



МЕДИАОБРАЗОВАНИЕ VS. КРИЗИС MEDIA EDUCATION VS. CRISIS

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Building media literacy in Indonesia with the support of international organizations

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Abstract. With the development of social media and the ease of information dissemination, fake news is becoming a serious problem. The role of media literacy as an antidote to misinformation has been widely studied around the world. In this regard, international organizations such as UNESCO and ASEAN, are helping Asian countries to fight fake news by creating conditions for improving media literacy. The work of these organizations in Indonesia is studied. The qualitative methods of analysis were used. By comparing the two approaches, recommendations were made for other Asian countries to optimize their media literacy efforts. The results showed that UNESCO and ASEAN are working effectively with the target groups in Indonesia. UNESCO has been active in promoting critical thinking among the public and working with local media companies, while ASEAN has focused on regional cooperation and developing comprehensive educational programs. Overall, a systematic and multifaceted approach is needed to raise the level of media literacy in the Asian region, which includes new educational programs, strengthening of legal regulation in the field of false information dissemination, cooperation between the government, media companies and the public, development of critical thinking among the population and increased activity of international organizations.

Keywords: digital literacy, UNESCO, ASEAN, misinformation, educational programs, Asian countries

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Повышение медиаграмотности в Индонезии при поддержке международных организаций

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Аннотация. С развитием социальных медиа и легкостью распространения информации фейковые новости становятся серьезной проблемой. В мире широко изучается роль медиаграмотности как антидота дезинформации. В связи с этим международные организации, такие как ЮНЕСКО и АСЕАН, помогают азиатским странам бороться с фейками, создавая условия для повышения уровня медиаграмотности. Исследование посвящено изучению работ этих организаций в Индонезии. Применялись качественные методы анализа. Сравнение двух подходов позволило сформулировать рекомендации по оптимизации работы в сфере повышения медиаграмотности для других азиатских стран. Полученные результаты показали, что ЮНЕСКО и АСЕАН эффективно взаимодействуют с целевыми группами в Индонезии. ЮНЕСКО ведет активную работу по повышению уровня критического мышления у населения и взаимодействию с местными медиакомпаниями, АСЕАН фокусируется на региональном сотрудничестве и разработке комплексных образовательных программ. В целом для повышения уровня медиаграмотности населения в азиатском регионе необходим системный и многосторонний подход, который включает новые образовательные программы, усиление правового регулирования в области распространения ложной информации, взаимодействия в этом направлении государства, медиакомпаний и общественности, развитие критического мышления у населения и повышение активности международных организаций.

Ключевые слова: цифровая грамотность, ЮНЕСКО, АСЕАН, образовательные программы, азиатские страны, дезинформация

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Introduction

Media literacy is “the knowledge, competencies and life skills needed to participate in contemporary society through accessing, analysing, evaluating and creating media messages in a wide variety of forms” (Hobbs, 2010). In today's world and in this digital age, where information is readily available through various sources, individuals need to be media literate to distinguish between credible and non-credible sources and identify fake news and disinformation.

According to research conducted by Forsman (2020), media literacy is believed to be strong as an antidote to the dangers of media concerning the younger generation. Through education, media literacy helps individuals recognize and

evaluate the credibility of information and its sources (Lessenski, 2022). Learning to assess news stories critically allows people to differentiate between genuine and fabricated news. For example, a media-literate individual would check the source of a news article, examine the author's credentials, and look for corroborating evidence from other sources.

The importance of media literacy in suppressing the spread of fake news and disinformation has become a concern in several countries (Knuutila et al., 2022), including Indonesia. Several countries have successfully implemented a media literacy framework and reduced the amount of disinformation, but several countries still need help increasing their media literacy level. However, a matter of media literacy to combat fake news and disinformation concerns countries and attracts international organizations. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO) is one example, which has worked with several Asian countries to promote media literacy and combat disinformation. In addition, The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a regional organization committed to promoting economic and social development in Southeast Asia, has also been active in promoting media literacy and combating disinformation in the region.

This study examines the programs and frameworks these two international organizations carried out to strengthen media literacy in Asian countries, with the study case of Indonesia. It is important to conduct research on this matter for several reasons. The first reason is the lack of media literacy in Indonesia, the country has a large population, and its media landscape is diverse and complex. However, studies have shown a significant lack of media literacy among the general population, which can lead to the spread of misinformation and fake news. This research will help identify the reasons for this lack of media literacy. The second reason is related to the role of international organizations in promoting media literacy in various countries worldwide. However, their role and impact in promoting media literacy in Indonesia are not well understood. This research can help identify the specific actions taken by international organizations in Indonesia and their effectiveness.

Overall, conducting research on the important role of international organizations in promoting media literacy in Indonesia can help improve our understanding of the current situation, identify specific challenges, and explore effective solutions to promote media literacy in the country and also expected to be a reference for other Asian countries to improve their efforts in fighting fake news and disinformation with media literacy.

Research method

Per the purpose of our research, this study will use qualitative and comparison methods. The qualitative method is carried out on an object of a research: a program and framework by international organizations (in this study, UNESCO and ASEAN) in promoting media literacy in Indonesia. This study examines two different frameworks from two international organizations.

The data sources we take from these methods come from programs and frameworks published by international organizations. This paper will analyze six aspects we will use as a comparison tool for the two programs of UNESCO and ASEAN. The six aspects are represented in the Table 1.

Table 1

Six aspects as tool of comparison

Aspects	Description
Funding	The programs' funding sources may vary and could potentially originate from the association itself, non-governmental organizations, or various countries
Target audiences	The target audience for the program may include a diverse range of groups such as teachers, students, journalists, and the elderly
Types of activities	The program may encompass various types of activities, including but not limited to educational initiatives, legislative endeavours, structural or scientific events, and research programs
Specific actions	The outcome and realization of the programs
Cooperation with locals	In what manner does the program establish a connection with the local population, which may involve collaborative efforts with media corporations, administrative authorities, and other related entities
Media used	What forms of media are employed to promote or disseminate the program, which may encompass various platforms such as websites, social media pages, and journals

From this data collection, we will thoroughly compare each media literacy program and framework from each international organization and hopefully produce the best recommendations for other Asian countries to improve their media literacy levels.

Results

This chapter we divided into three parts; the first part discusses the media literacy framework and programs from UNESCO to promote media literacy in Indonesia. The second part concerns the media literacy framework and program initiatives by ASEAN. In the last part, we will compare each media literacy framework and provide recommendations.

UNESCO media literacy framework

UNESCO has developed a comprehensive media literacy framework to help people in Asian countries navigate the complex media landscape. UNESCO has provided technical assistance and support to governments and civil society organizations in countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, Japan, Laos, Myanmar, and other Asian countries to improve media literacy and counter disinformation¹.

UNESCO usually finances programs to promote media literacy in the Region through UNESCO's International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC). In several programs, UNESCO and other countries jointly fund several media literacy programs, one of which is a safety training workshop organized by the Indonesian Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI). The program, part of the 2017 World Press Freedom Day series held in Indonesia, is sponsored by UNESCO and Norway². In the same program, UNESCO and a US-based non-

¹ Kajimoto, M., Kularb, P., Guntarto, B., Salleh, S.M., Tuazon, R.R., Torres, T.P.S., & Falcone, G.M.C. (2020). *Media and information literacy education in Asia: Exploration of policies and practices in Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines*. UNESCO. Retrieved March 1, 2023, from <https://gcedclearinghouse.org/sites/default/files/resources/200725eng.pdf>

² *World Press Freedom Day 2017 highlights the protection of journalists*. (2017, March 17). UNESCO. Retrieved March 1, 2023, from <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/world-press-freedom-day-2017-highlights-protection-journalists>

governmental organization (NGO), IREX, financed a safety workshop focusing on the organization's concept of integrated safety that combines physical, digital, and psychosocial safety.

UNESCO's program promotes media literacy through formal and non-formal education (Grizzle et al., 2013). One of UNESCO's essential media literacy programs is its Media and Information Literacy (MIL) program. Their program provides resources and training to educators and journalists in Indonesia to help them integrate media literacy into their curricula and activities. It means that UNESCO mainly promotes MIL through education through teacher training (UNESCO Policies and Practices in Asia, 2020). But apart from teachers, through several other programs, UNESCO also initiated training for journalists, although more than the training program for teachers.

The realization of the UNESCO program to promote media literacy in Indonesia can be seen in several programs below:

1. The media and Information Literacy (MIL) Education Program in Asia is a regional initiative to provide training and capacity-building programs for educators and journalists to help them develop the skills and knowledge necessary to promote media literacy. Within this program, UNESCO is working to promote media literacy by integrating media literacy into formal education systems and providing training and capacity-building programs for educators. One example is MIL Curriculum Guide, UNESCO has developed a curriculum guide aimed at educators and teachers (Wilson et al., 2011). The guide provides a comprehensive overview of the critical concepts in promoting media literacy and provides practical resources and activities for educators to use in the classroom. In line with this project, UNESCO also has MIL for Teachers project that includes training for teachers to help them develop the skills and knowledge necessary to promote media literacy in the classroom. UNESCO also published its handbook *Journalism, 'Fake News,' and Disinformation* in 2018 as educational resources to increase media and information literacy. This handbook has also been translated into many languages in Asia, including Indonesian.

2. Asia-Pacific Regional Forum for World Press Freedom Day, is an annual event that brings together media literacy experts, educators, journalists, government officials, and NGOs from the Asia-Pacific region to discuss and share best practices on media literacy. The forum provides a platform to exchange ideas and collaborate on initiatives to promote media literacy in the region. In 2017, for the first time since this forum started in 2003, the event was held in Southeast Asia, in Indonesia. During this forum, AJI and UNESCO provide a safety training workshop for journalists in Indonesia.

3. MIL Policy Recommendations, UNESCO has developed policy recommendations aimed at governments and policymakers in the Asia-Pacific region. The recommendations guide how to promote media literacy in the region, including recommendations on government policies, educational programs, and stakeholder engagement. The latest offers were published in 2020 as an exploration of policies and practices of MIL Education in Asia.

In Indonesia's case, UNESCO works with local groups such as AJI to organize training for journalists and collaborate closely with the ministry of education to

integrate the MIL curriculum into formal education, even though till this paper was written, the MIL curriculum still not integrated into the formal education system in Indonesia. UNESCO also promotes media literacy through its collaboration with universities in Indonesia, one of them is UIN Sunan Kalijaga, in 2019, held International Talks, Visiting International Librarians as one of the programs from UNESCO MIL Alliance³.

Because UNESCO focuses on promoting media literacy through education, most of its programs are distributed in the form of digital or printed handbooks. All publications are also available for free on the UNESCO website. However, there is not much UNESCO engagement through social media.

ASEAN media literacy framework

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has recognized the importance of media literacy in the digital age and has taken several steps to promote it in the region⁴. In the first step in 2018, ASEAN member countries, including Indonesia, adopted the Framework and Joint Statement to Minimize the Harmful Effects of Fake News and launched its ASEAN Digital Literacy⁵. This framework includes key articles to improve digital literacy, strengthen national capacity to detect and respond to fake news, encourage stakeholders to build on the existing industry anti-fake news guideline, and also share best practices and experience (Smith et al., 2021).

ASEAN and its member countries jointly fund media literacy promotion programs in the region. For some programs, ASEAN also cooperates with other countries in the region that are not member countries, such as Japan, together supporting a Working Group in Information Media and Training⁶. Cooperation with NGOs and philanthropic institutions Google.org, ASEAN also organizes several programs to support media literacy, such as the ASEAN Digital Literacy Forum in 2021. From this Forum, Google.org will support the ASEAN Digital Literacy Programme (ADLP) from 2022 to 2024. The latest initiation support from Google.org is the new Youth Advisory Group (AYAG) Regional Workshop held in February 2023 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The Target of ASEAN-initiated group programs in Indonesia is not only to focus on educators but also on young groups, elderly groups, and government officials⁷. The ASEAN program focuses on improving media literacy through non-

³ UNESCO MIL Alliance: *Media and information literacy skills. International talks. Visiting international librarians#1*. (2021, January 29). Perpustakaan UIN Sunan Kalijaga. Retrieved March 1, 2023, from <https://lib.uin-suka.ac.id/2021/01/29/unesco-mil-alliance-media-and-information-literacy-skills-international-talks-visiting-international-librarians1/>

⁴ Davis, S. (2021). *Media literacy training for Southeast Asian communities*. Retrieved March 27, 2023, from <https://blog.google/around-the-globe/google-asia/media-literacy-southeast-asia/>

⁵ ASEAN Digital Literacy Programme. (2022, February 11). ASEAN Foundation. Retrieved March 1, 2023, from https://www.aseanfoundation.org/asean_digital_literacy_programme/

⁶ Andarningtyas, N. (2021, March 11). Indonesia berpartisipasi dalam literasi digital di ASEAN. *Antara*. Retrieved July 29, 2023, from <https://www.antaraneews.com/berita/2037582/indonesia-berpartisipasi-dalam-literasi-digital-di-asean/>

⁷ Ramadhan, A. (2022, February 7). Perkuat Literasi Digital Lansia, MAFINDO meluncurkan Program Tular Nalar. *Tribun Jogja*. Retrieved March 1, 2023, from <https://jogja.tribunnews.com/2022/02/07/perkuat-literasi-digital-lansia-mafindo-luncurkan-program-tular-nalar/>

formal education, mainly digital media literacy, and the responsible use of digital technology through online and offline workshops, training, and webinars.

Here are some examples of ASEAN's programs to promote media literacy in Indonesia:

1. One of ASEAN's essential media literacy programs is Digital Literacy Programme (ADLP). This initiative promotes digital literacy and ensures that all citizens in the region have the necessary skills to participate effectively in the digital economy and protect themselves from cyber crimes. First initiated in 2021, the program is targeted to last until 2024. This Program will carry out various activities such as in-depth research, curriculum development, and Training-of-trainers. Under this program, ASEAN cooperates with universities in Indonesia, such as the Department of Psychology Universitas Brawijaya, which held an online forum called "Smart Using Social Media for Teenagers and Students" in November 2022⁸. Another realization is that, together with Ruang Guru, the largest education technology company in Southeast Asia, launched a digital skills training program to combat misinformation and disinformation in the region and Indonesia. The Program also partners with 32 provincial and 326 city and district governments in Indonesia⁹. Another realization under this program, in cooperation with *Masyarakat Antifitnah Indonesia* (MAFINDO), is initiating *Tular Nalar*. The program targets the elderly group (55 years and over) and involves young people as mentors. *Tular nalar* is an education in the form of modules and guides in improving digital literacy and reaching 25 cities in Indonesia¹⁰.

2. ASEAN Youth Advisory Group¹¹: This workshop aims at young people in ASEAN countries and provides them with the skills and knowledge necessary to evaluate and analyze media content and messages critically. This workshop will train 19 young ASEAN members from 10 ASEAN countries as agents of change¹². They will contribute to raising awareness of digital literacy's importance to their peers and communities. In training, they will be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to run awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of media literacy.

Overall, ASEAN's program to promote media literacy in Indonesia focuses on non-formal education and training. ASEAN works with local partners in Indonesia, such as MAFINDO, Ruang Guru, and universities, to promote media litera-

⁸ *Program Literasi Digital ASEAN*. (2022, November 24). Universitas Brawijaya. Retrieved July 29, 2023, from <https://psikologi.uib.ac.id/blog/2022/11/24/program-literasi-digital-asean-cerdas-menggunakan-media-sosial/>

⁹ Nugroho, I. (2022, October 17). ASEAN Foundation dan Ruangguru Gelar ASEAN Digital Literacy Programme. *Madaninews*. Retrieved March 1, 2023, from <https://www.madaninews.id/18497/asean-foundation-dan-ruangguru-gelar-asean-digital-literacy-programme.html>

¹⁰ Ramadhan, A. (2022, February 7). Perkuat Literasi Digital Lansia, MAFINDO luncurkan Program Tular Nalar. *Tribun Jogja*. Retrieved March 1, 2023, from <https://jogja.tribunnews.com/2022/02/07/perkuat-literasi-digital-lansia-mafindo-luncurkan-program-tular-nalar/>

¹¹ *New ASEAN initiative emphasizes education as the key to media literacy and countering disinformation*. (2022, January 24). Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Retrieved July 29, 2023, from <https://asean.org/new-asean-initiative-emphasizes-education-as-key-to-media-literacy-and-countering-disinformation/>

¹² *ASEAN youth advisory group of ASEAN digital literacy programme*. (n.d.). ASEAN Foundation. Retrieved July 29, 2023, from https://www.aseanfoundation.org/asean_youth_advisory_group_of_asean_digital_literacy_programme

cy with funding and support for media literacy initiatives and projects and to develop and implement media literacy programs and activities.

The ASEAN Program in promoting media literacy in Indonesia can also be accessed through ASEAN Foundation social media such as YouTube, Facebook¹³, and Twitter. This makes information related to their programs easily accessible through online news broadcasts, which makes the level of engagement of each program with community groups reasonably high.

Discussion

Based on the media literacy program promoted by these two international organizations above, similarities between UNESCO and ASEAN can be drawn. Both organizations adhere to a similar Media and Information Literacy (MIL) framework that emphasizes multiple competencies.

Regarding funding, there is no fundamental difference between UNESCO and ASEAN programs. Both rely on funding from member countries, NGOs, or other international groups with the same vision of promoting media literacy. ASEAN receives grants from Google.org, UNESCO is working with NGOs in global development and education, and IREX to initiate media literacy programs in Indonesia.

For the target audience, the ASEAN program in Indonesia includes more educators, students, youth, and the elderly group. This could have something to do with the type of activity supported by ASEAN is learning through non-formal education, so that the target audience is from different age groups and professions. While UNESCO focuses its programs on formal education, it can be seen from its programs that provide curriculum recommendations to be integrated into the Indonesian education system. Therefore, the goal of their program is more for teachers and the Ministry of education in charge of adopting the MIL education that UNESCO offers. However, ASEAN and UNESCO both see the importance of journalist groups in the fight against disinformation, so both include this group as a target audience and sponsor several training activities for journalists.

Based on the target audience of both groups, it can be seen that both focus on educational activities, be they formal or non-formal. In addition, UNESCO and ASEAN also sponsor activities that are capacity building and research programs, such as training journalists, teachers, and even young groups. Especially ASEAN through the AYAG program that trains young people to be agents of change in promoting media literacy in the region and Indonesia. ASEAN also established an online platform for all age groups to be more involved in promoting media literacy¹⁴.

Both organizations are involved with various local groups in Indonesia in cooperation with local partners, media groups such as AJI and MAFINDO, and several universities. But what should be underlined is that UNESCO's program approach is more to the government than the individual. Judging by their programs, they all involve the state's involvement as an organizer. Meanwhile, the approach of ASEAN programs directly touches local groups and individuals so that government is not too

¹³ Facebook is recognized as an extremist organization and banned in the territory of the Russian Federation.

¹⁴ ASEAN *Digital Literacy Programme*. (2022, February 11). ASEAN Foundation. Retrieved March 1, 2023, from https://www.aseanfoundation.org/asean_digital_literacy_programme/

involved. This is a plus point for ASEAN because if you only rely on the government as decision-makers, the program will experience delays due to bureaucracy and other reasons. Although in some programs such as Ruang Guru and TUTOR NALAR, ASEAN also cooperates with local governments in Indonesia; there are intermediaries in the program, namely Ruang Guru and MAFINDO, who are the implementers and catalysts for its success. The success of the ASEAN program can also be seen after one year of implementation in collaboration with 14 local implementing partners, 89 Training of trainers involving around 1,000 master trainers in ASEAN have been successfully held¹⁵. As of early January 2023, there are more than 68,000 people who have learned from 134 online and offline digital literacy workshops. This number includes 283 master trainers and 16,240 participants from Indonesia¹⁶.

The last aspect is the media both use in promoting media literacy programs in Indonesia. UNESCO needs to be more engaged with social media in spreading its program but focusing on printed handbooks translated into many languages, including Indonesian. All information related to their programs can also be found and downloaded on the UNESCO website. Like UNESCO, ASEAN provides free access to all information on its literacy programs on its websites. But ASEAN is more active in attracting readers and all groups interested in their programs by being active on social media such as Facebook¹⁷, Twitter, and YouTube. More precise comparison is represented in the Table 2.

Table 2

Comparison of UNESCO and ASEAN media literacy framework

Aspects	UNESCO	ASEAN
Funding		
International organization	√	√
NGO	√	√
Countries	√	√
Target audience		
Educators	√	√
Students	√	√
Journalists	√	√
Other groups (elderly)	–	√
Types of activities		
Educational program	√	√
Legislative program	–	–
Structural or scientific research program	√	√
Cooperation with local partners		
Media corporation	√	√
Universities	√	√
Administrative authorities	√	√
Local groups	√	√
Media used		
Social media	–	√
Journals	√	√
Web sites	√	√
Printed book	√	–

¹⁵ Liliyah, A. (2023). ASEAN Foundation Gelar Pelatihan Literasi Digital. *SWA Online*. Retrieved March 1, 2023, from <https://swa.co.id/swa/trends/asean-foundation-gelar-pelatihan-literasi-digital/>

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Facebook is recognized as an extremist organization and banned in the territory of the Russian Federation.

It is difficult to determine which organization is better for promoting media literacy programs in Indonesia, as each organization has its own strengths and areas of expertise. ASEAN and UNESCO have different approaches to promoting media literacy in Asia. The effectiveness of each organization's programs will depend on the specific needs and cultural context of the countries they are working in.

UNESCO has a global reach and a long history of promoting media literacy worldwide. UNESCO's media literacy initiatives in Indonesia are designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of different countries and regions. The organization provides a comprehensive approach to promoting media literacy. UNESCO's programs may mainly promote media literacy in countries lacking resources and infrastructure for media literacy education. UNESCO also strongly promotes media literacy in the digital age and has a comprehensive media literacy framework that includes education support and stakeholder collaboration.

ASEAN strongly focuses on regional cooperation and collaboration, which makes it well-suited to addressing regional media literacy challenges in Indonesia. ASEAN's programs may be particularly effective in promoting media literacy in countries lacking resources and infrastructure for media literacy education. However, the importance of media literacy promotion started by ASEAN (in 2020) quite late. It means there is a long way to establish the framework and see the achievement of their projects and programs.

The UNESCO media literacy framework is a comprehensive and holistic approach to media literacy that considers the complex and rapidly changing media landscape. Their framework is designed to adapt to the needs of different countries. Promoting critical thinking and active engagement with media helps individuals in Indonesia make informed decisions and take action to encourage responsible and ethical media use. Their framework is intended to guide policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders and support the development of media literacy initiatives and programs, especially in the digital era. And ASEAN media literacy framework provides a comprehensive and exclusive approach to promoting media literacy in Indonesia. All these programs and initiatives demonstrate ASEAN's commitment to advancing the development of media literacy in the region. Focus on regional collaboration, ASEAN promotes media literacy, helps build regional capacities, and promotes the development of media literacy education and training programs.

In conclusion, each of these organizations has strengths and areas of expertise that make it well-suited to promoting media literacy in different contexts in Indonesia. The most effective approach will depend on the targeted countries' specific needs and cultural context.

Conclusion

Improving media literacy in Asian countries can be done through several means, first through strengthening the education system. Incorporating media literacy education in school curriculums can help students understand and critically evaluate different forms of media.

Governments and media organizations can conduct awareness campaigns to educate the public about the importance of media literacy and how to recognize fake news and misinformation.

Strengthening the collaboration between media organizations, government agencies, and civil society groups also can help create media literacy programs and initiatives that are more effective and sustainable.

From the government's side, it is crucial to strengthen the regulation. It means regulating media content and holding media organizations accountable for spreading false information can also help improve media literacy in a country.

Focusing more on digital media literacy in this digital era is essential. With the increasing use of digital media, educating people on how to evaluate and use information from the internet effectively and safely is essential.

The last recommendation is how to create more media literacy programs. Not only governments and media organizations but international organizations or even non-governmental organizations should also be able to provide media literacy training programs for journalists and other media professionals to enhance their skills in verifying information and presenting it accurately to the public. Improving media literacy in Asian countries requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach that includes education, awareness, collaboration, regulation, and training.

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