**Content:**

**1. Summary of approach**

**2. Example of a coding sheet for monthly content monitoring**

**3. Example of a coding sheet for event-based monitoring**

**4. Annex: Quarterly reports**

**Summary: Making research on and for Syrian Independent Media**

FPU is one of the few organisations that implement research as an integral part of its programme. Research is also a tool that FPU gives, to evaluate what our partners are doing and has been a kind of an evaluation for partners’ editorial line.

The reason of doing research:

* Assess strong and weak points
* Assess impact of the Syrian program and where we are
* Better understand editorial strategies, and their place in a wider media environment. All those outlets that produce content about Syria. Are the outlets capable of being competitive. What do you offer that makes you valuable?
* Can we also use research activities to obtain information to be used in relation to advocacy and/or other forms of intervention?

Since 2015, Free Press Unlimited decided to invest significant resources and efforts into research and analysis of media content.

This idea came through the recognition that a systematic and reliable collection of data would on the one hand help the program to adapt and improve and, on the other hand, would offer Syrian media partner organizations an additional tool in order to produce more professional and self-aware journalism.

In 2016, the FPU team developed with Observatory of Pavia a quantitative and qualitative methodology aimed at analyzing, on a monthly basis, professional standards such as balance, fairness, mix between opinion and facts, presence of sources, contextual information, level and tone of the language, and so on (see Monthly Content Monitoring Template).

At the same time, the analysis provided information on which protagonists and sources were included, which kind of topics were covered, and their geographical focus. This would enable Syrian partners and FPU team to have a better idea of the type of coverage produced, and what was missing or under covered.

Some of these analyses were organized in a series of quarterly reports (see attached in Annex) that focus on the type of coverage Syrian independent media tend to offer in terms of topics, protagonists, and sources.

Since 2019, FPU decided to focus on another type of analysis. As media partners reached a more mature professional level, it was thought that research should move to investigate more strategic questions: Are Syrian media capable to cover issues in a competitive way? How do they position themselves within a wider media environment?

Since then, FPU produced a number of event based reports. These report keep some attention to journalistic standards, but focus more on how Syrian media frame the event, and if they are capable to cover it in a competitive way with other outlets.

The methodology is therefore tailored to each event. An exploratory phase enables the researchers to identify a number of [frames](https://www.communicationstudies.com/communication-theories/framing-theory) and then look at which ones are predominant in the coverage.

In the same way, for each event it is possible to identify some specific (and often relevant) subtopics and issues and see which ones are left out of the coverage. As an example, see at the methodology we used to cover the Turkish invasion of Syria’s Northeast in 2019.