



Internews in collaboration
with the World Economic Forum

Amplifying Women's Voice in the News

United for News is working to increase the extent to which newsrooms around the world source female experts. By amplifying women's authoritative voice, United for News seeks to break down gender stereotypes, empower women and girls, and build greater trust for media through inclusion.

Breaking Down Barriers & Building Trust

The Global Media Monitoring Project's 2015 *Who Makes the News* study reveals that only 24% of people heard, seen or read about in the media are women and only 19% of experts sourced in news stories are women. These rates have changed little in two decades.

Media has the power to both reinforce and diminish traditional gender roles and stereotypes. News and stories that portray men as protagonists and women as peripheral characters, dependents, victims or simply leave them out, perpetuate social and economic inequalities. Alternatively, news and stories that position women as successful leaders, inspired thinkers and independent adventurers create a culture of empowerment for women and girls.

Edelman's 2018 Trust Barometer reveals that the media industry is now the least trusted institution and that there is widespread skepticism around news organizations and news reporting. While there are many factors needed to restore trust, one key, addressable element is ensuring that news and information reflect the communities they serve. Around the world, women represent one of the largest groups left out.

To build trust and foster equality, United for News will amplify women's authoritative voice by increasing the number of female subject matter experts sourced in news around the world.

Coalition Members



News Integrity
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50:50
PROJECT

NEWS GAIN



Our Approach

The factors working against women's voices in media are complex and include local culture, newsroom intransigence, scarcity in access to experts, and women's own discomfort with the media. United for News recognizes that solving for these challenges is not wholly up to newsrooms but requires the intervention and coordination of a variety of stakeholders across industries.

Building on the work of our multi-stakeholder coalition, United for News will capture best practices and offer targeted assistance to newsrooms, to address both the demand and supply side elements necessary to build a robust pipeline of highly qualified female subject matter experts. On the demand side this includes resources that allow media to analyze and adapt their processes for recruiting sources, track the gender split of sources, and set customized and achievable goals towards parity. On the supply side, it means facilitating access to locally relevant female experts and providing media training for women so that they are ready to be interviewed by local and national media.

A taskforce of United for News members will share industry resources to execute this work.

Bloomberg advises the work with best practices developed through their New Voices program, an internal initiative to increase the extent to which Bloomberg newsrooms source

diverse experts; Edelman lends key communication support and knowledge from their Global Women's Executive Network; the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers' (WAN IFRA) Women in News program provides guidance for newsroom engagement; the 50:50 Project is sharing their methodology for benchmarking and tracking the gender of news sources in content; The Forum for Media Development (GFMD) lends support through their global Women in Media Working Group and Internews is helping to pilot the approach in countries around the world, leveraging their global network of media development programs.



The initiative includes three core elements:

Advocacy: United for News will raise awareness about this important issue across industries and encourage newsrooms to increase the extent that they source female subject matter experts in their news stories.

Throughout 2019, beginning with a panel session at the World Economic Forum Davos meeting in January, United for News will convene cross-industry conversations, engaging newsrooms and private industry on this important issue. Coalition members will share their experience and key learnings, helping make the case that the amplification of women's voices is a core business priority.

Sharing Best Practices: United for News coalition partners are deeply engaged in amplifying women's voices within their own organizations. We will capture best practices and resources from their work and make them available to newsrooms globally.

United for News will produce a handbook to serve as a guide to newsrooms around the world. This handbook will offer practical approaches newsrooms can use to implement policies and procedures which will allow them to source more female experts, addressing both the demand and supply side challenges.

Newsroom Engagement: Putting the handbook into action, United for News will design and run targeted programs in diverse countries around the world to help newsrooms quote more female subject matter experts.

To build out best practices applicable to a variety of social and market conditions, the pilot countries selected will represent distinct regions and income levels. Each country program will be customized to respond to unique market challenges and opportunities.

Pilot Projects – Core Elements

Best Practices

With advisement from Bloomberg, the 50:50 Project and WAN IFRA, United for News will share successful newsroom policies to effect change, such as instructions for conducting a source supply chain analysis, guidelines for setting achievable goals and strategies to hold news teams accountable.

Tracking Tools

With advisement and training from Bloomberg and the 50:50 Project, United for News will share tracking methodologies, guidelines for implementation and information on where to access tools and resources.

Access to Experts

Where needed, United for News will facilitate access to female experts. Depending on the pilot country, this may involve aggregating existing expert lists, working with local partners to build-out an expert database, and setting up hotlines with organizations that can help locate sources.

Media Training

Recognizing that women often decline invitations to be interviewed due to lack of experience with media, United for News will establish media training for women identified as in-demand by our participating newsrooms.



About United for News

United for News is a non-profit, mission-driven initiative founded by Internews in collaboration with the World Economic Forum. We are a diverse coalition of stakeholders from across the media and advertising industries with a shared vision of a world where everyone, everywhere has access to the trusted information they need to make good decisions for themselves, hold their governments to account, and achieve their human potential. The charter partners selected to join the coalition bring the wide-ranging resources and capabilities required to help achieve this ambitious program.

The successful development of the United for News program to increase female subject matter expert sourced in media requires a range of resources that very few other initiatives or projects can claim. The varied expertise of the coalition itself, from deep knowledge of local media markets to sophisticated engagement and content tracking methodologies, is a core strength. The coordination of the group's disparate contributions has already proved successful through the initiative design phase.