



Darjeeling Declaration on Development Journalism Teaching

The Declaration on Development Journalism Teaching was adopted at the Mind-mapping session on Development Journalism organized by Press Club, Kolkata in collaboration with UNICEF, West Bengal at Darjeeling, West Bengal on December 15, 2022. This is a document that outlines the shared beliefs and commitments of educators, journalists, researchers, and other stakeholders in the field of development journalism. The Declaration is intended to provide a common foundation for the teaching of development journalism and to promote excellence in this important field.

The Declaration begins by affirming the importance of development journalism in fostering greater understanding and awareness of development-related issues, ethical reporting and challenges. It also acknowledges the unique role that journalists play in bringing to the fore important issues of public interest and amplifying the voices of marginalized communities.

The Declaration outlines a number of key principles that should guide the teaching of development journalism. These include:

- 01 A commitment to ethical and responsible journalism
- 02 A focus on critical thinking and inquiry
- 03 An emphasis on practical skills and hands-on learning.
- 04 A recognition of the diverse needs and perspectives of different audiences
- 05 An appreciation of the role of technology and innovation in development journalism
- 06 Knowledge:**
 - Understand the principles and ethics of journalism and how they apply to development-related issues
 - Familiarize oneself with the local and global context of development journalism
 - Understand the different media platforms and how to use them effectively
- 07 Skills:**
 - Develop research and fact-checking skills
 - Improve interviewing, storytelling, and writing skills
 - Use multimedia tools (e.g. video, audio, photography) to tell compelling stories
 - Use data and statistics to support evidence in journalism
- 08 Attitude:**
 - Develop a commitment to social justice and development
 - Foster open-mindedness and a willingness to learn
 - Enhance critical thinking skills and the ability to ask tough questions
 - Develop empathy and sensitivity towards marginalized communities
- 09 Technology:**
 - Understand and use relevant software and tools (e.g. content management systems, audio/video editing software)

- Use social media and other online platforms to reach audiences
- Understand cybersecurity and how to protect sources and data
- Stay up-to-date with emerging technologies and how they can be used in development journalism

10 Applications:

- Apply journalistic principles in development-related contexts
- Engage with communities and build trust
- Work with different stakeholders (e.g. governments, development agencies, civil society organisations)

11 Critical thinking:

- Analyze and evaluate information and sources critically
- Understand different perspectives on development-related issues
- Develop the ability to think creatively and find solutions to complex problems

12 Design thinking:

- Understanding the design thinking process and how it can be applied to development journalism
- Developing skills in empathy, problem-solving, and prototyping
- Using design thinking to create innovative and effective journalism projects

13 Story ideas:

- Generating ideas for development-related stories
- Researching and verifying potential story angles
- Developing a pipeline of story ideas and sources

14 Search Engine Optimization:

- Understanding how search engines work and how to optimize content for better visibility
- Using keywords and other tactics to increase the discoverability of development journalism content

15 AI (artificial intelligence):

- Understanding the potential and limitations of AI in journalism
- Developing skills in using AI tools for tasks such as data analysis, translation, and content generation
- Ethical considerations in the use of AI in journalism

16 Pitching stories:

- Developing skills in crafting compelling pitches for development journalism stories
- Understanding the needs and interests of different publications and platforms
- Negotiating terms and building relationships with editors and other gatekeepers

17 Sustained training:

- Staying up-to-date with the latest developments in development journalism
- Developing specialized skills and knowledge in development-related topics
- Building networks and connections with other development journalists
- Improving the overall quality and impact of development journalism.

18 Data journalism:

- Understanding the role of data in development journalism
- Developing skills in collecting, analyzing, and visualizing data
- Using data to add context and depth to development-related stories

19 Storytelling:

- Developing skills in crafting compelling and engaging development stories
- Using multimedia tools (e.g. audio, video, photos) to tell stories
- Understanding the role of emotion and narrative in journalism

20 Risk journalism:

- Understanding the risks and challenges of reporting on sensitive or dangerous issues
- Developing skills in managing risk and protecting oneself and sources
- Ethical considerations in risk journalism

21 Child Rights:

- Understanding the rights of children and the challenges they face
- Developing skills in reporting on child rights issues in a sensitive and ethical manner
- Engaging with and amplifying the voices of children

22 Story presentation:

- Developing skills in presenting stories in a clear and concise manner
- Using multimedia tools (e.g. slides, videos, graphics) to enhance the impact of stories
- Understanding the needs and preferences of different audiences

23 Writing:

- Developing skills in writing clear, concise, and accurate development journalism stories
- Using different writing styles and formats for different platforms and audiences
- Understanding the importance of grammar, spelling, and style in journalism.

24 UX (user experience):

- Understanding user needs and preferences in relation to development journalism content
- Creating content that is engaging, easy to navigate, and accessible
- Using data and analytics to improve the user experience

25 Freelancing:

- Understanding the freelance market for development journalism
- Developing a portfolio of work to showcase skills and experience
- Networking with potential clients and building relationships
- Managing finances and contracts as a freelancer

26 Creating content for different platforms:

- Understanding the unique strengths and limitations of different platforms (e.g. print, radio, online)
- Developing skills in adapting content for specific platforms and audiences
- Using multimedia tools to create engaging content across platforms
- Staying up-to-date with platform-specific guidelines and best practices.

- 27 Collaboration on group projects and assignments, which can foster collaboration and interaction.
- 28 Peer teaching and peer review activities.
- 29 Inquiry-based approach, where trainees ask questions, gather and analyze information, and draw their own conclusions.
- 30 Problem-based activities, where trainees are presented with a real-world problem and must use their knowledge and skills to find a solution.
- 31 Field trips to attend events and interview sources.
- 32 Interactive lectures to engage learners should be encouraged.
- 33 Use of online resources such as videos, podcasts, and webinars to supplement in-class learning must be encouraged.
- 34 Regular interactions with experts from the media and communication industry to share their experiences and insights.
- 35 Mock press conferences as an effective way to have trainees practice their communication skills by participating in mock press conferences.
- 36 Media Analysis of different types of media (e.g., news articles, social media posts) to understand how they are constructed and how they influence audiences.
- 37 Media literacy exercises may be used to help trainees critically evaluate media messages and understand the role of media in society.

The Declaration concludes by calling on educators, journalists, researchers, and other stakeholders to work together to advance the field of development journalism and to promote a more just, equipped and equitable world.

(Drafted by Dr Uma Shankar Pandey, Project Director, Press Club, Kolkata-UNICEF project on Development Journalism)

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