

# NEWS NETWORK

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News Network Fellowship on Journalism

## A DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR WOMEN JOURNALISTS



US Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan Mozena is seen with the News Network female fellows in a certificate giving ceremony held in Dhaka on 3 June 2012. Fellows have completed a nine-month fellowship on practical journalism supported by The American Center. Managing Director and Chief Editor of United News of Bangladesh (UNB) Enayetullah Khan, Chief Editor and CEO of Maasranga TV Syed Fahim Munaim and Editor of News Network Shahiduzzaman are also in the picture.

The ultimate goals of the programme are to encourage young women to take up journalism as their profession and promote gender equality in the field of journalism.

Since its inception in 1994, News Network has been pursuing a plan for developing female journalists in Bangladesh as they account for less than 3 percent in journalism among the total number of journalists in the country. A gender balance is, therefore, needed in this profession.

News Network thinks:

- The profession can be a big employer for female graduates who come out from universities
- Women journalists can report incidents/events related to gender violence against girls and women more humanly with a better human approach
- The Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees equal treatment to men and women. So, there is no reason to leave the journalism profession only to the hands of men

The organisation believes if the country's female graduates can be encouraged to choose journalism as their profession that will be a big achievement for bringing a change in the traditional attitude, which will ultimately help promote women empowerment. News Network had long been trying to raise fund to this end.

The initiative did not go in vain. The dream came true in 1999 when Diakonia, a Swedish organisation, came forward and agreed to support News Network to launch a six-month fellowship programme for female journalists in the country. Immediately, the programme drew attention of various international funding agencies, organisations and foreign missions in Dhaka.



The Netherlands Ambassador Bea M ten Tusscher to Bangladesh is seen with a group of female fellows of journalism at News Network Office on 19 August 2008. Managing Director and Chief Editor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Zaglul A Chowdhury was also present on the occasion.

With the Diakonia's support, the programme was run for multiple years. In the last 10 years, different world reputed international organisations and donors, including, NORAD, DANIDA, Free Voice, Free Press Unlimited, USAID and US States Department provided support for carrying out this programme.

US Ambassador Dan Mozena gives certificate to a young woman who has completed a nine-month fellowship on practical journalism. The function was held in Dhaka in June 2013.



This initiative to develop women journalists is one of the most successful programmes of News Network as it is highly appreciated by the country's mainstream news media houses, universities and civil society members.

As many as 250 women have been trained under this programme as of 2012. Sixty percent of them are already working in the mainstream journalism.

But it is still a long way to go because the number of female journalists remains very low in Bangladesh journalism.



A group of fellows is in a practical session during their in-house training at News Network in May 2013

The programme is highly relevant and has had multiple impacts on society.

- A trained and skilled woman journalist does not only empower herself but also sends out a message of women power across the media world
- Such a journalist can be a model for others
- Women journalists bring with them gender balance in the media houses
- They are better suited to deal, write and broadcast issues related to gender bias, violence and gender equality
- Women tend to be honest, serious and hardworking.



Muhammad Zamir, Chief Information Commissioner, Government of Bangladesh, Hugh C. Orozco, Chief of Party – DAI/USAID PROGATI, and guests are seen with a group of News Network female fellows on journalism in a certificate giving ceremony held on 8 December 2010 at Dhaka.

#### Previous partners



Royal Danish Embassy



News Network envisions a stable nation, where citizens are aware of their rights, enjoy freedom of expression, live with dignity and enjoy gender equality and where the media are free.

#### The Programme

Currently supported by



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#### OUR AGENDA

- To promote of freedom of expression, freedom of media, human rights and gender equality
- Work for developing the professional capacity of journalists, promotion of investigative journalism
- Encourage young women to take up journalism as a profession
- Promoting investigative journalism and right to information
- Sensitise media people on crucial social issues including Right to the Information Act, democracy, good governance, transparency and promotion of access to justice
- Motivate children and youths to build themselves as good citizens
- Promote secularism, tolerance and peace in society, and also the rights of ethnic and indigenous people
- Organise dialogues, seminars, workshops and discussion meetings on issues of national importance.



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