Grassroots Journalism

A Resource Book on Development Journalism

written by:
Mahbub Hasan
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Message from Chair of Editorial Board

I am very pleased to see that the booklet captures the dream of grassroots journalists for positive change in the society. I am confident that the Community Journalist Groups will work across 31 working areas of ActionAid Bangladesh for the overall development of the disadvantaged children, women and communities. This will inspire community participation and promote good governance in the society. We expect all involved to contribute towards the mission of Community Journalist Groups.

I wish Community Journalist Group all round success. Let us all work together to end poverty and to realise human rights.

Farah Kabir
Country Director
ActionAid Bangladesh
In the wake of the twenty-first century, media is playing a very important role in fighting for human rights and establishing justice. Radio, television, newspapers and the internet are covering our successes, hurdles and promises from the social, economic, political and cultural spheres. Sadly, the participation of grassroots children, women and the marginalised in this role of media is hardly there. So Community Journalist Group is our initiative to focus children, women and the marginalised people of rural areas, turn them into active citizens and help them be active in claiming their own rights.

ActionAid Bangladesh runs 31 long-term development projects in 26 districts. Already a 15-member (30% children and 50% women) Community Journalist Group is formed in each of the 31 DAs. Attempts have been made with success to network with journalists at the grassroots to build journalistic capacity and IT skills of the Community Journalist Group members.

Community Journalist Groups will prepare features on the achievements, problems and prospects of the children, women and the marginalised and arrange for publication/broadcast in local and national news media. Besides, the Groups will lobby with people’s representatives, local administration and the civil society to solve local problems. Another way of establishing rights would be through children meeting the head of government and the policy makers to exchange issues and through engaging the two parties in a blog-based communication online. The whole process would ensure direct and more active participation of the community people in our collective efforts for development and eradication of poverty.

The goal, objectives and activities of Community Journalist Groups have been decided through sharing with children, women and representatives of civil society who sat together in workshop. A comprehensive booklet titled Grassroots Journalism has also been published internally and shared with all of 31 Community Journalist Groups to develop it further and be more inclusive. I am confident the resource-book will aid the Community Journalist Groups at the grassroots in journalistic training. It has been written in simple approach keeping the enthusiastic young would-be journalists in mind. I hope the booklet will foster our endeavour to operationalise grassroots journalism. We expect that you will give us your thorough support in materialising our dream of creating change makers at the grassroots.

Mahbub Hasan
Central Editor, Community Journalist Group
Manager – Sponsorship, ActionAid Bangladesh
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To speed up the sustainable development taking grassroots people along, a platform should be given from where children, women and the local people would be able to raise their voices. The Community Journalist Group (CJG) will be such a platform from where information-based activities will be operated to eradicate poverty. Access to information is one of the basic human rights in this 21st century. Information enriches lives, and lack of it can diminish dignity. To achieve development that is practical and lasting, we have to ensure community people’s right to information. Information can play a vital role to help children grow into active citizens. Besides, to facilitate a participatory and sustainable development promoting the grassroots, a forum is needed where children, community people and local civil society can have their voices heard.

1.1 GOAL
Eradication of poverty and social change through grassroots journalism.

1.2 OBJECTIVES
A. To establish human rights through journalism in the grassroots.
B. To build awareness and achieve development through ensuring access to information.
C. To ensure people’s participation in ActionAid Bangladesh’s activities.
D. Advocacy for eradicating poverty and to establish good governance in the grassroots.
E. To build children and the general mass as active citizens

1.3 ACTIVITIES
A. Establish one Community Journalist Group in each development area.
B. Prepare news, articles, stories/case studies featuring poverty, development and related socio-economic issues in order to aid Sponsorship reporting with Community Newsletters and Progress Reports.
C. The CJG team will approve the information of PRRP, Plans & Budget etc. and become thoroughly familiar with ActionAid Bangladesh’s activities.
D. The CJG team will hold monthly meetings to evaluate progress, decide on priorities and upcoming activities.
E. Arrange training on reporting, creative writing, advocacy, ICT, photography etc. for CJG members.
F. Write features/news on poverty, development and other related issues to publish significant ones in the local/national dailies in order to claim and ensure rights of the children, women and the marginalised.
G. Take part in various ActionAid Sponsorship and Programme activities like Child Message collection, PRPR, Plans & Budget etc. and become thoroughly familiar with ActionAid Bangladesh’s activities.

H. Publish, twice a year, 4-page ‘Grassroots Newsletter’ covering issues/information as per CNL, PR and other local events.
I. Publish wall magazines quarterly with the compositions of the CJG team and exhibiting the magazine in the important locations of the community such as, the UP office, Government office, School and other community places.

J. Inspire the students of the local schools towards journalism and take initiative for publishing wall magazine on a regular basis.

K. Organise view-exchange meetings, at least twice a year, with local press club and news agencies to adopt guidelines for future course of action and share work-experiences.

L. Meet locally elected people’s representatives (Member of Parliament, Chairman of the Upazilla i.e., sub-district, Chairman of the Union Parishad), Upazilla Executive Officer, Deputy Commissioner on significant issues/national days and try to solve local problems through advocacy.

M. Attempt view-exchange on poverty-related issues with journalists, news agencies and policy makers in the national level to discuss and solve problems.

N. Attend national-level events & organise excursions inside country and outside.
O. Arrange for circulation/publication of features through website/blog and engage policy makers, elected people’s representatives, local govt. administration and the civil society to try and change the society for the better.

1.4 CJG STRUCTURE

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<tbody>
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<td>Community children</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of Community</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent of sponsored child</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of civil society (1 teacher)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local journalist</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DA Head</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
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Note: One-third of the CJG team should be children and 50% of the team women. Participation of people with disability, aboriginal background and the marginalised is appreciable. The team can be reformed without violating the structure. If a member remains idle for six months or migrates from the working area, CJG team has to be reformed to fill the vacancy and inform the Central Editor (Manager-Sponsorship, ActionAid Bangladesh) within 15 days.

1.5 GRASSROOTS NEWSLETTER EDITORIAL BOARD

A. Editor: DA Sponsorship Officer
B. Editorial Board: Chief Reporter (Children’s wing), Chief Reporter (Women’s wing), Chief Reporter (General)

1.6 CENTRAL EDITORIAL BOARD

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<th>Central Editor</th>
<th>Central Editorial Board</th>
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<td>Manager – Sponsorship ActionAid Bangladesh</td>
<td>Members of Sponsorship Unit ActionAid Bangladesh</td>
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1.7 CONTENTS OF GRASSROOTS NEWSLETTER

One of the prime goals of our publication will be raising awareness among the locals and development associates/stakeholders regarding various issues along with highlighting the successes and potentialities of ActionAid in the poverty eradication activities. It will also include news with adequate information and statistics highlighting the initiatives to be taken by the locals, civil-society representatives and the government officials to solve different problems of the society. The problems faced by children, women and the marginalised, their individual/collective achievements and successes with ActionAid’s assistance (if applicable), the future plans/promises/prospects with ways to solve problems—all of these are suitable for CJG articles. Moreover, various social, religious, cultural events and celebration of national and international days etc. can also be covered.
A. On/about Children
- Covering children’s health, education and rights
- Featuring any governmental/private steps that may harm children or create violence against them
- Writing on issues that may hinder healthy growth of girls with possible means to solve those issues
- Showing the condition of children with disability in education, recreation, livelihood etc.

B. On/about Women
- Preparing stories on hurdles, successes & prospects in women’s social, economic and political life
- Writing articles/news that show violence against women, marginalisation etc.
- Featuring status and updates on women’s health, literacy, employment etc.
- Covering items on women entrepreneurs – stories of their success in business or in service

C. Local Issues
- Covering problems (natural calamity, corruption, illiteracy etc.) and likely solution
- Featuring locally important social, religious and cultural events, national/int’l days
- Writing on the successes and achievements of the locality

D. ActionAid Bangladesh and Local Partners’ Effort to End Poverty
- Writing news and articles on the results of the development activities initiated by ActionAid Bangladesh and its local partner and expressing the opinion of the community on the activities.
- Writing news on various advocacy and campaign in the national level organised by ActionAid Bangladesh and its local partners.

1.8 READERS OF GRASSROOTS NEWSLETTER
All sponsored children and their families, the local people, local representatives, government officials, policy makers, the civil-society representatives, the educated, less-educated people and the people of all classes of the society will be the readers of the Grassroots Newsletter.
2.1 What is Journalism?

Journalism in its limited sense is an organisational system of reporting incidents and dissemination of information to mass people. Generally, the task of collecting, writing, editing and publishing material in newspapers, television and radio for general information is journalism. In a broader sense, it also refers to works of persons professionally involved in mass communications.

Journalism is considered to be the fourth estate of work for a nation. Considering its importance, the position of journalism comes immediately after legislature, judiciary and the executive tasks.

Journalism is a responsible profession with social dimensions. The Bengali equivalent of the word ‘journalism’ is ‘shangbadikota’. The word ‘journalism’ originated from the root ‘journal’, which means a printed version of regular activities and events narrated through symmetric details and in a controlled manner. With the suffix ‘-ism’ (which suggests ideas related to habit, manners or belief), the word ‘journalism’ would mean activities related to journal.

In the first chapter of the book titled Journalism – Made Simple, David Wainwright begins: “What is Journalism? Journalism is information. It is communication. It is the events of the day distilled into a few words, sounds or pictures, processed by the mechanics of communication to satisfy the human curiosity of a world that is always eager to know what’s new.”

Dr. Partho Chattergy (2003) in the introductory chapter of Bisoy Sangbadikota (Subject: Journalism), placed his own definition about journalism where he says, “Journalism is a meaningful representation of daily life that is sometimes opinion-based and sometimes objective. Journalism is a complex process of capturing the features of life and represent before the mass-people. Considering its elements, journalism can be understood as a fusion of material literatures and fast-forwarding history. Journalism is a means of expressing about life, the society and the state.”

Journalism can be described as follows:

i) Journalism is the profession of journalist.

ii) Journalism is to publish/broadcast news of some selective daily events after editing.

iii) Journalism is to publish/broadcast an incident as it happened is journalism.

iv) Journalism is a system of describing incident and a mechanism of supplying information.

2.2 History of Journalism

In ancient India, inscriptions engraved on rocks or pillars served as a medium of information during the tenure of Emperor Asoka. This was the beginning of Journalism. The Mughal government had a network of news-services – the waqai-navis, sawanih-navis, and khufia-navis. In addition, there were harkarah and akhbar-navis for serving the royalties with general information. However, due to despotic forms of government and impossibility of reporting objectively, the proto-journalism of Mughal Bengal could never grow into journalism in its proper sense. Journalism with its modern characteristics originated from Europe in the eighteenth century. The chronological improvement of Journalism can be described as follows:

A. Journalism began during Emperor Asoka (304-232 BC) in ancient India. Information was collected engaging spies and inscriptions were engraved on rocks or pillars.

B. During Roman Emperor Julius Caesar (100-44 BC) Journalism flourished the most. He assigned a professional group to collect information and published Acta Diurna in 59 BC which, to some extent, resembled the modern newspaper.

C. First printed journal of news is German publication Aviso published on 15 January 1609.

D. The first newspaper in Indian sub-continent is an English weekly journal, Hicky’s Bengal Gazette, by Augustus Hicky published at Calcutta in January 1780.

E. First Bangla newspaper, Samachar Darpan, was published from Serampore in 1818.

F. The first weekly from Bangladesh (the then East-Pakistan), Rangpur Bartabaha, was published in 1847 from Rangpur.

G. Currently 1800 newspaper, magazine and periodical are published from Bangladesh.

H. State owned Bangladesh Television aired its first signal in black and white on 25th December 1964. Nowadays, 11 private satellite television channels have been airing news and programmes.

I. Radio transmission in Bangladesh started in Dhaka on December 16, 1939. As per the information from Information Ministry of Bangladesh Government, currently one government owned and four private FM Radio channels are transmitting programmes. They are Bangladesh Betar (state own), Radio ABC, Radio Aamar, Radio Foorti and Radio Today. Along with the FM transmission, Bangladesh Betar transmits programme through medium and short wave. Beside this first internet radio Radio2Fun is available from 2008.

The Flow-Chart shows Chronological Development of the history of Journalism

### Handwriting Era
(306-1780 AD)

Journalism Started to Disseminate emperor’s speech.

### Printing Era
(1780-1920 AD)

Story, Incidents, Propaganda everything published without maintaining any rule.

### Modern Era
(1920-till now)

Journalism is practiced with certain rule and structure which has a great influence on the society.
2.3 Types of Journalism

A) INFORMATION BASED JOURNALISM

i) Objective Journalism

Objectivity in journalism began in United States since the appearance of modern newspapers in the era of 1920. In journalism the goal of objectivity is to be neutral in reporting that emphasises eyewitness accounts of events, corroboration of facts with multiple sources and balance of viewpoints. Journalist should report an event ‘mind-independently’ which are true irrespective of human feelings, beliefs or judgments.

An example of Objective Journalism

Source: The Daily Star, 23 December 2009

ii) Investigative Journalism

The New York Herald newspaper began investigative journalism in 1836. That time the newspaper saved a person convicted in murder case through their investigative reporting. Leonard Seller, Professor of San Francisco State University said, “To investigate into concealed information is the responsibility of an investigative journalist.”

An example of Investigative Journalism

Source: The Daily Star, 02 January 2010

The most famous example of investigative journalism is to reveal the Watergate Scandal. In 1974 two reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein of Washington Post revealed that President Nixon had a tape recording system in his offices and that he had recorded many conversations exchanged during the convention of Democratic Party.

Effects of the series of investigative reporting on the scandal ultimately led to the resignation of the United States President Richard Nixon on August 9, 1974. It also resulted in the allegation and conviction of several Nixon administration officials. An investigative report was written after deep investigation of a single topic of interest which discovered seeds of an incident. Synonyms for ‘investigation’ are exploration, examination, cross-checking, research etc. Therefore, investigative journalism is the result of a research-based exploration, which is why this type of journalism is called ‘report by research’. An investigative journalist may spend months or years researching and preparing a report often involving crime, political corruption or a scandal.

iii) Development Journalism

The discussion of development journalism started in our country in the academic level since the beginning of twenty first century but still to be perceived by most mass media. So initiatives need to be taken to make mass media understand the importance of this new discourse of journalism.

An example of Development Journalism

Source: The Daily Star, 06 January 2010

The term development journalism first cropped up around 1967 to define a notion of journalism according to which reporting events of national and international significance should be constructive in the sense that it contributes positively to development of the country concerned. Its main focus should not be on day-to-day news but on long-term development process. Western models of journalism are seen as not transferrable to developing countries.

There is broad agreement that development journalism is “journalism relating to the projects and programmes launched in an economically backward country to provide certain minimum living standards to its people.”

Scope of development journalism

- The development journalism covers all aspects of human life — from poverty to global warming. It actually reports all sorts of events which create obstacle to human development. Major three areas of development journalism are: poverty, human rights and health. It is said that this type of journalism serves as a mouth-piece of government development activities but never receives any motivation by the government.

Importance of development journalism

- Publishes news on life struggle of less privileged population
- Gives informative and analytical understanding of government’s development project
- Makes the less privileged people empowered so that they can contribute in policy making through engaging themselves in political process
- Contributes to national development
- Alleviates social discrimination in developing process; it helps achieve success.
iv) Grassroots Journalism

The national news-agencies always tend to publish news with national interest. That’s why we see the national dailies publishing news that attract readers from different classes of the society and different areas of the country. But many incidents occur at the grassroots level that is of great importance for the people of that locality. Keeping this demand of the grassroots people in mind, grassroots journalism has been introduced. In 2003, Lauterer Jock in his book titled ‘Community Journalism: the Personal Approach’ told, “It’s the kind of Journalism practiced by newspapers where the readers can walk right into the newsroom and tell an editor what’s on their minds. It’s the kind of newspaper that covers the town council (village courts), prints the school lunch menus and leads the sports page with the high school football game.”

Grassroots Journalism emerges from the community and generates reports on community issues. It publishes national news that has immediate impact on the community. J. Herbert Altschull (1997) of Johns Hopkins University said, “There is a special role for community journalists here, may be the most important of all. They could become a third party to conflict. It’s an idea that appeals to me, an idea that makes people in the media real mediators. Best of all…the community journalist can and should bring the two sides together. Let the media people mediator. Most problems can be solved, or at least alleviated. Here is the classical third-party role.”

Issues that community journalist should cover are community problems, achievements of education, livelihood options, rights and initiative of women and people living with disability, news from agriculture, environment and climate activities etc.

An example of Grassroots Journalism (in local language Bangla)

Source: Puamdo, Panchbibi
v) Advocacy Journalism

Advocacy journalism is not related to media bias or failures of objectivity in media outlets, which attempts to be objective or neutral. It is a process to bring change in policy and practice in society. To change government policy, increase industrialisation and to uphold the problem of government services, the journalists of Europe and the United States started Advocacy Journalism in the 18th century. Now it is used to aware audience and to generate public opinion on a particular issue, to change government policy etc.

An example of Advocacy Journalism

Advocacy Journalism is practised in three ways:

1. Through giving explanation of an event to generate public opinion
2. Through criticising government policy through upholding public opinion
3. Through agenda setting
Through giving explanation of an event to generate public opinion

Mass Media, particularly in least developed and developing countries, give explanation on issues of national interest to educate and generate public opinion as most of the people of these countries are not well-educated.

Through criticising government policy through upholding public opinion

In many cases government falls in dilemma to take decision on national or public interested issues or sometimes takes decision against public interest. In these cases, the Mass Media work as a bridge between the government and citizens publishing different survey and interpretative reports showing public opinion on the issues.

Through agenda setting

The most effective way of advocacy journalism is Agenda Setting. Considering audience interest, media houses from time to time select some issues and emphasise on those through publishing series of reports, arranging roundtable discussions and advertisement so that audiences become aware of those issues. It is also to bring the issues on the discussion table of the concerned authorities. A successful example of Bangladeshi media agenda setting is acid violence. Now most of the citizens are aware of the violence and government proclaimed law against acid violence. Another example of agenda setting is mass media initiatives to encourage audience to vote Cox’s Bazar and Sundarban in the competition of new seven wonders.

An example of Editorial

ii) Column

A column is personality-driven article in newspaper, magazine and other publication and contains an opinion or point of view of columnist. Newspaper gives the readers information on various events and column writers give constructive and inner meaning of the events through analysing the information. Many readers may not understand the importance of many news events, but when the news events are illustrated by a column writer, it really makes sense with most of the readers. Usually columns are written by experts of respective discipline. Senior journalists also write column. Column writers are not salaried; they are honorarium receivers.

An example of Column

Yellow Journalism:

Besides keeping knowledge on the aforementioned types of journalism, a journalist also needs to be aware about Yellow Journalism. Because Yellow Journalism is just reverse of objective journalism. Yellow journalism is also known as Yellow Press. This type of journalism downplays news in favour of vested groups making the news sensational. One way of doing that is by giving eye-catchy headlines. It exaggerates a news event or even makes news on baseless incident. The New York World of United States started practicing this type of journalism in 1983 (Rahman, 2007). The newspaper everyday published a yellow cartoon on its first page and for this the journalistic style of New York World is known as Yellow Journalism. This type of sensational journalism started to survive the fight of circulation.

We should, at all times, avoid this objectionable method of using lie, scandal, or any sensitive and controversial issues in trying to present or create news. Rejecting yellow journalism is for the sake of professional journalism.
2.4 Importance of Journalism

We are living in the era of information technology, where power comes from control over information. It is also necessary for survival. So information is the first and foremost of present era since journalism is also very important being the main carrier of information. Below are some major important aspects of journalism:

- It gives the latest development of an incident in objective and impartial manner.
- It works as spokesperson of the people and generates public opinion.
- It upholds the public interest issues and speaks for less privileged people.
- Mass Media acts as the mirror of the society.
- It cares for the continuity of national culture.
3.1 What is News?
The Bengali equivalent of Journalism, as mentioned before, is 'shanghbadikota', which originates from the root 'shongbad'. The Bengali word 'shongbad' has several connotations for a Bengali audience; such as information, quote, dialogue, speech etc. Therefore, 'news' or 'shongbad' means the publication of recent/ concurrent information. In case we leave 's from the word 'news', news may mean the 'new'-ness of events or incidents.

The proverb 'easy things cannot be said easily' is appropriate for the definition of news. 'There would seem to be no way to gather the common elements in theses definitions to reach a general and wholly satisfactory short description of news'.

Below are some endeavours to define news:
- In Bangla it is termed 'Songbad', in Arabic 'Akhber' or 'Khabar' and in English 'News' or 'Report'.
- NEWS (N for North, E for East, W for West, S for South) means current events of our surroundings.
- Something that actually happens into the newsworthy realm where an account of it will be interesting to readers can be considered news.
- News is an account of man's changing relationships with his environment. Or to be more specific, the newsworthy development is one that disrupts or alters—or shows promise of altering—the status quo; news is an account of recent developments which have just happened or is about to happen.
- Whatever appears in the newspaper or other mass media is called news.

The above discussions may only succeed in furnishing partial definition of what 'news' is. Experienced journalists and academicians think that the existence of news can be felt only, and that it is quite hard to define 'news'. However, news needs to be about human beings and centering on human needs and interests. As argued by Bernard R., "We can partially define 'news' by the merit of its usefulness to human beings".

It is obvious, too, that certain other commodities are not news, but the newspaper does deal with them. Advertisements, editorials, cartoons, comics, fiction, book reviews, columns of philosophy and science—all appear from time to time in the newspaper. All of them may be interesting item, but they are not news.

3.2 Characteristics of News
The principle and primal characteristics of news can be understood as the 'A-B-Cs of news'; the A-B-Cs of news carry as many as six properties of news, which are as follows:

A. Accuracy
B. Balance
C. Clarity
D. Condense
E. News has to be accurate: News needs to be formed with accurate information and written as per structure and presented as per standard. News has to be built on real-life information. Authentic sources would constitute accurate news.
F. News has to be balanced: News has to be written from the impartial point-of-view of the reporter. It also has to, in a simple brief manner, accommodate the views of all parties concerned in a news event.

3.3 Elements of News / News Values
This conversation of the news essence lays a common foundation for the news values. This qualifications or characteristics of the news as commonly recognised are in reality special types of disruption of the status quo. In other words, any event which is newsworthly will not only disrupt the status quo but will also disrupt it in one of the following ways:

A. Immediacy: News is a perishable product—good only when fresh. Its saleability reduces as the clock goes round. With the primary precept of immediacy in mind, the writer demonstrates in her/his story that s/he is reporting something which has just happened or is about to happen.
B. Conflict: Most conflicts are newsworthy. Actual conflict is a visible disruption of the status quo. In its physical form it presages injury and damage. Violent conflict is, in itself, it arouses the emotion of the spectators and seems (may be) of enormous immediate importance. So journalists well understand the conflict element in the news. Conflict for supremacy also makes a story.
C. Proximity: To every human being the most interesting thing in the world is herself/himself and after that the things nearest to her/him in body and mind: job, health, home and family, hobbies and recreations. The reporter therefore strives incessantly to link the lives of others to the lives of her/his readers—to build bridges into their own experiences, hopes and ambitions. The pull of proximity is so strong that news is classified geographically as well as topically. The divisions include foreign news, national news etc. Proximity are mainly of two types: Geographical Proximity and Psychological Proximity.
D. Oddity / Novelty: The readers like to be astonished. The newsworthiness of the odd, rare and strange was recognised in about 1882 by Charles A. Dana. It can be said when a girl is going to school along the railway tracks is not news. But if the girl somehow saves the train from accident, we get good elements for news.
Human's innate interest is for money and... The label of crime and the accompanying social stigma normally confine their scope to those activities seen as injurious to the general population or to the State, including some that cause serious loss or damage to individuals. So crime is a big element of news.

**Money and development:**

Human's innate interest is for money and it is essential for survival. Every person also always wishes for development. As money and development are interconnected, incidents always wishes for development. As money and it is essential for survival. Every person also always wishes for development. Money and development:

- Crime is the breach of rules or laws for which some governing authority may ultimately prescribe a conviction. The label of crime and the accompanying social stigma normally confine their scope to those activities seen as injurious to the general population or to the State, including some that cause serious loss or damage to individuals. So crime is a big element of news.

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- **Human interest:**

- Many stories appear in the newspapers which at first glance do not seem to be news measured by specific news element. But that news attracts human feeling very much. They are called human-interest or feature stories. “The ebb and flow of ambition, hate, fear, love, sympathy, wrath etc. in human affairs are reflected in the news mirror. Such as reader's anger is aroused by injustice and brutality.”

**Progress:**

- Progress in terms of science, technology, social, political, economic aspects of life, modernisation, liberty, democracy etc. makes people happy as it improves the quality of life, which is why it is an important news element.

- **Competition:**

- Competition is a contest between individuals, groups, nations etc. It arises whenever two or more parties strive for a goal that cannot be shared. Competition occurs naturally between living organisms which co-exist in the same environment. Humans compete for water, food, and mates, though, when these needs are met, deep rivalries often arise over the pursuit of wealth, prestige, fame etc. Nowadays, competition in sports has become most familiar and enjoyable as well as important as news element.

- **Science and Discovery:**

- New discoveries of science always influence our lives. So readers want to know about every new invention and discovery. For this it is also considered as an important element of news.

- **Culture and Heritage:**

- Every country has its own culture and heritage. Mass media as a ‘watch dog’ of the society plays a vital role to subsist the continuity of culture and heritage. For this reason all Bangladeshi newspapers publish special issues on the first day of Bangali year, International Language Day on 21 February, Independence Day on 26 March and Victory Day on 16 December.

- **Suspense:**

- All the world’s a stage and all the men and women mere players. The newspaper holding a mirror to the scene of human performance catches and reflects the drama of real life, recording the ceaseless tumble of events from entrance to exit. One of the strongest elements common to the stage and the newspaper is suspense—the piling up of action towards an unpredictable climax, such as election, World Series etc.

### 3.4 Types of news

#### A) Based on News Sources

- **Local / Metropolitan News**

- News events taking place in the city from where the newspaper published is called local news. It is observed that most of the national dailies are published from metropolitan cities, so the local news is also called metropolitan news. For example English national daily *The Daily Star* is published from Bangladesh's capital Dhaka, so news incidents taking place in Dhaka are called metropolitan news. On the other hand, Bangla daily *Jonmohbhum* is published from divisional city Khulna. So for *Jonmohbhum* news events that took place in Khulna is local news.

- **National News**

- All news events occurring in the country except local/metropolitan news are called national news. For example, *The Daily Star* is published from Dhaka so all Bangladeshi news except those taking place in Dhaka are national news for *The Daily Star*.

- **Foreign News**

- News events taking place beyond the territory of a country from where the newspaper is published is called foreign news. For example all news except Bangladeshi ones published in The Daily Star called foreign news.

- **Regional News**

- Having a glance at the national dailies will reveal that most of these newspapers publish regional news within one or two pages. The regional news are not obviously so important to the people of the other regions of a country as it is to the people of that particular region where the news was created. For this reason, the regional...
news are published on a particular page by the News agencies. For example, Prothom Alo one of the best national dailies of Bangladesh, always publishes the regional news on its fourth and fifth page under the title Bishal Bangla (Huge Bengal). That means, news of different divisions, districts and even news of sub-divisions and Unions of a country are considered as regional news.

B) Based on news importance

i) Absolute News
Absolute news is one kind of hard news although it has greater importance. This type of news besides attracting all the readers of a country also stir the whole world. The fire that took place at Nimtoli in Old Dhaaka can be cited as an example here. More than one hundred people died getting burned in that massive fire. This incident stired the whole nation and this type of news can be considered as absolute news.

ii) Hard News
News events that are reported in the immediate publication of newspaper to meet up the reader’s demand are called hard news. It is actually up-to-the-minute news. Politics, war, economics and crime are considered hard news. A hard news story takes a factual approach: What happened? Who was involved? Where and when did it happen? Why?

iii) Soft News
News manager (i.e., News Editor) can handle this type of news events softly as it covers background information or human-interest stories, have less hurry for publishing. Difference between hard and soft news is the tone of presentation. A soft news story tries to entertain or advise the reader focusing arts, entertainment and lifestyles events.

C) Based on news structure

i) Surface News
This type of news does not dig deep into a story rather gives plain description of an event together with answer of who, what, when, where and why.

ii) In-depth News
In-depth news is of two types—investigative and interpretive—which are used to unearth significant information about bribery, graft, error, deceit, or mere incompetence in public places. The seed from which such reporting grows is hard to identify, since one of its prime characteristics is that it is hidden.

iii) Interpretative News
The means to predict the future development of an event through an in-depth understanding of it can be called ‘descriptive news’. This means that, in descriptive news, we can predict the development of the event with coordinated understanding of all three tenses (past, present and future). Lester Markel (journalist of New York Times) calls the ‘descriptive’ part of the term ‘deeper sense of the news’ and explains the structure of this type of news in the following manner: background, plot and key-message. (Rahman, 2007).

3.5 News information and information collection methods

Information is the heart of news report. News is appreciated, readable and has outstanding impact, when the news has adequate, authentic and relevant information. To collect news information, media professional employ different tools, techniques and methods that are stated below:

A) News Investigation
A proverb of the mass media profession is that ‘journalists are jack of all trades but masters of none’. This is because journalist had to report on diverse issues and obviously should have knowledge on assortment of issues. As it is difficult to acquire vast knowledge on many issues for a person, journalist at least should have knowledge on the source of information of many discourses. For example a journalist is assigned to report on mine explosion. The journalist is usually not an expert on excavation, but s/he must know who the expert is in mine excavation and where s/he can get book references on the issue.

B) News interview and techniques
Interview—a distinctive type of conversation between two persons— was pioneered by the researchers as an information collection technique. Later in 1836 the technique emerged in journalism to collect particular news information. A person was killed at a shop in New York in that very year. James Gordon Bennett of the New York Herald asked some questions on the killing to the owner of the shop and published the questions and answers that became a centre of reader attention. Since then interview has become very common in journalism.

The person who takes interview is called interviewer and the person who gives interview is called interviewee. New York University professor F. Fraser subdivides interviews into five main types:

i) The news interview
ii) The opinion interview
iii) The group interview
iv) The personality or feature interview
v) The press conference

i) The news interview
The news interview seeks facts. Its field is as broad as human endeavour. Its subject may be politics, education, finance, crime or invention.
ii) The opinion interview
The opinion interview is sometimes easy but as a rule it requires more tact on the part of the reporter than does the straight factual one. The opinion interview that is worthwhile is usually the result of both digging and diplomacy. The reporter strives to learn all he can about the personality of the individual whose views he seeks. He arrives with his leading questions memorised to avoid fumbling and delay.

iii) The group interview
The group interview, as its name suggests, sets down in one story the facts and opinions obtained by the reporter through a series of interviews with a number of people.

iv) The personality or feature interview
The personality interview is usually more interesting to write and read than the other types. Here, as in a personal sketch, the emphasis tends to be not so much on what the person says but on how, and where and why he says it. The reporter attempts to develop the personality of his subject through noting characteristics, tricks of speech, dress and appearance, personal traits and the like. The net effect, if successful, makes the reader feel that he has almost met the person depicted.

v) The press conference
The press conference resembles the group interview technique in reverse. In order to save time, or with the purpose of giving all the journalistic media or all the papers in town an even break, an important individual arranges to give out an important piece of news to the assembled group of newsmen. The interview element enters here in that after the announcement reporters are free to ask questions for further enlightenment.

Interview structure:
- Define a purpose for the interview
- Conduct Background Research
- Request an interview appointment
- Plan your strategy
- Meet the respondent: icebreaker conversation
- Ask your first serious questions
- Proceed to the heart of the interview
- Ask boom (potentially sensitive or embarrassing) questions
- Recover from boom questions
- Conclude the interview

Some principals of interviewing:
- Be sincerely interested. This does not mean you must like the person you are interviewing. You can be interested in what he has to say without necessarily liking her/him.
- The more sincerity and genuine interest you can put into an interview, the more sincerity and interest the respondent will show in return.
- The third principal is ‘pleasure principal’: People talk more openly when they are having fun. Most people do enjoy interviews; being interviewed gives them a chance to ‘be somebody’ and to ‘educate’ the public to their point of view. You can heighten their pleasure, simply by listening.
- Interview is successful when one person convinces another that what s/he says is true and when one person feels free to say what s/he really thinks and feels, regardless of whether s/he convinces the other.
- The final principal is that you must generate huge raw conversation. Most people merely answer questions; they do not speak in inverted pyramids. It’s the interviewer’s job to fashion the raw data into a coherent news story.

3.6 Journalism in Pictures
Journalism began with picture. Pictures made up the first written language, and from them the alphabet we now use developed. The present day emphasis on pictorial journalism stands out as a phenomenon of the twentieth century.

Alfred A Crowell in his book Creating News Editing said, “Pictures never be the alternative of news, but it helps news to be credible as readers can see the incidents. A good photo always attracts the readers.”

Gene Gilmore in his book Modern Newspaper Editing said, “Photos help readers to understand news and removes the monotonousness of newspaper.”

Bastain in his book Editing the Days News said news photos are mainly of three types:
- Photos of news incidents
- Photos of place, agency and events
- Photos of personality
3.7 News Writing Style

Effective writing for the newspaper does not differ essentially from effective writing in general. The reporter must adapt his story to prescribed newspaper forms. He must conform to the accepted rules of punctuation and grammar and the principle of rhetoric. Newspapers take special liberty in headline writing, while news stories follow accepted rules of English. It also strives for certain qualities of style: simplicity, conciseness, and vividness; directness, emphasis, and originality; clarity, brevity, accuracy.

Considering these general issues news stories are mainly written in three styles:

A) Pyramid Style

Pyramid style news writing begins the story with an eye-catching tale rather than the central facts to create suspense among readers. The style is used to write heart breaking or even touchy news events. Newspapers once used this method exclusively. The base most important part of a pyramid is broad. The top is a point.

An example of Pyramid Style

The main characteristics of this style are:

- Climax of story is not described at intro.
- Story is developed through creating suspense among the readers.
- The fact is described at the concluding paragraph.
A news Story written in inverted pyramid style

**Lead:** 50 percent of population in char (shoal) lands of the country are illiterate and only 44 percent of children in these areas go to school.

**Neck:** Most students do not attend classes regularly and the main reason behind this is that they do not get free textbooks, the study of Unnayan Shamannay said. The poor students even have to give bribes to receive their stipends, it added.

**Body:** Unnayan Shamannay conducted the research in seven upazilas of Pabna, Nilphamari and Lalmonirhat districts. Chinmoy Mutsuddi, team leader of the research project ‘Nodi O Jibon’, presented the study findings at a roundtable on ‘Safety net and education in char lands of northwest Bangladesh’.

**Major Detail:** Speaking at the roundtable, State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Motahar Hossain said the government has taken a new scheme to increase the salary and other allowances for primary school teachers in haor and Hill Tracts areas.

**Minor Detail:** The government has taken an initiative to offer extra financial benefits to the teachers in char, haor and CHT areas as they face tremendous difficulties in reaching schools, he said. “We will implement these additional benefits in July.” The teachers of these remote areas often have to walk miles or use bicycle to reach workplaces, he said.

**Least Important Info:** Unnayan Shamannay & Concern Worldwide organised the event at BIAA centre. Lawmakers and NGOs took part in the roundtable.

B) **Inverted pyramid style**

The inverted pyramid is a metaphor used by journalists and other writers to illustrate the placing of the most important information first within a text. It is the most widely preferred method in writing news stories.

The widest part at the top represents the most substantial, interesting and important information the writer means to convey.

The format is valued because readers can leave the story at any point and understand it, even if they don’t have all the details. It also allows less important information at the end to be more easily removed by editors so the article can fit a fixed size.

**News lead writing in inverted pyramid style:**

In this style news lead is the most important. The lead is the showcase of all or of the most newsworthy materials contained in the story. And since the lead thus reveals the whole story or its most newsworthy aspects, the subsequent parts of the story are in the nature of a logical development or proof of the lead.

The following general points are must for this introduction:

- Answers to 5Ws (who, what, when, where and why) & 1H (how) should be in the intro
- The intro should be appropriate for the story
- The intro should make the reader want to read the rest of the story
- The intro should normally be kept short (18-26 words)
- The intro should normally be based on the key point of the article

**An example of Inverted-Pyramid Style**

*Source: The Daily Star, 11 May 2010*
Construction of inverted pyramid news story:
The first hurdle has been cleared when the intro is written. What this collection of facts, quotes and background now needs is a thread of continuity – a linking of one paragraph to the next. Paragraphs can be linked in the following ways:
- Continuity of thought
- Repetition of key words
- Using tie-in phrases or words
- Short paragraphs
- Precision
- Answers
- Background
- Sequence

C) Feature news
Feature stories follow no set rules of style, form, content. They may conform to the straight news style with a 5-Ws summery lead. They may be narrative, descriptive, or expository. In other words they may tell stories, paint pictures or explain conditions. Their intention is to convey information and not, as human interest story, to dramatise events for the sake of an emotional impact. In brief, the only rule in writing features is make them interesting from beginning to end. Following are some of the characteristics of 'feature':
- It is a mixture of news and story.
- It is a means of capturing the salient features of life through human touch.
- The human condition (food, clothing, shelter and education) is presented here.
- There is much use of adjectives and pronouns.

An example of Feature Style

Feature writing style
- Summery lead
- Continuity of the story
- Descriptive presentation
- Use of humour in case of light topics
- Use of emotion-laden words in case of sad issues
- Retention of standard language and diction in case of serious matters

An attractive ‘feature’ structure:

Gripping introduction

Maintain the line of inquiry

Conclusion consistent with introduction

We have discussed three ways of writing ‘news’. And we have seen the ways vary as per writing style and approach. However, there is minimum set standards that apply to all three types, which are:
- Doing the research and thinking first, then writing
- Following any one of the writing style – not two at the same time
- Narrating the content directly
- Use of familiar words
- Use of small and self-contained paragraphs
- Use of simple diction and easy language
- Following the rules of grammar
### 3.8 Content of Newspaper

Following is the samples/examples of the content of Newspaper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A) Content of National Dailies</th>
<th>B) Content of Weekly Magazine</th>
<th>C) Content of Monthly Magazine</th>
<th>D) Content of Wall Magazine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Beside these regular items many daily newspapers publish periodicals which usually are:

1. Literature
2. Sports
3. Children
4. Women
5. Job Market
6. Entertainment
7. Technology
8. Advertisement
9. Fashion
10. Health
11. Law
12. Environment
13. Agriculture

### 3.9 Objectivity

The principle that 'news is objective reporting' has been called the major contribution of American journalists to their profession. They recognised the principle in 1923. It is the essential precept by which newsmen have tried to write news that is fair to the news consumers who cannot be present at events or who do not have access to news sources. A young Texas journalist Molly Ivins says, "Objectivity is getting the facts straight and letting the truth hang." Though objective reporting is the 'report of an event as it occurred', a good newsman must frequently report pertinent background information as well as literally observable facts. Unless balanced and complete information is presented in appropriate context, objectivity may only add to the consumer's confusion.

But effort to attain objectivity is impeded by many sorts of obstacles. One is that reporters, like other humans, can never wholly escape the weight of their own psyches. Most newsmen accept the challenge of objectivity. Another challenge in the quest for objectivity is the fact that the reporting of facts sometimes fails to depict the totality of a news situation.

#### a) Adequate Source

A news is formed basing on what concerned people say about an issue or event. Therefore, it is a rule to give credit / acknowledgement to this kind of sources. This means, there should be clear expression of name and identity of the source(s) of information.

#### b) Free from Bias

It is only natural that there will be two parties—one in favour and another against certain issue or event. However, it is the journalist's vocation to free himself/herself from personal bias and capture views of both the parties involved.

#### c) Undistorted and Authentic Information

The means of staying authentic/original is by avoiding any distortion or twist of information. Preparing news by twisting information has to be avoided by all means. The journalist must capture the event/issue exactly as it happened or was expressed.

#### d) Avoiding Personal Opinion

The reporter/journalist must abstain from making private comments or passing personal judgement. If the news relates a complaint against someone, it has to clearly capture the complainant's views.

#### e) Complete Picture

It is important to remember that accurate but partial information in news may mislead the audience. Therefore, the reporter/journalist should always refrain from capturing incomplete picture of the happenings.

#### f) No Foreseeing

Events, phenomenon and discourse have to be allowed free development on their own accord. The reporter / journalist should not make guesses of what the development of the incident would be in near future.

The general reading mass, the publisher and the patrons – everyone expects objectivity from newspaper. However, the clash of interests and individual traits are major hindrances to retaining objectivity in news. The primary hindrances to retaining objectivity are –

- The journalist him/herself who has bias for personal likings
- The rules and regulations exercised by the publishing house
- The interventions from the Government
- The strategic speeches made by politicians
- The organisations who advertise in the newspaper
- The powerful elites of the society
3.10 Media Law

Although freedom of expression exists under Constitutional guarantee, no mass media is free to make false, malicious or derogatory statements about any individual, any group or any institution, either intentionally or through negligence or accident. According to the available media law in Bangladesh, journalist/media house can be sued for violation of law in case of the following:

- Publish wrong or biased information through negligence
- Twisting information to save someone
- Use of information without citing source
- Use of malicious statements about any individual
- To make a mole, to a mountain
- Disclose secrets of individual
- Entitle someone as criminal before final verdict
- Criticism of any verdict
- Publish news that can create anarchy in the state
- Disclose state secrecy

Punishment in case of the violation of law:

If any of the above is occurred, journalist or media house shall be punished as follows:

- If an individual or organisation is sufferer, journalist or media house shall be punished with imprisonment of two years and shall also be liable to fine.
- If the impact is on the state or the society, journalist or media house shall be punished with imprisonment of five years and shall also be liable to fine or even cancellation of its publication declaration.
4.1 Mass Media

To achieve news status, any event must be published or broadcast through a medium. This medium for the delivery of news differs according to who the desired audiences are, where they are, and what their interests are.

News channels are divided into two categories—Print Media (Newspaper) and Broadcast Media (Radio and Television).

4.2 Who is a Journalist?

A journalist collects and disseminates information about current events, people, trends, and issues. His or her work is acknowledged as Journalism. Reporters are one type of journalists. They create reports as a profession for broadcast or print media. A columnist is a journalist who writes pieces that appear regularly in newspapers or magazines. Depending on the context, the term ‘journalist’ also includes various types of editors and visual journalists, such as photographers, graphic artists and page designers. A more formal definition of the term is those who may be admitted to membership of a national or regional association (union) of journalists.

In short, anyone connected to the work of journalism can be called a journalist. And to elaborate on it, those who collect news and writes them for newspaper, magazine, radio or TV, and those who collect photographs and also those who edit news and are related to the management of all these can be called journalists: However,

4.3 Skills of a Journalist

The news media is called ‘the fourth estate’. In the larger understanding, the role of the media is to monitor if the human systems are being utilised to ensure their betterment and, in smaller scale, if the country is governed with the state-laws. This side of the media necessitates the journalists to be wise, intelligent and in possession of the qualities of an academician. Senior journalists and those working in the management of the media must possess these three qualities. The journalists who are comparatively new may not possess all of them, but need to possess the following:

- A standard sense of the written and verbal language.
- A friendly personality who can easily build trust so the collection of information is effortless.
- Knowledge about a range of issues and a curiosity to know more about them.
- Preferably working knowledge of more than one language.
- Good working knowledge of how to operate computers.
- Skilled in taking good photographs.

4.4 Attributes of a Reporter

Some persons may be more suitable than others to become a journalist, but this does not mean that journalists are ‘born and not made’. Most of the attributes of successful journalists are acquired instead of inherited. The best qualifications for a journalist—aside from the desire and an ability to write for print or broadcast media—are insatiable curiosity, a flexible and sociable personality, a nature that relishes a variety of experience, a temperament to work under pressure of deadlines and a tolerance permitting neutral observations of people and events. Here are some other qualifications a journalist should possess:

- Investigative mind
- Bi-focal mind
- Nose for news
- Strong ethics and intelligence
- Industrious and courageous
- Good knowledge in language
- Good communication skill
- Knowledge on different subjects
- Basic computer knowledge

- People think of themselves as journalists who collect information and take photographs.
- In divisional cities, there are separate persons for collecting information and taking photos.
- In the district and smaller administrative units, one person does both of the tasks.
- The person who collects information is known as reporter.
- The person who takes photographs is known as photo-journalist.
- The Sub-Editor performs a lot of activities such as checking grammar and linguistic nuances, avoiding contradiction in information, preparing heading/title, editing photos and writing caption (for photos), following regulations of the publisher, and also deciding which news to be placed in which page and position of the newspaper and how much space to be allocated.

- The News Editor and Editor decide which news would be selected for publication/print along with the overall outlook of the medium.

- The Editor or staff working in the editorial board would write the day-to-day editorials.

- Finally, ‘journalist’ is a word necessarily suitable for reporter, photographer, sub-editor, members of editorial board and the editor himself.
4.5 How Would You Become a Journalist?

During the inception of early journalism, people did not see the job of a journalist as a fundamental or main profession. Journalism used to be appraised as a medium of expressing creativity. As a result, history shows that people from different professions such as writers, intellectuals, artists, academicians etc. would become involved in journalism. Now-a-days, although there is a created group of specialised journalists, a number of people from diverse professions would still become involved. This means, anybody can be engaged in the job of a journalist. However, some initial pre-conditions are to be met before such engagements, which are as follows:

- A regular habit of reading newspapers
- Writing on and about incidents happening every day
- Submitting your writing to the Editor working at the grassroots
- Sharing some of the writings with the local correspondent for feedback
- Writing some news, articles, features etc. on locally important issues and submitting them to the offices of local/national dailies, weekly magazines, wall-magazines and community newspapers.
5.1 Content of Grassroots Newsletter

Our sponsors are individuals who live in developed countries and have extended helping hands to developing countries like ours expecting to ensure basic rights of children such as education. Besides these generous sponsors, our development associates like, the local people, the civil-society representatives, government officials and the locally elected representatives are continuously extending their helping hands and cooperation to us. What these generous individuals like to see the most is the betterment of children and the poor people of the community. This is exactly why CJG should capture the improvement of the condition of individuals and the development of the community while writing for our supporters/donors.

Grassroots Newsletter will be published twice a year, first one in January-February and the second one in July-August. One will focus on the achievements of the previous year that means basing on the information of the Progress Report and the other will be based on the information given in the Community Newsletter. The Grassroots Newsletter will be published in a broad sheet with single forma. It will have the same shape as Tabloid or Magazine. If it is like Tabloid, it will have four pages with 11”x17” dimension and if it follows the Magazine layout, it will have 8 pages of 8”x11” dimension.

Half of the Grassroots Newsletter will be occupied by the gist of the Bengali translated contents of either Progress Report or Community Newsletter of ActionAid and the rest half will be occupied by local news, feature, short stories etc. among which at least one must be story or news related to children.

If the Grassroots Newsletter follows the shape of Tabloid, each page of it will occupy around 1800 to 1900 words leaving enough space for photos; but if it takes the shape of Magazine, each page will occupy ‘700 to 750 words excluding space for photos. The ‘Editorial’ will be of 200 to 250 words with the font size 11. Still a few changes may occur basing on the design and content of the Newsletter.

A) Content of Progress Report-focused Grassroots Newsletter:

i) Editorial

ii) Information published in the last progress report, such as:

- Health and Education: Existing situation of Health and Education and the main problems of the sectors along with contribution of ActionAid in solving the problems.
- Women and child rights: The major obstacles in the way of establishing women and child rights and the initiatives or activities of ActionAid in removing those obstacles. ActionAid’s role in promoting children’s creativity and talent in cultural fields.
- Livelihoods: What are the major financial activities of the people and the activities or initiatives of ActionAid in improving the living standard of the local people?
- Climate change: What kind of catastrophe has struck the locality as an effect of climate change? Is it creating any obstacle in the development activities of the area? What role is ActionAid playing to fight against the climate change?

iii) Among other contents there will be the following items:

- Feature: Feature can be composed on children, men and women, who have been struggling with poverty and helplessness or have overcome the poverty and helplessness that can inspire others.
- Art, literature and painting: This includes short story/article, poem, rhyme, comics, drawing of children, events/festivals that are part of local culture/heritage etc.
- Interview: Government official, elected representative, development worker and member of civil society etc.
- Sports: Sports programme for children and other local sports.
- History and culture: Cultural and archaeological history, ethnic groups etc.
- Infrastructure: School-college, roads, hospital, park etc.

iv) National News provided by ActionAid:

- National News provided by ActionAid: Achievements after/through development activities initiated by ActionAid and local partner, role of ActionAid in the development of education, health etc.

B) Content of Community Newsletter-focused Grassroots Newsletter:

i) Editorial

ii) Information published in the last community newsletter, such as:

- Health and Education: Existing situation of Health and Education and the main problems of the sectors along with contribution of ActionAid in solving the problems.
- Woman and child rights: The major obstacles in the way of establishing women and child rights and the initiatives or activities of ActionAid in removing those obstacles. ActionAid’s role in promoting children’s creativity and talent in cultural fields.
- Livelihoods: What are the major financial activities of the people and the activities or initiatives of ActionAid in improving the living standard of the local people?
- Climate change: What kind of catastrophe has struck the locality as an effect of climate change? Is it creating any obstacle in the development activities of the area? What role is ActionAid playing to fight against the climate change?

iii) Among other contents there will be the following items:

- Feature: Feature can be composed on children, men and women, who have been struggling with poverty and helplessness or have overcome the poverty and helplessness that can inspire others.
- Art, literature and painting: This includes short story/article, poem, rhyme, comics, drawing of children, events/festivals that are part of local culture/heritage etc.
- Interview: Government official, elected representative, development worker and member of civil society etc.
- Sports: Sports programme for children and other local sports.
- History and culture: Cultural and archaeological history, ethnic groups etc.
- Infrastructure: School-college, roads, hospital, park etc.

iv) National News provided by ActionAid:

- National News provided by ActionAid: The central editorial team of CJG in ActionAid would provide news and corresponding photos of events held at the national level on advocacy and different campaigns. The CJGs at the local level would incorporate these materials in the grassroots newsletter. The purpose of this specific activity is to share with the people of the locality and local administration about ActionAid’s national campaigns and programmes.

5.2 Title and Layout of Grassroots Newsletter

A. Nameplate: The name of our Grassroots Newsletter will be '<DA name> Unnyon Barta' (i.e., development message) for example DA 12 is in Sitakunda. So, for example, name of DA 12 Newsletter will be 'Sitakunda Unnyon Barta'. It should be placed on the top of page 1.

B. Folio Line: This section includes month and year of publication, for example, February 2010. It should be placed below the nameplate.

C. Printers Line: Name of editor and publisher, name and address of office and press. It should be placed on the bottom of last page.
D. **Logo:** Logo of ActionAid will be placed on the top right corner of first page and under it will be partner organisation’s logo. The CJG logo will be on the top left corner. Please see page 19 for sample.

E. **Credit line:** The printed or spoken acknowledgment of the source or ownership of a picture or report. The names of reporter, news agency or photographer are placed usually on the middle of headline and body.

F. **Editorial board:** The name of local editorial board will be printed on any place of the last page preferably just above printers’ line.

### 5.3 Information Source for Grassroots Newsletter

All that our sponsors wished to see is the development of our community/locality. This means the sources of information are all around us. Following are some likely sources:

- Progress Report and Community Newsletter published every year.
- National events organised by ActionAid and/or partner organisation. This information is given by central editorial board.
- DA Manager/Monitoring/Sponsorship officer working in/for ActionAid-run project. They will share development activities initiated by ActionAid and its local partner.
- Information from the annual report on the participatory PRRP events.
- Information gathered from attending different activities/events initiated/organised by ActionAid
- News, feature, poem, rhyme collected/composed by CJG members,
- Interview of prominent person known locally.

### 5.4 News Not Allowed to be Published in the Grassroots Newsletters

Generally newspaper publishes all newsworthy events. But Grassroots Newsletter shall publish news only related to development activities. This means some issues will not be permitted for publication in the Grassroots Newsletter – issues that are not related to development activities. In case of the following events, prohibition will be imposed:

- a) News of political parties
- b) News containing/supporting religious controversy
- c) News that can create anarchy in the society/state

### 5.5 Advertisement in Grassroots Newsletter

The main source of income for the mass media is advertisement. Since Grassroots Newsletter will work as a tool to fight against poverty and to bring social change, it will not publish any commercials. But commercials made for strengthening development activities and to create awareness and mobilise social issues, can be published in the newsletter after getting approval from the Central Editor.

### 5.6 What to Do to Publish News

If you have the notions of becoming a journalist, read newspaper sincerely and regularly, start writing current events as reporting the news is fundamental to virtually all journalistic occupations. So all CJG members shall write reports on their day to day events and submit to Sponsorship Officer in the fields twice a year.

- Your writing will be published on Grassroots Newsletter twice a year.
- CJG members shall be involved with case studies and news story collection process.
- CJG members will give information to central editorial to publish news bulletin.

### 5.7 Readers of Grassroots Newsletter

All sponsored children and their families, the local people, local representatives, government officials, policy makers, the civil-society representatives the educated and less-educated people and the people of all classes of the society will be the readers of the Grassroots Newsletter.

More specifically readers of Grassroots Newsletter will be:

A. **People involved with DA** that will include Sponsored children and their families, community people particularly those who are in anyway involved with ActionAid activities, staff working with the development activities etc.

B. **Members of civil societies** that may include president and general secretary of BAR council, chairman and general secretary of press club, educationist, environmentalist, writer, cultural activist etc.

C. **Government officials**
   - **District level:** District Commissioner, Additional District Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner-Land, Superintendent of Police, Additional Superintendent of Police, Assistant Police Super (circle), Commanding Officer (police), District Judge, Additional District Judge, Assistant District Judge, Executive Engineer (public health), Executive Engineer (roads & highways), Executive Engineer (LGED), District Educational Officer, District Fisheries Officer, District Veterinary Officer, District Food Officer, District Social Welfare Officer, District Women and Child Officer, Principal of Government college, Headmaster of Government school.
   - **Sub-district level:** Upzilla (sub-district) Executive Officer, Project Implementation Officer, Commanding Officer (police), Upzilla Education Officer, Head (Upzilla health centre), Principal of Government college, Headmaster of Government school.

D. **Elected representatives**
   - **District level:** Minister responsible for district / Member of Parliament, Chairman and Members of District Council.
   - **Sub-district level:** Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Upzilla Parishad, Mayor and Commissioners of City Corporation.

**Union (smallest tier of local govt.) level:** Chairman and Members of Union Parishad, Imams (religious leaders) of mosque, temple, church, pagoda etc.
5.8 Approval for Grassroots Newsletter

Once the Grassroots Newsletter is finalised from DA level, it shall be forwarded to ActionAid central editorial team for approval, and after getting approval DA will go for printing.

5.9 Annual Plan for Grassroots Newsletter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities of CJG</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
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<th>Nov</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News writing for newspaper, website &amp; blog</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Training of CJG</td>
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<td>Monthly meeting of CJG team</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grassroots Newsletter publication</td>
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<td>Wall-magazine publication</td>
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<td>Basic training on computing and the internet</td>
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<td>Advocacy training</td>
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<td>Meeting with journalists of local press club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocacy meeting with DC, UNO etc.</td>
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<td>Advocacy meeting with elected reps.</td>
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<td>Exposure visit to mass media organisation</td>
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<td>Participate in local and national events of ActionAid</td>
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Note: The annual timeframe can be changed but all the activities should be implemented.

Bibliography:
12. Islam, Professor Sirajul (2005), Banglapedia - the National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh, Asiatic Society, Dhaka.
In the wake of the twenty-first century, media is playing a very important role in fighting for human rights and establishing justice. Radio, television, newspapers and the internet are covering our successes, hurdles and promises from the social, economic, political and cultural spheres. Sadly, the participation of grassroots children, women and the marginalised in this role of media is hardly there. So Community Journalist Group is our initiative to focus children, women and the marginalised in this role of media is hardly there. So Community Journalist Group is our initiative to focus children, women and the marginalised in rural areas, turn them into active citizens and help them be active in claiming their own rights.

ActionAid Bangladesh runs 31 long-term development projects in 26 districts. Already a 15-member (30% children and 50% women) Community Journalist Group is formed in each of the 31 DAs. Attempts have been made with success to network with journalists at the grassroots to build journalistic capacity and IT skills of the Community Journalist Group members.

Community Journalist Groups will prepare features on the achievements, problems and prospects of the children, women and the marginalised and arrange for publication/broadcast in local and national news media. Besides, the Groups will lobby with people’s representatives, local administration and the civil society to solve local problems. Another way of establishing rights would be through children meeting the head of government and the policy makers to exchange issues and through engaging the two parties in a blog-based communication online. The whole process would ensure direct and more active participation of the community people in our collective efforts for development and eradication of poverty.

The goal, objectives and activities of Community Journalist Groups have been decided through sharing with children, women and representatives of civil society who sat together in workshop. A comprehensive booklet titled Grassroots Journalism has also been published internally and shared with all of 31 Community Journalist Groups to develop it further and be more inclusive. I am confident the resource-book will aid the Community Journalist Groups at the grassroots in journalistic training. It has been written in simple approach keeping the enthusiastic young would-be journalists in mind. I hope the booklet will foster our endeavour to operationalise grassroots journalism. We expect that you will give us your thorough support in materialising our dream of creating change makers at the grassroots.

-Mahbub Hasan