

2013 Somali Media Awards recognises media talents, quality journalism

The National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ), in partnership with United Nations, yesterday celebrated eight winners of the 2013 Somali Media Awards competition. The Media Awards recognised professionalism and excellence in the Somali media sector.



Somali journalists submitted entries across four categories - gender, children and youth, access to basic services, and investigative journalism. Winners were chosen anonymously and transparently by a jury of veteran Somali journalists with support from UN communications experts.

The events held both in Mogadishu's Maka Al-Mukarama Hotel and the PDRC center in Garowe were attended by government officials and members of the parliament, civil society stakeholders. The Awards were presented in Mogadishu by the deputy Minister of Information, Abdullahi Olad Rooble, chairman of the Parliamentary Media Subcommittee and secretary of the Parliamentary labor subcommittee, Abdullahi Omar Abshir and in Garowe, Puntland Minister of information, Ahmed Sheikh Jama, praising the winners and urging to double their efforts in order their profession to contribute the country's peace and developments. A UN representative Lindsey Beterson also attended the Garowe event.

"Let me take this opportunity to congratulate the eight winners whose work and integrity has been recognised here in Mogadishu and in Garowe."

A new door of opportunity

Mohamed Ibrahim, secretary general of the National Union of Somali Journalists said, "The Award which is the first ever of its kind in Somalia held for the Somali journalists opens a new door of opportunity for the Somali journalists to contribute to the development of the country through professionalism and integrity."

Names of the winners in South/Central:

1. Yusuf Ahmed Abuukar
2. Mohamed Kafi Sheikh Abubak
3. Maxamuud Cabdi Diirshe
4. Noor Ali Farah

Names of the winners in Puntland:

1. Abdirahman Ahmed Yusuf
2. Mohamed Salad Osman
3. Abdi Hassan Rooble
4. AbdirahmanAbdi Mohamed

The Somali Media Awards were established to encourage journalists who excel and exhibit professionalism in their field. Journalism can be an agent for positive change and development. Media has enormous potential to change the way that gender issues are addressed in the public domain through gender-balanced reporting or specific programmes on gender issues - such as gender-based violence, female genital mutilation and women's political participation.

"The quality of the winning entries and the professional style of presentation employed by the winners in the four categories is a testimony to the dedication and rising professionalism amongst the media talent in Somalia. I am delighted to recognise these talents through the media awards," said Philippe Lazzarini, the Resident and Humanitarian coordinator (RC/HC) for Somalia.

Unbiased voice of the people

Lazzarini said it was vital that the Somali media is supported to continue in its role as an unbiased voice of the people, which reports responsibly and professionally. A strong media sector is also one of the pillars of resilient civil society. Journalists should continue to defend the rights of vulnerable people in their communities and in their respective geographic areas to contribute to peace, justice, and freedom.

"Despite the dangerous environment in which they operate, Somali journalists have over the past years shown a remarkable dedication to highlighting the humanitarian and development issues in the country.

The UN is committed in building a strong, vibrant and responsible media for the benefit of all Somali people," Lazzarini added.

The winners were awarded equipment to support their work, including laptops and voice recorders. By recognizing media excellence and the integrity of Somali journalists, the 2013 Media Awards will acknowledge, inspire, support and promote media excellence in Somalia.

Source: National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ)