

Defending Journalism in Court



A case study on how journalists in Uganda are mobilising for media freedom

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Front Page: James Akena is assaulted by militaries. Source: NTV.

Table of Content

Table of Content	2
List of Tables	4
List of Figures	4
Acknowledgements	5
Abstract	6
Abbreviations	7
1. Introduction	8
2. Aim and Research Question	10
3. Theoretical Framework	11
3.1 <i>Political opportunities and threats</i>	12
3.2 <i>Mobilising structures and organisational resources</i>	13
3.3 <i>Cultural framing</i>	15
3.4 <i>Transnational contention and human rights regime</i>	15
3.5 <i>Summary</i>	15
4. Research Design, Methods and Ethics	16
4.1 <i>Research design</i>	16
4.1.1 <i>Social movement outcomes</i>	17
4.1.2 <i>Selection of actions</i>	17
4.1.3 <i>Delimitations</i>	19
4.1.4 <i>A comparative research design</i>	19
4.2 <i>Data collection</i>	21
4.2.1 <i>Mixed-method strategy</i>	21
4.2.2 <i>Interviews</i>	21
4.2.3 <i>Documents</i>	22
4.3 <i>Data analysis</i>	22
4.4 <i>Reliability and validity</i>	23
4.5 <i>Ethical considerations</i>	24
4.5.1 <i>Harm to participants and informed consent</i>	24
4.5.2 <i>Researchers' safety</i>	24
4.5.3 <i>Positionality and partiality</i>	24
5. Relevance to Global Studies: A Global Decline in Media Freedom	26
6. Previous Research	28
7. Background: Media Freedom in Uganda	29
7.1 <i>One hundred years of struggle</i>	29
7.2 <i>Yoweri Museveni and NRM</i>	30

7.3 Controlling the media.....	31
8. Four Campaigns With Successful Collective Actions.....	33
8.1 The media landscape	33
8.2 The media freedom movement.....	34
8.3 Campaigns.....	34
8.4 End impunity for crimes against journalists	34
8.4.1 Background	34
8.4.2 Positive outcome: The conviction of a high-ranking police officer.....	35
8.4.3 Negative outcome: Most cases never reaches the courts	38
8.4.4 Mixed outcome: When compensation is a break-through	39
8.4.5 Analysis:.....	40
8.5 Free arbitrary arrested and/or charged journalists	42
8.5.1 Background	42
8.5.2 Positive outcome: Quick response	42
8.5.3 Negative outcome: Journalists are harassed for years	45
8.5.4 Analysis: Easier to mobilise support for high-profile journalists	45
8.6 Legal action against closure, bans and suspensions	47
8.6.1 Background	47
8.6.2 Positive outcome: Open court	48
8.6.3 Mixed outcome: Reopening of closed media outlets	49
8.6.4 Mixed outcome: Temporary injunction of UCC order	50
8.6.5 Analysis.....	51
8.7 Challenging repressive laws	52
8.7.1 Background	52
8.7.2 Positive outcome: Nullified the laws on false news and sedition	52
8.7.3 Unknown outcome: Pending case in the East African Court of Justice	53
8.7.4 Analysis.....	54
9. The Importance of Public Advocacy and of Mobilising Support	55
9.1 Political and legal opportunity structure.....	56
9.2 Mobilising structures and organisational resources	57
9.2.1 Transnational networks.....	58
9.2.2 Repertoires of contention.....	58
9.2.3 The importance of organisational resources	59
9.3 Framing: Information and accountable politics.....	60
10. Conclusion	61
References	63
Appendix A: Interviews	69
Appendix B: Interview Guide.....	71

List of Tables

Table 1: Dimensions of movement-mobilising structures.....	14
Table 2: Dimensions of movement-mobilising structures in the case of the media freedom movement in Uganda.....	14
Table 3: Campaigns and actions.....	18
Table 4: Comparative research design based on different outcomes.....	20
Table 5: Actions to end Impunity.....	41
Table 6: Free arbitrarily arrested and/or charged journalists.	46
Table 7: Legal action against closure, bans and suspensions.....	52
Table 8: Legal action to nullify repressive laws.....	54
Table 9: All actions structured by outcomes.....	55

List of Figures

Figure 1: Ugandans reading front pages at a newsstand in Kampala, Uganda. Photo: Private.....	33
Figure 2: HRNJ-Uganda is reporting from the launch of "Press Freedom Index 2018: Impunity – A Cry for Press Freedom". Source: Twitter.	35
Figure 3: A tweet from a journalist condemning the assault on Andrew Lwanga. Source: Twitter.....	36
Figure 4: IFJ condemns the attack on James Akena. Source: Twitter.	40
Figure 5: A weekly newspaper sharing their interview with Solomon Serwanjja. Source: Twitter.	44
Figure 6: Solomon Serwanjja and the team was able to continue their investigation. The number of retweets and likes suggests that the arrests made their report long-awaited by the public. Source: Twitter.....	44
Figure 7: The webpage of Unity FM while it was closed. Source: www.unityfmlira.com	49
Figure 8: Demonstration on World Press Freedom Day 2019. Source Twitter.....	51

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Abstract

There is a global decline in media freedom. Journalists are increasingly being harassed, assaulted and imprisoned. While there is a lot of research on this depressing trend, there is little research on how social actors can act to defend media freedom. This thesis aims at explaining when and why collective actions in defence of media freedom are successful. It is a case study of how journalists and media organisations in Uganda are mobilising in defence of media freedom. Uganda is chosen as a case because it is a country in which media freedom has deteriorated quickly, but at the same time, there are still several strong independent media outlets and an intense public debate about media freedom.

The results show that the media freedom movement in Uganda to some extent has been able to use legal action to defend themselves against state repression and in a few cases even advancing the institutional framework for media freedom. The thesis further identifies the factors that facilitate a positive outcome in these rare cases of successful legal action. Those are 1) the ability to mobilise and activate support beyond the most obvious organisations, 2) that the journalist or media outlet has public credibility, and 3) that there is sustained public advocacy accompanying the legal case. In a semi-authoritarian context where activists risks state repression and the independence of the judiciary is questioned, it requires, however, an extensive support structure for legal mobilisation to ensure a due process of law and court room victories.

Abbreviations

ACME – African Centre for Media Excellence
AI – Amnesty International
CPJ – Committee to Protect Journalists
EAMI – East African Media Institute
HRNJ-Uganda – Human Rights Network of Journalists - Uganda
HRW – Human Rights Watch
IFEX – International Freedom of Expression Exchange
IFJ – International Federation of Journalists
MLDI – Media Legal Defence Initiative
NRM – National Resistance Movement
RDC – Resident District Commissioner
RSF – Reporters Without Borders
SMO – Social Movement Organisation
UCC – Uganda Communication Commission
UCRA – The Uganda Court Reporters Association
UDHR – The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UJA – Uganda Journalists Association
UJU – Uganda Journalists Union
UN – United Nations
UPDF – Uganda Peoples Defence Forces
UPF – Uganda Police Force

1. Introduction

How can journalists, media organisations and media owners in Uganda successfully defend media freedom from governmental repression? We know from previous research that a strong media sector and a functioning rule of law are crucial factors to restrain governments from clamping down on media (Vondoepp and Young 2015). We also know that a perceived common purpose, the organisational strength of the media and the level of solidarity between media professionals facilitates successful collective action for media rights (VonDoepp 2017), and that coalitions of domestic and transnational actors have the capacity to put pressure on governments to advance media freedom (Relly and González De Bustamante 2017; Simon 2015).

The research on the agency and the importance of social actors in defence of media freedom is, however, in its infancy. Research on media freedom has focused either on restraints and violations of media freedom or structural determinants, such as regime type, economic condition or the extent of rule of law, of media independence (VonDoepp 2017). That research has enlarged the knowledge about the media environment and working conditions for journalists, and as it shows that the state of media freedom is deteriorating worldwide it raises questions about how the situation may be improved. There is, therefore "an urgent call for empirical results, theoretical insights and analytical concepts" regarding the complex issues of journalist safety, impunity and media freedom and "the challenge is not only to explain the problems but also to contribute to solutions" (Carlsson and Pöyhtäri 2017, 15).

Through this thesis, I aim to contribute to the solutions Carlsson and Pöyhtäri requests and fill the empirical and theoretical gap they identify. I am using social movement theory to analyse how media freedom can be defended in a semi-authoritarian country with a regime that increasingly clamps down on independent media. It is a case study of how the media freedom movement in Uganda is 1) taking legal action to end impunity for crimes against journalists, 2) defending journalists that are arbitrarily arrested and/or charged with criminal offences, 3) fighting governmental orders to close media outlets or bans on media coverage, and 4) trying to advance the institutional framework for media freedom. The empirical material consists of 40 in-depth interviews with journalists, media owners, lawyers, activists, researches and politicians. The results indicate that although the overall picture is that the state of media freedom is deteriorating, there are several actions that either has been able to push back state repression or advanced the institutional framework for media freedom. The results further

suggest that the factors that facilitate successful actions are the ability to mobilise broad support, sustained public advocacy and that the journalist or media outlet in question has public credibility.

The thesis makes theoretical, empirical and practical contributions to existing research on the struggle for media freedom. The theoretical contribution is to adapt the concept of legal opportunity structure to a semi-authoritarian context where the impartiality of the judiciary is questioned. In a semi-authoritarian context, ‘access to courts’, is to be regarded as a contingent element. It is most evident in the fight to end impunity. It requires an extensive support structure for legal mobilisation to be able to put enough pressure on the judiciary to open up cases against police officers or soldiers that have assaulted journalists. The empirical contribution is to widen the use of social movement theory into campaigns for media freedom. There is earlier research on how social movements are using media as a channel to get out its claims, how social movements are using social or other media they are in control of to mobilise, and on social movements that aim to change how the traditional media are working. But the research on how media organisations are mobilising to defend its rights is in its infancy. The practical contribution is a better understanding of how journalists, media organisations and media owners, with support of transnational actors, in practice can take legal action and strike back against governmental repression of media independence.

2. Aim and Research Question

This thesis aims to explain how the media freedom movement in Uganda in collaboration with transnational civil society organisations are mobilisation to defend media freedom.

Research question:

- When and why are actions to defend media freedom successful?

Sub-questions:

- What actions have the media freedom movement taken to defend media freedom?
- What has the outcome been?
- Which factors may explain the outcomes?

3. Theoretical Framework

This chapter will describe social movement theory, which is the theoretical framework that I will use to explain the struggle for media freedom, and define the key concepts ‘political and legal opportunities’, ‘mobilising structures’ and ‘cultural framing’.

Social movement studies have a long history in sociological thought (Martin 2015, 20). The basic idea is to study collective forms of protest that aims at social change. Snow (2013) defines social movements as ”collective actions through which aggrieved collectives give voice publicly to various grievances and press relevant authorities to attend to the associated claims and/or demands”. Although social movement studies is a disparate field of study Snow (2013) outlines six characteristics that all social movements share. They:

- seek or oppose change
- are challengers or defenders of existing institutional structures or systems of authority
- are collective enterprises
- act outside of existing institutional or organisational arrangements, although they also act within institutional channels
- operate with some degree of organisation
- display some degree of temporal continuity

The media freedom movement in Uganda consists of activists, journalists, civil society organisations, professional associations and media corporations. I consistently use the term ‘media freedom’ instead of ‘press freedom’, because ‘media’ better captures print media as well as broadcast and digital media. Many of the individuals in the media freedom movement may be considered as part of the economic and cultural elite in Uganda, and are therefore something slightly different than what is usually described as a ‘social movement’. They are, however, involved in a contentious struggle with a semi-authoritarian regime, are seeking change, are acting collectively, are acting inside and outside existing institutional and organisational arrangements, are operating through different organisations and networks, and have fought for media freedom for decades. I agree with VonDoepp (2017, 515) that social movement theory is useful in the context of Africa’s hybrid and newly democratic states. Social movement theory addresses contentious forms of politics, and it helps to explain what opportunities the media freedom movement are seizing, what mobilising structures and organisational resources they utilize and how they frame their grievances and demands. In the next sections, I will describe

these three main explanatory factors that are used in social movement theory: opportunities, mobilising structures and framing.

3.1 Political opportunities and threats

Several scholars have acknowledged that feelings of injustice and grievances in itself are not sufficient for a social movement to emerge. Individuals and organisations must also believe that change is possible. ‘Political opportunities’ are those openings in the polity that make people believe. Tarrow (2011, 163) defines political opportunity as ”consistent – but not necessarily formal or permanent – dimensions of the political environment or of change in that environment that provide incentives for collective action by affecting expectations for success or failure”. Threats are, on the other hand, the state’s capacity and propensity for repression (McAdam 1996, 27).

Political opportunities and threats may be either ‘stable’ or ‘volatile’ (Gamson and Meyer 1996, 277–78). Some aspects of opportunity and threats are deeply embedded in institutions or culture, and changes slowly over several decades, or by a revolution, whereas other aspects are constantly shifting with different events or political actors (Ibid).

A further distinction is between ‘objective’ and ‘perceived’ political opportunities and threats (Tarrow 2011, 164). It is when opportunities are perceived as such by movements that they become a source of mobilisation, and in the same way, movements can be constrained from collective action by threats of repression that are ”more apparent than real” (Ibid).

An aspect of the political opportunity structure, that is of importance for the media freedom movement in Uganda, is ‘legal opportunity structure’. It is defined as “features of the legal system that facilitate/hinder social movements’ chances to have their grievances redressed through the judiciary” (De Fazio 2012, 4) and as political opportunity structure, it also consists of stable and volatile (or contingent) features (Hilson 2002, 243). De Fazio (2012) distinguishes three elements of legal opportunity: 1) accessibility to courts, 2) availability of justiciable rights and 3) receptivity of the judiciary toward a social movements’ claim. ‘Access to courts’ refers to rules for legal standing and the costs/affordability of litigation, ‘justiciable rights’ refers to if civil rights are enforceable through the courts, and ‘judiciary receptivity’ refers to whether the courts are supportive or adverse to a social movement’s legal claims. While access to courts and justiciable rights are relative stable features, judiciary receptivity is a contingent feature (Ibid, 7).

Legal opportunity structure, along with mobilising structures and ideological orientation, shape a social movement’s strategy (De Fazio 2012, 5). De Fazio outlines a few hypotheses

based on a comparative analysis of the civil rights movements in the USA and Northern Ireland (Ibid, 15-17). The first is that an open legal opportunity structure accompanied by courtroom victories are legitimizing a social movement's claims and are giving hope to activists. Thus it expands the capacity for further mobilization. In contrast, when a social movement experiences the legal opportunity structure as closed, they abandon legal action and turn to other forms of collective action. Denied access to courts and distrust toward the legal system made the social movement in Northern Ireland turn to street protests and insurgency. When the legal opportunity structure is partially closed, the way forward depends on the movement's organisational resources and ideological orientation.

Epp (1998) further highlights the importance of resources. He argues that legal mobilisation is not an automatic response to legal opportunities, it also requires a 'support structure for legal mobilization' that consists of advocacy organisations, willing and able lawyers and sources of financing (Epp 1998, 18–19). Such a support structure provides legal aid and legal cases, networks of communication, legal and non-legal research, and public advocacy. Those elements are required to successful appeal to the courts of law and eventually enforce a 'rights revolution' in the sense that the judiciary are attentive to individual rights of ordinary citizens.

I will use the concept of political and legal opportunity to explain the strategic choices of the media freedom movement in Uganda. The perceived lack of political opportunities in the semi-authoritarian context, and the relative open legal opportunity structure accompanied with a few milestone court room victories have made litigation a prime strategy (Stremlau 2018, 136; Lugalambi and Tabaire 2010, 18). Apart from that, and perhaps most importantly, the arbitrary arrests and charges against journalists as well as the systemic impunity for crimes against journalists, has made legal action a natural strategy.

3.2 Mobilising structures and organisational resources

Every social movement has to mobilise its available resources and come together in some kind of informal or formal organisation. McCarthy (1996, 141) defines those 'mobilising structures' as "ways of engaging in collective action which includes particular 'tactical repertoires', particular 'social movement organisational' forms, and 'modular social movements repertoire'". Particular repertoires and forms are new or unique actions and organizational forms, while modular are actions and organizational forms that have been standardised.

Several actors are usually active in any social movement. McCarthy (1996) summarises the dimensions of movement-mobilising structures in a comprehensible table (see Table 1).

Table 1: Dimensions of movement-mobilising structures.

	Non-movement	Movement
Informal	Friendship networks Neighbourhoods Work networks	Activist networks Affinity groups Memory communities
Formal	Churches Unions Professional associations	Organisations Protest communities Movement schools

I will use this scheme to analyse how the media freedom movement in Uganda are mobilising. It needs, however, to be adjusted. The media freedom movement consists mainly of media professionals. Therefore fits ‘work networks’ and ‘professional associations’ better in the ‘Movement’-dimension. It is first when mobilising occurs in ‘friendship/neighbourhoods networks’ or in organisations outside the media sector that it has diffused to ‘Non-Movement’-segments of the population. The adjusted dimensions are shown in Table 2:

Table 2: Dimensions of movement-mobilising structures in the case of the media freedom movement in Uganda.

	Non-movement	Movement
Informal	Friendship networks Neighbourhoods	Activist networks Affinity groups Memory communities Work networks
Formal	Churches Unions	Organisations Protest communities Movement schools Professional associations

Movements engage in politics through ‘tactical repertoires’ or ‘repertoires of contention’. That is collective action that may be violent, contained or disruptive (Tarrow 2011, 99). Disruptive actions can break the routine of everyday politics, provide evidence of a movements determination, obstruct the activities of the opponents, bystanders or authorities and force them to react, and also broaden the circle of conflict (Ibid, 99-106). It is primarily disruptive actions that give power to movements that lack other resources, but even disruptive actions tend to be to normalised after some time and thus becomes ‘contained actions’ (Ibid).

The concept of ‘repertoires of contention’ will be used in the analysis to show that the media freedom movement in Uganda is primarily using a globally well-known repertoire of action

that is used by transnational advocacy groups. When the media freedom movement, however, opts for disruptive action it may enhance their position.

3.3 Cultural framing

As soon as a social movement enters the stage it is already engaged in processes of making meaning and are trying to change people's perceptions and behaviour. Framing is the process in which movements constructs "an interpretive scheme that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there'" (Tarrow 2011, 142). When movement constructs frames they draw on a cultural stock of images of the world and injustices (Zald 1996, 267). But they do not just re-use known frames and images, they also reshape and creates new ones (Tarrow 2011, 144–45), and they often use cultural contradictions and possibilities (opportunities) for action when they construct frames (Zald 1996, 268). Frames may be limited to particular campaigns, but sometimes movements also construct frames that endure for decades and becomes 'master frames' (Ibid, 269).

The concept of framing sheds light on the contentious nature of the struggle for media freedom. While the media freedom movement usually use a frame of violated basic rights, the government frames their actions against the media sector with reference to national security and nation-building.

3.4 Transnational contention and human rights regime

In the last century an international human rights regime has evolved (Tarrow 2011, 249). It consists of international treaties, institutions, organisations and networks, and it has created opportunities for activism that have caused social movements to act across borders in different ways whether it is to form transnational coalitions, to exchange frames and repertoires of contention or to use international legalisation (Ibid).

The idea of a transnational exchange of ideas, frames, repertoires of contention and mutual support sheds light on the mutual support between the media freedom movement in Uganda and transnational actors.

3.5 Summary

Social movement theory and the key concepts will be used to explain what opportunities the media freedom movement exploits, what actions they take, how they mobilize, and how they frame their demands. The explaining factors that I use in the Research Design are also based on the key concepts.

4. Research Design, Methods and Ethics

In this chapter I will describe the research design, how I have collected and analysed data, and what ethical considerations I have undertaken.

4.1 Research design

This thesis is a case study of how the media freedom movement in Uganda is mobilising. The media freedom movement in Uganda is chosen as a case because it is an 'exemplifying case' (Bryman 2016, 62) of the global struggle for media freedom. There are three reasons why Uganda is an exemplifying case. First, Uganda is a country in which the situation has deteriorated quickly. In the World Press Freedom Index, measured by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), Uganda has fallen from score 17.00 in 2002 (the first year the annual index was published) to 39.42 in 2018 (www.rsf.org). Put in another way, Uganda has fallen in ranking from 52 to 125 out of 180 countries in the period of 2002-2018. Second, ever since Museveni and NRM seized power in 1986 there has been a public debate on media freedom in Uganda (see more in the chapter "Background"). Third, despite governmental attacks on media, there are still several independent media outlets as well as civil society organisations determined to protect freedom of expression. In Freedom House's ranking *Freedom in the world 2018*, Uganda's status was changed from 'Not Free' to 'Partly Free' because "the media remains active and vibrant, and journalists have continued to provide critical coverage despite harassment" (Freedom House 2018). This dynamic struggle between the government and the media makes Uganda an interesting country for research. Although Uganda is a unique case it should thus be possible to draw lessons that are illuminating to struggles in other countries. Considering the deteriorating state of independent media in Uganda it is further important to understand what actions that can be taken before the media becomes too weak to defend its rights.

Research on social movement has focused on the emergence of movements (what give rise to movements?), the development or decline of movements (how do movements mobilize and evolve?), and the outcome of movements (what do they achieve?). This thesis sets out to explain outcomes. My purpose is to answer the research question: *When and why are actions to defend media freedom successful?* I will compare actions with a positive, mixed and negative outcome,

and identify the factors that facilitate a positive outcome. It is thus an inductive study (Bryman 2016, 22) that are generating theory rather than sets up a hypothesis to be tested.

In the following sections I will 1) define what constitutes a positive outcome, 2) describe the rationale behind the selection of actions, 3) outline the comparative research design, and 4) discuss limitations in the research design.

4.1.1 Social movement outcomes

In a review of studies on social movement outcomes Martin (2015) concludes that in the short run, success or failure depends on the ability to mobilise resources and exploit political opportunity, and in the long run, the ability of social movements to spread its knowledge production to a larger population (Martin 2015, 68). Outcome may thus be understood as concrete legal, political or policy change but also as the influence on popular values and attitudes (Ibid, 248-250). I will treat outcomes as concrete legal, political or policy changes. The reason is that these changes are possible to measure. Some of my informants argued that the minor legal, political and policy changes that the media freedom movement has achieved are fruitless (interview 39), and highlighted the importance of gaining public trust and support for media. However, for this thesis, it has not been possible to gather data about the influence of the movement on public values and attitudes.

4.1.2 Selection of actions

The media freedom movement in Uganda has carried out many campaigns and actions during the time-span of concern here, from 1986 and onwards. My purpose is to identify what can be done to reverse the depressing development. Therefore the research question is *when and why actions to defend media freedom are successful*, and the starting point in the choice of actions to analyse has been actions that my informants regard as successful. These actions are then compared with actions that have been unsuccessful in order to identify the factors that facilitate a positive outcome.

In a comparative analysis that is designed to explain the social world, the units of analysis should be as homogenous as possible while there has to be variation in the factors that explains the social world (Esaiasson et al. 2017, 92). To find homogenous units of analysis I have grouped all actions in campaigns, and in every campaign singled out actions that may be regarded as positive, mixed and negative. The category mixed outcome is actions that were regarded as successes by some of the informants despite not achieving the objective. The

actions with negative outcomes have been chosen for their exemplifying character. There are several other actions with a negative outcome that could have been chosen.

A campaign is here defined as "a sustained, organised public effort making collective claims on targeted authorities" (Tarrow 2011, 191). The campaigns and actions that I analyse is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Campaigns and actions.

Campaign	Positive outcome	Mixed outcome	Negative outcome
End Impunity for crimes against journalists.	Conviction of a police officer.	Compensation from the military.	No charge for assaults by the police/military.
Free journalists that are arbitrarily arrested or charged with criminal offences.	'Quick responses'.	Team of investigative reporters got out of jail.	Failure to get a fair trial and/or in reasonable time.
Legal action against closure of media outlets, suspensions of journalists and bans on coverage.	Open court.	Re-opening of media outlets. Injunction of UCC orders.	Media outlets remain closed or are re-opened with restrictions.
Challenging the legality (the constitutionality) of repressive laws.	Laws on false news and sedition was nullified.	Pending case on criminal defamation.	Laws on promoting sectarianism and criminal defamation was upheld.

The observant reader will note that all campaigns are centred around legal action. The courts have for a long time been a central site of conflict between the government and the media in Uganda (Stremlau 2018; Lugalambi and Tabaire 2010). One reason for that is that the media are constantly attacked and have to defend itself. Another reason is that the media freedom movement has exploited legal opportunities. The list of successful actions is, however, in no way exhaustive. It is based on interviews with 40 people associated with the media freedom movement of today. There are other possible actions with a positive or mixed outcome that may have not been remembered at the time of interviews or not known to my informants. I will now turn to what explicit delimitations I have made.

4.1.3 Delimitations

Media freedom is a complex concept. Weaver (1977) summarises how it has been defined in basically three different ways: (1) as the relative absence of governmental restraints on the media; (2) as the relative absence of governmental and all other restraints on the media; and (3) as not only the absence of restraints on mass media, but also the presence of those conditions necessary to ensure the dissemination of a diversity of ideas and opinions to a relatively large audience.

The struggle for media freedom in Uganda, and elsewhere, has to include a multitude of strategies. Several of the individuals and organisations that I have interviewed are not only involved in a contentious struggle with the government to push back repression. They are also involved in projects such as trainings for journalists to enhance professionalism, funds for investigative journalism, creating ethical standard and self-regulatory mechanisms, improving business models to make media outlets more sustainable and building public awareness about the role of journalism in a democratic society. I have, however, delimited this research to how the media in Uganda are struggling with the first and most basic level of media freedom: to push back governmental restraints. To measure and explain interventions intended to change underlying structural features, strengthen the capacity of journalists or changing public opinion would have required a completely different set of data collection. In practice, there is, however, no clear-cut delimitations. All three dimensions of media freedom are interrelated. A strong and self-assured media sector with public support is probably the best guard against governmental restraints, and to build a strong and self-assured media sector with public support you need to improve structural conditions such as business models, working conditions, journalist education, etc.

The research is further limited in time to the current political period under Museveni and NRM rule. That is from 1986 and onwards.

4.1.4 A comparative research design

The units of analysis are actions in defence of media freedom. The factors that may explain the outcome are derived from the theoretical framework and have been chosen on the basis of a thematic analysis of the collected data. It is factors that the informants thought explained a positive outcome. Table 4 shows the research design.

Table 4: Comparative research design based on different outcomes.

<i>Action</i>	Mobilising structure	Trans-national support	Media outlet	Public credibility	Public advocacy	Protest	Outcome
<i>N</i>	Formal movement	Political	Freelancer	High	Occasional	Yes	Positive
	Informal movement	Financial	Local	Low	Sustained	No	Mixed
	Non-movement	Legal	National		None		Negative
		None	International				

Description of factors

Mobilising structure: Mobilisation measured with the adjusted variant of McCarthy’s (1996) four dimensions of mobilizing structures. Attributes: Formal movement, informal movement and non-movement. Formal movement is when media or other organisations that fights for freedom of expression take action. Informal movement when colleagues, individual journalists and activists takes action (whether it is through social media or demonstrations). Non-movement is when individual readers/listeners/politicians/etc or organisations take action or show support. For the sake of simplification I have grouped formal and informal non-movement into one attribute.

Transnational support: What kind of transnational support the action has got. Attributes: Political, financial, legal or none.

Media Outlet: If the involved media outlet is local, national or international media outlet, or if the journalist is a freelancer.

Credibility: Whether the affected journalist or media outlet has public credibility (as opposite to being biased or sensational) and the issue that made the authorities to crack down had public interest (as opposite to sheer entertainment or intrusion of the privacy of ordinary citizens). It will be evident in the analysis that it is easier to mobilize support for journalists and media outlets that are perceived by the public as being credible and if the issue is of public interest. Attributes: High and low.

Public advocacy: Whether the repertoire of contention included occasional, sustained or none public advocacy. Public advocacy is press conferences, statements, social media campaigns, opinion articles, lobbying, meetings with authorities, etc, that in different ways raises public awareness and puts pressure on the authorities. With occasional public advocacy I mean actions were there are public advocacy only in conjunction with major happenings (the incident that evoked the action, the start of the trial, the conviction, etc). With sustained public advocacy I

mean actions where there is an attempt to keep up the noise through the whole process. Incidents with no public advocacy are violations that no organisations has taken action against.

Protest: Whether the repertoire of action also included protests such as street demonstrations or disruptive actions.

Outcome: Whether the outcome of the action can be regarded as Positive, Mixed or Negative.

4.2 Data collection

4.2.1 Mixed-method strategy

In social movement studies, mixed-method strategies are widely used (della Porta 2014, 2). Scholars tend to be pragmatic and use all available techniques for data collection and analysis (Ibid). I have conducted a qualitative research based on interviews and content analysis of social media postings, newspaper articles and reports by civil society organisations. I also spent eight weeks as an intern at a media organisation in Uganda. The understanding of the context derived from the work as an intern informs the analysis.

The approach adopted for data collection has been 'purposive sampling' (Bryman 2016, 408). Interviewees and content material have been selected because they are relevant to the research question: *When and why are actions to defend media freedom successful?* For the interviews, key organisations and individuals were identified beforehand, and thereafter new interviewees were selected by questions that aroused during the research or by the snowball method whereby interviewees suggested other persons.

The collected data consists primarily of interpretations of reality by human beings. The epistemological assumption, in the meaning what is acceptable knowledge, underpinning the research is therefore interpretive (Bryman 2016, 24). That does not mean that I dismiss the existence of an objective reality outside the minds of human beings, but that the explanations in this research are based on humans perceptions of reality and their reactions thereupon.

4.2.2 Interviews

40 interviews were carried out from 13 November 2018 to 22 January 2019. Each interview lasted from 30 to 90 minutes. 25 of the interviewees were working as professional journalists at the time of the interview. They worked in radio, tv, online and print media. In private, community and state media. The other interviewees were personnel at civil society organisations, lawyers, researchers, politicians and one was working in a state agency. 30 of the interviewees were men, and 10 were women. Journalism in Uganda is a male-intensive occupation, and although there are no statistics I would not be surprised if my misallocation

matches the misallocation in Uganda journalism as a whole. A majority of the interviewees lived and worked in the capital Kampala, but 15 worked in the cities and villages of Mbarara, Bushenyi, Lira, Arua, Soroti and Gulu. The mix of workplaces, gender and location has been helpful because they are affected by the attacks on media freedom and interpret the struggle in partially different ways (see Appendix A for a list of interviewees).

All the interviewees were approached as fellow journalists. I used my background as a journalist as a way of creating trust. Although I used a template for semi-structured interviews (see Appendix B) some of the interviews became more like discussions.

4.2.3 Documents

I have used different sets of documents to triangulate the data derived from interviews. Triangulation is a method in which the researchers uses multiple sources to achieve greater confidence in the findings (Bryman 2016, 386).

Official documents from state and private sources. Several of the organisations in focus in this research are producing a lot of documents. That includes alerts, press releases, statements and reports that are useful for understanding how the organisation are framing the issues and what kind of actions they take.

Media outputs. Violations of media freedom are frequently reported in media and I have used those articles. The media reports also force the authorities to respond in public to claims by the media freedom movement, which sheds light on the contentious character of the issue.

Social media. Mobilising and campaigning are often performed on social media. A major challenge while using social media posts is how to find and sample documents (Bryman 2016, 558). I have not conducted a verifiable analysis on the extent of social media content in specific actions, but have used social media postings to illuminate and triangulate other data.

4.3 Data analysis

I have conducted a thematic analysis (Bryman 2016, 587–88) of the interviews. The interviews were recorded. In the process of analysing I have been listening and re-listening to them, and have coded and then reduced the codes into themes such as 'repertoire of actions', 'successful actions', 'court successes', 'factors behind success', 'framing', 'contentious politics', 'mobilising', 'difficulties', 'state retaliation' and 'failures'. In the end, these were refined into the explaining factors used in the research design.

I have worked with an iterative strategy (Bryman 2016, 379). The basis of the thematic analysis has been the interviews. Based on the interpretations and theorising of that data, further

data have been collected to amplify, verify and elaborate on the interpretations and theorising. In this process, any single data from either interviews or written material have been cross-checked and triangulated with data from other sources (Ibid, 386). Theories about legal opportunities and transnational contention were for example added when the importance of legal action respective the connection between national and transnational organisation became obvious.

4.4 Reliability and validity

To ensure quality in the research process it is necessary to reflect on reliability and validity. Reliability concerns the question if the results are repeatable and consistent (Bryman 2016, 41). In qualitative research it is next to impossible to replicate a study but the researcher has to be as transparent as possible about how the data has been collected and analysed. I have done that by describing the research process, and to ensure consistency I have triangulate all data and interviewed relatively many informants (40 informants).

Validity concerns the integrity of the conclusions (Bryman 2016, 41). My purpose is to explain *when and why are actions to defend and promote media freedom successful*. It is, however, important to bear in mind that all conclusions about causality are to some extent unsure (Esaiasson et al. 2017, 91). The social world is simply too complex to be sure about cause and effect. Nevertheless, the goal of social science is to use empirical evidence to make the best possible explanation. In a comparative analysis, a major problem is if the units of analysis are homogenous. In the actions that I compare there are for example differences in the severity of the assault, of how important the authorities perceive the case and the place and time. I take these differences into consideration in the analysis of the actions. The difference in who is the victim I have upgraded to an explaining factor (media outlet and public credibility) because it has an important impact. In a comparative design with multiple explaining factors, it is also difficult to pinpoint exactly which factor(s) that are most decisive and are causing the outcome (Esaiasson et al. 2017, 118). It can be one decisive factor or the combination of several, and there is a further risk that the most decisive factor is missing in the data. It means that we are doing probabilistic rather than deterministic explanations (Esaiasson et al. 2017, 121). We are making suggestions on plausible explanations rather determined explanations, and further research is needed to test any hypotheses that are made. A further risk is ‘data fitting’, that the researcher finds a theory that fits the data, but not necessarily the social reality (Esaiasson et al. 2017, 113). To avoid the risks I have tried to be as true as possible to the material, and triangulated all data. Through the whole process, I have also imagined the media freedom

movement in Uganda as the receiver of my results. The results have to make sense to their social reality and their struggle.

4.5 Ethical considerations

My ethical considerations have included potential harm to participants, my own safety and the issue of impartiality. Here I will discuss these issues.

4.5.1 Harm to participants and informed consent

The most basic ethical principle of social research is not to harm participants (Bryman 2016, 126). Several of my informants have been or are at risk of being harassed, assaulted and imprisoned. In the context of conflict zones and authoritarianism protecting participant's identity is crucial (Malthaner 2014, 187). All of my informants have given their informed consent. All interviews were conducted in a place chosen by the informant. The interviews were recorded and the audio files were as soon as possible transferred to a hidden and encrypted disc on my computer. While I was in Uganda all documents relating to the research were kept on a hidden and encrypted disc. The exception was some phone numbers, dates and WhatsApp-conversations that was stored on my cell phone. The cell phone is usually a major security threat so I kept as little information as possible on it.

The protection of the participant's identity and safety also mean that the researcher might have to refrain from publishing sensitive information (Malthaner 2014, 187). I have avoided sensitive personal details in this thesis. However, most of the actions that I analyse have been extensively covered by national media in Uganda and many of my informants are well-known media freedom activists. It will make no difference for them to be named once more. For the sake of clarification, I do mention some individuals and organisations in these actions.

4.5.2 Researchers' safety

For my own safety, it was important to have updated knowledge of the current situation and to build and sustain trustful relations with a local network in the field (Malthaner 2014, 190–91). Before my trip to Uganda, I conducted a Journalist Safety Course, and in Uganda, I did an internship with a local organisation and thus had trustful relations with a local network.

4.5.3 Positionality and partiality

Politics and values intrude in all phases of the research process (Bryman 2016, 141). Positionality refers to the fact that the researcher's beliefs, political stance and cultural

background affects the research process, as well as any reporting of the findings (Bourke 2014, 2–3). In qualitative research based on interviews, it also affects the relations between the researcher and the informants (Ibid).

I am a white middle-aged man from a rich country in the north that is also a major donor country to Uganda. I am also a freelance journalist, a member of two organisations that work globally to promote media freedom and had the privilege to travel abroad and conduct research in Uganda. It is impossible to know how my position affected the interviews. It was quite easy to get access into the parliament, state agencies and elsewhere, and most of the informants were happy to meet me. I think they were eager to let the world know what is happening in Uganda. Maybe some thought that I could be a medium for their voice (either through journalism or science). Some also asked for more concrete international support as financial and material support, getting in touch with Swedish media organisations and going to Sweden to learn more about how we deal with media freedom. Even though most were happy to see me it was also obvious that some were trying to overplay the size, role and effectiveness of their respective organisation. That problem is, however, apparent in all interviews of this kind.

Regarding me being a journalist and a member of organisations that promotes media freedom I take the position of a 'conscious partiality' (Bryman 2016, 141). I am committed to the cause, my aim with this thesis is to build on the knowledge on how to defend media freedom, and during the research process, I took part in social media campaigns and fund-raised second-hand cameras to an organisation in Uganda that supports assaulted journalists. I believe that my commitment and understanding of journalism informs rather than disrupts the analysis.

5. Relevance to Global Studies:

A Global Decline in Media Freedom

In the last decade, there has been a decline in media freedom in almost all parts of the world (Freedom House 2019). Media professionals are increasingly being killed, charged with criminal offences, arbitrarily imprisoned and threatened while they are doing their work (Simon 2015; Cottle 2017). Most of the attacks remain unresolved which is fostering a culture of impunity that creates fear and self-censorship among journalists (Carlsson and Pöyhtäri 2017). There are many sorts of perpetrators, but governments are among the fiercest (Graber 2015, 237). Reporters Without Borders have noted a 'climate of hatred' in which political leaders and 'strongmen' such as Vladimir Putin, Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Rodrigo Duterte, are verbally lashing out on independent media and thus undermining public debate (Reporters Without Borders 2019). But it is not only autocratic regimes that are attacking journalists and restricting media freedoms, increasingly governments are cracking down on media behind a democratic façade (Simon 2015, 32). Those governments may have been elected in multi-party elections and tolerate independent media, but suppress critical expression through a range of measure as harassments, national security prosecutions, withdrawal of government advertisements, seemingly reasonable restrictions on 'hate speech', laws on terrorism, etc. (Simon 2015).

Freedom of expression and media freedom are fundamental human rights enshrined in Article 19 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and it is a prerequisite for other civil and democratic rights. Research shows that there is a strong correlation between media freedom and democracy, good governance and economic wealth (Norris 2006). Norris identifies three key functions of the media in this process: as a watchdog over the abuse of power, as a civic forum for political debate and as an agenda-setter in the society (Ibid).

The ability of the media to fulfil its democratic role is severely undermined by the attacks and limitations on media freedom. In many countries there have therefore been an intense public debate about media freedoms the last years and the media sector are trying to defend their rights in various ways. At the frontline are local journalists, media outlets and civil society organisations that are defending media freedom in their respective national context. These are cooperating with transnational organisations that are working on a global scale. Some of them are Reporters Without Borders (RSF), Article19, Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ),

International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Amnesty International (AI), Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Media Legal Defence Initiative (MLDI). The cooperation consists of information sharing, joint campaigns, and moral, financial and legal support. There is also a vast amount of private and governmental donor funding that supports organisations that are defending media freedom and to enhance the resilience of the independent media.

6. Previous Research

There is a lot of research on media freedom (Weaver 1977), but only recently the attention has turned to the agency and role of social actors in the struggle for media freedom (VonDoepp 2017, 510–11). When VonDoepp and Young (2015) did an analysis of what restrains governments in Sub-Saharan Africa with democratic or hybrid regimes to clamp down on media, they found two factors that were particularly strong: the presence of a strong media sector and civil society organisations supportive of media independence, and a functioning rule of law (Vondoepp and Young 2015, 1116–17). A conclusion was thus that media collective action is an important factor for the defence and advance for media freedom. To understand the dynamics in the struggle of media freedom, VonDoepp (2017) then used social movement theory in case studies of Ghana, Zambia and Malawi. He argues that a perceived common purpose (collective action frames), the organisational strength of the media sector (mobilising structures) and the level of solidarity (a shared identity) were factors that facilitated successful collective action in Ghana and Zambia. In Malawi lack of resilient organisation and lack of solidarity made it harder to mobilise collective action.

There are some more cases studies on media freedom movements. Robie (2014) has made a case study of Pacific Media Watch that have done much to improve media freedom in the Oceania region. Tapsell (2013) has done research on how journalists and civil society organisations have pushed for media freedom in semi-authoritarian Malaysia. Those studies are descriptive analysis of single cases and they thus highlight the need to analyse those movements with a theoretical framework in order to be able to compare and draw generalisable conclusions.

There is also a growing body of literature on journalists safety and impunity which is a reaction to the declining state of media freedom around the world (Carlsson and Pöyhtäri 2017). One example that is using a collective action framework is Relly and Bustamente (2017). They are analysing how global and domestic networks are collaborating to fight impunity for crimes against journalists in Mexico and shows how a multitude of organisations interact and thus can put pressure on the government of Mexico.

With my thesis, I intend to add to this literature on how journalists, media organisations and civil society organisations can defend media freedom.

7. Background: Media Freedom in Uganda

The struggle for media freedom in Uganda started during colonial time. This chapter will briefly describe the history of media freedom in Uganda.

7.1 One hundred years of struggle

The history of the media in Uganda is like a never-ending sword-play between publishers and the government. It has been going forward and backwards since the 1920s. Periods of a vibrant media industry has been followed by periods of state repression (Stremlau 2018, 36).

The first mass media was founded by missionaries in the beginning of the twentieth century (Stremlau 2018, 29). They were religious newsletters (Lugalambi and Tabaire 2010, 4). The first commercial newspaper, *Uganda Herald*, was published in 1912 (Stremlau 2018, 30). It was in English and had Europeans as its main audience (Ibid). The first independent Ugandan newspaper is therefore regarded to be *Sekanyola* that was founded in 1920 (Lugalambi and Tabaire 2010, 4). It was soon followed by more (Scotton 1973). Those were often critical of the British protectorate and the local Buganda government, and it did not take long before they were charged with criminal libel and defamation by the government. In what was the first East African libel case involving a newspaper, the editor and the publisher of *Munyonyozi* was brought to court by the prime minister of the Buganda government in 1922 (Scotton 1973, 219). *Munyonyozi* was accused of having called for the replacement of the treasurer of the Buganda government (Ibid). They were, however, able to get away with a light fine after the colonial judge of the High Court stated that he wished "to encourage such a laudable enterprise as a Native newspaper and not cripple it by imposing a too heavy fine" and then argued for the importance of a free press in a democratic society.

Since then the courts have been an important site in the struggle for media freedom (Stremlau 2018; Lugalambi and Tabaire 2010). The incident in the 1920s has striking similarities with present time court cases. The state still uses libel or defamation to cripple critical reporting, and where the colonial judge used the British law, media lawyers of today are using the Constitution of Uganda (which guarantees media freedom) to defend media freedom.

Another incident in the 1920s which reminds of the struggle of today is the treatment of Yusufu Bamuta, editor of *Dobozi*. He did his best not to breach the colonial laws in his critical editorials, and when the authorities were not able to charge him with criminal offences they

turned to other means and dismissed him from the position as secretary at the parliament of Buganda (Scotton 1973, 225). In a letter to a friend he later wrote: "I have done my best in a constitutional way and the result has cost me both money and my appointment, but I do not grieve. Truth will always [come] out and I am sure it will prevail in spite of oppression" (Ibid). The treatment of Bamuta evoked protests, and five people were killed in a riot. But within a few years, all major journalists at the time were silenced. Bamuta was finally imprisoned for rape, a charge he denied.

When the press finally revitalised in the following decades an even more outspoken anti-colonial press emerged (Stremlau 2018, 30–31). At times several newspapers were banned and their journalists imprisoned (Lugalambi and Tabaire 2010, 4–7). That made the cause for freedom of expression a central anti-colonial theme. In the *Uganda Express* the government was criticised for using colonial laws that restricted freedom of expression as "a political weapon to punish those who happen to oppose its policies" (Ibid 17).

Uganda got independent in 1962. The first ruler of independent Uganda, Milton Obote, promised to allow a free press and the new magazine *Transition* became one of the most influential paper in Africa in the first half of the 1960s. But once again things were about to change. Milton Obote's government soon used the same colonial laws he earlier had opposed to suppress the media, and during the fierce dictatorship of Idi Amin in the 1970s and Milton Obote's return to power in the early 1980s the independent press was silenced (Lugalambi and Tabaire 2010, 8–9).

7.2 Yoweri Museveni and NRM

The recurring periods of an independent media did have a lasting effect as it made the public aware of the potential role of media, public debate and politics (Stremlau 2018, 36). Freedom of expression also became a central propaganda message for Yoweri Museveni and his guerrilla NRM (Ibid, 106). When NRM seized power in 1986 they consequently allowed a freer press. Previously banned newspaper remerged (Lugalambi and Tabaire 2010, 8–9) and nearly 30 new newspapers and magazines started between 1986-1990 (Tripp 2010, 97). The government also set up a state-owned daily newspaper, *New Vision*, that was fairly independent and at the time Uganda was regarded as one of the freest countries in Africa (Ibid, 96-101). In 1992 the airways were liberalised and there was a further boom of radio stations and broadcasters (Lugalambi and Tabaire 2010, 11). The new constitution in 1995 further underlined freedom of expression and media freedom. Chapter four is on "Protection and promotion of fundamental and other

human rights and freedoms” and in article 29 ”Protection of freedom of conscience, expression, movement, religion, assembly and association” is guaranteed. It states inter alia that

*”(1) Every person shall have the right to—
(a) freedom of speech and expression which shall include freedom of
the press and other media;”*
(Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995)

However, NRM would soon change in the same manner as their predecessor had. Already 1986 Museveni stated that “We want freedom of the press, but we cannot have enemy agents working against us here.” (Tabaire 2007, 207). During Museveni’s now 32-year reign he “has been quick to clamp down on the press when the need arises” (Ibid, 204). Control of the media has become a central part of NRM’s strategy to remain in power, mainly because the vibrant media industry has been one of the most important forces exposing and criticising the government (Tripp 2010, 96–97). The treatment of the state-owned *New Vision* is symptomatic for the change in NRM’s attitude towards media. It remains to be one of the most influential media outlets in the country. But the former editor-in-chief William Spyke left in 2006 after pressure from Museveni (The Observer 2013) and it has been under increasing political pressure ever since (Stremlau 2018, 125).

Tripp (2010) defines the NRM government as a semi-authoritarian or a ‘hybrid regime’. That is a regime that has adopted democratic features but at the same time pervert democracy for the sole purpose of staying in power. That explains why the government allows political opposition, since 1995 Uganda has a multi-party system with elections to the parliament and the presidency, and a free press, but clamps down on dissenting voices whenever they feel threatened. Violations of media freedom are especially severe in periods of elections, social unrest or when investigative journalists are exposing corruption or other governmental wrongdoings (Human Rights Watch 2010; Human Rights Network for Journalists - Uganda 2019)

7.3 Controlling the media

The government are using several tools to control the media, including legal and regulative as well as extra-legal means (Tripp 2010, 97). The legal means includes laws on sedition, promoting sectarianism, criminal defamation, criminal libel, forgery and uttering a false document, incitement of violence, criminal trespass, anti-terrorist act and computer misuse act. Regulative means are primarily bans on media coverage of certain events or opposition

politicians, suspensions of journalists, licensing and closure of media outlets by the state agency Uganda Communications Commission (UCC). A problem with several of these laws and the media regulations are that they are vague and broad, and therefore have little predictive value for what speech is permissible and may be used arbitrarily by the authorities (Human Rights Network of Journalists – Uganda 2017; Human Rights Watch 2010).

My informants alone had been victims of the following ways in which mainly the government but also other actors had tried to silence them:

- Physical assaults and destruction of equipment.
- Arbitrarily arrests in police stations, prisons or 'safe houses'.
- Kidnappings.
- Surveillance by phone tapping and plainclothes.
- Prosecutions and trumped-up charges through a range of different criminal laws.
- Harassments and threats by politicians, civil servants and other actors.
- Bribery or other ways of trying to buy your silence.
- Editors or media owners telling you to drop sensitive investigations because they are pressured by external actors.
- UCC are closing the media outlet, banning certain programmes, suspend journalists or are banning media from covering certain events.
- State agents operating inside media houses.

The president is also frequently lashing out on critical media. In interviews, he has called journalists "vultures" (Stein 2010) and media "fake news generators" (Museveni 2018). The same kind of language is also used by other governments officials. The head of the Uganda Police Force said in 2015 that the "police would crack down on journalists" (Human Rights Network of Journalists – Uganda 2015a, 31).

8. Four Campaigns With Successful Collective Actions

In this chapter I will first give an overview of how the media freedom movement is organised. Thereafter I will describe the campaigns and actions mentioned in the research design, and explain which factors that facilitate a positive outcome. In the next chapter I will do a more comprehensive analysis.

8.1 The media landscape

The largest media owner in Uganda is the state. The government-controlled Vision Group runs several national and regional newspapers (including *The New Vision*, *Bukedde* and *Kampala Sun*), TV stations and radio stations. The biggest independent newspaper, the *Daily Monitor*, was founded in 1992 by journalists that wanted to create a free and critical daily newspaper. It is now owned by Nation Media Group with headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. Nation Media Group also owns the weekly *East African*, *NTV Uganda*, *Spark TV* and a few radio stations. Other national independent media outlets include the tabloid *Red Pepper*, weekly *The Observer*, the magazine *The Independent*, *NBS TV* and the non-profit news agency *Uganda Radio Network*. The most vibrant sector is radio stations. There are about 200-300 radio stations around the country. Many are owned by politicians close to the ruling NRM, others are private businesses or community radios. The owners are organised in Uganda Media Owners Association (UMOA) and the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB). The latter often takes action to defend media when UCC order closures, bans or suspensions.

Figure 1: Ugandans reading front pages at a newsstand in Kampala, Uganda. Photo: Private.



8.2 The media freedom movement

The journalists are organised in different organisations. There are two national organisations: Uganda Journalists Association (UJA) and Uganda Journalists Union (UJU). There are also several regional organisations and professional associations. Those have often proved to be more effective in defending their members rights than UJA, that has been criticised for being compromised by the government, and UJU which only unites a small portion of the media employees (interview 2, 8, 20, 22, 23, 25, 37 and 39). There are also several civil society organisations, mainly founded by donor money, devoted to enhancing media quality or to protect journalists' rights.

Regarding media freedom HRNJ-Uganda has taken informal leadership. HRNJ-Uganda was founded in 2005 by journalists and activists that had suffered state repression and acknowledged the need for a civil society organisation for the defence of media freedom. HRNJ-Uganda now have a few hundred members across the country and thanks to donor money they have a secretariat that includes legal officers. Their basic idea is to function as a network. Journalists across the country are reporting violations to the national secretariat and the secretariat can activate support for important cases. They are also publicising a yearly Press Freedom Index that lists violations of media freedom and proposes solutions.

8.3 Campaigns

In the remainder of this chapter, I will describe the campaigns. For each I will first give a background, then I will describe a legal action with a positive outcome followed by others that have resulted in a negative and/or mixed outcome. Before closing the description of each campaign I will make a short analysis of the findings.

8.4 End impunity for crimes against journalists

8.4.1 Background

Threats and physical assaults on journalists are one of the most common violations of media freedom in Uganda (Human Rights Network of Journalists – Uganda 2019). The perpetrators vary but the far most common are the Uganda Police Force (UPF), the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) or other security organisations (Ibid, 42). A typical example is when journalists are covering a political rally that the police or military is cracking down on. Journalists are often the first target because they have cameras (interviews 22 and 27).

There are cases when civilian perpetrators have been held accountable and convicted in court. But only two times have a police officer been prosecuted, whereof one also got convicted, and military personnel have never been prosecuted (Human Rights Network of Journalists – Uganda 2019, 47–48). The fight against impunity is, therefore, a priority for the media freedom movement in Uganda. HRNJ-Uganda, UJA, UJU and Chapter Four are some of the organisations that do advocacy and offer legal support to end impunity.

The fight to end impunity is also a priority for transnational organisations as CPJ, RSF and IFEX, and the UN has declared 2 November the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists. The campaign to end impunity is thus part of a larger global campaign. Information and material are shared globally. Figure 2 is from HRNJ-Uganda’s Twitter account. It shows the presentation of the Press Freedom Index 2018 which has the title *Impunity – A Cry for Freedom*. It also shows that HRNJ-Uganda has borrowed a campaign icon from IFEX as their profile picture on Twitter.

Figure 2: HRNJ-Uganda is reporting from the launch of “Press Freedom Index 2018: Impunity – A Cry for Press Freedom”. Source: Twitter.



8.4.2 Positive outcome: The conviction of a high-ranking police officer

Andrew Lwanga was assaulted by a police officer on 12 January 2015 while he was covering a demonstration by unemployed youths. The police officer hit him with a baton and continued to kick him in the back after he had fallen to the ground. Andrew Lwanga was badly hurt and will probably be disabled for the rest of his life.

The response from the media freedom movement was immediate. Other journalists at the spot had filmed the incident and photos were posted and spread on social media by both individuals and media outlets. Figure 3 is one of many tweets on the day of the assault.

Figure 3: A tweet from a journalist condemning the assault on Andrew Lwanga. Source: Twitter.



The assault was condemned straight away by HRNJ-Uganda, UJU and CPJ, and in the coming days by several other national and transnational organisations. This excerpt from the alert from HRNJ-Uganda shows how they frame assaults and the importance of ending impunity. They are using the contradiction, that the police who are supposed to protect the citizens instead are assaulting them.

“This action by a senior police officer to target journalists and assaulting them rather than ensuring their safety and security as they do their work is deplorable. The police should investigate this matter and take appropriate action against the said errant police officer.” (HRNJ-Uganda 2015)

HRNJ-Uganda also put pressure by walking down to the police station and demanding action against the errant police officer (interview 5). The following day HRNJ-Uganda used the momentum created by traditional and social media to mobilise. They held a press conference, which is part of their repertoire of actions in high-profile cases and usually attracts the majority of the media outlets (interview 9). They also arranged a demonstration. It was not announced in advance, to avoid police repression, but most of the journalists that attended the press conference joined (interview 5). The intention was to walk to the UPF Headquarters. Despite police blocks, tear-gas to disperse the demonstration and arrests of the presumed leaders, the

journalists kept on walking until they reached the headquarters and was able to deliver a petition to the Inspector General of Police. The effect of this unusual collective action by the media freedom movement was that the faulting police officer was suspended from work.

The judicial process took just over two years until the final conviction. During that time the media freedom movement kept on showing solidarity, raising awareness and pressured the judiciary to keep the case going forward. The campaign "Save Andrew Lwanga" raised money for medical bills, transnational organisation (IFJ, CPJ and Rory Trust) also gave money for medical treatment, and in the end, even Museveni had to officially acknowledge the case and released money for treatment. That happened when a journalist brought up the issue during a press conference and Museveni seemingly oblivious replied: "Who is that? My staff please follow up this one. I would want to support that person" (Ndagire 2016).

HRNJ-Uganda was constantly checking on the judiciary during the judicial process to ensure a fair trial. They provided evidence, and when the investigative police officer was absent from court hearings, which would slow down the process, they went looking for him and forced him to the courtroom (interview 5). The media freedom movement at large also made sure that there was public pressure on the judiciary to make a proper job (Interview 5, 9, 21). The legal officer of HRNJ-Uganda on the importance of putting pressure.

"We played a big role in that case because often the state attorneys are compromised. But with the watching eyes from HRNJ-Uganda it becomes very hard for them to be compromised. We also helped them with research. So what HRNJ does in such cases are two: watch and brief the case.

//...//

In the beginning they were trying to play around with the evidence. But what we did was to give a lot of publicity to the case. Then it becomes very hard for the police officer to compromise the judiciary officer. That is a way of putting pressure. By giving maximum publicity to the case." (Interview 9)

In the words of an activist:

"The media attention that we gave [in the Andrew Lwanga-case]. The exposure that we gave. And the global response that we received from our partners. And I think most importantly the unity that journalists exhibit towards this case was phenomenal. If we can continue that trend I see a lot of change taking place." (Interview 31)

Staff at HRNJ-Uganda and Andrew Lwanga were threatened and given personal offers to let the case be (interview 5, 9 and 21). Andrew Lwanga says that it was the solidarity that made him endure:

"Each time I was in court someone from HRNJ was there. Either the lawyer or some other representative. Each time I was in court media was there to cover my story. I could not betray them. That gave me energy all the time to come back to court."
(Interview 21)

On 10 March 2017, the former Old Kampala Divisional Police Commander was convicted for the assault (Human Rights Network of Journalists – Uganda 2017, 71–72). Although the conviction was light, the police officer was fined one million shillings and had to pay five million shillings in compensation, it was considered as a success by the media freedom movement (interview 2, 5, 9, 12, 20, 21, 22, 27 and 31). It was the first time a police officer had been convicted for assaulting a journalist and it thus sent an important signal that no one is guaranteed impunity. Amnesty International, one of the transnational organisations that took up the case, also acknowledged the conviction as a success:

"Today's ruling is a rare victory for freedom of the press in Uganda. It sends a clear message that attacks on journalists must never be accepted or tolerated under any circumstances. It will hopefully assure people working in the media that the courts are watching; willing and ready to uphold their rights." (Amnesty International 2017)

8.4.3 Negative outcome: Most cases never reaches the courts

Only a few of the reported assaults are taken to court. Two obstacles are the precarious state of journalists and the corrupt judiciary.

Journalists in Uganda are precarious workers. Most are freelancers with no job security, little pay and no legal support from the media houses. They lack the time, resources and allies to pursue court cases. A common scenario is therefore that they drop charges in exchange of compensation (interview 2, 3, 5, 6, 9 and 12). The General Secretary of UJU has met many journalists that have done that:

"They beat them. They destroy their equipment. Then they give them money to keep quiet." (Interview 3)

The journalists that pursue a case against the authorities are also at risk of getting into trouble. This is a comment from a journalist that was assaulted by the police while doing a story on electoral fraud. He opened a legal case but later had to withdraw it:

" In the end of it all. No one is there to back you up.

//...//

I had to withdraw. Because I had a lot of pressure from my bosses. They were not giving me work. And I am a freelancer. The more time you are spending at home, you will be losing money. And I have a family to take care of." (Interview 6)

One of my informants summarizes the choices an assaulted journalist has:

"Many of them don't want to go to court. That's what we see. They find it too expensive and too unpredictable. They prefer to do out of court settlements.

//...//

They are interested compensation. They need their gadgets back. Otherwise they can't work. You are on your own. So you have to make a decision. Am I going to the legal route to set a precedent or am I going the practical and say I have to live, I have to pay school fees for my children, I have to feed my family. The decision is not just legal, it is socio-economic issues." (Interview 12)

Another obstacle is that the judiciary is slow and to some extent corrupt. A journalist that was shot by militaries in February 2011 while he was covering electoral violence is still trying to get justice. He has got medical and financial support from transnational civil society organisations, but despite efforts by UJU none was ever prosecuted for the assault and the journalist is still trying to at least get some compensation (Interview 3, 4; Kenya Correspondents Association 2011; Committee to Protect Journalists 2011).

8.4.4 Mixed outcome: When compensation is a break-through

Sometimes compensation has been regarded as a success. In August 2018 James Akena was beaten by militaries. The incident was captured on video that circulated worldwide on social media, and national and transnational civil society organisations condemned the assault. It was one of several similar incidents around the same time, and HRNJ-Uganda gave an 'ultimatum' to the military that they would organise street protests if the military didn't come to the negotiation table. The sustained public advocacy and calls for protests pressured the military to give an official apology (Reporters Without Borders 2018) and they made individual deals with

the assaulted journalists (Human Rights Network of Journalists – Uganda 2019, 44–45; interview 5 and 29). That was considered as a success because the military is a closed institution that is hard to reach and their personnel have never been prosecuted for crimes against journalists (interview 5 and 31).

The transnational support that was given to this action and other similar actions is believed to be important (interview 2, 3, 5, 9, 12 and more). Especially when the embassies of important international allies or major donor countries are criticizing violations of freedom of expression (interview 12 and 20) but also critique from organisations such as CPJ, RSF and Amnesty International. Figure 4 is a tweet from IFJ condemning the assault on James Akena.

Figure 4: IFJ condemns the attack on James Akena. Source: Twitter.



The chair of HRNJ-Uganda comments on the importance of transnational support:

"It makes a lot of difference because that is a message that is passed very clearly to the perpetrators. That the world is watching. That you can't do something wrong to journalists and simply get away it. That there is a need for us as a country, as a public, to respect media rights. That these journalists are not working for themselves. That these journalists are working for the good of the people of this country."
(Interview 31)

8.4.5 Analysis:

The fight to end impunity might seem to be a struggle against all odds. The assaulted journalists are often unwilling to pay the price for standing up against the authorities, and the judiciary

will cover up for the perpetrators or make the case drag on for years. Despite that, the media freedom movement has retained respect for the courts and acts in believe that they can get fair trials (Stremlau 2018, 135). My informants confirm Stremlau’s conclusion. This citation is from a lawyer:

“There are challenges. No doubt about it. The courts are corrupt. The courts are slow. In many cases the courts do not appreciate human rights arguments. They will prioritise state security over human rights. So there are challenges. But on the whole the challenges are notwithstanding. There are opportunities that we have used to enforce the rights of media practitioners.” (Interview 27)

Table 5 shows the described actions with the explaining factors from the research design.

Table 5: Actions to end Impunity.

Action	Mobilising structure	Trans-national support	Media outlet	Public credibility	Public advocacy	Protest	Outcome
<i>Andrew Lwanga</i>	Formal and Informal movement	Political Financial	National	High	Sustained	Yes	Positive
<i>Assaulted by police</i>	None	None	Local	High	None	No	Negative
<i>Shot by military</i>	Formal movement	Political Financial	Freelance	Low	Occasional	No	Negative
<i>James Akena</i>	Formal and Informal movement	Political	Inter-national	High	Sustained	No	Mixed

The action with a positive outcome have all the explaining factors. A journalist from a national TV-station was assaulted, the media freedom movement mobilized in unity, did sustained public advocacy for more than two years, showed the ability to turn to protests and got transnational support.

The legal action for the man who was shot by militaries has some similarities. There was initially public advocacy from local and transnational organisations. The reasons it failed may be that he lacked the same personal networks and credibility. He was a freelancer and he was also travelling in a car belonging to an opposition politician when he was shot. The reason may also be that the public advocacy faded away as time went by, in contrast to the Andrew Lwanga-case in which there was sustained public advocacy. A third possible reason is that the legal action was taken against the military which is a more powerful institution than the police. The other action with a negative outcome lacked sustained public advocacy and protests, and the

journalist worked for a local media outlet. That region also lacks a strong local media organisation with the ability to mobilize which have been crucial in other actions.

The action with a mixed outcome has also similarities with the Andrew Lwanga-case. The victims, James Akena and other journalists assaulted by the military, worked for major media outlets, the media freedom movement mobilised in unity, got transnational support and was on the verge of staging protests when the military apologized and made individual deals with the journalists. This time the media freedom movement “accepted” the apology and compensation, instead of pushing for an end to impunity. It was considered a success anyway, because the military was regarded as a more closed and powerful institution than the police.

8.5 Free arbitrary arrested and/or charged journalists

8.5.1 Background

Arbitrary arrests and charges are one of the most common ways that the media is harassed by the authorities (Human Rights Network of Journalists – Uganda 2019; Human Rights Watch 2010). Many journalists have been charged with crimes relating to speech since NRM seized power in 1986 (Stremlau 2018, 134). The laws that are used to silence journalists include fake news, sedition, promoting sectarianism, criminal defamation, criminal libel, forgery and uttering a false document, incitement of violence and computer misuse act.

In some incidents, the arrests and charges are publicly backed up from the State House. For example, when Andrew Mwenda was charged with sedition, criminal defamation and promoting sectarianism after he had hosted a talk show about the death of Sudan’s vice president in 2005, Museveni attacked the media and said “*They are vultures, vultures. For them the misery of the many is the joy of the vultures. Any newspaper that plays around with regional security, I will not tolerate it. I will simply close it. Finished. The end.*” (Stein 2010).

8.5.2 Positive outcome: Quick response

Quick action has proved to be important to avoid long judicial processes. Andrew Amvesi was summoned for charges of criminal defamation when he investigated a story about a police officer that allegedly had sexually harassed and manhandled a woman (interview 16 and 17). Just in time before he was handcuffed, he managed to call a friend who mobilised the regional organisation West Nile Press Association (WENPA). Eight people immediately walked together to the police station. A few hours later Amvesi was able to leave the police station without any charge.

WENPA was formed in 2012 in Arua in northwest Uganda. It has around 50 members and is collaborating with the national organisations HRNJ-Uganda and UJU. One of the members about how they mobilised:

” We have used our platform to defend us against the police. When they arrested and handcuffed him we mobilised and said this cannot happen, it is against our rights. We put pressure. We had to mobilise and rush to the police and enforce our rights.”
(Interview 17)

A similar local organisation exist in the city of Gulu, Northern Uganda Media Club (NUMEC). They have acted in similar ways (interview 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36). Two journalists were arrested and taken from Gulu to the police headquarters in Kampala, after publishing a story about an American missionary. They feared that they would be stuck in Kampala.

“I would have been in prison now. But NUMEC and HRNJ-Uganda stood firm. They demand the case to be gone. They even went to the top police officers in Kampala to understand the magnitude of this case, how they best could handle it. They helped me a lot. The legal issue, the financial support, writing about the issue, they did a lot of advocacy, talking to the top guys. Those guys even gave money to transport me back to Gulu.” (Interview 33).

There are also professional associations that have demonstrated the same kind of solidarity. Foreign Correspondents’ Association Uganda (FCAU) organises all journalists inside Uganda, whether of Ugandan nationality or from other countries, working for foreign media. When their chairman got arrested while doing an investigative story about a hospital in Kampala they acted quick. The chairman describes what happened:

”The association was really effective. My co-chair was really quick and put the story out on social media everywhere. People were phoning the police chief, they were politicians asking what is going on. That was a rapid reaction.

//...//

The key is that we have good contacts with other journalists, with media houses, with diplomats and embassies and with government officials. The goal is to act quickly and rapidly. If you wait until they are in the system, it is harder to get them out of the system.” (Interview 22)

Most of the members in both of WENPA, NUMEC and FCAU know each other and are keen to show solidarity in case of emergency.

A final example of quick and massive outrage is when a team of investigative reporters from NBS TV and BBC got arrested in February 2019 as they were about to publish a story on corrupt government officials that had been stealing and selling drugs from hospitals (Human Rights Network For Journalists - Uganda 2019a). A soon as they got arrested there was an immense reaction on social media, massive media coverage, and several national as well as transnational organisations condemned the arrests. Figure 5 is an example from an interview, that The Observer shared on Twitter, with the investigative journalist Solomon Serwanjja whose wife was arrested because the police couldn't find him.

Figure 5: A weekly newspaper sharing their interview with Solomon Serwanjja. Source: Twitter.



The public pressure forced the police to back down and admit they had made a mistake, although the judicial process is not yet ended. The investigative team was thus able to continue their investigation, and when they were about to publish the story there was a lot of interest due to the police crack-down on the team as this the tweet in Figure 6 from Solomon Serwanjja suggests.

Figure 6: Solomon Serwanjja and the team was able to continue their investigation. The number of retweets and likes suggests that the arrests made their report long-awaited by the public. Source: Twitter.



8.5.3 Negative outcome: Journalists are harassed for years

Most of these cases never proceed to a trial (Human Rights Watch 2010, 14), and when they do the government risks losing the case (Lugalambi and Tabaire 2010, 14). However, the arrests and charges have a chilling effect on media and are disrupting the work and life of journalists as this director of an aid organisation that supports freedom of expression says:

“They know it is bogus charges. The intention is not to have an outcome. The intention is to keep you busy.” (Interview 12)

The judicial process may go on for years. A journalist in Lira was charged with treason in 2011, detained for nearly one year and then had to report regularly to a police station for another six years until the charges finally were dropped (interview 9 and 15). The seven-year-long “investigation” had not produced any evidence at all. The journalist is still working at a radio station and is now an outspoken advocate for media freedom:

“There was no case against me. I knew that. There was no evidence. There was nothing. I told everyone I was innocent but it was somehow difficult for them to withdraw the case. Many cases are of the same kind. Justice is delayed. That is the challenge.” (Interview 15)

Other journalists have, however, given up their investigative reporting or stopped working entirely as journalists after they have been summoned, threatened and charged too many times. Like this former journalist:

“The government comes after you. They are threatening, assaulting and arresting journalists. They frame it another way. They frame it as you got arrested for that and that. But when you are interrogated they tell the real cause, that you are a journalist. My wife said that I should quit. That it isn’t worth it. Many journalists have quit. That’s what you do when you have a chance.” (Interview 1)

8.5.4 Analysis: Easier to mobilise support for high-profile journalists

The key to a positive outcome is the ability mobilize and make enough noise before, as one of the informants said (interview 22), the police have done the paperwork and started a judicial process that may take ages. The media freedom movement is mobilising in two different ways. Either through smaller, specialised civil society organisation, professional associations and activist networks built on a high level of trust and solidarity, or through a larger campaign in social and traditional media.

The team of investigative reporters is an example of how journalists with large personal networks and from major media outlets can mobilize support. However, the situation is very different for less influential and less resourceful journalists. It is particularly difficult for journalists outside Kampala or journalists that lack social and political networks to struggle with the authorities (Stremlau 2018, 136). One of the informants phrase it like this:

”Personally if I am in trouble I think they would support me. But I have also observed that it depends on the personal network. I am a pretty experienced journalist which means I have people who have known me longer, people that are my friends. They will come to my rescue because they are my friends. And my friends are high-profile, so others will follow my high-profile friends to fight for me. And once you have enough journalists in your corner, others will follow. That is more about me as an individual than me as a journalist. In other cases you have a journalist in jail, and other journalists are just looking on because they do not know her.” (Interview 23)

As Table 6 shows it is this ability to mobilize support and do sustained public advocacy that are the most important factors. In the quick response-actions there have been an intense but short period of mobilising and public advocacy. In the action for the journalist in Lira, there was public advocacy in the beginning, but as in most of these legal cases that drag on for years it is difficult to sustain public advocacy and pressure. The action for Andrew Lwanga, described in the previous section, is a unique case of long sustained public advocacy.

Table 6: Free arbitrarily arrested and/or charged journalists.

Action	Mobilising structure	Trans-national support	Media outlet	Public credibility	Public advocacy	Protest	Outcome
<i>Quick response</i>	Formal and informal movement	None	Different	Different	Sustained	No	Positive
<i>Team of reporters</i>	Formal and informal movement Non-movement	Political	National	High	Sustained	No	Mixed
<i>Journalist in Lira</i>	Formal movement	Political	Local	High	Occasional	No	Negative
<i>Quitted work</i>	None	None	Local	High	None	No	Negative

Several of my informants were self-critical about the fact that they have failed to unite in an organisation that can speak up in every case and with the backing of all journalists, and especially the fact that the media owners do not defend their staff (for example interview 2, 8, 23, 25, 29, 37 and 39). This is a comment on the fact that some attacks on journalists do get attention, and others not:

“We need sustained pressure. Not just a one-off. We need sustained working together, we need energies that are pulled together in the same direction. If we did that, we could reduce the cases and send a very strong signal and message to the rest of the world.” (Interview 31)

Some informants believe that it would be possible to achieve media freedom if only the media were better organised and acted in solidarity.

“What has not changed is the inadequacy among media practitioners and managers in understanding their rights. And also the inadequacy among media practitioners and managers to speak with one voice. To collectively say this is what we want, this is what we stand for and this will be the strategies.

//...//

The government will find a very disorganized media that is not up to the game, even though their rights are expected to be threatened every other day.” (Interview 37)

8.6 Legal action against closure, bans and suspensions

8.6.1 Background

Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) has extensive power to regulate media. They can decide on closure of newspapers, radio stations and broadcasters. They can ban media from covering certain events or from having certain individuals as for example hosts in talk shows. They can force media outlets to suspend journalists. Those closure, bans and suspensions are often arbitrarily (Human Rights Network of Journalists – Uganda 2019, 25).

On top of that, the police and Resident District Commissioner (RDC) sometimes outflanks UCC. Especially in the countryside. In April 2019 the police stormed and closed three different radio stations for hosting another opposition politician, Kizza Besigye (Human Rights Network For Journalists - Uganda 2019b). Later in the same month, UCC followed suit and ordered the suspension of 39 journalists working at 13 different media outlets because they had covered the arrest of opposition politician Bobi Wine (Reporters Without Borders 2019).

The parliament and the courts have also issued bans on media coverage for what have seemed to be political reasons (interview 8; Human Rights Network of Journalists – Uganda 2015b)

8.6.2 Positive outcome: Open court

In 2015 journalists were banned from a court hearing in which a police officer was accused of leaking information to the public. The media freedom movement responded by challenging the ban in the High Court. The Uganda Court Reporters Association (UCRA) pursued the legal case with support from HRNJ-Uganda, Centre for Legal Aid and the England-based Media Defence League Initiative (MLDI) (Human Rights Network For Journalists – Uganda 2014).

It was a public interest litigation-case in which the lawyers used the Uganda Constitution to defend the journalist's rights. Article 50 in the Constitution, on the "Enforcement of Rights and Freedoms by the Courts", offers the opportunity for any person whose fundamental rights has been infringed to apply to a court for redress. In this case, the media freedom movement further referred to article 41 and 43 in the Constitution. Article 41 guarantees "Right of access to information" and article 43 prescribes inter alia that: "Public interest under this article shall not permit any limitation of the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms prescribed by this Chapter beyond what is acceptable and demonstrably justifiable in a free and democratic society, or what is provided in this Constitution." (Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995). This legal case got a lot of media coverage and the media freedom movement raised public awareness about the right to information, and, in the end, the High Court ordered that the court hearings should be open to journalists (Human Rights Network For Journalists – Uganda 2014). A lawyer that was involved in the case believes that it was successful because of sustained public advocacy and media coverage.

"Public interest litigation for the defence of rights can be very productive. It is a good avenue for defending the rights of journalist and anybody else.

//...//

It requires a very intense public advocacy accompanying the case. You must raise the stakes. You must argue this case both in court but also in the court of public opinion. Our approach to public interest litigation has been non-traditional. We will make all the noise about this case to make sure that the court knows how important this matter is for us. So we raise the stakes. It's a lot of advocacy around it. That's the reason why it is successful.

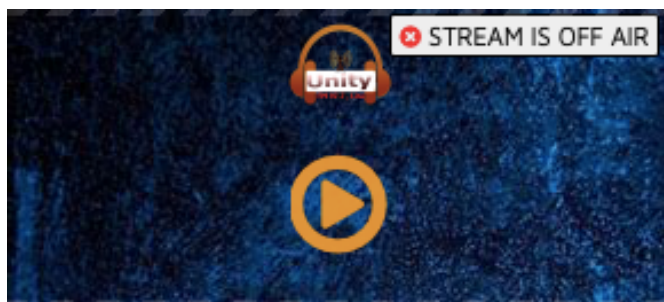
The second reason why it may be successful is... Everyone wants to be a good friend to the media. So if the media takes a case seriously enough people are most likely going to listen to them because they also want to use the same media for other reasons. Because of the important role that media plays people tend to be sympathetic and hear the case quickly.

That case was filed in court, in less than 8 months it was heard and the High Court ordered the lower court to allow journalists to cover that case. Because of public advocacy and concern of media... That's one example when public advocacy around a case can force the court to hear a case". (Interview 27)

8.6.3 Mixed outcome: Reopening of closed media outlets

Media outlets are frequently closed down by either UCC or the police. On 17 November 2018 *Unity FM* in Lira was raided and closed down by the police. Six members of the staff were arrested on allegations that the radio had incited violence. The radio remained closed for more than a month until it was allowed to reopen (Human Rights Network For Journalists – Uganda 2018). HRNJ-Uganda offered legal support, local journalists and politicians launched the campaign "Free Radio Unity" and transnational organisations condemned the closure for being arbitrarily and excessive. However, many inside the media didn't stand up. One argument was that *Unity FM* had breached professional standards because they had not challenged misinformation and hate speech from hosts in talk shows or listeners in call-in programmes (Rupiny 2018). This made the public advocacy slow and a critical mass was never reached. When *Unity FM* got permission to reopen it was with restrictions. Figure 7 shows the online stream of *Unity FM* when it was closed by the authorities.

Figure 7: The webpage of *Unity FM* while it was closed. Source: www.unityfmlira.com



Two other cases spotlight when (and when not) it is possible to mobilise support. *Daily Monitor* was raided by the police and closed down on 20 May 2013 after they had published a letter exposing an assassination plan. Two radio stations affiliated to *Daily Monitor* was also closed down, as well as the tabloid *Red Pepper* because they had retold the story. The closure evoked national and transnational condemnation, legal action and street demonstrations in which the police assaulted journalists and demonstrators (Committee to Protect Journalists 2013) and the *Daily Monitor* paper remained a 'crime scene' for 11 days before it was reopened (BBC News 2013). In comparison, when the tabloid *Red Pepper* was raided and closed down

by the police on 21 November 2017, and five director and three editors were arrested and charged with treason over a story about an alleged military coup in Rwanda, the personnel remained in jail for 29 days before they were granted bail, and the paper remained closed for more than two months (Heslop 2018). Although some say that the management of Nation Group Media made a deal with the government to re-open *Daily Monitor* in 2013 (interview 24) it seems obvious that the amount of protest did play a role to re-open the newspaper more quickly. Red Pepper had difficult to mount support beyond the obvious organisations inside the media freedom movement and the support was sometimes accompanied with an excuse, that for the sake of media freedom the paper needs to be supported despite its often sensational and articles (Quintal 2017). A demonstration in support of Red Pepper only attracted three journalists (Interview 20).

A lawyer that has been involved in actions in defence of media freedom describes what makes mobilisation possible and when it is harder to mobilise support:

"One is the credibility of the person involved. It is easier if the person that is being prosecuted is a person that is credible and that people believe in him or her. It is much easier.

Two, it is also much easier if the person works for a credible media house. I give an example of Red Pepper. When it was closed and the editors were in Luzira, nobody sympathized with them. Because it is a tabloid, They have destroyed peoples life. Nobody went to defend them. //...// Because they are not seen as a credible paper. But if it is a credible paper as the Daily Monitor which was closed for a week, there was so much noise, there was so much public support and from international organisations like Humans Rights Watch and Amnesty International and Article 18. //...// So the credibility of the media house is important. The reputable media house will get public support because of the good work that they do.

The third one is the kind of issue they are involved in. Because there are some issues that do not attract public sympathy and support. Especially cases on civil and political rights tend to attract a lot of public support and discussion." (Interview 27)

8.6.4 Mixed outcome: Temporary injunction of UCC order

An UCC order of 30 April 2019 to suspend 39 journalists working at 13 different media outlets was quickly condemned by the media freedom movement as well as transnational civil society organisations and at least 14 countries (Kigongo 2019). The order was issued just a few days

before World Press Freedom on 3 May, which consequently was used to demonstrate against UCC. Figure 8 from UJA's Twitter account shows the demonstration.

Figure 8: Demonstration on World Press Freedom Day 2019. Source Twitter.



A re-vitalised UJA took the lead and appealed against the UCC order to the High Court. UJA is the oldest national journalist organisation in Uganda but it has earlier been accused of being compromised by the government and for having weak leadership. On May 23 the High Court halted the UCC order with address to the human rights enshrined in the Constitution. The judge said: “I am mindful of UCC regulatory mandate and national security at large, but this does not mean that the rights of citizens have to be violated” (Kigongo 2019). The final verdict is yet to come. Therefore the outcome is regarded as mixed.

8.6.5 Analysis

The media freedom movement exploits legal opportunities to take action against bans, closure and suspensions. Despite any differences regarding the different ways that UCC is restricting media freedom, mobilising, sustained public advocacy and protests seems to facilitate a more positive outcome.

In the actions for Unity FM in Lira and Red Pepper, there was some public advocacy and even transnational support. But, as mentioned, the public advocacy was limited and mixed because the media outlets were also criticised for breaching professional journalist standards which gave them less support than the media outlets in the other actions mentioned here. It

implies that the quality of journalism is an important factor for successful action. Table 7 shows the explaining factors in these actions.

Table 7: Legal action against closure, bans and suspensions.

<i>Action</i>	Mobilising structure	Trans-national support	Media outlet	Public credibility	Public advocacy	Protest	Outcome
<i>Open Court</i>	Formal and informal movement	Political Legal	National and local	High	Sustained	No	Positive
<i>Unity FM Lira</i>	Formal movement	Political	Local	Low	Occasional	No	Negative
<i>Daily Monitor</i>	Formal and informal movement	Political	National	High	Sustained	Yes	Mixed
<i>Red Pepper</i>	Formal movement	Political	National	Low	Sustained	No	Negative
<i>Suspensions</i>	Formal and informal movement	Political	National and local	Different	Sustained	Yes	Mixed

8.7 Challenging repressive laws

8.7.1 Background

In addition to defending journalists charged with criminal offences one by one, the media freedom movement has also challenged the legality of these laws in the Constitutional and Supreme Court of Uganda. Laws that regulate speech, like criminal defamation and libel, exists in most countries. They are supposed to serve personal integrity and reputation, national security and similar interests. But when they are broad and vague, as in Uganda, they can be used by the authorities to suppress the media and dissenting voices (Human Rights Network of Journalists – Uganda 2017, 31; Human Rights Watch 2010). To make sure that they do not infringe on freedom of expression the civil society organisation Article 19 has set up three principles that any restriction on freedom of expression should meet: 1) it must be prescribed in a law that is narrowly and precisely defined, 2) it must protect a legitimate interest and 3) it must not just be legitimate but also necessary (Article 19 2017).

8.7.2 Positive outcome: Nullified the laws on false news and sedition

Charles Onyango-Obbo and Andrew Mwenda were charged with publication of false news in 1997. They had written an article in the *Sunday Monitor* in which they reported that the foreign newspaper *The Indian Ocean Newsletter* had claimed that the Uganda government had been giving gold by the president of Congo Laurent Kabila in exchange for military support (Supreme Court of Uganda 2004). Onyango-Obbo and Mwenda appealed to the Constitutional court and were acquitted on the ground that the charges against them were inconsistent with the rights enshrined in the constitution. Especially article 29(1)(a) which guarantees freedom of

expression and media freedom. However, as the Constitutional Court ruled that the law on false news in itself is consistent with the Constitution, Onyango-Obbo and Mwenda appealed to the Supreme Court to get the law nullified. In 2004, after seven years, the final verdict was in their favour (Supreme Court of Uganda 2004).

The court victory was considered to be a "watershed in the continuing struggle for freedom of the press in Uganda" (Tabaire 2007, 194). The next year, in 2005, Mwenda opened yet another case with the help of East African Media Institute (EAMI). This time Mwenda had been charged with sedition, criminal defamation and promoting sectarianism, and he challenged the constitutionality of sedition and promoting sectarianism. In 2010 the Constitutional Court declared the law on sedition null and void, with reference to article 29(1)(a) in the constitution but upheld the law on promoting sectarianism (Global Freedom of Expression 2010).

Inspired by the victories the media freedom movement has also challenged some provisions of the "Press and Journalist Act", some sections of the "Communications Act" and the Anti-Pornography Act. Those are pending in court. The coordinator of EAMI describes the rationale of using the Constitutional and Supreme Court to get rid of repressive laws:

"Let's use the court of laws. Slowly by slowly. They say the elephant is very big. But you can begin with one ear. Then you continue with the other ear. Then you go for the mouth. In ten years you have finished the elephant.

//...//

The law was nullified by the court. But you have to be patient. It took us five years. All these laws that empower the oppressor of the media. We slowly by slowly get rid of them." (Interview 25)

8.7.3 Unknown outcome: Pending case in the East African Court of Justice

A long-standing court battle concerns the law on criminal defamation. In 2009 the Constitution Court upheld criminal defamation in a case where four journalists from the *Daily Monitor* had been charged with defamation and responded by challenging the constitutionality of the law (Global Freedom of Expression 2009). However, in 2014 several civil society organisation opened a new case. Now in the East African Court of Justice that is part of the East African Community Treaty that was first signed in 1999 and consists of five countries: Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. The case concerns late Ronald Ssemuusi. He was convicted to one year in prison in 2011 for criminal defamation because he had reported about a district chairman that was involved in corruption (Global Freedom of Expression 2014). In 2015 he

passed away but the case to challenge the law on criminal defamation is still pursued by HRNJ-Uganda, Chapter Four and MLDI. Many more international organisations have joined as friends of court¹. The organisations contend that the way criminal defamation is defined in Uganda violates the principles of the East African Community Treaty (Human Rights Network of Journalists – Uganda 2015a, 22–23). The organisations that are "friends of courts" offer legal expertise. International legal support has also been crucial in other cases, for example when the law on false news was challenged. A lawyer describes the value of this support:

"We are a common law country. In a common law country the judiciary system relies on decisions by other courts and superior courts. The judges seem to be persuaded by decisions from commonwealth countries such as UK, Canada, South Africa. These international interventions help to bring expertise and international comparative. But also because public interest litigation in Uganda is not a very well-established practice. So benefiting from the expertise from people who have been doing this for many years does help the quality of our case and the quality of the judgement.

Secondly, it brings additional political support and public scrutiny, and sometimes attention from foreign governments in these cases." (Interview 27)

8.7.4 Analysis

The outcome of the cases in which criminal laws have been challenged in the Constitutional and Supreme Court are mixed. It is considered a big victory that two laws have been nullified. However, other laws have been upheld. What distinguishes the legal cases from each other is a question for further research that goes deeper into the judicial process.

Table 8: Legal action to nullify repressive laws.

Action	Mobilising structure	Trans-national support	Media outlet	Credibility	Public advocacy	Protest	Outcome
<i>False News, Sedition</i>	Formal and informal movement	Political Legal	National	High	Occasional	No	Positive
<i>Defamation</i>	Formal and informal movement	Political Legal	National	High	Occasional	No	n/a

¹ United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, African Union Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, Africa Freedom of Information Centre, Article 19 Eastern Africa, Centre for Human Rights of the University of Pretoria, Centre for Media Studies and Peace Building, Centre for Public Interest Law, Committee to Protect Journalists, Foundation for Human Rights Initiative, Freedom of Expression Institute, Ghanaian PEN Centre, Media Council of Tanzania, Media Rights Agenda, Media Institute of Southern Africa, Pan African Lawyers Union, PEN International, PEN Sierra Leon, PEN South Africa, PEN Uganda and World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers.

9. The Importance of Public Advocacy and of Mobilising Support

In this chapter I will summarize the results and discuss the research question, *when and why are actions to defend media freedom successful?*, by using social movement theory.

First, I have compiled the results in one comprehensive table (Table 9) in which the actions are ordered by their respective outcome. That makes it easier to see which factors that facilitate a positive outcome.

Table 9: All actions structured by outcomes.

<i>Action</i>	Mobilising structure	Trans-national support	Media outlet	Public credibility	Public advocacy	Protest	Outcome
<i>Andrew Lwanga</i>	Formal and informal movement	Political Financial	National	High	Sustained	Yes	Positive
<i>Quick response</i>	Formal and informal movement	None	Different	Different	Sustained	No	Positive
<i>Open court</i>	Formal and informal movement	Political Legal	Different	High	Sustained	No	Positive
<i>False news, Sedition</i>	Formal and informal movement	Political Legal	National	High	Occasional	No	Positive
<i>James Akena</i>	Formal and informal movement	Political	Inter-national	High	Sustained	No	Mixed
<i>Team of reporters</i>	Formal and informal movement Non-movement	Political	National	High	Sustained	No	Mixed
<i>Daily Monitor</i>	Formal and informal movement	Political	National	High	Sustained	Yes	Mixed
<i>Suspensions</i>	Formal and informal movement	Political	Different	Different	Sustained	Yes	Mixed
<i>Assaulted by police</i>	Formal movement	None	Freelance	High	None	No	Negative
<i>Shot by military</i>	Formal movement	Political Financial	Freelance	Low	Occasional	No	Negative
<i>Journalist in Lira</i>	Formal movement	Political	Local	High	Occasional	No	Negative
<i>Quitted work</i>	None	No	Local	High	None	No	Negative
<i>Unity FM Lira</i>	Formal movement	Political	Local	Low	Occasional	No	Negative
<i>Red Pepper</i>	Formal movement	Political	National	Low	Sustained	No	Negative
<i>Defamation</i>	Formal and informal movement	Political Legal	National	High	Occasional	No	n/a

In all actions with a positive or mixed outcome 1) the media freedom movement has mobilised beyond the most obvious civil society organisations and engaged larger networks of

individuals, 2) the journalist or media outlet has had credibility, and 3) there have been sustained public advocacy (except the long judicial process to nullify repressive laws in the Constitutional and Supreme Court). These factors can be said to facilitate a positive outcome. Since the list of actions is not exhaustive there may be other actions that also include these factors but resulted in a negative outcome. Without these factors in place it seems, however, difficult for the media freedom movement to be able to stand up for their rights when they are violated by the authorities.

In the following sections, I will further analyse the results through the three 'powers in movements': political/legal opportunities, mobilising structures and framing/making meaning.

9.1 Political and legal opportunity structure

The political opportunity structure for institutional change is perceived by the media freedom movement as closed (interview 1, 2, 11, 25, 37 and 39). Museveni is regarded as too powerful, in control of the entire political system and willing to use all possible means to stay in power. The divergent voice among my informants is, not surprisingly, a Member of the Parliament (interview 26). In the parliament there is "Parliamentary Forum on Media" but while the members of that forum are alleging that they are doing their best to advance media freedom, journalists that follow their work disagree (interview 8). The lack of perceived opportunities has a demoralising effect. Many journalists regard harassments, assaults and arbitrarily arrests as part of the work, and the media organisations are considered too small, divided and weak. There is only one example of a lobby campaign that resulted in a mixed outcome. It was when the implementation of new legalisation that would give the regime the mandate to licence who is a journalist and who is not, The Press and Journalist Act, was halted (interview 2,5).

When the political opportunity structure has been closed, the media freedom movement has seized legal opportunities. In their brief overview of how the media have tried to push back repression Lugalambi and Tabaire (2010, 18) writes that journalists took their concern to court when "appeal to reason failed" and Stremlau (2018, 136) concludes that the courts have been a central site in the struggle between the government and the media. Uganda is a common law country in which the judiciary is expected to act independently and Uganda has also a quite progressive human rights enforcements law (interview 27). The two stable elements of the legal opportunity structure, 'access to courts' and 'justiciable rights' (De Fazio 2012), are therefore in place. The media freedom movement has been able to challenge the legality of repressive laws in the Constitutional and Supreme Court and has been able to take legal action against repressive regulations by UCC. The strategy has been to make public advocacy to influence the

contingent element De Fazio's model of legal opportunity structure, 'judiciary receptivity'. The victories that have been secured, especially when the laws on False News and later also Sedition was nullified, have injected hope and the media freedom movement has filed several other cases in which the legality of certain laws and regulations are questioned. De Fazio's (2012) hypothesis that an open legal opportunity structure accompanied by courtroom victories are legitimizing the movement's claims and giving hope to activists is therefore to some extent confirmed by my results.

The media freedom movement has further challenged the law on criminal defamation through the legal opportunity that the East African Treaty offers and have appealed to the East African Court of Justice. The case is still pending there. It is the first case of media freedom in the East African Court of Justice (interview 27) and it is thus of international interest. Around 20 national and transnational civil society and intergovernmental organisation have also joined as friends of court. The resources allocated to this case shows the potential value the transnational media freedom considers a positive verdict in the international court would have. A positive verdict in this case would open up for more cases.

Regarding criminal cases the challenge is to ensure a fair trial within reasonable time. It has proved next to impossible to open up legal cases against police officers or soldiers that have assaulted journalists, and sometimes next to impossible to get a fair trials, or any trial at all, when the charges against journalists are fake or trumped-up. The strategy has in many cases been to mobilise to put pressure on the judiciary to perform as it is supposed to do. In a semi-authoritarian regime, where the judiciary is corrupt and/or aligned with the regime, 'access to court' could therefore be regarded as a contingent feature of the legal opportunity structure.

9.2 Mobilising structures and organisational resources

The media in Uganda is disorganised. There are several civil society organisations and professional associations, but no uniting organisation or umbrella body. The absence of an umbrella organisation makes networking necessary in every single action. As we have seen in the comparison with actions to end impunity and free arbitrarily charged journalists, external pressure matters for the outcome of litigation and that the chances of a positive outcome increases when mobilising occurs beyond the circle of the most obvious civil society organisations. HRNJ-Uganda are usually spearheading campaigns. To their advantage is their basic idea to function as a network. They have contacts and local coordinators all over the country and are constantly interacting with other groups. But mobilisation still seems somewhat

ad hoc and several informants said that mobilisation is dependent on the involved person's personal network, the size and credibility of the media outlet.

9.2.1 Transnational networks

The media freedom movement in Uganda is part of a transnational network of civil society organisations that fights for media freedom. CPJ, RSF, MDLI, AI, Article19, HRW are some of the organisations that sometimes take on claims from Uganda and gives them a global audience. Most of the actions discussed in this thesis have got political and sometimes also financial or legal support from transnational organisations. This support is regarded as important to put pressure on the judiciary and the regime, especially support from the embassies of countries that are donors to Uganda is regarded as important (interview 12, 20). Uganda is keen on keeping a democratic facade and is a big receiver of donor money, and it is thus sensitive to international criticism. The results shows, however, that this support have little decisive value on the outcome. Actions with positive, mixed and negative outcome have all got transnational support. That does not mean that the support is unimportant. It may well be that it is a necessary, although not decisive, factor.

The legal support from transnational actors are also regarded as important. Uganda is a common law country and the media freedom movement has been able to use experience and judicial decisions from other common law countries in the legal actions to question the legality of repressive laws (interview 27).

9.2.2 Repertoires of contention

The media freedom movement is using a globally well-known repertoire of contention. It includes statements, social media campaigns, press conferences, public debates, demonstrations, talk shows, opinions articles and stakeholder meetings. An advantage is that the media freedom movement has free access to and makes use of the media. Incidents of violations of media freedom are widely covered in the press and some of Uganda's more prominent social media personalities are also journalists. This advantage makes it possible to inform the public and also to force the opponent (whether it is the police, military or any other) to engage in a public discussion about the matter in media. There is however some criticism inside the media that the media coverage has been too shallow. The critique is that the perpetrators are not sufficiently questioned in the media and that the media have failed to educate the public about the importance of media freedom and how it affects everyone in the society (interview 27, 40).

The actions described above are well-known and 'contained' actions. In a few cases, the media freedom movement has used 'disruptive' actions in an attempt to break the routine of

everyday politics. Tarrow (2011) argues that disruptive action gives power to social movements and the examples discussed in this thesis imply that disruptive action may enhance the power of the media freedom movement. The unannounced demonstration after the first press conference on the Andrew Lwanga-case is one example. The demonstration didn't stop despite police attempts to block and disperse the demonstrators, and when the demonstrators arrived at the police station the errant police officer that was the target of their anger had been taken off duty. Other disruptive actions are frequent calls for a 'media blackout'. The purpose is to bring pressure and to show the value of media by not reporting anything concerning the police or other questioned institutions. Most time it fails because it is difficult to unite all journalists and media outlets in a blackout, or because the state-owned media do not join (Interview 3, 5, 8, 20, 29). However, during the so called 'walk-to-work-protest' when at least a dozen journalists were assaulted by the police (Baranga 2011), a media blackout on the police is said to have endured for a week and ended first when the police called for a meeting to restore media-police relations (Interview 5).

9.2.3 The importance of organisational resources

Epp (1998) argues that legal mobilisation requires a support structure because litigation is costly and time-consuming. Such a support structure consists of advocacy organisations, willing and able lawyers and sources of financing (Epp 1998, 18–19). HRNJ-U do have a legal officer, there are a few well-known 'media-friendly lawyers' in Kampala, the big media houses have their own lawyers and Chapter Four offer legal aid to some journalists. But overall, the civil society organisations in Uganda that form the base of the media freedom movement are relatively small and lack resource. They have to constantly turn down request form journalists for legal aid (interview 27). UJU is said to have around 1 000 members, HRNJ-Uganda a few hundred (interview 3, 5, 31). Few of them have membership fees, and if they have, the fees are low. Instead, most of them are dependent on donor money to have an office, employees and organise activities. As we have seen in actions to challenge the legality of repressive laws and the action to grant access for journalists to cover court cases, transnational legal aid organisations and universities have also provided essential support. Donor money is thus essentially for legal mobilisation in Uganda. But as donor money often comes for short periods or particular projects funding is a major problem.

Donor money is also an internally contested issue. Some argue that donor money is necessary as it enables the organisations to create a secretariat and thus more sustainable organisations (interview 5, 12, 27, 31, 37 and 39). Without a secretariat, the defence of

journalists rights would be even more ad hoc and the costly focus on legal action would have to change. Others have little trust in organisations that are perceived to be more accountable to donors in the North than the media and journalists they are supposed to serve (interview 1, 23).

9.3 Framing: Information and accountable politics

In their advocacy, the media freedom movement is drawing on a 'master frame' on human rights violations. In cases of assaults or arbitrary arrests, the frame is that an innocent journalist doing his/her job has been wrongfully attacked by government officials. Pictures and videos from the street that shows the assaults are used, as well as pictures from hospitals that show wounds. That was done in the Andrew Lwanga-case as well as in the James Akena-case. Providing convincing facts and pictures is part of what Keck and Sikkink terms 'information politics' in transnational advocacy campaigns (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 18).

The media freedom movement further exploits the gap between the actions of the government and the principles it has committed itself to. The first statement after Andrew Lwanga was assaulted pinpointed the irony that the police that are supposed to protect the citizens, in fact are the perpetrators. The exposure of this gap is what Keck and Sikkink terms 'accountability politics' in transnational advocacy campaigns (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 24). Sometimes government officials defend incidents of assaults and violations of freedom of expression. However, it is more common that government officials are trying to dodge the issue, are playing down the seriousness of the issues or excusing the acts by stating that it was a mistake. The media freedom movement mostly have the upper hand in the public debate. That is probably not surprising given the fact that the media freedom movement are owning most of the platforms that the information war is played out on. But the question is whether it matters. The difficult part is to translate that advantage into sustained pressure on the judiciary and the authorities. Effective legal mobilisation requires a support structure (Epp 1998) with advocacy organisations, lawyers and sources of financing.

10. Conclusion

The deteriorating state of media freedom in Uganda is part of a global decline in freedom of the press and journalist's safety. Journalists all over the world are increasingly being killed, assaulted and arrested. Those attacks severely undermine the media's ability to fulfil its democratic role, that is to function as a watchdog, as a forum for political debate and as an agenda-setter in the society. A heated discussion about democracy, media freedom and journalist's safety has therefore arisen in many countries. This public debate has gone on for years in Uganda. Here it is the semi-authoritarian regime that is the main threat to media freedom. The police, military and media regulatory agencies are cracking down on media. My aim with this thesis was to explain *when and why actions to defend media freedom have been successful*. The research has shown that the media freedom movement in Uganda has been able to use legal action to defend themselves against state repression and in a few cases even advancing the institutional framework for media freedom. The research further identified factors that seem to facilitate a positive or mixed outcome. Those are 1) the ability to mobilise active support beyond the most obvious civil society organisations and thus engages larger networks of individuals, 2) that the journalist or media outlet has public credibility, and 3) that there is sustained public advocacy for the legal case.

Although there are a lot of pessimism inside the media about the possibilities for a positive change, the legal victories in Constitutional and Supreme Court and when the high-ranking police officer was convicted, have strengthened the belief in legal action and thus confirms De Fazio's hypothesis that court victories are legitimizing the movement's claims and giving hope to activists. The media freedom movement is, however, yet to get the benefits from these court room victories. There is still next to total impunity for police and military crimes against journalists and the state agency UCC are taking more and more action to cripple independent reporting. The media freedom movement seems to lack the resources and support structure (Epp 1998) that are necessary for a more sustained legal mobilisation. A reliable support structure needs to consist of advocacy organisations, willing and able lawyers and sources of funding. All three elements have to be in place to ensure consequent legal action in response to violations and more sustained public advocacy. Legal mobilization in a semi-authoritarian context probably also requires more resources than in countries with a functioning rule of law. Activists are always at risk for state repression and nothing can be taken for granted. Even 'access to courts' (De Fazio 2012) is a contingent feature. The prospects of prosecuting a police officer

or soldier, or having a fair trial, and within reasonable time, when you are accused with trumped-up charges is dependent on the pressure the media freedom movement can put on the judiciary.

The media, and in the extension also the media freedom movement, also face structural challenges such as media ownership, economic pressure, lack of professionalism and poor working conditions. According to my informants, there is a decline in qualitative and investigative journalism in Uganda, and many believed that those structural problems are an even bigger threat than state repression to the existence of independent media. In the end, it is two sides of the same coin. State repression is causing economic losses and is draining the media sector of talent, and if the media itself fails to deliver qualitative journalism there will be no need for state repression because the regime has nothing to fear.

Above all, this research raises questions for future research on how to best defend media freedom. I will only highlight three of the most urgent. First, the results suggests that legal mobilization is a plausible way to defend media freedom if the court case is accompanied by mobilisation and public advocacy. But as only around 15 actions are analysed there is a need for further research to test when that hypotheses is valid (and when it is not valid) and thus refine the explaining factors. Secondly, there is need for more research on how the support structure for legal mobilisation functions and may be strengthened. Thirdly, the findings indicates that public support is important even for the outcome in legal cases, and several of the informants mentioned the importance of getting public support for media freedom. Therefore it would be interesting to understand the relationship between the public support for media freedom and ability for a movement to defend media freedom.

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Appendix A: Interviews

All interviews have been conducted face-to-face in Uganda.

1. Former journalist. 2018-11-13.
2. Employee at ACME. 2018-11-13.
3. General Secretary of UJU. 2018-11-16.
4. Freelance journalist. 2018-11-16.
5. National Coordinator at HRNJ-Uganda. 2018-11-21.
6. TV-journalist and local coordinator at HRNJ-Uganda. 2018-11-22.
7. Media lawyer. 2018-11-23.
8. Journalist and Chairman of UPJA. 2018-11-27.
9. Lawyer at HRNJ-Uganda. 2018-11-28.
10. Media owner. 2018-11-30.
11. Media owner. 2018-11-30.
12. Chief of Party of Freedom House in Uganda. 2018-12-01.
13. Media owner. 2018-12-05.
14. Radio journalist. 2018-12-05.
15. Radio journalist and Local Coordinator of HRNJ-Uganda. 2018-12-06.
16. Journalist and Treasurer of WNPA. 2018-12-07.
17. Radio journalist. 2018-12-07.
18. Journalist. 2018-12-07.
19. Radio journalist. 2018-12-07.
20. Journalist. 2018-12-10.
21. TV-journalist. 2018-12-10.
22. TV-journalist and Chairman of FCAU. 2018-12-11.
23. Journalist. 2018-12-11.
24. Journalist. 2018-12-12.
25. Researcher and Director of IMC and Coordinator of EAMI. 2018-12-12.
26. MP of NRM and Chairperson of PFM. 2018-12-13.
27. Lawyer and Executive Director at Chapter Four. 2018-12-13.
28. Executive Director at CIPESA. 2019-01-11.
29. Radio journalist and President of UJA. 2019-01-11.
30. Researcher. 2019-01-12.
31. Journalist, Chairman of HRNJ and Communications officer at TEKAMA. 2019-01-14.

- 32.** Journalist and Administrator at NUMEC. 2019–01-15.
- 33.** Radio journalist. 2019–01-15.
- 34.** Radio journalist. 2019–01-15.
- 35.** Journalist. 2019–01-16.
- 36.** Journalist. 2019–01-16.
- 37.** Executive Director for Uganda Women’s Media Association and Mama FM. 2019–01-18.
- 38.** Radio journalist. 2019–01-18.
- 39.** Executive Director at ACME. 2019–01-21.
- 40.** Director of education and research at UHRC. 2019–01-22.

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Personal career and experiences

About the organisation / media outlet

History

Main focus

Resources / funding

Defending/promoting media freedom

Opportunities and threats:

How do you defend or promote media freedom?

In which areas do you see an opportunity for progress?

How do you mobilise support?

Why is it difficult to mobilise support?

What obstacles and threats do you encounter when fighting for media freedom?

Repertoire of action:

What actions have your organisation taken to promote and defend media freedom?

When, why and what kind of action?

If going public, how do you frame your message?

Success:

Describe a successful action or campaign.

What was "success" in this case?

What made it successful?

Response and counteraction:

What response do you get from your action? From government, other actors and public.

Collaboration and solidarity:

Who do you collaborate with?

What are the obstacles for collaboration?

What are the positive outcomes?

Transnational:

Do you have any contacts with transnational organisations promoting media freedom? In what way do they contribute?

Future:

What is needed?

How could you be working?

Media freedom in Uganda

What are the major threats to media freedom in Uganda?

Has the situation changed in recent years, and in what way?

Snowball

Give me advice on people who have contributed to media freedom.