

## Development Programme for RURAL JOURNALISTS



A group of young journalists covering a field assignment

## Development Programme for RURAL JOURNALISTS

This is to impart training to rural journalists on the basics of journalism. The idea is to sharpen their knowledge about journalism and help them understand the profession better. The programme seeks to improve the skills of rural journalists in gathering, understanding and dissemination of news and information both for their local news outlets and the national ones.

Rural journalists are often the primary sources of news and information. So, it is highly important that they understand the basics of the profession and the ethics and principles associated with it. They must adhere to the principles of objectivity and accuracy. If any error or mistake is committed at the grassroots level of journalism, it affects the

credibility at the national level, too. By the time the mistake is corrected the damage is already done, sometimes beyond repair. Rural journalists often fail in maintaining accuracy or objectivity not because they have such intention, but mostly because they lack proper knowledge, awareness and motivation about the principles of the profession. Training can improve their understanding of the profession, the techniques, the art of gathering and writing news keeping high the principles of accuracy, fairness and objectivity.

The ordinary people, a large part of them still illiterate, have faith in journalists. They believe journalists stand against injustice and work for the welfare of society. This reliance on the media makes journalists even more accountable and responsible to people. Citizens expect the journalists to expose corruption, injustice and unfair deals.

So, the journalists, especially those based in rural areas, must be professionally upright and honest. They must stay away from conflict of interests.



Two female journalists covering an assignment arranged by News Network in Cox's Bazar as part of their training



A group of young rural journalists in Dinajpur preparing to join a discussion in a workshop

### Relating it to achieving MDGs

Bangladesh is just three years away from the UN-set deadline to achieve the MDGs. While the United Nations recognises that Bangladesh is progressing satisfactorily in achieving the targets to reduce child and maternal mortality and universal primary education, there still much remains to be done. Rural journalists have a role not only to report about the progress but to analyse and interpret the strong and weak points, where the government is lagging behind.



A vibrant rural market showing the sign of changing rural economy

It is expected to be a self-propelled and self-motivated programme. Once we create a new generation of skilled journalists in rural areas, their employers will be encouraged to provide them with jobs and keep them in their organisations.

The challenge here is to make them understand and realise the value of skill development training. Thus the support of the media houses will be the key to make the programme sustainable.



Farm workers, including women, working on a cropland

### THE PROGRAMME

In partnership with



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.

It promotes freedom of press and expression, human rights along with the rights of the minorities & ethnic groups and access to information. It promotes good governance, accountability and transparency at all levels. It also seeks to develop the capacity of media and bring in more women in journalism.

### OUR AGENDA

- Promotion 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 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 the society, and also the rights of ethnic and indigenous people of the country.
- Organise dialogues, seminars, workshops and discussion meeting on issues of national importance.