



Changing **female presence** in the Nepali media

Thursday, August 16, 2018

DONATE

Today I have an appointment to interview Nanu. She's a young woman from Nepal who leads the Gender Media Monitoring, a project done by Freedom Forum and Free Press Unlimited. I'm impressed with her project and curious to learn more about her experience and the research.

By Irina Raiu

As we greet each other, the first thing I notice about her are her dark curls, friendly face and red lipstick. Slightly nervous about being interviewed, she takes place in the seat across me and starts to tell me about the project.

Monitoring gender content in the media

"When I started the project in October 2016, I didn't know how to monitor gender content in the media. I was very inexperienced back then. Every day we would monitor 9 media outlets and 12 news items per outlet. That was crazy and hectic, haha." Nanu laughs loudly and continues: "I'm glad that Free Press Unlimited suggested a correct methodology and advised us on the frequency in which we should monitor. So instead of once a day, we started to monitor once a week. And we went from 12 to 8 news items per outlet."

Lack of female presence

After the first three months of monitoring, Freedom Forum noticed a low percentage of women who are represented in the media. For them, the lack of female presence and bylines was a serious issue. "Even if we were unaware about this before, after the presentation given by Free Press Unlimited, we became more aware of female presence in the media."

Freedom Forum was quite surprised by the first outcomes. "In one of the news papers we had noticed that 6 out of 8 bylines were unknown. So we clearly wrote in the report that there were zero female bylines. But the editor of that daily news paper wrote to us in a letter: "How did you know we have no females? 33 percent of our staff is female. How can you make such a statement. Clarify!""

Questioning the media monitoring report

Stay involved

First name *

Last name *

E-mail address *

Submit

"In this letter he had cc-ed both our national information commission as well as the press, other media organisations and Free Press Unlimited. We monitored 9 media outlets in total but only this one was trying to undermine and question our study. I tried to call him and explain that it was all just a misunderstanding, but he just said: "No, don't talk to me. I have written you a letter, now reply to me in a letter. I don't want to talk to you." So I replied to him both through a letter as in an email, explaining that we had clearly written about the amount of female bylines, not the women working in his organisation."

Sitting on the edge of her seat...passionate and determined she continues: "I wanted to clarify the issue, so I called him again. He said to me: "Go and learn journalism first, then talk to me." I was already worried before, but with these words he scared me even more."

Meeting with a female reporter

After all the phone calls and letters, Nanu asked one of the interns to arrange a meeting with one of the female reporters from that daily news paper. The two of them knew each other so Nanu was hoping to get some additional insights. During their conversation, she found out that the female reporter writes at least one or two articles per day, but that the reporter is never mentioned in the bylines. "For me this was very striking so I included this in the report, but made sure that she would remain anonymous."

The results of gender monitoring

Nanu smiles from ear to ear. "After our second monitoring (January - March), we found her bylines in the newspaper together with that of 2 other female reporters. Then in our third monitoring (April - June) there were 3. And surprisingly in our fourth monitoring (July - September 2017) there were 7 female bylines!

I have personally emailed all the reports to the editor of the daily news paper. Up to this date he still hasn't responded. So even if the editor in chief didn't accept our study, the content spoke. And we are amazed and very excited to see the change!"

SHARE THIS PAGE:



Also interesting:



Female journalists make a stand for **neglected groups** in Indonesia

Women from different parts of Indonesia took part in the Citradaya Nita programme in 2015 to improve their skills as journalists. [Read more](#)



Online safety for female journalists in Pakistan

The Digital Rights Foundation stands up for the safety of journalists in Pakistan; and strives to create a safe space for women online. [Read more](#)



Recap: Men march for Women on **International Women's Day**

With these activities we celebrated International Women's Day together with our partners. [Read more](#)

PROJECTS

Digital security courses for journalists & activists

Empowering media through collaborative crowdfunded journalism

Together for reliable information in Africa

NEWS

Call for proposals: submission for a documentary

The impact of COVID-19 on the global struggle for freedom

Insiders info: Fact-checking journalist over fake news

ABOUT US

About us

Publications

Vacancies

Disclaimer

Privacy statement

Subscribe to newsletter

Complaints and reports

CONTACT DETAILS

Weesperstraat 3

1018 DN Amsterdam

The Netherlands

T: +31 20 8000400

E: info[at]freepressunlimited.org

IBAN: NL92 INGB 000 000 7676



PARTNERS

greenhost.



CERTIFICATIONS

