

Third Yearly Report
(16 August 2024 - 30 June 2025)

Climate, energy and the media

Prepared by



26 August 2025

Context

Bangladesh, a fast-growing economy in Asia, is on a trajectory to become a middle-income country and striving to become a developed nation by 2041. Its impressive growth performance that has averaged close to 6 percent per annum since the turn of the century fuelled by rising exports, remittances and a booming private sector. Investment, the principal driver of growth has risen from 24 percent of GDP to 32 percent in two decades, according to the World Bank.

Bangladesh aspires to achieve SDG 7 by 2030 and contingent on the steady growth of clean energy. It also has a national target of increasing the share of renewable energy by 20 percent of total consumption within 2030. According to Sustainable & Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA), the share of renewable energy was 3.25 percent in 2019, and according to Energy Tracker, renewable energy in Bangladesh needs US \$70 billion in power investment by 2035 to achieve its renewable energy goals.

The challenge is formidable, but it is rarely discussed in media, while it can play a significant role in not only promoting the clean energy but also to hold the authority and businesses accountable for every dollar invested in this sector. Media coverage around this issue remained limited to post-editorials, occasional reporting of new green ventures and publishing press releases by the government and the companies. But the dire need to diversify energy sources, the impact of fossil fuel on the environment, climate change, and above all, life - is yet underreported.

Strong role of media on promoting renewable energy can foster the pace of adopting new green technologies in power generation, increase use of clean energy in industrial and other productions and also help mitigate the impact of climate change and environmental degradation. This opportunity to translate this critical issue into everyday reporting is often marred by the lack of capacity and resources in the media as a whole, and lack of skills to produce engaging contents to create demand among its audience. Neither there is much collaboration between media and civil society on renewable energy that is observed in many other countries.

Thus, the project targets media and journalists to have greater capacity and a positive mind-set to produce quality stories on climate change, impact of fossil fuel use on environment, the need for clean energy for sustainable development, and ensure transparency and accountability in renewable energy investments.

Project Objective

To bring the sustainable energy goals in policy discussions through engagement of media to play its due role.

Reporting period: 16 August 2024- 30 June 2025

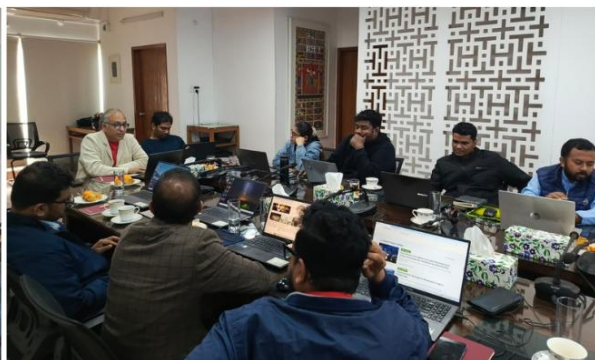
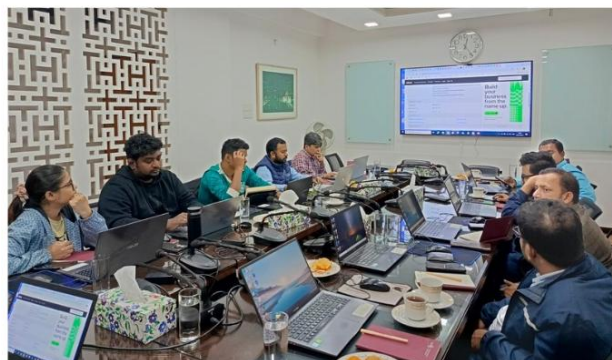
Activities Performed

Activity 1: Study Circle



During the reporting period, MRDI organised five study circles with journalists who had earlier received training and mentorship on climate change and renewable energy reporting. These study circles served as interactive platforms where participants engaged with subject-matter experts to deepen their knowledge and sharpen reporting skills.

- **First Study Circle:** The first session was conducted by Md. Badruddoza Babu, Head of Capacity Building and IJ Help Desk at MRDI on 05 September 2024 where he highlighted the importance of research in generating story ideas, effective research strategies, and narrative techniques to a group of 11 journalists from national news outlets.
- **Second Study Circle:** The second session facilitated was conducted by M. Zakir Hossain Khan, Chief Executive and Managing Director of Change Initiative on 28 October 2024 where the expert discussed different sides of Integrated Energy and Power Master Plan (IEPMP) and how to report on it to a group of 9 journalists from national news outlets.

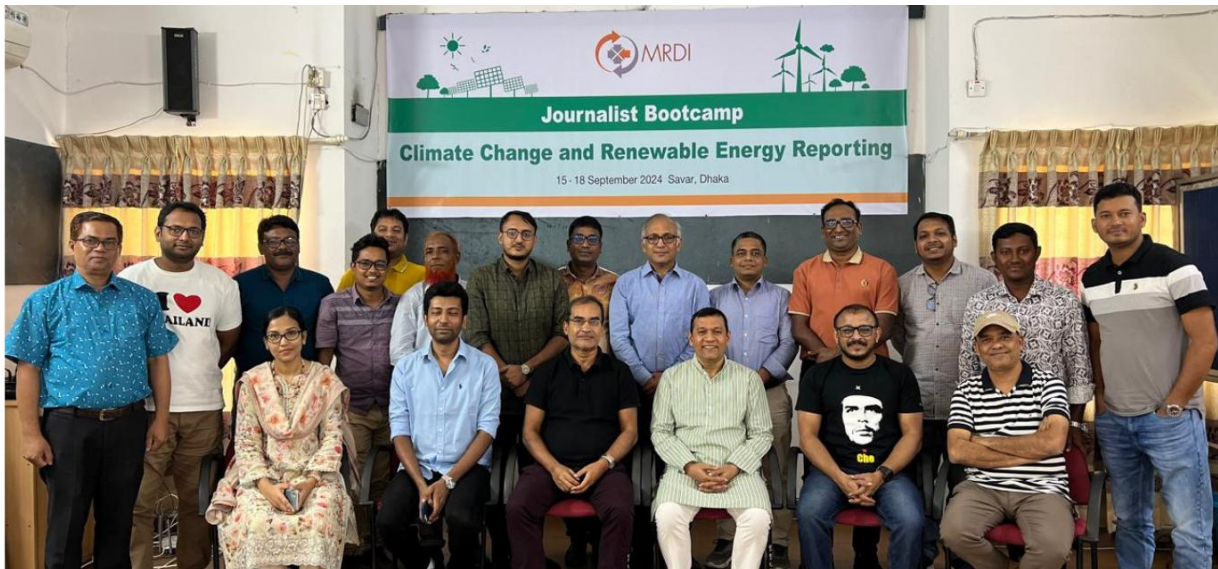


- **Third Study Circle:** Led by journalist and trainer Mohammad Ashraful Hoque, the third study circle on 19 December 2024 focused on interview techniques with 8 participants.
- **Fourth Study Circle:** Conducted by Qadaruddin Shishir, Fact-Checking Editor at AFP Bangladesh, the session on 06 January 2025 introduced fact-checking and verification methods to 10 journalists of national news outlets to strengthen their fact-based reporting.
- **Fifth Study Circle:** During the fifth study circle, 8 journalists of national news outlets who shared key lessons learned from the capacity-building activities to MRDI and the two mentors. MRDI also briefed participants on upcoming activities and encouraged their continued engagement for further learning during the same session organised on 20 March 2025.

Activity 2: Bootcamp



MRDI organised a four-day bootcamp on climate change and renewable energy reporting for correspondents of national news outlets during September 15-18. Although the bootcamp was scheduled for 12 participants, 11 correspondents from national news outlets, including print and TV took part in the training as one participant was unable to attend due to unavoidable circumstances.



Four members of a journalism expert group acted as facilitators and resource person of the sessions, along with external experts. Over the course of the bootcamp with the guidance of 4 journalist and technical mentors, along with issue experts, the participants deepened their understanding of key topics such as climate change, energy transition, and important resources for energy reporting with ideas of integrating public interest, human narratives, investigations, gender and many more. The district participants also finalized their story ideas at the bootcamp in consultation with the mentor.

Activity 3: Mentorship support for bootcamp participants

On the closing day, MRDI awarded 11 journalists of national news outlets with mentorship on climate change and renewable energy reporting to facilitate them to work under supervision of a mentor who provided them with advice and guidance on how to build the story and how to put the skills the mentees learned during the 4-day bootcamp organized earlier into practice. The mentorship began on 19 September 2024 and continued till 30 June 2025.

During the reporting period, nine mentees successfully completed their mentorship and produced stories as planned, all of which were approved by their mentors. Of these, five stories were published, two were submitted and are awaiting newsroom clearance for publication, while one story was rejected by the newsroom due to editorial policy considerations. The terms of reference with remaining two mentees were discontinued as the story planned under the mentorship support could not be completed within the timeline under the project.

Activity 4: Advanced training of renewable energy reporters



A three-day advanced training on climate change and renewable energy reporting for reporters of national news outlets was organised during 22-24 September 2024. Although the training was scheduled for 12 participants, 9 journalists from national news outlets, including print and TV took part in the training as two participants were unable to attend due to unavoidable circumstances and one news outlet did not nominate its participants.

Four members of a journalism expert group acted as facilitators and resource person of the sessions, along with external experts. Over the course of the training with the guidance of 4 journalist and technical mentors, along with issue experts, the participants deepened their understanding of key topics such as energy transition, energy finance, climate and energy campaigns, diplomacies surrounding energy transition, important resources for energy reporting with ideas of integrating public interest, story planning and many more.



On the final day, 11 journalists - nine participants and the two journalists who could not join the training - joined online and finalized their story ideas in consultation with the mentor.

Activity 5: Mentorship support for advanced training participants

On the closing day, it was announced that all 11 participants will receive a two-month mentorship on the subject matter of the training. The mentorship began on 01 November 2024 and continued till 30 June 2025.

However, the project finally awarded 9 journalists of national news outlets with mentorship on climate change and renewable energy reporting to allow them to work under supervision of a mentor who provided them with advice and guidance on how to build the story and how to put the skills the mentees learned during the 3-day advanced training organized earlier into practice.

During the reporting period, five mentees completed their mentorship and published the stories. Two other mentees completed their mentorship and produced the story as planned and approved by the mentor which are awaiting newsroom clearance for publication. The terms of reference with remaining two mentees were discontinued as the story planned under the mentorship support could not be completed within the timeline under the project.

Activity 6- Media Monitoring

MRDI concluded the media monitoring activity on energy transition on 30 June 2025. The monitoring facilitated journalists and stakeholders' access to information on what is happening surrounding renewable energy in Bangladesh and beyond in a common space using reports published in mainstream news outlets. The news clippings are shared in the web-based knowledge hub of MRDI.

Activity 7: Investigative Journalism Partnership

MRDI signed investigative journalism partnership agreement with three national news outlets as a pilot to support newsroom to pursue unique investigative ideas on renewable energy and its importance in addressing climate change hazards that they think are challenging with existing knowledge and resources. In later stage, the project however discontinued agreement with one news outlet.

The partnership with two news outlets, which ended in the reporting period, supported newsrooms to develop in-house resources for quality production. Under the partnership, one news outlet produced a story on energy transition during reporting period as well as two capacity building activities that were facilitated at the news outlet. One other news outlet produced stories on energy transition following a capacity building intervention organised during reporting period and the stories are awaiting clearance from newsroom on publication.

Activity 8: Energy Glossary

MRDI developed a glossary containing jargon and terminology commonly used in the realm of energy to empower journalists with a better understanding of these technical terms, ultimately enhancing the quality of their storytelling. An expert writer with knowledge on the subject matter has drafted the glossary which was reviewed by an editor & reviewer.

A total of 500 copies of the publication were published and 261 of them were distributed to the journalists, civil society members and academia during reporting period.

Activity 9: CSO news media consultation on energy transition advocacy



The shift towards sustainable energy requires informed public discourse and policy advocacy. CSOs bring research-based insights, policy expertise and grassroots perspectives on the energy transition while journalists translate complex issues into accessible stories that inform and engage the public. Keeping the reality in mind, the project brought together Civil Society Organisations working in energy transition and the newsroom editors and gatekeepers in a policy consultation to identify gaps and propose ways forward for stronger collaboration to uncover policy gaps to make energy transition a priority in public discourse. One expert having experience in the energy transition ecosystem presented the keynote paper and two other experts from news media and CSO sector attended a panel discussion at a later stage.

The multi-stakeholder dialogue was attended by 30 participants including CSOs, newsroom editors/gatekeepers, representatives from academia and research organisations who together identified challenges and charted the way forward.