

2009 CNN Multichoice African Journalist finalists

The finalists in the 14th CNN MultiChoice African Journalist competition were announced on Tuesday, 12 May 2009, by Azubuike Ishiekwene, chair of the independent judging panel. The competition received 836 entries from 38 countries, including French- and Portuguese- speaking Africa.

The 25 finalists from 12 countries include:

- Ayodeji Adeyemi, *TELL Magazine*, Nigeria
- Biaou Daniel Valérien Adje, ORTB - Parakou, Benin
- Anas Aremeyaw Anas, *The Crusading Guide*, Ghana
- Rajen Bablee, *Samedi Plus*, Mauritius
- Ernesto Bartolomeu, TPA, Angola
- Nicola De Chaud, Backyard Productions for Carte Blanche, South Africa
- Ethar El-Katatney, *Business Today*, Egypt
- Hazel Friedman, Special Assignment, SABC, South Africa
- Halden Krog, *The Times*, South Africa
- Anna-Maria Lombard, Health-e News Service for 3rd Degree e.tv, South Africa
- Paul McNally, *Men's Health Magazine*, South Africa
- James Moturi Mogaka, KTN, Kenya
- Fredrick Mugira, Freelance for *Mail & Guardian online* www.mg.co.za, Uganda
- Sammy Muraya, Metro FM, Kenya
- Boniface Mwangi, *Expression Today*, Kenya
- John Benson Mwangi, KTN, Kenya
- John-Allan Namu, KTN, Kenya
- Elshadai Negash, Freelance for *Fortune Newspaper*, Ethiopia
- Luís Nhachote, Zambeze, Mozambique
- Tolu Ogunlesi, Contributing Editor for *Glide Magazine*, Nigeria
- Violet Otindo, K24 Television, Kenya
- Odette Schwegler, Backyard Productions for Carte Blanche, South Africa
- Viviane Tiendrébéogo, Radiodiffusion Télévision du Burkina Faso
- Beauregard Tromp, *The Star*, South Africa
- Alain Zongo, *L'Observateur Paalga*, Burkina Faso

This year the recipient of the Free Press Africa Award is Nicaise Kibel'bel Oka, of Les Coulisses in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He was awarded the prize, for his work in the DRC, and also, according to the judges in recognition of all the journalists in the DRC who put their lives at risk in telling the story. Three murdered journalists, Pascal Kabungulu (killed 31st July 2005), Serge Maheshe (killed 13th June, 2007) and Didace Namujimbo (killed 23rd November 2008), were given recognition.

Award ceremony in Durban

The winners of the competition will be announced at an award ceremony and gala evening at the

International Convention Centre, Durban, South Africa on Saturday, 18 July. The hosts for the evening will Isha Sesay, presenter of CNN weekly programme "Inside Africa", along with South African eNews Channel presenter, Macfarlane Molele.

Announcing the finalists, Azubuike Ishiekwene said: "2009 saw a steady, remarkable improvement in the overall quality of the entries. A number of journalists who entered the competition over the last few years took the opportunity to improve their skills, enter again and raise the bar on their previous entries. Many first time entrants also delivered inspiring work that raised the overall quality. The competition was particularly strong in the Health, Sport, Tourism, Environment, TV 60, Radio and Print General News categories. Across the continent - including countries like Rwanda, Ethiopia, Angola and Egypt - we saw entries from young journalists who are determined to make a difference. That is really gratifying."

The independent judging panel, chaired by Azubuike Ishiekwene, executive director, Punch Nigeria Limited includes: Ferial Haffajee, editor-in-chief, *Mail & Guardian*, South Africa; Joel Kibazo, journalist and media consultant; Arlindo Lopes, secretary general of SABA - Southern African Broadcasting Association; Kim Norgaard, CNN's Johannesburg Bureau Chief; Anna Umbima, journalist and broadcaster. Filipe Correia de Sá, senior producer at BBC World Service and Jean-Paul Gérouard, deputy editor-in-chief at France 3 were brought in to help judge the Portuguese and French language categories.

The sponsors include: British Airways; Coca-Cola Africa; Ecobank, IPP Media, Tanzania; Merck Sharp & Dohme (MSD); Safabond Africa Ltd; South African Tourism; Zain; Global Media Alliance; and A24 Media.

The Southern Sun Elangeni is the delegate hotel for the CNN MultiChoice African Journalist Awards 2009. The finalists will have an all expenses paid five-day programme of workshops, media forums, networking and as well as sight-seeing.

Outstanding calibre of entries

"Once again the calibre of entries is outstanding. Their thirst for top-class storytelling continues to raise the bar year-on-year," said Tony Maddox, executive vice-president and managing director of CNN International. "Now in its 14th year the African Journalist Awards 2009 maintains its position as the most prestigious pan African accolade for journalism and CNN is proud to continue its commitment to fostering inspired journalistic excellence in African reporting."

Nolo Letele, Group CEO, MultiChoice South Africa said, "We are very proud to partner with CNN to host the African Journalist of the Year Awards in South Africa, in the beautiful city of Durban. It is an annual event we look forward to, to celebrate and recognise true excellence in African journalism. Congratulations to all the finalists. Your journey commenced with an individual thought, which has the potential to stitch together communities, nations and the African continent."

For more information, go to www.cnn.com/africanawards.