

MISA trains journos on child reporting

 By [Gregory Gondwe](#)

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The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) has trained Malawi journalists on child reporting. An initiative MISA programme specialist for Media Freedom Monitoring and Research, Levi Kabwato describes as an on-going effort towards empowering journalists to report informatively and positively on children and child rights.

The training took place this week in Blantyre where journalists were informed about various issues governing child right that focused on ethical guidelines and principles; international human rights instruments such as the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

According to Kabwato, the journalists were trained on the minimum standards each story on children must pass before being published.

"We also had attendance from selected children who spoke to journalists about how they would want to be reported on and represented in the media," said Kabwato, who also pointed out that the initiative was supported with the participation of a prominent high court judge and child rights advocate, Judge Esmie Tembenu.

MISA chairperson, Anthony Kasunda said the training was organised to address some knowledge gaps that were identified during a media monitoring exercise of selected newspapers in June this year.

Kabwato said MISA hopes to see a significant shift in the manner in which children are reported on.

"We hope to see stories that do not portray children as victims, often subjecting them to further abuse; we also hope to see and hear more children's voices in the media as well as more concerted and genuine effort towards challenging the notion that children cannot make the news in meaningful ways," explained Kabwato.

The training is part of the project that started in 2009 when MISA and Save the Children Sweden implemented a project called 'children and the media' as part of an initiative to empower southern African media in reporting about children.

The training hopes to align the reporting approach by the regional media with UN convention on the rights of children.

ABOUT GREGORY GONDWE

Gregory Gondwe is a Malawian journalist who started writing in 1993. He is also a media consultant assisting several international journalists pursuing assignments in Malawi. He holds a Diploma and an Intermediate Certificate in Journalism among other media-related certificates. He can be contacted on gregorygondwe@gmail.com. Follow him on Twitter at [@Kalipochi](#).

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