

IBT strategic plan January 2018 – December 2020

IBT's mission, vision and values

IBT's vision

A world in which the media is a force which enables all people to be active global citizens so that their actions can make a difference.

Our vision for 2020 is

People in the UK will have access to more and better coverage of the world and will be able to find it easily through their favourite media.

IBT's values

- **Practicality:** IBT believes in practical solutions therefore we will ensure that all our activities have practical outcomes from which our members can clearly benefit.
- **Diversity:** IBT values diversity of background and opinion, therefore we will seek to make our staff, trustees, consultations, research, briefings, training and other events as inclusive as possible.
- **Fairness:** IBT believes in fairness therefore we will ensure that participants in our events and research are treated fairly and their views are accurately represented.
- **Accountability:** IBT believes in accountability therefore we will publish research that holds the media to account and we will publicise our objectives and results so that our membership can hold us to account.

IBT's mission

Our purpose

- We work with the media, government, regulators and civil society to increase understanding of people throughout the world and the issues which affect them.

Our beliefs

- All media should recognize that they can both inform and entertain.
- All media should provide access to imaginative, inspiring, innovative high quality content.
- All media should help audiences to learn about and engage with the wider world.

Our identity

- We are an independent trust registered in the United Kingdom.
- We are accountable both to those who support us and to those we seek to benefit.
- We aim to provide practical solutions in all that we do.
- We are a civil society membership organisation

Our culture

- We are dedicated to achieving our vision.
- We are driven by our values, our passion, our energy and our commitment.

- Our way of working is action oriented, professional and practical.
- We strive to be innovative, fair and collaborative.

Review of the previous strategy, 2012-17

The document outlined four headline strategies:

- Research based advocacy for more and better international content
- Commissioner briefings
- Develop IBT's global contribution
- Develop IBT to be fit to fulfil its plans

Advocacy - the advocacy has been largely successful. We lobbied regulators and governments to preserve and enhance commitments to public service broadcasting and our research has provided a persuasive evidence base.

Research – the quantitative research has become less important as we have focused increasingly either on topical issues or on practical reports that enable our members to enhance their media messaging – for example our report on *The Aid Industry – what journalists really think*, which we published in 2014, and our report on online campaigning *Social Media – making your voice heard* which we published in 2015. Quantitative research has been commissioned when it was directly relevant to our advocacy in order to provide us with an evidence base. In 2015, we published the latest report in our longitudinal study *Reflecting a Changing World?* And in 2016 we published our quantitative news study *Small Screen, Big World*. One of our most successful reports was *Video First – making an impact*, published in 2017, which included practical guidance on how to maximise the impact of online video.

Better international content –we have been successful in maintaining international content within news programmes and in some key non-news strands such as *This World* and *Unreported World*. There have also been some impressive one-off documentaries but overall there has been a decline in non-news factual programming and some current affairs strands such as *Panorama* and *Dispatches* have become increasingly domestic in their focus. A separate issue for us has been the dominance in news of the breaking story or big story of the day and the way in which the range of international stories has narrowed.

Commissioner briefings – these have become a core activity and a key resource for our membership. In the period 2015-17, we have held briefings with the Today programme, Unreported World, BBC News online, Sky News, Vice News, BuzzFeed UK, The Daily Telegraph, The Independent, CNN, Marie Claire, GQ, The world tonight, ITV News, Al Jazeera, On Assignment, Channel 4 News online, Huffington Post, New Statesman online, Radio 5 Live, Radio 1 Newsbeat, Mail Online and BBC News.

IBT's global contribution – this has been less successful. We have developed few new partnerships. We did expand our research activities to look at global media. *Kony 2012 – success or failure?* was a timely report which looked at this remarkable online phenomenon with some key lessons for NGOs. As part of this research, we went to Uganda to document response there to the Kony video. *HIV and stigma – the media challenge* was published in 2014 in partnership with IPPF. Although the value of the report was recognised by those working in the HIV and AIDS sector, it did not have the wider impact that we had hoped for and we were unable to secure new funding to continue this area of work.

IBT fit for purpose – we have reformed our governance successfully and have become closer to our membership. We have successfully grown our membership and help to secure a more sustainable funding base.

Overall conclusions - IBT's principal activities – advocacy, research and membership services have remained unchanged. However, there have been changes in emphasis. Advocacy has focused principally on the public service broadcasters and their role. Research has been of two distinct types – as an evidence base for lobbying or as a practical guide to help members with their media activities. Membership services have expanded from commissioner briefings to include training, an annual dinner and other networking opportunities.

There has been one fundamental change. At the start of this period, our focus was principally on television. At the end, it had expanded to include all media - radio, newspapers, magazines – but above all, online and social media. Although most people in the UK still get their information about the wider world from television, digital media is and will continue to play an increasingly important role. As the media landscape changes, IBT will have a valuable role to play in helping our membership to navigate these changes.

These changes in emphasis have come about because of the external factors outlined below.

External factors

The international development paradigm - how is it changing?

Many development researchers and practitioners seem to agree that we cannot rely on old, aid-related paradigms and simplistic pathways to progressive global social and economic change. The argument goes that development must become both more universal and more transformative. The last few decades of international development reveal a series of paradoxes and contradictions. Growth has accelerated in many countries but has been accompanied by growing inequalities of many kinds. Dominant development paths are proving deeply unsustainable, with climate change, biodiversity loss, land and water degradation and pollution threatening our ability to thrive on a pressurised planet.

How are public attitudes, the concerns of IBT members and the evidence aligned?

A range of research – mostly public opinion monitoring surveys and some focus group work suggests that during the same period this more complex notion of global development has emerged UK public support for UK aid and development assistance has declined.

These are deeply challenging debates given INGO dependence on public support and government funding, a largely hostile or deeply sceptical UK media and a development studies academic community somewhat disconnected from this UK policy and public attitudes space.

What has been UK film makers' response to a changing world?

UK based production companies and film makers continue to produce some truly innovative programmes relating to issues in the developing world. The strength of British innovation is well indicated by this year's nominations for the One World Media Awards. These include feature documentaries such as *Exodus - Our Journey to Europe* (KEO Films) that explored the experience of refugees through their own lived experiences filmed by themselves.

Whilst some news programming arguably may reinforce stereotypes of the improvised, conflict ridden South, corrupt and beyond help, many factual programmes explode these myths (intentionally or unintentionally).

Many issues relating to the changing nature of development have been the subject of documentaries in the UK including the emergence of the mega city, the rise of China as a key economic and

international development player and large scale migration. Despite the limitations posed by commissioning editors in mainstream broadcasters there appears to be a capacity to produce ground-breaking content that challenges the dominant but increasingly outdated development paradigm.

Arguably, film makers are in a strong position to challenge the traditional international charity narrative on global development. Contested ideas, uncomfortable truths (such as corruption and failed international interventions), community based viewpoints and lived experiences can all be explored if the overall narrative is compelling for engaged but under-informed viewers. Given the access to large audiences provided by the BBC and commercial broadcasters, perhaps it is in this space that some reinvention or reframing of the global development story can take place with some conceptual impacts on the public discourse around global development.

Changing media landscape

The huge growth of social media has changed the way in which we receive information. It has reduced the importance of television and the role of the public service broadcasters. However, it is worth noting that television remains the main source of news and information about the wider world for most people in the UK. Television also has the ability to reach mainstream audiences whereas much social media activity is conducted within a bubble with information shared by like-minded people. The growth of news websites like Vice News and BuzzFeed have diversified the sources of news available to people in the UK. Much news is also shared via Facebook. Television has also changed with the growth of new suppliers like Netflix and Amazon. These new organisations have global reach but their main focus is on entertainment.

Media reporting of aid

Certain media outlets have become increasingly critical of UK aid, notably The Daily Mail, Mail on Sunday, Times and Express. Many NGOs in conjunction with Bond and DFID have defended aid and responded to media attacks. Public support for aid has fallen.

What can IBT do next to add value to these debates and achieve its purpose?

Currently IBT is mainly connected into its network of journalists, producers and broadcasters and its membership which is predominantly Communications staff from UK INGOs. IBT provides practical support to members seeking help with leveraging awareness of their charities in the media. It has been very successful in delivering targeted advocacy around UK broadcasting's commitment to high quality international programming and its research has improved understanding of UK audiences' experience of engaging with international factual programming.

However, IBT has also convened a number of debates over the years around the changing nature of development. Moving forwards it could consider increasing its engagement with the need for a new global development narrative and waning public support for aid and development. This could actively support film makers, NGOs and development studies researchers to become more effective actors in a movement to reframe development in a changing world.

The trends in social media and the new entrants into television have implications for IBT and its future strategy. Public service broadcasting should remain a priority for IBT's advocacy work. In terms of research, IBT will need increasingly to advise and help its membership understand the changing media landscape. With its membership services, IBT will need to broker access to a wide range of media organisations.

The negative reporting of aid remains a major concern for IBT's membership and IBT will have an important role in helping its members to respond effectively to these media attacks.

IBT's strategy 2018-20

IBT will continue to work with the media to ensure that UK audiences remain engaged with global issues. Brokering access to senior members of the media is seen by our members as IBT's unique offer. Other activities including advocacy and research will also contribute to achieving our wider goals. The media landscape has changed markedly in recent years and there are fewer opportunities for high quality coverage of global issues on mainstream media. It is therefore more important than ever that IBT makes the case to enhance these opportunities, with particular reference to the public service broadcasters. At the same time, there is much greater coverage of global issues online. This presents both opportunities and challenges. For NGOs, the online space is highly competitive; many people live in an online bubble, only consuming content which accords with their tastes and interests. This makes it difficult to reach beyond core supporters and appeal to wider audiences. Given the challenges of the digital landscape, IBT will have an important role to play in enabling our members to be more effective in this space and ensuring that there is international content online that appeals to a range of audiences.

IBT will continue to work in three main areas: advocacy, research and capacity building.

Advocacy

The aim of our advocacy is to ensure that media organisations, particularly the public service broadcasters, maintain a commitment to high quality coverage of global issues, across all genres, that appeal to a range of audiences.

Our advocacy will prioritise the public service broadcasters, ensuring that they continue to deliver high quality international coverage that appeals to a range of audiences. We will work with other media organisations to encourage diversity in media coverage of global issues. We will work with Ofcom, the media regulator, to ensure that it enforces the BBC operating licence and the Channel 4 remit. We will seek to influence any new regulations as they arise in order to maintain present commitments to international coverage.

Research

The aim of our research is to provide practical guidance to our members to enable them to maximise the effectiveness of their media activities. If our members are more effective, the quality of media coverage of global issues will improve which will help us to achieve our advocacy goals.

We will also report on topical issues, such as fake news and the aid debate, where we can contribute greater understanding and help our members to respond to these issues.

We will also produce research to provide an evidence base for our advocacy.

Capacity building

The aim of our capacity building activities is to enhance the capability of our members so that they are more effective in the media space. IBT will therefore organise a range of events such as briefings with editors from online, press, radio and television; training to include digital and media skills; networking opportunities and an annual dinner for CEOs from our member organisations.

IBT is a membership based organisation and our members determine what we do and the sort of organisation we are. Our principal offer to our members is access to senior members of the media. In addition, the focus of our training is on enabling our members to develop their digital and media

skills; we organise networking events to enable members to meet with each other and create opportunities for peer learning and sharing; we publish practical research that enables members to be more effective in their media activities and to understand the full implications of topical issues and debates.

Organisational goals

In order to be effective, IBT needs to have an engaged membership and a sustainable funding base; and in order to respond to the needs of members, IBT's leadership, staffing and governance should be fit for purpose, and the organisation should be digitally enabled

Operating plan 2018-20

Advocacy

Objective 1: Work with Ofcom, Government officials, policy maker and others, to promote commitments to public service remits

We will maintain regular contact with Ofcom so that

- They focus on the international content of public service broadcasters.
- They promote greater transparency and accountability.

Specific targets are that:

- The BBC's new operating licence is effectively enforced by Ofcom.
- Channel 4's funding base is secured so that it continues to be a not for profit commercial public service broadcaster with a strong commitment to international content.
- ITV and Channel 5 continue as public service broadcasters with a statutory commitment to show international news and current affairs in peak time on a regular basis.

Objective 2: Promote high quality international content by working with the public service broadcasters

We will work with the key UK public service broadcasters to ensure that they fulfil their remits and that their international coverage has the maximum impact.

We will work with the BBC so that it achieves the following targets:

- Broadcasts a significant amount of international coverage across a range of genres, with programmes that are high quality and innovative.
- Brings international content on television to all audiences, not just those watching minority channels.
- Uses news programmes to present richer and more diverse portraits of people around the world.
- Uses drama and comedy to engage wider audiences with global stories and issues.
- Maintains its commitment to a peak time international current affairs strand such as *This World*.

- Covers international current affairs adequately in a peak time current affairs strand such as *Panorama*.

We will work with Channel 4 so that it achieves the following targets:

- Continues to cover the wider world in an original and distinctive way through *Channel 4 News* and a range of other programmes including *Dispatches* and *Unreported World*.
- Represents a wider range of global voices across its output.

Research

Objective 3: Publish research that empowers our members

We will produce practical guides, on a regular basis, to help our members to be more effective in the changing media landscape. We will ensure that these reports are easily accessible and that their findings are widely disseminated. We will use social media to engage our members with our reports, enabling them to contribute to them at an early stage and to build a community of interest. Social media will be an integral part of the dissemination strategy for each report.

We will undertake topical research on key issues of relevance to our membership.

We will publish research that provides an evidence base for our advocacy.

Specific targets:

- IBT will produce one or two major reports every year.
- Each report will have its own media strategy to ensure it receives maximum exposure to clearly identified target audiences.
- IBT will need to demonstrate that its members value the research and find it of practical benefit.

Objective 4: IBT should make an important contribution to the debate on aid and development

IBT has a distinct contribution which it can and should make to the aid debate. We have a track record of producing research that investigates the role of the media in engaging the public with aid and development. We will share our knowledge and understanding with those who are involved in researching or campaigning on this topic. Where appropriate, we will publish our own research, provided that it does not duplicate research efforts that are already being undertaken and will be of practical benefits to our members and to the aid sector.

Specific targets:

- In 2018, we will publish new research on this topic.
- In 2019, we will review the impact of our research and decide whether or not to publish further research in 2020.

Capacity building

Objective 5: Build and confirm IBT's reputation for brokering access to senior media figures

Specific targets:

- IBT will hold regular briefings with senior media figures so that members have access to up to date information.

- IBT will hold an annual dinner with a senior media industry figure.
- IBT will hold networking events on a regular basis so that its members can benefit from peer learning and sharing, and meet informally with media representatives.

Objective 6: IBT should provide media skills training for its members

Specific targets:

- IBT will hold regular training events so that media officers, digital heads, CEOs and others can refresh their media and digital skills.

Organisational goals

Objective 7: IBT should build a sustainable membership base

Specific targets:

- By the end of 2018, IBT will have developed an enhanced membership offer to ensure that it meets its members' changing needs and represents value for money.
- By the end of 2018, IBT will have increased its membership from 39 to 45 members.
- By the end of 2019, IBT will have increased its membership from 45 to 50 members.
- By the end of 2020, IBT will have maintained a stable membership of 50.

Objective 8: IBT should build a sustainable funding base

Specific targets:

- By the end of 2018, IBT will have identified new potential funders: trusts, foundations, corporates and others, who may have an interest in collaborating with us. The potential for members to be a source of additional income should also be investigated in this time frame.
- By the end of 2019, IBT will have built a successful relationship with at least one new funder.
- By the end of 2020, IBT will have maintained an ongoing relationship with at least one new funder.

Objective 9: Establish IBT's reputation as an organisation that is digitally enabled

Specific targets:

- By the end of 2018, IBT will have hired a digital consultant and a digital communications manager.
- By the end of 2018, IBT will have an agreed digital strategy which will set out how the organisation can use digital communications to strengthen its membership offer and how the success of its digital strategy can be measured.
- By the end of 2018, IBT will have appointed a digital Trustee.
- In 2019 and 2020, IBT will ensure that all its research reports are effectively promoted online with a clear, targeted digital marketing plan with measureable outcomes.

Objective 10: Ensure IBT's leadership, staffing and governance are fit for purpose

Specific targets:

- IBT's staffing needs will be assessed and reviewed by the Trustees annually.
- The Trustees will undertake succession planning and consider the leadership skills required for IBT's future success.