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Americas - Haïti

Valuable voice silenced

Cité Soleil in mourning for murdered community radio station manager

6 March 2012

Reporters Without Borders is deeply saddened by the news that radio journalist **Jean Liphète Nelson** was gunned down yesterday in Cité Soleil, the poorest neighbourhood of the capital, Port-au-Prince.

The manager of [Radio Boukman](#), a community and educational radio station based in Cité Soleil, Nelson was widely respected for his humanitarian commitment to serving the inhabitants of this politically sensitive district. Aged 38, he was the father of five children.

"We had several meetings with Nelson and the staff of *Radio Boukman*, the station he helped to found in June 2006," Reporters Without Borders said. "He was totally committed to his community and had told us of his desire to change the perception of Cité Soleil, which is too often seen as just the bastion of criminal gangs.

"Through *Radio Boukman* and the various social programmes he oversaw, he wanted to improve the situation and status of a segment of the population that tends to be ostracized. *Radio Boukman* also played a crucial role as a relay of information during the [January 2010 earthquake](#). We hope the station's young staff will be able to consolidate and advance this heritage. We also hope that justice will be quickly rendered to Nelson and his family and that he will receive the tribute he deserves from the Haitian government."

Nelson and four other people were driving in a *Radio Boukman* vehicle in Bois Neuf, a part of Cité Soleil, when they came under fire from four heavily armed individuals. One of the passengers, Alexandre Marcus, was killed on spot. Nelson's young brother, Jean Robert Nelson, was hit in the leg. Nelson, who was also hit, was taken to a Médecins Sans Frontières hospital where he died of his injuries soon afterwards. The news of his death caused tension in Cité Soleil.

There is as yet no evidence that Nelson's murder was definitely linked to his work. But this possibility must not be ruled out on the grounds that there has of late been an increase in this kind of violence in the capital. Nelson was a well known and recognisable figure in Cité Soleil, where and his radio station may have threatened the interests of certain criminal gangs.

Photo: Le Nouvelliste
