CALL FOR APPLICATIONS
Digital storytelling for climate change in Myanmar

A training program on digital storytelling techniques and humanizing scientific facts about climate change and sustainable development in Myanmar

June to December 2020

Locations:
Myanmar (Yangon and potential field trips to provinces)
Languages: Myanmar and English

Mekong Sustainable News Project – Background

Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar are all predominantly rural countries; indeed, in the last three, more people work in the agricultural sector than any other. These four countries are among those that are most affected by climate change, especially in rural areas. They also have to cope with major challenges in terms of air and water pollution, food safety and new pandemics. Faced with these threats, the work carried out by journalists is absolutely critical, as it makes it possible to raise people's awareness and inform them about the issues linked to sustainable development, so that they will be inspired to play their part in making the environmental changes needed in their respective countries. Launched in 2019, the Mekong: Sustainable News project is helping to improve how scientific news topics are being processed in the Mekong region, especially by digital media organisations. It is encouraging journalists to cover environmental subjects in a positive and humane way, by highlighting tangible solutions. Journalists have to act as intermediaries between the scientific community and the general public, so that people can be informed about the most relevant points concerning the key challenges ahead. The project is specifically financed by the Solidarity Fund for Innovative Projects, Civil Societies, French-Speaking Countries and Human Development, which is run by the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs.

Project – Expected results

1. Empower journalists and media creators in order to help them produce quality digital content
2. Increase digital media's journalistic production quality for content related to environment and sustainable development.
3. Create a pool of specialized journalism trainers at the regional level on issues related to sustainable development.
4. Develop a network of scientists, journalists and media content developers to better share knowledge /expertise and create educational and/or accessible content to the public.

Training outline

The training cycle will start this summer in Yangon, Myanmar, and will last until December 2020.

It will gather up to 10-15 participants from Myanmar, committing to attending at least 3 training sessions and being mentored by Data experts, media trainers and scientists and to producing minimum 2 data driven stories for multimedia platforms in Myanmar or English language.
The following topics will be taught during the training sessions:

- Data Journalism and visualization: use data to tell the story
- Measurements of pollutions levels (water, air etc) and their impact on human health
- Disaster Risk Reduction Management
- Environmental governance in the context of the 2020 General elections
- Food safety and environmental health

The topics and time-frame may be subjected to change depending on the circumstances of COVID-19 outbreak in the region and worldwide. CFI and its partners will also adapt the specific topics of the trainings depending on the story ideas pitched by the applicants.

To ensure the quality of the program, CFI is partnering with the leading French organization GRET and the Myanmar Journalism Institute (MJI) to provide journalism training, scientific data and reliable expertise on these topics. Field trips will be organized to allow participants to work on visual stories.

The training will be accompanied by one CFI project staff and at least two trainers specialized in scientific reporting, environmental storytelling and/or data visualization. The training sessions will be followed by individual mentored writing sessions on specific topics selected by the project team together with the participants. During these sessions the participants will have to develop at least two multimedia stories on an environmental related issue, which is in line with the overall and specific objectives and main communication messages of the project. The writing process will be fully supervised and mentored by the project team and experts in form of advice for literature, research methods, statistical data, writing style, etc. The project will apply an innovative approach to teaching with the inclusion of interactive tools on humanizing green growth-related issues by showing to the socio-economic impacts as well as the misconceptions around these issues, using the expertise of French and professionals the Asia-Pacific region working in the field.

Stories will be published on multi-media news outlets in Myanmar, CFI media platforms and other international media platforms if relevant. The 2 participants who will have gained more audience engagement with his/her story will win coaching sessions with media professionals to continue telling stories and develop audience engagement from January to April 2021 as well as invited to join the international scientific conference to be held in Vietnam (5-10 October 2020 in Qhuy Nhon)

**Application process**

Participation in the MEKONG SUSTAINABLE NEWS training cycle is awarded on a competitive basis. All training expenses will be covered by the project and experienced media experts will support the participants in the development of their articles on environment related issues. Thus, it is a unique opportunity to participate to this training.

Eligible candidates have to be citizens from Myanmar with preferably notions of English. They need to have at least one-year digital journalism background and knowledge of environment and sustainable development news. They must be available to participate in the full training cycle from June 2020 to December 2020 (each training will last maximum 4 days). The 2 most successful participants will be invited to join the international scientific conference to be held in Vietnam (5-10 October 2020 in Qhuy
Nhon) as well as coaching sessions with media professionals to continue telling stories and develop audience engagement from January to April 2021.

Selection criteria:

- Experience in digital journalism background and online news production
- Availability to commit to the full training schedule
- Good command of English
- Strong interest in environmental and scientific topics.
- CFI would like to have newsrooms’ commitments to publish stories written by the participants in order to increase their content production on environment and sustainable development.
- Relevance of the topic:
  - Originality of the stories
  - Understanding of the issues at stake
  - Dissemination strategy
  - Gender component within the story
  - Feasibility and Practicality

A good level in English is recommended but not compulsory. Freelance journalists and journalists who already attended training in the framework of the CFI Mekong Sustainable News project in 2019 are strongly encouraged to apply.

Application submission shall include:

- Recent CV including contact information and a short biography (up to 100 words)
- Copies of up to 3 published stories/journalistic pieces related to environment in English or Myanmar language (in most common file format (MS Word – for text articles/blogs, etc; AVI, WMV – for video; PCM, WAV or MP3 – for audio stories. Please, contact the organisers, if there are questions related to the file format)
- Links to officially published narratives/stories related to environment done before 30 March 2020
- Short motivation explaining the wish to participate in the training
- For freelancer and for newsroom staff: letter of interest from the editor in chief about your story’s ideas and pitches.
- A description of at least 1 story including the following elements:
  - Description of the main topic they want to cover (linked to environment and sustainable development in Myanmar) and 2 specific angles about it.
  - Pre-identification of the people they would like to interview
  - Descriptions of existing alternatives to the problem the topic is raising and the role of science in them.
  - Digital components of the story (audio, online writing, infographic, timeline, video etc)
  - Dissemination process of the multimedia story

All materials should preferably be submitted in English language but can also be submitted local language if not possible (except the copies of the articles to be submitted in their original published version).
Only selected participants will be contacted. The organizers reserve the right to contact journalists via email or phone before making the final selection. The training session will be held in English and Myanmar languages. Participation in the trainings is free of charge, meals, training materials and local transportation (if the participants are outside of Yangon) will be covered by CFI.

**Application process**

- Questions on the procedure can be asked to yulwinsoe@gmail.com until 19 June 2020, before 5:00 pm local time.
- Submission of complete applications: 26 June 2020, 6:00 pm local time yulwinsoe@gmail.com and clz@cfi.fr
- Potential consultations with shortlisted candidates: 29 June – 1 July 2020
- Notifications of acceptance: between 1- 8 July, 2020

*Should you have any question, please call Yu Lwin Soe at +95 (0) 9976977850 or contact her by email at yulwinsoe@gmail.com*

**After the program:**

All finished stories will be submitted to a jury that will award the authors of the 3 best stories with equipment and coaching sessions to improve audience engagement and digital storytelling skills. In order to receive a price, the stories will have to be published and disseminated on a local media platform. The participant’s award ceremony will be held in Yangon in 2021.

**Supported by:**

Supported by: In partnership with:

**The Mekong Sustainable News project is implemented by CFI, the French Media Development Agency and supported by the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs.***