

Bhutan Media Foundation



ANNUAL REPORT

2021



TASHICHHO DZONG
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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck'.

His Majesty The Druk Gyalpo

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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 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 serves its purpose fully.

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



Statement from the Executive Director



It takes a while for any organisation to find its footing. And so it has been with BMF. More than 10 years after His Majesty The King established it under his hand and seal, the Foundation has begun to broaden its scope of work enshrined in the royal mandate.

Since 2011, when we started rolling out our programmes, we have conducted 91 programmes and spent Nu 44.112 million. By Bhutanese standards, both the number of activities and spending are quite substantial.

We began small, focusing mostly on the capacity building and upskilling of the Bhutanese media houses. They include training, workshops, reporting grants, subsidies, scholarships, internships, and study visits for journalists and media managers. Given the high rate of attrition in the Bhutanese newsrooms, professional development of the media houses will remain a priority for us.

In recent years, we have broadened the scope of our activities. Mindful of our public mandate as a Public Benefit Organisation, we have started conducting media literacy training for rural people, students, and working professionals based on carefully designed modules. Recognising the challenges posed by infodemic, we will keep updating and improving our media literacy programmes.

We are now venturing into media-related research to generate much-needed data for our activities as well as for policymakers and the public. We want to make sure that all our activities are connected and complement one another. We do not want to spread ourselves too thin but remain focused.

I take this opportunity to pay my tribute to the Royal Vision that is BMF and thank all our partners and stakeholders who have supported us through the years.

Needrup Zangpo

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.



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.

Training

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

Partnership

Build partnerships and collaborations through fund mobilisation, industry engagement and community engagement

Growth of Bhutanese Media

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

Sustainability of Bhutanese Media

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

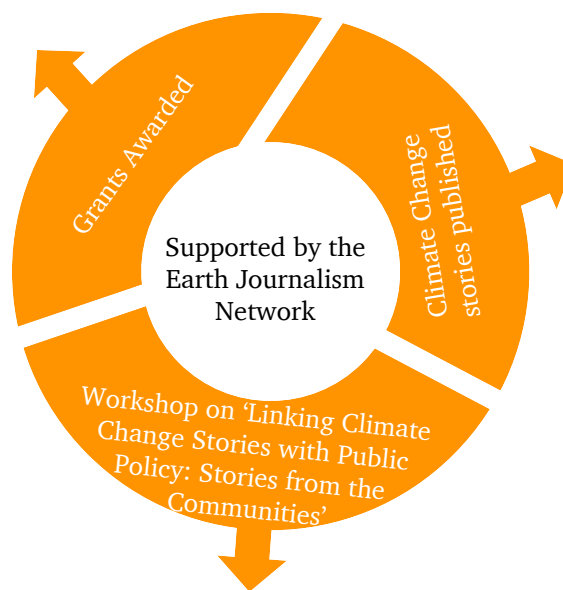
Strategic Goals 2019-2021

Activities

1. Linking Climate Change Stories with Public Policy

18 Grants awarded

- Supported nine grantees who produced two climate change stories each
- The first story focused on the impact of climate change in rural communities
- The second story reported on the policy aspect of their first story



2

Booklets of Climate Change Stories published

- The stories produced by the nine grantees were compiled into two booklets and published.

- The workshop engaged the grantees to introduce the subjects of their reporting and share their reporting experience with a select group of people, who broadened the discussion on the subjects.
- The objective of the workshop was to sustain public discourse broached by the grant stories
- Conducted on 2 August 2021



Activities

2. Building Capacity of the Media Houses in Bhutan

25 Journalists trained

- Conducted on 2-3 February 2021
- Facilitated by Ms. Sana Amir, a freelance multimedia journalist and producer from India

12 websites upgraded

- With the funding support, 12 media houses upgraded their websites with new features such as advertising spaces, contact information for paid subscription and videos on site, video content upload and social media integration

24 Journalists trained

- Conducted on 8-9 February 2021
- Facilitated by Mr. Phub Dorji of Nyingnor Marketing Company

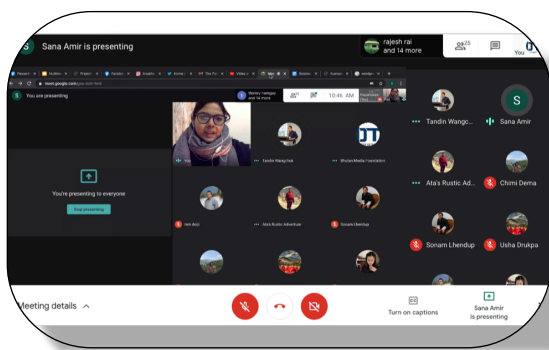
20 Journalists trained

- Conducted on 15-16 February 2021
- Facilitated by Mr. Phub Dorji of Nyingnor Marketing Company

39 Stories published

- Launched on 17 March 2021
- Written by three senior journalists, the book titled 'Life and Living in Bhutan Amid Covid-19 Pandemic' covers all aspects of life and living in Bhutan during the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic.

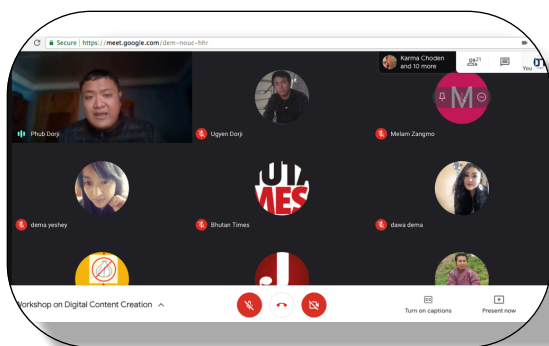




25 journalists attended the workshop on multimedia journalism facilitated by Ms Sana Amir



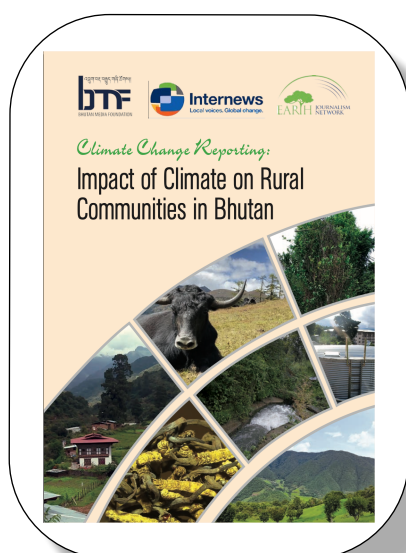
24 journalists attended the workshop on social media facilitated by Mr Phub Dorji



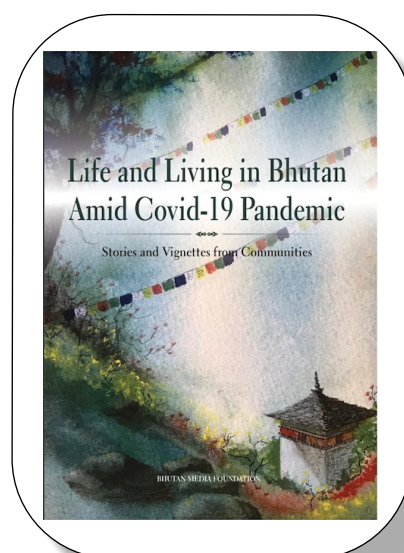
20 journalists attended the workshop on digital content creation facilitated by Mr Phub Dorji



The grantees of Climate Change Reporting Grant sharing their experience during the two-day workshop



Climate Change stories published



'Life and Living in Bhutan Amid Covid-19 Pandemic' book published

Activities

3. Building Youth's Resilience to Infodemic, Misinformation, and Disinformation

- A toolkit titled 'Navigating Infodemic, Misinformation, and Disinformation' was launched on 17 November 2021
- The toolkit contains concise definitions and explanations of infodemic, misinformation and disinformation with relevant examples in the Bhutanese context.
- The toolkit is written and designed for the youth as they are the majority section of the population on the digital platforms and are most affected by false information



439 Students trained

- The students of Paro College of Education in Paro, Gedu College of Business Studies in Chukha, Dechentsemo Central School in Punakha, and College of Language and Culture Studies in Trongsa were trained on navigating infodemic, misinformation, and disinformation
- The training was conducted by Mr Needrup Zangpo, the Executive Director of BMF and Mr Tashi Dorji, a media consultant.



Activities

4. Towards Responsible Use of Social Media in Bhutan

57 Working professionals trained

- Two separate advanced SML training were conducted for the civil servants and employees of corporations and state-owned enterprises
- Facilitated by Mr Needrup Zangpo, the Executive Director of BMF, and Mr Phub Dorji, a social media and digital marketing expert.



1122 Students trained

- The students of Norbuling Rigtar College in Paro, Jakar Higher Secondary School in Bumthang, Mongar Higher Secondary School in Mongar, Sherubtse College in Tashigang, Kunzangling Central School in Trashigang, Gyalpozhing College of Information and Technology in Mongar received a two-day Intermediate Social Media Literacy training
- The training was conducted by Mr Needrup Zangpo, the Executive Director of BMF, and Mr Passang Tshering, the Executive Director of Bhutan Toilet Organisation and a social media expert, and Mr Gopilal Acharya, a former editor and media consultant.





'Navigating Infodemic, Misinformation and Disinformation' Toolkit launched



289 students of Dechentsemo Central School in Punakha attended the training on 'Navigating Infodemic, Misinformation and Disinformation'



140 students of Mongar Higher Secondary School attended the Intermediate Social Media Literacy training



57 working professionals in Thimphu attended the Advanced Social Media Literacy training

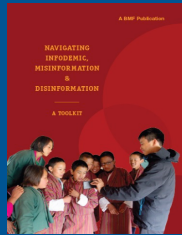


A nation-wide study on the use of social media in Bhutan titled 'Social Media Landscape in Bhutan' published



Social Media Literacy training modules published

BMF Publications



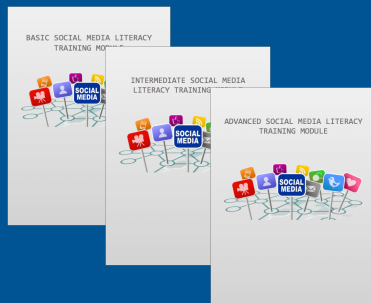
'Navigating Infodemic, Misinformation & Disinformation' A Toolkit



Social Media Landscape in Bhutan



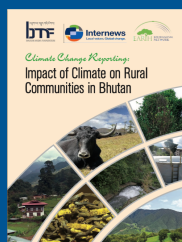
Media Engagement Guide for CSOs



Social Media Literacy Training Modules



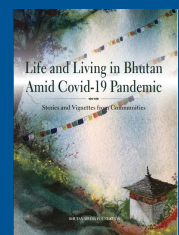
Media Literacy Training Modules



Impact of Climate on Rural Communities in Bhutan



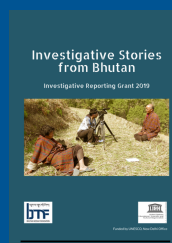
Linking Climate Change Stories to Government Policies and Plan



Life and Living in Bhutan Amid Covid -19 Pandemic: Stories and Vignettes from Communities



Media Literacy Survey Report



Investigative Stories from Bhutan



Bhutan Journalism Review

Eleven Years On: How Far We Have Come



Beneficiaries



Training

- 1,423 media professionals trained
- 137 rural community members trained
- 2,915 students trained
- 148 working professionals, including Members of Parliament, trained



Grants

- 60 reporters and freelancers
- 4 private radio stations



Internship

- 10 marketing managers and journalists sent to India and Thailand



Scholarship

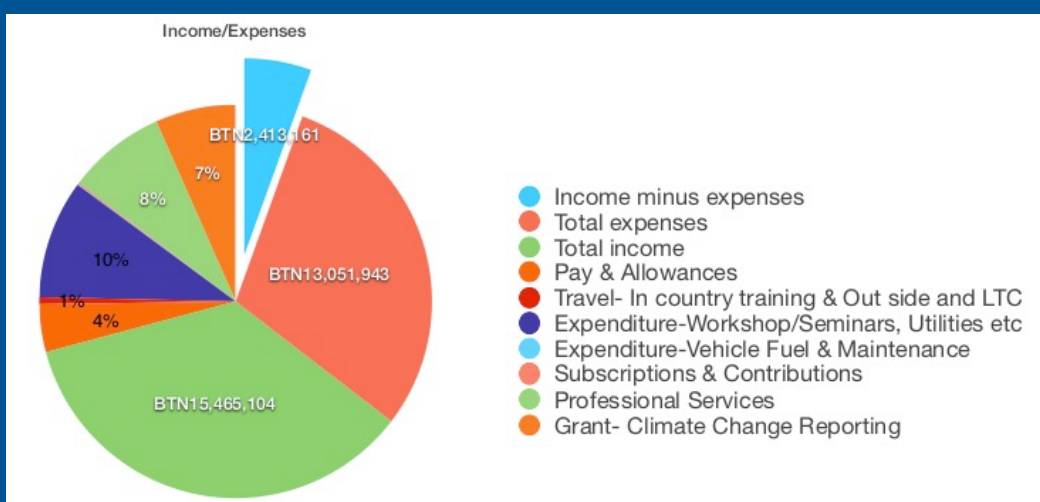
- 2 journalists awarded scholarship

Financial Statement

MONEY IN (NU)	
Grant	6,706,773
Interest Income	538,331
Seed Fund	8,220,000
TOTAL INCOME	15,465,104

MONEY OUT (NU)	
Pay and Allowance	1,717,848
Travel (Training and LTC)	247,512
Expenditure (Administration)	4,263,464
Expenditure (Vehicle Running)	25,209
Subscription and Contributions	60,342
Professional Services	3,522,570
Project Grantee	320,000
Grant (Climate Change Reporting)	2,894,998
TOTAL INCOME	13,051,943

BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 2021 (NU)	
Income minus Expenditure	2,413,161



Meet Our Team

BOARD MEMBERS



Mr Gelay Jamtsho (Chairperson)
Director
Royal Office for Media

Mr Tenzing Lamsang
Editor-in-Chief
The Bhutanese



Mr Ugyen Penjor
Managing Director
Kuensel

Ms Kuenzang Lham Sangye
Chief Planning Officer
Gross National Happiness Commission



Mr Needrup Zangpo
Executive Director
BMF

SECRETARIAT



Mr Needrup Zangpo
Executive Director

Mr Dawa Tshering
Finance Officer



Ms Tenzin Yangden
Programme Officer
(Communication)

Ms Sonam Wangmo
Programme Officer
(Administration)



Our Supporters and Partners

International

Canada Fund for Local Initiatives
Earth Journalism Network
European Union
Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom
Global Investigative Journalism Network
Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Bhutan
The Asia Foundation
The Swiss Embassy, New Delhi
UNESCO, New Delhi

Local

Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy
Department of Information and Media
Gross National Happiness Commission
National Commission for Women and Children
RENEW
Royal Government of Bhutan
The Journalists' Association of Bhutan

Media Stakeholders

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

How can you support us?



You can make a one-time donation 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



Bhutan Media Foundation
Post Box: 1655
Kawajangsa, Lhado Lam
Thimphu, Bhutan
Telephone: +975-2-331705/09
Email: bmf@bmf.bt
Website: www.bmf.bt