

Ecuador
Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, treats

<p>STRENGTHS</p>	<p>One of the strengths is the good will evident in the government to improve the status of freedom of speech and press. Likewise, having a reformed – yet imperfect – statutory framework compared to that in force years ago is also a strength. The mobilization capacity of the communications industry is also noteworthy, which, through joint initiatives, launches projects to watch and permanently monitor the state of freedom of expression and the press in the country. That same spirit has allowed for the creation and growth of new media in the digital domain thereby encouraging plurality of voices and sources.</p>
<p>WEAKNESSES</p>	<p>The greatest weakness in Ecuador has been the non-realization of sufficient good will to improve the status of freedom of expression and press, translated into amendments to the Organic Law of Communication. In practice, the October 2019 protests and their aftermath demonstrated two key facts: The persistence of violent and authoritarian practices entrenched in the government that undermine freedom of the press and expression. Furthermore, its institutions do not function adequately in order to punish violations of fundamental freedoms, allowing a cloak of impunity to hide unacceptable actions against the press and freedom of expression.</p>
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p>	<p>The last few years have been ones of great economic hardship for Ecuador, even more so with the advent of COVID-19. Several media outlets have closed and hundreds of journalists have lost their jobs. This same undesirable circumstance is also perceived as an opportunity worth considering for overcoming this same crisis. Actually, in recent months, new communication ventures have been created, such as Public Journalism, by former workers of government media outlets. New projects like this one can build the momentum necessary to provide something missing in Ecuadorian journalism: New voices, sources, approaches, and audiences.</p>
<p>THREATS</p>	<p>In recent times, Ecuador has experienced extreme political polarization between supporters of former President Rafael Correa and his opponents. In the past, this division translated into stigmatizing and violent speeches against the press that spawned animosity among a good part of the</p>

population against several media outlets. Although this has subsided in the last two years, elections will be held 2021, and it has already been possible to note that this disparaging discourse towards the press is beginning to emerge again. On the other hand, Ecuador faces the same global threat of fake news. This same climate of tension has given rise to the creation of media with good and deontological principles not aligned with those of good professional practices. This, added to the lack of knowledge from the State of how to regulate a space such as social media, poses a potentially complicated scenario.

