Strategic Action Plan on Advocacy for Media Reform in Bangladesh 2025-2030

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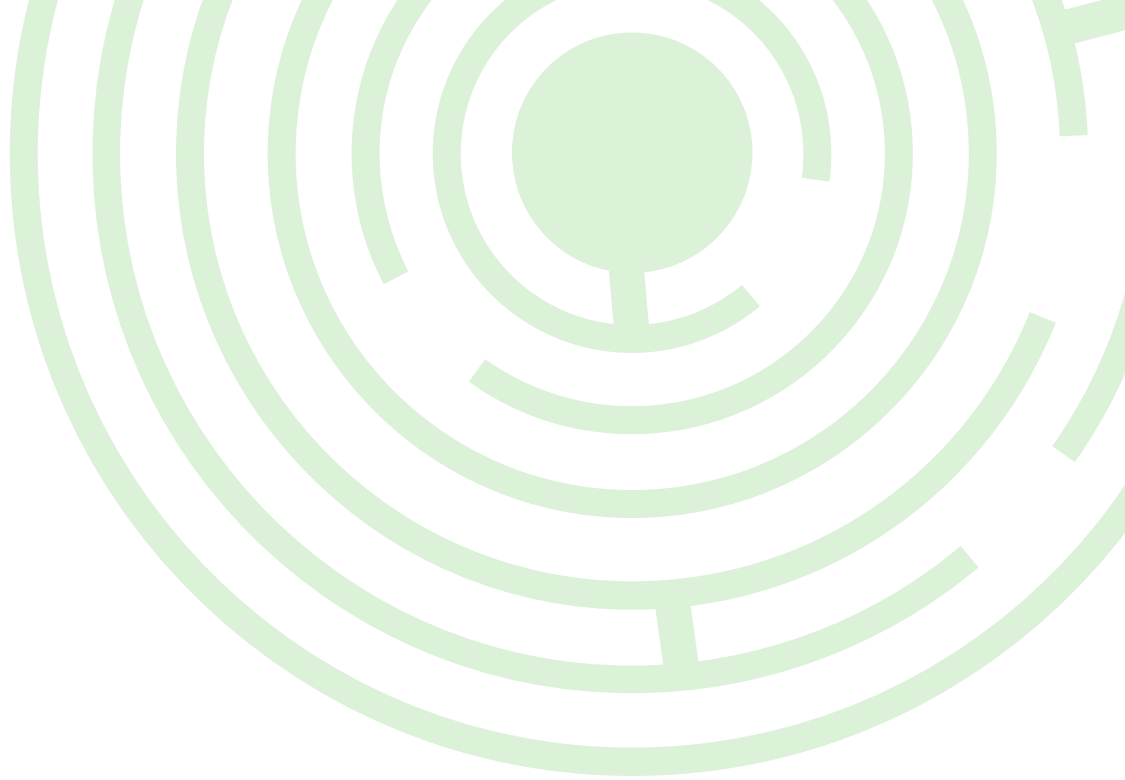**Aktarun Naher**
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Acronyms

ATCO	Association of Television Channel Owners
BJC	Broadcast Journalist Center
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DRU	Dhaka Reporters Unity
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
FAQ	Frequently Asked Question
FIMI	Foreign Information, Manipulation and Interference
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KII	Key Informant Interview
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MFC	Media Freedom Coalition
MRC	Media Reform Commission
MRDI	Media Resources Development Initiative
NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
NOAB	Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh
RSF	Reporters Without Borders
TIB	Transparency International Bangladesh
TRP	Television Rating Point
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WPFI	World Press Freedom Index

Foreword

The news media landscape in Bangladesh stands at a crossroads today. Over the past two decades, a rapid expansion of news outlets and platforms has much reshaped the way of information flow, broadened the methods and channels of citizen engagement and changed their perception of news, and also substantially changed the traditional role of news media in holding the powerful ones accountable. Nonetheless, the expansion and changes brought about have really enhanced the scope for and quality of professional journalism, as news professionals remain stymied by political pressure, restrictive regulatory frameworks, nexus between owners and powerful quarters, and a poor safeguarding mechanism.

Successive governments had failed to take measures to establish a safer and enabling environment for independent journalism through policy measures, institutional development and by effectively addressing transparency and accountability issues. Even as recently as a year ago, the prospect of change seemed impossible as the same model of media ownership and management prevailed.

The changeover in August 2024 following a mass uprising ushered in rare opportunities to reset the country's news media industry reeling from diminishing freedom, lack of creativity and, above all, distrust. The interim administration initiated wide-ranging reforms in key areas, including the media industry, where the newly found opportunities have triggered passionate arguments and discussions in favour of press freedom and independent journalism.

The interim government has formed the Media Reform Commission that has already provided a comprehensive roadmap to transform the country's news media with a stated aim to build a free, independent, inclusive and resilient news media ecosystem.

But translating these recommendations into reality is not the sole responsibility of the government, rather it requires sustained and coordinated action from all stakeholders. With the idea that sustainable reforms cannot be imposed from the outside, but must be driven by the industry itself, Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI), following an extensive, consultative and inclusive process, presents this Strategic Action Plan on Advocacy for Media Reform in Bangladesh with a timeline of 2025-2030 to turn the vision into action.

MRDI is proud to have facilitated this process in partnership with International Media Support (IMS), Denmark.

The action plan reflects the collective vision of a broad range of stakeholders: editors, journalists, news media owners, journalist associations and unions, politicians, academics, civil society actors, policymakers and the development partners. The framework consists of the essential interventions to promote an enabling environment for practising journalism without fear of intimidation.

But the true value of this strategic action plan depends on its potential to mobilize coordinated action. It is both a roadmap and a call to partnership to the government, industry, civil society and international actors to work together in building a free, fair, inclusive and independent news media ecosystem in Bangladesh.

MRDI is thankful to its five-member working group led by journalist and researcher Afsan Chowdhury with members including former senior lecturer of media studies and journalism at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh Nandita Tabassum Khan, journalist and researcher Qurratul-Ain-Tahmina, executive editor of Prothom Alo Sajjad Sharif and former executive director of Channel 24 Talat Mamun for developing the action plan on its behalf. We would like to extend our gratitude to journalist and researcher Priscilla Raj for her time and effort to fine tune and give the document a final shape. MRDI also extends its thanks to everyone who participated in the focus group discussions and key informant interviews for their helpful cooperation. We also acknowledge the contributions by the MRDI staff members who directly or indirectly supported this project.

We believe that the strategic action plan, built through a collaborative approach with the aim to strengthen press freedom and democratic discourse, promote inclusivity and give voice to citizens, has something to offer, at least as a guide and as inspiration, to all those individuals and organisations who believe in the power of journalism.

Executive Summary

The strategic plan in brief

In a coordinated effort to identify the challenges and specify the scope of work in addressing those barriers, the "Strategic Action Plan on Advocacy for Media Reform in Bangladesh" with a timeframe of 2025–2030 has been formulated through a participatory and evidence-based approach. The formulation process ensured inclusivity and sectoral representation in alignment with national priorities, while combined desk-based research, extensive stakeholder consultations, and insights from sector and political specialists on the Media Reform Commission report.

Major challenges addressed

The strategic plan highlights persistent challenges to press freedom in the country, characterised by biased reporting, suppression of dissent, ownership issues, punitive laws, weak enforcement of journalistic code and practices, lack of grievance redressal mechanisms, and inadequate safeguarding measures for journalists. Also legal, political, and economic pressures fuelled by ties between news media owners and power groups continue to erode editorial independence and public trust.

To address the situation, the strategic plan views strong advocacy for establishing the proposed National Mass Media Commission as the best possible solution. It also observes that supporting press freedom needs continued generation of documents and evidence on the obstructions posed against the news media, while identifying the causes and loopholes and the actors posing those barriers.

It also stresses putting forward recommendations to overcome those challenges. The pathway to solution invariably includes strong support for independent investigative journalism, promoting a diverse and safe media environment for journalists to work without fear.

The consultative discussions held to formulate the strategic plan, among other major issues, focused on the media ownership, in particular the frequent misuse of authority to award news media licences by the past political governments to corporate strongmen holding allegiance to them. Despite questionable investments and serious allegations of using news outlets to protect their business interests, obtaining news media licences was a 'piece of cake' affair for the powerful business groups so long as they were allies of the ruling party of the time, eager to push its narratives.

The discussions have also identified the concentration of ownership in a handful of news media groups as harmful as it curbed competition and trust, while their power has allowed their shady dealings in running the media organisations' administration, finance, affairs of circulation and revenue sources go unchallenged.

Hence the strategic plan advocates for transparency in licensing, registration, audits and circulation/TRP disclosure, while stresses partnering with stakeholders who can act as pressure groups. It also promotes policy consultations on ownership and financial disclosure, alongside audience surveys to track trust, habits and expectations of the consumers.

Self-regulation stressed

Ensuring self-regulation in news media is crucial as the sector has been persistently dealing with political interference, ownership concentration, self-censorship and weak internal regulation, leaving little room for enforcing either ethical standards or for redressing the audience grievances.

The strategic plan prioritizes self-regulation by supporting outlets to develop internal codes of practices, establish media ombudsperson offices, and strengthen institutional safeguarding mechanism against intimidation and misinformation. It does all the more so in the face of the recent surge in fake news and information disorder, fuelling violence, deepening polarization and eroding public trust, aggravated by limited newsroom capacity for fact-checking.

The key actions recommended in this regard are capacity building on journalist safety, creating a 24/7 support system for combating disinformation, and integrating fact-checking into journalism education.

Legal reforms to safeguard press freedom, protect journalists

The strategic plan emphasises advocacy on legal reforms to establish a rights-based legal framework, enabling journalists to report without fear of censorship, harassment or arbitrary confinement. To achieve that it recommends facilitating expert-led consultations along with

advocating for the repeal or revision of repressive laws in line with the media reform commission report.

The proposed legal reform as its main objective concerns the welfare, rights and protection of journalists, which is all the more so where women media practitioners are involved. Addressing the issues, the strategic plan recommends advocacy for putting in place a "Journalist Protection Act" and repealing the laws governing criminal defamation.

The proposed law will act as an umbrella, covering the major safeguarding aspects concerning news professionals, giving them enhanced protection against threats, attacks, surveillance, misuse of legal tools, and other physical, digital and psychological risks that they are regularly subjected to while discharging professional responsibilities. It will also help protect them from the oppression they face in the hands of their employers as they refuse to issue news professionals formal job contracts, official identity documents, fair wages, or due benefits.

The proposed repeal of the defamation laws will also crucially help strengthen the safeguarding mechanism of the profession as it will enable journalists to cover news with more independence and without fear.

On the same note, the strategic action plan further stresses and includes the tasks of developing a central safety protocol, providing targeted training, offering psychosocial support to address stress and trauma, as well as legal support when their professional rights and dignity are breached by either employers or other parties.

Visibility and inclusivity

The strategic plan underscores institutionalising fair, accurate and respectful representation across newsrooms, supported by grievance redressal mechanisms for discriminatory content. The step would particularly help enhance the visibility and inclusion of communities often overlooked, such as those marginalized by gender identities, indigenous people, persons with disabilities, and religious or ethnic minorities. Key actions include promoting Gender Charter of Commitment, adopting inclusive policies, developing and monitoring guidelines, building newsroom capacity on fair coverage, and updating journalism curricula.

Capacity building for media literacy and fact checking

To combat the current surge of misinformation, foster critical thinking, and develop informed citizens, media literacy is now crucial. The strategic plan promotes integrating fact-checking and media literacy into national curricula at all levels, distinguishing it from social media literacy. Key actions proposed are national surveys on media literacy, curriculum

modernization to cover artificial intelligence, digital media, verification, safety and ethics, and collaboration with journalism schools to ensure practical and context-relevant skills for an industry-ready generation for quality journalism.

Contextualising press freedom

Contextualising the political, legal and cultural realities of the country, the plan recommends engagement of relevant stakeholders to create an enabling environment for the news media and journalists to operate independently, transparently and safely in service of the public interest.

Democracy, rights and freedom of expression share close connotations and are interlinked, while news media is a significant conduit to disseminate people's views and help people take decisions in consolidating the democratic process. As the fourth pillar of the state, its role is to help create an informed citizenry through ensuring continuous and free flow of authentic information.

The interventions of the strategic action plan to garner safe work environment for the news professionals, while promoting press freedom, operational transparency, policies for journalist welfare and the establishment of an effective self-regulatory mechanism will significantly contribute to enhancing accountability and inclusivity across sectors.

Conclusion

Grounded in the principle that reforms should be driven by the industry itself, the strategic plan is a collective vision of all stakeholders, aligning particularly with the recommendations forwarded by the Media Reform Commission. Aiming at to help bridge the gap between learning and practice as well as strengthening institutions to uphold democratic values and processes, its effective implementation will bring fundamentally positive changes to the impact of news media on both the public life and the affairs of the state.

Context

Over the past two decades, the news media landscape in Bangladesh has experienced rapid expansion in number of outlets, platforms and audience reach. Yet, this growth has fallen short of adequately safeguarding press freedom, ensuring transparency in operations, and maintaining professional ethics in journalism and the long-term viability of news media.

Persistent political influence by successive governments, restrictive laws, corporate-centric ownership, uneven access to resources and the absence of a self-regulatory mechanism have continued to undermine the industry's ability to serve the public interest in the best way possible.

As the free and independent news media, a fundamental pillar of a just, peaceful and inclusive society, empowers citizens to make informed decisions and hold those in power accountable, restrictive regulations imposed by previous regimes had curtailed space for expression and posed challenges for the news media to fulfilling its role as the fourth estate.

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) ranked Bangladesh at 165 in 2024, down from 118 in 2002 in the World Press Freedom Index. In August 2024, a month-long student movement turned into a mass uprising, ousted the Awami League regime when the party chief had to flee the country. Other party leaders and activists either had to flee or go into hiding to avoid public outrage or arrest on criminal charges. Amidst the ensuing turmoil, the interim government led by Dr Muhammad Yunus took over. His government formed reform commissions, including the Media Reform Commission, with a pronounced aim at formulating sets of recommendations to initiate substantial reforms to the country's major sectors.

The Media Reform Commission (MRC) has been tasked with reviewing the current state of affairs concerning the news media, identifying the obstacles for independent journalism, and outlining the steps to establish an effective self-regulatory mechanism to make sure that journalists and news media organizations remain accountable to the profession.

Regarding the country's evolving situation of media freedom, the media reform commission report highlights that "Following the transition from military autocracy to democracy through the mass uprising in 1990, a significant improvement in media freedom was observed… Media freedom gradually contracted during the power transitions between the Awami League and BNP until 2006, and risks for journalists increased."

"In this period (past 15 years), the media have not only been directly attacked by the government and its supporters in the campaign to eliminate the opposition, but state institutions have also failed to provide legal protection. Law enforcement agencies have violated fundamental rights and engaged in brutality, while the courts have been unable to protect journalists, with some judges even accused of political bias," the report also points out.

In the RSF index released in 2025, Bangladesh moved up 16 spots now ranking 149th out of 180 countries. Nevertheless, this upward shift has not yet translated into substantial progress on the ground as false cases are still allegedly filed against journalists and other obstacles continue to persist, effectively curbing media freedom.

News reports suggest that fear for physical safety and instances of judicial harassment against journalists still remain widespread. Transparency International Bangladesh, in an August 2025 research report, said that 496 journalists were subjected to harassment in a year since August 2024 with nearly half of them facing murder charges. Additionally, at least 150 journalists lost their jobs, including from top positions like editors and newsroom managers, while some news outlets experienced mob attacks in a bid to silence and intimidate journalists. A new joint assessment by the UNDP and UNESCO, released in July 2025 finds that political pressure and restrictive laws still pose serious threat to media freedom and public trust in the country.

Amid the backdrop, the post-August 2024 period has brought both opportunities and challenges. An industry, long defined by censorship, editorial interference and fear, is now in transition, experiencing a renewed sense of freedom and optimism. The media reform commission in its report, submitted to the interim government, has provided a comprehensive roadmap for transforming the country's news media environment into one that is free, independent, inclusive and resilient.

The report, while delineating the ground realities and challenges, typically characterised by crisis in ownership, a lack of government policy support, accountability issues, absence of self-regulation, and operational issues, offers a roadmap, proper implementation of which, as the commission maintains, will effectively support the news media to become independent, objective, responsible, and strong in legal, institutional and financial aspects.

The roadmap includes 21 broad recommendations alongside two draft ordinances: one for a "National Mass Media Commission" and another for a "Journalist Protection Act".

Translating the recommendations into reality requires sustained and coordinated action from all relevant actors that include the government and regulatory bodies, political fronts, owners and editorial bodies, news media practitioners, journalist associations and unions, academia, civil society and non-governmental organizations, development partners and international actors and consumers.

Methodology

The "Strategic Action Plan on Advocacy for Media Reform in Bangladesh" to facilitate the implementation of media reforms in Bangladesh is an outcome of a participatory and evidence-based approach, ensuring inclusivity, sectoral representation, and alignment with national priorities. The process combines desk-based research with extensive stakeholder engagement to generate actionable and consensus-driven actions.

To accomplish the assignment, MRDI formed a five-member working group with representations from print and broadcast media, researchers and academics to review available documents and carry out an in-depth analysis of the Media Reform Commission report to prioritise key thematic areas to set up base for the strategic action plan. The group, led by journalist and researcher Afsan Chowdhury, has as members former senior lecturer of media studies and journalism at University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh Nandita Tabassum Khan, journalist and researcher Qurratul-Ain-Tahmina, executive editor of Prothom Alo Sajjad Sharif and former executive director of Channel 24 Talat Mamun. MRDI provided all technical, secretarial, logistics and knowledge support in developing the plan.

To ensure a comprehensive, inclusive and evidence-based approach, the development process of the plan combined three methods of data gathering and consultations:

1. Desk review

The working group comprehensively desk reviewed the current landscape of news media operations in the country, identifying reform priorities and examining relevant legal, policy and institutional frameworks. The reviewed documents are Media Reform Commission report, policy documents, academic research and regional/international best practices in media reforms. The desk review outlined the thematic focus of the process and guided the design of stakeholder engagement activities.

2. Stakeholder consultations

The working group gathered valuable inputs from seven group consultations covering a broad range of stakeholders, including editors and newsroom gatekeepers from national and community news outlets, journalists, representatives from journalist unions and

editorial associations, journalism academics, members from the civil society organisations and non-government organisations, and development partners. Each consultation gathered perspectives of the participants on the current challenges and opportunities for media reforms where the groups together identified sector-specific priorities and feasible interventions, facilitating consensus building on the reform process.

3. Key informant interviews (KIIs)

Key informant interviews were conducted among representatives from newspaper owners, editorial leadership, state institutions for journalism capacity building, political parties, and media development cum research organisations. Using a semi-structured set of questionnaire, the KIIs collected views on the ground realities and practical considerations for implementation of news media reforms. The in-depth insights provided context specific understanding and complemented findings from the group consultations.

Following the methodology, the working group charted the roadmap for implementing the media reform commission's recommendations under seven interlinked themes:

1. Press freedom
2. Licensing, registration, ownership, and operational transparency
3. Media self-regulation
4. Welfare, rights and protection of journalists
5. Legal reforms
6. Equity, equality and inclusion
7. Journalism education and skill development

This mixed-method approach has helped ensure that the strategic action plan is grounded on evidence, shaped through inclusive dialogue and is realistic in the country context, while it offers a solid outline of time-specific actions and identify responsible actors and stakeholders.

The Action Plan

Overall objective

To promote a free, independent, inclusive and accountable news media ecosystem in Bangladesh through legal, institutional and policy reforms by means of coordinated advocacy and targeted capacity-building initiatives.

Strategic framework

This framework will promote interventions that uphold press freedom, ensure the welfare and safety of journalists, enhance transparency and accountability in news media operations, modernize journalism education, facilitate news media literacy and promote diversity, equity and inclusion in news media. Under the framework actions in following thematic areas will be carried out over the next five years:

1. Press freedom

Free press has always been a myth in Bangladesh, as the country continues ranking low in global press freedom indexes with journalists regularly facing legal, political and economic pressure undermining editorial independence. The immediate past regime of Awami League often referred to increasing number of news media entering the market as evidence of press freedom, while the audience have long expressed dissatisfaction over the independence and credibility of the news media. The dirty nexus between owners and power groups in the format of political, corporate or elites have constantly undermined press freedom, ultimately leading to a loss of public trust in journalism and news institutions.

Selective and biased reporting was common, while suppression of dissenting voices, lack of ownership transparency and the use of punitive laws to silence journalists were regular during the past regime. Meanwhile, years old journalistic codes of ethics enforced by the Bangladesh

Press Council only exist in paper, while institutional mechanisms to protect journalists' rights have always remained weak.

To address these challenges, the strategic action plan will work on the Media Reform Commission's proposal for an independent and legally mandated "National Mass Media Commission" that will emphasise self-regulation rather than state control, thereby balancing press freedom against public accountability. The plan will also take into account the need for promoting a regulatory system for institutionally safeguarding free, safe and diverse news media environment.

Goal

To facilitate a well-informed and connected stakeholder network that will collaboratively advance the establishment of a National Mass Media Commission, promote a regulatory framework for a free and diverse media environment, and facilitate institutional safeguarding and editorial independence for journalists, allow them to work without fear of retaliation, and also uphold ethical standard in news media and redress grievances.

Objective

1.1 To mobilize a well-informed and networked community of stakeholders to facilitate passage of the plan to set up proposed National Mass Media Commission to uphold ethical standards in news media, address challenges facing media, promote journalistic standards, redress grievances and protect news media freedom.

- Encourage and facilitate constructive and action-orientated policy dialogue/consultations with stakeholders.
- Engage with stakeholders, including the editorial bodies, to advocate for the commission and bring voices of the journalist community to make its needs understood among policymakers.
- Engage with the interim government to expedite its inclusion as an ordinance.
- Engage with political parties to secure their commitment for inclusion of the commission in their election manifestos.
- Engage with the next elected government to realise the proposal of an independent and statutory national commission or place the ordinance, if promulgated, before the parliament for enactment.
- Submit petition to the parliament
- Launch public awareness campaigns on the need for transparency, accountability, grievance redressal and restoration of trust in news media institutions.

1.2 Promote a regulatory system conducive to free and diverse news media environment.

- Carry out consultation / survey / research on the news media environment identifying reasons, loopholes and actors as barriers of press freedom and suggesting pathways.

1.3 Promote institutional safeguarding measures for free and independent journalism, enabling reporting without fear of retaliation.

- Support independent start-ups, particularly on investigative journalism, through capacity building on journalism and media viability as well as conducting assessments.

2. Licensing, registration, ownership and operational transparency

The MRC report identified that the past governments allowed free passes to political allies and business groups to establish news outlets ignoring their dubious source of investment. The report highlighted that many of the conglomerates used the news media to shield their business interests and bent their editorial policies to serve the ruling party's narratives. The concentration of multiple outlets' ownership in the hands of a handful of business groups has also hurt competition and eroded public trust in news media, it points. The report stressed disclosure of the source of investment to run news media and source of income of the outlets as well. Keeping in view the operational and financial transparency and accountability of news media, under the strategic action plan, stakeholders together will act as pressure groups while taking advocacy initiatives regarding transparency in licensing and registration process and also disclosure of the audit reports, of newspaper's authentic circulation figures.

Goal

To enhance transparency and accountability in the news media through standardized audits, enforce public disclosure of information, and facilitate open dialogue between news media and audiences ensuring that news media practices align with public expectations for more meaningful and trustworthy engagement.

Objective

2.1 Promote transparency and accountability measures, including audit transparency and disclosure of circulation and TRP data.

- Conduct policy consultation on transparency and accountability to promote disclosure of ownership and finances based on findings of the MRC report.

2.2 Bridge the gap between expectations from the news media and reality for a meaningful media-audience engagement.

- Conduct audience survey to find changes in news consumption habits, level of trust and public expectations from news media.
- Encourage and support news outlets to develop internal audience assessment mechanism to complement national data.

3. Media self-regulation

Despite Bangladesh's diverse news media landscape, challenges in the form of political interference, media ownership concentration, and self-censorship persist. Also, journalists in their day-to-day operations and field investigations face hurdles due to the lack of internal regulations and limited capacity development opportunities. The absence of the self-regulatory mechanism exposes gaps in enforcement of ethical standards and leaves audience without any grievance redressal mechanisms. While a handful of the newsrooms have internal codes of practice and guidance in some formats, adherence to such codes is highly inconsistent.

In recent years, a rapid surge in fake and fabricated news has triggered incidents like mob attacks, violent protests, and communal clashes—some with deadly consequences. Misinformation is eroding public trust, polarizing society, and threatening democratic stability. A widespread lack of fact-checking capacity in the newsroom limits the audience's access to authentic information, making them vulnerable to propaganda and information manipulation. With the crisis grown rather systemic, every legitimate news outlet must acknowledge that its credibility is at stake.

This action plan puts self-regulation in high priority and aims at supporting news outlets in developing internal regulation system, including their codes of practice and guidance to facilitate institutional development as well as to safeguard news media employees from external intimidation and from the wave of mis/disinformation threats.

Goal

To facilitate a safe, enabling and accountable news media ecosystem keeping at its centre the principles of quality journalism through development of effective self-regulatory frameworks, effective grievance redressal mechanisms, protection against backlash and strengthening news media integrity through advocacy and capacity building on best practices.

Objective

3.1 An enabling and safe news media ecosystem supporting quality journalism, facilitating institutional development and offering internal accountability frameworks to redress grievances.

- Develop separate codes of practice and guidance for news media owners and editors with their endorsement.
- Hold lobby meetings with editors and owners of news outlets on establishing the office of media ombudspersons

3.2 Promote protection and safeguard for journalists to work without fear of backlash.

- Capacitate journalists on security, safety, and protection.

3.3 Enhance information integrity of newsrooms by building relevant capacities through adoption of best practices and policies.

- Establish a 24/7 support system for news media for better protection against mis/disinformation traps and facilitate channelling of authentic information.
- Ensure capacity building of journalists to better prepare on prevention of mis/disinformation and Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) through following standard and due verification processes.
- Support journalism schools to integrate fact-checking in curriculum and establish practice labs.

4. Welfare, rights and protection of journalists

Journalists in Bangladesh live with intimidation and fear of attacks and under surveillance from different agencies. They are also familiar with traditional aggression through abuse of legal instruments. Much of this dire reality stems from the absence of effective legal mechanisms to safeguard journalists. The enactment of a "Journalists' Protection Act" and the

repeal of criminal defamation laws that are applied to journalists can directly address this chilling effect on journalism.

Gross breach of rights at the workplace by employers has left the news media industry as a severely exploitative sector and journalism as a most vulnerable profession. Journalists here often have to work without formal contracts and appointment letters, adequate pay, professional identity cards issued by the employer, without any kind of safety nets.

The media reform commission report broadly highlighted that no journalist should be hired, whether on a temporary, permanent, or contractual basis, without the issuance of formal letter confirming the hiring, a photo ID and salary/payment. Wage disparities and irregular payment of salaries are common although journalists continue to work in an environment that frequently exposes them to physical, digital or psychological threats.

Goal

To facilitate a collaborative network of stakeholders to advocate for the proposed Journalist Protection Act as well as promote comprehensive safety measures and fair employment standards in the news media industry.

Objective

4.1 Facilitate a well-informed and networked community of stakeholders to work collaboratively for the passage of the proposed Journalist Protection Act.

- Encourage and facilitate constructive and action-orientated policy dialogue/consultations with stakeholders for enacting the Journalist Protection Act to enable an environment where rights of the journalists are protected.
- Engage with the interim government to expedite its promulgation as an important ordinance.
- Engage with political parties to secure their commitment for the act in their election manifestos.
- Engage with the next elected government to enact the proposed Journalist Protection Act or place the ordinance, if promulgated, before the parliament for enactment.
- Submit petition to the parliament.

4.2 Enhance knowledge and skills of the journalists and news media employees on safety, security, and protection.

- Develop a standard protocol on journalist safety, covering prevention, protection and prosecution strategies through a consultative process with endorsement by news media owners and editors.

- Conduct journalist safety training, both physical and digital, in newsrooms.
- Assess and develop a support mechanism to address the prevalence of stress, trauma, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder among journalists and offer psychosocial support.

4.3 Promote good practices in standardizing salaries, issuing appointment letters and ID cards, and ensuring safety and legal support as vital to strengthen job security and dignity of journalist community.

- Negotiate with news media owner associations to formalize employment contracts, salary scales, IDs and benefits.

5. Legal reforms

Legal reform is crucial to establish a clear and protective environment in Bangladesh that safeguards journalists' rights to report without fear of censorship, harassment and arbitrary detention. Strong legal protections promote transparency, accountability and independence for news media that are essential for a healthy democracy. Additionally, updating or enacting new laws can help address multifaceted challenges enabling journalists to operate more freely and responsibly. Without proper legal provisions, journalists remain vulnerable to pressure from political forces and power holders, threats and restrictions that hinder the growth of a vibrant and trustworthy media landscape.

Goal

To promote a rights-based legal environment for journalism that protects rather than restricts journalistic good practices.

Objective

5.1 Promote a legal ecosystem that protects rather than restricts journalistic practice.

- Facilitate expert-led legal reform consultations.
- Launch media advocacy campaigns to build pressure for repeal or revision of repressive clauses from laws based on the MRC report.

6. Equity, equality and inclusion

The absence of robust policies and ethical guidelines in the country's news media has led to a critical gap: the persistent underrepresentation and misrepresentation of marginalized communities. Research has repeatedly shown that deprived segments of the population, including those ignored due to gender identities, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and religious or ethnic minorities, are either invisible in the mainstream narratives or represented through harmful stereotypes and tokenism.

To mend the situation news outlets must institutionalize mechanisms to ensure fair, accurate and respectful representation of all communities. This must go hand in hand with a clear grievance redressal process to address discriminatory or exclusionary content.

Goal

To achieve equality, equity, dignity and sensitivity in the news media specifying standards, policies and actions for fair coverage of all communities.

Objective

6.1 Facilitate inclusive practices to achieve equity, equality, dignity, sensitivity and inclusion of diverse voices in the news media in a transformative approach that specifies standards, policies and actions for fair coverage of all communities.

- Implementation of the MRDI Gender Charter of Commitment in the news media.
- Support news media to adopt policies, processes, structures and practices that are inclusive and free from discrimination.
- Develop and ensure implementation and monitoring of institutional gender policies, guidelines/ codes of ethics and professional standards.
- Capacity building of newsrooms on fair coverage that mainstreams diverse voices maintaining highest ethical norms, professional standards and due sensitivity.
- Update the gender part of the journalism curriculum in line with the spirit of Gender Charter of Commitment.

7. Journalism education and skills development

Strengthening media literacy has emerged as an urgent priority to combat misinformation, promote critical thinking, and foster informed citizenry in the country. Immediate action is required to integrate media literacy across all educational levels through curriculum review and revision, particularly by incorporating dedicated modules in ICT and civics education. These

collaborative efforts will ensure that media literacy becomes an institutionalized component of education reform, equipping future generations with the tools to navigate the complex information ecosystem of the digital age. Fact-checking should be integrated into the news literacy program. News literacy and social media literacy are distinct and should be addressed separately.

Goal

To modernize journalism education and strengthen industry skills through curriculum development, promoting news media literacy and bridging the gap between learning and practice.

Objective

7.1 Facilitate inclusion of media literacy into all educational levels to build informed and critically engaged. citizens.

- Initiate sustained advocacy to formally integrate media literacy into the national curriculum at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.
- Conduct national survey on media literacy to assess the level of understanding among citizens.

7.2 Create a skilled, ethical, and future-ready generation of journalists.

- Organize roundtable discussions and policy forums to co-create media literacy content and ensure its contextual relevance.
- Modernize curricula to include AI, digital media, verification, safety, and ethics.
- Partner with journalism schools to revise curricula.

Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Successful implementation of the Strategic Action Plan on Advocacy for Media Reform will require active participation, ownership and coordinated action of a wide range of stakeholders. This plan will apply the lens of diversity, equality and inclusion and partnership-based approach in its implementation. The process will engage all relevant stakeholders who bring unique expertise, influence and responsibility in implementation of the plan. Below is a description of key stakeholders and their roles and potential contributions:

- **Government, legislative and regulatory bodies:** The process will engage with policymakers, legislators, relevant ministries (Ministry of Information & Broadcasting; Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs) and departments, and Parliamentary Standing Committees, particularly for facilitating legislative and institutional reforms. Proposed National Mass Media Commission, if established, will lead the process.

- **Interim government formed reform commissions:** Collective and individual level engagement and buy-in from members of the National Consensus Commission, Media Reform Commission and other reform commissions will help successful implementation of the advocacy initiatives.

- **Political fronts:** The work on press freedom, legislative reforms and protection of journalists is critically interlinked and dependent on the commitment and willingness of political parties. This initiative will engage influential actors of different political parties to secure their support for press freedom and legal and institutional reforms through inclusion of the priorities in their election manifestos, while urging them to act as pressure groups for their implementation.

- **Owners' associations:** Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (NOAB) and Association of Television Channel Owners (ATCO) will be involved as important stakeholders for influencing policy reforms, resource allocation and promoting good business practices.

- **Editorial bodies:** To align editorial leadership with the action plan, Editors' Council and Organization of the Editors of Local Newspapers will be engaged for interventions related to industry-wide reforms, including self-regulation, journalistic standards, ethics and practices as well as rights, safety and welfare.

- **Journalism practitioners:** Editors from national and community news outlets will be engaged in the implementation of self-regulatory mechanism and industry-oriented reforms as well as in raising awareness and consensus to bring meaningful changes.

- **Professional media associations and forums:** Representatives from journalist unions, associations and forums, including National Press Club, Broadcast Journalist Center (BJC), Dhaka Reporters Unity, will be engaged to act as pressure groups for fair and safe working conditions for journalists.

- **Academia and research:** Academics and journalism educators along with researchers will be engaged in interventions to generate evidence-based documentation and to support bringing changes in journalism curriculum, integrating media literacy into the education system, and bridging the gap between learning and practices.

- **Civil society and NGOs:** Representatives from civil society organizations (CSOs) and national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will engage in dialogues advocating for press freedom, journalist safety and diversity in news media representation. Engagement of international NGOs will help bring global perspectives and technical expertise in implementing the plan.

- **UN agencies, development partners and international actors:** United Nations agencies and development partners will act as pressure groups for bringing meaningful change as well as to support funding, guide with policy advice and provide technical assistance for implementation of the plan. Members of the Media Freedom Coalition will also be instrumental in advocacy initiatives related to press freedom and the safety of journalists. These international actors can also facilitate the sharing of global best practices aligned with the interventions of this plan.

- **Consumers:** The strategic action plan will gather expectations from consumers in audience surveys and also engage them in media literacy initiatives.

- **Legal practitioners:** The plan will engage association of legal practitioners and organizations providing legal support.

Risk and Mitigation Strategies

This plan acknowledges potential risks that may arise from external factors, programmatic and internal challenges. A thorough risk assessment has been conducted to anticipate and address these challenges effectively. MRDI will continuously monitor the evolving landscape and adapt its strategies to ensure success of the plan.

Risk Category	Potential Risk	Mitigation Measure
Political & Regulatory	Media Reforms may not be a priority for the interim government	• Engage with the interim government and Media Reform Commission members to stress its importance. • Facilitate news media actors, talk show participants and opinion pieces writers to talk about, write on importance of meaningful media reform. • Do advocacy for expediting its inclusion as an ordinance which will create a good starting point for further advocacy in the future.
	Advocacy process may delay due to elections	• Plan the course of action by keeping the probable election dates in mind and adjust accordingly. • Engage with key leaders of political parties to include media reform agendas during election campaigns to keep the issue alive.
	Elected government may show reluctance in implementing the recommendations	• Engage with the next elected government focusing the importance of an independent commission for mass media, the need for journalist protection and review of existing laws hindering independent journalism. • Facilitate series of consultations with news media decision makers to continue publishing opinion pieces in favour of media reforms. • Submit petition of public interest to the parliament to raise discussions among law makers after election.

Risk Category	Potential Risk	Mitigation Measure
	Political parties may lose interest after election	• Engage with political parties to secure their commitment on implementing the major recommendations, particularly on forming an independent commission, in their election manifestos. • Ensure political parties' participation in policy advocacy discussions • Determine the scope of further engagement with political parties depending on outcomes of evidence-based consultation, research and documentation on news media freedom.
	Legal reform advocacy may face restrictions	• Conduct a legal review before launching advocacy. • Involve legal experts in consultation meetings. • Encourage law professionals to write op-eds highlighting legal aspects of media reform process. • Encourage bar members to put their comments on drafts of proposed laws. • Enlist legal experts for setting up legal support group for the news media.
Stakeholder Engagement	Owners and editorial bodies may not agree to cooperate as some proposed reforms may affect personal interest	• Try to point out the probable points of disagreement before consultation meetings and lobby in smaller group arrangement. • Host inclusive consultations before finalizing positions. • Build consensus on core shared goals even if structural disagreements remain. • Utilize the existing relation of trust between organizations in favour of press freedom and the editors' community to mitigate major disagreements.
	Some stakeholders may have bias	• Use diverse spokespersons from different sectors. • Avoid overrepresentation of any one group in advocacy events. • Release clarifying statements and third-party endorsements to counter bias allegations.

Risk Category	Potential Risk	Mitigation Measure
	Limited journalist participation	• Mobilize relationship of trust with news media. • Guarantee confidentiality for journalists supportive of press freedom. • Engage through journalist unions and professional networks. • Use understanding about work of journalists to find out which outlets and reporters align with the cause.
Operational and Coordination Risks	Potential gaps in coordination	• Use network of advocates in relevant sectors. • Coordinate regularly with the actors. • Use shared communication platforms for updates. • Set a dedicated coordination office to restore alignment.
	Resource constraints	• Secure funding support from multiple sources. • Partner with NGOs, academic institutions and donor agencies. • List activities on the basis of priority and scale of work scope.
	Lack of available research and information	• Conduct baseline surveys and stakeholder mapping before campaigns. • Conduct desk review of media grievances and international best practices. • Conduct media monitoring to track previous coverage and find out areas of importance and scope of improvement. • Partner with research institutions or think tanks to fill gaps quickly.
Public Perception and Communication Risks	Misinformation campaigns	• Prepare a proactive communication plan with FAQs. • Monitor news media for misinformation. • Respond quickly with fact-based corrections. • Launch a targeted myth-busting campaign with credible voices.

Risk Category	Potential Risk	Mitigation Measure
	Low public awareness	- Find out gaps through consultations and design activities based on findings - Use relatable messaging focusing on how the commission benefits the public. - Use expertise of grassroots actors and influencers. - Leverage social media platforms - Mobilize news media to intensify campaigns with local events and storytelling content showing real cases of grievances.
	Media backlash	- Engage editorial bodies to create a positive attitude on media reform process. - In case of incidents of backlash, hold public debates and panels to explain the commission's safeguarding measures.
	Equity and inclusion activities for deprived and marginalized groups may face obstacle	- Hold intensive consultations meetings with stakeholders. - Influence teachers and students to be gender sensitive. - Include possible dissenters in the advocacy consultations.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)

The Strategic Action Plan for Advocacy for its successful management and completion mandatorily needs to follow the monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning framework. The coordination office will use a comprehensive approach of data collection, analysis and reporting to monitor effectiveness of the strategic interventions and to reflect on what is working, what is not, and how improvements can be made.

Due to the changing democratic scenario in Bangladesh in the coming five years, this plan acknowledges potential risks that may arise from external factors, programmatic as well as internal challenges, but also actively considers different approaches to ensure that evolving landscape is closely monitored and strategies are adapted accordingly as a response to the changes having potential impact on the plan.

A logical framework with indicators will be developed for monitoring of the process, involving professionals engaged in the implementation. A sustainability strategy will accompany the overall strategic framework.

Call for Action

The current context and realities in the country underscore the urgent need for bold reform measures to pave the way forward for a free, fair, diverse and independent news media environment. The recommendations of the Media Reform Commission present a timely opportunity to address systemic challenges through wide-ranging reforms. It, however, requires coordinated and sustained advocacy efforts by all stakeholders to ensure that the recommendations do not fade away over time.

This Strategic Action Plan for Advocacy developed through a comprehensive and inclusive process provides clear and actionable steps, keeping in view the country's political, industry and institutional realties. Meaningful change in the news media industry must be led from within rather to be imposed from outside. This plan has, therefore, been developed taken into account of opinions of editors, journalists, news media owners, civil society, academia and development partners to ensure that it reflects the collective vision of those at the heart of the industry.

The strategic action plan outlines a roadmap with urgent priorities and long-term goals as well as actionable steps to bring all relevant stakeholders together to build consensus in translating the recommendations into action over the 2025–2030 period with the broader aim that we all vision: An independent news media environment that safeguards press freedom, protect journalists, improves transparency and promotes diversity and inclusion, effectively serving as a corner stone of the democratic future of Bangladesh.

Adequate resources and multi-stakeholder partnerships will be critical for greater coherence, efficiency and impact of this action plan. Organisations with experience and understanding of the news media landscape and its operations shall be assigned to coordinate this process in partnership with all development partners and stakeholders who share the vision of a news media ecosystem that truly serves the public interest.

This plan calls on donors, development partners, UN bodies and philanthropic institutions to join forces to co-create the initiatives aligned with their strategic priorities to enable a free, independent, inclusive, and accountable news media ecosystem in Bangladesh.

Strategic Action Plan on Advocacy for
Media Reform in Bangladesh (2025-2030)

Thematic area	Scope of work	Suggestive interventions	Indicator against thematic area	Time frame			Stakeholders/ Actors
				Immediate (6 months)	Short-term (2 years)	Long-term (3-5 years)	
Press Freedom	Mobilize a well-informed and networked community of stakeholders to facilitate passage of the plan to set up proposed National Mass Media Commission to uphold ethical standards in news media, address challenges facing media, promote journalistic standards, redress grievances and protect news media freedom.	Encourage and systematically facilitate constructive and action-orientated policy dialogue/ consultations with stakeholders.	• A well-informed community of stakeholders formed to push establishment of National Mass Media Commission. • Evidence generated for promoting a regulatory system favouring press freedom and journalistic standards.				• Ministry of Information & Broadcasting • Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs • NOAB, ATCO • Editors' Council • BJC • Legal experts • Unions and associations • Academics • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
		Engage with stakeholders, including editorial bodies in thematic stakeholder convening to advocate					• Editors' Council • BJC • Editors of national and community news outlets

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		for the commission and bring voices of the journalist community to make its real needs understood among policymakers.					- Academics - Unions and associations - Media Freedom Coalition members - UN agencies and development partners - International and local NGOs and CSOs - Bar Association
		Engage with the interim government to expedite its inclusion as an ordinance.					- Editors' Council - BJC - NOAB and ATCO - Editors of national and community news outlets - National Consensus Commission members - Media Reform Commission members - Other reform commission members
		Engage with political parties to secure their commitment on the need for the National Mass Media Commission in their election manifestos.					- Political parties - Media Reform Commission members - Other reform commission members - Editorial and post-editorial writers and talk show personalities

							• Representatives from civil society
		Engage with the next elected government to realise the proposal of an independent and statutory national commission or place the ordinance, if promulgated, before the parliament for enactment.					• Political party in treasury and opposition benches • Parliamentary standing committee on Ministry of Information & Broadcasting • Representatives from civil society • Editors' Council • BJC • Editors of national and community news outlets
		Submit petition to the parliament.					• Representatives from civil society
		Launch public awareness campaigns on the need for transparency, accountability, grievance redressal and restoration of trust in news media institutions.					• UN agencies and development partners • Media Freedom Coalition members • International and local NGOs and CSOs • Academics
	Promote a regulatory system conducive to free	Hold consultation / survey / research on news media environment					• Researchers • News media outlets • Policymakers • Media Freedom Coalition

and diverse news media environment.	identifying reasons, loopholes, actors as barriers of press freedom, suggest pathways.							members • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs • Academics
	Promote institutional safeguarding measures for free and independent journalism, enabling reporting without fear of retaliation.	Support independent start-ups particularly on investigative journalism through capacity building on journalism and media viability as well as conducting assessments.						• Startups • UN agencies and development partners
Licensing, registration, ownership and operational transparency	Promote transparency and accountability measures, including audit transparency and disclosure of circulation and TRP data.	Hold policy consultation on transparency and accountability to promote disclosure of ownership and finances based on findings of the MRC report.	• Expectation of audience on news media transparency gathered through consultation / survey / research.					• Proposed National Mass Media Commission • Ministry of Information and Broadcasting • NOAB, ATCO • Editors' Council • BJC • Journalist unions and associations • UN agencies and development partners • National and local CSOs
	Bridge the gap between expectations from the news	Conduct audience survey to find changes in news consumption habits, level of trust and						• News media • Consumers • Researchers • UN agencies and

	media and reality for a meaningful media-audience engagement.	public expectations from news media.					• development partners • International and national NGOs and CSOs
		Encourage and support news outlets to develop internal audience assessment mechanism to complement national data.					• News media • UN agencies and development partners • International and national NGOs and CSOs
Media self-regulation	An enabling and safe news media ecosystem supporting quality journalism, facilitating institutional development and offering internal accountability frameworks to redress grievances.	Develop separate codes of practice and guidance for news media owners and editors with their endorsement.	• A uniform template on codes of practice and guidance developed and institutional capacity provided. • Concept of media ombudsperson floated. • Support mechanism to prevent mis/disinform ation established. • Knowledge and skills of safety and security increased				• Editors' Council • NOAB, ATCO • BJC • Editors from national and community news outlets • Media Freedom Coalition members • UN agencies and development partners • International and national NGOs and CSOs
		Hold lobby meetings with editors and owners of news outlets on establishing the office of media ombudspersons.					• Editors Council • NOAB, ATCO • BJC • Editors from national and community news outlets • Media Freedom Coalition members • UN agencies and development partners

			among journalists.				• International and national NGOs and CSOs
	Promote protection and safeguard for journalists to work without fear of backlash.	Build capacity of the journalists on security, safety, and protection.					• News outlets • Journalist associations and forums • UN agencies and development partners • International and national NGOs and CSOs
	Enhance information integrity of newsrooms by building relevant capacities through adoption of best practices and policies.	Establish a 24/7 support system for news media to provide robust protection against mis/disinformation traps and facilitate channelling of authentic information.					• News outlets • UN agencies and development partners • International and national NGOs and CSOs
		Build capacity of journalists to become strongly equipped to prevent mis/disinformation, Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI) and verification.					• News outlets • UN agencies and development partners • International and national NGOs and CSOs
		Support journalism schools to integrate fact-checking in					• Public and private journalism schools

		journalism curriculum and establish practice labs.					• Academics
Welfare, rights and protection of journalists	Facilitate a well-informed and networked community of stakeholders to work collaboratively for the passage of the proposed Journalist Protection Act.	Encourage and facilitate constructive and action-orientated policy dialogue/ consultations with stakeholders for enacting the Journalist Protection Act.	• A community of stakeholders formed to collectively push enactment of journalist protection act. • A standard protocol on journalist safety developed. • Lobbying held with the owners for fair employment standards of journalists.				• Ministry of Information & Broadcasting • Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs • NOAB, ATCO • Editors' Council • BJC • Legal experts • Unions and associations • Academics • Media Freedom Coalition members • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
		Engage with the interim government to expedite its inclusion as an ordinance.					• Editors' Council • BJC • NOAB and ATCO • Editors from national and community news outlets

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							• Consensus Commission members • Media Reform Commission members • Other reform commission members
		Engage with political parties to secure their commitment on the urgency of the act and its inclusion in their election manifestos.					• Political parties • Media Reform Commission members • Other reform commission members • Editorial and post-editorial writers and talk show personalities • Representatives from civil society
		Engage with the next elected government to realise the proposal of the Journalist Protection Act or place the ordinance, if promulgated, before the parliament for enactment.					• Political party in treasury and opposition benches • Parliamentary standing committee on Ministry of Information & Broadcasting • Representatives from civil society • Editors' Council • BJC

							• Editors from national and community news outlets
		Submit petition to the parliament.					• Representatives from civil society
	Enhance knowledge and skills of the journalists and news media employees on safety, security, and protection.	Develop a standard protocol on journalist safety covering prevention, protection and prosecution strategies through a consultative process with endorsement by news media owners and editors.					• NOAB, ATCO • Editors' Council • BJC • Legal experts • Unions and associations • Academics • Media Freedom Coalition members • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
		Conduct journalist safety training, both physical and digital, in newsrooms.					• News outlets • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
		Assess and develop a support mechanism to address prevalence of stress, trauma, anxiety and post-traumatic					• Journalists • News outlets • UN agencies and development partners

		stress disorder among journalists and offer psychosocial support.					• International and local NGOs and CSOs
	Promote good practices in standardizing salaries, issuing appointment letters and ID cards, and ensuring safety and legal support as vital to strengthen job security and dignity of journalist community.	Negotiate with news media owner associations to formalize employment contracts, salary scales, IDs, and benefits.					• NOAB, ATCO • Unions and associations • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
Legal reform	Promote a legal ecosystem that protects rather than restricts journalistic practice.	Facilitate expert-led legal reform consultations.	• Media campaigns for a rights-based legal environment for journalism.				• NOAB, ATCO • BJC • Editors' Council • Legal experts • Unions and associations • Academics • Media Freedom Coalition members • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs

		Launch media advocacy campaigns to build pressure for repeal or revision of repressive clauses from laws based on MRC report.						• NOAB, ATCO • BJC • Editors' Council • Legal experts • Unions and associations • Academics • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
Equity, equality and inclusion	Facilitate inclusive practices to achieve equity, equality, dignity, sensitivity and inclusion of diverse voices in the news media in a transformative approach that specifies standards, policies and actions for fair coverage of all communities.	Implementation of the MRDI gender charter of commitment in the news media.	• Standards and policies developed for inclusive presentation and representation. • Knowledge and skills on fair coverage enhanced.					• Owners and editors • Academics • Media Freedom Coalition members • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
		Support news media to adopt policies, processes, structures and practices, promoting inclusion and discrimination-free environment.						• Owners and editors • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
		Develop and ensure implementation and						• Owners and editors

		monitoring of institutional gender policies, guidelines/ codes of ethics and professional standards.						• Academics • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
		Build capacity of newsrooms on fair coverage that mainstreams diverse voices maintaining highest ethical norms, professional standards and due sensitivity.						• Editors • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
		Update the gender part of the journalism curriculum in line with the spirit of Gender Charter of Commitment.						• Academics • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
Journalism education and skills development	Facilitate inclusion of media literacy into all educational levels to build informed and critically engaged. citizens.	Initiate sustained advocacy to formally integrate media literacy into the national curriculum at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.	• Level of media literacy assessed at the national level. • Support provided to higher education institutes to modernize journalism curricula.					• Ministry of Education • Ministry of Primary and Mass Education • Public and private universities • National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) • Academics

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							• UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
		Conduct national survey on media literacy to assess the level of understanding among citizens.					• Academics • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
	Create a skilled, ethical, and future-ready generation of journalists.	Organize roundtable discussions and policy forums to co-create media literacy content and ensure its contextual relevance.					• Curriculum developers • Journalists • Academics • UN agencies and development partners • International and local NGOs and CSOs
		Modernize curricula to include AI, digital media, verification, safety, and ethics.					
		Partner with journalism schools to revise curricula.					

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