Global Grants 2025 - Individual Grantee Reports

Syeda Afsana

Position: Deputy Controller of News

Organisation: Bangladesh Betar

Activity: Diverse Content Formats and social media for targeted audiences

Location: Radio Television Malaysia (RTM)

Date: 20 – 22 May 2025

Visiting RTM in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Objectives

My main objective was to acquire knowledge so as to know how content is made especially for social media and how they spread across different broadcasting platforms.

I wanted to gather knowledge on RTM's planning strategies for social media. I hope it will aid me in building my project titled *'Social Media Strategic Program Development'.*

Based on the knowledge gathered from RTM I also wanted to develop my project on a short-, medium- and long-term basis with the ultimate goal of building a strong social media wing. In the short term the planning will focus on training and infrastructure development. In the medium term the focus will be on content creation, staff training and use of social media in various formats. In the long term the planning will suggest a social media policy where among others; ethics, law and audience research forms a harmony between the government and stakeholders.

Supported by the Grace Wyndham Goldie [BBC] Trust Fund

Syeda at the current affairs news department at Radio Television Malaysia. Credit: Syeda Afsana

Experience

My objective was to visit RTM to observe how they are creating content for diverse populations and incorporate the understanding in my policy titled: *Social Media Strategic Program Development.*

My experience from the visit is enabling me to better understand how a world-renowned media house works and how it is transforming itself to better suit the need of its citizens. I have gained knowledge about the use of an automation system that has many options regarding content management. This can be considered as a best practice because news, programs and social media platforms have access to this software which reduces time and ensures efficiency.

Bangladesh Betar has audiences of various backgrounds. RTM also deals with audiences from various backgrounds and languages. Thus, their content creations are target oriented with strong demonstration of creativity by incorporation of local, national and international importance which is similar to Bangladesh Betar. This fulfils my objective and desire to learn from content management and social media use. RTM has recently shared content among its television, radio and social media platforms. In order to collect content, they heavily depend on reporters who get information from every corner of Malaysia. The terms and conditions for the appointment process of reporters are smart and very much effective. This system if implemented in Bangladesh Betar will be very effective.

In terms of professional development, I thoroughly enjoyed my tour. I feel inspired by RTM's professionalism and dedication to work. I will try to incorporate ideas such as the use of a software and reporter appointment process in my project titled: *Social Media Strategic Program Development.* My interaction with officials of RTM was very cordial. I could connect with their subjects and mode of operations as the two countries share similarities in people's choice and culture.

I went through different sections of the newsroom, observed on-air television shows and radio broadcasts, seen how social media content is being made, the supervision activities of officials, work of reporters and editors, to finally wrapping up my visit with learning about the archiving system of RTM. The most interesting thing that I learned is the use of a software that involves content collection, editing, news reading and archiving. I was able to capture what I needed to fulfil my objectives, but if the tour was more than three days, I would have been able to get a deeper understanding of RTM's working methods.

I would incorporate the reporter management and software part in my project titled: *Social Media Strategic Program Development*. It will enable Bangladesh Betar to attain efficiency by lowering cost, better time management and wider reach to the diverse community. I would like to consider the working process of RTM as a best practice and incorporate some parts of it in my project. My experience with RTM will improve my career in several ways. Firstly, I can now confidently incorporate new ideas in my project as I now know how they work. Secondly, RTM sets itself as a best practice model for me due to the same type of content management. Thirdly, as a mid-level official I am often responsible to set policies for new media, and this visit has enlightened me in this regard.

Sustainable development goals incorporate many aspects, some of them are poverty reduction, education, women empowerment, sanitation etc. Bangladesh Betar already produces all kinds of content that cover all sides of SDGs. Therefore, my knowledge on better management and creation of content from RTM will upgrade the existing work of SDG.

During my visit to RTM we shared knowledge on content creation and management and reporter appointment techniques. The sessions were held with senior officials of TV, Radio and current affairs. Both sides shared subjects of mutual interest such as working environment and management.

Meeting with Dr. Haida binti Baba Zain, Deputy Director for TV News. Credit: Syeda Afsana

Conclusion

My visit to RTM was an eye opener for me. The institution from 2018 has indulged itself in a new journey with better infrastructure and human resource management. I found an integrated software system that incorporates all content and editing which is saving time, money and manpower.

In the short term I will incorporate the idea of a software and reporter management system in my project and disseminate information with my fellow colleagues.

In the long run I hope to get involved in developing a new media policy which will incorporate infrastructure development for better content making and better working environment.

I am immensely grateful to my authority and RTM for their help towards me successfully carrying out my visit with this grant opportunity. I especially like to thank RTM officials for elaborately explaining their activities amid their very busy schedule.