**REPORT**

**on the activities of the Public Foundation for Support and Development of National Mass Media during 2023**

The Public Foundation for Support and Development of National Mass Media was established in November 2019 by a group of proactive journalists and bloggers to develop the media sector, provide material support, and uphold the rights of media community representatives in Uzbekistan. Since its registration, the Foundation has undertaken significant work to create equal conditions for mass media in the media market, promote their further development, and ensure the rights of journalists and bloggers.

The main sources of the Foundation's financial resources in 2023 were charitable contributions from local organisations. In total, **7,096.7 million sums** were credited to its account.

These funds were directed towards ensuring the implementation of the Foundation's statutory objectives in areas such as the development of national mass media and comprehensive support for media outlets, journalists, and bloggers.

Throughout 2023, the Mass Media Foundation held a series of seminars and trainings aimed at developing the media sphere in Uzbekistan. In particular:

– On March 7, jointly with the World Bank Office in Uzbekistan and the Public Association of Disabled People of Tashkent City, Sharoit+, a seminar was organised to improve the communication skills of journalists and bloggers on inclusion issues. About 30 journalists, bloggers, and journalism students participated in the event. Specialists from the World Bank, Sharoit+, and invited experts familiarised the participants with disability-related terminology and methodologies for preparing inclusive content materials.

– On May 23, in collaboration with Hudson Sandler, a British strategic communications and ESG consulting company, seminars and trainings were held for media specialists, focusing on the perception of Uzbekistan by international media and strategies for building corporate reputation.

– On July 10, the Foundation, together with the OSCE Coordinator in Uzbekistan, held a round table on the topic "Freedom of Mass Media in the Era of Digitalisation". Participants analysed the possibilities of applying artificial intelligence in journalism and the associated risks.

– On August 17, in partnership with the Embassy of France, a seminar dedicated to effective media management was held, featuring renowned French journalist, chief editor of France 24, and director of Académie France Médias Monde, Antoine Cormery. The seminar gathered over 100 participants from various media fields: journalists, bloggers, and other experts. Participants gained knowledge about modern approaches to media management and practical skills.

– On August 23, together with the University of Journalism and Mass Communications, the Foundation held a seminar for students and lecturers on the topic "The Impact of New Technologies on Communications and Information Dissemination". The speaker was George Chen, former Managing Director of Public Policy for Greater China, Mongolia, and Central Asia for Meta, an experienced journalist and professor at Hong Kong University.

– On August 25, a seminar was held at the Foundation's office dedicated to social network technologies, their influence on the capabilities of content creators and journalists, and methods for increasing reach and enhancing user engagement.

– In September, within the framework of the "Strengthening the Judicial System" project implemented by the Supreme Court and USAID, the Foundation acted as a co-organiser of a three-day training for media representatives. This training aimed to enhance the professional literacy of journalists when covering topics related to judicial proceedings, including issues of ethics and responsibility in creating content dedicated to violence.

– On October 27, during Global Media and Information Literacy Week, the Foundation and the Embassy of France held another seminar-training dedicated to journalistic ethics in crisis situations. The speaker was correspondent, senior reporter, and presenter on France 24, Elena Voloshina.

– On November 17, in collaboration with the Project Co-ordinator of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Uzbekistan, a round table was held on the topic of gender-sensitive journalism, focusing on online harassment and violence against women journalists.

In 2023, the Mass Media Foundation successfully implemented a number of projects aimed at supporting gender equality and combating domestic violence in Uzbekistan. In particular, the Foundation developed and on February 28 presented to journalists, bloggers, and the general public a guide on covering content from a gender-sensitive perspective in the media. This guide was created based on recommendations from international institutions and is intended to provide effective assistance to editorial staff and individual media representatives to strengthen the fight against gender-based violence.

– On March 29, in collaboration with the Ministry of Transport, the Foundation launched the social advertisement "Violence Is Not Part of Our Culture", which was placed in stations of the capital's metro. The advertising banners were stylised as an equaliser made from ornaments of Uzbek ikat. The equaliser symbolised sound waves—the voices of women, victims of violence, calling for help. The banners contained QR codes through which detailed practical information on assistance in cases of violence could be obtained. For the design of the social advertisement, the project was awarded a prize at the international competition Jolbors-2023.

– On May 24, a methodological manual titled "Answers to 100 Topical Questions about the Mass Media Sphere for Enhancing Legal Literacy of Journalists and Bloggers" was presented. The project was implemented with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and aimed at improving the legal qualifications of journalists and bloggers so they can competently represent and protect their rights and legitimate interests.

In 2023, the Public Foundation for Support and Development of National Mass Media actively participated in various events and activities concerning important public and international initiatives. On June 21, the Foundation took part in the celebration of the 105th anniversary of the newspaper "Oʻzbekiston Ovozi", presenting valuable gifts to the veterans of the publication.

– On September 11, the Minister of Energy of the Republic of Uzbekistan, J. Mirzamakhmudov, held a press conference at the Foundation's office, where the topic of liberalising prices for natural gas and electricity for legal entities was discussed.

– On November 15, in Tashkent, the Foundation, together with the Embassy of the UAE and the Ministry of Ecology of Uzbekistan, organised a briefing dedicated to the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 28). Data on the government's work in the environmental sphere were presented, and the main theses of the republic's participation in COP 28 were discussed.

Throughout 2023, the Mass Media Foundation initiated about 15 meetings and negotiations with various foreign partners, experts, and representatives of the media industry. In particular.

– On March 4, a meeting was held with students of Webster University, where issues of freedom of speech and the media in Uzbekistan were discussed.

– On May 22, representatives of the Foundation met with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Canada, discussing issues of media literacy and gender equality.

– On June 15, a meeting was held with representatives of UN Women, where issues of gender-sensitive journalism and the elimination of harmful social norms were considered.

– On June 21, issues of gender equality were discussed with representatives of the OSCE.

– On June 26, the Chairwoman of the Foundation's Board of Trustees, Nozima Davletova, spoke in Washington at a round table on preventing domestic violence in Uzbekistan.

– On July 6–7, the Director of the Foundation, Akramjon Fozilov, participated in the Central Asian Media Conference in Bishkek.

– On July 18, the project of the Information Code was discussed with UNESCO advisors.

– On October 4–5, the Director of the Foundation delivered a report at the plenary sessions of the Human Dimension Conference held in Warsaw, Poland. His speech was dedicated to the current state of media freedom in the country and the activities of the Foundation.

– On November 15, the leadership of the Foundation held a meeting with a delegation of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, headed by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Teresa Ribeiro. The main topic of discussion was the project of the Information Code, which is being developed under the leadership of the Agency of Information and Mass Communications. The steps already taken in this direction and measures needed to make the Code a functional document were analysed. The parties also discussed recent changes in the media sphere and touched upon issues related to the work of journalists in Uzbekistan and the prevention of obstacles in their professional activities.

The Mass Media Foundation actively advocated in defence of journalists facing pressure in the course of their professional activities and actions limiting freedom of speech in Uzbekistan. For example:

– On January 1, the Foundation welcomed the court's decision to overturn the detention of journalist Lolagul Kallikhanova, emphasising the importance of fair treatment of media representatives.

– On August 15, the Foundation condemned violence against journalists of Zo‘r TV and called for an investigation and punishment of the perpetrators, expressing support for journalists who honestly fulfil their mission.

– On October 6, the Foundation expressed concern over threats and insults directed at journalist Violetta Mustafina of Repost.uz, insisting on legal responsibility for such actions and stressing the need to protect press freedom and the safety of journalists.

–On December 11–12, the Public Foundation for Support and Development of National Mass Media, with the assistance of the State Museum of Memory of Victims of Repression under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and the Organisation of Turkic States, held a two-day International Scientific Conference on the topic "Jadids: Ideas of National Identity, Independence, and Statehood" in Tashkent. The main purpose of this conference was to commemorate the memory and legacy of representatives of the Jadidism movement in Turkestan and to popularise their ideas among the youth. The conference brought together prominent scholars and experts from various countries, including Azerbaijan, Germany, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Netherlands, Turkey, the USA, Japan, and others. An open panel session for a wide audience was also organised. Within the framework of the conference, a large-scale exposition "Corridor of Memory" dedicated to the Jadidism movement in Turkestan was presented

The report on the activities of the Public Foundation for Support and Development of National Mass Media for 2023 was discussed by the members of the Board of Trustees. They noted that during the reporting period, the Foundation managed to make a significant contribution not only to the support and development of the media sphere in Uzbekistan but also to increasing the interest of youth in science, education, and the study of history.