed by community stakeholders on the specifics of the negative impact of air pollution on health and the economy. General public awareness of their rights is also low. Similarly, knowledge among journalists, media newsroom editors and media decision makers needs to be enhanced to better understand the importance of elevating CA issues.

Endline conditions: Stakeholders' and media decision makers' awareness and knowledge on the sources and impact of air pollution is still quite adequate. There appears to be a more nuanced understanding of the limitations in addressing the issues both individually and decision makers' and government action, despite increased awareness and knowledge.

The report concludes that within a short space of time, the project has made commendable gains in raising awareness within and among media houses, effectively working with a relative handful of journalists and media houses that are the most credible and/or have largest audiences and most influential audiences. On the other hand, the impact on the communities overall is less pronounced. Although, it appears that those community members who were part of the first phase of the project appear to have more understanding into the importance of the issue, despite their limitations in addressing the issue completely. The project has generated interest, awareness and understanding of the importance of clean air issues among those who were involved directly and some who were involved indirectly. Consequently, the

gains can be seen as the beginning of a journey on the right path to generating and demanding more actions, accountability and solutions from the duty bearers (government, MDAs/MMDAs) to addressing Ghana's serious air pollution scourge.

Background to the Assignment⁴

This work presents the final step in New Narratives' work to document the role and impact of quality journalism towards Clean Air Fund's work to diminish air pollution in Accra - and later Ghana. This project '**Excellence in Clean Air Reporting**' has been designed to support fact-based, people-centred journalism on issues of air pollution in Ghanaian media. The project is generously supported by the Clean Air Fund (CAF), a philanthropic initiative tackling global air pollution that works with governments, funders, businesses, and campaigners to deliver clean air for all as fast as possible.

Purpose of this Report

This report completes the project's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) process. The aim of this study is to provide a clear understanding of the end line situation of the project and to understand:

- what changes have occurred since the baseline stage, at the beginning of the project?
- what changes can be attributed to the influence of the project?

Approach and Methodology

This work used mixed research methods mainly primary research as well as secondary research. The desk research consisted of a brief review of articles on clean air (CA) issues produced by NN fellows during the project as well as a review of NN interim report. The primary research included conducting 11 key informant interviews (KIs) and twelve focus group discussions (FGDs) with key stakeholders from the media and clean air landscapes. As before, the same communities were invited into some nine Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). As before, we used the different geographic areas around Accra based on a variety of socio-economic classes. This time, within each community, four FGDs were carried out with: 1) community/opinion leaders (COL), 2) women and 3) youth representatives. These were held with the same participants that were consulted during the baseline stage, at the beginning of the project. And then we held an additional FGD in each area with a mixed group of Community Opinion Leaders (COLs), women and youth that were not involved with the baseline/beginning of the project.

⁴ Extracts from NN website

As before, the community members involved represented a broad diversity of backgrounds and realities in both so-called ‘planned and ‘unplanned’ neighbourhoods⁵. These were:

Adabraka, Darkuman and East Legon.

The planned neighbourhoods largely stem back to the colonial period, whereas the unplanned nature of the city has resulted in the development of slums and much smaller communities within officially recognized neighbourhoods with a well-defined centre but poorly identified extremities.

During this round, we also added an FGD with 8 NN Fellows and two online surveys: one survey was for all 12 of the NN fellows, the other survey was open to journalists who were not NN fellows, and therefore were not directly involved in this project. We called this group the non-fellow journalists. There were 42 respondents to the survey from this group.

Overall, a total of 193 stakeholders were consulted during this phase. They were mainly through FGDs (70%), then online surveys (27%), the remainder were consulted through KIs. The stakeholders included can be divided up into 3 main groups: 1) Public; 2) CA practitioners – those working on CA issues, and they make up the resource persons for the NN project; and 3) Media practitioners - key players from 11 media houses and organisations in Ghana.

The full list of organisations consulted can be found in Annex 1.

Demographic Characteristics of the stakeholders included

Overall, there was a good gender balance among the stakeholders involved – of the 193 participants, 52% male and 47% female. Also, the participants from the public included a good range of business and community members and students.

Assignment Limitations

The project limitations still remained from phase 1 such as the fact that NN is operating in a complex ecosystem making attribution and contribution difficult and due to finite timeframe and resources, there is a need to prioritise stakeholder focus. However, the previous limitation around the lack of government involvement in the first phase of the M&E exercise was slightly better at this stage. But unfortunately, it did not improve by much. Consequently, the main limitation at this stage was the following:

Table 1 Details on Selection of Communities for FGDs

Adabraka and East Legon

Both Adabraka and East Legon are found in the so-called ‘Planned neighbourhoods’. There are 22 of those, which were developed in the colonial era and are inhabited by rich Ghanaians and expatriates.

The city of Accra is officially divided into five geographical regions, where Adabraka is found in Accra Central, the liveliest part of Accra with Government Ministries – and tourists. East Legon is situated in Accra North, counting some of the wealthiest neighbourhoods with wealthy Ghanaians, academics, government officials and ex-patriates.

Darkuman

The Darkuman neighbourhood is characterized as an ‘Unplanned neighbourhood’. Given the disproportionate rate of expansion of the city and the provision of basic infrastructure and services, unplanned neighbourhoods are characterized by poor road networks, poor drainage systems, and insufficient water and electricity services.

Although not mutually exclusive, these unplanned settlements can be further distinguished from slums, where a slum is defined as a run-down area of a city characterized by substandard housing and squalor and lacking in tenure security. Here ‘a slum’ is seen as an area of severely low income where working migrants living in makeshift accommodations are the majority.

⁵ Information for the description of the planned and unplanned neighbourhood are from the below quotes site.

Overall, there was still limited government agency involvement: Although we were able to speak with the main agency charged with clean air issues, so government engagement this time was slightly better than in phase 1.

During this phase, we were able to speak with the EPA, the main agency charged with clean air issues, in addition to an MMDA agency, the AMA. However, other related government agencies such as ministry of health or transport, were still lacking at this stage of the project. Nevertheless, during this phase, we were able to speak to other related CA practitioner stakeholders such as public health, University of Energy and Natural Resources (UNER) which provided a different perspective on CA with regards to energy.

Sampling bias

Given that NN organised the KIIs and FGDs, there is a level of bias in the selection of participants for the stakeholder consultations. The selection of participants for the KIIs can be described as purposive, and those who were available and willing to take part with short notice. Therefore, the KII stakeholders tended to be media house colleagues known to NN. Similarly, the participants for the FGDs were selected by NN fellows for 2 FGDs and for the 3rd FGD, an NN fellow introduced us to the Community leader, who then selected participants who were representative of their communities. Subsequently, they worked tirelessly to bring together groups based on their own networks.

However, the consultants do not find that these limitations have had much of a material impact on the subsequent outcomes of the stakeholder consultation exercise and the final results of this endline project report. As mentioned at the baseline stage, the limitations should be acknowledged and noted to improve on subsequent exercises. to make them more comprehensive.

Project Context⁶

One of CAF's goals for the Ghana programme is to support local partners to increase public and civil society demand for cleaner air and for energy, transport and waste management solutions that result in cleaner air, improved health, and reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. But anecdotal conversations and initial research indicate that public awareness of the impacts of and solutions for air pollution is relatively low in Ghana.

Journalism done by leading, credible news organisations plays a key role in determining what issues make the national “agenda” each day, e.g., which issues are discussed on radio and television programs, social media and in political and business forums. In this way journalism helps spread information about key issues and drive discussions at all levels of society from political and business leaders to regular citizens that would not happen otherwise. This helps to create the conditions under which leaders and citizens drive and support change.

Anecdotal conversations with Ghanaian journalists indicate that, like the general public, they had low knowledge of climate change and environment issues in general but have almost no knowledge of issues surrounding clean air.

This project aimed to support upskilling journalists from eleven leading Ghanaian media outlets (the “beat reporters” and “fellows”) to enhance their understanding of air pollution and its impacts on health, climate, and Ghanaian society at large. The project did this in workshops that introduce these selected journalists to the key issues and actors involved in the issues. Their knowledge will also build as they undertake their investigations of clean air issues over

⁶ Extracts from NN project documentation at the beginning of the program

the 10 months of the project. The two “beat” reporters (reporters devoted part time to covering air pollution) located in Ghana News Agency and Joy FM, in particular, will have an opportunity for deep growth in knowledge, contacts and confidence in covering issues of clean air.

Recognizing that there is an important cross-fertilization between media houses⁷, it is expected that the capacity built and the learning-by-networking among the fellows as well as the two spearheading beats, will feed into better informed, new relevant angles and gripping human interest stories by a much broader range of media than those directly involved in the NN/CAF project.

Project Vision, Goals, objectives and outcomes⁸

The 2026 vision for NN for this work was to increase public demand for cleaner air to galvanise and reinforce action on air pollution.

The intended outcomes of the project included the following:

- Journalists from eleven leading Ghanaian media outlets have an increased knowledge of air pollution, its impacts, causes and solutions and how to report them effectively.
- Ghanaian audiences are informed and energised to push policymakers and key stakeholders to address air pollution, its impacts, causes and solutions.
- Increased institutional knowledge within Clean Air Fund of whether, how and how effectively news media can be used to raise public, civil society and decision-maker awareness of air pollution, its impacts, causes and solutions.
- Increased collaboration between Ghanaian news media and clean air stakeholders

Objectives:

1. Increase the quantity and quality of stories on air pollution, its impacts, causes and solutions in leading Ghanaian news media.
2. Create a link between clean air stakeholders and media outlets to enhance the effectiveness of their campaigning and policy influencing.
3. Enable targeted news media to effectively report on air pollution-related issues and increase public, civil society, and decision-makers' awareness regarding air pollution.

Theory of change:

- **Journalists will build knowledge of air pollution, its impacts, causes and solutions as well as building skills in doing compelling journalism.** The one-year period of the grant will give them a chance to build capacity, confidence, and contacts. **Their knowledge will be multiplied in peer-to-peer newsroom interactions.**
- Strengthened relationships between journalists and clean air stakeholders will **ensure clean air stakeholders can better engage agenda setting news media in national discussions about air pollution.** It will amplify their watchdog role and awareness building among everyday Ghanaians.

⁷ It is commonly known that not least media houses with meagre budgets as well as local and community media, lift important stories from the major, recognized and reputable media.

⁸ The following is taken from the NN project documents as part of their M&E agreement with CAF, their funders. Source: “Annex 1 Project Overview, Purpose and Vision”.

Communities will have built their agency in making their voices heard on matters of air pollution and accountability and will be empowered to continue to **use news media to demand more responsive and accountable Ghanaian political and business leadership**.

The following provides a detailed summary overview of the key findings from the research and highlights the endline project conditions of the project under each project objective.

Key Findings

Objective 1: Increase the quantity and quality of stories on air pollution, its impacts, causes and solutions in leading Ghanaian news media

Baseline conditions: *Until now, reporting on clean air issues in Ghanaian news media has been, at best, limited, covering broader related issues such as climate change or environmental issues rather than specifically reporting on clean air issues. Participants found it difficult to cite any CA articles, or campaigns. Only a few stakeholders from media, CA practitioners, and from the community groups were able to cite a past article or campaign relevant to CA issues in the past year or up to 5 years ago.*

Endline conditions: *The number of stories on clean air increased significantly as a result of this project, given the negligent starting point, the project has done very well to ensure that among the climate change or environment news item, issues related to clean air were among the most regularly reported on. All journalists and practitioners noted this significant increase. However, community stakeholders still found it difficult to cite any news article/news item related to clean air. Only a few were able to cite related news items that they observed during this project timeframe. Nevertheless, those that had participated in the project at the baseline stage have a better sense of the role that media can play and who should be doing more to address this issue.*

By the end of the project, New Narratives reporters have produced 118 articles, published the main Ghanaian media houses as well as 8 podcasts.⁹ The majority of all media stakeholders indicated that as a direct result of the project the quantity of stories on clean air issues had increased. Among the survey responses from the non-fellows journalist group, 79%¹⁰ indicated having seen or heard more stories on air pollution in the last year, than they have seen previously. Some editors were able to cite previous articles on air pollution.

Editors also shared some of the major air pollution stories or campaigns they have been involved in:

“Around December, the air quality deteriorated significantly, and that was mainly due to the Harmattan... And by reporting how bad the air quality has been and those who are most likely to be affected by this immediately, it helped people. I mean, those who cannot [stand the situation] started using the face mask to protect themselves and for authorities to also act in areas that they can do something about” (Editor, Joy News).

There were split experiences among editors as to whether clean air is more on the climate change agenda since the start of the project. One editor stated:

⁹ New Narratives Country Director

¹⁰ N=42

“just before that time, we had a climate change coverage once a week, every Wednesday. But because of the engagement [with New Narratives], we have increased the aspect of clean air. And so, we have climate change coverage, and we also have clean air in our content every week separately” (Editor, Joy News).

“it's [clean air] a subset of the environment, so climate change, renewable energy, green gas, all those things, floods, it cuts across, so I think that is what we are doing, we are looking at different aspects under the environment, and then we have our reporters working on those aspects. Yeah, of course, it's [clean air] been one of the areas that we give priority to when it comes up, so definitely it has changed. We would give priority to that because we now know the importance of having clean air, we make sure that if there's an event, or there's a topic under discussion in the media landscape, we highlight those aspects, just to bring it to the fore, and to push for cleaner air in our community, especially the city of Accra” (Editor, Daily Guide Network).

However, other editors shared that clean air reporting is not segregated but treated as a component of a broader theme such as climate change issues and the environment.

“The segregation has not been very clear. So, we have done this octopus approach where we deal with all the climate issues, whether it is clean air or whether it is how illegal mining is affecting river bodies and all of that. So, we kind of jam all of them together. Unfortunately, the one who was doing clean air as their specialty has moved on, unfortunately. So that has left us with a gap” (Editor, Ghana Web)

This highlights the importance of the project in shining the spotlight on clean air issues.

Regarding the number of assignments undertaken on a monthly basis, the frequency ranged from once a week to once a month. In the case of Luv FM, which runs a science and environment desk, they have segmented programming and, therefore, run programmes or reports on the environment two to three times a week. Editors also indicated that they have a journalist or a team working on the thematic area and are given a range of a week to two and a half months to write or develop a clean air or climate story.

According to the non-fellows, the Multimedia Group Limited, specifically Joy News, stood out as the media outlet that best covers air pollution issues, as was indicated by 43 per cent of respondents. This was followed by TV3 (10 per cent) and Ghana News Agency (7 per cent). The non-fellows identified a number of journalists who are concerned and passionate about reporting on air pollution, with Joy News' Michael Papa Nii Asharley (one of NN's two beat reporters) being the most frequently named. The majority (88 per cent) of the non-fellows indicated the possibility for a journalist to produce one feature or documentary on air pollution per month, while 7 per cent indicated No and 5 per cent, maybe.

Respondents from government entities reiterated the media's role in keeping the public informed. They also acknowledge the media's role in setting the agenda by bringing clean air issues to the fore:

“they're helping. They're bringing the issues to the attention of the policymakers. Yeah, to the attention of those who need to hear or to know” (Government, Environmental Protection Agency).

Also, on public interest and attention to issues of clean air, the majority (67%¹¹) of practitioners interviewed asserted that there is general awareness among the populace, however, they do not necessarily attribute it to traditional media. One practitioner interviewed, spoke about how young people are increasingly taking action to increase awareness through social media:

“we have a huge network of young people that we engage ...For instance, on WhatsApp, we have almost 9,000 people in different WhatsApp groups around the country. And I'll say at least 25% of them are a lot more concerned [than at the beginning of the project] about clean air and are talking about it... within this same group of people, a lot of them have become ambassadors or advocates for clean air. So I'll give an example, so one of the people... he's been saying that when he gets the opportunity to talk to people at church, especially like mounting a pulpit-type thing, he talks about clean air, right? This is not something that he would have done in 2022...around our community and our network and people that we influence, a lot of people are talking about clean air and they are concerned about it. Another interesting thing is there are a number of people who've been working on solutions towards clean air and they haven't really been talking about clean air until our campaign” (Practitioner, Ghana Think Foundation).

For another practitioner, it appears discussions on clean air, air pollution, and climate change have been changing in the last decade. He opines that in the recent decade, climate change and air quality issues were not something that people cared about. However, in the last five years, people have become more aware of climate change and its related impact. In the case of air pollution, the level of engagement is not comparable to climate change. He believes air quality issues are discussed sporadically:

“When it comes to air pollution, however, in the last five years, it has not really been that much. I think just about a year or two ago, let me say about two, three years ago, it started gaining some weight [attention]. And from last year coming into this year, we've seen a lot of talks on it. Almost having at least, I think in every two months, you probably hear of air quality or air pollution within our discussions. And most especially this year, when it was, I think from December to somewhere in February, when we were having the dry season with very low air quality, it became a huge topic and a lot of people were talking about it. Journalists were much more interested in talking about what the issues were, what were causing them, what are some of the problems or effects that we could have from them. And trying to find out solutions to them, how we can mitigate against them” (Practitioner, University of Energy and Natural Resources).

In terms of how their organisations are working with public awareness of clean air issues, practitioners use a number of strategies including public engagement, collaborating with other organisations, awareness campaigns and solutions-orientated engagements. For example,

“So now we are concerned about what is happening, but what are the things that we can actually go out to do? ... it's kind of been a gradual thing and it's going to continue as well. So our project officially ends with Clean Air Fund after the end of June, but there are a number of things that we are planning to do past June. And I think because of the way we've run the campaign, we would even do some advocacy and some marketing things past June. So, I mean, it's something that we'll continue to advocate for, especially on the solutions point of view. So, through this whole period, we've been talking about electric cars, people

¹¹N=3

cycling more, people using clean cooking stoves...We've been talking a lot about indoor plants. So, we have talked about the kind of plants they can plant in their homes just to improve the quality of air in their home” (Practitioner, Ghana Think Foundation).

Editors also argued for more people-focused CA stories (a requirement of NN journalism) rather than science-based articles due to the relatability of such content:

“we’ve realised that that’s more relatable. If somebody is suffering from lung disease because of the fact that there are drivers and they are inhaling all these dirty fumes from the vehicles, there are a lot more drivers who can relate to it and can take precautions from it if a doctor or an expert is speaking to how to avoid these things, and so that works for us... We don’t want to keep doubling all the statistics and all of that. People can relate to that, but they can relate to the human being, the suffering, the effect, because if it happens to them, it can happen to anybody, so it’s better to listen and take precautions from their stories of others (Editor, GhanaWeb).

Unfortunately, though, despite the increase in stories on clean air issues, the majority of community participants in all 3 communities felt that they hadn’t seen a change in the level of reporting on clean air issues. Despite the long list of trusted and responsible media houses, the majority of participants both new and those from the previous consultations registered their displeasure towards media houses’ significant inclination towards the discussion of politics. Many felt it has gotten particularly worse during the project period, citing the forthcoming election as a major reason why nothing but politics is in the news.

On quality of CA stories

During the FGDs with the NN fellows, they reflected on the impact of the project on them. It is clear that the project has helped to improve their capacity to produce more quality stories on CA. They discussed improvement in knowledge on environment-related topics, understanding the impact of clean air on health, improvement in writing skills, considering the cost burden of stories, and giving people the right of reply. The NN fellows further reflected on the most important lessons learnt about doing good journalism while in the New Narratives programme, and the responses have been summarised in Figure 1.



Figure 1 **Important lessons learnt in the New Narrative programme**

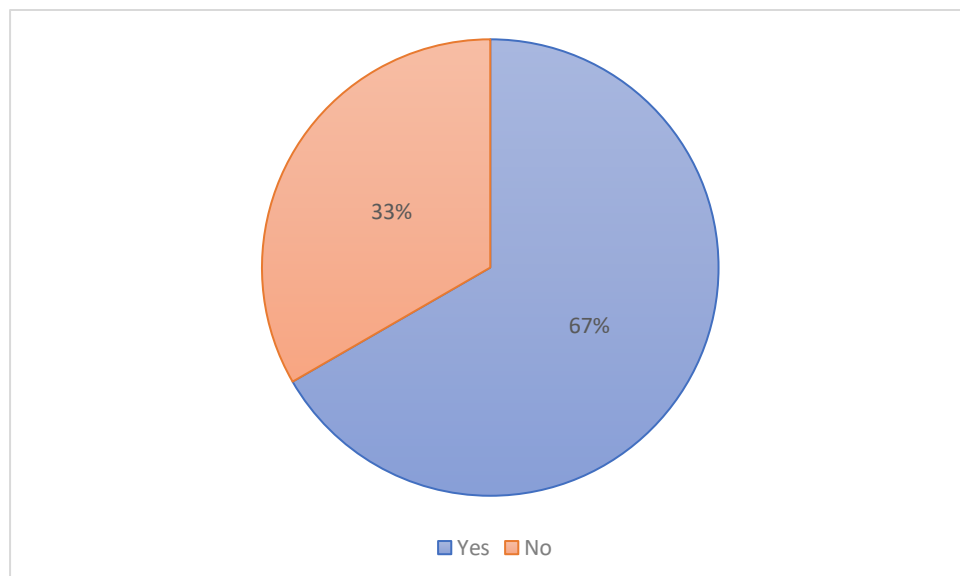
Respondents further explained how the New Narratives’ on-the-job approach to training has helped improve their journalism, including doing detailed research in writing a report, learning creative writing skills, using lived experiences, and writing a good story

pitch. The fellows reiterated how beneficial the skills, knowledge, and experience gained from the programme have been, particularly in the newsroom. They also admitted receiving support from the newsroom. A respondent shared:

“For instance, during the Harmattan season I was their go-to person for all stories related to air pollution. They sometimes point me to stories” (NN Fellow).

The project has appeared to have additional benefits beyond the NN fellows, by impacting other journalist colleagues. Out of the 12 NN fellows, 8 of them (representing 67 per cent) indicated that they have passed on skills learnt from New Narratives to newsroom colleagues, as compared to 4 (representing 33 per cent) in Figure 2.

Figure 2 **Response to passing on skills learnt to colleagues**



The majority (83%¹²) of the NN fellows indicated that there has been a dramatic increase in knowledge, while only a minority (17%¹³) indicated a moderate increase in knowledge.

Government stakeholders recognise the importance of training the media to enable them to produce quality CA stories. The EPA acknowledged that, for example, the Clean Air project has had an impact on the work they do as training the media allows them to have a deeper understanding of issues they report on, which contributes indirectly to pushing the air quality agenda of the Agency:

“getting the media to understand... I mean, it's one of the things that I would say is positive. Because once they get the understanding, then when they are reporting, they report with that understanding, which I think is good... “

Objective 2: Create a link between clean air stakeholders and media outlets to enhance the effectiveness of their campaigning and policy influencing.

Baseline Conditions: Links between clean air stakeholders are largely non-existent. Critical players such as CA practitioners are working in silos. Critical implementing agencies such as local government agencies are no longer working on CA issues as previously. Community participants are not engaged in a meaningful way on CA issues.

Endline Conditions: Links between clean air stakeholders have been better established. Government CA practitioners see the need and feel the media can help them to play their role better. Some CA stakeholders report better interactions with other newer actors. However, the youth CA were not able to deepen their interaction with government agencies, they were able to improve community action

¹² n=10

¹³ n=2

on addressing the issues. Community stakeholders feel that nothing has changed in terms of government action and authorities working together to address air pollution.

Governmental agencies highlight especially that addressing air pollution issues is the job of multiple stakeholders. Unlike other stakeholders who largely agreed that they work in silos during the baseline exercise for this project, the government agencies understand and believe that they work with other agencies. According to the EPA, they are already embarking on a number of multi-stakeholder initiatives aimed at addressing air pollution in Ghana. Among other initiatives, they are working:

“on regulations to facilitate the enforcement of standards. And EPA is also collaborating with the various stakeholders that are needed to help improve on the air quality...if you take the emission from transport, for instance, there's not only EPA, the Ministry of Transport is there, Ministry of Highways is there, the DVLA [Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority] is there, the NPA [National Petroleum Authority] is there...In the past, EPA worked with these stakeholders to phase out lead in fuel... And we are in discussion with the DVLA to see how we can implement or enforce the standard. When it comes to industry, EPA is also working with the stakeholders involved in that space. And there are a lot of awareness creation that is going on in the industry. Like I said, the environmental assessment regulation tool that we are using to regulate industry is one of the tools that is helping us to get those activities from the industrial sector.” (Government, Environmental Protection Agency).

On the part of the AMA, they point out that they have a holistic view of the city and the various issues of importance. They state further that:

“So, it either has to be an environmental health officer or a public health person for pollution issues to become obvious... AMA was fortunate to be part of a larger C14 group activity and in those types of forums, clean air, pollution, transport, in fact, climate change management issues are very well supported” (Government, Accra Metropolitan Assembly).

However, Government responses suggest that this project has enabled them to increase their interactions with other stakeholders, including the press.

“Well, the other is that, as I said, in dealing with air pollution, it's not just one institution, but a number of stakeholders come into play. So I'm also seeing a number of stakeholders together to tackle the issue. Well, maybe to add on to what was being done” (Government, Environmental Protection Agency).

In the assessment of whether or not media coverage and media interest have increased since the start of the project, practitioners opined that the media is making a good effort to engage them.

“They've reached out a number of times. For me in particular, I think about three times. And that was when I couldn't, we couldn't have a good time to meet because of our schedule. But we have had engagements and recently we had one, yes, even off camera... they are approaching more on air quality nowadays than they used to be” (Practitioner, University of Energy and Natural Resources).

Practitioners also shared that the project has had beneficial consequences in terms of fostering positive relations with other stakeholders:

“Yeah, so I think with media it's become much more easier because if you go to the media without anything that they are interested in, they won't listen to you. But because now they are interested in issues like this [clean air/climate change], they are ready to assign someone to you who is either being trained or knows what the whole thing is about and then the person can now listen to you and then put your stats out there. So it's become a bit easier in terms of delivering the media as well” (Practitioner, University of Energy and Natural Resources).

Although practitioners have not necessarily formed consortia with other stakeholders on clean air, they have been “working closely” (Practitioner, Ghana Think) or collaborating with other stakeholders. One practitioner further indicated that since the project began, his organisation has attempted to collaborate with other local entities; however, these discussions have yet to manifest into actual collaborations. Aside from Ghana Think which has established new relations with the Energy Commission and other solutions-orientated organisations, other practitioners have not necessarily formed new engagements with other stakeholders.

Quality of Stakeholder Engagement

However, the practitioner from the UNER admits that the project has led to better engagement with existing stakeholders. In their reflection on how their engagement with other stakeholders can be improved, practitioners pointed out the relevance of collaborating to increase public awareness. One discusses the need for warm introductions and reducing bureaucracies:

“I think through some warm intros, like I don't want to be sending so many letters...if people could introduce us to some of the decision makers or some of these stakeholders, that would be great. So, you don't have to go through all the bureaucratic things that I have to go through. I mean, to be frank, for we as Ghana, I think, we have largely not worked with government institutions because they are so bureaucratic. Like we have stayed away from them, and we've been able to do so much, we've been able to impact, like indirectly impact over 100,000 people by not engaging with government. You know, but I think for this particular campaign, we didn't have a choice. Yeah. We had to, because there's a lot of enforcement that needs to happen and you need to engage with such people” (Practitioner, Ghana Think Foundation).

In practitioners' assessment of whether there is a real sense of working together among government institutions with other stakeholders on clean air, there still is room to synergise efforts:

“... I think that is also a problem... And one aspect of it is the gap between institutions. Most of the institutions are not working together, especially on the environmental challenges that we have. So you see either Ministry of Energy or the energy sector doing their own thing, and then the environmentalists are also doing their own thing, trying to get those issues. But knowing that the problem from one sector is what is causing the problem in the other sector, and then to link up with them and find solutions, it becomes difficult. The only time I've seen a collaboration is on the transition framework from non-renewable sources to renewable energy sources¹⁴... That is where you see the collaboration between the Ministry of Energy,

¹⁴ Ghana's National Energy Transition Framework (2022-2070):
https://www.energymin.gov.gh/sites/default/files/2023-09/FINAL%20GHANA%27S%20NATIONAL%20ENERGY%20TRANSITION%20FRAMEWORK_2023_compressed%20%281%29_compressed%20%282%29.pdf

Ministry of Lands and Forestry, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, trying to collaborate together and then come up with a transition strategy to meet the net zero emissions by 2070. Apart from that, you hardly see it” (Practitioner, University of Energy and Natural Resources).

From the perspective of practitioners engagement with other stakeholders, their respective roles in relation to clean air have not necessarily changed since this project, but have been able to do more in their capacities:

“contributing to talking and sharing my knowledge on what I know about clean air to various groups. I've done that several. Yeah. I think that is the way I also contribute to creating awareness... I think about 10 [interviews]...[collaborated with] other stakeholders. We also did the teachers and the paediatric society. but my line of work will not be directly involving the community (Practitioner, School of Medicine & Dentistry, KNUST).

Community respondents from the Youth/Women/COL FGDs exhibited limited knowledge of the MDAs that should be involved such as Ministry of Sanitation and district assemblies (none specifically named) were mentioned. They also have better knowledge of the laws, MDAs, or authorities dealing with air pollution. However, respondents feel that the ineffectiveness of existing laws is very visible.

“laws on environment in general, or air pollution, are not working effectively, or are not working at all in Accra” (FGD Women, Adabraka)

“when it comes to the implementation of the law, I think we do have the laws. Implementation and enforcement is the issue. You find yourself in a residential community and then a factory is set up in the residential community” (FGD Youth, East Legon).

According to FGD respondents, the main stakeholders working on air pollution include households, traditional leaders, town council squad popularly called ‘abaa yie¹⁵:

“reintroduce the town council squad back then, which was in the days of former President Rawlings, where you had people go around, and when they see your house littered, they could call you or summon you to authorities...if this is reintroduced, it will help to reduce this air pollution or waste management” (FGD Women, Adabraka).

However, the youth group observed a change in the players working on broader themes relating to the environment, which revolved around citizen action.

“I would say that if anything comes close to addressing air pollution, probably be the Bus Stop Boys¹⁶ who have been cleaning gutters and cleaning various streets in Accra. So maybe they are doing something close to cleaning the environment” (FGD Youth, East Legon).

Consequently, the community groups do not feel that there has been any change and that the agencies are not coordinating to address the issue of air pollution.

¹⁵ ‘Abaa yie’ is a Ga phrase meaning ‘they are coming’, a term used by traders to alert other traders, who are usually selling at unauthorised spots, to move away in a bid to outsmart city guards (The Ghanaian Times, 2021: <https://www.ghanaiantimes.com.gh/ama-designates-pavement-for-xmas-trading-post/>)

¹⁶ Buz Stop Boys (<https://twitter.com/buzstopboys>) is a group of young individuals who volunteer to keep the city of Accra clean. They have gained attention due to their use of social media such as X in promoting their activities.

Objective 3: To enable targeted news media to effectively report on air pollution-related issues and increase public, civil society, and decision-makers' awareness regarding air pollution.

Baseline conditions: Stakeholders' awareness and knowledge on the sources and impact of air pollution is fairly good. However, enhanced knowledge and awareness is needed by community stakeholders on the specifics of the negative impact of air pollution on health and the economy. General public awareness of their rights is also low. Similarly, knowledge among journalists, media newsroom editors and media decision makers needs to be enhanced to better understand the importance of elevating CA issues.

Endline conditions: Stakeholders' and media decision makers' awareness and knowledge on the sources and impact of air pollution is still quite adequate. There appears to be a more nuanced understanding of the limitations in addressing the issues both individually and decision makers' and government action, despite increased awareness and knowledge.

"before the first meeting, I had little knowledge about air pollution. Even though I have not personally advised or educated anyone on air pollution, I believe there is this general reduction in the rate at which people burn or contribute to air pollution. But since the last time, nothing has changed. Things have been the same. And when you try to advise somebody on air pollution, the person fires back and doesn't listen" (FGD Women, Darkuman).

"the situation hasn't changed, it hasn't improved it has even gone worse because gas [Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG)] has become expensive and so this results in the traditional ways such as charcoal and firewood which contributes to air pollution, and of course 'man for chop' - we have no choice than to go on with our old ways" (FGD Women, East Legon).

It can be inferred from these extracts that respondents understand the value of individual action in the reduction of air pollution. However, they realise the limits of the application of their knowledge. Some respondents indicated the difficulty in educating other individuals who are perpetrators. There are instances where some citizens (usually the perpetrators) believe other citizens do not wield the authority to educate them on improper sanitary practices. The extract from the FGD Women, East Legon respondent is also relevant, as prevailing economic conditions can undo gains made by clean air efforts. This extract therefore shows the interconnectedness of the economic health of the country vis-à-vis energy choices made at the individual level. Media Editors are also more aware of the linkages between air pollution and the economy.

"it's impacted massively on persons who are suffering from it. It also puts pressure on the limited health facilities that we have. And I think that it has limited the productivity of those who suffer from it because those who suffer from it are always out of work... So that has been the impact, productivity, pressure on the healthcare systems, and even the cost of giving these treatments" (Editor, Joy News)

This project has done well to raise awareness and concern among NN fellows and their colleagues and evidence to suggest that even though it's the end of the pilot project, there is a need to maintain momentum given the seriousness of the issue. All but one NN fellow indicated that there has been a big increase in their concern about air pollution's impact on Ghanaians now compared to before the clean air reporting programme. Similarly, with the

exception of one fellow, respondents state that their colleagues have been more concerned and knowledgeable about air pollution since the programme started.

A possible testament or demonstration of the effectiveness of this project is that other practitioners see the need to continue to their work, beyond the Clear Air Fund project.

“So now we are concerned about what is happening, but what are the things that we can actually go out to do? ... it's kind of been a gradual thing and it's going to continue as well. So our project officially ends with Clean Air Fund after the end of June, but there are a number of things that we are planning to do past June. And I think because of the way we've run the campaign, we would even do some advocacy and some marketing things past June. So, I mean, it's something that we'll continue to advocate for, especially on the solutions point of view. So through this whole period, we've been talking about electric cars, people cycling more, people using clean cooking stoves... We've been talking a lot about indoor plants. So we have talked about the kind of plants they can plant in their homes just to improve the quality of air in their home” (Practitioner, Ghana Think Foundation).

However, the respondents also pointed out the current modus operandi of the media, such that an agenda can be set based on who can pay for airtime:

“...it looks like the way the media operates in Ghana, again, it's an issue of who is available to pay for the airtime...the government can decide to take the cost of that as a form of incentives for the amounts media houses” (Government, Accra Metropolitan Assembly).

In terms of how media stakeholders feel regarding the changes that need to happen to increase the quality and quantity of coverage of air pollution issues in Ghana:

- Training workshops for journalists and editors
- More fellowships like New Narratives' Clean Air project should be introduced
- Sustained awareness creation efforts
- Funding and guidance on clean air-related topics
- Collaboration and partnerships among journalists

On improvements NN Fellows would like to see in the clean air reporting programme, the following suggestions were given:

- Increase in funding for journalists
- Swift response to submitted pitches
- Ensuring enough funding for individuals who travel to other destinations to cover news
- Enhanced engagement with and expanded access to diverse technical expert sources
- Availability of localised data on air quality issues
- Extend media's awareness creation efforts
- Incentivising journalists

According to media editors, the following could be done differently to make the project better:

- Funding
- Collaboration between media and other stakeholders
- Stronger engagements with editors
- Increase the frequency of reporting
- Considering more audience-appropriate modes of communication

From the perspective of the NN Fellows, the following can be done to improve and ensure that the project has more impact:

- More journalists on board
- Support peer-to-peer learning
- Sustaining networks created
- Reimbursing costs to cover news
- Partnerships with different stakeholders
- Diversify the pool of speakers/trainers
- Link journalists across countries.
-

The following matrix provides a summary of the key baseline conditions identified under the various objectives.

Summary Matrix of M&E results at Endline level

PROJECT NAME	Clean Air Ghana			
Objective 1	Indicator 1.1	Means of Verification (MOV)	Baseline	Endline
Increase the quantity and quality of stories on air pollution, its impacts, causes and solutions in leading Ghanaian news media	Number of stories in key media about air pollution	Possibly limit to media where NN has fellows and beats. Ask them to inform.	Journalists in the program report having done no stories or few stories on CA before the project.	The number of stories on clean air increased significantly. The project has done very well to ensure that among the climate change or environment news items, issues related to clean air were among the most regularly reported on. All journalists and practitioners noted this significant increase. However, community stakeholders still found it difficult to cite any news article/news item related to clean air.
	Indicator 1.2 Quality of reporting on air pollution-related stories increases	Means of Verification (MOV) Based on Prue/Ato's 11 content development indicators	Baseline Stories submitted as part of application process or first draft submitted in the project have few of the 11 indicators	Endline Quality of reporting appears to have improved according to CA practitioners especially government agencies. The majority of articles were approved.
Objective 2	Indicator 2.1	Means of Verification (MOV)	Baseline	Endline
Create a link between clean air stakeholders and media outlets to enhance the effectiveness of their campaigning and policy influencing	Number of stakeholders engaged	[‘engaged’ in media stories?] As above for indicator 1.1	Stakeholders report limited to no engagement with newsmen on issues of CA.	Links between clean air stakeholders have been better established. Government CA practitioners see the need and feel the media can help them to play their role better. Some CA stakeholders report better interactions with other newer actors.
	Indicator 2.2 Stakeholders report an increase in quality of engagement	Means of Verification (MOV) Based on KIs at baseline and endline	Baseline Links between clean air stakeholders are largely non-existent. Critical players such as CA practitioners are working in silos. Critical implementing agencies such as local government agencies are not working on CA issues as previously. Community participants are not engaged in a meaningful way on CA issues.	Endline The youth CA were not able to deepen their interaction with government agencies, however, they were able to improve community action on addressing the issues. Community stakeholders feel that nothing has changed in terms of government action and authorities working together to address air pollution.
Objective 3	Indicator 3.1	Means of Verification (MOV)	Baseline	Endline
To enable targeted news media to effectively report on air pollution-related issues and increase public, civil society and decision makers- awareness regarding air pollution	Increase in awareness among media decisionmakers	In-depth interviews (KIs)	Stakeholders' awareness and knowledge on the sources and impact of air pollution is fairly good.	Increase in differentiated awareness among media decisionmakers on clean air issues on health and the economy.
	Indicator 3.2 Increase in awareness among editors and heads of newsrooms	Means of Verification (MOV) In-depth interviews (KIs)	Baseline Knowledge among media newsroom editors and heads of newsrooms is good, however, it needs to be enhanced to better understand the importance of elevating CA issues.	Endline Increase in differentiated awareness among editors on clean air issues on health and the economy and the need to continue to try to keep these issues in the news.
	Indicator 3.3 increase in awareness of air pollution-related issues among FGD participants	Means of Verification (MOV) FGD meeting reports	Baseline Enhanced knowledge and awareness is needed by community stakeholders on the specifics of the negative impact of air pollution on health and the economy. General public awareness of their rights is also low.	Endline Increase in differentiated awareness among FGD participants on clean air issues on health and the economy compared to FGD participants who had a very general understanding and awareness.
	Indicator 3.4 Increased knowledge of air pollution related issues among participating journalists	Means of Verification (MOV) NN Quiz used at beginning and end of the start-up workshop with journalists. Quiz will be administered during the second workshop.	Baseline Journalists were asked to undertake extensive reading before the first workshop where they were quizzed. Likely as a result, knowledge among journalists is good, however, it needs to be enhanced to better understand the nuances of CA issues and the importance of elevating CA issues.	Endline High rates of increase in knowledge on clean air issues among journalists, both NN reporters and journalists who were not involved in the NN training but had come across the NN reporters or their articles.

Conclusion

This endline report has further highlighted the importance of the role of the media in raising awareness and facilitating discussions on clean air issues. The project has made several commendable gains in raising awareness within and among media houses and it has enabled stakeholders to engage more meaningfully, especially government stakeholders. These commendable gains were achieved despite only a relative handful of journalists and media houses were provided with direct support. However, the impact on the communities is less pronounced. Nevertheless, the impact that the project has had on those participants who were involved in phase 1 is interesting to note. While they are less pessimistic that the media has played its role in raising awareness, their involvement in the project made them more aware of their individual roles in addressing the issue. Therefore, the project has generated interest, awareness and understanding of the importance of clean air issues. The gains can be seen as the beginning of a journey on the right path to generating more actions, accountability and solutions to addressing Ghana's serious air pollution scourge.

Annex

1. List of Participant Organisations for the Stakeholder Consultations

Categories	Participant Organisations
Media	-Daily Guide (Newspaper) -GhanaWeb (Online news portal) -Joy FM (Radio) -Adom FM -Luv FM (Radio) -Ghana News Agency (GNA) (News Agency)
Practitioners	-Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (Hospital) -Ghana Think (Social Enterprise) -Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) (Local government authority) -Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) governmental -University of Energy and Natural Resources
Focus Group Discussions	Group involved in the previous baseline exercise -Women -Youth -Community/ Opinion leaders Mixed group of COL Women/Youth who were not in the previous baseline exercise NN fellows/Beats
Online Survey	NN Fellow/Beats Non NN Fellows/journalists who were not NN fellows

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