Images that stay forever

Personal stories of trauma suffered by Kenyan journalists covering the Tana River massacres in 2012 and the Westgate Shopping Mall attack in 2013

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Cover Photo: People seek refuge outside Nairobi’s Westgate Mall, 21 September 2013. Photo: Tyler Hicks/The New York Times

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MCK thanks the Kenyan journalists interviewed for this booklet for openly sharing their personal stories.
Preface

In both recording and relaying traumatic news, journalists become direct witnesses of tragic events with terrible consequences on their psyche. Many journalists and their editors put news gathering or "capturing the event" above anything else, including their own security and psychological wellbeing.

The safety, health and wellbeing of journalists are critical to the development of a responsible media in any country. International Media Support (IMS) has worked in many parts of the world, including Kenya, applying a comprehensive approach to media safety that combines safety training, practical measures such as trauma counselling, as well as advocacy that pushes for the development of policies to enable media organisations to embed these concepts in their work.

The initial activities of IMS in Kenya were in response to the post-election violence in 2007-2008. Since then, much work has been done to move forward on the safety of journalists, not least by the Media Council of Kenya (MCK), whom IMS has partnered on a series of safety and security and trauma counselling training workshops and media and security dialogues between various parties in conflict.

We are pleased to be partnering MCK through our support to the publication of this booklet, in which Kenyan journalists describe the trauma they experienced in covering the Tana River killings in 2012 and the Westgate Shopping Mall terrorist attack in 2013. The booklet also includes suggestions to both working journalists and their editors on how best to prepare for and cope with trauma.

There is a clear need for journalists and media houses alike to take the issue of trauma counselling very seriously and to work towards a more comprehensive approach to mitigating and treating trauma in and outside the newsroom.

Jesper Højberg
Executive Director, International Media Support
Copenhagen, Denmark
Introduction

While monitoring media coverage of disasters and other major events in Kenya in the recent past, the Media Council of Kenya (MCK) has noted numerous breaches by journalists of the Code of Conduct for the Practice of Journalism in Kenya, as provided for in the Media Council Act 2013. These breaches have most often surrounded journalists’ failure to ensure accuracy in their reporting, and their intrusion into victims’ grief. Additionally, concerns have been raised that journalists or their media houses ignored security protocols and endangered their own lives, or the lives of others, in the course of duty.

Reporters and their news organizations are frequently accused of exploiting people who are vulnerable, or in the grip of personal tragedy. Journalists have even been portrayed as vultures swooping down to feast on the afflicted.

However, far less has been said about the selfless behaviour that journalists have exhibited in the course of their duties, and the physical and emotional price that the journalists themselves have paid in their efforts to tell the stories of others in their mission to inform the public.

This publication tells the personal stories of a number of Kenyan journalists, who found themselves suddenly at the centre of human suffering while covering two of the most shocking events in Kenya’s recent history: the Tana River massacres and the Westgate shopping mall terrorist attack. Their testimonies reveal the great personal risks they took in reporting on these events, the precautions they took, and the measures they failed to take.

The journalists may have come away physically in one piece, but what is becoming clear day by day is that the bloodletting, death, property destruction, gut-wrenching emotions, violence, fears, anxiety and uncertainty of the whole period, seriously psychologically scarred many of them.

These stories help us to appreciate what media consumers often take for granted. Behind the scenes of the nicely edited newspaper articles and TV or radio broadcasts, the journalists may have gone through nightmarish experiences and suffered horrendous conditions in order to bring the story to people’s living rooms.
Introduction

The publication aims to raise awareness among media professionals, editors, media owners and government institutions of the importance of establishing systems and routines that cater for the safety of journalists and possible after-effects related to their reporting on violent incidents.

Dr Haron Mwangi
Chief Executive Officer
Media Council of Kenya
1. Reporting on two traumatic episodes

Kenya has experienced many disasters in the course of its recent history, both manmade and natural, including terrorist attacks, bloody tribal clashes, landslides, floods, road traffic accidents, collapsed buildings, and others.

Particularly fresh in the minds of most Kenyans are the Tana River massacres, where at least 150 were brutally murdered in inter-ethnic attacks over a period of months in 2012, and the terrorist attack on the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, in which at least 67 people were killed in September 2013.

These two traumatic episodes unfolded in dramatically different terrain within Kenya: the first in the remote and inhospitable marshes of one of the least developed parts of the country, and the second in the newest and most fashionable of the capital Nairobi’s shopping malls. Both episodes illustrated some of the strengths and weaknesses of the Kenyan media’s approach; and both have revealed lessons to be learned in ensuring that journalists can provide the public with the information they need, while minimizing the risks to which the journalists themselves are exposed.

There follows a short description of the main events involved in each of these significant disasters and an outline of the ways in which Kenyan journalists were exposed to trauma as they reported on each twist and turn.

1.1 Tana River massacres

The Tana River killings in a remote part of Coast region were particularly gruesome. At dawn on 14 August 2012, villagers in Kao settlement woke to screams and cries of anguish, as armed attackers from the Orma ethnic community murdered two men and one woman, and wounded seven others, from the rival Pokomo community. Kao is situated a few kilometres from Ungwana Bay and is served by a network of channels that form the Tana River delta. Almost two weeks later, an aggrieved Pokomo community retaliated and sought revenge. On 22 August 2012, around 100 Pokomo youths armed with machetes and other weapons launched an attack on the Orma village of Riketa B, which is located deep in the delta
1. Reporting on two traumatic episodes

marshlands. They killed 54 people, mainly women and children, and forced around 200 people to flee as homes and property were burnt.

These killings heralded a period of brutal raids and counter-raids in which an estimated 150 people were killed, including nine policemen. Smaller scale attacks and counter-attacks had been going on largely unreported in the district since January 2012.

Neighbours for centuries, the Pokomo and the Orma employ very different ways of eking out a living from nature. The Pokomo are sedentary farmers on the Tana River banks, while the Orma are nomadic herders, roaming the plains of the harsh northern territories and only converging at the Delta for pasture during the dry season. Historically they have sometimes clashed over resources such as pasture. But there is evidence to suggest that the heightened violence was fuelled by local politicians, as Kenya geared up for general elections.

On 1 September 2012, at Semikaro Village, one person was killed and two were injured. On 7 September 2012, 17 people were killed despite the heavy security presence at Chamwanamuma, and another 38 were killed at Kilelengwani primary school, including nine members of Kenya's paramilitary police, the General Service Unit (GSU).

The massacres in the Tana Delta in 2012 differed greatly from the sporadic acts of violence previous experienced in the region over past decades. Peace would normally resume after talks convened by elders from the warring communities. The bloodiness of the physical attacks, and the precise planning and speed with which they were executed, were new hallmarks of this period.

The officer in charge of the security operation, Angelus Karuru, later described the attacks as having taken place with lightning speed and military precision. "It is clear from our investigations that the attackers had some form of military training which involved division of labour and a clear command structure," he said.

The Tana Delta is a deceptive area, with invisible prizes far beyond the dense vegetation dotted with small farms, where poor farmers and herders eke out their existence in ways that have not changed for generations.
The Tana, the biggest river in Kenya, flows into the Indian Ocean at Ungwana (formerly known as Formosa) Bay, which has become a richly productive fishing zone with harvests sold to international markets mainly in Spain, South Korea and Japan. The small ports in the area are also favourite conduits for international drug cartels, which have turned Kenya into one of the most lucrative transit points for Asian and South American drugs, before they are redirected to Europe and other markets in the world.

Human Rights Watch and other observer reports indicated that a number of politicians were involved in inciting or organizing the violence in Tana River, which broke out in the months preceding the general elections held in Kenya in March 2013.

All these attacks were reported by local journalists, who underwent huge logistical and physical difficulties first of all in accessing the remote locations in one of Kenya’s most underdeveloped counties. Access was a challenge not only for the media but for the security forces as well. Reporters and photographers often plunged into their duties without any preparation and had to endure extreme physical hardship without the right clothing or equipment. There were dangers from wild animals, from hostile armed groups, and from other less visible players who did not want the truth of what was going on to be told publicly.

Moreover, the death toll was high, crude weaponry was often used, homes and property were wantonly destroyed, and families were forced to flee with little but the clothes on their backs.

1.2 Westgate mall attack

Unidentified gunmen attacked the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi’s upmarket Westlands at around noon on Saturday, 21 September 2013. The mall was packed with Kenyan and foreign weekend shoppers, well-heeled lunch-goers, and families enjoying leisure and entertainment events. Eye witnesses said the attackers lobbed grenades and started shooting as they entered the mall. Shoppers screamed in panic, some trying to run and others dropping to the ground to protect themselves from the hail of bullets.
1. Reporting on two traumatic episodes

Shoppers, security personnel, and journalists initially thought the attack was a "normal" robbery in the city that has been dubbed "Nairobi" because of its crime rate. But it was quickly recognised as a well-planned attack carried out by terrorists.

Later, the Al-Shabaab group claimed responsibility for the attack, stating it was retaliation for the Kenyan army's incursion into southern Somalia under "Linda Nchi,"a joint military operation with the Somali government intended to wipe out Al-Shabaab bases.

The security forces took a long time cordonning off the scene and asserting control. It was mayhem as bleeding wounded were carried out by volunteers onto Red Cross ambulances, distraught relatives looked for family members, people lay bleeding on the tarmac waiting for help, and journalists and onlookers milled about.

As Kenyan police officers followed by the Kenyan army stormed the mall, a prolonged shoot-out ensued with the terrorists holed up inside. There were large numbers of shoppers trapped in shops and store rooms, the cinema, the toilets and other hiding places inside the mall. It was reported that people were being held hostage by the terrorists. Some of those inside the mall spoke on mobile phones to family or friends outside describing their location and begging for help.

The siege went on until 24 September, although the reality of what precisely went on inside the mall once all civilians and journalists had been chased out of the building by security forces remains unclear to this day. It ended with the rooftop section at the back of the mall collapsing. When it was all over, the shops inside the mall were found to have been stripped of every item of value. The army chief denied that his troops had taken anything other than drinking water.

Hundreds of journalists from Kenya and the world gathered to cover the attack at Westgate. TV networks went live, filming any action and filling in the lengthening periods of inaction during the siege with survivor interviews, footage from hospitals, interviews with families of the dead or missing, and replay of video taken earlier.
1. Reporting on two traumatic episodes

The foreign TV crews came well prepared with bullet proof vests and helmets. By striking comparison, most of the local crews lacked such equipment.

Reporters and photographers witnessed scenes of heroic rescues of women and children by armed vigilantes, private security officers and Kenya Red Cross workers. They documented wounded people being wheeled out bleeding in supermarket trolleys by Good Samaritans. They also witnessed horrific carnage, such as the children and their parents who had been gunned down on the rooftop parking area as they took part in an open air cooking competition. They interviewed survivors who had lived through the terror, broadcast hospital appeals for blood donations, and reported at the funerals of mothers and daughters, fathers and sons.

The whole city felt vulnerable as it emerged that the terrorists had simply driven up to the front entrance of the mall, got out of a car and walked in shooting. Threats had long been circulating among foreign embassies of an impending attack at such a prime target in the city. The authorities were accused of having ignored the warnings.

Tensions between the media and the government escalated as the Westgate siege went on. From the media's point of view, the authorities failed to provide regular, consistent and detailed updates as events unfolded. President Uhuru Kenyatta issued the first official statement on Saturday night. After that, various arms of the government and security apparatus issued statements that were incomplete and often contradictory. Some sections of the Kenyan media carried out their own investigations seeking to establish the truth behind what had happened at Westgate. They were accused of subverting the work of the security agencies and even putting lives in danger.

For some Kenyan journalists, the trauma they experienced at first hand at Westgate was exacerbated by the fact that they were made to question whether they did right or wrong in their reporting on events. Also, with so many unanswered questions remaining about what happened, and even the exact death toll, finding a sense of closure on events has been difficult for relatives if not for journalists too.
2. Testimonies of trauma

*From the marshes...*

**ALPHONCE GARI**

*Age 30, reporter for Radio Africa Group*

"I was not crying...it is just that my body could not take any more and just broke down... and the tears just started flowing..."

Alphonce Gari was in Nairobi, some 600 kilometres from his base in Malindi at the coast, when he first heard about the attacks in Tana River. He made a number of phone calls to security people and other sources in the area and filed his first story of the conflict from a remote distance. By evening, he was informed that the tension had increased greatly and on the second day he was informed of an attack at Kao, where three people were killed.

"This is when I realized that the matter was getting too sensitive and I decided to abandon my personal business in Nairobi and I boarded a bus for Malindi to get close to the action."

Gari exchanged notes with his journalist colleagues in Malindi, and a group of them decided to travel to the Kipini area on the Coast, close to Kao. They received a detailed briefing from Kenya Red Cross officials, who had a presence on the ground. Accompanied by security officers, they took off in a hired boat for Kao, wending their way through the river delta channels.

"The journey was dangerous because the river is infested with crocodiles, and the Pokomo appeared suspicious of us because we were accompanied by security officers. They suspected that the security officers were protecting the Orma."

As their boat chugged upstream, they could see Pokomo sentries perched on the river banks armed with bows and arrows. "We later learnt that a plan had actually been hatched to attack us in the river, but was later withdrawn."
On reaching Kao, they found that the village had been burnt to ashes. A mosque bore the visible marks of bullet holes on the walls. A library in the village had been vandalized, and all the shops had been looted by the attackers. The villagers had all fled, leaving just a stray dog and an errant cow foraging among the ruins.

They got back into their boat and motored to the other side of the river to find the people who had fled the village. These people were also armed with bows and arrows and spears and did not want to talk to the journalists. As more than 300 of their cows had been slaughtered by the raiders, it seemed the villagers were preparing their revenge.

With the atmosphere being hostile, Gari and his colleagues left as darkness was approaching. They went to Garsen, where they found the Coast Provincial Commissioner, Samuel Kilele, and the local Member of Parliament, Danson Mungatana, addressing a closed door peace meeting at Maridhiano Hall in Minjila.

At around 9.00 pm, the journalists were allowed into the hall. The Provincial Commissioner addressed them, saying the government would not condone any more violence in the area and appealing to the people to surrender all the illegal firearms in their possession.

Gari and his colleagues drove through the night back to Malindi. They continued to monitor the situation from there as best they could. On 22 August, information started filtering in of a major attack at Riketa B.

“We were initially told that over 100 people had been slaughtered and we immediately decided to move to the area.”

He and a few other local reporters pooled the money they had on them to buy fuel to fill one of the journalist’s cars. As they got closer to Riketa B, the road became impassable. They decided to leave the car and trek on foot through the marshes.

They waded for two to three hours through waist-deep swamps. To keep some dry clothes, they removed their trousers, wrapping them with their cameras and mobile phones inside plastic bags, which they carried above their heads as they ploughed through the muddy creeks.
They did not see any crocodiles. They saw a number of carcasses of cows, and joked gruesomely to each other that the crocodiles were probably sleeping after a feast. Occasionally, they would meet villagers armed with traditional weapons.

“In the midst of these hardships, we would get calls on our mobiles from our editors, demanding updates on the story! Despite telling them how difficult the situation was for us, they did not relent.”

When they finally arrived at Riketa B they found the village in a state of total chaos.

“We counted 53 corpses, people killed in the attack, stacked inside the mosque. Fourteen of them had been burnt beyond recognition, set alight in their houses. I saw bodies of children, killed in their mothers’ arms. Seeing these things was very distressing to me personally.”

Gari recalled how he moved around the devastated village as if in disbelief, taking photographs without thinking about what he was seeing. He felt as if he was lost in some kind of dream.

“I was like a robot – just shooting and moving from one burnt house to another. It was mind boggling how anyone could be so heartless to kill infants and the elderly. I could not understand that type of hate.”

He remembers vividly seeing a dead woman clutching a baby, only a few weeks old, both of them sliced through by a machete.

“After seeing this, I could not go on…I sat down and broke down. Even my colleagues noticed and some tried to console me, but they were also in deep emotional states. I was not crying…it is just that my body could not take any more and just broke down... and the tears just started flowing. It was the act of opening that shawl and seeing the two-week-old baby with the deep cuts that completely unnerved me.”

Driven by what he felt was the call of duty, he carried on, counting the bodies to ensure that the figures he had been given tallied with what he witnessed. He and his colleagues interviewed some of the survivors before leaving the scene of devastation.
They drove to a small town called Witu, where they set up base and camped for two weeks to cover the ongoing story. They received some funds from their head offices through M-Pesa [mobile phone money transfer] to cover their basic needs. They reported on further attacks at Chamwanamuma, Semikaro and Shirikisho, where dozens of people were killed.

“By now, we had almost become accustomed to the blood and the badly disfigured bodies and it was almost getting to feel like normal.”

LORNA KERUBO
Age 25, reporter for The Star newspaper

“I felt so sad watching the casualties day in day out, knowing that the victims could have been my relatives”

Lorna Kerubo acted as a liaison between the team deployed to the conflict zone and the newspaper’s nearest main bureau in Mombasa. From Malindi, she remained in touch with her colleagues in the field, whenever the mobile network enabled calls in and out of the remote villages in Tana River.

“I became the official link between the conflict zone and the bureau in Mombasa, while I also reported on stories and interviewed the fleeing families as well as the maimed and injured at the local hospital.”

Her strategy was hanging around at the bus terminal where the Kenya Red Cross ambulances were also temporarily based. When wounded or fleeing people were brought in, she would interview these arrivals and witness as the injured were taken by ambulance to the District Hospital. She often accompanied badly wounded people to the hospital and interviewed them and their accompanying relatives.

“They would narrate to us how the raiders descended on them at dawn and hacked them to pieces. There was one terrible incident which they narrated to us saying that even they were shocked at the level of inhumanity rained on them despite the age old problems between the two communities involved.”
Many of the victims said they suspected the violence was politically motivated or instigated. They had warned the police of pending attacks but nothing had been done.

"I felt so sad watching the casualties day in, day out, knowing that the victims could have been my relatives. After writing the stories, I would pray for them and ask my church congregation to also pray for them. It helped me deal with it. Irrespective of the causes of the conflict, I had faith that God would provide answers."

In between her reporting forays to the hospital and the police station, Lorna would also interview people among the growing numbers who were fleeing the violence-torn areas. Some of them took temporary shelter at the bus terminus before they could find accommodation. Many of the displaced were too frightened to share their stories of the violence they had escaped. She felt for them in their distress.

"I remember one young woman with two children, who was looking for her husband. He was supposed to be working in Malindi, but she had absolutely no idea where he lived because she had never come to the town before. It took a while to trace the husband."

One scene that remained etched on her mind was the attempted public lynching of a young man accused by some of the victims of being behind some of the attacks in Tana River. He was attacked in Malindi by an angry mob.

"If the police had not been present, the man would have been lynched… but they quickly gave him protection and took him to the police station, where he was held until he identified himself as a home guard. It was a scary moment watching the crowd baying for his blood."
DAISY OPAR  
Age 27, reporter for Citizen Radio

“Whoever saw those first images will forever live with them”

Daisy Opar had recently moved to Lamu County, just south of the Somali border and north of the Tana Delta. Her experience working for the radio was limited to covering local events and meetings. One morning she was in the office early and by 6.30 am she noticed an unusual number of boats moving to and from the main jetty at Lamu town, bringing people clearly fleeing from nearby villages.

“I first heard of the attacks at Riketa B when I was visiting the offices of the Kenya News Agency in Lamu and amidst the snippets of information filtering through, some people were talking of a massacre but the figures were conflicting.”

She informed her editor. He told her to keep abreast of the story and to send all the information she could get as the figures kept shifting with each boatload of fleeing villagers.

“We were informed that a raid by armed men had occurred at around 5.00 am and its intensity had led to the fleeing of people from the other villages like Chamwanamuma and Dide Waride, as reports initially talked of hundreds dead. I filed my stories based on the reports I got from interviews with the fleeing residents and from police and government officials who were monitoring it from Lamu.”

She thought the attack was a one off incident and went to visit some of those who had fled and set up camp at Witu with assistance from the Kenya Red Cross.

“When the next attack on Kilelengwani happened, I was at Witu on assignment to cover the plight of the Internally Displaced Persons who had camped outside Witu police station... we had gone there accompanying the Mpeketoni District Officer. We felt very safe.”

But the next day, convoys of motorcycle taxi’s carrying women, children and elderly people started flowing into Witu. There was talk of a massacre in Kilelengwani.
“We heard that the village of Kilelengwani was on fire! Tension started rising in Witu and even the security officers there were very much on edge as information filtered in that nine of their own had also been killed in the carnage.”

Daisy and a colleague accompanied the District Officer and security officers to Kilelengwani to assess the situation, as hundreds of women and children, looking scared and confused, passed them on foot going in the other direction.

“We could see smoke from a distance and even bodies on the road side as we approached. The GSU officers stopped our car and warned us that the situation was very bad and wanted me and my colleague, another lady journalist, not to go in.”

Daisy and her colleague decided it would be safer to go in with the security team. They found Kenya Red Cross workers and GSU officers already on the ground trying to help people. Red Cross vehicles were ferrying the injured to the hospital at Witu.

They saw the bodies of a number of police officers who had been killed in the gruesome attack. The scenes were extremely disturbing. The police officers removed the bodies of their dead colleagues.

“Whoever saw those first images will forever live with them. We were there two hours after the attack with my colleague Zahra Rashid from the Nation Media Group. The smell, the bodies and the severed heads and limbs was just too much.

“We stayed there for four hours and it was a nightmare from hell. It was almost too much to bear for us. There were women running past our car, and in front of us there were houses burning and there were children screaming inside. They were burnt to ashes. We went back to Witu and I was so disturbed that I could not even tell my boss. I had gone there on my own volition without informing the office but finally I filed the story.

“That night, for our safety, the District Officer locked me and Zahra in an office to stop us from going back or going out.

“The incident at Kilelengwani affected my work as I realized that much as I tried, I could not get the images from my mind for a number of weeks.
I never sought any medical assistance but we would spend hours talking about it before we could get sleep.

“I was afraid of sleeping since this was my first story of that magnitude since I started my career. I effectively lost control and it still bothers me.”

PAUL GITAU
Age 31, reporter for The Standard Group

“We were in a daze at the scenes of horror but we had to start interviewing the witnesses...”

Paul Gitau had been based in Malindi for several years and was a well-established reporter with a good network of contacts. He remembers getting a phone call from a source one night while still in bed, informing him of a massacre in which 200 Orma people were said to have been killed by Pokomo raiders at Riketa B village in the Tana Delta.

After failing to get any confirmation from the police or local sources, he finally managed to speak to the District Commissioner, who confirmed the attack but could not confirm the numbers killed.

“I grabbed my cameras and drove in my car towards the scene of the attacks accompanied by some colleagues from other media houses.”

They arrived at Dide Waride at around 10.00 am having covered the over 100 kilometres from Malindi at high speed.

The journalists had come totally unprepared for the terrain. To reach Riketa B, they had to cross the marshes and creeks teeming with crocodiles. They had to strip to their underwear and wrap their trousers and shirt, cameras and other valuables in plastic bags and carry them above their heads as they waded through the muddy water.

“We crossed six channels plus the main river and walked for two hours across the muddy terrain before we could reach the village.”
When they finally reached the village, they found death and destruction. Inside the mosque they found dozens of bodies stacked in a pile on the floor. Many were women and children. Some had been decapitated.

“We were in a daze at the scenes of horror but we had to start interviewing the witnesses who were in a seriously agitated state after surviving very serious violence.”

But even as they began the interviews, some of the editors started calling from the head offices demanding to be briefed on the unfolding events.

“I realized they had no idea what situation we were in and I switched off my phone to continue with my interviews.”

After a few hours of interviews, photography and condoling with the victims, the reporters left for the harsh trek back to Dide Waride. But the car would not start as the battery had died because the headlights had been left on. They got a lift from a Red Cross vehicle. Managing to access the internet at Witu, they filed their stories.

For a month and a half Paul was based at Witu, from where he would file his stories as the attacks continued.

The attack on Kilelengwani, which marked a turning point in the conflict, happened when Paul was in Malindi during one of his breaks. His source informed him that this time policemen had been attacked and many of them killed.

“What I found strange is the fact that although the policemen were heavily armed, not a single shot had been fired by them, leaving nine of them hacked to death with machetes by the swift attack in broad daylight.

“How do 300 armed men move around in an area that is populated without detection? The police were very mad with me when I started asking questions and I decided to be more discreet.”

When he heard that six people had been killed in the village of Darga, he drove there with a local guide. Each community had set up its roadblocks along the way. At one roadblock, his guide had to hide in the boot of the car underneath the equipment and bags to avoid being seen by the armed men from his rival community.
The killings in Darga resulted from gunshots. The conflict had escalated and was becoming more dangerous. The villagers in Darga were angry and hostile to the media, whom they accused of siding with their enemies. Paul had to take refuge in the police commandant's vehicle and be escorted out of the village by the police to protect him from attack by the villagers.

Paul's investigations had revealed that both communities had armed militias who were well trained and coordinated.

“They were arranged such that during an attack, one wing would go after the cows mutilating them, another would head for the population, while even another one would ensure that any casualties on their side were evacuated and that no one was left behind.”

He ignored warnings of danger and set out to investigate reports of a mass grave in Ozi forest. He was ill prepared and his car ran out of fuel on the way. Luckily he was rescued by a police convoy on patrol and towed back to Garsen, the command centre for police patrols.

Paul still constantly goes over the events in his mind.

“According to my estimates, the official police figure was grossly understated and I think that the number of people who died during the two month long attacks was at least 200 and not the government figure of 120. We also got reports of abductions of women by the raiders.

“It looked like a horror movie to me but I knew it was real because I had gone through it. I kept asking myself, what type of a human being can do this to his fellow human being? What can make a man reach that point where killing women and children is justified? A 90-year-old woman was burned in her house because she could not move.”
LABAN WALLOGA  
Age 40, photographer with the Nation Media Group 

"Then I asked myself:  
Was the photo worth my life?"

Laban Walloga vividly remembers the day he received information of the first attack at Kao, in the Tana Delta. He was briefed by his editor and given money for transport and accommodation. He picked up his cameras, got into the office car with a reporter, and they headed towards the conflict zone.

At Witu, they stopped to talk to some of the victims of the attack. Among them was a four-year-old girl, suffering burn injuries, whose family had been killed in the attack.

Reaching Kao proved far more difficult than they had realized. The only way to get there from the delta was to hire a boat to take them up the creek.

“We arrived in Kao village after three days following delays in getting a boat. We found the whole village burned down completely, with smoke still billowing in the air. The whole village was engulfed in a deathly silence with no inhabitants left.

“The only occupants in the whole village were a cow and a dog who we found loitering in the empty village together scavenging for any edibles.”

Laban saw that schools and places of worship had been ransacked and burnt. The only clinic in the village had been looted. A mosque was still smouldering.

“I felt very sad and it left me wondering at the extent of hatred between these two communities.”

Laban had previously covered street riots and some localized communal conflicts, but this was the first time he had experienced violence on such a scale. He also found the experience frightening and feared for his personal safety.

They were confronted and questioned by a group of Orma and Wardei warriors, whom they ran into doing a war dance in the middle of the road to Semikaro.
"They surrounded us asking us questions like: where are you going? Why are you going to cover those idiots Pokomo, or you are part of them?

“We tried to convince them that we were journalists and that we only cover all sides without favour, but it was very difficult, until we had to part with some cash to be freed. They insisted on riding with us to monitor our coverage and it took time to plead with the elders...That was my toughest moment in my life...going for a picture that endangers your life."

They attempted to travel from Dide Waride to Riketa B after hearing about the attack in which 53 people died. Again, Laban was aware how unprepared he was for such a journey.

“We had to look for polythene bags with which to wrap our cameras and clothes as we waded through the crocodile infested waters and swamps for many hours."

At Riketa B they found the carcasses of cows slashed with knives, and a mass grave where all the dead had been hastily buried. Most houses had been burnt and only one mosque was left standing. Wading back through the swamps, their guide pointed to the remains of two cows eaten by crocodiles.

“We all fell silent in fear. But then again I remembered that it was me who needed the photos. Then I asked myself: Was the photo worth my life? I told myself, no. That was the worst adventure I have ever taken."

Filing stories and photographs was almost impossible because of poor mobile phone network coverage and internet connection. Laban stayed up late into the nights trying to send his material to the newsroom.

“It was very frustrating having photographs, exclusive ones, but not being able to transmit them and missing your deadlines. The photo editor demanded the images as if getting and transmitting them was just an easy thing and truly they could not understand why I could not file the photos on time. Pressure was far too much to bear.

“Emotionally, I could not stand seeing helpless women, children dead without any cause. They were innocent of the differences between their men."
From the mall...

**JUDY KABERIA**
Age 31, reporter for Capital FM in Nairobi

"I could not sleep properly for many nights. I would wake up sweating and breathing hard"

"The September 21, 2013, attack on the Westgate Shopping Mall is the worst terror strike in 15 years since the August 1998 bomb blast in Nairobi.

As a journalist, I learnt many lessons amid the shock, confusion and the grief of witnessing people I had seen alive lying dead of gunshot wounds. It was Saturday morning and like many other weekends, the day was "dry" for the media. We did not have many events to cover nor were we expecting big news. At around 9.30 am, my editor informed me of a robbery at the Westgate Shopping Mall and that he needed a reporter to go find out what was happening.

A few minutes later, I was outside the main entrance of Westgate Shopping Mall. Most television stations were already reporting that several customers had been held hostage by robbers. Some television presenters were even calling hostages and asking where they were hiding and how many they were.

I tried to push my way inside the mall like the rest of the journalists. There was fear, uncertainty, a feeling of insecurity and scenes that looked far from reality. It looked like a horror movie.

There were several mutilated bodies, some covered in blood. There were people coming out of the mall, some without injuries, and others with deep gunshot wounds. Some collapsed and died while others made it to ambulances parked near the mall.

At that point, I realised this was not the usual robbery. Gunshots sent people scurrying in all directions trying to save themselves from what they didn’t know. Other curious onlookers wanted to see what was happening. Police had a difficult time trying to chase away the curious crowd that sometimes got dangerously close to the building, endangering themselves unnecessarily.
Some survivors who had come out of the mall told us the mayhem was being perpetrated by a group of gunmen shooting at anyone they came across in the building.

Listening to stories of the survivors, it was hard to come to terms with the kind of brutality they went through. It was a struggle to try to be in their shoes even for a second. They described images of the callous gunmen and what they told them before shooting them or their relatives and friends at close range. They narrated their miraculous escape from the attackers.

The images of the brutally murdered victims constantly replayed in my mind as I tried to do a report of the episode for my newsroom.

Sometimes it was so hard to keep off my feelings and I became attached to the survivors. I got a new friend, Rachael, who was shot in the left leg. She has since been amputated. I kept on visiting Rachel while she was admitted to Mater Hospital. I have been following her and communicating with her asking her how she is coping.

The first day I visited her in hospital, she told me how the gunmen shot her in the ankle and then shot dead the people she was hiding with, in one of the shops at the mall. She was lucky to survive.

I did not cry as she narrated to me her story, but later that night, I wept. When my two-year-old daughter asked why I was crying I told her I had stomach pains.

Since the attack and events that followed, I could not sleep properly for many nights. I would wake up sweating and breathing hard because of nasty dreams of an encounter with Samantha Lewthwaite, the British widow suspected to be a terrorist and initially suspected to have been in the company of the gunmen.

Watching ambulances picking up bodies, seeing relatives watching and praying that their loved ones were not among the dead broke my heart. It was agonizing to see children, too innocent to comprehend what was happening, coming out of the mall, scared and confused. As I held my microphone ready for interviews, I kept wondering why there are heartless and barbaric beings out to kill innocent people. I could not understand why they killed even children.
As some Kenyans complained that the media was misreporting on the Westgate attack, all I know is that we too have feelings. We lost colleagues in the attack, we mourned with relatives who lost their loved ones, and we celebrated with those who survived. At the same time, we had to do our job of informing the public. That does not mean we did not learn some lessons.

First, it was unprofessional for the media to call hostages and ask them where they were hiding. It was a terrible mistake on our side because if the terrorists were following our updates, which I think they were, we would have aided them to know where to go and kill more people.

Before finding out what was happening at Westgate, some of us misguided the public by saying it was a robbery. The police who should have been better informed than us proceeded to the venue with the perception it was a robbery. We should have held on to our thirst and competition for breaking news and waited to find out what was really happening. We got conflicting reports from the government side and most times we had to rely on our own findings, which were sometimes inaccurate.

After the initial rescue mission the government confirmed that 67 people had died. Later, some bodies were retrieved. Has the number of 67 changed? What happened to the [government inquiry] report on the Westgate attack? The government also said there were 15 terrorists, other days they said they were 10 and that they were holding some of the suspects. According to the government, five of the terrorists had been killed. To date, the country is in darkness, where are those five bodies? How many suspects are still being questioned? On the part of the government, it was a bad score in terms of its duty of providing information and a sense of direction to the public and the media.

The media are also not without blame. I wondered what point we wanted to prove by showing grisly images on television screens and publishing them in newspapers.

Besides the finger pointing, Good Samaritans like Naivasha Flower Firm gave us flowers and told us they understood that it was hard to camp outside Westgate for so many days, waiting to report sad news. The Media Council of Kenya and some families also took their time to provide us with breakfast, lunch and dinner during our days and nights outside Westgate.
2. Testimonies of Trauma

OUMA WANZALA
Age 33, Writer for The Daily Nation in Nairobi

“Most Kenyan journalists did not have bulletproof vests, unlike those from the foreign media”

“Just before 1 pm, a colleague told me robbers had raided Westgate Shopping Mall in Nairobi and there was a heavy exchange of fire. I had never been to the up-market shopping mall.

After a few minutes I left the office for lunch. On the news bulletin, I heard NTV’s news anchor Victoria Rubadiri giving a brief on the attack and talking to two women reportedly holed up inside the mall.

As I was watching the news, I thought this could be just a normal robbery, hold-ups being quite common in Nairobi.

After lunch, I walked to the office with some colleagues. On the way we talked about what was going on at Westgate. In the office, the discussion was on the same subject. I turned to social media to get more information. On the TV was an alert about three people dying in the criminal attack.

On Twitter, I saw a picture of two young women shot dead lying in the front of a vehicle. After about an hour or so, our photographer arrived at the office with several pictures of bodies full of bullets, scattered all over. There were children and women crying. Other people, perhaps taxi drivers, were hiding under their vehicles.

I realised this was serious and not a mere robbery. After seeing the photos I got so scared that I did not want to see them anymore and I had to keep off social media in particular. In about an hour’s time I was asked by the news editor to go to the scene and join my colleagues dispatched earlier on.

The driver, two other colleagues and I headed to Westgate. The driver knew the place and he navigated his way through and within a short time we were at the nearby Visa Oshwal Centre. He directed us to use a side gate to enter the scene of terror.
On our way, we came across several Asian vigilantes with bulletproof jackets and walkie talkies as they directed traffic along several roads around the scene. On several occasions, we had to show our press cards to be allowed to pass. On arrival, more Asians were directing traffic from the scene and in particular ambulances carrying victims.

Several armoured vehicles with soldiers were also arriving and several people were busy taking pictures with their phones. A number of journalists were scrambling to get the best shots while others were busy with their phones probably updating their respective newsrooms.

About 50 metres from the scene were several more journalists doing live coverage, while others were taking shots of those being rescued by the Kenya Red Cross officials and other rescue workers.

The place was full of people trying to catch a glimpse of what was going on oblivious of the immense danger they were exposing themselves to. Gunshots could be heard from a distance and we took cover after being advised to do so by the police.

Several cars had been abandoned at the scene and we took cover under them. Highly agitated people said they were looking for their relatives.

“Whenever you hear any gunshots please do not run away; instead lie down,” a police officer barked at us. Most Kenyan journalists did not have bulletproof vests, unlike those from the foreign media. Whenever gunshots subsided, we moved closer to the building to get close up pictures as the police tried to push us away.

“Please do not go live as it is dangerous to yourselves and the security of other people around here,” said a security officer, but the journalists could hear none of that and they dodged him and continued airing live. The foreign media were only keen to interview white people.

The coverage exposed the security forces at the scene as terrorists could monitor the unfolding events live and were also able to get updates through the social media.

More ambulances and pick-ups kept coming in, most likely carrying bodies. Interior and National Co-ordination Cabinet Secretary Joseph ole Lenku,
2. Testimonies of Trauma

Inspector General of Police David Kimaiyo and other senior security officers arrived to brief information-hungry journalists.

At about 7.30 pm, word went round of a possible secondary attack to aid the attackers to flee. We immediately called our driver to return to the office given the confusion witnessed at the scene.

You could not tell if sympathizers of the attackers were among the members of the public milling around the scene and who were walking in and out freely without any security checks.

At the scene several Good Samaritans were giving free water and biscuits to journalists and security personnel. On Sunday morning, I left the office for the scene and as usual we went through Visa Oshwal Centre but this time round security was very tight.

You had to be either at the centre or Peponi Road and onlookers were kept far away from the scene. Several journalists pitched tents at the centre while victims being rescued were given first aid before being rushed to hospital. At the centre there was no information for the media and one had to be alert. Whenever there was a siren we rushed to the centre basement to witness the arrival of those rescued.

Covering the military personnel who had been injured during the operation was the hardest task, as their colleagues blocked journalists from taking pictures.

“We are here to inform the world what is happening, kindly allow us to do our job or you are hiding something," several journalists protested.

Getting stories on the second day was hard and one had to be creative with some relatives and friends of victims unwilling to talk. Members of the public continued to bring in food and water which they served to security officers and journalists.

On the third and fourth day things were a bit different. Journalists were kept far back at Peponi Road and Westlands roundabout by no-nonsense security officers.
3. Understanding trauma: Some key concepts

**Stress**
Stress is any demand or change that the human system (mind, body, spirit) is required to meet and respond to. It is a part of normal life. The diagram below shows how stress levels can impact your performance ability. The general stress elements that featured in discussions with Kenyan journalists on their routine professional and personal lives include pressure to produce quality work, time constraints, team conflicts, financial matters, and more.

![Stress Diagram](image)

The diagram shows that some degree of stress is needed to function normally, but too much inhibits performance.

**Traumatic stress**
Traumatic stress is the reaction to any challenge, demand, threat, or change, that exceeds our coping resources, and that results in distress.

**Vicarious Trauma**
Vicarious trauma or secondary traumatization are terms used to refer to traumatic stress reactions, which can occur in response to witnessing or hearing about traumatic events that have happened to others. Journalists often experience this kind of trauma as they find themselves in situations of witnessing, hearing, and then reporting on events.
3. Understanding Trauma: Some Key Concepts

**Critical incident stress**
A critical incident is an unusual and intense event during which you feel that you are in serious danger of being hurt or killed, for instance during gunfire, kidnapping, bombings, or carjacking. Personal experiences shared by the journalists revealed that journalists' lives were sometimes put in direct danger, and they therefore suffered from critical incident stress.

**Cumulative stress**
Vicarious trauma reactions can also develop over time as a result of cumulative secondary exposure to distressing events and stories. This is also known as 'piling on'.

**Coping skills need bolstering**
The traditional image of journalists is one of selfless, tireless and invincible professionals. This may be the image many journalists aspire to emulate. They tend to think they are somehow immune to pressure. They see themselves as exempt from danger, and feel compelled to run headlong into an incident or environment that other people might hesitate to get involved in or shy away from. This attitude is summed up in the journalistic maxim that goes: "I'm the guy running towards the gunfire when everyone else is running away!"

This kind of bravado attitude makes journalists all the more vulnerable to suffering the effects of trauma, precisely because they may deny the symptoms as they occur. They most likely are not functioning in a working environment that is sympathetic to displays of “human weakness” in professionals who are meant to be tough as nails.

As a journalist, you may struggle to find a healthy balance between personal life and work. This is because stories break at any time of the day or night and do not allow for a predictable "9 to 5" daily work pattern. It is also because of the competitive nature inherent in the news profession: you may feel compelled to break new stories, to get to the scene first, to take risks, to get unique pictures or original quotes, and so on.

Some journalists may be on call, almost like a doctor or member of the emergency services, and must be ready to abandon personal or family commitments at any moment, to be dispatched at short notice to the scene of the latest accident or crime.
There may also be the financial imperative, especially for those journalists who work on a freelance or commission basis: if you do not get to the scene first, your picture will not be the one purchased by the newspaper. Or if your report is late, you will not be paid.

In private sessions with Kenyan journalists, the journalists have shared moments of personal reflection on how their work has impacted on them physically, mentally, spiritually and socially. The objective of the sessions was to create awareness among the journalists individually of their own challenges. The journalists were asked to write down the way they have been affected by their work. The themes that emerged included:

- Anger
- Anxiety
- Bitterness
- Sadness
- Concern over poor field facilitation
- Suspicion and mistrust
- Hatred
- Insecurity
- Feeling that problems were being minimized by editors

Clearly, Kenyan journalists need to develop their own strategies to recognise signs of stress in their own behaviour, and to take measures to protect their own health and wellbeing. At the same time, newsrooms and employers need to recognise the importance of incorporating appropriate measures to protect journalists through their policies and procedures.
4. Tough outside, weak inside

All over the world, journalists report on different kinds of stories, including those in which they witness at first hand very violent scenes. They often see victims who have been violated in the extreme. In addition, journalists listen to traumatic experiences told by survivors and eyewitnesses, often dealing with enormous grief.

At times these stories, which clearly must be told, traumatize the journalists, some of whom may be young and inexperienced. Additionally, journalists, not to mention other media practitioners such as video editors, caption writers, and graphic designers, are further traumatized in the course of relaying these horrific images and sounds to the public.

In both recording and relaying traumatic news, journalists become direct witnesses of tragic events with terrible consequences on their psyche. Moreover, even when journalists have no direct experience of such events, they subsequently interview victims and witnesses of the events, who inadvertently transfer their emotions surrounding traumatic events to the journalists.

Because of their career choice, and reinforced by media training, journalists have put news gathering or "capturing the event" as the mantra of their work. They have elevated reporting above anything else, including their own security and psychological wellbeing.

4.1 Traumatic events

Traumatic events pose security challenges, put demands on safety, threaten lives, or change normal living conditions so as to exceed the coping mechanisms of most people, thereby leading to distress. Therefore, when journalists pursue news in these circumstances, they operate in an environment that will easily transfer the traumatic materials to them.

The above may occur through interviewing affected people; helping the affected; touching graphic materials or items at the scene; smelling things at the scene, especially where there is serious injury or death involved or any scent emanating from the scene; and finally, through normal obser-
vation of the scene. This level of involvement makes journalists primary witnesses of trauma and hence vulnerable to traumatic effects.

There is little appreciation of psychological support for journalists in most media houses in Kenya. Their priority is on capturing the “big story,” not on the wellbeing of the journalists.

Psychologists, through their professional interaction with journalists, have observed that the "news at any cost" syndrome has cost the journalists a lot in terms of maintaining a balanced lifestyle, engaging in ethical practices, and keeping a positive self-image.

They walk and live through various trauma symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) such as:

a) Re-experiencing the traumatic event
   - Intrusive, upsetting memories of the event
   - Flashbacks (acting or feeling like the event is happening again)
   - Nightmares (either of the event or of other frightening things)
   - Feelings of intense distress when reminded of the trauma
   - Intense physical reactions to reminders of the event (e.g. pounding heart, rapid breathing, nausea, muscle tension, sweating)

b) Avoidance and numbing
   - Avoiding activities, places, thoughts, or feelings that remind them of the trauma
   - Inability to remember important aspects of the trauma
   - Loss of interest in activities and life in general
   - Feeling detached from others and being emotionally numb
   - Sense of a limited future (not expecting to live a normal life span, get married, have a career)

c) Increased anxiety and emotional arousal
   - Difficulty falling or staying asleep
   - Irritability or outbursts of anger
   - Difficulty concentrating
   - Hyper-vigilance (on constant “red alert”)
   - Feeling jumpy and easily startled
Beyond the above three major symptoms of PSTD, other common symptoms include: anger and irritability; guilt, shame, or self-blame; substance abuse including alcoholism; feelings of mistrust and betrayal; depression and hopelessness; suicidal thoughts and feelings; feeling alienated and alone; physical aches and pains.

4.2 ‘Self-treatments’ and impact of trauma

Due to lack of knowledge on the subject of trauma, most journalists have resorted to their own ‘self-treatments,’ such as having multiple sexual partners, indulging in alcoholism, taking sleeping pills, tough self-talk including chest-thumping phrases similar to 'I am a journalist, I can do this!'

All these 'self-treatments' are supposed to help them suppress their emerging emotions. They indulge in these 'self-treatments' to avoid idle moments that could trigger memories of traumatic events; they overwork to keep the mind busy and the body tired, in case either mind or body - or both - start re-expressing the traumatic events, and so on.

Journalists, and media houses in general, lack counselling services to deal with the post-tragic news trauma and are often suffering from self-denial due to lack of knowledge of the central role counselling plays in creating a healthy working environment.

For instance, during the post-election violence in Kenya in 2007-8, many journalists were heavily traumatised. When such a journalist continues working without a healing mechanism, it weakens her or his natural internal self-being to cope with any other trauma or ordinary stress.

Most recently, this was evident in the coverage of the Westgate mall terrorist attack. In their bid to cover the "big story," many journalists physically and emotionally exposed themselves to danger and intruded in the emotional space of the victims, sometimes with very little sensitivity. This is a clear symptom of a journalist who has experienced trauma in the past but has never healed through undergoing counselling, and therefore, whose sensitivity to personal safety and to victims’ emotions is at its lowest ebb.
The psychological impact following traumatic events, include: shock, horror, denial, disbelief, rationalising, fear, panic, anxiety, anger, guilt, disgust, hopelessness, and helplessness, among others. As is evidenced by the personal experiences narrated in this booklet, the reactions of journalists who have covered traumatising incidents include: depression, loss of motivation, insomnia, loss of appetite, crying spells, guilt, irritability, inability to concentrate, poor memory and stupor. Usually, such states of mind are temporary and recovery is natural, but if stress is prolonged, it can have disastrous effects.

"An emotionally healthy journalist is a responsible journalist"
- Dinah Kituyi, Psychologist

4.3 Training and support on self-care

Having no prior experience or knowledge of handling such disorders, journalists need to be trained and made aware of the symptoms they are likely to suffer in covering traumatic events. It is therefore paramount that psychological support for journalists becomes integral in training and practice. One basic way of providing support to minimise the vulnerability of journalists is instituting briefings before, during, and after coverage of an event.

These briefings are described below:

a) Before assignment
   - Before any assignment, manage your existing stress, because covering any event when your stress levels are already high compromises the quality of your self-care
   - Always have a bottle of water with you, which helps to calm you down and serves as a symbol or reminder to take care of the self
   - Have a security briefing with your supervisor and have his/her number on speed dial, in case of emergency or being emotionally affected

b) During assignment
   - Always ask yourself, am I safe?
   - During an interview over traumatic events, take pauses, drink your water and take deep breaths allowing emotional release
4. Tough outside, weak inside

- Always ask yourself: am I respecting the person I am interviewing? It helps in your recovery when you know you have respected your interviewees
- Be aware of your emotions during the assignment

c) After assignment
- Write down the events and things that aroused your emotions
- Talk with someone to re-live your story
- Ask yourself how well you have taken care of yourself and what you need to improve on
- Be aware of your emotional, physical, mental and spiritual reactions
- Seek help if and when getting stretched

Further information
There are many excellent resources available on the internet for journalists and media managers to read more on how to prepare for and cope with trauma. Some of the best are:

The Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma
http://dartcenter.org/content/tragedies-journalists-6#.UzbNNPldX6U

University of Wisconsin Center for Journalism Ethics
https://ethics.journalism.wisc.edu/resources/global-media-ethics/trauma-and-journalists/
4.4 Tips for taking care of yourself

1. Know your limits. If you’ve been given a troublesome assignment that you feel you cannot perform, politely express your concerns to your supervisor. Tell the supervisor that you may not be the best person for the assignment. Explain why.

2. Take breaks. A few minutes or a few hours away from the situation may help relieve your stress.

3. Find someone who is a sensitive listener. It can be an editor or a peer, but you must trust that the listener will not pass judgment on you. Perhaps it is someone who has faced a similar experience.

4. Learn how to deal with your stress. Find a hobby, exercise, attend a house of worship or, most important, spend time with your family, a significant other or friends - or all four. Try deep-breathing. All of these can be effective for your mental and physical well-being.

5. Understand that your problems may become overwhelming. If this happens to you, seek counselling from a professional.

*Reproduced with permission from The Dart Center*
4. Tough outside, weak inside

4.5 Tips for photojournalists

1. Understand that you may be the first to arrive at any scene. You may face dangerous situations and harsh reactions from law enforcement and the public. Stay calm and focused throughout. Be aware that a camera cannot prevent you from being injured. Do not hesitate to leave a scene if it becomes too dangerous. Any supervisor or editor should understand that a person’s life is more important than a photo.

2. Treat every victim that you approach at a tragedy with sensitivity, dignity and respect. Do not react harshly to anyone’s response to you. Politely identify yourself before requesting information.

3. You will record many bloody images during a tragedy. Ask yourself whether these are important enough for historical purposes or too graphic for your readers or viewers.

4. Do everything possible to avoid violating someone’s private grieving. That doesn’t mean that you shouldn’t record photos of emotion at public scenes. However, do not intrude upon someone’s private property or disturb victims during their grieving process.

5. Realize that you are a human being who must take care of your mind. Admit your emotions. Talk about what you witnessed to a trusted peer, friend or spouse. Write about it. Replace horrible images with positive ones. Establish a daily routine of healthful habits. If your problems become overwhelming, do not hesitate to seek professional counseling.

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4.6 What newsrooms can do

Develop an effective trauma programme. Suggestions include:

1. Media outlets must acknowledge trauma as reality and a concern; not as a career "stopper"

2. They must regard trauma services as part of staff well-being, similar to other programs

3. They need to make information available to journalists and hold information sessions

4. They should offer confidential counselling

5. They should encourage journalists to monitor themselves and their colleagues

6. They need to develop a policy on reporting crises, such as rotating reporters and de-briefing

7. Media outlets must make trauma training part of their ongoing training for war reporters

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