

NUJ FCT, Chevron Train Over 70 Journalists On AI

Chevron Nigeria Limited, CNL, and the Nigerian Union of Journalists, Federal Capital Territory, NUJ FCT Council have trained over 70 journalists to build members capacity on the use of Artificial Intelligence to boost efficiency, quality reportage and curb misinformation. The General Manager, Policy, Government and Public Affairs, Chevron Nigeria Limited, Olusoga Oduselu who was represented by Mr Victor Anyaegbudike stressed the role of the media as agenda-setters and opinion moulders. He made this known at a one-day media training workshop with the theme 'Harnessing Artificial Intelligence in Journalism', sponsored by NNPC-Chevron Nigeria Limited Joint Venture, in Abuja. He said Chevron Nigeria believes in human capital development being the engine room of any organization and and society's success. Oduselu also expressed confidence in the partnership with NUJ Abuja Council as he highlighted on previous editions of the training of journalists which held in 2023 and 2024 respectively across three zones in the country including Lagos, Delta and the Federal Capital Territory, FCT.

According to him is geared towards building the capacity of media practitioners to enhance their skills and abilities. He said: "As members of the fourth estate of the realm,

your role as agenda-setters and opinion moulders cannot be over-emphasized. "I want to thank you for your impactful role in reporting on the oil and gas industry and providing effective perspectives on complex industry operations" He said.

"We continue to partner with the media for the development of society. In this light, we also recognize the need for capacity building of the media practitioners to enhance their ability to perform their duties. That is why CNL pioneered the Advanced Writing and Reporting Skills, AWARES, programme in collaboration with the Pan Atlantic University, Lagos. Over 120 journalists have benefitted from the programme since its inception in 2014. "Through programmes such as AWARES and this current journalism training, we help to improve professional capacity and build lasting partnerships with our media stakeholders.

"We also recognize that the success of the larger society invariably translates to success in our business; and we believe it is in our long-term interest to add value to society as we create value for our stakeholders. "We are always open to dialogue and further discussions if you require clarifications on a story that directly affects our company or the oil and gas industry." He also urged



journalists to make their “mark in the narrative of Nigeria and her multidimensional development, while maintaining the ethical principles that guide your noble profession.” According to him (Oduselu), Chevron supports Nigerian Content development by providing employment to Nigerians, and contract opportunities in all our projects up to an estimated annual average over \$1 billion. Meanwhile, in her speech, the Chairman, Nigerian Union of Journalists, NUJ, Comrade Grace Ike, urged journalists to embrace AI to enhance performance and productivity.

Ike harped on the importance of AI in every field of endeavour, and pointed out that AI has been adopted by colleagues in other climes to harness their potential and work seamlessly. Meanwhile, she commended the confidence and commitment of Chevron Nigeria to organize the media capacity building workshop to enhance media reportage in nation building, leveraging on AI to enhance efficiency including setting agenda and having an informed public discourse. She also acknowledged Chevron Nigeria for sponsoring what she described as a “vital training” to empower journalists to harness AI's potential while safeguarding the truth and trust that underpin our work. “We stand at a transformative moment in the history of journalism. Artificial Intelligence, AI, is no longer a distant concept but a powerful tool reshaping how we gather, verify, and deliver news. “AI enhances our ability to analyze vast data, detect misinformation, and engage audiences more effectively. It offers unprecedented opportunities to improve the speed, accuracy, and reach of our reporting. “Moreover, AI plays a crucial role in fact-checking and verification. With the rise of misinformation, especially, during elections and public health crises, AI-powered platforms cross-reference claims against trusted databases and detect manipulated media like deep fakes. “This strengthens the credibility of journalism by reducing errors and misinformation. AI also personalizes content for audiences by tailoring news feeds and recommendations based on reader preferences, thereby, increasing engagement and sustaining readership.

“Tools that transcribe interviews and speeches efficiently save journalists time, allowing them to focus on analysis and storytelling. “Let us embrace innovation boldly but responsibly, ensuring that technology enhances our mission to inform, enlighten, and serve society with courage and integrity”, she said. She also maintained that the capacity building is an imperative for all journalists, saying it calls for journalists to “embrace innovation, uphold integrity, and lead the transformation of journalism in Nigeria and beyond. With the right mindset and tools, we can harness AI to tell stories that matter, faster and more accurately, while preserving the trust of our audiences.” One of the resource persons, the Deputy Director, Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development, Busola Ajibola, while speaking on the topic, 'Leveraging On Artificial intelligence to enhance

Journalism in Nigeria' said journalists who fail to leverage on AI would have his or her job threatened, therefore, said they should be proactive to embrace trending innovations and technologies to improve on their skills and knowledge.

Another resource person, the Director, International Institute of Journalism, IIJ, Dr Emman Usman Shehu, speaking on the topic, 'Freedom of Information and Media Accountability', said it is important for journalists to use the Freedom of Information Act as it gives them the opportunity and right to hold public officials accountable. Shehu who was represented by a seasoned journalist and reputable editor, Dr Simon Musa Reef, said, “The Act applies not only to public institutions but also to private organizations providing public services, performing public functions, or utilizing public funds. “Recent Developments; In April 2025, the Nigerian Supreme Court ruled that the FOIA applies to all tiers of government, including state institutions. “This landmark judgment addressed the reluctance of some state governments to comply with the Act, thereby enhancing its applicability nationwide. However, he pointed out that there are challenges in its implementation including; Limited awareness – Many citizens, journalists, and public officials are unaware of the FOIA's provisions and benefits, hindering its effective utilization. Laws and Practices- The Official Secrets Act is often used to deny access to public information, and journalists who request information under the FOIA frequently face harassment, threats, and intimidation; Bureaucratic Delays and Poor Record-Keeping Public institutions often cite exemptions to deny requests without valid reasons, and bureaucratic delays further hinder the Act's effectiveness. Meanwhile, a resource person, Dr Lemmy Ughegbe, speaking on the topic, 'Mental Health Of Journalists in the Era of Social Media', pointed out that Social Media poses Opportunity and Threat at the same time, and journalists need to understand these facts as they do their jobs. Ughegbe highlighted opportunities of the social media including; Faster news dissemination, Direct audience engagement, Easier sourcing and verification, and new forms of storytelling. Threats; Harassment and trolling, Misinformation wars, State surveillance, Doxxing and identity theft, and coordinated attacks.

“An online attack isn't just technical. It is personal. It can cause real psychological harm”, he added. He also spoke extensively on the implications of mental health challenges which could negatively impact the society, saying if journalists fear harassment the public loses, when good reporters quit because of mental breakdown, society loses, and when media houses do not invest in their journalists' safety and well-being, trust in journalism erodes. “Therefore, protecting ourselves and our mental health is not selfish. It is an act of professional responsibility”, he stated.