

IIJ to train journalists to report politics and good governance

 By [Walter Wafula](#)

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The International Institute for Journalism (IIJ) in Germany has opened applications for the Reporting Politics: Good Governance, Investigating Policies, Covering Elections to be held in Berlin, Germany, from 17 October to 2 December 2012.

The six-months course was announced on Thursday, 12 July 2012, by Sabine Emmerich, the project manager at IIJ in Berlin. The course aims at enhancing the competence of print and online journalists in the area of accurate, professional and readership-oriented political reporting and to increase the awareness for the media's contribution to the promotion of good governance, according to Emmerich.

Topics to be covered

The course is designed to cover topics including: the core functions of political journalism, the role of the media as a watchdog such as news and information gathering, investigative journalism, interview techniques, features and portraits.

It will also focus on election reporting as a specific field of political reporting. Under this segment, participants will be equipped with skills on the characteristics of election campaigns, planning of campaign reporting; the role of think tanks, polling institutes and experts and post-election reporting.

In addition, it will address the sticking issue of bad governance by putting particular emphasis on subjects of political reporting, the dimension of corruption, research and investigative reporting.

The institute believes it's important to train journalists in these areas because political reporting ensures that citizens get access to information that is relevant to building a health democracy in the world. "It ensures that citizens can make informed choices rather than act out of ignorance or on the basis of misinformation. Furthermore, information serves a checking function by ensuring that elected representatives uphold their oaths of office and act in the interest of those who elected them," the Institute says.

Media seen as an avenue...

As such, the media is seen as an avenue to expose corruption and a means to keep a check on public policy by throwing a spotlight on government action. "Free and fair elections are not only about casting votes in proper conditions but also about having adequate information about parties, policies, candidates and the election process itself so that voters can make

informed and well-grounded decisions."

After completion of the course participants are expected to have reflected their own experience with political reporting - have explored modern political systems and the role of the media, the private sector and civil society in securing sustainable development and the welfare of the people. They will also be expected to be familiar with modern election campaigns and strategies of covering them.

The course will be conducted through interactive lectures cum discussion, self-reflection, role plays, site visits and exercises for planning the coverage and training the techniques required.

A maximum of 15 participants from developing countries including: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Egypt, Indonesia, Malawi, Pakistan, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, are expected to take part in the course. Upon completion of the full programme, participants can expect a Certificate of Attendance of the course.

This course is open to newspaper, news agency and online journalists who have a strong interest in political reporting. Applicants must have a minimum of four years of professional experience - be proficient in English - be given paid leave for the duration of the course, according to the admission requirements for applicants. The deadline for application is 24 July 2012. [Download the application form \(Size: 174KB\)](#)

The Reporting Politics: Good Governance, Investigating Policies, Covering Elections is one of the many journalism courses that are organised, administered and sponsored by IIJ for reporters in developing countries and those in transition. The programme focuses on political and conflict sensitive reporting, economics and business journalism, environmental reporting as well as on multimedia journalism and media management.

Through its programmes, IIJ aims to strengthen the freedom of expression in partner countries of the German development cooperation and to thus improve the conditions for democratisation and economic and social development

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