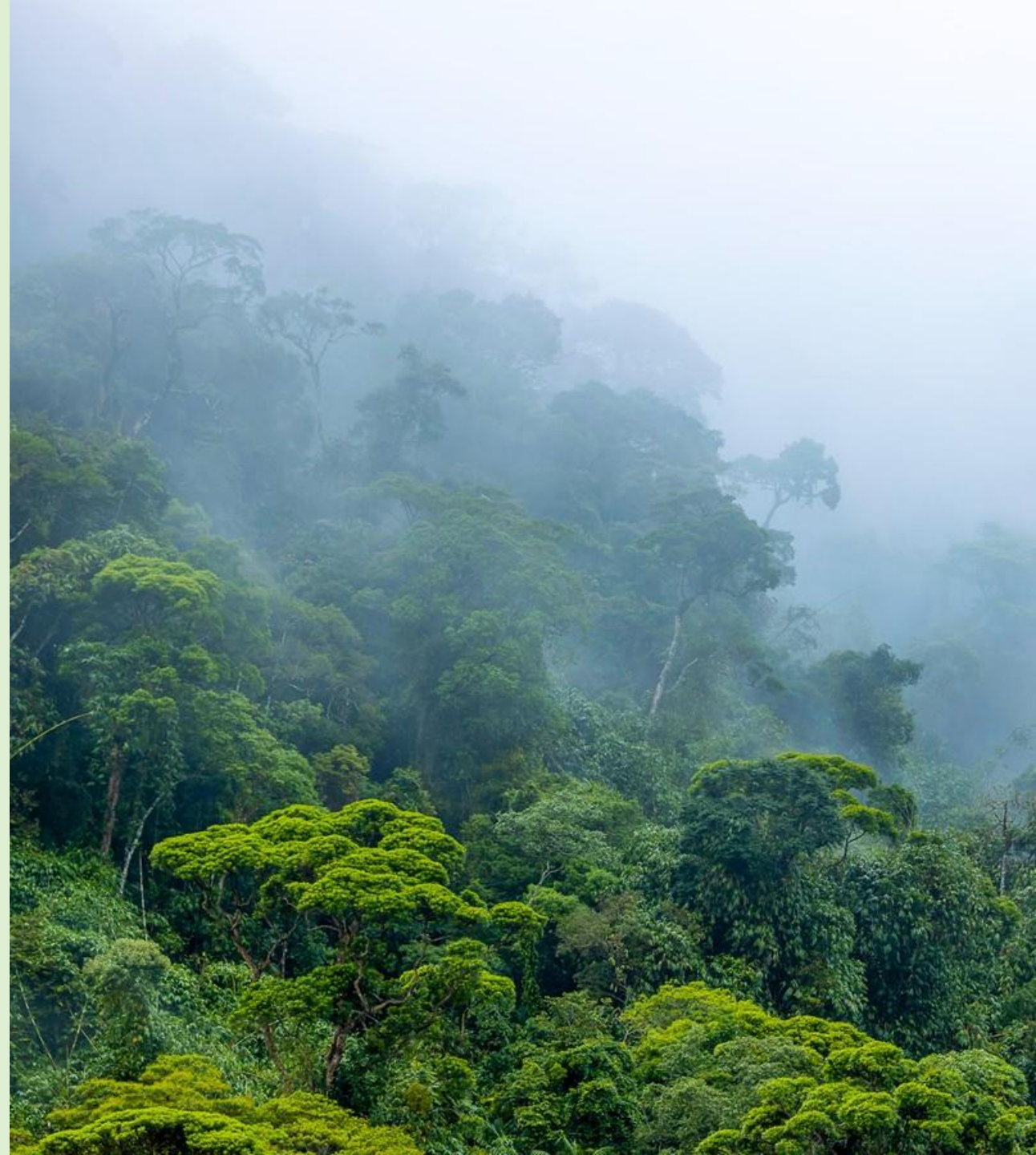


VIENNA, 4TH SEPTEMBER 2024

Panel: The role of civil society –

Freedom of expression and a free media

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- Lise Stensrud
Policy Director Anti-Corruption
Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation



Status in Norway – and some lessons learned

A trust based society

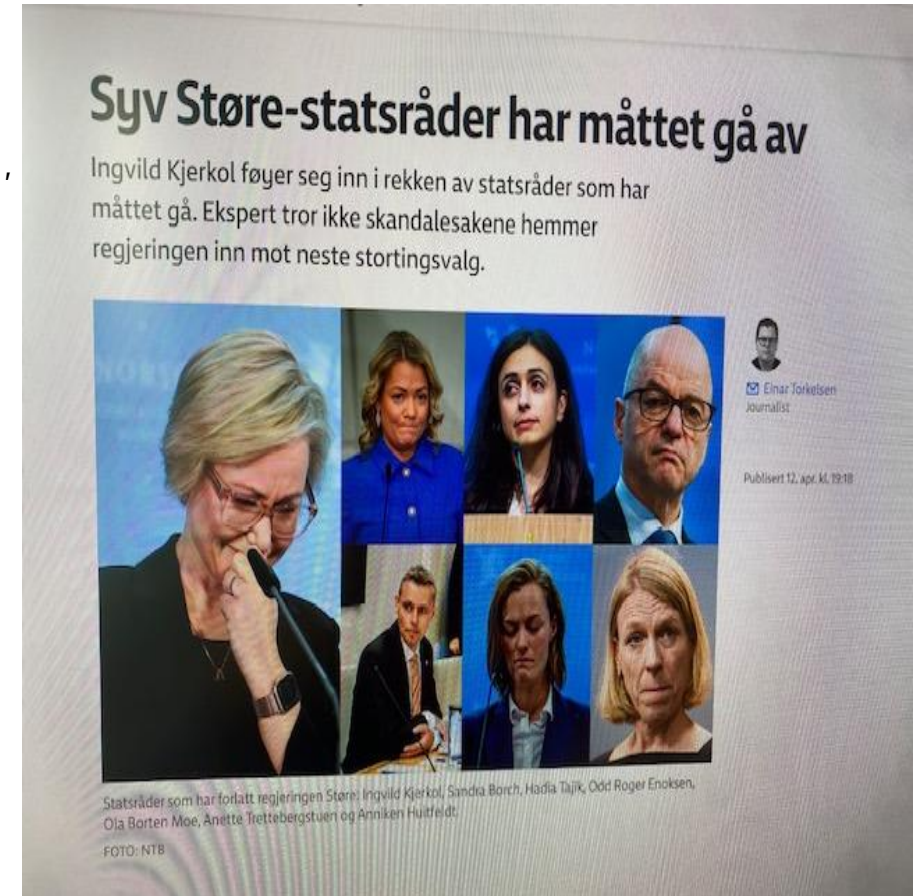
- Norwegians have high degree of trust in Government, public institutions, the Storting (Parliament), the courts, tax authorities and the police, and - the media
- Media operate in favourable political environment, legal framework secures freedom of expression/right to public information, freedom of the press, public funding to newspapers
- Strong overseeing within the Storting is essential, public hearings,

Scandals happens

- Result of freedom of expression, freedom of the press, access to information,

Policy changes:

- Stronger rules (partiality, conflict of interests)
- Increased focus on ethics and training for leaders/staff
- Monitoring the implementation of rules/regulations



Norway's Strategy for promoting Freedom of Expression and independent media

Why?

- Freedom and free access to information are fundamental rights, and a key priority in Norway's foreign and development policy.
- Freedom of Expression is Increasingly coming under pressure, new restrictions, including defamation laws limits freedom of expression, journalists prevented from doing their job, human rights defenders denied access to information,
- The digital transformation demands new approaches, social media outreach
- Disinformation, fake news, defamation laws, self-regulation - increasing



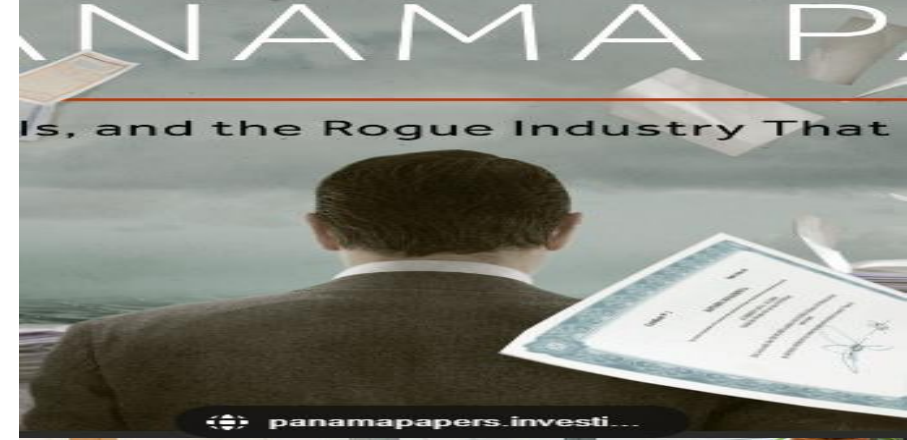
How we work internationally

- Supporting a diversified, independent media organisations, civil society groups and human rights defenders (financial aid/capacity building, networking/connecting, protection)
- Ensure access to information and protecting the freedom of expression for journalists, writers, artists and other vulnerable groups
- Emphasize the importance of support to UN agencies (including UNODC), and active participation in the UN, the Council of Europe, The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and other regional organisations to promote freedom of expression and press freedom.
- Support initiatives to protect those who are in the frontline.
- Use the information and knowledge gained to strengthen the provision of technical assistance and support to governments and civil society for transparency, integrity and accountability measures



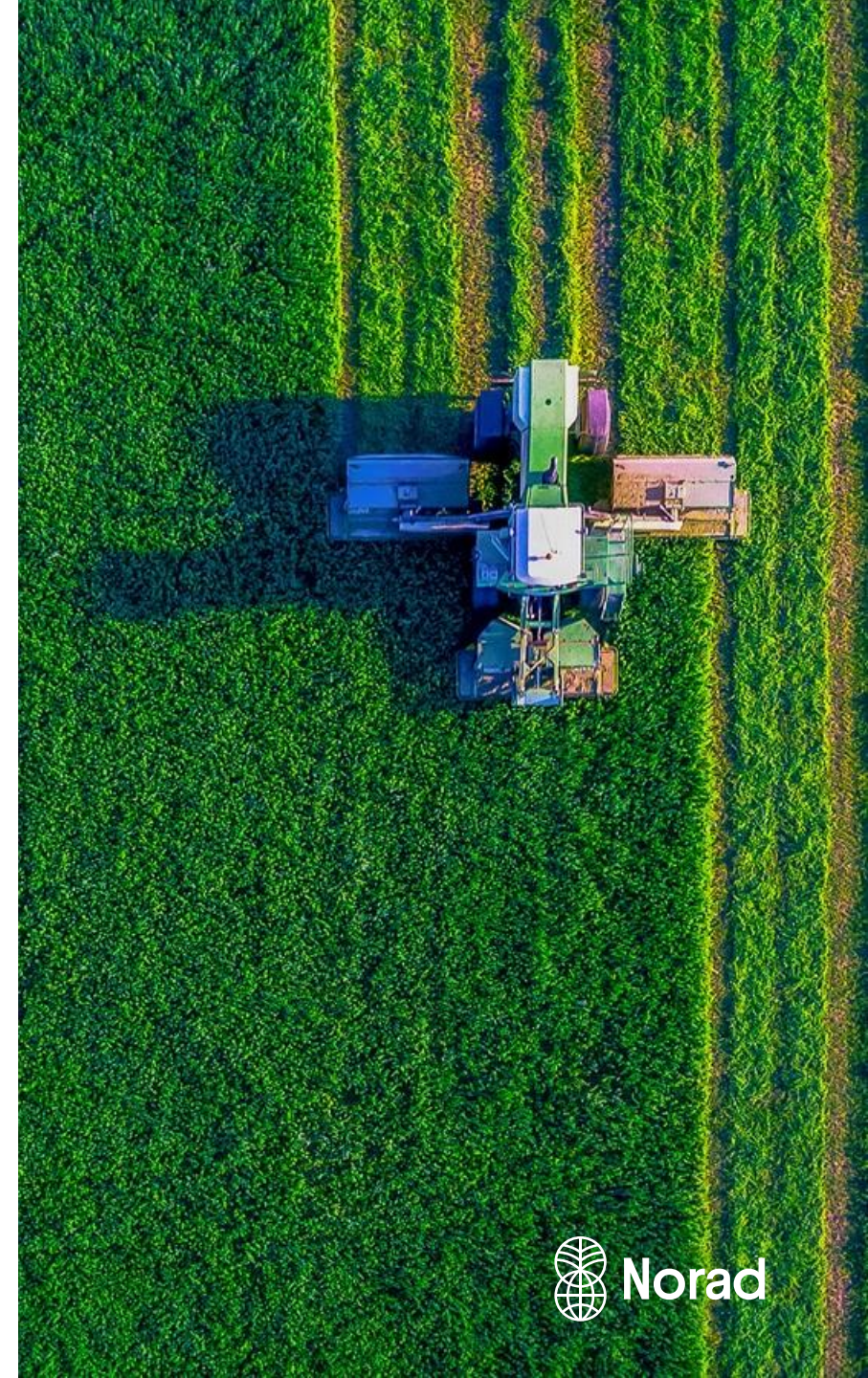
Results from supporting investigative journalists

- Increased Investigative Capacity: Support partners such as International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), Pulitzer and Reuters Foundation has significantly bolstered global investigative journalism and global collaboration
- Investigations has led to prosecutions in many countries.
- Information and knowledge learned from the leaks have provided information needed for political- , financial and systemic changes



What is needed – in moving forward -

- Protection against SLAPP (policies and laws)
- Source protection laws for investigative journalists who are uncovering wrong doings in the public service
- Networks of journalists- make it possible for journalists at risk if their names were associated to pass on a story and make sure that stories which would otherwise be suppressed are published.
- The dashboards developed and data collected and systemized has proved of high value to law enforcement authorities
- Communication strategy (law enforcement)
- Need for something in between the journalist's story (the news) and the law enforcement engagement





«A FREE PRESS CAN BE GOOD OR BAD, BUT MOST CERTAINLY, WITHOUT FREEDOM A PRESS WILL NEVER BE ANYTHING BUT BAD» (ALBERT CAMUS)

