

Breaking Down Barriers to Health Services in South-East Asia; a reporting programme for young journalists

Call for Applications

Course Dates: 10th – 14th June 2024, 9:00-16:00 local time
Course Location: In-person, Bangkok - Thailand
Application deadline: 23:59 GMT, Sunday 28th April 2024

[APPLY HERE](#)

Are you a young journalist or media contributor, working in Thailand, Indonesia or the Philippines, with an interest in driving social change? If you are, this exciting new training programme may be for you!



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Too often, the people most vulnerable to disease are those who have the least access to health services. This can be due to stigma, discrimination, gender inequality and/or harmful laws and policies, including criminalisation. Since 2017, through its *Breaking Down Barriers* initiative, the Global Fund has been investing in programmes to remove such barriers, so everyone can access the health services they need.

To be successful, breaking down human rights-related barriers to health services demands that marginalised, vulnerable and criminalised groups – such as gay men and other men who have sex with men, transgender people, sex workers, people who use drugs, migrants and mobile populations, young people, persons with disabilities and prisoners – have a voice. Raising awareness of the impact of stigma and discriminatory laws and policies which leads to unequal access to health services is key to shifting attitudes. It is also crucial in explaining the links and implications for public health in wider society. As such, the role of the media, communities and civil society organisations working on these issues is integral – giving a platform to those who need it most and challenging legal frameworks where they are shown to be unjust.

This June, Thomson Reuters Foundation (TRF) and the Global Fund are launching a new dual track training course for journalists and civil society organisations (CSOs) based in Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines - *Breaking Down Barriers to Health Services in South-East Asia*. The five-day in-person course is the first of a series of engagement opportunities provided through the programme, which will support journalists to report on human rights-related barriers to health services with accuracy and authority, and simultaneously support CSOs to raise awareness of their work to remove these barriers through enhanced communication and media engagement skills.

The initial 5-day course will be delivered through TRF's *Dual Track* approach; journalists and representatives of CSOs will take part in simultaneous training courses (tracks) led by our leading team of trainers. At strategic moments during the five days, and through subsequent programme engagements, the two tracks will come together for joint sessions to facilitate mutual learning and networking. This approach has proven highly successful in strengthening collaboration between the media and civil society.

For more information on the programme and how to apply, please see below.

1. Background

Since 2019, [The Global Fund and Thomson Reuters Foundation \(TRF\)](#) have been working together to amplify the voices of marginalised groups as they demand equitable access to health services. Despite the progress made, changing discriminatory laws and policies and eliminating stigma remain formidable challenges. Building on the partnership with TRF, the Global Fund is now seeking to enhance and support the vital role played by youth and young leaders in improving human rights, gender equality and equity in health services for the most vulnerable in society.

Between 2024 and 2026, TRF and the Global Fund will support young civil society leaders and journalists based in countries covered by the Global Fund's *Breaking Down Barriers* initiative who aspire to a step change in public narratives on human rights, and to build more just and equal societies. TRF and the Global Fund see the media and civil society as playing crucial roles in this critical work:

The role of journalists

Journalists have a vital and powerful role to play in addressing barriers to health services for marginalised groups by raising awareness of disparities, conducting investigative reporting to uncover systemic issues, highlighting successful solutions, and informing the public. Through high-quality and accurate reporting journalists can inform public perception and policy direction, and ultimately drive positive change towards equitable access to health services for all.

The role of communities and civil society organisations

Working on the frontlines of social change, communities and civil society organisations (CSOs) are crucial partners in advocating for marginalised and vulnerable groups, providing services, and mobilising communities. Through their direct work with marginalised and vulnerable people, CSOs often have deep knowledge of their needs, and expertise in empowering these communities to

demand better health services. CSOs conduct research, raise awareness about health disparities, and lobby governments and other stakeholders for policy change to promote equitable access to health services. By amplifying the voices of marginalised groups and advocating for their rights, CSOs contribute significantly to efforts to improve health outcomes for all members of society.

2. The Programme

This new programme offers long-term, targeted support to young journalists and young civil society leaders to drive real change in attitudes, practices, and policy. Programme participants will have the opportunity to progress through the following programme stages:

1. Onboarding onto the programme through one-to-one conversations with TRF and/or Global Fund staff.
2. Participation in TRF's innovative dual-track training course in Bangkok, Thailand, 10-14th June 2024.
3. The opportunity to access direct one-to-one mentorship. For journalists this will involve working directly with a TRF mentor to develop and publish (or broadcast) an original journalistic work. For CSOs this will involve working directly with a TRF mentor to pursue an agreed communications objective. Places on the mentoring scheme will be awarded through a competitive proposal review process, and proposals must focus on the topic of human rights and health services. Small grants will be awarded to applicants whose proposals are successful.
4. The opportunity to access legal support. For journalists, legal support will be made available through the Legal Network for Journalists at Risk (LNJAR) platform. For CSOs support will be available through signing up to TRF's TrustLaw network – the world's largest pro-bono legal service. Through TrustLaw, TRF will support CSOs to harness the pro bono expertise of lawyers in the TrustLaw network to support research and capacity-building needs.
5. Participation in an alumni network of young journalists and young activists. Alumni will have opportunities to come together at key milestones over the 2.5 years of the wider programme (2024-2026). These opportunities will include alumni events and days of particular relevance, such as World AIDS Day.
6. Access further support opportunities – be it further training, TrustLaw support, or one-to-one mentorship opportunities

3. Expected Programme Outcomes

Through the initial training course and subsequent engagement in the 2024-2025 programme participants will build their skills in journalism and communication. On completion of the programme, participants are expected to have greater understanding of best practices, and increased confidence and motivation with regards reporting or communicating on human rights issues relating to health services. Participants will also understand how to access legal support through the TRF TrustLaw network.

Journalists are expected to have acquired the tools and know-how to report confidently and convincingly on human rights related barriers to health services and why the topic is important. They will also be able to articulate solutions to overcoming these barriers – particularly for marginalised and vulnerable groups – and better understand the work undertaken by their CSO counterparts. Crucially, journalists will understand the Reuters Principles of journalism, the importance of accuracy and fairness in media reporting on the human rights of marginalised people, and how to engage meaningfully with those from civil society operating in this space.

The longer-term programme will provide course alumni with opportunities to engage in follow-up activities, including joint sessions to foster journalist-CSO interaction. TRF and the Global Fund see this long-term approach as fundamental to fostering a productive network of CSOs and journalists equipped with the tools and knowledge to explain how efforts to reduce human rights-related barriers to health services must be an integral part of efforts to improve the health of everyone in society.

4. The Dual-Track Training Course

Participation in the Dual-Track Training course is the second stage of the programme, and requires your participation in-person from 10th to 14th June 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Training Course Format:

Course Dates: Monday 10th – Friday 14th June 2024 (in person)

Course Location: Bangkok, Thailand

- The five-day course will be delivered through a blend of in-person modules, practical group work, guest sessions with subject-matter experts, exercises and individual assignments.
- The journalism and CSO training tracks will proceed in separate training rooms, with joint sessions built into the agenda to bring the two tracks together. These joint sessions will offer opportunities for practicing skills with professional peers, learning more about one another's work, and networking.
- The training will be run in English.
- Journalist participants are also strongly encouraged to come with a story idea that they can develop as the course proceeds.
- Journalist participants will have the opportunity to interview their CSO counterparts in practical joint exercises.

Following the course, journalist participants will have an opportunity to pitch a story idea to be selected for TRF's mentoring scheme. The scheme will provide successful participants with a story grant and one-to-one mentoring with a TRF trainer to support the development and publication of the story.

Training Course costs:

The following costs associated with participating in the course will be covered by TRF and the Global Fund:

- International and domestic flights (economy class)
- Visa costs, if applicable
- Accommodation for the duration of the course
- Other local transportation to/from course venue, including airport transfers
- Meals and refreshments and/or a daily per-diem to cover meals not provided during course hours.

TRF and the Global Fund will consider reimbursement of other reasonable costs which participants may expect to incur to enable participation in the training course. Costs outside of those listed above must be discussed and agreed with TRF in advance of the course.

Training Course Principles:

The course is designed to be practical and interactive, and participants will work on real-world issues they face in their work, as well as hypothetical scenarios. Although trainer-led, participants will be expected to contribute to discussions, and to share insights from their own experience. Participant assignments as part of the course will be reviewed and discussed by the group as a whole and the TRF training team.

We emphasise that the training space is a safe environment, and that respect and fairness are crucial.

TRF and the Global Fund expect:

- Participants to provide respectful, constructive, and meaningful contributions during and after the course.
- Journalists and civil society participants to forge networks and identify issues for appropriate reporting and content generation.
- All participants to engage with one another, share knowledge and experience of their work and examples of how they may have overcome challenges.
- Ongoing and active engagement in activities as described above.

Participants should expect to abide by the above principles throughout their engagement in both the training course and the longer-term programme.

5. Application Process and Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility – Journalists:

To be eligible to participate in this programme journalist applicants must be:

- Full-time journalists or active regular contributors to a media publication or social media platform.
- Working and publishing (or broadcasting) in the Philippines, Thailand or Indonesia.
- Able to demonstrate at least three years of professional experience, whether working as a journalist for a media organisation, creating content for a social media platform, or another form of journalistic activity.
- Experienced in reporting on human rights and/or public health issues, or able to show a demonstrable interest in such reporting.
- 30 years of age or younger at the time of applying.
- Able to publish an original piece of journalism on the theme of human rights and access to health services.
- Fluent in English.
- Hold a valid passport and be able to travel to Bangkok, Thailand, for the course dates shown.

Application requirements:

To apply, please complete an application form using the application link below. The application form must be completed in full for your application to be considered. Before you start your application, please be prepared to share the following required information:

- An up-to-date CV showing your current role(s).
- A short response to each of the following four questions (word limits apply):
 - How do you expect to benefit from this programme and how do you plan to use what you learn in your work? (max 500 words)
 - From your experience or observation, please share an example of a human rights-related barrier to health faced by young people, and the impact this barrier has on access to health services and/or health outcomes? Examples of human rights-related barriers to health include:
 - Criminalisation, punitive laws and policies
 - Stigma and discrimination in community, healthcare, workplace, education, and justice settings
 - Harmful gender norms, gender-based discrimination and violence
 - Discriminatory law enforcement practices
 - Discriminatory healthcare provision
 - Lack of legal literacy and access to justice
 - Lack of youth empowerment and meaningful engagement in advocacy for human rights
 - What, in your view, is the role of young people in tackling human rights-related barriers to health, especially in relation to HIV, TB, and malaria?
- Should your application be successful, you will be required to provide a letter from your editor, or an appropriate manager, in support of your participation, and confirming your availability to travel and participate in the five-day training course. As far as possible the letter should also include in-principle support for your subsequent engagement in future opportunities offered as part of the programme.

 [APPLY HERE](#)

Please note: There are limited spaces available for this programme. All applications will be considered on merit.

If you have any difficulties applying, please email belen.becerra@thomsonreuters.com or chris.ford@thomsonreuters.com