

ANNUAL REPORT

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NEWS NETWORK

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Annual Report 2011

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Cover Photo

Students of a school run by News Network for harijan children in Bogra town.

Photo: Benzaman/U-AID

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Executive Summary

In 2011, News Network undertook three new projects with support from The American Center in Dhaka, Netherlands-based Free Press Unlimited and Plan Bangladesh. Switzerland-based Anne Frank-Fonds is also continuing their educational support to Harijan Children in Bogra town. Besides, News Network successfully completed three different projects funded by UNESCO and Taiwan Foundation for Democracy.

A five-year funding agreement was signed between News Network and the Netherlands-based The Free Press Unlimited on capacity building of News Network and skill development training of local journalists, working for print and electronic media in remote districts of the country. The project was launched in May 2011 and 180 journalists got benefitted by the end of the year.

Plan Bangladesh is providing support for combating gender-based violence against girls and women as well as empowering them to stand against such acts. The year-long project started soon after signing of the agreement in August 2011. One of its major activities, 'Sensitization workshop for media people on Gender Based Violence', was held in Dhaka with 25 journalists taking part in the programme.

The American Center approved a grant for implementing a 12-month project for the development of women journalists in the country. Under the programme, 20 female trainee journalists, freelance writers, contributors and graduates were awarded a nine-month fellowship in October 2011 on practical journalism.

UNESCO supported a project for media people working in the country's three hill districts, which completed in March 2011. Sixty (60) journalists, working in the CHT region received a four-week-long skill development training. Besides, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD) provided fund to organise a two-day orientation programme on sensible journalism for 20 trainee journalists, working in various media houses. The programme was held in Dhaka.

The Switzerland-based Anne Frank - Fonds (AFF) has been continuing their aid to a News Network's ongoing educational programme for Harijan children in Bogra. They have approved fresh grants for the year 2012.

Major activities of the year 2011

1. A three-day skill development training for 120 local journalists
2. A two-day media workshop for better understanding of RTI
3. Sensitisation workshop for media people on Gender Violence
4. News-feature writing
5. Awarding 20 females a nine-month fellowship on journalism
6. Motivational programme for trainee journalists on sensible journalism
7. Organising a month-long professional training in Rangamati for local young journalists

News Network received Tk. 73,51,742 (USD. 91,896) as grant from the international organisations and mission in 2011 and the year end the expenditure stood up at Tk.65,24,380 (USD 81,555). External annual audit and the audit of the completed projects were done separately in time.



Voice of America (VOA) conducted a two- day workshop for News Network fellows on 'Reporting Myriad Issues in Bangladesh', at The American Center in Dhaka from October 12 to13, 2011. It has given better understanding to participants on health and food security issues and the role of media. In the picture fellows are seen with Brain Armstead, a senior media expert of VOA and Patricia Hill, Press and Information Officer of US Embassy in Dhaka..

Programmes

Supported by



1. Projects of the Year

Projects

Media Development Programme
 Development Programme for Women Journalists
 Capacity-building programme for
 Journalists of Three Hill Districts Motivational
 Programme for Sensible
 Journalism-Phase II

 Girl Power Project Educational Support Program for
 Harijan Children-Phase III

Support

Free Press Unlimited
 American Center

 UNESCO)

 Taiwan Foundation for
 Democracy (TFD)
 Plan Bangladesh
 Anne Frank Fonds(AFF)

2. Progress of the projects

2.1 Media Development Program

It is a five-year long project, supported by Free Press Unlimited. It was launched in May 2011 and will continue till December 2015. Under the project, an initiative has been taken to



A group photo of rural journalists, working for local and national news media along with resource persons on completion of training. Frontline (sitting) from left Farid Hossain, Bureau Chief of Associated Press in Dhaka, Shahiduzzaman, Editor of News Network and Didarul Alam, Senior correspondent of United News of Bangladesh and local coordinator of workshop. The journalists completed a three-day skill development training, supported by Free Press Unlimited at Khulna city from 7 to 12 December 2011

improve the skill and capacity of the local journalist by maintaining accuracy of information. Also they were given guidance on producing qualitative reports/articles and better understanding on professional ethical issues. Besides, they will be provided sufficient knowledge how to use of 'Right to Information Act' for information gathering. Since the rural journalists have little scope for building their professional capacity and improving their skills, they often make mistakes and confuse the readers about the accuracy and reliability of information. Such mistakes also create problems for themselves and as a result they face legal issue sometimes.



Dessi Damianova, Programme Manager of Free Press Unlimited and female journalists of Bogra are seen in the picture following a training for rural journalists. In two phases 60 journalists participated in the programme held in September 2011

In its first year News Network has implemented the following activities:

- Training workshops for the journalists working from remote districts
- Workshops for media people on the use of RT Act for information gathering
- Capacity building of the News Network.

Two different training workshops were organised in Bogra and Khulna towns. The number of participants was one hundred and twenty (120). Many journalists, including 24 female, for the first time took part in such training programme. Most of the journalists came from Upazila (sub-district) level. They were given basic ideas on reporting, including techniques of information gathering and how to maintain the accuracy of information. They were also motivated on principles of journalism.



A journalist receives his certificate from Shahiduzzaman, Editor of News Network after successfully completed a three-day workshop on Right to information. Sadrul Alam Dulu, a senior journalists of United News of Bangladesh and former President of Rangpur Press Club is also seen in the picture. The workshop was organized by News Network from 22 to 24 October in Rangpur town. 25 local journalists from print and electronic media participated in the programme, supported by Free Press Unlimited.

On the RTI Act for media people, two training programmes were held in Rangpur and Mymensingh towns. Sixty (60) journalists were benefited from the programme. Earlier, they had little knowledge about the RTI Act and Access to information. One of them said, "We were in the dark but this workshop made us aware, courageous and showed how to get information." In fact no effective campaign was carried out by the government to make people well aware of its benefit since the law was enacted.

The participants of both the workshops found it very useful. Journalists who came from very remote areas said the training will have a very positive impact on their profession. "It will not only develop our capacity but also build up our courage," said a participant.

Another important aspect of this project was to develop the capacity of News Network. Under the programme, a new set of communication equipments has been installed in its office apart from hiring experts and recruitment of new staff. It will continue throughout the project period.

2.2 Development Program for Women journalists

The American Center of US Embassy in Dhaka provided financial assistance to implement the programme. It was a 12 month-long project, which started in September 2011, aiming to continue creating women journalists in Bangladesh. On gender equality issue, the project is quite relevant to Bangladesh context. Among the total journalists, only 5 percent are female. So, it is necessary to promote journalism among women and motivate them to take it as their profession.

Twenty (20) young women, including contributors and fresh graduates in journalism from different universities, were awarded a nine-month fellowship on practical journalism. The fellowship included three month long in-house skill development training, three months internship in major print and electronic media houses and three month for completing their assignments on various issues. Their in-house training was completed in December 2011 and in January 2012 they will be sent to different media houses for a three-month internship.

Besides, during in-house skill development training they were given basic ideas on the issues like; human rights, women and child rights, gender equality, CEDAW, good governance and transparency, global warming, climate change issues and right to the information act.

During their in-house training, the fellows joined a two-day orientation programme on 'health



Fellows of 'Development Program for Women Journalists' organized by News Network are seen in a group work. The program was supported by The American Center in Dhaka

and food security issues', which was jointly organised by Voice of America, The American Center in Dhaka and News Network. Brain Armstead, a senior expert of VOA conducted the programme.

2.3 Capacity Building for Journalists of Three Hill Districts, supported by UNESCO

This project was launched in June 2010 and continued till May 2011. The objective of the programme was to develop professional skills of the journalists, who were working for print and electronic media in the hilly region.

It was a challenging task for News Network to organise programmes in remote CHT districts from Dhaka, with limited resources. But the project activities were accomplished successfully and in due time. Three different four-week long training programmes were held in Khagarachhari, Bandarban and Rangamati districts headquarters respectively. Training sessions in Khagrachari and Bandarban were organised in 2010 and the programme in Rangamati district town was held in first quarter of 2011. The project was unique in a sense that it was the first of its kind to train up the journalists of that region.



A group photo of local journalists based in Rangamati who completed a four-week-long (30 January 2010 to 24 February 2011) training on skill development, supported by UNESCO. Twenty-four media people benefited from the program.

Rangamati Hill District Council Chairman Nikhil Kumar Chakma was the chief guest in closing ceremony of Rangamati programme. Local newspapers editors and civil society members were present and some of them also spoke on the occasion.

Following inputs were given to the participants;

- Basics of journalism, including professional ethics and responsibility
- News reporting
- Techniques of information gathering, including taking interviews, covering press conferences and other events
- Conducting investigative reporting and its technique of information gathering
- Practical, including group work and presentations
- Discussion on current affairs, right based issues etc

The following materials were distributed to the participants for their better understanding: Universal Declarations of Human rights, UN Convention against Corruption, CEDAW, Copies of the 'Right to Information Act' and related materials

The programme was appreciated by the members of the civil society, government officials and the media houses.

2.4 Motivational Programme for Sensible Journalism (Phase II), supported by Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD)

The project focused on young trainee reporter, including male and female, working in print and electronic media. The objectives were to motivate them about sensible journalism and professional responsibilities. It has been observed that few media houses take efforts to build up the novices. Keeping this in mind News Network organised a two-day long workshop in October 2011 in the capital city Dhaka. Twenty trainees nominated from different print and electronic media participated. Participants found it useful and will be effective at their initial professional stage.



Participants of two-day long motivational workshop on sensible journalism are seen in the picture. 15 young trainee journalists from various media houses joined the program, supported by Taiwan Foundation for Democracy held in Dhaka from 15 to 16 October 2011

2.5 Education Programme for Harijan Children

The project started in 2008 with the assistance from Anne Frank-Fonds, a Switzerland-based donor agency. The project was initiated to provide education to Harijon Children, the most neglected minority community of the country. Two elementary schools have



Students of a school are seen in the picture. Photo: Benzaman/U-AID

been set up in Bogra town, a northern district headquarters of the country. Harijans are also called dalits, have traditionally occupied the lowest place in the caste system of Hindu. They were considered to be outside the confines of the caste. The exact size of the Harijan population is not known. But there are likely to be thousands scattered across the country. They are deprived of social rights and basic human rights like proper education, sanitation access to better medication etc.

2.6 Girl Power Project supported by Plan Bangladesh

News Network and Plan Bangladesh have signed a 12 month-long agreement in August 2011 to work together for combating gender based violence (GBV) against girl children and young women, and promote their empowerment at the same time. Its major activities are: sensitizing media people on GBV, conducting discussion sessions with the girl students from various educational institutes, teachers, journalists and members of the civil society. Activities also include writing features, publishing newsletter and providing media technical supports to other Plan's partners in the country.

For project curriculum News Network prepared several news features on violence against women and empowerment issues and released to print media for publication. A two-day workshop on Gender Based Violence (GBV) was arranged by News Network in order to sensitize a group of journalists. The journalists were nominated by the country's major newspapers, TV Channels and radio stations.

Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, State Minister for Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Government of Bangladesh was present as the chief guest in the closing ceremony.



Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, State Minister, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs delivers her speech in a closing session of a two-day long workshop to sensitize about gender based violence (GBV) against girl children and young women on 20 December 2011. Shahiduzzaman, Editor of News Network, TIM Zahid Hossain, Acting Manager, Communication and Public Relations of Plan Bangladesh and Mohammad Masud, Manager Girl Power Project, Plan Bangladesh are also seen in the picture. 25 journalists from major national print and electronic news media participated in the program, supported by Plan Bangladesh.

It was held on 20 December 2011. The minister highly appreciated the initiative and said, 'Media has a huge role in changing the attitude of society towards women. So, arranging this type of workshop for journalists is necessary and effective in combating gender based violence and empowering women in the country'. Dr Chaudhury urged both the organization -- News Network and Plan Bangladesh -- to continue their efforts and organise such workshops in other districts headquarters, too.



Participant Shahnaz Biswas Yeasmin, Reporter of Boishaki TV channel receiving her certificate from Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, State Minister for Ministry of Women and Children Affairs.

Finance

1. Projects and funding organisations at a glance

Name of the Projects	Funding agency
Media Development Program	Free Press Unlimited, Netherlands
Development Program for women journalists	American Center
Girl Power Project	PLAN International
Education Program for Harijan Children	Anne Frank Fonds, Switzerland

2. BUDGET 2011

Sl.	Head of Account	Total
	PROGRAM COST	
1	Capacity building of rural journalists training	975,000
2	Workshop for media people on right to information	475,000
3	Capacity building for journalists in 3 hill districts	574,130
4	Fellowship for women journalists	700,000
5	Training Module	40,000
7	Sensitization workshop with media practitioners	104,600
9	Issues covered in various media through media campaign	70,000
10	Reported and case follow-up published in the media	35,000
11	Newsletter publication	47,000
12	Educational materials	50,000
13	Honorarium for School Asstt.	26,000
14	Honorarium & conveyance for the participants	20,000
15	Daily allowance for the participants & others	20,000
16	Workshop materials	38,000
17	Venue	15,000
18	Honorarium for resource persons	16,000
	Total Program cost	3,205,730
	Administrative support cost	
1	Rent for computer	120,000
2	Rent training room	80,000
3	Furniture & fixture	30,900
4	Telephone, fax, postage & other utilities	298,410
5	Office supplies & conveyance	130,972
6	Office rent & Rent for school rooms	424,000
7	Salary and honorarium (Including teachers honorarium)	2,180,000
8	Audit fee	57,000
9	Office equipmenxt	242,240
22	Total administrative support cost	3,563,522
23	Grand total	6,769,252

* Budget may be chanced according to donor's commitment.

3. Financial Statement

NEWS NETWORK
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 2011

PARTICULARS	DETAILS	AMOUNT
RECEIPTS:		
OPENING BALANCE (01.01.2011)		
Cash in hand	21,356.00	
Cash at Bank	99,388.99	
		1,20,744.99
FUND INFLOW		
Fund received from:		
FREE PRESS	36,54,295.05	
TAIWAN FOUNDATION FOR DEMOCRACY	1,54,700.00	
AMERICAN CENTER	21,90,000.00	
PLAN BANGLADESH	6,28,997.00	
ANNE FRANK FONDS	3,61,500.00	
UNESCO	3,62,250.00	
		73,51,742.05
Advance recovery		1,15,830.00
Temporary loan		70,000.00
Sale of different publication		10,564.43
Bank interest		27,417.77
Subscription from the Executive members		2,100.00
TOTAL TAKA		76,98,399.24
PAYMENTS:		
FUND OUTFLOW		
Capacity building training for rural / grassroots journalists		9,73,179
Workshop for media people on right to information		4,74,052
News Network website dev. & uploading		2,25,000
Salaries		18,25,000
Office rent		3,60,000
Office supplies		1,28,862.43
Utilities		1,18,718
Communication cost		1,42,264
Equipments		2,21,880
Bank charge		6,152.56
Furniture & fixture		30,900
Honorarium & conveyance for the participants		20,000
Daily allowance for the participants		20,000
Workshop materials		37,870
Venue		13,000
Resource persons honorarium		18,000
Rent for school rooms		1,44,000
Educational materials		49,477
Teachers honorarium		1,30,000
School assistant honorarium		26,000
Training for the journalists in hill districts		5,73,953
Fellowship for women journalists		6,93,810
Training Module		40,000
Rent for computer		1,20,000
Sensitization workshop with media practitioners		1,04,262
Issues covered in various media through media campaign		8,000
Fund refund to the USAID/Progati)		55,027
Audit fee		20,000
CLOSING BALANCE (31.12.2011)		
Cash in hand	34,350.92	
Cash at Bank	10,84,641.33	
		11,18,992.25
TOTAL TAKA		76,98,399.24

Total expenditure is BDT 65,24,379.99 (Equivalent USD 81,555/EURO 62,137)

4. Certificate of the Auditor



Chartered Accountants



FORM FD-4

We have audited the accounts of NEWS NETWORK Dhanmondi, Dhaka Registration no. FDR-922, dated 20.03.1995 for the Year ended 31st December, 2011 and examined all relevant books and vouchers and certifies that according to audited accounts.

1. The brought forward foreign donation at the beginning of year 1st January, 2011 was Tk. 236,574.99
2. The foreign donation amounting to Tk. 7,351,742.05 was received by the organization during the period.
3. The balance of unutilized foreign donations by the organization at 31st December, 2011 Tk. 10,08,910.05
4. Foreign donation amounting to Tk. 6,524,379.99 have been utilized for the following purposes (shown project wise).

NAME OF THE PROJECT:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capacity Building Program for Journalists of Three Hill Districts 2. Development Program for Women Journalists 3. Media Development Program 4. Motivational Program on Sensible Journalism, Phase-II 5. Education Program for Harijan Children, Phase-III 6. Girl Power Project
FUNDING AGENCY:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNESCO 2. AMERICAN CENTER, US EMBASSY IN DHAKA 3. FREE PRESS 4. TAIWAN FOUNDATION FOR DEMOCRACY 5. ANNE FRANK - FONDS 6. PLAN BANGLADESH

Name of the project (s)	Budget for this year	Amount spent this year	Difference
Capacity building program for journalists of three hill districts	603,512.00	592,517.55	+ 10,994.45
Development Program for Women Journalists	1,270,000.00	1,260,165.00	+ 9,835.00
Media Development Program	3,745,000.00	3,665,016.00	+ 79,984.00
Motivational Program on Sensible Journalism, Phase-II	155,000.00	154,732.00	+ 268.00
Education Program for Harijan Children, Phase-III	370,000.00	369,077.44	+ 922.56
Girl Power Project	625,740.00	482,872.00	+ 142,868.00
Total Taka	6,769,252.00	6,524,379.99	+ 244,872.01

Total expenditure in BDT. 6,524,379.99 (Equivalent USD 81,555 / EURO 62,137)

5. Certified the organization has maintained the accounts of Foreign Donations and records relating their to in the manner specified as in section 5 of the Foreign Donations (voluntary activities) Regulations Ordinance, 1978 read with rule 6 and 7 to the said ordinance.
6. The information furnished above is correct and checked by us.

Dated: 9.04.2012

Pinaki Das
Pinaki Das, FCA
Partner

Pinaki & Company
Chartered Accountants
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5. Budget 2012

Sl.	Head of Account	Total
	Program Cost	
1	Capacity building of rural journalists training	1,535,625
2	Seminar on Media development & Press freedom	300,000
3	Skill development training for local journalists & staffs	540,000
4	Workshop for media people on right to information	498,750
5	News Network Website development	240,000
6	Fellowship for women journalists	1,045,000
7	Training Module	240,000
8	Certificate giving ceremony	86,000
9	Sensitization workshop with media practitioners	156,713
10	Journalists engage in media events	95,734
11	Issues covered in various media through media campaign	129,800
12	Reported and case follow-up published in the media	13,210
13	Newsletter publication	80,560
14	Honorarium for school program	351,000
15	Educational materials	36,000
	Total Program Cost	5,348,392
	Administrative support cost	
1	Salary and honorarium	3,483,500
2	Rent for computer	150,000
3	Rent training room	160,000
4	Furniture & fixture	247,125
5	Telephone, fax, postage & other utilities & others	551,997
6	Office supplies & conveyance	234,096
7	Office rent & Rent for school rooms	660,000
8	Audit fee	55,000
9	Office equipment	756,000
	Total administrative support cost	6,297,718
	Grand total	11,646,110
	Total Budget in BDT.11,646,110 (Equivalent USD 143,779)	

* Budget may be revised as per donor's commitment.

Our mission is to promote freedom of press and expression, access to information, environmental issues, gender equality, human rights along with the rights of the minorities & ethnic minority groups by ensuring good governance and transparency at all levels. It seeks to increase the number of female journalists in Bangladesh. Also holds the mission to develop the capacity of media people, including the women journalists.

Our ultimate vision is to see a stable nation, where people will enjoy their freedom to live with dignity.

NEWSNETWORK

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