

ANNUAL
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Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)

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FOREWORD



At the juncture of democratic transition after the July uprising in Bangladesh, MRDI is continuing its all-out efforts for achieving a free and diverse media environment and empowering citizens' right of access to information even in an adverse environment for the news media landscape and people's right to information.

The political changeover that took place in August 2024, had major impact on all sectors including the news media. MRDI, as a news media development organization significantly felt the impact and successfully applied its adaptive management capacity, networking with allies including development partners by utilizing the opportunities created and facing the challenging situation.

The interim government, after taking charge, took some reform initiatives including reform of the media. MRDI availed the opportunity of launching discussions on necessary reforms in news media so it can effectively play the role of the fourth pillar of the state with its accountability to the consumers with the realization that democracy cannot function and sustain in absence of a free and vibrant media.

In order to cope with the technological advancement, and further improve the level of transparency, MRDI's efforts are on to automate its management and financial operations by deploying an appropriate ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) solution. MRDI is continuing its support to newsrooms for their digital transformation by facilitating the adoption of new technologies in news media that help journalism remain relevant to its audiences while enabling a shift from legacy structures such as print and traditional broadcast toward digital-first operations. Moreover, MRDI, in its planning and implementation, emphasizes ethical principles and values amid technological and digital shifts, including the use of Artificial intelligence (AI). It has analyzed the state of AI adoption in Bangladeshi newsrooms-from automating transcription and translation to supporting data-driven reporting, content personalization, and newsroom management, while identifying both the opportunities and challenges involved.

Complying with MRDI's strategic objective of working toward gender equity using a gender transformative approach, positive responses from the mainstream news outlets across the country created a momentum in the newsroom in favour of a shift towards gender equity and equality by acknowledging the gender charter of commitment for Bangladeshi news media developed by MRDI involving news media editors, owners, academics, gender specialists, legal expert and researcher in the process.

Engaging high profile companies and key individuals working in news media business and development has added value to the vision of establishing the journalism training institute, a one-stop destination for journalism training, research, and education. The effort is on to establish it on a strong foundation with the aim to launch it next year.

The prevailing political and social constraints necessitate a concerted effort to safeguard and reinforce the channels through which democratic engagement and media freedom are facilitated. MRDI's strategic initiative responds to this urgent need by empowering journalists and citizens alike, equipping them with the tools, knowledge, and platforms necessary to navigate and challenge the encroachments on information dissemination and freedom of expression.

During its journey of more than two decades, MRDI has come across two major shifts in the years 2008 and 2016 in terms of exploring new horizons which placed the organization to a new height. MRDI now plans to shift from an approach of implementing different projects, to the approach of one-programme operation to focus on result-based interventions and face the sustainability challenges in compliance with the organization's strategic plan. This is not merely a continuation of MRDI's legacy but an essential evolution in response to the emergent challenges that threaten democratic integrity in Bangladesh. To take this forward, MRDI opts for a core funding strategy as part of its resource mobilization through exploring partners targeting next fiscal. The approach intends to ensure that the whole resource mobilization cycle becomes more systematized.

This report compiling the performances and initiatives of the year also discloses major decisions taken by the board of directors in its meetings during the reporting year. Functional committees related to transparency and compliance with the standards of internal governance are also mentioned in the report.

Whereas the report for the fiscal 2024-25 presents what MRDI did in the year, it also complies with the provision of RTI Act as a non-governmental organization. We hope our partners, beneficiaries and stakeholders will find this report useful and have a clear idea of our work during last year.

ACRONYMS

AGM	Annual General Meeting
AI	Artificial Intelligence
CEF	Civic Engagement Fund
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FCA	Fellow Chartered Accountant
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FU	Finance Uncovered
GIJN	Global Investigative Journalism Network
HR	Human Resources
IDP	Information Disclosure Policy
IJ	Investigative Journalism
IT	Information Technology
KII	Key Informant Interview
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MIS	Management Information System
MRC	Media Reform Commission
NGOAB	NGO Affairs Bureau
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RE	Renewable Energy
RTI	Right to Information
RTK	Right to Know
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SOP	Scope of Work
STID	Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development
TIB	Transparency International Bangladesh
ToR	Terms of Reference
IQJB	Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh
SPBMRT	Strategic Prioritizing - Bangladesh Media Reforms During Transition
JFD	Journalism for Functional Democracy
CCF	Climate Communication Fellowship
ANMRB	Advancing News Media Reform in Bangladesh
SNMFAB	Strengthening News Media Freedom and Accountability in Bangladesh
AWRTI	Advancing Women's Right of Access to Information
DIF	Digital Investigation Fellowship
PFCCMB	Promoting Fact Checking to Counter Misinformation in Bangladesh
CEM	Climate, Energy and the Media
MSD	Media Strengthening Democracy
MIMA Phase II	More Information More Accountability (MIMA) Phase II
TJMDC	Training for Journalists from Marginalized and Disenfranchised Communities



MRDI's Contribution in Achieving SDGs

As a news media development organisation, MRDI aligns its initiatives to contribute to sustainable development goals adopted by the United Nations. This is primarily achieved through production-based journalism capacity-building initiatives implemented under various projects. Besides, initiatives aiming to create awareness among various stakeholders and assisting government machinery in creating enabling environment for better press freedom contributes to achieving SDGs. All the initiatives enhance the quality, depth, ethics and objectivity of reporting to empower news outlets to serve as agents of positive change, that help to achieve SDG -16- Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. It contributed to determining processes to implement the news media reform initiative in Bangladesh.

According to MRDI's mission, it also realized how to better utilize the RTI Act and make it more pro-people thus contributing to empowering all people including the marginalised to freely enjoy their right to information which aligns with SDG 16 as well.

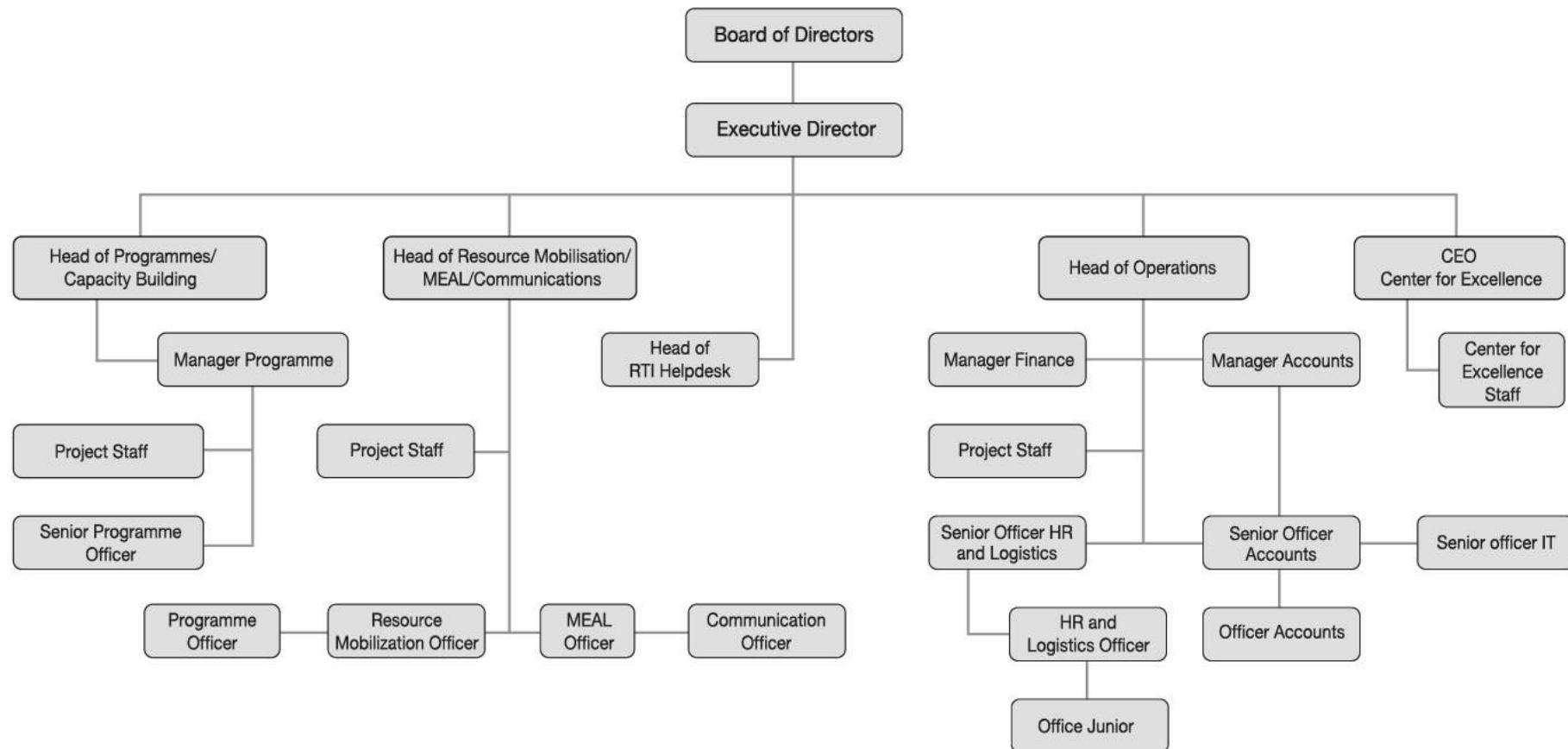
One of MRDI's strategic objectives is to work toward gender equity using a transformative approach that aligns with SDG 5 aiming at achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls. As a part of its efforts MRDI took an initiative to develop 'Gender Charter of Commitment for Bangladeshi News Media' to facilitate attaining gender equity and equality in a transformative approach.

Initiatives taken by MRDI contributed to SDG 7-the affordable and clean energy goal that aims to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. The organisation engaged news media to produce news stories on the issue through their capacity building on energy transition. While intensive training and an energy glossary helped journalists to dive deep into the topics, there were also initiatives to bring together CSOs and news media leadership to share knowledge for better understanding and news production for wider public reach.

MRDI also demonstrated its commitment to addressing climate change, the SDG 13-that works to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. IJ partnership built with a news outlet aimed to enhance storytelling skills of reporters and correspondents of climate hotspot zones in climate and environmental reporting, which will effectively present the severity of climate change and tell Bangladesh's stories accurately.

Through comprehensive, 360-degree interventions-including fact-checking training for journalists, digital hygiene orientation for journalism learners, and a Digital Investigation Fellowship for early-career journalists, MRDI aligned its work with the United Nations Global Principles for Information Integrity to strengthen responsible journalism and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

ORGANOGRAM



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bangladesh's political history witnessed a massive changeover in August 2024 following a student-led mass uprising across the country that toppled the longest-tenured government since independence. This pivotal moment attracted widespread attention domestically and internationally. Newsrooms were naturally busy covering a wide range of fast-moving events: deadly protests across the country, shifts in power, new political arrangements, emerging parties, economic changes, and reform initiatives in different sectors. Their reporting continued on tensions surrounding the upcoming national election in a shifting political climate, as well as an overwhelming number of everyday issues including deteriorating law and order, the rise of mob culture, administrative changes, legal battles, arrests, and more.

Consequently, newsrooms found it difficult to sustain their expected volume of investigative work, which typically requires extensive reporter engagement and substantial time resources. The resulting drop in investigative and in-depth stories diminished the news media's ability to reflect public interests during the reporting period of July 2024 to June 2025.

However, at the same time, the political changeover 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 news media industry, where the newly found opportunities have triggered passionate arguments and discussions in favour of press freedom and independent journalism.

This political changeover compelled the chief information commissioner and one commissioner to resign and the other commissioner was terminated by the supreme judicial council on charges of severe irregularities. The Information Commission became totally dysfunctional that limited citizen's right of access to information and adversely impacted the demand-supply chain of information flow.

In this situation, MRDI continued its efforts through its strategic initiatives to the betterment of the quality of investigative journalism and advancement of news media ecosystems. It continued to equip journalists and news outlets with different skill sets, tools and knowledge, supporting digital platform adoption by newsrooms, promoting people's right to information and advancing gender equity through transformative approaches.

To develop the capacity of the news media to produce quality public interest investigative, objective, ethical, and in-depth reports, MRDI continued its flagship intervention through partnership, mentorship and bootcamps engaging journalists across the country. Stories produced under this initiative got attention of the editors resulting in significant coverage in terms of placement and space/time. The success of the intervention resulted in getting acknowledgement of three stories by the Global Investigative Journalism Network (GIJN) in their annual best stories announcement. Some stories also could draw attention of GIJN Bangla in selecting their best story of the month.

For the first time MRDI launched its mentorship program on financial investigation in collaboration with the Finance Uncovered, UK this year and trained nine financial reporters from which six in-depth stories exposing financial crime and irregularities were produced.

Similarly, a new initiative was taken to build capacity of the news outlets on basics and purpose of political coverage, guidelines on covering big events, campaigns and politics; responsibilities of political parties and analysing their manifestos. Also the three-month mentorship to three reporters helped them to learn about how to critically look into factors related to coverage of government, politics, legislation, politicians, elections, candidates, political parties, political issues and government policies.

Like the previous year, MRDI continued its efforts on production-based capacity building in climate and energy transition issues to investigate energy finance, diplomacy and transition. In continuation of supporting news outlets, MRDI entered into investigative journalism partnership to produce impactful investigations on energy transition. A national TV channel exposing corruption in the subsidized LPG distribution system triggered government probes and national attention.

With a view to increasing the quality and volume of coverage of energy transition, a CSO-media interaction was organized to bring them together for a discussion to identify gaps and strengthen collaboration for stronger energy-transition reporting. Recommendations gathered from the discussion emphasized shared narratives, local voices, editor sensitization and data sharing.

Under the initiative to build capacity of the journalist associations, this year MRDI partnered with Bangladesh Sports Journalists Association to enhance the skills of sports journalists on investigative reporting considering the volume of funds the sports bodies operate. During the sessions participants interacted with seasoned investigative journalists and brainstormed to develop story ideas on irregularities in sports institutions.

The e-learning platform of MRDI continued its support to the young learners and journalists across the country who gained knowledge and capacity on investigative journalism, TV reporting, and safety in the reporting year. This success facilitated MRDI to develop more such courses.

MRDI seized the rare opportunity for meaningful media reform initiated by the interim government after the August 2024 political transition and helped shape reform proposals through generating recommendations from the broad stakeholders. Moreover, keeping the long-term impact of the recommendations and facilitate their implementation, two ordinances - one to protect journalists and another to establish an independent commission for a stronger news media sector were drafted and shared with MRC which was included in their report submitted to the interim government. To take the effort forward, MRDI initiated a five-year strategic action plan for advocacy targeting immediate (6 months), short term (2 years), and long term (3-5 years) interventions engaging different stakeholders through consultations and interviewing the key actors.

A milestone was initiating Gender Charter of Commitment for News Media, a unified framework to promote gender equity in the news media industry, aimed at facilitating gender equality and equity. MRDI engaged a team of journalists, newsroom decision-makers, academics, activists, legal experts, and CSO representatives to craft the charter through a series of focus group discussions involving stakeholders including editors, owners, union/association leaders, reporters, news managers and news consumers. Twenty-one news outlets have signed the Charter, committing to adopt in-house policies to ensure equitable inclusion of all genders in both organizational structures and content where MRDI started supporting initially ten signatory outlets in developing their own gender policy.

MRDI continued its mental health support programme by providing orientation and in-person counselling to journalists, with a special focus on trauma and PTSD following the 2024 uprising and violence. During the reporting year, MRDI joined the first ever 'Mental Health in Journalism Summit', a global effort to rethink how journalists approach mental health in a rapidly changing media industry.

Another key intervention of the reporting year was empowering news media through information integrity initiatives including fact-checking training for journalists and digital hygiene orientation for journalism students and youths at different universities. MRDI also offered Digital Investigation Fellowship for journalism freshers to build their career as factcheckers as there is a gap in newsrooms.

Additionally, an assessment initiated by MRDI titled 'Media Metamorphosis: AI and Bangladeshi Newsrooms 2024', surveyed editors and journalists to understand AI usage patterns, address ethical concerns and identify needs and gaps

for improved AI adoption in Bangladesh's news media. It found contradictory attitudes toward AI, with concerns about job loss and reduced critical thinking, but also recognition of improved efficiency and content quality. Challenges included limited technological investment, linguistic barriers, and resistance to innovation within the newsrooms. To promote people's access to information, MRDI with its long track record of promoting the RTI Act and its engagement in drafting and advocacy / campaign for enactment, facilitated RTI Forum to press demand for review and amendment of the act. Its team also went through a massive review of the act and proposed amendment which was finally approved by the forum and sent to the office of the Chief Advisor and the law advisor. Lobby is being continued for the amendment of the act and appointing Information Commissioners.

MRDI's RTI Helpdesk continued its support to journalists and citizens by providing assistance, including guidance on applications, appeals, complaints, and answering RTI-related queries. To mark International RTI Day, MRDI as the secretariat of RTI Forum played a significant role in organizing a national seminar where NGO representatives and government officials were present and stressed the need for an overhaul of the Information Commission and amendments to the RTI Act to ensure that citizens can fully benefit from their right to access information.

As a vocal agent for information disclosure by authorities, MRDI provided capacity building and follow up technical & knowledge support to CSO partners of Nagorikata-CEF programme to develop their information disclosure policy in line with the provisions of the RTI Act and NGOAB guidelines. Establishing the institute for journalism education and research is still in its process of board formation and finalizing the registration documents. The institute is expected to be established as a state-of-the-art education and research through short term training, diploma and long-term courses.

Meanwhile, MRDI has moved one step closer to implement its one-program plan in line with five-year strategic plan shifting from the current project-driven approach. MRDI, through its long experience and a sustained trust relation with the newsrooms, government, development partners and the civil society learnt that the one programme approach of operations can help build a better organizational structure and avoid procedural complications. Result-based interventions and sustainability techniques are being planned initially under this one-program approach. Discussions with development partners to secure core funding for one-program approach was going on during the reporting period.



PROJECTS AND PARTNERS

During the reporting year, MRDI implemented the following projects in partnership with the organizations/agencies mentioned.

PROJECT

Improving Qualitative Journalism in Bangladesh-Phase III

OBJECTIVE

To contribute to improve the conditions for strengthening democracy, transparency, and freedom of expression, reducing corruption, fostering gender equality, and addressing climate change challenges in order to build a sustainable society.

WITH SUPPORT OF

:Fojo
Linnaeus University

PROJECT

Climate, Energy and the Media

OBJECTIVE

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

WITH SUPPORT OF

 **Tara**

PROJECT

Promoting Fact Checking to Counter Misinformation in Bangladesh

OBJECTIVE

To create a responsive society against misinformation through capacity building of journalists, journalism teachers, and youths on factchecking

WITH SUPPORT OF

 **Internews**
Local voices. Global change.

PROJECT

Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development (STID)

OBJECTIVE

Increased networking and mobilisation among CSOs, greater collaboration with policy makers, enhanced capacity of news media & civil society actors and participation of all segments of the population for creating a gender responsive and inclusive society

WITH SUPPORT OF

GFA GROUP
Your purpose. Our expertise.  **GFA** CONSULTING GROUP

PROJECT

Journalism for Functional Democracy

OBJECTIVE

To strengthen national news outlets by developing capacity of district correspondents to produce in-depth and investigative stories of public interest that contributes to make the democratic institutes functional and accountable to citizens

WITH SUPPORT OF

The Asia Foundation

PROJECT

Journalism to Safeguard Democracy

OBJECTIVE

- To strengthen national news outlets as trusted platforms of information by developing their capacity thus contribute to safeguard democratic values in Bangladesh
- To push for immediately implementable recommendations from MRC report

WITH SUPPORT OF

The Asia Foundation

PROJECT

Digital Investigation Fellowship

OBJECTIVE

To build a batch of digital investigative journalists to better fight mis/disinformation and expose actors behind information pollution in Bangladesh

WITH SUPPORT OF**PROJECT**

Training for Journalists from Marginalized and Disenfranchised Communities

OBJECTIVE

To build capacity for young journalists from the marginalised and disenfranchised communities

WITH SUPPORT OF

PROJECT

Strengthening News Media Freedom and Accountability in Bangladesh

OBJECTIVE

To provide support to the Media Reform Commission as required

WITH SUPPORT OF

The Asia Foundation

PROJECT

More Information More Accountability - Phase II

OBJECTIVE

- To identify the AI tools and services used by Bangladeshi news media
- To assess the awareness of ethical and responsible AI usage

WITH SUPPORT OF

The Asia Foundation

PROJECT

Climate Communication Fellowship

OBJECTIVE

To integrate subjects related to climate change and energy transition into policy discussions and contribute to MRDI's engagement with civil society organizations having operations on the themes

WITH SUPPORT OF**PROJECT**

Advancing News Media Reform in Bangladesh

OBJECTIVE

To foster inclusive reforms with a sustained impact to enhance press freedom and improve the journalism standards engaging diverse stakeholders by articulating their expectations and recommendations for the Media Reform Commission

WITH SUPPORT OF

The Asia Foundation

PROJECT

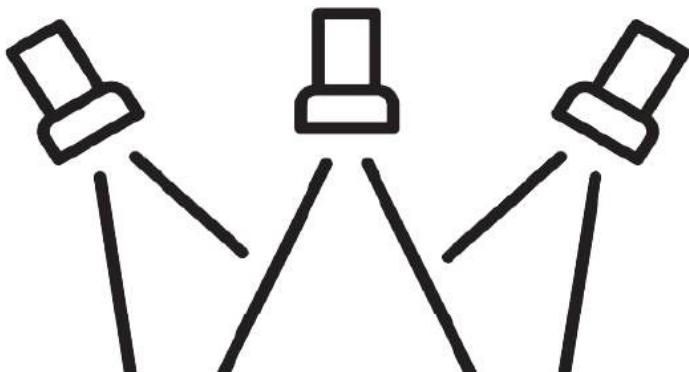
Strategic Prioritizing - Bangladesh Media Reforms During Transition

OBJECTIVE

- To develop a strategic action plan that will facilitate implementation of news media reforms in Bangladesh through a collaborative process
- To draw attention of the interim government, political parties and other actors on the strategic action plan through a policy dialogue

WITH SUPPORT OF

GOOD JOURNALISM | BETTER SOCIETIES



SPOTLIGHT 2024-2025



Media Reform in Bangladesh: A Milestone for Press Freedom

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. 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. A ray of hope emerged in the post-August 2024 period, when Bangladesh's interim government launched reforms process for news media, among other sectors, offering the news media a long-awaited chance at independence and self-regulation. Guided by the Media Reform Commission, the initiative provided a comprehensive roadmap for transforming the country's news media environment into one that is free, independent, inclusive and resilient. MRDI offered its expertise to the media reform process at the Commission's request. Drawing on its long-standing work in news media and journalism development, MRDI contributed to preparing recommendations to promote inclusive, lasting reforms that would strengthen press freedom and professional standards. The effort engaged diverse stakeholders and received full cooperation from the Commission.

MRDI facilitated to reflect the collective vision of a broad range of stakeholders through extensive consultations with editors, journalists, news media owners, journalist associations and unions, politicians, academics, civil society actors, policymakers and the development partners, key informant interviews and a large-scale survey. They emphasized reforms in key areas including press freedom; licensing, registration, ownership and operational transparency; media self-regulation; welfare, rights and protection of journalists; legal frameworks; state-owned media capacity; equity, equality & inclusion; and journalism education and skills development. Through an online survey, MRDI collected recommendations from 401 journalists, the top three recommendations being the enactment of a new protection law for journalists, reform of news media-related laws and the formation of an independent media commission. Out of the 37 recommendations submitted by MRDI, 22 have been reflected in the MRC's final report to the government.

At the interim government's Media Reform Commission's request, MRDI facilitated drafting of the Bangladesh Media Commission Ordinance 2025, proposing an independent body to ensure media accountability, journalist protection and

grievance redress. Drawing on the best national and regional practices, the draft outlined the Commission's structure, membership, powers, and financial management, incorporating expert feedback before submission and was included in the Commission's recommendations to the government.

MRDI also contributed to drafting the Journalism Rights Protection Ordinance 2025, to safeguard journalists from lawsuits, harassment and intimidation, covering protections for safety, independence, privacy and freedom of expression. Reviewed and endorsed by the Commission, the ordinance, if enacted, would ensure accountability for rights violations and promote a safer, more enabling environment for news media in Bangladesh.

Following its support to the MRC, MRDI realized that translating these recommendations into reality will not be possible alone by the government, rather 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, MRDI launched an extensive, consultative and inclusive process to develop a Strategic Action Plan on Advocacy for Media Reform in Bangladesh with a timeline of 2025-2030 to turn the vision into action. During the reporting period, the consultations for developing a framework covering essential interventions to promote an enabling environment for practising journalism without fear of intimidation was ongoing. Once complete, the strategic action plan will act as 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.

Gender Charter of Commitment for News Media

With an idea to create an enabling environment in Bangladesh's news media industry where people irrespective of their gender identity could work and excel, MRDI launched a unified framework titled "Gender Charter of Commitment for News Media", first of its kind in Bangladesh to facilitate gender equality and equity in a transformative manner.

The charter, developed by a ten-member working group of journalists, newsroom decision-makers, academics, rights activists, development professionals, gender specialists and a legal expert following thorough discussion and consultations with stakeholders was launched in December 2024 to promote that news outlets will commit to ensure the presence and participation of all genders equally and equitably within their institutional structures and journalistic content.

The Charter covers five areas: equality in participation, representation and presentation of gender in published news, policy framework; health, safety & security and monitoring. Twenty-one news outlets have signed the Charter and committed to adopt in-house policies to ensure equitable inclusion of all genders. Signatories are expected to develop gender policies, codes of conduct and staff capacity-building programs with MRDI initially supporting at least ten news outlets in this process.

Once ready, these in-house policies, new or revised from existing ones, aim to enhance gender sensitivity, workforce diversity and inclusive content at the news outlets. MRDI is simultaneously fostering networking among CSOs, engaging policymakers and building capacity to create a gender-responsive news media ecosystem.

MRDI held lobby meetings with journalism departments of four public universities—University of Rajshahi, Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur; University of Barishal and Khulna University to organise seminars on the gender charter of commitment. It plans to conduct ten seminars with six in Dhaka and four in districts with around 100 participants each in the next reporting year. The seminars will feature working group experts as panelists who will shed light on equal representation, unbiased reporting and inclusive workplaces to prepare students to advocate for gender equity in their future journalism careers.

Information Integrity Empowers Journalism

In Bangladesh, the rise of digital and social media has amplified both access to news and the spread of misinformation. Upholding information integrity is critical for news outlets to maintain credibility in a politically and socially polarized environment. Transparent and fact-checked reporting helps protect journalists from reputational and legal risks while ensuring that the public receives authentic information to make informed decisions. On the other hand, knowledge and skills development on fact-checking and digital hygiene can equip journalism students with critical thinking skills to evaluate online information, detect misinformation and protect themselves from digital threats such as scams and privacy breaches. By fostering these habits, students can become more informed citizens capable of making sound judgments and contributing to a safer digital environment.

Keeping that in mind MRDI took fact-checking and digital hygiene orientation initiative for journalism learners and youths.

During the reporting period, MRDI organized nine orientation programmes for journalism students and youths on fact-checking and digital hygiene at three universities in Dhaka- University of Dhaka, Daffodil International University and Bangladesh University of Professionals-and six outside Dhaka - University of Rajshahi, North Bengal International University, Khulna University, Barishal University, Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur and Comilla University. A total of 403 students participated in these interactive sessions.

The Digital Hygiene sessions covered key cybersecurity practices such as using strong passwords, encrypting data and downloading software only from trusted sources. Participants were encouraged to adopt safe online habits to enhance digital safety. In the fact-checking sessions, students explored how misinformation spreads, the motives behind their circulation and techniques for verifying information responsibly.

MRDI also completed a five-month Digital Investigation Fellowship with six participants where the fellows learned how to produce fact-checked stories, build narratives, cite evidence and maintain ethical standards. Each fellow, later submitted an investigative story to their news outlets, addressing narratives affecting public perception and democratic values.

Accomplishment Against Strategic Objectives

MRDI's Strategic Action Plan outlines five programmatic strategic objectives designed to advance its mission and contribute to its long-term vision, in alignment with its core values.

- 1  To develop the capacity of the media to produce quality investigative, objective, ethical, and in-depth reports.
- 2  To promote people's access to information.
- 3  To work toward gender equity both internally and in programmes using a gender transformative approach.
- 4  To create a free and diverse media environment in Bangladesh.
- 5  To support the media in their transformation in the use of digital platforms.

Activities carried out across different projects, together with the organisation's core initiatives, collectively helped fulfil the objectives.

1

To Develop the Capacity of the Media to Produce Quality Investigative, Objective, Ethical and in-depth Reports

Mentorship Support following Residential Training

Following the selection of 12 district correspondents from a pool of 30 participants of an earlier residential training on public interest journalism, MRDI provided two months of structured mentorship support to help participants produce in-depth and investigative stories under the guidance of experienced mentors.

Of the 12 mentored journalists, 11 correspondents successfully completed their tasks. Collectively, they produced 16 published stories across 11 national and community news outlets. As part of this, two three-part investigative series and three stories with multiple side stories got featured in news media reflecting the strong level of editorial attention for good stories even when they are produced from outside of Dhaka. The remaining participant also completed the story and submitted it to their respective news outlet, however that was not published because of an editorial decision of the news outlet.

Advocacy with Newsroom

MRDI organized an advocacy meeting with the newsroom managers from 9 national news outlets including print, online and television channels to share lessons learned from the production-based capacity building initiative. The meeting featured a comprehensive presentation highlighting the project's objectives, activities and key takeaways from its implementation.

After the presentation, newsroom managers engaged in a discussion on the impact of public interest reporting on policymakers, strategies to strengthen newsroom efforts in holding democratic institutions accountable and the additional capacity-building support needed to sustain high-quality public interest journalism. This initiative reinforced the importance and significance of institutional commitment in translating individual journalistic skills into lasting newsroom practices and editorial impact.

Content Development for Capacity Building on Public Interest Journalism

To strengthen the role of news media in advancing transparency, accountability, and inclusive public discourse particularly to amplify the voices and concerns of left-behind communities, MRDI organized a training content development meeting as part of two residential public interest journalism programs: a three-day bootcamp and a four-day training for district correspondents of national news outlets.

The initiative engaged four experienced journalists who jointly contributed as facilitators, resource persons, and mentors to ensure the training sessions are practice-oriented, aligned with newsroom realities and can facilitate journalists with knowledge and skills to produce impactful people-centred stories.

Following a competitive selection process where more than 100 applications were reviewed, 12 participants were selected for the training and 15 for the bootcamp based on the originality, relevance, and potential public impact of their proposed story ideas.

Before the capacity building programmes, the proposed training content was presented before the 10 senior newsroom gatekeepers from national news outlets where their feedback was incorporated to finalise the session topics and resource persons.

Mentorship Training on Public Interest Reporting

In order to reinforce the role of the news media as fourth pillar of the state by promoting public interest journalism that prioritise the needs of left-behind populations, 12 district level journalists of national news outlets were trained on public interest reporting in a 3-day residential training to strengthen their skills in quality, in-depth and investigative journalism by equipping them with modern tools & techniques. They learnt how to hold authorities accountable through journalism that amplifies the voices of vulnerable communities, as fair representation in news media is not just about visibility rather promoting justice, dignity and accountability. Following the training, the journalists were placed under a two-month mentorship programme to produce stories on critical public interest issues spotlighting systemic gaps and the responsibilities of the authorities concerned in ensuring no one is left behind.

Public Interest Reporting Bootcamp

In order to make interest of the citizens heart of journalism, highlight issues that hold the authorities accountable and strengthen national news outlets as trusted platforms of information by developing their capacity to safeguard democratic values, a 3-day bootcamp on public interest reporting was organized at Savar, outskirts of the capital Dhaka.

A total of 15 district correspondents of different national news outlets participated the camp following their selection through an open call for applications. The participating journalists were provided space to learn theoretical aspects through well-designed lectures, participated in hands-on activities, interactive group discussions, and presentations. The insights and reflections into the training helped each trainee finalize investigative story ideas under guidance of mentors who were tagged with them for further development of the ideas and produce stories under the mentorship support.



Mentorship Programme on Financial Investigation

Large-scale financial corruption and irregularities have remained at the center of controversy since the country's economy began to flourish. There are allegations that influential groups and individuals with close ties to authorities have amassed vast wealth through corruption, money laundering, and tax evasion, fueling public pressure on the press to expose them.

However, the number of investigative pieces on newspaper and TV screen fell short to satisfy consumers. They lack depth, heavy with jargon being dependent on government documents and statements. Against the backdrop, MRDI organised its capacity building programme to address shortcomings, offering necessary sets of skills to conduct rigorous investigation into financial crime including money laundering, tax evasion, bribes, amassment of illegal wealth etc., and produce in-depth news pieces that can contribute to a transparent and accountable financial sector in Bangladesh.



Nine journalists from different national newspapers and TV channels received three-day residential capacity building training under this mentorship program. MRDI partnered with Finance Uncovered (FU), a UK-based leading organization working on financial investigations globally for this initiative. Three FU experts facilitated the production-based capacity building and supported participants in producing stories under three local journalist mentors. After 2 months of mentorship support under three subject-expert journalists as mentors, eight participants completed investigations and produced stories out of which six were published and broadcast in newspapers and TV channels.

Reporting Boot Camp for Female Journalists

As part of its commitment to empower the next generation of journalists, MRDI prioritises capacity building for young journalists to shape their professional journey. One such initiative was the Reporting Bootcamp for Female Journalists on basic journalism.

Every year, a good number of freshers join news industry, yet a persistent gap exists in Bangladesh's news media: the underrepresentation of women in mainstream newsrooms particularly in reporting and investigative roles that limit their participation and career progression. To address this crisis, a five-day bootcamp was organized exclusively for early-career female journalists, primarily reporters, to strengthen their professional skills, confidence and newsroom readiness. This camp combined hands-on learning, critical thinking and peer exchanges to provide participants with practical newsroom-oriented skills. Twelve participants were provided with hand-on exercise and curated knowledge on basic journalism, story idea generation, planning, story pitching, data gathering techniques, writing tips and ethics, art of data



presentation, gender sensitivity in content and use of Right to Information Act as a reporting tool. After the training, four seasoned journalists guided and supervised their work for two months as mentors leading to production of 12 stories on issues that matter to communities.

The initiative reflects MRDI's institutional commitment to equity where gender is not treated as a standalone issue, but integrated across programmes as a cross-cutting priority aligned with its strategic plan.

Training for Journalists from Marginalized and Disenfranchised Communities

The voice of journalists from marginalized and disenfranchised communities remains largely underrepresented in the news media. As a result, the visibility of the needs, rights and realities of these communities remains limited in public discourse. Building professional capacity for the young journalists from these communities on quality journalism can support more equitable presentation.

Keeping that in mind, MRDI organized a three-day training for six journalists of marginalized and disenfranchised communities from different news outlets including five from outside Dhaka.

They attended a total of 11 sessions on different topics related to journalism and their rights including planning, research and information gathering, crafting investigative reports story structure and depth required for impactful journalism as well as subjects on Aboriginal Land Rights Act and crime reporting. Sessions on interview techniques, storytelling strategies and journalism ethics further reinforced their editorial integrity and professional standards.

Journalist Training: Investigative Reporting on Sports

Sports journalism is vast and popular in Bangladesh in terms of media attention it gets, number of journalists work, and the number of audiences sports focused news items get. The sector is not only a source of mass public engagement but also a major economic ecosystem involving government funded facilities, public institutions, clubs, federations, large

volume of sponsorships and public expenditure. Despite regular allegations of irregularities and corruption within the sector, coverage largely focused on regular developments, events and match results rather than accountability as investigative reporting remains limited.



In this situation, MRDI signed an MoU with Bangladesh Sports Press Association (BSPA) to organize a capacity building training to enhance the knowledge and skills of the members on investigation. A two-day training programme was organized involving 22 members of the BSPA, who represent different newspapers, online and TV channels. To introduce investigative thinking within sports journalism as well as to help participants identify governance, financial, and administrative issues within sports institutions that warrant public scrutiny. By the end of the programme, participants were able to brainstorm and generate investigative story ideas rooted in real challenges within the sports sector.

Online Courses

MRDI offers a suite of free online courses for journalists and journalism students on different subjects to provide a learning opportunity for anyone, anywhere in the world. Currently, there are three such courses available in the platform to reinforce essential skills and professional standards of the journalists.

During the reporting period, 664 individuals including 543 male and 121 female enrolled in the three online journalism courses deployed in the e-learning platform. The online course on Investigative Journalism received the highest number of enrollments with 326 registrations. Other than that, 292 individuals enrolled in the course on Television News Reporting while 46 participants enrolled in Course on Safety & Security in Journalism.

Among the attendees, 269 individuals including 207 male and 62 female, mostly journalists and students, completed these courses during the reporting period.

New Course on Basic Journalism

Through its ongoing capacity development programmes under different projects, MRDI felt that many journalists need support to sharpen their knowledge on the basics of journalism. The early career ones in the business often feel helpless while working in the field that hampers quality works and require brushing up their knowledge. Their news outlets too feel a disconnect between academic learning and real newsroom requirements. To cater to this demand, MRDI have taken an initiative to produce another online course on basics of journalism named "News Reporting". Two issue experts with years of experience in journalism and Bangladeshi journalism landscape were engaged to design and produce the course featuring working seasoned journalists. The six-hour course is expected to include a total of 22 video lessons, 22 reading materials and more than hundred quizzes for evaluation. The course will offer basic knowledge on news reporting which will help Bangla speaking journalism learners, early career journalists as well as seasoned ones to sharpen their understanding in the basics.

Fellowship on Political Reporting

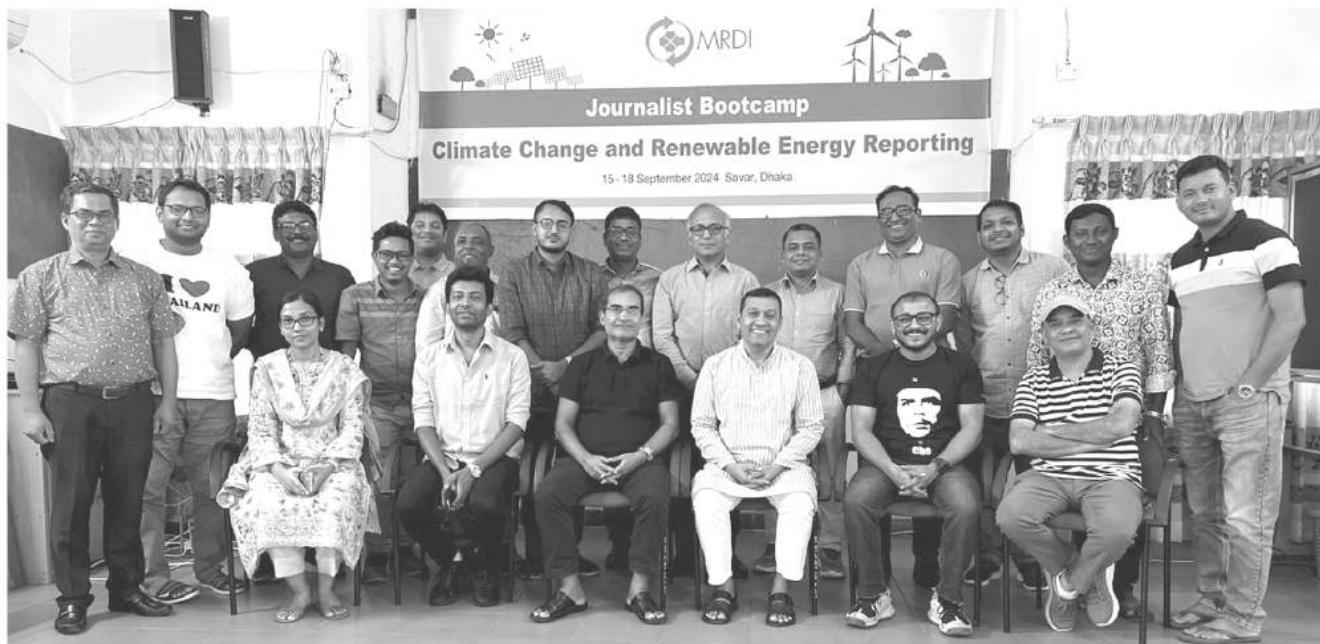
With the number of news media growing in an unprecedented speed in Bangladesh, media coverage by news media has increasingly been diversified in recent years. But when it comes to reporting on politics, good governance or democracy, the coverage remained extremely poor as most news media always prioritised covering day-to-day events or routine updates instead of in-depth analysis.

In order to encourage newsrooms to pursue political stories from a watchdog perspective through in-depth critical analysis, MRDI facilitated one reporter each from three news outlets with a three-month fellowship support to strengthen capacity of their reporters with political reporting experience on how to critically look into factors related to coverage of government, politics, legislation, politicians, elections, candidates, political parties, political issues and government policies.

During the reporting period, fellows attended two of four weekly sessions conducted by a seasoned journalist expert in political reporting. The sessions covered different aspects in political reporting including the basics of politics, political structure, role of political journalism in a democratic society, election procedures, functions of government etc. The journalists started shaping their story plans simultaneously through discussions in the sessions. Once the weekly sessions are over and the story ideas are finalized, they will be working on their proposed ideas to produce stories under the supervision and guidance of the same mentor.

Bootcamp and Mentorship for District Correspondents

With the reality that most of the energy projects are outside of megacities and to encourage district correspondents report on the need for energy transition as well as improving quality and reach of renewable energy reporting, MRDI organised a 4-day bootcamp for 11 district correspondents of national news outlets, picked from 20 journalists who attended a basic training in the previous reporting year.



The bootcamp helped journalists gain a solid hands-on understanding on issues 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. All 11 participants finalized their story ideas in the camp and in following two months worked under mentors to produce stories. Nine of the mentees produced stories as planned, following the mentorship support. Five stories have been published while two are awaiting newsroom clearance for publication after submission. One story failed to go through gatekeepers due to respective house's editorial policy. The terms of reference with remaining two mentees were discontinued.

Advanced Training and Mentorship Support on Energy Transition

Building on its earlier basic training, MRDI organised a three-day advanced training for journalists of national news outlets who have been reporting on climate change and renewable energy since 2023 as part of a dedicated energy transition cohort under MRDI support.

Nine journalists from print, broadcast and online platforms received in-person training featuring sessions on 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. They finalized their investigation story proposals consulting with mentors on the final day of the training. Two more journalists, who were in the participants' list but could not manage to attend in-person got an opportunity to join them virtually for selected sessions as well. By the end of the training, nine journalists were provided with mentorship support under journalistic and issue-based experts. Following post-training mentorship support, five mentees published their stories while two stories by mentees are awaiting editorial review at respective newsrooms. The terms of reference with remaining two mentees were discontinued.

News Monitoring on Renewable Energy

MRDI concluded its news monitoring initiative on renewable energy and the energy transition at the end of the reporting year. The initiative facilitated knowledge support to journalists and key stakeholders by providing easier access to information on developments in renewable energy, both from Bangladesh and the world. The monitoring initiative consolidated reports from mainstream news outlets into a shared space. The collected news clippings are available in MRDI's Web-Based Knowledge Hub as a reliable reference point for journalists to identify trends, gaps, and emerging narratives in energy transition reporting.

CSO-News Media Policy Consultation on Sustainable Energy Transition

To strengthen informed public discourse and evidence-based policy advocacy on sustainable energy transition, MRDI organised a policy consultation bringing together Civil Society Organizations working in energy transition and the newsroom editors and gatekeepers from national news outlets to identify gaps and propose ways forward for stronger collaboration. The multi-stakeholder dialogue was attended by 30 participants including representatives from CSOs, newsroom editors/gatekeepers, representatives from academia and research organizations where both sides collectively identified key gaps in climate and energy coverage and explored pathways for more effective collaboration between the news media and policy actors.



The consultation resulted in a set of practical recommendations including developing shared narrative between CSOs and news media to enable aligned messaging, increase collaboration to combine CSO data with news media storytelling, prioritise local voices and community perspectives in reporting and sensitization of news media editors/newsroom gatekeepers on climate and energy issues to strengthen editorial leadership. Participants also emphasized the need for regular media-CSO-researcher dialogues to build trust and cooperation as well as provide regular and reliable data by CSOs to the news media to support quality journalism.

Study Circle on Climate and Energy Reporting

To sustain learning and strengthen the application of skills gained through earlier trainings and mentorships, MRDI organized five study circles as interactive learning platforms for journalists covering climate change and renewable energy. Designed as small-group, subject-based sessions, the study circles allowed journalists to engage directly with subject-matter experts and peers to deepen their understanding of complex issues while refining other reporting skills. The sessions focused on issues like investigative journalism, how to report on government policies, interview techniques, fact-checking and verification methods. Journalists in different numbers out of 11 journalists who had earlier received training and mentorship on climate change and renewable energy reporting in previous years of the project joined the study circles.

Investigative Journalism Partnership on Renewable Energy Reporting

To ensure that resource constraints do not limit newsroom ambition, MRDI piloted Investigative Journalism Partnership (IJP) with three national news outlets to support newsrooms to pursue unique investigative ideas on renewable energy and its importance in addressing climate change crisis. Despite one agreement being discontinued at later stage, the initiative yielded high quality and impactful journalism.

Under the partnership with one news outlet, a groundbreaking 55-minute investigative TV report was aired that drew government attention and triggered official investigations. The report became one of the most discussed stories in Bangladesh at the time. As part of the partnership, the newsroom also received targeted capacity building on PTC and pronunciation to improve quality of its work.

Through another partnership, a national newspaper is producing a series of data-driven stories on energy transition based on formal research methodologies. Under this initiative, their district correspondents received specialized capacity building to enhance evidence-based reporting and deepen coverage of energy and climate issues.

Investigative Journalism Casebook

Behind every investigation, there are untold accounts that rarely reach the public, remaining only with the reporters. Readers are unaware of how the famous stories were crafted, how the information was uncovered, or the challenges and barriers the reporters had to overcome. Yet, these untold details are invaluable learning resources for journalists looking to enrich their knowledge and sharpen their investigative skills. Theories and techniques on investigation or process and tools can be learned from books, but they often fail to reflect current realities and newsroom contexts. Considering the facts, MRDI took an initiative to develop an Investigative Journalism Casebook based on award winning and widely-recognised investigative reports from Bangladesh. The casebook will document and analyze detailed investigative process contexts, ideas and hypothesis, methods followed and techniques used in storytelling. It will also capture first-hand account from of Bangladeshi reporters, challenges they faced during investigation and publication. This book will be distributed among different training programme participants, journalism students at universities, newspaper editors, journalists, academics as required as a practical learning resource.

Investigative Journalism Partnership (IJP)

The Investigative Journalism Partnership (IJP) is the flagship and completely production driven initiative of MRDI designed to enable news outlets and journalists to pursue ambitious investigative ideas that are often constrained by limited newsroom resources. This production-oriented initiative aims to support full investigative cycle by strengthening newsroom capacity to produce in-depth and investigative reports through human, technical and financial resources to ensure good investigative journalism initiatives remains viable.

During the reporting year, four partner news outlets have implemented their planned activities where MRDI supported to organise capacity building activities as well as support to produce investigations. Two of the partners have applied to revise the agreements and another applied for new partnership at the end of the year.

The partners received support to enhance the capacity of their journalists and staff through in-house workshops and to produce stories according to their plans. A total of 26 stories, mostly investigations and long form in-depth public interest pieces including multi part series and side stories were published. The stories addressed critical issues such as climate change and the environment, corruption and other governance issues.

Among the partners, one Bangla daily conducted investigations throughout the year on impact of climate change and the environment in coastal districts. With mentorship support, the newsroom produced 16 in-depth and investigative stories with some of them as multi-part stories. Using the experience, the partner went on to publish few more in-depth/investigative stories independently that demonstrates sustained capacity building impact beyond direct programmatic support.

Investigative Journalism Helpdesk

Investigative Journalism Helpdesk offers on demand and long-term support for the journalists to carry out investigations and produce stories. Journalists can seek support or advice on story planning, fieldwork and storytelling under one-to-one guidance. They can also avail mentoring support depending on the merit of their stories. Reporters can contact the help desk over phone, email, or in person visit.

During the reporting year, 21 journalists from national news outlets including district correspondents requested support from the IJ Helpdesk. The desk delivered 124 supports that resulted in publication of at least 13 investigative stories including multi-episode series.

Beyond the regular support, the help desk has provided training to a group of young journalists and journalism students under a Fellowship initiative to nurture the next generation of investigative reporters.

Several investigations supported by the IJ Helpdesk generated public discussions and institutional impact. One of them uncovered corruption in agricultural sector in Bangladesh where the desk provided extensive support throughout the investigation, shooting, visualization and storytelling stages. The widely discussed report compelled the government to launch inquiry. The Anti-Corruption Commission and the Ministry of Agriculture started an inquiry into the corruption allegations.

Three stories produced with support of the desk bagged prestigious Investigative Journalism Award by Transparency International Bangladesh while GIJN Bangla honored two stories as the best investigations.

Investigative Journalism Fellowship Programme

MRDI hosted fellowship programme on investigative journalism for freshers at newsrooms and journalism students. This initiative aims to enhance knowledge in investigation, foster critical thinking and promote ethical practice in journalism through a two-month intensive training programme which contributes to producing in-depth and investigative reports. A total of 12 participants, including 4 female received hands-on training under supervision of seasoned investigative reporters and subject experts. They learnt basics of investigation and skills required for a successful production including idea generation, hypothesis, planning and pitching for a story, source mapping, data collection, fact checking

and verification, interview techniques, data handling, visual storytelling, journalism ethics and gender perspectives. At the training sessions the participants were often taken to breakout groups allowing for more focused discussion, problem-solving, or collaboration on specific topics with experts. The fellowship contained 16 day-long in-person sessions and two virtual sessions. Following successful completion, they were handed over certificates at a day-out program arranged at a leisure center near Dhaka. The fellows are now working either in newsrooms or independently.

News Monitoring

News monitoring is MRDI's another initiative that strengthens journalism by systematically generating evidence on how news media reports on public interest issues. The monitoring unit track reporting trends, assesses story quality, identify ethical violations and produces qualitative and quantitative data through daily basis monitoring of news stories, editorials, opinion pieces, features and interviews published and broadcast in 24 national outlets including 12 newspapers, 10 TV channels and 2 online portals

The monitoring produces both quantitative and qualitative insights. The quantitative data focuses on accident, crime, election, human rights, suicide, violence against children and violence against women. The qualitative analysis covered business, democracy, environment and climate change, gender, politics and governance, and human rights.

The evidence generated through this initiative has become a critical knowledge base for MRDI and its partners. It helps identifying trends in public interest reporting, providing relevant data, analyzing coverage patterns and gender representation in media. The insights inform project proposals, reports, training contents, advocacy initiatives and policy engagements to ensure that MRDI's interventions respond to real newsroom practices and emerging trends.

GIJN Bangla

The Bangla edition of Global Investigative Journalism Network (GIJN) has become one of the most reliable sources of knowledge and information for Bangla speaking journalists since its inception in 2019. It consistently provides cutting-edge knowledge of investigative journalism including tools, methods, techniques and other resources to journalists, journalism students, and media academics. Readers can find guides, tips, tools & techniques of modern journalism, examples of investigative journalism, fellowship, grants, and training related information to enhance the capacity of journalists.

As per Google Analytics, GIJN Bangla page received more than 70,842 views during this period. The page has published 67 translated Bangla articles related to investigative journalism and 4 monthly newsletters, which reached a diverse group of journalists and other professionals. GIJN Bangla gave priority to cover the upcoming Global Investigative Journalism Conference. It also published a special write-up on Best Investigative Stories from Bangladesh in 2024.

2

To Promote People's Access to Information

RTI Helpdesk

The RTI Helpdesk supports journalists and other information seekers to get information a citizen is entitled to under the Right to Information Act (RTI), while also assists the information providing authorities for smooth delivery. MRDI's RTI Helpdesk has a dedicated official who assists information seekers via a hotline number or in-person during office hours on the weekdays to file RTI applications. The support includes identifying the right authorities, filling out application forms, handling appeals and complaints and providing expert advice on the RTI Act. In the reporting year, 307 supports were provided to 72 individuals -- 45 journalists and 27 other professionals. The support included 28 applications, 19 appeals and 11 for complaints. The desk also responded to 248 RTI related queries by help seekers.

Among the journalists who received support from the desk, the largest group belonged to newspapers, followed by television stations and online news portals. Many of them work across multiple platforms of their organizations.

International Day of the Right to Know Observance

Information serves as both a powerful tool and a critical element of democracy and good governance. A citizen's right to information is fundamental for enabling a participatory government, as it empowers individuals to demand transparency and accountability from authorities. This right supports democratic values, enhances human rights, promotes good governance, and fosters an open society as part of constitutionally protected freedoms of thought, conscience, and expression.

In Bangladesh, Right to Know Day is observed on September 28, the same day as International Day for Universal Access to Information. In observance of the occasion, the RTI Forum and NGO Affairs Bureau of Government of Bangladesh jointly organized a view-exchange meeting on "Right to Information for Transparency- and Accountability-Based Good Governance: Role of NGOs," on September 29 at the NGOAB conference room in Dhaka.



Senior government officials, chief executives from different NGOs, civil society members and representatives from the development sector attended the discussion and shared their perspectives on the Right to Information. During the discussions, civil society participants called for a reform of the Information Commission and amendments to the Right to Information Act to ensure full citizen access to information. They emphasized the need for a collaborative reform process involving both government officials and stakeholders involved in access to information to advocate for the removal of barriers in the act and a shift in the mindset of authorities responsible for information dissemination.

Overall, stakeholders emphasized that strengthening the implementation of the RTI Act 2009 requires legal reform, institutional independence and cultural change across government and non-government sectors.

Some of their priority recommendations include amending the RTI Act particularly revisiting the list of exempted organizations, and reconstituting the Information Commission to ensure its independence, credibility, and effectiveness. They also stressed the need to appoint and train designated information officers across all public authorities and NGOs.

To improve access to information, stakeholders called for proactive disclosure as well as emphasized on monitoring and oversight led by the RTI Forum and Information Commission as essential to ensure compliance and accountability.

The meeting highlighted the importance of nationwide awareness campaigns to promote the benefits of the RTI Act and change negative attitudes toward information seekers.

IDP Development Workshop

To strengthen the institutional capacity of 17 strategic partners and grantees of Nagorikata Civic Engagement Fund (CEF), MRDI organized 2-day long Information Disclosure Policy (IDP) Development Workshop in two batches to help them comply with the Right to Information Act, 2009 and NGO Affairs Bureau guidelines. Executive Directors and the designated officers of respective organizations participated in the workshops.

Through this initiative, organizations drafted or reviewed their own information disclosure policies aligning internal system with obligatory requirements. The discussions also made conceptual clarity about the classification of information and mode of the proactive disclosure. Following the workshop, MRDI provided follow-up support to two organizations by reviewing their draft IDPs during this period.



3

To Work toward Gender Equity using a Gender Transformative Approach

Gender Charter of Commitment

MRDI cherishes the value of belief in equity in all its outcomes. While gender is included as a programmatic objective of the strategic plan, the issue is addressed as a cross component in all its programmes. From the findings of a study on media regulation, representation of women and hijra and a gender guideline, MRDI felt that a common guideline for the news media industry is essential for gender equity and equality. MRDI took an initiative to develop a 'Gender Charter of Commitment for the News Media' to facilitate attaining gender equality and equity.

A ten-member working group was formed consisting of journalists, newsroom decision makers, academics, rights activists, legal experts and CSOs to formulate the gender charter of commitment. After 8 months of vigorous tasks of stakeholder mapping, desk review, methodology development and ensuring participation of the stakeholders, the Charter was drafted by the dynamic working group. It was launched in presence of editors, newsroom managers, representatives from editorial and journalist union/associations, CSOs and development partners along with working group members and MRDI team.

The charter has been developed considering the institutional structure of the news media and the content. It is divided into five parts- Equality in Participation, Representation and Presentation of Gender in Published News, Policy Framework, Health, Safety & Security and Monitoring. 21 news outlets have signed the charter; and as signatories they promised to adopt in-house policy to include all the genders equitably both in their organisational structure and in content. They will need to develop gender policies, code of conduct and capacity building for the staff to do that. MRDI has plan to support at least 10 news outlets to develop gender policy.



Gender Policy Development for News Outlets

Aligned with the Gender Charter of Commitment, MRDI has initiated the process to support 10 signatory news outlets including eight national and two regional news outlets to develop in-house gender policies. Among them, three news outlets has nominated a focal person to work on developing its gender policy in collaboration with an expert from MRDI resource pool.

During the reporting period, MRDI team has finalized the concept of the policy, started meeting with the selected news outlets, and drafted the structure of the policies. Development and implementation of gender policies in the news media organizations will ease the path toward gender equality, equity, and sensitivity among journalists and may enhance gender diversity in the workforce. It will also create opportunities for greater diversity in news content. If an organization already has such a policy, it may need to be revised in line with the charter and MRDI will render that support as well.

Lobby Meetings on MRDI's Gender Charter of Commitment

MRDI arranged lobby meetings with journalism departments of four public universities--University of Rajshahi, Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur, Barishal University and Khulna University prior to organizing seminars at universities-six in Dhaka and four in districts-engaging 100 participants in each session to introduce MRDI's Gender Charter of Commitment.

Departments of all these four universities agreed to organize seminars on the Gender Charter of Commitment developed under MRDI initiative. The pattern of the seminar was also discussed. At the seminars, two working group experts will serve as panelists where they will discuss key aspects such as equal representation, unbiased gender reporting and creating inclusive workplaces. These sessions will prepare students as advocates for gender equity in their future journalism careers.

Mental Health Support for Women Journalist

MRDI has initiated mental health programme for the journalists in the reporting year and provided mental health support to women journalists through orientation programme and in person counselling. After the 2024 uprising, MRDI took an initiative to organize orientation programme on mental health focusing the women journalists with trauma and PTSD. A half-day orientation programme was organized in Dhaka partnering Women Journalists Network, Bangladesh where 13 women journalists from different print, television, online outlets and news agencies, all members of WJNB participated.

Participants were engaged in an interactive, discussion on the importance of mental health, risk of field journalists amidst violence, mental health stigma and so on. The mental health experts and journalists trained as para counsellors delivered support to the journalists.

Five feedback sessions were also organized to find the results and influence of the mental health sessions, and to plan the next steps accordingly. One mental health expert and five trained para counsellors joined in the special feedback session in the form of a day-long workshop and discussed success and challenges and planned activities for the future.

A total of 33 male journalists also received in person counseling services under this initiative.

4

To Create a Free and Diverse Media Environment in Bangladesh

Advancing News Media Reform in Bangladesh

Bangladesh's news media landscape entered a rare window of opportunity for reforms following the political transition of August 2024. The interim administration announced various reform commissions to suggest necessary reforms in key areas and news media is one of those. The Media Reform Commission reached out to MRDI requesting for its inputs in the process. In continuation of its involvement in news media and journalism development, MRDI took initiative to assist in the preparation of recommendations for the Media Reforms Commission in order to foster inclusive reforms with a sustained impact to enhance press freedom and improve the journalism standards engaging diverse stakeholders by articulating their expectations and recommendations.

Through series of consultation meetings with groups of news media stakeholders, including editors, news managers, journalists, editorial/journalist association/unions, academics, civil society actors, policymakers and Key Informant Interviews (KIs) with three news media investors, editor and experts and conducting large-scale survey, MRDI suggested focus of reforms on eight key areas including press freedom, licensing, registration, ownership, and operational transparency, media self-regulation and accountability mechanisms, welfare, rights, and protection of journalists, legal aspects, capacity building of state-owned/operated media entities and institutions, journalism education & skill development and gender equality & inclusion.

Through the online survey, recommendations of 401 journalists were collected and top three of those were formulating a new protection law for journalists, reform of news media related laws and formation of an independent media commission as a regulatory body to safeguard the needs of news media. The compilation of all recommendations MRDI received was handed over to the commission. Out of the 37 recommendations submitted by MRDI, 22 have been reflected in the MRC's final report to the interim government.





MRDI feels that implementation of those recommendations does not fall into the sole liability of the government rather required a collective approach engaging news media stakeholders that can shape a sustainable reform agenda to ensure an independent, accountable and sustainable news media ecosystem in Bangladesh.

With that feeling MRDI took another initiative to outline strengths & weaknesses and to propose evidence-based recommendations on how to advance media freedom and pluralism in Bangladesh. It was designed to develop a collaborative and evidence-based strategic action plan to advance the news media reform initiative and ensure engagement of relevant stakeholders in the dissemination of this plan. Grounded in the principle that sustainable reforms must be led from within the news media profession and industry, the initiative was structured to ensure inclusivity and collaboration, bringing together key actors from across the news media ecosystem and beyond to build a common agenda for change.

By the end of the reporting period, preparatory activities including forming of working group, defining structure and approach of the strategic action plan, Scope of Work were completed. A diverse group of stakeholders were identified including media professionals, representatives from civil society, unions, associations, academics and political actors for consultations and Key Informant Interviews (KIs) to facilitate inclusive consultations with relevant stakeholders from across the media landscape and beyond.

Draft of National Media Commission Ordinance, 2025

On request of the interim government's Media Reform Commission, MRDI developed the draft of the National Media Commission Ordinance, 2025 tailored to Bangladesh's context, that proposed an independent commission to ensure news media accountability, protection of journalists, and strengthening the grievance redressal mechanism. The MRC included the draft in their final recommendations submitted to the government.

In order to draft the ordinance, MRDI engaged an expert who reviewed existing national and regional laws and other documents and prepared a primary document outlining a structure of the formation of an independent media commission, its organogram and criteria for selection of members, the scope of work for the commission, its authority relating to principle of self-regulation in news media and its financial management. It authorized the commission to have the rights and responsibility to handle complaints, enforce ethical guidelines and promote transparency in news media operations. Two additional experts reviewed the draft and provided feedback which was incorporated in the draft of the ordinance.

If enacted, the ordinance is expected to address gaps in existing laws and policies and endorsed best practices from regional and global laws by integrating it to Bangladesh's framework.

Draft of Journalists Protection Ordinance, 2025

MRDI developed another draft ordinance for journalists' protection on request of the interim government's Media Reform Commission. One of the key mandates of the ordinance is protection of journalists against lawsuits and harassment which are often used as tools to silence critical reporting in Bangladesh. With such safeguards, the ordinance, if enacted, will empower journalists to continue their work with confidence knowing they are protected from intimidation and harassment.

MRDI engaged the same expert to prepare primary draft of the ordinance. The draft covers sections on protection of journalists' lives, their independence and right to privacy, freedom of expression and favorable working environment. The reform commission reviewed the draft before submitting it to the reform commission. The reform commission included this one in their recommendations too.

If enacted, this ordinance is expected to ensure the punishment for those who violate the safety, security and freedom of the journalists and news media workers.

Fact-checking and Digital Hygiene Orientation for Journalism Learners and Youths

Learning fact-checking and digital hygiene helps students develop critical thinking skills to evaluate online information, identify misinformation and manipulation, and protect themselves from online threats like scams and privacy breaches. By fostering these habits, students can become more informed citizens, make sound judgments, and contribute to a more truthful and safer digital space.

MRDI organized nine separate orientation programmes for journalism students and youths on fact-checking and digital hygiene at different universities in Dhaka and outside during the reporting period. The universities in Dhaka are-- University of Dhaka, Daffodil International University and Bangladesh University of Professionals while outside Dhaka are-- University of Rajshahi, North Bengal International University, Khulna University, Barishal University, Begum Rokeya University-Rangpur, and Comilla University. A total of 403 students participated in the interactive sessions.

The session on Digital Hygiene focused on understanding what digital hygiene entails, emphasizing how students can protect themselves while using digital platforms. Key topics included essential cybersecurity practices such as using strong passwords, encrypting sensitive data, and downloading software only from trusted sources. Participants were encouraged to adopt these safe digital habits to enhance their online safety. In the Fact-checking sessions, participants learned about the spread of misinformation, exploring how information can be distorted, possible motives behind the circulation of rumors and who are typically behind the scenes navigating it. The sessions provided practical guidance on how to verify information and apply effective fact-checking techniques to navigate the digital information landscape responsibly.



Digital Investigation Fellowship

MRDI successfully completed a Digital Investigation Fellowship programme in the reporting year. In the five-month fellowship, six participants learned about the role of fact-checking in news reporting, how to structure and write a complete fact-checked story. They also learned about narrative building, evidence citing, maintaining neutrality and adhering to ethical standards. The fellows developed ideas on news stories and drafted texts for facilitator's review and feedback. After the training, each fellow produced an investigative story through digital investigations addressing critical narratives affecting public perception and democratic values.

Upon completion of the fellowship, MRDI organized a certificate giving ceremony where the fellows shared their inspiring journeys-from developing fact-checking skills to driving change in their newsrooms by advocating for dedicated fact-checking sections. They also presented key findings from their investigations, highlighting the vital role of accountability and truth in journalism.



Assessment of News Media Coverage on Marginalized and Excluded Community

An assessment of news coverage on marginalized and excluded communities was ongoing monitoring content of 10 news outlets - 5 newspapers and 5 televisions, over 12 months spanning a period of three years. Two media monitoring officers are conducting day-to-day monitoring following two separate code sheets for monitoring newspaper and television under supervision of an expert.

Assessment of AI integration in Bangladeshi News Media

MRDI conducted an assessment titled "Media Metamorphosis: AI and Bangladeshi Newsrooms 2024" surveying 53 journalists from 25 news outlets along with focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIs) involving 13 editors and newsroom gatekeepers from print, television, and online news platforms.

The initiative was taken to understand AI usage patterns, addressing ethical concerns and identifying needs and gaps for improved AI adoption in Bangladesh's news media. The findings were shared at a meeting with editors, newsroom gatekeepers, head of online platforms of news outlets, journalists, academics, fact-checkers and representatives from the CSOs and development sector.

The assessment found that newsroom management's approach to AI is contradictory: simultaneously fearing disruption while hoping AI will solve systematic newsroom challenges. This uncertainty makes it difficult to establish a clear strategic vision for integrating AI. Economic constraints, insufficient investment in technological infrastructure and linguistic barriers compound the difficulties. The disparities between English and Bangla outlets add complexity, with AI tools most used in English-language outlets, as they are reported to these tools perform better in English than Bangla. Successful AI integration requires a fundamental shift in approach.

During the survey, about two thirds of the participants found that using AI increased their efficiency and improved their content quality while 52% reported that it reduced their workload. Half of the participants believed that AI will improve their journalism quality significantly in future.

In terms of associated concerns, the assessment finds that concerns about AI causing job loss are moderate with most participants rating it 3 out of 5. However, there is strong concern that over reliance on AI may reduce critical thinking and affect the reliability of content.

The assessment highlighted that journalists exhibit a strong resistance to technological change, particularly AI perceiving it as a threat rather than a tool creating a self-imposed barrier that hinders innovation in newsrooms. Additional challenges include surface level understanding, a focus on output over process, lack of understanding about incorporating AI into workflows and guidelines, and a fear of making mistakes that overshadows the desire for innovation.

About the ethical use, most participants however said they are unaware of awareness on ethical use of AI revealing participant's unfamiliarity with global or industry-specific guidelines governing the ethical use of AI in journalism. The surveyed journalists pointed out that major barriers to ethical AI adoption include insufficient training and support (85%), lack of AI understanding (74%), budget constraints (47%) and absence of clear ethical guidelines (45%).

Mental Health in Journalism Summit 2024

Mental health has become one of the most important challenges for media professionals all over the world. Burnout, anxiety, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and vicarious trauma are on the rise. To overcome this major challenge and catalyze a mentally healthy work culture in the media, 'Mental Health in Journalism Summit 2024', the first ever global event dedicated to mental health in the media was organized virtually on 8-10 October 2024. MRDI, as outreach partner of the summit showcased its pioneering initiative providing mental health support to women journalists in Bangladesh. It also presented a paper in a session titled "Empower Her: Mental Health Support for Women Journalists in Bangladesh" at the summit attended by around two thousand media and mental health professionals from all over the world.

5

To Support the Media in their Transformation in the use of Digital Platforms

MRDI continued to support the sustainability of news media in Bangladesh by facilitating their digital transformation as traditional media outlets including print, television and radio across the globe are now integrating websites, social media, and livestreaming for better audience reach and revenue generation. This transformation changes everything involving news media including how information is disseminated, audiences interact and how organizations can generate revenue etc. In this front, MRDI supports newsrooms in their audience research, digital-first workflows, publication strategies, business development, revenue strategies, and capacity building.

During the reporting period, MRDI continued to assist one of the highest circulated English daily to strengthen its digital presence, including its website, social media, and multimedia offerings. The initiative included support for establishment of a digital-first workflow, an editorial strategy, conduct audience research, create revenue models, and develop other guidelines and policies. Once implemented, the news media will be able to navigate its digital transformation, build a strong reader base, and establish a sustainable revenue model by 2027. One major aim of this initiative is to introduce subscription model for e-paper of the news media as a test intending to introduce a paywall by the end of the current partnership.

MRDI also continued providing support to a Chattogram-based Bangla-language daily newspaper this reporting year as well by conducting assessments and training programs focused on digital journalism, multimedia storytelling and social media strategies. It conducted a two-day assessment and intervention to optimize digital tool usage, enhance content strategy, and maintain ethical standards in digital publishing. Following the training, the newspaper began implementing what they learned with their limited resources.

MRDI Journalism Institute

With a market gradually booming, the demand for skilled, ethically grounded and qualified journalists has never been greater in Bangladesh. Yet, many new entrants to the profession continue to lack formal journalism education and exposure to newsroom realities.

Recognising this structural challenge, MRDI's Board, through its five-year strategic plan (2021-2026) planned to create a state-of-the-art journalism institute with a clear mandate: to deliver industry-ready education that bridges theory and practice, strengthens professional standards and equips journalists to adapt to technological, editorial, and business transformations shaping the future of news media.

Currently, the management of MRDI is working on to establish the MRDI Journalism Institute designed as a pioneering institution in Bangladesh to facilitate informed journalism education, conduct research and offer courses on professional practice.

Veteran journalist Shakeel Anwar with extensive experience at BBC World Service, who joined in the 2023-2024 reporting year, played a catalytic role in advancing the institute's vision. He facilitated consultations with editors, academics, news media experts, and MRDI's leadership on governance models, legal and administrative structures, ownership frameworks, and operational requirements.

In July 2024, MRDI engaged with Asian College of Journalism (ACJ), Chennai that expressed strong interest in partnering on curriculum development, research initiatives, and sector-wide surveys tailored to the needs of Bangladesh and the wider South Asian media ecosystem.

The MRDI Board formally approved the name of the institute, and the Memorandum of Association (MoA) and Articles of Association (AoA) were finalised. Alongside MRDI, leading organisations including Media World (owning company of The Daily Star), Media Star (owning company of Prothom Alo), and Digitally Right have committed as organisational partners. Discussions are also underway with individual board of directors including Iftekharuzzaman from Transparency International Bangladesh and leading businesswomen and corporate icon Rubana Huq and Rupali Chowdhury, to join the Board.

Currently, the process of the institute is progressing through regulatory approval, business planning, fund mobilisation, and Board formation process. Planning is underway on infrastructure, identify priority skills aligned with industry needs and how to develop future-oriented curricula integrating digital innovation, media ethics, public interest reporting, and newsroom sustainability.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Planning and Review Workshop

MRDI's five-year strategic plan, the guiding document of the organization, entered its fourth year and the team looked back to evaluating whether they are moving according to the plan, its achievements and challenges. Like previous year, the annual Strategic Plan Review Workshop 2024 was held involving all staff members of MRDI. This year, the four-day programme was organized in Sreemangal, the "tea capital" of Bangladesh, with the objectives to:

- ▶ Recap key features of MRDI's strategic plan.
- ▶ Review the achievements and challenges of milestone plans.
- ▶ Develop an operational MEAL plan for MRDI.
- ▶ Build the capacity of team members to implement the MEAL plan

The workshop utilized a range of methodologies-including NOISE (Needs, Opportunities, Improvements, Strengths, Expectations) analysis, presentations, group work, and recreational activities-to ensure a highly engaging and productive learning experience.

Following the introductory session of the workshop, participants presented progress against MRDI's agreed milestones. Along with highlighting key achievements of the year, they also identified implementation challenges. The session facilitated constructive discussions on practical strategies and corrective actions to address these challenges and strengthen future programming.



Some important decision from the workshop are as follows:

- ▶ Several KPIs have been revised to make sure that they closely align with the requirements of specific activities of projects being implemented
- ▶ Grievance Redress System, a system that allows MRDI's programme participants and beneficiaries to express their grievances will be developed. Grievance redressal reports will be published on MRDI's website for transparency
- ▶ A feedback response mechanism will be established, and the project focal persons will be responsible for managing that.

Furthermore, the workshop underscored the importance of establishing an operational MEAL system within the organization.

The participants have learnt the new concepts, terminologies and systems particularly the practical application of MEAL which will be helpful in documentation, monitoring and evaluation of every activity, as well as the programmes being implemented by MRDI.

Five programmatic strategic objectives were discussed during the session, including gender as a key focus area. In addition, ten milestones supported by enabling objectives-such as human resources, business development, communications, and MEAL-were explained in detail.

Several important decisions on gender issues were made during the session, including incorporating gender attitudes into appraisal interviews, reviewing the gender audit structure, developing a gender-specific code of conduct, and integrating gender and gender diversity topics into all training sessions.

Climate Communications Fellowship

MRDI partnered with International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX), a US-based non-profit organization for 'Climate Communications Fellowship' project with an aim to integrate climate change and energy transition subjects into policy discussions and contribute to MRDI's engagement with civil society organizations having operations on the themes. MRDI hosted a Communications Coordinator under the fellowship to primarily support its communications activities in line with its strategic plan as well as to plan and execute stakeholder engagement, communications strategies and other tactics to shape public opinion on energy transition and climate change issues. The fellow received extensive training on climate change and energy transition in the first five months by IREX as a part of his learning goals. There were periodic check-ins, webinars and community building sessions hosted by IREX in participation with seven other fellows across South Asian countries.

MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING (MEAL)

MRDI is continuing to strengthen the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) approach in a systematic process to track and evaluate the achievement against the organization's Strategic Objectives (SO). Operational MEAL approach ensures structured data collection methods, its proper management, analysis and hence ensures evidence-based decision making for the MRDI Management as well as ensuring accountability.

Alignment with Strategic Objectives

Aligned with the organization's five Strategic Objectives, a comprehensive MEAL Database has been developed during this year and is being followed to track the organizational achievement towards its target. Specific outputs are captured against each of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) against each Strategic Objective from all the ongoing projects of the organization. This alignment ensures the measurement of the project as well as the organizational progress towards its broader strategic mission and vision.

Key Achievements

Significant achievements were accomplished during the year through MEAL:

- ▶ A consolidated MEAL Database has been developed to ensure systematic collection of project data.
- ▶ MRDI staff are oriented and guided on the operational MEAL process to enhance their capacity to apply monitoring and reporting tools effectively.
- ▶ Implementation of periodic monitoring and reporting were conducted at MEAL Coordination meetings where several observations were discussed and accumulate the decisions accordingly.
- ▶ Since MEAL Database provides evidence-based information, it is convenient for the organization to make informed decisions and plan and implement accordingly.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Like any other evolving system, MRDI faced some challenges in implementing MEAL activities. Timely collection of monitoring data was a challenge, but the situation is improving. For maintaining consistency and ensuring the quality data flow, continuous support is required. The new indicators adopted into the MEAL Database may take time to become fully functional.

Accountability and Learning

Several MEAL Coordination meetings were organized throughout the year to share and review the observations. These sessions enhance accountability by providing opportunities to discuss achievements, challenges, and share lessons among the teams.

New KPI was finalized through these meetings and finally approved by the MRDI Board of Directors and incorporated into the MRDI MEAL Database.

A guideline for the Complaint, Feedback, and Response Mechanism (CFRM) was discussed during the meetings to strengthen accountability across all operational areas of MRDI, ensuring inclusiveness for its beneficiaries and engagement of stakeholders at all stages.

Plan for Next Year

The MEAL process is a continuous cycle that evolves according to emerging needs. Nevertheless, MRDI is following the principles we set in the Strategic Plan Review Workshop 2024 and follow-up meetings throughout the year.

A CFRM guideline is being drafted and will be presented at the next Strategic Plan Review Workshop in 2025 and will roll out in the upcoming year.

Automation of MRDI Administration and Financial procedure

MRDI is implementing an initiative to transform its management and operations into ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) and commission a fully automated software system by deploying Microsoft Dynamic 365 Business Central. One Microsoft enlisted vendor started working to deploy the system. But at one point the firm failed to progress with the functional requirement of MRDI and both MRDI and the firm mutually decided to discontinue the agreement. However, the process of selecting another firm for the task is now in progress.

This ERP system will cover financial and accounting management, petty cash management, VAT and tax management, human resource & payroll management, attendance & staff movement management, fixed assets management, procurement management, and store management.

This activity will contribute to enhancing coordination and data integration, ensuring greater transparency and accountability in administrative and financial processes that will facilitate the shift from project driven to one programme operations.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The political changeover in August 2024 appeared both as an opportunity and challenge for all sectors including the news media and people's right of access to information. Status of Bangladesh in freedom of expression improved according to the latest report of the World Press Freedom Index, which is a good sign. But the reality remains, barriers and challenges in different forms are still limiting free speech that adversely impacts the media and journalism. The news media environment has not been congenial for journalists to produce quality investigative stories without fear. Changes took place in management and newsrooms of individual news outlets.

During the reporting period the news media was mostly engaged in covering events related to political change, law and order situation, upcoming election, mob incidents and other issues that left limited time and scope to produce in-depth and investigative stories. However, number of investigations took place regarding the irregularities and corruption of the previous government.

Absence of the Information Commission has limited people's right of accessing information, and the journalists as well that adversely impacted MRDI's mentorship programme where journalists plan to gather information from the authorities for their investigations. Similarly citizens as a whole became less interested in filing RTI applications. Parallelly proactive disclosure of information by authorities including NGOs has a declining trend.

Amidst these challenges, the political changeover opened opportunities to reshape the news media industry in a way that allows more freedom and enhances audience trust. Reform initiative of the interim government in the media among other sectors can be an effective conduit to attain this end.

Apart from these external factors, MRDI experienced internal opportunities and challenges during the year. Restructuring the MEAL system and deploying a technically skilled designated MEAL officer brought significant changes in the system of tracking progress of activities and programmes. This is an opportunity for the programme and MEAL teams to work collectively for clearer reflection of the organization's performances. This has also created an opportunity to establish a centralized MIS for the organization.

Challenges faced by the news media industry also impacted MRDI's programmes. Number of quality investigative stories reduced compared to those of the previous year. Coping with the changed environment of the news outlets has not been easy for MRDI.

DISCLOSURE OF MAJOR DECISIONS BY THE BOARD

During the reporting year, MRDI board of directors and its general body took the following major decisions in four board meetings and one general meeting.

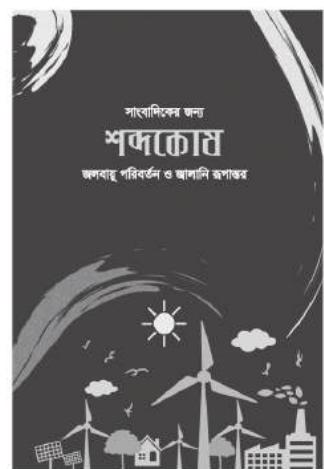
- ▶ In MRDI's Financial and Administrative Manual, added sub-clause 18.4 under chapter XVIII cost sharing guideline -- "External audit firm appointed by the AGM will certify the MRDI overhead rate in prescribed format each year from July to June based on the actual expenditure during the annual audit of the organisation. MRDI will charge the certified rate of overhead if there is any provision in donor budget."
- ▶ The ceiling of inviting quotation for procurement has been increased in the context of present market price.
- ▶ A Qasem & Co. is appointed for the organisational audit along with employees provident fund for the fiscal year 2024-2025.
- ▶ Some KPIs of the strategic plan have been modified in accordance with the recommendations of the Strategic Plan Review Workshop.
- ▶ Hasibur Rahman is nominated to represent MRDI in the proposed Institute of Journalism and Research.
- ▶ The existing procurement committee is revised due to resignation of a member from MRDI.
- ▶ The revised gender code of conduct for MRDI is approved.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION

Energy Glossary

The issues of climate change and energy are more global rather than local and most of the related policy documents and research are in English. As a result, many journalists in Bangladesh find it difficult to navigate the complex terminology of climate change and energy system for access to knowledge resources, learn from them, and keep up with global developments.

Keeping the reality in mind, MRDI has developed a handbook covering commonly used jargon and terminology from the fields of climate change and energy transition to support journalists improve their understanding of these technical terms and thereby quality of their reporting. It provides clear explanations of key concepts related to energy transition, climate change, and environmental issues in both Bangla and English, along with their meanings. It also includes a list of frequently used terms and reliable sources/resources for accessing credible information on climate change and energy transition.



The handbook, which is designed as a practical resource for reporters, editors, journalism students and civil society organizations translates critical technical terms from English into clear and concise Bangla definitions. It is expected to empower journalists to simplify complex issues into language accessible to the general public which ultimately is expected to enhance accuracy in their reporting.

Gender Charter of Commitment for News Media

The Bangladeshi news media landscape reached a milestone with the launch of the Gender Charter of Commitment for News Media in Bangladesh acknowledged and signed by 21 leading news outlets of the country. The charter lays out the standards, policies and actions necessary to ensure inclusion, equality, equity, dignity and sensitivity for all genders within news media organizations and their content.

The primary goal of the charter is to create a news media environment where people of all genders can work safely, equitably, and professionally, and where their voices and experiences are reflected accurately and respectfully in the media. It defines gender as a social construct, while sex refers to biological characteristics.

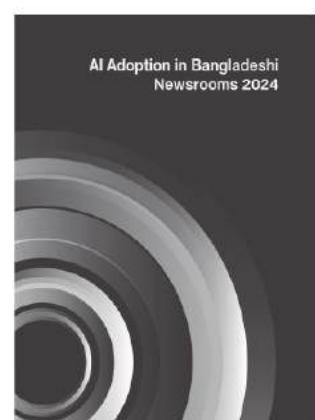


Under the charter, the news media organizations, commit to developing policies for gender equality, emphasize transparency in recruitment and promotion processes, adopt affirmative action to facilitate participation of marginalized genders, monitor compliance with gender equality standards in the workplace, develop ethical guidelines for gender representation in news content, avoid perpetuating gender stereotypes and promote diverse voices and ensure visual elements in news are relevant and respectful.

The charter also promises to ensure safety and security of all employees, especially marginalized genders, provide safe transport and establish complaint mechanisms for discrimination, develop policies to protect against work-related hazards while committing to monitoring the implementation of the charter's pledges and ensure accountability for adherence to gender equality standards.

Annual Report 2023-24

To disseminate the accomplishment of the organization in a compiled volume, and also as a compliance with the provision of proactive disclosure under the RTI Act, MRDI published the annual report 2023-24.



AI Adoption in Bangladeshi Newsrooms 2024

The AI Adoption in Bangladeshi Newsrooms - 2024 report examines the growing role of artificial intelligence in reshaping journalism in Bangladesh. It finds that AI tools are being applied across the sector-from automating transcription and translation to supporting data-driven reporting, content personalization, and newsroom management. These innovations have the potential to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and extend the reach of news outlets, particularly in a competitive and resource-constrained media market.

At the same time, the study highlights significant risks, including unchecked misinformation, algorithmic bias, loss of editorial independence, and threats to employment security for journalists. Smaller outlets, often with limited financial and

technical capacity, face additional barriers in adopting AI responsibly. Concerns over transparency and the absence of clear disclosure when using AI-generated content further complicate the ethical landscape.

Many journalists in Bangladesh are leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) in their individual work but institutional use in newsrooms operations remain nominal. Around 51% of journalists have used AI tools in their work individually, but institutional use is much lower at just 20%. Among those using AI, ChatGPT is the most popular tool with a 78% usage rate, followed by Grammarly (52%) and Google Translate (44%). Other tools include Canva (37%), Google Gemini (19%), DALL-E and Adobe Sensei (15% each), and Midjourney, Tableau, Factmata, and Turnitin (7% each) along with 11% using other tools.

The primary use of AI across news media outlets is to enhance grammar and writing style with a combined usage rate of 52%. Journalists using AI mainly rely on it for content enhancement and fact-checking. Following grammar improvement, conducting research and background verification ranks second at 48%.

The report recommends building institutional policies for responsible AI use, training journalists in critical AI literacy, and strengthening editorial oversight to safeguard accuracy and credibility. It also calls for regulatory frameworks that address ethical risks without stifling innovation, as well as partnerships between media, academia, and technology providers to ensure balanced growth. Overall, the report views AI as both a challenge and an opportunity—one that, if managed carefully, can contribute to a stronger, more sustainable, and trustworthy media ecosystem in Bangladesh.

AI tools are already supporting newsroom tasks but their use often lacks clear oversight. Smaller outlets risk being left behind due to resource constraints. Unchecked adoption could increase misinformation, bias, and insecurity in journalism jobs. Transparent newsroom policies and disclosure standards are urgently needed to protect credibility. Training programs will be vital to equip journalists with AI literacy and ethical awareness. Finally, regulatory safeguards should be designed to ensure accountability without stifling the sector's growth and innovation.

VISIT ABROAD

During the reporting period, the Communications Fellow at MRDI visited Bangkok, Thailand, from March 31 to April 4, 2025, to attend the in-person convening of the Climate Communications Fellowship organized by the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX), a US-based non-profit organisation. Sector specialists from various countries facilitated learning sessions throughout the programme, marking the beginning of the Fellow's transition journey and strengthening their understanding of climate change and the energy transition.

Following the communications coordinator's visit, a manager programme of MRDI, as a representative of the host organisation attended a retreat and educational training in Thailand, organised by IREX from June 23- June 26, 2025.

MRDI team including the Chair Farid Hossain, Executive Director Hasibur Rahman and Director Ishtiaque Reza visited Chennai, India from 28 July - 30 July 2024 to attend the meeting at Asian College of Journalism (ACJ). During a meeting with chairman of the Asian College of Journalism, the MRDI team emphasized the potentiality of developing and running courses, exchange of students and faculties, conducting research and survey jointly. The team tried to understand how ACJ's classrooms and labs are designed, their overseas collaboration, curriculum development and enrollment strategies, targets, student-faculty ratio, revenue generating strategy and how to determine fees.

MRDI COMMITTEES

► PROCUREMENT

Md. Shahid Hossain
Advisor, Planning & Development
Aktarun Naher
Manager, Programme
Sk. Shaniaz Ahmed
Deputy Manager, Accounts

Tahmina Ferdowsy
Senior Accounts Officer
Jannatun Nahar
Senior Programme Officer

► WHISTLE BLOWER

Farid Hossain
Chair
Hasibur Rahman
Executive Director
Md. Shahid Hossain
Advisor, Planning & Development
Samsun Nahar
Manager, Finance

► GRIEVANCE REDRESS OFFICER

Hasibur Rahman
Executive Director

► GRIEVANCE AGAINST THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Farid Hossain
Chair

► BUDGET

Aktarun Naher
Manager, Programme
Md. Mominul Islam
Manager, Accounts
Samsun Nahar
Manager, Finance

► PROVIDENT FUND TRUST

Hasibur Rahman
Chairman
Md. Nazrul Islam
Member
Aktarun Naher
Member
Samsun Nahar
Secretary
Md. Mominul Islam
Member

► SAFEGUARD OFFICER

Md. Shahid Hossain
Advisor, Planning & Development

► ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING CAMLCO

Md. Shahid Hossain
Advisor, Planning & Development

► MEMBERS OF AML/CFT COMPLIANCE UNIT

Aktarun Naher
Manager, Programme
Samsun Nahar
Manager, Finance

► GENDER COMMITTEE

Dr. Azizunnahar Islam
Director of MRDI Board
Md. Shahid Hossain
Advisor, Planning & Development

► EXTERNAL EXPERT

Shahnaz Munni
Former Chief News Editor, News 24
Aktarun Naher
Manager, Programme
Samsun Nahar
Manager, Finance
Mohua Alam Snigdha
Senior Officer HR & Logistics

Board of Directors

(As of 30 June 2025)

Name	Position	Profession
Farid Hossain	Chair	Journalism
Hasibur Rahman	Executive Director	Development Worker
Md. Nazrul Islam	Director	Former Secretary, Coordination & Reforms, Cabinet Division; Former Permanent Member, The National Human Rights Commission
Syed Ishtiaque Reza	Director	Journalism
Sakiul Millat Morshed	Director	Development Worker
Dr. Azizunnahar Islam	Director	Honorary Professor, Dhaka University
Mainul Alam	Director	Journalism
Dr. Shamim Imam	Director	Development worker
M.B.M. Lutful Hadee, FCA	Director	Business
Shahana Huda Ranjana	Director	Communication expert
Miraj Ahmed Chowdhury	Director	Business

Policy Documents

1. Financial and Administrative Policy Containing
 - Human Resource (HR) Policy
 - Procurement Policy
 - Fixed Assets Management Policy
 - Bank & cash management policy
 - Travel Policy
 - Anti-corruption Policy
 - Conflict of interest Policy
2. Information Disclosure Policy
3. MRDI Gender Policy

Contributions to other Organizations this Year

Provide salary and benefits of two personnel to coordinate and facilitate in implementing activities of three somities at Sundarbans and one in Basatpur, Jashore.

MRDI Advisor

Md. Shahid Hossain
Advisor, Planning and Development
Nepal Chandra Sarker
Advisor, RTI

Advisory Staff

Rashid Naim
Coordinator, Programme Development

MRDI Institute

Shakeel Anwar
Chief Executive Officer

CORE STAFFS

Name & Designation	Responsibilities
1. Shakeel Anwar	Responsible for leading the conceptualization and establishment of the MRDI Training Institute; developing the business plan and exploring partnerships with international news organizations, institutes, and universities; forming an advisory group with national and international experts; identifying diploma and short-term training courses aligned with the institute's mandate; planning for a research wing; exploring international collaboration for course design and delivery; representing the organization in national and international meetings, negotiations, and academic forums; ensuring growth and business sustainability of the institute; and engaging external experts as required in the process of developing the concept, legal affiliation, and business plan.
2. Md. Badruddoza Head of Capacity Building & Head of IJ Helpdesk	Responsible for implementation and overseeing capacity building programmes complying with the policies and practice of organization and regulations of the donor organization; developing news ideas and concepts as per need of the organization; representing the organization in different forums and maintain liaison with donors and other stakeholders and support news media houses and journalists to improve their journalism skills through IJ Helpdesk.
3. Aktarun Naher Manager, Programme	Deputed as programme coordinator in the project, 'Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development'. Responsible for successful implementation of project activities. She is responsible for coordinating and supervising the overall programme related activities of the organization in consultation with the supervisor, maintaining effective communication with the donor/s, NGO Affairs Bureau and others as determined by MRDI management.
4. Samsun Nahar Manager, Finance	Deputed as finance manager in the project 'Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase-III'. Responsible for preparing required financial report and statements for financial analysis; preparing budget as per requirement; performing duties and responsibilities assigned by the supervisor.
5. Md. Mominul Islam Manager, Accounts	Deputed as finance coordinator in the projects 'Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development'. Responsible for preparing required financial report and statements for financial analysis; preparing budget as per requirement; perform duties and responsibilities assigned by the supervisor.
6. Syed Samiul Basher Anik Manager, Programme	Deputed as programme coordinator, in the project, 'Climate, Energy and the Media'. Responsible for successful implementation of project activities.
7. Sarwat Tarannum Nadia Senior Programme Officer <i>Discharged</i>	Deputed as project coordinator in the project 'Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase-III'. Responsible for successful implementation of project activities. Discontinued from March 2025.
8. Md. Tarik Hasan Al Mahamud Senior Officer, IT	Deputed as senior officer, IT in the project 'Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase-III'. Responsible for handling all IT needs of the organization, maintain website and the server of MRDI, coordinate and supervise with all the vendors and suppliers related to IT.

Name & Designation	Responsibilities
9. Tahmina Ferdowsy Senior Accounts Officer	Deputed as finance officer in the project 'Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase-III'. Responsible for maintaining accounts of all expenditures of the project activity and bank account of the project.
10. Md. Mizanur Rahman Senior Coordinator Programme Management	Deputed as logistic coordinator in the projects, 'Improving Qualitative Journalism in Bangladesh-Phase II' and training coordinator in the project, 'Media Strengthening Democracy'. Responsible for facilitating programme coordinator in organizing programmes successfully.
11. Mohua Alam Snigdha Senior Officer HR & Logistic	Deputed as programme officer logistic in the projects 'Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development'. Responsible for facilitating programme coordinator in organizing programmes successfully.
12. Md. Jewel Senior Programme Officer, MEAL	Deputed as programme officer in the projects 'Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development'. Responsible for the MEAL system of the project as well as the organization.
13. Modina Jahan Rime Senior Programme Officer	Deputed as senior officer (gender) in the project 'Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase-III'. Responsible for implementing the gender activities of the project. Resigned in September 2024.
14. Jannatun Nahar Senior Programme Officer	Deputed as programme officer in the projects 'Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development'. Responsible for successful implementation of project activities.
15. Sumona Hembrom Senior Programme Officer RTI Help Desk	Deputed as Senior Programme Officer- RTI Help Desk in the project, 'Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase-III'. Responsible for running the RTI helpdesk.
16. Atiqur Rahman Media Monitoring Officer	Deputed as programme coordinator in the project, 'Promoting Fact Checking to Counter Misinformation in Bangladesh' and project coordinator in the project 'Journalism to Safeguard Democracy'. Responsible for working with senior media monitoring officer and successful implementation of project activities.
17. Minhaz Sheikh, Office Junior	Providing support services as per requirement.
18. Hamida Begum, Office Junior	Providing support services as per requirement.

CORE STAFFS

(CONTRACTUAL)

Name & Designation	Responsibilities
1. Sk. Shaniaz Ahmed Deputy Manager, Accounts	Deputed as finance coordinator in the projects 'Climate, Energy and the Media', 'Promoting Fact Checking to Counter Misinformation in Bangladesh' and 'Journalism to Safeguard Democracy'. Responsible for maintaining accounts of all expenditures of the project activity and bank account of the project. Preparing financial reports according to the format and time frame; facilitating programme team regarding the financial transaction of the programs; taking care of project administrative work relevant to finance; maintaining liaison with donor.

Name & Designation	Responsibilities
2. Anannya Paul	Deputed as Programme Officer under MRDI to support implementation of programme and project activities. Responsible for assisting programme staff, coordinating events and reporting, communicating with beneficiaries and stakeholders, managing filing and documentation, supporting media monitoring and archiving, and performing other duties assigned by the authority. Contract ended in November 2024.

PROJECT STAFFS

Name & Designation	Responsibilities
1. A K M Sanaul Haq Capacity Building Manager	Deputed as capacity building manager in the project, 'Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase-III'. Responsible for all capacity building programme of the project; organize trainings, roundtables and other activities as per project plans; ensure project delivers expected outputs and outcomes, in line with the budget and activity plan; ensure quality of capacity building activities, online/classroom/in-house training and publications; supervise development of communication materials (print/multimedia) and represent the organization in different forum and maintain liaison with donors and other stakeholders
2. Md. Abul Bashar Selim Project Coordinator	Deputed as programme coordinator in the project, 'Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase-III'. Responsible for successful implementation of project activities. Resigned in November 2024.
3. Salma Zannat Project Coordinator (Gender)	Deputed as programme coordinator in the project, 'Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase-III'. Responsible for implementing the gender activities of the project.
4. Ruhina Akter Sub-Editor at GIJN	Deputed as sub-editor GIJN in the project, 'Improving Qualitative Journalism in Bangladesh-Phase II'. Responsible to facilitate GIJN editor to run the bangla edition and GIJN facebook page.
5. Md. Syed ul Abedin Programme Officer Web Based Knowledge Hub	Deputed as Programme Officer-Web Based Knowledge Hub in the project "Climate, Energy, and the Media". Responsible for collecting and organizing data, coordinating with IT for database updates, maintaining the knowledge portal, ensuring information credibility, supporting users, preparing bi-weekly newsletters/tip-sheets, collaborating with internal and external partners, and performing other duties assigned by MRDI Management. Resigned in September, 2024
6. Umme Samia Programme Officer	Deputed as Training & Programme Coordinator under the projects "Media Strengthening Democracy" and "Journalism for Functional Democracy". Responsible for supporting project and programme implementation, drafting event and programme reports, maintaining documentation, generating innovative ideas for effective activity delivery, and performing other duties assigned by the supervisor and the Executive Director. End of contract in November 2024.

Name & Designation	Responsibilities
7. Dilruba Begum Monalisa Capacity Building Manager	Deputed as Project Coordinator in the project, 'Advancing Women's Right of Access to Information in Bangladesh'. Responsible for tracking action plan, coordinating with funder and project team, managing implementation, reporting, field visits, procurement support and ensuring timely and effective delivery of project activities. End of contract in July, 2025
8. Mohammad Zakir Hossain Accounts Coordinator	Deputed as Accounts Coordinator in the project "Advancing Women's Right of Access to Information in Bangladesh". Responsible for maintaining project accounts in Tally, preparing vouchers and financial documents, managing bank transactions, preparing expenditure statements and fund requests, ensuring compliance with MRDI and donor financial policies, supporting audits, depositing VAT & tax, maintaining petty cash, documenting financial records, conducting financial visits, and performing other duties assigned by management. End of contract in July, 2025
9. Sizan Ahmed Jim Project Coordinator	Deputed as programme coordinator in the project, 'Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase-III'. Responsible for facilitating programme coordinator in organizing programmes successfully.
10. Ashif Islam Communications Coordinator	Deputed as communication coordinator in the project, Climate Communication Fellowship'.
11. Nabiluzzaman Nafiu Programme Officer Web Based Knowledge Hub	Deputed as programme officer, web-based knowledge hub, in the project, Climate, Energy and the Media'. Responsible for facilitating programme coordinator in organizing programmes successfully.
12. Buty Hajong Media Monitoring Officer	Deputed as media monitoring officer in the project, 'Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase-III'. Responsible for running the media monitoring activities of the project.
13. Sabira Sultana Shaown Senior Programme Officer (Gender)	Deputed as senior officer gender in the project 'Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase-III'. Responsible to facilitate project coordinator gender in implementing the gender activities of the project.
14. Tithy Mondal Project Coordinator	Deputed as project coordinator in the project 'Strategic Prioritizing - Bangladesh Media Reforms During Transition'. Responsible for successful implementation of project activities.
15. Zannatul Firdaus News Media Monitoring Officer	Deputed as news media monitoring officer in the project 'Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development'. Responsible for running the media monitoring activities of the project.
16. Syed Mohammad Rahatul Islam News Media Monitoring Officer	Deputed as news media monitoring officer in the project 'Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development'. Responsible for running the media monitoring activities of the project.

Designated Information Officer under RTIA

Name : Aktarun Naher
Designation : Manager, Programme
Tel : +88 02 41022772-74
E-mail : aktarun.naher@mrdibd.org

Alternative Designated Information Officer under RTIA

Name : Samsun Nahar
Designation : Manager, Finance
Tel : +88 02 41022772-74
E-mail : samsun.nahar@mrdibd.org

Appellate Authority under RTIA

Name : Hasibur Rahman
Designation : Executive Director
Tel : +88 02 41022772-74
E-mail : hasibur.rahman@mrdibd.org

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

MRDI practices transparent financial management and a scientific & reliable accounting system. Committed and efficient finance team has been able to keep up the reputation with the support of the management. A strong internal control system is there in place. Policy documents like financial and administrative manual, HR policy, gender policy, information disclosure policy are now in place for its managerial operations. MRDI meticulously abides by the law of the land and regulations of the regulatory authorities concerned.

MRDI maintains required books of accounts and related records in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs). We record all financial transactions through tally software. Management and control of all funds, assets, procurement and expenditure are done through a very transparent and controlled system complying with the in-house policies, rules and regulations.

MRDI initiated the process of implementing an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software system with Bizzntek Ltd. to automate its organizational operations. The proposed ERP solution was intended to cover Finance and Accounting Management, Procurement Management, Store Management, Fixed Assets Management, Attendance and Staff Movement Management, Human Resource Management, and Payroll Management. The implementation was to be carried out in accordance with the agreed Functional Requirement Document (FRD). However, Bizzntek Ltd. failed to deliver the ERP software in line with the agreed scope of work. Consequently, both parties mutually agreed to discontinue the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed on 21 April 2025.

During the financial year 2024-2025 MRDI finance team maintained fourteen separate sets of books of accounts. One set for transactions of the core organization and the other thirteen sets for individual projects.

The financial statements of MRDI reflect the true and fair view of the financial position and are free of material misstatement.

In 2024-2025 MRDI received funds from the following funding authorities/Organizations:

Fojo Media Institute (IQJB-Phase III)	BDT. 29,119,020
GFA Consulting Group GmbH (STID)	29,915,180
International Media Support (SPBMRT)	2,403,278
The Asia Foundation (JSD)	2,416,100
IREX (CCF)	837,621
The Asia Foundation (ANMRB)	1,793,376
The Asia Foundation (SNMFAB)	1,815,000
The Carter Center (AWRTI)	1,101,700
Swiss Embassy (DIF)	535,500
Internews (PFCCMB)	3,124,508
TARA Climate Ltd (CEM)	7,726,996
European Union (MSD)	1,232,783
The Asia Foundation (MIMA Phase II)	1,599,500
The Asia Foundation (JFD)	2,303,614
Global Investigative Journalism Network (TJMDC)	520,100
Total	86,444,276

MRDI meticulously follows the government policy and procedures as well as standards in all spheres of its programme and administration. In particular the income tax and VAT are deducted as per the income tax and VAT at ordinance. MRDI has its own TAX Identification Number (TIN) and submits the company tax return each year as per law of income tax.

During 2024-2025 MRDI deducted at source and deposited the following amounts of money in the government treasury:

VAT Tk. 1,038,950

Tax Tk. 5,179,952

**Independent Auditor's Report on
the Consolidated Financial Statements
of
Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)**

As at and for the year ended 30 June 2025

A.QASEM & Co.

Chartered Accountants

Since 1953

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**Independent Auditor's Report
To the management of Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)**

Report on the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial Statements of "Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)" which comprise the Consolidated statement of financial position as at 30 June 2025, and the Consolidated statement of income and expenditure, Consolidated statement of receipts and payments account for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying consolidated financial statements give true and fair view of the financial position of the company as at 30 June 2025, its income and expenditure, and its receipts and payments account for the year then ended in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) as explained in Note 2.0 and comply with the requirements of the Foreign Donations (Voluntary Activities) Regulation Act 2016 and other applicable laws and regulations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants published by International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants (IESBA Code), together with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Bangladesh, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Consolidated Financial

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs), the companies Act, 1994 and other applicable laws and regulations and for such internal control applicable as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the project's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statement or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization's to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, and significant audit findings including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

In accordance with the Companies Act, 1994, we also report the following:

- a) We have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purposes of our audit;
- b) In our opinion, proper books of accounts as required by laws and regulations have been kept by the organization so far as it appeared from our examination of those books; and
- c) The statements of financial and statement of income and expenditure deal with by the report are in agreement with the books of accounts and returns

A. Qasem & Co.

Chartered Accountants

FRC Enlistment Registration No: CAF-001-129



Akhtar Sanjida Kasem FCA, ECMA, CFE
 Partner

Enrolment Number: 643

DVC: 2512010643AS155741

Date: 01 December 2025

Place: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
Consolidated Statement of Financial Position
As at 30 June 2025

	Notes	Amount in BDT		
		As at 30 June	2025	
Assets				
Non-current assets				
Property, plant and equipment	3.00	2,358,626	2,795,135	
Intangible assets	5.00	2,423,750	1,715,000	
Total non-current assets		4,782,376	4,510,135	
Current assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	6.00	32,371,924	36,537,251	
Investment in fixed deposit receipts (FDR)	7.00	-	1,368,907	
Advance, deposit and prepayments	8.00	1,228,702	494,952	
Stock of RTI books and Gaon Swapna products	9.00	129,884	537,736	
Reimbursable cost from projects		-	261,355	
Total current assets		33,730,510	39,200,201	
Total assets		38,512,886	43,710,336	
Fund and liabilities				
Fund				
Unutilized project fund	10.00	28,646,509	34,286,264	
Capital fund	11.00	4,034,739	2,898,282	
Gaon swapna fund	12.00	-	1,894,528	
Project fixed assets fund	13.00	2,070,929	2,456,004	
Intangible assets fund	14.00	2,423,750	1,715,000	
Total fund		37,175,927	43,250,078	
Current liabilities				
Outstanding liabilities	15.00	1,336,959	460,258	
Total current liabilities		1,336,959	460,258	
Total liabilities		1,336,959	460,258	
Total fund and liabilities		38,512,886	43,710,336	

Footnotes:

1. Signed as per our independent auditor's report of even date annexed;
2. These financial statements should be read in conjunction with annexed notes 1 to 29.

A. Qasem & Co.
Chartered Accountants
FRC Enlistment Registration No: CAF-001-129

Akhtar Sanjida Kasem FCA, ECMA, CFE

Partner
Enrolment Number: 643

DVC: 2512010643AS155741

Date: 01 December 2025
Place: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Farid Hossain

Farid Hossain
Chair

Hasibur Rahman

Hasibur Rahman
Executive Director



Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
Consolidated Statement of Income and Expenditure
For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Notes	Amount in BDT	
		For the year ended 30 June 2025	2024
Income			
Grant income	16.00	83,438,928	103,369,538
Interest on bank deposits	17.00	14,524	15,125
Reimbursement of cost against facilities and archiving		698,666	1,138,501
Expert support cost received from project		18,000	29,000
MRDI contribution to project		682	-
Overhead/organizational cost from project		-	7,681,826
		84,170,800	112,233,990
Expenditure			
Programme cost	18.00	31,127,688	42,917,924
MRDI contribution to project	19.00	143,777	127,054
Salary and benefits	20.00	43,875,661	42,678,815
Office rent	21.00	3,718,956	2,631,476
Professional and audit fees	22.00	1,105,000	965,217
Transportation and conveyance	23.00	849,891	751,912
Utility and office maintenance	24.00	1,401,048	1,274,683
Phone, fax, internet, postage etc.	25.00	326,106	369,951
Printing and stationery	26.00	297,766	330,490
Newspaper and periodicals	27.00	-	25,200
Depreciation on fixed assets	Annexure-A	1,535,508	5,338,085
Depreciation on right of used assets	Annexure-A	-	849,039
Donation and assistance		85,000	20,000
Bank charges		90,218	96,591
Media monitoring		-	231,000
Facility charges		738,038	946,873
Staff capacity building		5,500	7,058
Annual retreat		56,576	124,585
Annual strategic plan review workshop		115,992	-
Meetings/Events/Training/Workshop		160,854	-
Programme planning and design		-	123,977
Miscellaneous expenses		16,105	44,584
Interest expense on lease liability		-	49,797
Loss on disposal of assets		137,853	20,150
Staff group health insurance premium		231,427	249,309
Overhead/organizational cost		-	7,804,960
Total expenditure before for income tax		86,018,964	107,978,730
Excess/(Short) of income over expenditure before income tax		(1,848,164)	4,255,260
Provision for Income Tax	Annexure-D	1,907	4,992
Excess/(Short) of income over expenditure		(1,850,071)	4,250,268
		84,170,800	112,233,990

Footnotes:

1. Signed as per our independent auditor's report of even date annexed;
2. These financial statements should be read in conjunction with annexed notes 1 to 29.

A. Qasem & Co.
Chartered Accountants
FRC Enlistment Registration No: CAF-001-129

Akhtar Sanjida Kasem
Akhtar Sanjida Kasem FCA, FCMA, CFE

Partner

Enrolment Number: 643

DVC: 2512010643AS155741

Date: 01 December 2025

Place: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Farid Hossain

Farid Hossain
Chair

Hasibur Rahman

Hasibur Rahman
Executive Director



Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
Consolidated Statement of Receipts and Payments
For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Notes	Amount in BDT	
		For the year ended 30 June	
		2025	2024
Opening balance			
Cash in hand		19,200	14,184
Cash at bank		36,518,051	30,470,379
		36,537,251	30,484,563
Receipts			
Donor fund received	10.01	86,444,276	105,852,971
Interest on project bank account		259,417	225,825
Encashment of FDR		1,402,073	-
Reimbursement of cost against Archiving and facilities		698,666	1,138,501
Expert support cost received from project		18,000	29,000
Capital fund (Closing from project bank account)		1,816,079	-
Sale of Gaon Swapna products		34,226	48,613
Reimbursement of cost against MRDI writing pad and folder		28,428	69,009
Interest on MRDI bank account		14,524	15,125
Miscellaneous Income (Sale of scrap of old assets)		26,000	41,000
Pervious years adjustment account		1,059,384	646,500
Directors entry fee and subscription		6,700	9,500
Reimbursable cost from project		261,355	-
Utilized donor fund transfer to IQJB Phase III		5,305,239	-
Reserve fund-bank interest to IQJB Phase III		611,508	-
Provision for expenses to IQJB Phase III		200,000	-
Legal Expart fees received from Donor (The Law-Focus)		765,750	-
MRDI contribution to project		682	-
Overhead/organizational cost from project		-	7,681,826
Total receipts		98,952,307	115,757,870
Total fund available for use		135,489,558	146,242,433
Payments			
Programme cost	18.00	31,112,316	42,917,924
Contribution to projects	19.00	143,777	127,054
Salary and benefits	20.00	43,765,661	42,678,815
Office rent	21.00	3,718,956	3,688,956
Professional and audit fees	22.00	485,000	595,217
Transportation and conveyance	23.00	849,891	751,912
Utility and office maintenance	24.00	1,346,472	1,226,079
Phone, fax, internet, postage etc.	25.00	326,106	369,951
Printing and stationery	26.00	209,255	288,107
Facility charges		738,038	946,873
Purchase of fixed assets		1,026,853	852,191
Automation development cost-Honorarium for expert		-	360,000
Automation Development Cost--Deployment of ERP Solution		708,750	-
Payment of outstanding liabilities		515,477	3,040,137
Donation and assistance		105,280	50,000
Advance and prepayments		852,150	120,000
Newspaper and periodicals	27.00	-	25,200



Notes	Amount in BDT	
	For the year ended 30 June	2025
	2024	
Gaon Swapna operational expenses	-	782
Investment in FDR	-	54,286
Staff Group Health Insurance Premium	231,427	249,309
Bank charges	94,533	99,266
Media monitoring	-	231,000
Adjustment of last year's unutilized project fund	6,838,875	2,443,286
Reimbursable cost from projects	-	261,355
Income tax paid in advance	1,955	4,992
Staff capacity building	5,500	7,058
Annual retreat	56,576	124,585
Annual strategic plan review workshop	115,992	-
Meetings/Events/Training/Workshop	160,854	-
Programme planning and design	-	123,977
Miscellaneous expenses	16,105	44,584
Stock of MRDI folder and writing pad	57,000	214,350
Legal Expart fees paid (The Law-Focus)	194,063	-
Residual balance transfer the MRDI core operational account	1,816,078	-
Unutilized fund refund to donor	1,507,947	-
Unutilized donor fund transfer to IQJB Phase III	5,305,239	-
Reserve fund-bank interest to IQJB Phase III	611,508	-
Provision for expenses to IQJB Phase III	200,000	-
Previous years adjustment account	-	2,976
Overhead/organizational cost to MRDI	-	7,804,960
Total payments	103,117,634	109,705,182

Closing balance

Cash in hand	6.01	2,660	19,200
Cash at bank	6.02	32,369,264	36,518,051
		32,371,924	36,537,251

	135,489,558	146,242,433
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Footnotes:

1. Signed as per our independent auditor's report of even date annexed;
2. These financial statements should be read in conjunction with annexed notes 1 to 29.

A. Qasem & Co.
Chartered Accountants
FRC Enlistment Registration No: CAF-001-129

Farid Hossain
Farid Hossain
Chair

Akhtar Sanjida Kasem
Akhtar Sanjida Kasem FCA, ECMA, CFE
Partner

Enrolment Number: 643

DVC: 2512010643AS155741

Date: 01 December 2025
Place: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Hasibur Rahman
Hasibur Rahman
Executive Director



Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements
As at and for the year ended 30 June 2025

1.00 Background

1.01 Legal form of the entity

Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI) vision's just and open societies where all people enjoy their rights.

Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI) is registered with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh under the Section 28 of the Company Act 1994 having Incorporation Number C-544(57)/2003 dated 13 May 2003 as a company limited by guarantee and also registered with the NGO Affairs Bureau having registration number 1962 dated 21 September 2004 under the Foreign Donations Regulation Ordinance 1978 which was renewed on 24 July 2019 for a period of ten years up to 20 September 2029.

Furthermore the organization has changed its name from "Management Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)" to "Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)" by getting approval from NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB) vide reference no. 03.07.2666.660.66.014.23-187, dated- 23 November 2023.

The registered office of the organization is 8/19 Sir Syed Road (3rd floor), Block-A, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh.

1.02 Objectives of the organization

To support the development of a strong and independent media that exercises excellence in journalism, and to empower all people including the marginalized to freely enjoy their right to information working with partners in Bangladesh and beyond.

2.00 Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies

2.01 Basis of preparation

The consolidated financial statements have been prepared and presented in accordance with:

- a) International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and International Accounting Standards (IASs).
- b) Other relevant laws and regulations applicable in Bangladesh

The consolidated financial statements have been prepared applying accrual basis of accounting on going concern basis.

Authorization for issue

The consolidated financial statements were authorized for issue by the Board of Directors of the Organization on 01 December 2025.

2.02 Component of financial statements

According to the International Accounting Standard "IAS-1", presentation of financial statements to complete set of financial statements include the following components:

- (a) Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2025
- (b) Statement of income and expenditure for the year ended 30 June 2025
- (c) Statement of receipts and payments for the year ended 30 June 2025
- (d) Notes to the financial statements as at and for the year ended 30 June 2025



2.03 Summary of projects included in financial statements

MRDI maintains its books of account project wise and consolidated financial statements are prepared by adding each accounting head of individual project's financial statements. The projects include:

Sl.	Name of project	Funded by
01	Improving Qualitative Journalism in Bangladesh Phase II	Fojo Media Institute, Linnaeus University, Sweden
02	Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase III	Fojo Media Institute, Linnaeus University, Sweden
03	Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development (STID)	GFA Consulting Group GmbH (GFA)
04	Strategic Prioritizing – Bangladesh Media Reforms during Transition (SPBMRT)	International Media Support (IMS)
05	Journalism to Safeguard Democracy	The Asia Foundation (TAF)
06	Climate Communications Fellowship	International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX)
07	Media Strengthening Democracy	European Union
08	Promoting Fact Checking to Counter Misinformation in Bangladesh	Internews
Sl.	Name of project	Funded by
09	Climate, Energy and the Media	TARA Climate Limited
10	More Information More Accountability (MIMA) Phase II	The Asia Foundation
11	Journalism for Functional Democracy	The Asia Foundation
12	Journalist Capacity on Climate Change Reporting	Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ)
12	Advancing Women's Right of Access to Information in Bangladesh (AWRTI)	The Carter Centre (TCC)
12	Training for Journalists from Marginalized and Disenfranchised Communities	Global Investigative Journalism Network (GIJN)
12	Gaon Swapna	The City Bank Ltd., HSBC Bangladesh and Manusher Jonno Foundation

2.04 Grant income

International Accounting Standard IAS-20 "Accounting for Government Grants and Disclosure of Government Assistance" has been followed for recognizing the grant income. As per IAS-20 grant received is initially recorded as liability. Grant amount used for project expenses has been recognized as income to the extent of expenses incurred.

2.05 Property, plant and equipment

The cost of an item of property, plant and equipment is recognized as an asset if, it is probable that the future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the organization and the cost of item can be measured reliably. Property, plant and equipment are stated at cost and accumulated depreciation is shown separately. Cost represents the cost of acquisition, purchase price and other directly attributable cost of bringing the assets to working conditions for its intended use.



2.06 Depreciation

Depreciation is charged on property, plant and equipment using straight line method. If assets are acquired during the first half of the year then full year depreciation is charged on assets. No depreciation is charged if the assets are acquired during the second half of the year and also in the year of disposal. Depreciation is charged at the following rates:

<u>Property, plant and equipment</u>	<u>Rate</u>
Furniture and fixtures	20.00%
Computer, printer and multimedia	33.00%
Office equipment	30.00%
Vehicle	25.00%
Other assets	20.00%

Applicability of Depreciation on Projects' assets depends on MRDI's Financial and Administrative Manual

2.07 Related party transaction

As per IAS 24 "Related Party Disclosures", a related party is a person or entity that is related to the entity that is preparing its financial statements. Related party transaction is a transfer of resources, services, or obligations between a reporting entity and a related party, regardless of whether a price is charged as per IAS 24. In case of MRDI, related parties include the directors, key management personnel, associates, companies under common directorship etc. as per IAS 24 "Related Party Disclosures". All transactions involving related parties arising in the normal course of business are conducted at arm's length at normal commercial rates on the same terms and conditions as third party transactions using valuation modes as admissible.

2.08 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents for the purpose of the receipts and payments comprise of cash and bank balance. Cash and bank balance includes donations received through donor grants which are available for the use of organization without restrictions.

2.09 Taxation

In accordance with the provisions of Income Tax Act 2023, all NGOs working in Bangladesh are assessable entities and submission of Income Tax return is mandatory whether the income of any NGO for any year is taxable or not is decided only after regular assessment to be made by the assessing authority. MRDI has made provision for taxation as per requirement of Income Tax Act 2023.

2.10 Provision for liabilities

Provision and accrued expenses are recognized in the combined financial statements when the organization has a present obligation resulting from past events and it is probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation, and a reliable estimate of the amount can be made.

2.11 Foreign currency transactions

MRDI maintains its books of account in Bangladeshi Taka. Transactions in foreign currencies are accounted for in Bangladeshi Taka at the rate of exchange ruling on the date of transactions.

2.12 Capital fund

Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI) is registered with the office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh under Section 28 of the Companies Act 1994 as a company limited by guarantee and without capital. MRDI receives grants/donation from national and international funding agencies based on agreement signed between them. The capital fund represents excess of income over expenditures.



2.13 Preparation of Consolidated Financial Statements

MRDI's consolidated financial statements have been prepared based on the following principles:

- a) Total project cost has been segregated considering the nature of expenditure and booked under the related head of consolidated financial statements.
- b) Mutual debts has been adjusted during the combination.
- c) Balance of fund against unimplemented activities has been shown under unutilized fund.

2.14 Reporting period

The consolidated financial statements of MRDI cover 12 months starting from 01 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 consistently.

2.15 General

- i. The figures in the consolidated financial statements have been rounded off to the nearest Taka (BDT) whenever necessary.
- ii. Previous year figures have been rearranged wherever considered necessary to conform to the current year's presentation.



	Notes	Amount in BDT	
		As at 30 June	
		2025	2024
3.00	Property, plant and equipment		
Cost			
Opening balance		12,469,398	12,409,977
Add: Addition during the year	3.01	1,236,852	1,048,085
Add: Adjustment during the year	Annexure-A	-	(411,178)
		13,706,250	13,046,884
Less: Disposal during the year		(561,794)	(577,486)
Total cost		13,144,456	12,469,398
Accumulated depreciation			
Opening balance		9,674,263	5,304,692
Add: Depreciation charged for the year	Annexure-A	1,535,508	5,338,085
Add: Adjustment during the year	Annexure-A	-	(391,041)
		11,209,771	10,251,736
Less: Disposal during the year	Annexure-A	(423,941)	(577,473)
Total accumulated depreciation		10,785,830	9,674,263
Written down value		2,358,626	2,795,135
Details are shown in Annexure-A			
4.00	Right-of-use asset		
Cost		-	4,245,198
Accumulated Depreciation		-	4,245,198
		-	-
The Company leases a assets(two floor) for continuing its operation. The tenure of the lease was 5 years which has been ended 30 June 2024.			
5.00	Intangible assets		
Automation/ software Development Cost (Work-in-Progress)			
Opening balance		1,715,000	1,355,000
Automation development cost-Honorarium for expert		-	360,000
Automation Development Cost--Deployment of ERP Solution		708,750	-
		2,423,750	1,715,000
Note : Full automation of MRDI administrative and financial procedure was an revenue expenditure item as per NGOAB approved budget. However, as per IAS 38 it is a capital expenditure in nature and recognized as automation/software development cost (work in progress) until the full automation has been done. As per the MoU the full process will be done by 30 March 2025. Then automation/software development cost (work in progress) will be transferred to Intangible Assets.			
6.00	Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash in hand	6.01	2,660	19,200
Cash at bank	6.02	32,369,264	36,518,051
		32,371,924	36,537,251
6.01	Cash in hand		
Core account		2,660	14,982
Gaon Swapna		-	4,218
		2,660	19,200



Notes	Amount in BDT		
	As at 30 June		
	2025	2024	
6.02 Cash at bank			
Project bank accounts	6.02.01	27,964,731	27,613,570
Core bank accounts	6.02.02	4,404,533	8,904,481
		32,369,264	36,518,051

6.02.01 Project bank accounts

Name of bank	Accounts title	Accounts no.	2025	2024
			BDT	BDT
Prime Bank PLC.	MRDI-FOJO	STD-2138314003939	1,122,089	18,772,887
Prime Bank PLC.	MRDI-GFA-STID	STD-2138311021844	22,711,877	-
Prime Bank PLC.	MRDI-IMS-SPBMRT	STD-2138314021881	1,747,922	-
Prime Bank PLC.	MRDI-TAF-JSD	STD-2138313022039	1,134,425	-
Prime Bank PLC.	Gaon Swapna	STD-2138311005680	-	166,181
Prime Bank PLC.	MRDI-EU-MSD	SND-2138314019091	-	365,101
Prime Bank PLC.	MRDI-INTERNEWS-PFCCMB	SND-2138317019148	78,738	796,414
Prime Bank PLC.	MRDI-TARA-CEM	SND-2138314018929	1,169,680	6,148,827
Prime Bank PLC.	MRDI-CIJ-JCCCR	SND-2138315019520	-	234,226
Prime Bank PLC.	MRDI-TCC-AWRTI	SND-2138314019521	-	843,500
Prime Bank PLC.	MRDI-TAF-MIMA	SND-2138313019522	-	102,799
Prime Bank PLC.	MRDI-TAF-JFD	SND-2138318020137	-	183,635
Total			27,964,731	27,613,570

6.02.02 Core bank accounts

Name of bank	Accounts title	Accounts no.	2025	2024
			BDT	BDT
Southeast Bank PLC.	MRDI Mother Account	CD-001211100006616	7,095	6,847,120
Prime Bank PLC.	MRDI Operational Account	STD 2138315008259	4,397,438	2,057,360
Prime Bank PLC.	MRDI-INFCOUS	STD 2138315003581	-	1
Total			4,404,533	8,904,481

7.00 Investment in fixed deposit receipts (FDR)

FDR against Gaon Swapna fund	7.01	1,402,073	1,368,907
Less: Encashment & Transfer		(1,402,073)	-
		-	1,368,907

7.01 FDR against Gaon Swapna fund

Opening balance	1,368,907	1,283,053
Add: Closing balance of interest as at 19 January 2025	64,734	85,854
Less: Last years' provision	(31,568)	-
Closing balance	1,402,073	1,368,907

8.00 Advance, deposit and prepayments

Advance income tax	8.01	1,907	10,307
Security money	8.02	374,645	374,645
Advance for programme	8.03	537,400	-
Advance to staff against salaries	8.04	168,750	110,000
Advance to vendor	8.05	146,000	-
		1,228,702	494,952



	Notes	Amount in BDT	
		As at 30 June	
		2025	2024
8.01 Advance income tax			
Opening balance		10,307	5,315
Add: Addition made during the year		1,907	4,992
Less: Adjustment made during the year		(10,307)	-
Closing balance		1,907	10,307
Details are shown in Annexure-D			
8.02 Security money			
Opening balance		374,645	364,645
Add: Addition during the year		-	10,000
Less: Adjusted during the year		-	-
		374,645	374,645
8.03 Advance for programme			
Opening balance		-	-
Add: Addition made during the year		537,400	-
Less: Adjustment made during the year		-	-
Closing balance		537,400	-
8.04 Advance to staff against salaries			
Opening balance		110,000	-
Add: Addition made during the year		285,000	340,000
Less: Adjustment made during the year		(226,250)	(230,000)
Closing balance		168,750	110,000
8.05 Advance to vendor			
Opening balance		-	-
Add: Addition made during the year		146,000	-
Less: Adjustment made during the year		-	-
Closing balance		146,000	-
9.00 Stock of RTI books and Gaon Swapna products			
Gaon Swapna products		-	347,913
RTI books		17,784	17,784
MRDI folder		28,485	30,645
MRDI writing pad		27,983	141,394
MRDI Certificate		55,632	-
Holder		129,884	537,736



	Notes	Amount in BDT	
		As at 30 June	
		2025	2024
10.00	Unutilized project fund		
Opening balance		34,286,264	30,163,892
Add: Fund received during the year	10.01	86,444,276	105,852,971
Add: Interest on fund received during the year		258,941	166,986
Add: Project depreciation during the year		1,411,870	5,127,430
Add: Loss on disposed project assets [BDT 5,746-5,688]		58	-
		122,401,409	141,311,279
Less: Project fixed assets purchase (FOJO-IQJB, TAF-JFD and TARA-CEM)		(1,026,853)	(852,191)
Less: Automation/Software Development Cost (Work in Progress)		(708,750)	(360,000)
Less: Transfer of Project Bank Balance		(233,547)	-
Less: Donor fund refund		(1,507,947)	-
Less: Adjustment of last year's unutilized project fund		(6,838,875)	(2,443,286)
Less: Grant income recognized during the year	16.00	(83,438,928)	(103,369,538)
		28,646,509	34,286,264
Details are shown in Annexure-I			
10.01	Fund received during the year		
FOJO Media Institute		29,119,020	51,935,124
GFA Consulting Group GmbH (GFA)		29,915,180	-
International Media Support (IMS)		2,403,278	-
The Asia Foundation (JSD)		2,416,100	-
IREX-CCF		837,621	-
The Asia Foundation (ANMRB)		1,793,376	-
The Asia Foundation (SNMFAB)		1,815,000	-
The Carter Center (MRDI Operational Account)		273,810	-
Swiss Embassy (MRDI Operational)		535,500	121,536
Internews (PFCCMB)		3,124,508	7,589,789
TARA Climate Ltd (CEM)		7,726,996	17,002,606
European Union (MSD)		1,232,783	8,219,787
The Asia Foundation (MIMA Phase II)		1,599,500	3,227,711
The Asia Foundation (JFD)		2,303,614	3,279,098
Centre for Investigative Journalism (JCCCR)		-	3,877,527
The Carter Center (AWRTI)		827,890	4,438,146
Global Investigative Journalism Network (MRDI Operational)		520,100	365,050
Bangladesh Health Watch (MRDI Operational)		-	2,339,419
The Asia Foundation (MRDI Operational)		-	2,504,778
UNDP (MRDI Operational)		-	952,400
		86,444,276	105,852,971
11.00	Capital fund		
Opening balance		2,898,282	(2,019,610)
Add: Excess/(short) of income over expenditure		(1,850,071)	4,250,268
Add: Transfer of project bank balance		1,816,079	-
Add: Previous year's adjustment		1,059,384	643,524
Add: Profit on sale of scrap assets		81,000	41,000
Add: Adjustment of Previous years Provision for income tax		26,363	-
Add: Directors' subscription		6,700	9,500
Less: Adjustment of Previous years Income tax paid in advance		(2,998)	-
Less: Adjustment of reimbursable cost from projects-BGBS		-	(26,400)
Closing balance		4,034,739	2,898,282



	Notes	Amount in BDT	
		As at 30 June	
		2025	2024
12.00	Gaon swapna fund		
Opening balance		1,894,528	1,855,439
Interest on bank deposit	12.01	29,327	60,153
Add: Profit/(loss) during the year	12.02	(333,967)	(21,064)
Less: Adjustment of Previous years Income tax paid in advance		(7,356)	-
Available balance in Gaon Swapna bank account		1,582,532	1,894,528
Less: Transferred to the MRDI Operational account		(1,582,532)	-
Closing balance		-	1,894,528
12.01	Interest on Gaon Swapna bank deposit		
Opening balance of interest on SND account		476	855
Add: Interest received on FDR during the year		64,734	57,984
Add: Accrued interest		-	31,568
Less: Last years' provision		(31,568)	(27,579)
Less: Bank charges		(4,315)	(2,675)
		29,327	60,153
12.02	Profit/ (loss) from Gaon Swapna		
Sale of Gaon Swapna products		34,226	48,613
Less: Operational expenses			
Opening stock of products		347,913	386,808
Add: Operational expenses		20,280	30,782
Less: Closing stock of products		-	(347,913)
		368,193	69,677
Profit/(loss) from Gaon Swapna		(333,967)	(21,064)
Deferred grant income for intangible assets	14.00	2,423,750	1,715,000
		2,423,750	1,715,000
13.00	Project fixed assets fund		
Opening balance		2,456,004	6,731,243
Add: Addition during the year		1,026,853	852,191
Less: Loss on disposed project assets [BDT 5746-5688]		(58)	-
Less. Depreciation during the period		(1,411,870)	(5,127,430)
Closing balance		2,070,929	2,456,004
Details are shown in Annexure-A			
14.00	Intangible assets fund		
Opening balance		1,715,000	1,355,000
Automation development cost-Honorarium for expert		-	360,000
Automation Development Cost-Deployment of ERP Solution		708,750	-
		2,423,750	1,715,000
15.00	Outstanding liabilities		
Opening balance		460,258	2,880,905
Add: Addition during the year		1,612,604	619,493
Less: Payment made during the year		(735,903)	(3,040,140)
Closing balance		1,336,959	460,258
Details are shown in Annexure-C			



Notes	Amount in BDT	
	For the year ended 30 June 2025	2024

16.00 Grant income

FOJO Media Institute (IQJB Phase II)	13,116,912	49,281,331
FOJO Media Institute (IQJB Phase III)	33,673,544	-
GFA Consulting Group GmbH (GFA)	6,343,185	-
International Media Support (IMS)	557,911	-
The Asia Foundation (JSD)	1,085,116	-
The Asia Foundation (JSMA)	65,030	493,043
The Asia Foundation (MIMA Phase II)	960	3,126,742
The Asia Foundation (MIMA)	3,313	142,117
The Asia Foundation (JFD)	2,525,014	2,958,651
Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ)	1,185	3,645,934
The Carter Center (AWRTI)	832,406	3,600,314
MRDI Operational	7,321,225	7,722,450
Internews (PFCCMB)	3,845,178	9,837,438
TARA Climate Ltd (CEM)	12,830,783	6,711,565
European Union (MSD)	1,237,166	15,849,953
	83,438,928	103,369,538

17.00 Interest on bank deposits

Interest received on other bank accounts (MRDI Operational)	14,524	15,125
	14,524	15,125

18.00 Programme cost

Programme cost	31,127,688	42,917,924
As per statement of income and expenditure	31,127,688	42,917,924
Less: Payable during the year (TARA-CEM)	(15,372)	-
As per statement of receipts and payments	31,112,316	42,917,924

Details are shown in Annexure-B

19.00 MRDI contribution to project

Contribution to IQJB project	18,000	-
Contribution to AWRTI project	4,095	6,054
Contribution to CSR project Sundarbans	65,000	65,000
Contribution to CSR project Basatpur	56,000	56,000
Contribution to JFD project	682	-
	143,777	127,054

20.00 Salary and benefits

Executive Director	20.01	7,925,164	7,476,137
Head of Programme and Advisor		11,002,893	9,717,066
Manager and Deputy Manager		7,901,096	8,581,917
SPO, PO and APO		15,245,860	15,918,515
Office Junior		651,064	636,040
Salary expense for project (Previous year adjustment for EU-MSD and TCC-AWRTI)		1,149,584	349,140
As per statement of income and expenditure		43,875,661	42,678,815
Less: Advance adjustment during the year		(110,000)	-
As per statement of receipts and payments		43,765,661	42,678,815



Notes	Amount in BDT		
	For the year ended 30 June		
	2025	2024	
20.01 Executive Director's benefits include the following items:			
Basic salary	3,735,071	3,530,769	
House rent	1,867,535	1,765,385	
Festival allowance	1,134,126	1,056,556	
Medical allowance	679,104	641,958	
Conveyance allowance	509,328	481,469	
	7,925,164	7,476,137	
21.00 Office rent			
Office rent recovered from projects	3,718,956	2,769,619	
MRDI contribution	-	(138,143)	
As per statement of income and expenditure	3,718,956	2,631,476	
Add: MRDI contribution for lease payment	-	1,057,480	
As per statement of receipts and payments	3,718,956	3,688,956	
22.00 Professional and audit fees			
Audit fee for MRDI consolidated accounts	350,000	200,000	
Professional fee for tax assessment and company affairs	160,000	160,000	
Professional fee for tax assessment EPF	-	10,000	
Audit fee for OA	85,000	85,000	
Audit fee for TARA-CEM project	210,000	80,000	
Audit fee for TAF-JFS project	100,000	-	
Audit fee for IQJB phase II project	200,000	-	
Audit fee for EU-MSD project	-	200,000	
Audit fee for TAF-MIMA Phase II project	-	75,000	
Audit fee for CIJ-JCCCR project	-	90,000	
Audit fee for TCC-AWRTI project	-	65,217	
As per statement of income and expenditure	1,105,000	965,217	
Less: Payable during the year	(620,000)	(370,000)	
As per statement of receipts and payments	485,000	595,217	
23.00 Transportation and conveyance			
Local transportation for executive movement	460,808	414,184	
Local transportation for programmatic and administrative movement	389,083	324,408	
Overseas travel	-	13,320	
	849,891	751,912	
24.00 Utility and office maintenance			
Electricity bill	428,771	502,129	
Office service charges	-	80,000	
Repair and maintenance	972,277	692,554	
As per statement of income and expenditure	1,401,048	1,274,683	
Less: Provision during the year	(37,581)	(48,604)	
Less: Accessories for mobile phone	(16,995)	-	
As per statement of receipts and payments	1,346,472	1,226,079	



	Notes	Amount in BDT	
		For the year ended 30 June 2025	2024
25.00 Phone, fax, internet, postage etc.			
Internet		230,600	263,922
Mobile phone		83,591	90,750
Telephone		2,670	6,445
Postage		9,245	8,834
As per statement of income and expenditure		326,106	369,951
Less: Payable during the year		-	-
As per statement of receipts and payments		326,106	369,951

26.00 Printing and stationery

Printing and stationery	297,766	330,490
As per statement of income and expenditure	297,766	330,490
Less: Adjustment during the year	(88,511)	(42,383)
As per statement of receipts and payments	209,255	288,107

27.00 Newspaper and periodicals

Newspaper and periodicals	-	25,200
	-	25,200

28.00 Number of employees

28.01 Core employee

The number of core employees engaged by the Company for the whole or part of the year from 01 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, receiving a total salary of more than Taka 150,000 p.a is 20. The number of core employees engaged by the Company for the whole or part of the year from 01 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, receiving a total salary of less than Taka 150,000 p.a is 6.

28.02 Project employee

The number of project employees engaged by the Company for the whole or part of the year from 01 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, receiving a total salary of more than Taka **150,000** p.a is 17. The number of project employees engaged by the Company for the whole or part of the year from 01 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, receiving a total salary of less than Taka 150,000 p.a is 2.

29.00 Related party disclosures

During the year, the company made a number of transactions with related parties in the normal course of business. The name of related parties, nature of transactions, their total value and closing balance have been set out in accordance with the provisions of "IAS 24: Related Party Disclosures".

Details are shown in Annexure-E



Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
Schedule of Property, Plant and equipment
As at 30 June 2025

Sl. no.	Particulars	Cost					Rate (%)	Depreciation					Written down value		
		Opening balance	During the year			Closing balance		Opening balance	During the year			Closing balance			
			Adjustment	Addition	Adjustment /disposal				BDT	BDT	BDT				
		BDT	BDT			BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT		
1.0	Furniture and fixture														
1.1	Table	412,398	-	-	-	412,398	20%	380,408	-	31,944	-	412,352	46		
1.2	Chair, sofa etc.	341,573	-	-	-	341,573	20%	298,672	-	22,193	-	320,865	20,708		
1.3	Shelf, paper stand, notice board etc.	373,020	-	-	-	373,020	20%	363,320	-	9,645	-	372,965	55		
1.4	Interior decoration	344,951	-	-	-	344,951	20%	344,937	-	-	-	344,937	14		
	Sub-total (A)	1,471,942	-	-	-	1,471,942		1,387,337	-	63,782	-	1,451,119	20,823		
2.0	Office equipment														
2.1	Monitoring set up	70,927	-	-	-	70,927	30%	70,924	-	-	-	70,924	3		
2.2	Photocopier, Fax machine, scanner, TV, recorder, Speaker, Cassette player, Spiral Binder, Blower Machin	56,580	-	-	550	56,030	30%	56,575	-	-	549	56,026	4		
2.3	Power generator (Honda)	102,250	-	-	-	102,250	30%	102,249	-	-	-	102,249	1		
2.4	Electric fans	65,138	-	-	-	65,138	30%	65,110	-	-	-	65,110	28		
2.5	Air cooler, Dehumidifier, Refrigerator	584,193	-	-	209,000	375,193	30%	584,183	-	-	208,996	375,187	6		
2.6	Telephone and internet connectivity	90,850	-	-	-	90,850	30%	90,840	-	-	-	90,840	10		
2.7	Camera	24,377	-	-	-	24,377	30%	24,376	-	-	-	24,376	1		
2.8	Mobile and telephone set	330,176	-	209,999	202,513	337,662	30%	182,975	-	7,056	64,726	125,305	212,357		
2.9	Access and Attendance Control Device	55,000	-	-	-	55,000	30%	54,998	-	-	-	54,998	2		
	Sub-total (B)	1,379,491	-	209,999	412,063	1,177,427		1,232,230	-	7,056	274,271	965,015	212,412		
3.0	Computer, printer and multimedia														
3.1	Tower server	180,360	-	-	-	180,360	33%	180,359	-	-	-	180,359	1		
3.2	Desktop computer	576,096	-	-	-	576,096	33%	576,076	-	-	-	576,076	20		
3.3	Laptop computer	638,029	-	-	134,850	503,179	33%	638,016	-	-	134,847	503,169	10		
3.4	Laser printer	128,995	-	-	9,135	119,860	33%	128,989	-	-	9,134	119,855	5		
3.5	UPS, IPS and stabilizer	193,858	-	-	-	193,858	33%	86,657	-	52,800	-	139,457	54,401		
3.6	Multimedia projector	191,225	-	-	-	191,225	33%	191,221	-	-	-	191,221	4		
3.7	Computer networking	78,680	-	-	-	78,680	33%	78,678	-	-	-	78,678	2		
	Sub-total (C)	1,987,243	-	-	143,985	1,843,258		1,879,996	-	52,800	143,981	1,788,815	54,443		
4.0	Other assets														
4.1	Books	25,930	-	-	-	25,930	20%	25,913	-	-	-	25,913	17		
4.2	Paintings	40,000	-	-	-	40,000	20%	39,999	-	-	-	39,999	1		
4.3	Tally ERP.9 Gold	124,800	-	-	-	124,800	20%	124,800	-	-	1	124,799	1		
	Sub-total (D)	190,730	-	-	-	190,730		190,712	-	-	1	190,711	19		



Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
Schedule of Property, Plant and equipment
As at 30 June 2025

Sl. no.	Particulars	Cost					Rate (%)	Depreciation					Written down value		
		Opening balance	During the year			Closing balance		Opening balance	During the year			Closing balance			
			Adjustment	Addition	Adjustment /disposal				Adjustment	Charged	Adjustment/ disposal				
		BDT	BDT		BDT	BDT		BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT		
5.0	Project assets														
5.1	FOJO IQJB Phase II Project	5,878,543	-	99,035	5,746	5,971,832	4,206,527		1,068,499	5,688	5,269,338	702,494			
5.2	TAF JSMA Project	601,898	-	-	-	601,898	493,043	-	65,030	-	558,073	43,825			
5.3	TAF MIMA Project	148,419	-	-	-	148,419	142,117	-	3,313	-	145,430	2,989			
5.4	EU-MSD Project	431,212	-	-	-	431,212	142,301	-	142,301	-	284,602	146,610			
5.5	MRDI-TARA-CEM	240,690	-	110,450	-	351,140	-	-	86,781	-	86,781	264,359			
5.6	MRDI-TAF-JFD	139,230	-	-	-	139,230	-	-	45,946	-	45,946	93,284			
5.7	FOJO IQJB Phase III Project	-	-	160,300	-	160,300	-	-	-	-	-	160,300			
5.8	GFA-STID	-	-	657,068	-	657,068	-	-	-	-	-	657,068			
	Sub-total (E)	7,439,992	-	1,026,853	5,746	8,461,099	4,983,988	-	1,411,870	5,688	6,390,170	2,070,929			
	Balance as at 30 June 2025	12,469,398	-	1,236,852	561,794	13,144,456	-	9,674,263	-	1,535,508	423,941	10,785,830	2,358,626		
	Balance as at 30 June 2024	12,409,977	(411,178)	1,048,085	(577,486)	12,469,398	-	5,304,692	(391,041)	5,338,085	577,473	9,674,263	2,795,135		
	Right-of-use asset														
	Balance as at 30 June 2025	4,245,198	-	-	-	4,245,198	4,245,198	-	-	-	4,245,198	-			
	Balance as at 30 June 2024	4,245,198	-	-	-	4,245,198	3,396,159	-	849,039	-	4,245,198	-			



Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
Programme Cost
For the year ended 30 June 2025

Sl. no.	Project/contract/agreement title	For the year ended 30 June	
		2025	2024
1	Improving Qualitative Journalism in Bangladesh Phase II, supported by Fojo Media Institute, Linnaeus University, Sweden	7,168,174	16,555,171
2	Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh Phase II, supported by Fojo Media Institute, Linnaeus University, Sweden	8,702,352	-
3	Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development (STID), In partnership with GFA Consulting Group GmbH (GFA)	1,307,572	-
4	Strategic Prioritizing – Bangladesh Media Reforms during Transition (SPBMRT), In partnership with International Media Support (IMS)	117,482	-
5	Promoting Fact Checking to Counter Misinformation in Bangladesh in partnership with INTERNEWS	556,684	4,507,327
6	Climate, Energy and the Media in partnership with TARA Climate Ltd	6,497,912	2,194,200
7	Journalism to Safeguard Democracy, supported by The Asia Foundation	327,411	-
8	Journalism for Functional Democracy, supported by The Asia Foundation	1,380,672	1,582,870
9	Advancing Women's Right of Access to Information in Bangladesh (AWRTI), supported by The Carter Center	30,000	727,719
10	MRDI Operational (Improving Qualitative Journalism in Bangladesh, supported by Fojo Media Institute, Linnaeus University, Sweden, Digital Safety for Journalists, supported by Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh, Training for journalists from marginalized and disenfranchised communities supported by Global Investigative Journalism Network, More Information More Accountability – Phase II, supported by The Asia Foundation, Advancing news media reform in Bangladesh, supported by The Asia Foundation, Strengthening News Media Freedom and Accountability in Bangladesh, supported by The Asia Foundation	5,039,429	4,748,880
11	Media Strengthening Democracy in partnership with European Union (EU)	-	8,249,837
12	More Information More Accountability (MIMA) Phase II, supported by The Asia Foundation	-	1,893,605
13	Journalist Capacity on Climate Change Reporting, supported by Centre for Investigative Journalism	-	2,458,315
	Total	31,127,688	42,917,924



Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
Schedule of outstanding liabilities
As at 30 June 2025

Sl. no.	Particular	Project, contract/ component	Opening balance	During the year		Closing balance
				Addition	Payment/ Adjustment	
			BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT
1	Audit fees	MRDI core	200,000	350,000	200,000	350,000
2	Fee and expenses for tax consultants	MRDI core	160,000	160,000	160,000	160,000
3	Provision for office expenses for company return	MRDI core	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
4	Professional fees for Tax Assessment for FY 2023-2024 (MRDI Employee's Provident Fund)	MRDI core	10,000	-	10,000	-
5	Hasibur Rahman	MRDI core	15,291	171,994	96,873	90,412
6	The Law Focus (The entire process of registration of MRDI Training Institute)	MRDI core	-	765,750	194,063	571,687
7	Provision for income tax	MRDI core & Gaon Swapna	26,363	1,907	26,363	1,907
8	Utility bill	MRDI core	33,604	22,581	33,604	22,581
9	Audit fees	MRDI-TARA-CEM	-	110,000	-	110,000
10	Distribution Cost of Energy Glossary	MRDI-TARA-CEM	-	15,372	-	15,372
Total			460,258	1,612,604	735,903	1,336,959



Annexure-D

Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)

Tax liabilities and advance tax

As at 30 June 2025

Income year	Assessment year	Tax liabilities as per assessment order	Tax deducted at source/paid	Tax adjustment	Total tax paid in advance
		BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT
2024-2025	2025-2026	-	1,907	-	1,907
Total		-	1,907	-	1,907



Annexure-E

Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
Statement of related party transactions
As at 30 June 2025

Director	Project/Contract	Assigned as	2025	2024
			BDT	BDT
Syed Ishaque Reza	Transforming Governance for Sustainable Development (TG4SD) IP	Mentorship facilitation	-	5,000
Grand total			-	5,000



Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
Schedule of Consolidated Statement of Financial Position-Balance Sheet
As at 30 June 2025

Particulars	FOJO-															Gaon Swapna	
	2024-2025	MRDI Operational	IQJB Phase II	FOJO-IQJB Phase III	GFA-STID	IMS- SPBMRT	Internews (PFCCMB)	TARA-CEM	EU-MSD	TAF-JSD	TAF-MIMA Phase II	TAF-JFD	CIJ-JCCCR	TCC-AWRTI	TAF-JSMA	TAF-MIMA	
	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT
Assets																	
Non-current assets																	
Property, plant and equipment	2,358,626	287,697	702,494	160,300	657,068	-	-	264,359	146,610	-	-	93,284	-	-	43,825	2,989	
Right-of-use asset	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Intangible assets	2,423,750	-	2,423,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total non-current assets	4,782,376	287,697	3,126,244	160,300	657,068	-	-	264,359	146,610	-	-	93,284	-	-	43,825	2,989	
Current assets																	
Cash and cash equivalents	32,371,924	4,407,193	-	1,122,089	22,711,877	1,747,922	78,738	1,169,680	-	1,134,425	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Investment in Fixed Deposit Receipts (FDR)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Advance and prepayments	862,150	55,000	-	185,750	316,000	105,400	-	-	200,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Security money	364,645	364,645	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Stock of RTI books, writing pad and folder	129,884	129,884	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Income tax paid in advance	1,907	1,907	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Reimbursable cost from projects	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total current assets	33,730,510	4,958,629	-	1,307,839	23,027,877	1,853,322	78,738	1,169,680	-	1,334,425	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total assets	38,512,886	5,246,326	3,126,244	1,468,139	23,684,945	1,853,322	78,738	1,434,039	146,610	1,334,425	-	93,284	-	-	43,825	2,989	
Fund and liabilities																	
Fund																	
Unutilized project fund	27,741,693	-	-	590,415	22,914,927	1,845,367	66,442	993,558	-	1,330,984	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Reserve fund-Bank interest	904,816	-	-	717,424	112,950	7,955	12,296	50,750	-	3,441	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Capital fund	4,034,739	4,034,739	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Gaon Swapna fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Project fixed assets fund	2,070,929	-	702,494	160,300	657,068	-	-	264,359	146,610	-	-	93,284	-	-	43,825	2,989	
Intangible assets fund	2,423,750	-	2,423,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total fund	37,175,927	4,034,739	3,126,244	1,468,139	23,684,945	1,853,322	78,738	1,308,667	146,610	1,334,425	-	93,284	-	-	43,825	2,989	
Liabilities																	
Non-current liabilities																	
Non-current liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Provision for expenses	1,336,959	1,211,587	-	-	-	-	-	125,372	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total non-current liabilities	1,336,959	1,211,587	-	-	-	-	-	125,372	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Current liabilities																	
Outstanding liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Lease liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total current liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total fund and liabilities	38,512,886	5,246,326	3,126,244	1,468,139	23,684,945	1,853,322	78,738	1,434,039	146,610	1,334,425	-	93,284	-	-	43,825	2,989	



Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
Schedule of Consolidated Statement of Income and Expenditures
For the year ended 30 June 2025

Particulars	2024-2025		MRDI Operational	FOJO-IQJB Phase II	FOJO-IQJB Phase III	GFA-STID	IMS-SPBMRT	Internews (PFCCMB)	TARA-CEM	EU-MSD	TAF-JSD	TAF-MIMA Phase II	TAF-JFD	CIJ-JCCCR	TCC-AWRTI	TAF-JSMA	TAF-MIMA
	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT
Income																	
Grant income	83,438,928	7,321,225	13,116,912	33,673,544	6,343,185	557,911	3,845,178	12,830,783	1,237,166	1,085,116	960	2,525,014	1,185	832,406	65,030	3,313	
MRDI contribution to project	682	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	682	-	-	-	-	
Reimbursement of cost against facilities and archiving	698,666	698,666	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Overhead/organizational cost from project	5,904,557	5,904,557	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Expert Support cost received from project	18,000	18,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Interest on bank deposits	14,524	14,524	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	90,075,357	13,956,972	13,116,912	33,673,544	6,343,185	557,911	3,845,178	12,830,783	1,237,166	1,085,116	960	2,525,696	1,185	832,406	65,030	3,313	
Expenditure																	
Programme cost	31,127,688	5,039,429	7,168,174	8,702,352	1,307,572	117,482	556,684	6,497,912	-	327,411	-	1,380,672	-	30,000	-	-	
Contribution to projects	143,777	143,777	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Salary and benefits	43,875,661	4,793,706	3,819,142	20,251,495	4,734,439	397,461	2,305,391	4,678,862	1,090,770	606,315	-	655,732	-	542,348	-	-	
Office rent	3,718,956	2,078,453	-	-	-	-	-	368,896	744,000	-	115,280	-	262,327	-	150,000	-	
Professional and audit fees	1,105,000	595,000	200,000	-	-	-	-	-	210,000	-	-	-	100,000	-	-	-	
Transportation and conveyance	849,891	630,558	20,000	100,000	-	-	40,000	24,000	-	5,000	-	21,333	-	9,000	-	-	
Utility	428,771	311,638	-	-	-	-	-	12,000	36,000	-	5,000	-	34,133	-	30,000	-	
Repair and office maintenance	972,277	967,277	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Phone, Fax, Internet, Postage etc.	326,106	255,273	-	-	-	-	-	12,000	24,000	-	7,500	-	21,333	-	6,000	-	
Printing and stationery	297,766	210,766	-	-	-	-	-	40,000	36,000	-	5,000	-	-	-	6,000	-	
Depreciation on fixed assets	1,535,508	123,638	1,068,499	-	-	-	-	-	86,781	142,301	-	-	45,946	-	65,030	3,313	
Depreciation on ROU	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Donation and assistance	85,000	85,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Staff Group Health Insurance Premium	231,427	67,266	-	126,207	30,669	-	-	-	-	-	7,285	-	-	-	-	-	
Bank charges	90,218	16,033	828	38,162	1,265	6,922	6,475	7,728	4,095	1,325	960	4,220	1,185	1,020	-	-	
Media monitoring	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Newspaper and periodicals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Facility charges	738,038	-	-	-	-	-	-	200,000	480,000	-	-	-	-	-	58,038	-	
Staff Capacity Building	5,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Annual retreat	56,576	56,576	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Annual Strategic Plan Review workshop	115,992	115,992	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Meetings/Events/Training/Workshop	160,854	160,854	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Registration and renewal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Programme Lanning and design	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Miscellaneous expenses	16,105	16,105	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Loss on disposal of assets	137,853	137,795	58	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Overhead/organizational cost	5,904,557	-	840,211	4,455,328	269,240	36,046	303,732	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	91,923,521	15,805,136	13,116,912	33,673,544	6,343,185	557,911	3,845,178	12,830,783	1,237,166	1,085,116	960	2,525,696	1,185	832,406	65,030	3,313	
Excess/(Short) of Income over Expenditure	(1,848,164)	(1,848,164)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Provision for Income Tax	1,907	1,907	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Excess/(Short) of Income over Expenditure	(1,850,071)	(1,850,071)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	90,075,357	13,956,972	13,116,912	33,673,544	6,343,185	557,911	3,845,178	12,830,783	1,237,166	1,085,116	960	2,525,696	1,185	832,406	65,030	3,313	



Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
Schedule of Consolidated Statement of Receipts and Payments
For the year ended 30 June 2025

Particulars	Total 2024-2025	MRDI Operational	FOJO-IQJB Phase II	FOJO-IQJB Phase III	GFA-STID	IMS- SPBMRT	Internews (PFCCMB)	TARA-CEM	EU-MSD	TAF-JSD	TAF-MIMA Phase II	TAF-JFD	CIJ-JCCCR	TCC-AWRTI	Gaon Swapna
	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT
Opening balance															
Cash in hand	19,200	14,982	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,218
Cash at bank	42,634,798	8,904,481	18,772,887	6,116,747	-	-	796,414	6,148,827	365,101	-	102,799	183,635	234,226	843,500	166,181
	42,653,998	8,919,463	18,772,887	6,116,747	-	-	796,414	6,148,827	365,101	-	102,799	183,635	234,226	843,500	170,399
Receipts															
Donor fund received	86,444,276	7,374,907	-	29,119,020	29,915,180	2,403,278	3,124,508	7,726,996	1,232,783	2,416,100	-	2,303,614	-	827,890	-
Interest on project bank account	259,417	-	-	105,916	112,950	7,955	2,994	22,937	1,315	3,441	-	935	498	-	476
Contribution received from MRDI	682	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	682	-	-	-
GAON SWAPNA FUND	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Realization of Advance and Prepayments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reimbursement of cost against Archiving & facilities	698,666	698,666	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Expert Support cost received from Project	18,000	18,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Fund (Closing from Project Bank account)	1,816,079	1,816,079	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of Gaon Swapna Products	34,226	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34,226
FDR encashment	1,402,073	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,402,073
Reimbursement of cost against MRDI writing pad & folder	28,428	28,428	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Interest on bank deposits	14,524	14,524	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Income (Sale of scrap of old Assets)	26,000	26,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Previous years adjustment Account	1,059,384	1,059,384	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Directors entry fees and subscription	6,700	6,700	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reimbursable cost from project	261,355	261,355	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accounts payable-The Law Focus	765,750	765,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overhead/organizational cost from project	5,904,557	5,904,557	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	98,740,117	17,974,350	-	29,224,936	30,028,130	2,411,233	3,127,502	7,749,933	1,234,098	2,419,541	-	2,305,231	498	827,890	1,436,775
Total	141,394,115	26,893,813	18,772,887	35,341,683	30,028,130	2,411,233	3,923,916	13,898,760	1,599,199	2,419,541	102,799	2,488,866	234,724	1,671,390	1,607,174



Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
Schedule of Consolidated Statement of Receipts and Payments
For the year ended 30 June 2025

Particulars	Total 2024-2025	MRDI Operational	FOJO-IQJB Phase II	FOJO-IQJB Phase III	GFA-STID	IMS- SPBMRT	Internews (PFCCMB)	TARA-CEM	EU-MSD	TAF-JSD	TAF-MIMA Phase II	TAF-JFD	CIJ-JCCCR	TCC-AWRTI	Gaon Swapna
	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT	BDT
Payments															
Programme cost	31,112,316	5,039,429	7,168,174	8,702,352	1,307,572	117,482	556,684	6,482,540	-	327,411	-	1,380,672	-	30,000	-
Salary and benefits	43,765,661	4,683,706	3,819,142	20,251,495	4,734,439	397,461	2,305,391	4,678,862	1,090,770	606,315	-	655,732	-	542,348	-
Office rent	3,718,956	2,078,453	-	-	-	-	368,896	744,000	-	115,280	-	262,327	-	150,000	-
Contribution to projects	143,777	143,777	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Audit fees and other professional fees	485,000	85,000	-	200,000	-	-	-	100,000	-	-	-	100,000	-	-	-
Transportation and conveyance	849,891	630,558	20,000	100,000	-	-	40,000	24,000	-	5,000	-	21,333	-	9,000	-
Utility	406,190	289,057	-	-	-	-	12,000	36,000	-	5,000	-	34,133	-	30,000	-
Repair and office maintenance	940,282	935,282	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,000	-	-	-	-	-
Phone, Fax, Internet, Postage etc.	326,106	255,273	-	-	-	-	12,000	24,000	-	7,500	-	21,333	-	6,000	-
Printing, stationery and supplies	209,255	122,255	-	-	-	-	40,000	36,000	-	5,000	-	-	-	6,000	-
Facility charges	738,038	-	-	-	-	-	200,000	480,000	-	-	-	-	-	58,038	-
Purchase of fixed assets	1,026,853	-	99,035	160,300	657,068	-	-	110,450	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Payment of outstanding liabilities	515,477	515,477	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Donation and assistance	105,280	85,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20,280
Staff Group Health Insurance Premium	231,427	67,266	-	126,207	30,669	-	-	-	-	7,285	-	-	-	-	-
Bank charges	94,533	16,033	828	38,162	1,265	6,922	6,475	7,728	4,095	1,325	960	4,220	1,185	1,020	4,315
Doner fund deposit to project account	6,838,875	6,838,875	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Income Tax paid in advance	1,955	1,907	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	48
Staff capacity building	5,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Annual retreat	56,576	56,576	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Annual Strategic Plan Review workshop	115,992	115,992	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Meetings/Events/Training/Workshop	160,854	160,854	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous expenses	16,105	16,105	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stock of MRDI certificate holder	57,000	57,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Advance and prepayments	852,150	45,000	-	185,750	316,000	105,400	-	-	-	200,000	-	-	-	-	-
GAON SWAPNA FUND	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accounts payable-The Law Focus	194,063	194,063	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Residual balance transfer from MRDI Core	1,816,078	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	233,539	-	1,582,531
Operational Account	Unutilized fund refund to Donor	1,507,947	53,682	-	-	-	-	-	504,334	-	101,831	9,116	-	838,984	-
Automation Development Cost--Deployment of ERP Solution	708,750	-	708,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unutilized donor fund transfer to IQJB Phase III	5,305,239	-	5,305,239	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reserve fund-bank interest to IQJB Phase III	611,508	-	611,508	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provision for Expenses to IQJB Phase III	200,000	-	200,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overhead/organizational cost to MRDI	5,904,557	-	840,211	4,455,328	269,240	36,046	303,732	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	109,022,191	22,486,620	18,772,887	34,219,594	7,316,253	663,311	3,845,178	12,729,080	1,599,199	1,285,116	102,799	2,488,866	234,724	1,671,390	1,607,174
Cash in hand	2,660	2,660	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cash at bank	32,369,264	4,404,533	-	1,122,089	22,711,877	1,747,922	78,738	1,169,680	-	1,134,425	-	-	-	-	-
	32,371,924	4,407,193	-	1,122,089	22,711,877	1,747,922	78,738	1,169,680	-	1,134,425	-	-	-	-	-
	141,394,115	26,893,813	18,772,887	35,341,683	30,028,130	2,411,233	3,923,916	13,898,760	1,599,199	2,419,541	102,799	2,488,866	234,724	1,671,390	1,607,174



Details of project-wise unutilized fund are as follows		Amount in BDT	
		For the year Ended 30 June 2025	
		2025	2024
Project name	Donar name	Amount	Amount
Improving Qualitative Journalism in Bangladesh - Phase II (IQJB)	Fojo Media Institute (FOJO)	-	18,772,887
Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh -Phase III (IQJB)	Fojo Media Institute (FOJO)	590,415	-
Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development (STID)	GFA Consulting Group GmbH (GFA)	22,914,927	-
Strategic Prioritizing – Bangladesh Media Reforms during Transition (SPBMRT)	International Media Support (IMS)	1,845,367	-
Journalism to Safeguard Democracy	The Asia Foundation (TAF)	1,330,984	
MRDI Operational Account			-
MRDI Mother Account	TARA Climate Ltd. (TARA) & European Union (EU)	-	6,838,875
Promoting Fact Checking to Counter Misinformation in Bangladesh (PFCCMB)	INTERNEWS	66,442	796,414
Climate, Energy and the Media (CEM)	TARA Climate Ltd (TARA)	993,558	6,148,827
Media Strengthening Democracy (MSD)	European Union (EU)	-	365,101
More Information More Accountability Phase II (MIMA Phase II)	The Asia Foundation (TAF)	-	102,799
Journalism for Functional Democracy (JFD)	The Asia Foundation (TAF)	-	183,635
Advancing Women's Right of Access to Information in Bangladesh (AWRTI)	The Carter Center (TCC)	-	843,500
Journalist Capacity on Climate Change Reporting (JCCCR)	Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ)	-	234,226
		27,741,693	34,286,264
Details of project-wise Reserve fund-Bank interest are as follows:			
Improving Quality Journalism in Bangladesh -Phase III (IQJB)	Fojo Media Institute (FOJO)	717,424	-
Strategic Togetherness for Inclusive Development (STID)	GFA Consulting Group GmbH (GFA)	112,950	-
Strategic Prioritizing – Bangladesh Media Reforms during Transition (SPBMRT)	International Media Support (IMS)	7,955	-
Promoting Fact Checking to Counter Misinformation in Bangladesh (PFCCMB)	INTERNEWS	12,296	-
Climate, Energy and the Media (CEM)	TARA Climate Ltd (TARA)	50,750	-
Journalism to Safeguard Democracy	The Asia Foundation (TAF)	3,441	-
		904,816	-
Total		28,646,509	34,286,264



Media Resources Development Initiative

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