**Fake medicines, child domestic workers, an unfinished highway...**

*investigative journalism is alive and well in the Maghreb region*

Between December 2013 and December 2014, 16 journalists from Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia took part in a training course in investigative journalism organised by CFI. The course was aimed at giving participants the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the tools needed to conduct a long-term investigation and then to produce and publish their reports on the theme of “corruption, transparency and freedom of information” at the end of the training.

Five of these investigations have now been published, relating to a wide range of topics such as the trade in fake medicines in Mauritania, the plight of child domestic workers in Tunisia or the construction of the fabled East-West highway in Algeria.

The final sessions of this project, which was funded by UNESCO and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development, were held in Tunis from 1 to 3 December 2014.

Investigative journalism is still largely in its infancy in the countries of the Maghreb region, but the fight against corruption tops the list of global challenges faced by these countries.

Taking this situation as a starting point, at the request of the Sub-Directorate for Democratic Governance of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development, the French Embassy in Tunisia and the UNESCO regional office in Rabat, CFI arranged for five sessions providing guidance and training in investigative journalism to be held in Tunis between December 2013 and December 2014.

These sessions focused in particular on the specific details of the methods involved in investigative journalism, the protection of journalists, the rights and duties of journalists as defined in international agreements and under international law, verification of sources and cyber-surveillance.

Notable speakers at the sessions included the journalists François Bonnet and Fabrice Arfi (Mediapart), Pierre Haski (Rue89), Nicolas Beau (Marianne/Mondafrique) and the Moroccan independent journalist Ali Lmrabet.

Fifteen journalists from the Maghreb region took part in this course, selected from more than 40 applicants with a background in print or online press after a call for proposals was launched in October 2013. The participants, sponsored by their Chief Editor, were tasked with producing an investigative report to be published in their
newspaper or on their website as soon as the training ended, with each journalist benefiting from the support of a mentor throughout the course of their investigation.

**To date, five investigations have been published.**
The first investigation was broadcast in April by the Algerian journalist Ilyas Hallas and concerned the project to construct the Algerian East-West highway, which was started 8 years ago but is still not completed and is dogged by allegations of corruption.
For his part, Ibou Badiane was interested in the trade in fake medicines in his home country of Mauritania, which has become a hub for this trade in West Africa. In Tunisia, Synda Tajine investigated the trafficking of young girls to serve as domestic workers, some of whom end up being subjected to violent abuse by their employers.

Find out more about the 5 investigations on the Mediapart website:

The final session in Tunis, held from 1 to 3 December 2014, brought together all of the journalists who took part in the training course in order to assess how the year had gone with the course coordinator and to attend a writing workshop aimed at helping the journalists to complete their reports. Grégoire Pouget, from Reporters Sans Frontières, led a workshop entitled “RSF security kit” in relation to data protection.
Lastly, the participants took stock of how the state of investigative journalism had developed in each of the four countries represented over the course of the last year.

“The desire to investigate exists everywhere, and the courage required to publish is growing all the time; our role is to share the resources and methods used by top investigative journalists, which we are very lucky to have in France, with these inquisitive and intrepid investigators who are just getting started”.
Étienne Fiatte, CFI Managing Director

**Contacts presse**
CFI – Julien Gueit – Tél : 01 40 62 32 64 – jgt@cfi.fr
OXYGEN – Tatiana Grafeuil / Maëlle Garrido – Tél. : 01 41 11 37 89 – tgraffeuil@oxygen-rp.com