

# MEDIASCAPE BHUTAN

The Biannual Newsletter of Bhutan Media Foundation

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## BMF finalises three media literacy training modules



Thirty public officials and media professionals attended the consultative workshop

Bhutan Media Foundation conducted a consultative workshop on media literacy training modules on 21 August 2019. Thirty public officials and media professionals attended the workshop. The workshop is part of BMF's project titled 'Inclusive Media Literacy for Democratic Empowerment' funded by European Union/Helvetas Bhutan. The

Memorandum of Agreement with Helvetas was signed on 29 March 2019. This year-long project is aimed at starting a professionally planned media literacy programme by developing three training modules that encompass all sections of the population across different places of residence, education levels, and professions. The Basic Module

was implemented in Sakteng, Trashigang, and Kazhi in Wangdiphrodrang. The Intermediate Module was implemented at the College of Language and Culture Studies in Trongsa and the Advanced Module was implemented in Thimphu.

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Basic  
Module

137

Rural community members trained

Intermediate  
Module

856

High school and college students trained

Advanced  
Module

50

Working professionals including MPs trained

## BMF implements the media literacy training modules



Eighty-one participants from Kazhi gewog in Wangdiphodrang attended the training



Mr Needrup Zangpo, ED of BMF, during the training in Sakteng gewog in Tashigang

>>from on page 1 Bhutan Media Foundation conducted the Basic Media Literacy training for the people of Kazhi in Wangdiphodrang and Sakteng in Tashigang. A total of 81 participants in Kazhi and 56 participants in Sakteng attended the training. The basic media literacy training module is designed for the illiterate and semi-literate population. The access to smartphones and the popularity of social media platforms such as WeChat have made it possible for the illiterate and semi-literate segment of the population to be part of the rapidly growing social media landscape in Bhutan. Hence, the training was conducted to make them understand different types of media, their roles and functions, critically analyse and evaluate media and news content, differentiate between different types of mainstream and social media, and how to use social media responsibly.



856 students attended the Intermediate Media Literacy Training at CLCS in Trongsa



50 participants attend the Advanced Media Literacy Training in Thimphu

The Intermediate Media Literacy Training Module was implemented at the College of Language and Culture Studies in Trongsa. A total of 856 students from CLCS and Taktse Central School attended the training. The intermediate module is designed for the high school and college students. The Bhutanese youth today use mobile phones and social media platforms to stay connected and to access information and entertainment, which has both positive and negative impacts. Through this training, the students were made aware of various types of media they use, their level of use, their positive and negative impacts, differentiate fake news from real news and Royal Government of Bhutan's social media policy.

The Advanced Media Literacy Training Module was implemented in Thimphu for the working professionals including the MPs. The participants included Members of Parliament, representatives from government agencies, corporations, CSOs, media houses, teachers and lecturers. The workshop covered topics on Digital citizenship, media's role in democracy, media theories and realities, the rise of social media and many more.



## BMF and UNESCO sign contract to strengthen Investigative Journalism in Bhutan

An MoU was signed between Mr Eric Falt, the Regional Director of UNESCO, and Mr Needrup Zangpo, Executive Director of Bhutan Media Foundation, on 12 March 2019 on 'Strengthening Journalism to Ensure Public Access to information'.

This year-long project to promote SDG 16.10 will support an investigative reporting training for journalists, production of investigative journalism contents and development of a resource centre for investigative reporting.

Under this project, a three-day training on Investigative Reporting was conducted for 35 journalists.

The aim of the training was to develop a fleet of journalist with the skills and knowledge to undertake Investigative Journalism and promote best practices of journalism and to raise the standards of critical reporting to a high professional level. The journalists who attended the training were provided with an opportunity to participate in Investigative Reporting Grant.

Ten reporters were granted an Investigative Reporting Grant between Nu. 40,000 and Nu. 45,000 each. These grantees published 15 investigative stories. A mentorship programme was included as a part of the Investigative Reporting Grant whereby three mentors were assigned to a group of selected reporters (grantees) to guide them in



Mr Needrup Zangpo (left) of Bhutan Media Foundation and Mr Eric Falt of UNESCO signed the MoU in the office of BMF



The winners of Investigative Reporting Grant with the mentors

developing investigative stories to be published or aired in the Bhutanese media. The 10 reporters were guided by the three mentors throughout the process of reporting, investigating, and report writing in order to assure quality of reporting and final products. The high level of self-censorship in Bhutanese media due to fear among journalists to undertake in-depth investigation and cover sensitive issues still remains a concern. Thus, this investigative grant is expected to make a critical start to the culture of inquiry among the Bhutanese journalists.



A resource centre for investigative reporting has been established

## BMF collaborates with RENEW on “Moghi Mikhar”, 12-episode talk show featuring Bhutanese women



Dr Meenakshi Rai (left) of Renew and Mr Needrup Zangpo of Bhutan Media Foundation signed the MoU

“Moghi Mikhar” is a 12-episode Television Talk Show conceived and produced by RENEW in partnership with Bhutan Media Foundation, Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS) and other relevant civil society partners. Over the course of 12 episodes, ‘Moghi Mihar’ explores topical and often difficult issues confronting Bhutanese women in particular and the Bhutanese society at large. The Talk Show was aired twice a week (every Tuesday and Friday at 8 pm) on BBS 2 from 8 March till 30 April 2019.

Recognizing the powerful role of the media in shaping values and perceptions and as an instrumental mass communication tool for dissemination of information and advocacy, this talk show brings together individuals from various backgrounds, both men and women, to discuss issues ranging from relationship, and feminism to choices, youth, mental health, social media, from sexual abuse, women and art, and domestic violence to women in Buddhism.

## The Prime Minister visits BMF office for AM with PM

Hon’ble Lyonchhen Dr Lotey Tshering visited Bhutan Media Foundation as part of PMO Bhutan’s new initiative called ‘AM with PM: A Dialogue with the Prime Minister’.

The BMF team submitted a range of media-related issues to Hon’ble Prime Minister. The meeting paved the way for future collaboration between Bhutan Media Foundation and the Royal Government of Bhutan.



The Board and Secretariat of BMF with the Hon’ble Prime Minister

## Dzongkha journalists attend Wikipedia training



Dr Bunty Avieson (second from left, front row) with the participants

Bhutan Media Foundation conducted one-day training on Wikipedia in Thimphu on 24 January 2019.

The training was facilitated by Dr Bunty Avieson, Australian writer, journalist, and professor, and was attended by 11 Dzongkha editors and reporters.

The training was supported by Wikimedia Foundation.

## About Bhutan Media Foundation

Bhutan Media Foundation was established through a Royal Charter issued by His Majesty the King on 21 February 2010 to foster the growth of a strong, responsible media capable of playing an important role in the social, economic and political growth of the nation. It is mandated to strengthen the media so that they may carry out their duties, without fear and favour, in the interest of democracy.

The Foundation is mandated to support the sustainability of the media houses, foster the media's professional development, promote media literacy and education, and support media advocacy and policy.

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