



*14th Wole Soyinka Centre Media Lecture and
public launch of the Collaborative Media project*

Can democracy work without a strong sub-national media?

#14WSCLecture

Wednesday 13 July 2022



ORDER OF EVENTS

Welcome

Uduak Amimo – Moderator

National anthem

Introduction

Moderator

Opening remarks

Ropo Sekoni, Board Chair, WSCIJ

Keynote speakers

Chiedo Nwankwor

Vice Dean for Education and Academic Affairs, Johns Hopkins University. School of Advanced and International Studies (SAIS)

Kole Shettima

Director, MacArthur Foundation, Africa Office

Launch of Collaborative Media project

Motunrayo Alaka, Executive Director/CEO, WSCIJ

Panel discussion

Moderator/Panellists

Questions & answers

Audience

Appreciation

Samson Ademola, Research and Programme Officer, WSCIJ

Sub-national issues need to take centre stage to develop national accountability

The 2022 edition Wole Soyinka Annual Media Lecture will explore the prospects of a vibrant democracy without independent media playing the watchdog role at the sub-national levels of governance. We hope this lecture will encourage conversations and actions where more media organisations increase their focus on sub-national governance and take advantage of their proximity to better educate citizens on civic issues to encourage active participation. It is especially urgent as we build-up to the forthcoming elections, where 30 of 36 states in Nigeria hold their gubernatorial elections and, importantly, the governance that should follow before another election fever hits.



Without pre-empting today's discourse, the gap in the independent reportage of state and local government levels has its effects on accountability and transparency at sub-national levels. Perhaps the challenge to media coverage at sub-national levels of governance is the proximity of sub-national media to the government, which can increase the risk of investigative reporting. Instances of intimidation and attacks by some of our partners who are here today have been reported.

To enable more media organisations to join the reportage of sub-national issues whilst also encouraging collaborative journalism, the Wole Soyinka Centre for Investigative Journalism (WSCIJ), initiated the Collaborative Media Engagement for Development, Inclusivity and Accountability (CMEDIA) project earlier in the year. The three-year multi-level intervention for media independence and government accountability initiative supported by the MacArthur Foundation, has partnered with 26 media organisations across Nigeria to investigate and shed more light on states and local government and the private sector even as it amplifies marginalised voices.

We thank you for joining this lecture which also marks our grand patron, Professor Wole Soyinka's 88th birthday. I hope you support this mutual cause for a better media, a better society.

Motunrayo Alaka
Executive Director/CEO, WSCIJ



Speakers



Chiedo Nwankwor

Vice Dean for Education and Academic Affairs, Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced and International Studies (SAIS)

The co-speaker has a background in comparative politics with a focus on African politics. She would bring her unique perspective in political science to the lecture discourse by drawing on her knowledge of networks and collaborations that enable democracy and leadership at the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) and its Women Lead initiative.



Kole Shettima

Director
MacArthur Foundation,
Africa Office

The co-speaker will address the theme from his vast knowledge of governance, his wealth of experience in political science and development, particularly, at the intersection of media, social justice and democracy. He will also speak to his experience of funding media accountability efforts through donor support as well as building enduring business models to sustain the efforts.



Ibiba Don Pedro

Managing Director
National Point

The role of an independent subnational media in reporting governance within a region for equitable resource governance and social justice will be the focus of the panellist. She has a close to three-decade career in journalism and experience managing a newspaper focused on the Niger Delta.



Haruna Mohammed

Co-publisher
WikkiTimes

Corruption is the bane of Nigeria's democracy. The panellist will contribute his experience on investigating high profile corruption and related issues in Bauchi State and other parts of northern Nigeria. He will offer insights on how the media can better perform its watchdog role, while keeping safe and sane in the profession which has attracted threats to his life and arrests at one time or the other.



Fisayo Soyombo

Founder/Editor-in-Chief
Foundation for
Investigative Journalism
and Social Justice (FIJ)

The panellist has uncovered suppressed truths at various points through undercover reporting. He will speak on what difference subnational investigative journalism has made, is making and can make in Nigeria's democracy and the challenges to it. He will share stories of impacts from his earlier investigative works focused on state governments and speak to how to engage audiences online for attention from relevant quarters.



Adaora Onyechere

Executive Director
Gender Strategy
Advancement
International

Input from the panellist will be to provide the youth, girls and women angle to the conversation. She will also share her thoughts on how media focus at the subnational level can help advance the cause of marginalised groups.



Mansur Liman

Director-General
Federal Radio
Corporation of Nigeria
(FRCN)

The strategy for connecting to and engaging with audience in far to reach areas of Nigeria effectively through the lens of the successes and failures of the Federal Radio Corporations Nigeria (FRCN) will be the talking point for the panellist, who is the director-general of Africa's largest and public broadcasting organisation. He will also speak to the impacts of radio on local governance.



Uduak Amimo

Broadcaster and
executive coach

The moderator will coordinate the entire lecture, moderate the discussion, intervene as may be necessary to ensure the free flow of conversation, keep the panel within the scheduled time, create links from varying perspectives of panellists and contributors on the topics and manage the questions and answers session.

Moderator

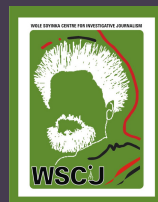
About the Lecture

The Wole Soyinka Media Lecture Series is an annual programme of the Wole Soyinka Centre for Investigative Journalism (WSCIJ) aimed at examining varying topical issues that have a reverberating effect on the perceived performance of the media on the health of Nigeria's democracy and the country at large.

Held first on 27 March 2008, WSCIJ has since 2009 held the lecture on 13 July, to commemorate the birthday of Africa's first Nobel Laureate in Literature and Grand Patron of the WSCIJ, Professor Wole Soyinka.

Past lectures have explored several issues of public interest, including electoral reform, media challenges, local governance, national security, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), corruption, oil revenue, tax regime, basic education, electricity, conflicts and peace-building.

Our distinguished speakers and panellists have come from different walks of life—scholars, public servants, diplomats, political analysts, tax professionals, and heads of government parastatals.



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Investigative reporting is the vital force for the restoration of human dignity. – Wole Soyinka