

Annual Report 2019



Establishment



TASHICHHODZONG
THIMPHU, BHUTAN

The rights to freedom of information, expression and of the media enshrined in the Constitution are fundamental to democracy. In our small nation, media can be even more effective in encouraging debate and participation, vital to building a vibrant democracy.

However, today, our media agencies are young and their exemplary commitment and desire to perform their duties are not matched by adequate resources. As it is my sacred duty to ensure the success of our young democracy, I have decided, through the exercise of my Royal Prerogative of Kidu, to strengthen media agencies so that they may carry out their duties, without fear or favour, in the interest of democracy.

It is my hope that the Bhutan Media Foundation established under this Charter, shall serve 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.

Granted on the 21st day of February, 2010 at Tashichho Dzong.

His Majesty The Druk Gyalpo

Content

BMF: a background.....1

Vision & Mission.....2

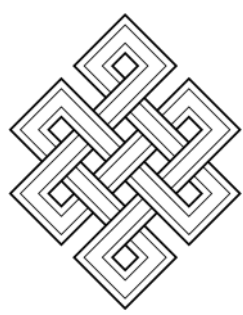
Strategic Goals 2019-2021.....3

Activities.....4 - 8

Financial Report.....9

Our supporters and partners.....10

How can you support us?.....11

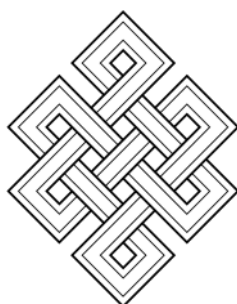


Background

Bhutan Media Foundation was established through a Royal Charter issued by His Majesty King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck 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 support wholesome development of media so that it can carry out its roles and responsibilities in the interest of democracy.

Accordingly, a team of media professionals formulated a Charter for BMF by distilling the wisdom of His Majesty's Royal Charter. The Charter of BMF was prepared to ensure that BMF operates professionally and sustains its function in times to come.

BMF was registered as a public-benefit civil society organisation on 10 April 2015. A four-member Board of Directors guides the function and operation of BMF. The Board members comprise the representatives of His Majesty The King, the Royal Government of Bhutan, and the media industry.



Vision

Take effective action targeted at informed society by fostering the growth of free, independent, responsive and credible media that play a constructive role in the social, economic, and political life of the nation, thereby leading to a vibrant democracy.

Mission

Sustain democracy by developing the Bhutanese media through transformational initiatives that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster freedom of expression, information and press

Strategic Goals: 2019-2021

Support professional growth of the Bhutanese media through training, mentorship, scholarships, internships, exchange programmes, professional discourse, awards and grants

Support or facilitate sustainability of media organisations through direct support and online transition

Support media literacy and education through training, workshops, clubs, and research

Build partnership and collaboration through fund mobilisation, industry engagement and community engagement

Activities

January: BMF conducts Wikipedia training



Dr Bunty Avieson (centre) with the participants



Eleven Dzongkha editors and reporters attended the training in Thimphu

Bhutan Media Foundation conducted one-day training on Wikipedia on 24 January 2019 in Thimphu. The training was conducted with support from Wikimedia Foundation. This training was facilitated by Dr Bunty Avieson, Australian writer and journalist. Eleven Dzongkha editors and reporters attended the training.

March: BMF signs MoU with RENEW on TV talk show



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

BMF and RENEW signed an MoU on gender project called 'Moghi Mikhar' (Through Her Eyes), a 12-episode TV talk show focussing on women and gender. Under the MoU, BMF compiled synopses of the Dzongkha talk shows in English and carried out an impact survey on the show.

Over the course of 12 episodes, 'Moghi Mikhar' 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 to 30 April 2019.

Annual Report 2019

April: Prime Minister visits BMF for Am with PM



The Board and Secretariate of BMF with the Hon'ble Prime Minister

Hon'ble Prime Minister Lyonchhen Dr Lotay Tshering visited Bhutan Media Foundation on 8 April 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 the Prime Minister.

The issues included the sustainability of BMF and professional development support for the media houses in Bhutan.

May: BMF conducts investigative reporting

BMF conducted three-day training on investigative journalism from 6 to 8 May 2019 in Thimphu. The training was facilitated by two resource persons from India: Ms Sana Amir, ICFJ Multi-media Associate with MA in Convergent Journalism (a practising multimedia journalist), and Mr Ushinor Majumdar, a journalist and author (a practising investigative journalist). The training also included multi-media journalism and talks by senior Bhutanese newspaper editors.

The goal of the three-day training was to



Ms Sana Amir, ICFJ Multi-Media Associate, facilitating Mobile Journalism training



35 regular journalists, freelancers, and media educators attended the training

develop a fleet of journalist with the skills and knowledge to undertake investigative journalism, promote best practices of journalism, and to raise the standards of critical reporting to a high professional level.

Thirty-five journalists from print and broadcast media, freelance journalists, and media educators attended the training. The training was supported by UNESCO under the project titled 'Strengthening Investigative Journalism to Ensure Public Access to Information'.

Annual Report 2019

June-November: BMF gives Investigative Reporting Grant

Ten reporters from various media houses received an Investigative Reporting Grant from BMF on 18 June 2019.

The objective of the grant was to support print and broadcast journalists to do investigative stories thereby starting a culture of inquiry in the Bhutanese media.

The 16 investigative stories produced by the grantees between 18 June and 18 November were published or aired in the Bhutanese media. A mentorship programme was included as part of the Investigative Reporting Grant whereby three mentors



BMF team with the mentors and the selected grantees were assigned to the selected reporters (grantees) to guide them in developing their investigative stories.

August: BMF conducts consultative workshop on Media Literacy Training Modules



Ms Monira AY Tsewang, Chief Information & Media Officer of MoIC, presenting her view during the meeting



30 public officials and media professionals attended the workshop

BMF on 21 August conducted a consultative workshop on three media literacy training modules it developed. The three modules were Basic Media Literacy Module, Intermediate Media Literacy Module and Advanced Media Literacy Module.

The consultative workshop was attended by 30 representatives of the media, government agencies, and CSOs. The modules were part of the project titled 'Inclusive Media Literacy for Democratic Empowerment' supported by EU and Helvetas.

The objective of the project is to start a professionally planned media literacy programme by developing three training modules that encompass all the sections of the populations across different places of residence, education levels, and professions.

Annual Report 2019

August-September: Community members of Sakteng and Kazhi attend Basic Media Literacy Workshop



56 community members of Sakteng attended the Basic ML workshop (12 to 14 August)



Mr. Ugyen Penjor, editor of Kuensel facilitating the workshop in Kazhi, Wangduephodrang (17 to 19 September 2019)

BMF conducted a Basic Media Literacy Workshop for the people of Kazhi in Wangduephodrang and Sakteng in Trashigang in August and September.

Fifty-six community members of Sakteng and 81 members of Kazhi attended the three-day workshops. The workshops were 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.

October: BMF conducts Intermediate Media Literacy Workshop



894 students attended the intermediate media literacy workshop at CLCS in Trongsa



Presentation by a student during a group activity

BMF conducted a two-day Intermediate Media Literacy Workshop at the College of language and Culture Studies in Trongsa from 21 to 23 October. A total of 894 students from CLCS and Taktse Central School attended the workshop. The students were trained on using social media platforms responsibly, identifying fake news, and social media policy of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

December: BMF conducts Advanced Media Literacy Workshop



Mr Gopila Acharya facilitated the three-day workshop

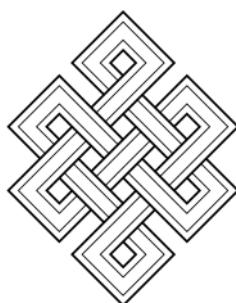


Participants in discussion during a group activity

BMF conducted a three-day Advanced Media Literacy Workshop from 18 to 20 December in Thimphu. The workshop covered topics such as digital citizenship, media's role in democracy, media theories and realities, the rise of social media, and media ethics, among others.

A total of 60 participants attended the workshop. The participants included representatives from the National Assembly of Bhutan, the National Council of Bhutan, government agencies, corporations, CSOs, media houses, teachers, and lecturers.

BMF conducted the Advanced Media Literacy Workshop for the first time. The workshop is aimed at working professionals, including senior public officials and Members of Parliament.



Annual Report 2019

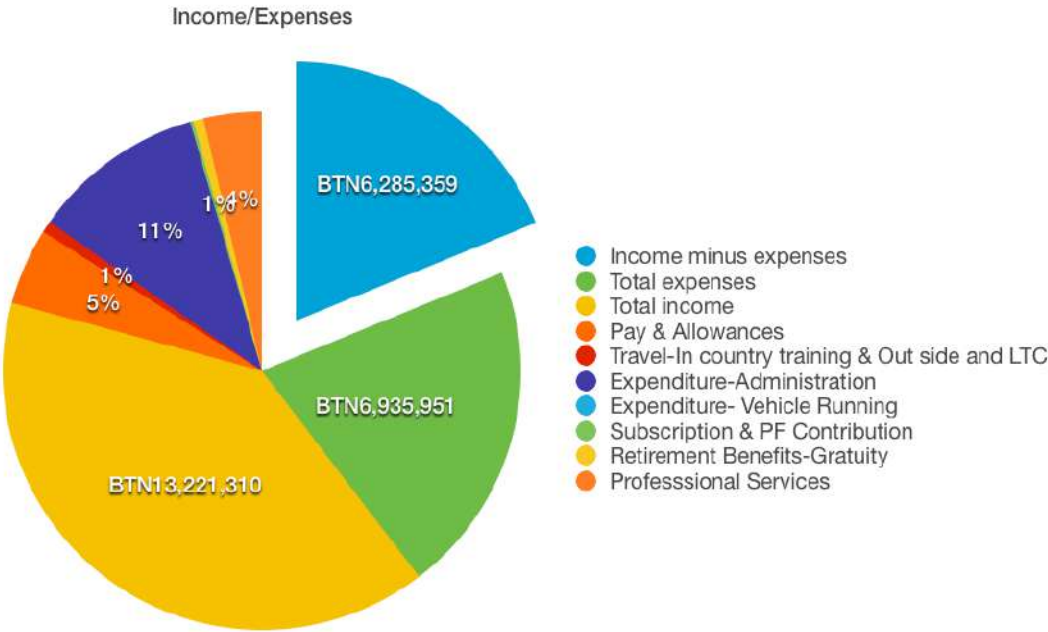
Financial Report

Statement of financial income and expenses (January to December 2019)

| MONEY IN | |
|---|---------------|
| Grant-UNESCO & Helvetus, EJM, Wikimedia Foundation , RENEW & RGoB | BTN4,149,936 |
| Interest Income | BTN801,374 |
| Seed Fund | BTN8,270,000 |
| TOTAL INCOME | BTN13,221,310 |

| MONEY OUT | |
|---|--------------|
| Pay & Allowances | BTN1,599,512 |
| Travel-In country training & Out side and LTC | BTN241,608 |
| Expenditure-Administration | BTN3,600,338 |
| Expenditure- Vehicle Running | BTN6,588 |
| Subscription & PF Contribution | BTN61,708 |
| Retirement Benefits-Gratuity | BTN215,799 |
| Professional Services | BTN1,210,398 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | BTN6,935,951 |

| BALANCE AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2019 | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Income minus expenses | BTN6,285,359 |



Our supporters and partners

International

Bhutan Foundation
Centre for Media and Health
Earth Journalism Network
European Union
Global Investigative Journalism Network
Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Bhutan
International Republican Institute
Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation (NUFFIC)
Social Justice Initiative
The Swiss Embassy, New Delhi
UNESCO New Delhi Office

Local

Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy
Bhutan Network for Empowering Women
Department of Information and Media
Gross National Happiness Commission
Journalists Association of Bhutan
National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC)
RENEW
Royal Government of Bhutan
Tarayana Foundation

Media stakeholders

Bhutan Times
Bhutan Today
Business Bhutan
Gyalchi Sarshog
Kuensel
The Bhutanese
The Journalist
Bhutan Broadcasting Service (TV & Radio)
Kuzoo FM
Radio Valley
Yiga Radio

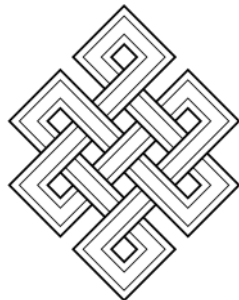
How can you support us?

You can make one-time or annual DONATION to the media development fund of BMF.

You can FUND a programme, project, or a scholarship.

You can PARTNER with BMF on media development activities.

Visit www.bmf.bt to learn more about us.





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