

**PRESENTED TO NLC CONSULTATIVE FORUM ON DECENT
WORK AGENDA BY THE NIGERIA UNION OF JOURNALISTS
(NUJ), FEBRUARY 26 – 27, 2009**

BACKGROUND

The Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) contends that the quality of working condition enjoyed by Journalists is a key factor in creating a democratic media culture. Without social justice and fairness at work, it is impossible to talk of editorial independence or press freedom.

The long-term objective of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) is getting the best deal possible for its members and creating the conditions for them to enjoy a better quality of life. It has become increasingly obvious that real journalistic quality and real journalistic freedom can only be ensured through the securing of decent working conditions for journalist Not only do journalists need to win their freedom from governments, they also need to win their independence from media owners, the corporate media and their imposing regional and global structures.

The Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) convoked a stakeholders Workshop on conditions of service for Nigerian Journalists in October 14 – 15, 2008 in Calabar, Cross River State. The workshop was in recognition of the urgent need to enhance the working condition of journalists in the Country. The summit was a follow-up to an international workshop organization collaboration with the Regional Office of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) Dakar, Senegal, in Abuja on October 29 – 31, 2006.

ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

- a. **Protection for Members and Unions** - The Union can provide members with unemployment and hardship benefits, but above all, it provides solidarity. When everyone is a member of the Union, individuals have collective power. This protects members from unfair employment practices – such as low pay, wrongful dismissal and unsocial hours.
- b. **Improved Condition of Service** – a Union exists to improve the conditions of workers lives and to allow members to express their views on the ever-changing problems of society. The NUJ will join with other unions to exert influence on political institutions. Majority of members have families and all have social interests. These aspects of their lives should be protected and improved upon.

- c. **Conflict Resolution** – The contradictions between management’s objectives and a trade Union’s interest mean that there will be a potential conflict. The role of the Union is to resolve such conflicts to make and sustain compromises.
- d. **Workers Interest** – Industrial relations –management and workers co-existence – are essentially the responsibility of employers. A trade Union exists to ensure that workers’ interests are not forgotten and their needs are satisfied. Without a Union, everyone is at risk. It is our resolve that everyone in an editorial department, from young trainees to executive staff should be a Union member.

SOME SPECIFIC NEEDS OF JOURNALISTS

- a. **Protection** – Journalists need Unions. They are all workers and need the protection that a Union provides.
- b. **Global Problems** – The Industrial problems facing journalists are the same across the world: poor pay, long hours of work, insecurity, poor retirement benefits, lack of insurance and health benefits, workplace discrimination etc. “Through Solidarity comes strength”
- c. **Ethics and Press Freedom** – Journalists have a wider responsibility both in their profession and to public interest. Journalists also need to be able to defend their professional rights in their negotiations with management and they need to represent themselves in ethical and press freedom matters.
- d. **Equality for all** – In Journalism, as elsewhere, men and women should enjoy equality of opportunity and reward. Results rarely reflect that goal. That’s why gender equality should always be at the heart of Union’s strategies.

NUJ DECENT WORK AGENDA EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

S/NO	ISSUES	ACTIVITIES TO ADDRESS THE ISSUES	INPUTS Resources - Material - Financial	OUTCOME Targeted Achievements	JUSTIFICATION - Workers - Work place - Community Short time/long time	TIME FRAME
1.	Protection for Members and Union	<p>a. Regular Courtesy calls on Employers.</p> <p>b. Workshops/Seminars on identifying issues and grievances</p> <p>c. Convoke programs/activities to improve capacity of members.</p> <p>d. Provision of social benefits</p>	<p>a. National, Zonal and State Councils to identify and initiate at all levels, bi-monthly.</p> <p>b. Quarterly – inviting resource persons from academia and NLC, and at all levels of the Union. Sundry ÷ ₦1.5m x 4 = ₦6m.</p> <p>c. Improved and Enhanced Capacity Programmes focusing at Job Protection at all levels Sundry ÷ ₦1.5m x 4 = ₦6m</p> <p>d. Life Insurance Policy: Gross Pay x 5 - Special Insurance For risk involving Assignments</p> <p>e. Visible Involvement of NLC in (a) – (d) above.</p>	<p>a. Strike actions becoming last resort</p> <p>b. Identify what motivates members and what issues and grievances are.</p> <p>c. Empowerment, Capacity building and enhancement</p> <p>d. Assurances of better life after service</p>	<p>a. Conducive labour/industrial climate</p> <p>b. Adverting ugly industrial situation</p> <p>c. Improved Intellectual Status</p> <p>d. Secured future for members</p>	<p>QUARTERLY AND CONTINUOUS</p>

2.	Improved Conditions of Service	<p>a. Improved academic standards of members .</p> <p>b. Exerting influence on the political class</p>	<p>a. Subsidized tuition and other incidentals N5m/annum</p> <p>b. Reaching out to political class/government at all levels N6m/annum</p>	<p>a. To Improve academic status leading to better career prospects</p> <p>b. General Improved Conditions of Service for members</p>	<p>a. Increased earnings, output and professional interaction.</p> <p>b. Protection of life and improved conditions of service</p>	<p>BI-YEARLY</p> <p>Monthly</p>
3.	Conflict Resolution	<p>a. Regular meetings/summits with stakeholders, workshops/seminars inviting NLC, IFJ etc.</p>	<p>a. Resource Persons and Materials form NLC & IFJ ₦9m/annum</p>	<p>a. Avoidance of Contradictions and resolution of Conflicts</p>	<p>a. Peaceful co-existence between the employers and employees</p>	<p>Quarterly</p>
4.	Workers/Members Interests	<p>a. Workers Interest are not forgotten and their needs satisfied.</p> <p>Interaction between Unions and Media Employers (NPAN).</p>	<p>a. Dialogue with Employers and Editorial management</p>	<p>a. Embracing membership especially from senior staff cadre</p>	<p>a. Increased Union Membership especially Editorial and Professional Platforms</p>	<p>Quarterly</p>