

# North Africa meets South East Asia in Media Professional Programme

Media executives from Cambodia, Egypt, Libya, Myanmar and Vietnam got together for the WAN-IFRA Media Professionals Programme year-end event in Kuala Lumpur last week for sessions on leadership and management, how to develop a solid media business and women in leadership.

The Media Professionals Programme, which launched earlier this year with two parallel programmes in South East Asia and the Middle East & North Africa, aims to contribute to the growth of strong local media enterprises in developing markets. The participants from the two programmes met in Kuala Lumpur to exchange their experiences and discuss common issues in their respective media markets.

"It was fascinating to see how many issues the participants from the two regions have in common, both in their daily work and in a larger media context," said Kajsa Törnroth, strategic advisor for the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA).

"They all face challenges, and meeting and exchanging with peers gave them the opportunity to get hands-on advice from each other and realise that they are not alone in their efforts to develop independent high-quality media in politically and economically volatile markets."

The Media Professionals Programmes provides mid-level media professionals from the commercial and editorial side of newspapers and online media with personalised, high-impact leadership development opportunities. It equips them with sustainable strategies, skills and support networks to advance their careers and contribute to the growth of financially viable and editorially strong media enterprises in the region.

"The sessions we had throughout the programme were critical as they allowed me to disengage from my daily routine and put emphasis on areas that I normally don't have time to consider," said Fatemah Farag, director of Welad Elbalad Media Services Ltd in Egypt, one of the participants.

"Getting input from other people who are doing similar things gives you additional context and makes it a richer experience."

"Furthermore, attending WAN-IFRA events and learning about the international setting of the business is something we never get exposed to, which is mind-blowing. To get that exposure to international trends and the movers and shakers gives a lot of new ideas, and has also been a great networking opportunity," she said.

The meeting was held during WAN-IFRA's Digital Media Asia conference, a conference on new media.