

Fatuma Noor named CNN Multichoice African Journalist of the Year

Kenya's Fatuma Noor was named the 2011 CNN MultiChoice African Journalist of the Year at this year's awards ceremony on Saturday evening, 25 June 2011. Noor, who works for *The Standard Kenya*, was awarded for her investigative three-part series on the "Al-Shabaab", which was chosen from among 1407 entries from 42 nations across the African continent.



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The series tells the story of the young men who give up their freedom abroad to return and fight for the "Al Shabaab" in one of the world's most dangerous places, Somalia. Noor was one of the 27 finalists at the awards ceremony and was a winner in the General News Award (Print) category.

The awards, which rotate location each year in tribute to their pan-African credentials, were held at a gala ceremony hosted by CNN and MultiChoice at The Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Collins Khumalo, president, MultiChoice Africa and Parisa Khosravi, senior vice president of international newsgathering for CNN Worldwide presented Fatuma Noor with the award.

Noor said: "I want to thank my mum and my boss Catherine, who believed in me when no one else did. There was a time in my life when I thought about giving up, but with this award I'm not giving up any time soon."

Awarded for going the extra mile

Chair of the judging panel, journalist and media consultant Joel Kibazo said: "The judges were impressed with the high quality of entries to the competition this year, and this intrepid young journalist has shown great courage and determination in going the extra mile to tell this fascinating story. Fatuma Noor's three-part series on the Al-Shabaab provides a detailed and personalised portrait of the young men who leave their comfortable western lives to join one of the world's most ruthless militant groups in Somalia."

Khosravi said: "Tonight's journalists join an ever-growing community of excellence, each one representing the very best in African journalism. The collective talent celebrated here this evening is a sign of the increasingly assured voice in which Africa is telling its unique and myriad story. I congratulate them all."

Khumalo said: "Congratulations to all the 2011 winners, we hope the acknowledgment you've received this year will inspire you to continue telling the African story to the world. Although there can only be one overall winner, we'd like to salute each and every journalist that entered. Without your hard work and support, the ongoing development of democracy and diversity of the media across the African continent would not be possible."

Mahamud Abdi Jama, Free Press Africa Award winner

The evening also recognised Mahamud Abdi Jama as this year's recipient of the Free Press Africa Award for his work in Somalia. His situation was noted by the Committee for the Protection of Journalists (CPJ) in New York. He wrote a critical article about the government there and was jailed for just over a month and released when pressure was put on the government of Somalia.

The CNN MultiChoice competition is now in its 16th year. The sponsors include: African Development Bank; Coca-Cola Africa; Ecobank, IPP Media, Tanzania; Ericsson; Merck Sharp & Dohme (MSD); Research In Motion (RIM); South African Tourism and A24 Media. The Sandton Sun Hotel, Johannesburg is the delegate hotel for this year's awards.

Individual competition category winners:

Arts & Culture Award

Winner: Kofi Akpabli, freelance for *Daily Graphic*, Ghana.

Title: "What is right with Akpeteshie?"

Judge's citation: "Kofi Akpabli's story uses the most enriching and fantastic language to explain why Akpeteshie, a local brew, is the equivalent of a liquid national heritage. Kofi not only educates and enlightens us to the history and best practices of this national beverage - but he also does it with humour and style. A worthy return winner."

Digital Journalism Award

Winner: The Dispatch Online team on behalf of *The Daily Dispatch* in South Africa.

Title: "Failed Futures"

Judge's citation: "This website won because, for the second year in a row, the *Daily Dispatch* team has displayed a wonderful creativity to produce first class journalism with the new tools of the digital age. The website is about the many problems, but also the hopes and dreams of the teachers and pupils of a very poor area of Western Cape, South Africa. The Mbizana area has one of the worst records for education in South Africa."

Economics & Business Award

Winner: Sylvia Chebet and Kimani Githae, Citizen TV, Kenya.

Title: "An uphill task"

Judge's citation: "The story highlighted the fact that in spite of the millions of dollars spent on ensuring wide coverage, there are still potential profit centres not yet reached. This story demonstrates that the demand in Kenya is there."

Environment Award

Winner: Lamia Hassan, *Business Today Egypt*, Egypt.

Title: "Washed up"

Judge's citation: "She covered a fairly technical subject - the environment in simple but attractive language. It is an issue we are seeing in many parts of Africa."

Francophone General News Award: Print

Winner: Rabin Bhujun, *L'Express Dimanche*, Mauritius.

Title: "Le vrai pouvoir des castes"

Judge's citation: "This story stands out in the Francophone Print category as yet another master piece of investigative journalism in Mauritius. In his insightful account about the castes' influence on the political system - one of the un-stated realities of Mauritius - Rabin demonstrates integrity, well-organised research and good writing skills."

Francophone General News Award: TV / Radio

Winner: Claudine Efoa Atohoun, ORTB, Benin.

Title: "Le barrage de Nagbéto: Outil de développement ou source de nuisance"

Judge's citation: "The 'Nagbéto Dam' story stood out among Francophone Radio entries as an excellent piece of radio journalism. Claudine demonstrates good journalistic skills - research, balance and clarity - and tells a very relevant story through a competent use of radio techniques."

Free Press Africa Award

Winner: Mahamud Abdi Jama, Waaheen Media, Somalia.

Judge's citation: "The freedom to operate as a journalist is at the core of the media industry and this award is acknowledgement and recognition of the efforts Mahamud has gone to, in order to tell the story."

HIV/AIDS Reporting in Africa Award

Winner: Beryl Ooro, K24 TV, Kenya.

Title: "HIV infection among senior citizens in Kenya"



Judge's citation: "The story is brilliant and fascinating. For too long, the story of HIV / AIDS pandemic in Africa has been told that one begins to wonder if there is anything new to say. And then, here is a story that throws up an entirely new perspective which shows that an age group (octogenarians) hitherto considered not at risk can also be vulnerable."

MSD Health & Medical Award

Winner: Oluwatoyosi Ogunseye, *Sunday Punch*, Nigeria.

Title: "Luth's Ransome - Kuti's Children's Centre"

Judge's citation: "It is a good investigative story, well written yet told in a simple manner. It is activism journalism at its best, since after the story was published something was done to improve the situation."

Mohamed Amin Photographic Award

Winner: Norman Katende, freelance for *The New Vision*, Uganda.

Title: "When death strikes"

Judge's citation: "This entry was not chosen for the depth of its composition or the framing. When you are shooting within minutes of a massive bomb-blast, those elements of photography are not top of mind. Instead, these shocking, heart-breaking images won for news value, for flashing across the globe the pain of the Ugandan bomb-blasts that placed such a pall over the World Cup."

Portuguese Language General News Award

Winner: Selma Marivate, TV Miramar, Mozambique.

Title: "O Movimento Rastafari em Mocambique"

Judge's citation: "This story stood out in the Portuguese language category as a comprehensive piece of TV journalism, an in-depth account of a group of followers of the Rastafari movement in Mozambique. It is a well balanced story, with a wide range of interviews, beautiful video shots and soundbites, which makes it a reference in this particular category."

Print General News Award

Winner: Fatuma Noor, *The Star*, Kenya.

Title: "Investigative three-part series on the Al-Shabaab"

Judge's citation: "The judges elected this story in its category but also unanimously agreed this was the overall winner of the CNN MultiChoice African Journalist Awards 2011. It is an investigative story about the Al-Shabaab, which brings to the fore an insight view about the militia group, through comprehensive accounts from its own recruits and representatives, as well as through the journalists own experience of a dramatic encounter with armed militiamen in Somalia. Thanks to Fatuma's excellent writing skills, the story also emerges as an engaging piece of reading."

Radio General News Award

Winner: Melini Moses, SABC, South Africa.

Title: "Hillbrow - Den of Iniquity"

Judge's citation: "Melini brings the listener on a journey of discovery to a neglected, crime-ridden and rundown area of Johannesburg. Her ability to describe the small details makes the audience feel that they are there walking the streets with her. Melini is a true story-teller and a clear winner in this category."

Sports Award

Winner: Kamau Mutunga, *DN2 Magazine*, *Daily Nation*, Kenya.

Title: "Soccer and Superstition (Animal body parts and snake blood on the pitch)"

Judge's citation: "This is an informative romp through the story of superstition in soccer in Kenya. It is elegantly written and while it spans several decades, it moves quickly and with a light touch. A sidebar shows this is by no means only an African issue - it gives insight into all countries from France to Brazil. "

Television - General News - Feature / Current Affairs Award

Winner: Lindile Mpanza, e.tv, South Africa.

Title: "Silence of the innocents"

Judge's citation: "The story won because it was well-researched and comprehensive. The reporter went to the village where she spent some time and spoke to all the dramatis personae - the young girls that are being kidnapped, the men who do the kidnappings, parents of the abused girls and the police. It is a great

piece of journalism which exposed the debilitating practice that many people ordinarily will not associate with a country as developed as South Africa. It is everything that good television story should be - absorbing and flawless delivery."

Television - General News - News Bulletin Award

Winner: Farouk Kayondo, UBC, Uganda.

Title: "Watching in the hood"

Judge's citation: "The story is a winner because it's well-told and it focused on the other side of Johannesburg that's easily forgotten during such big events. No one is too poor to catch the soccer action according to the story."

Tourism Award

Winner: Benon Herbert Oluka, *Daily Monitor*, Uganda.

Title: "Why Ugandans would rather watch goat races than visit their national parks or heritage sites"

Judge's citation: "This story won because it displays a very well-documented work on the reasons why Ugandans don't go to visit their own museums and national sites."

Again this year the judges highlighted some excellent work and awarded commendations in nine categories. These journalists participated in the finalists' programme in Sandton and received a cash prize and certificates of commendation:

- Sonny Serite, freelance for *The Sunday Standard*, Botswana
- Virgil Augustin Pascal Houesson, *L'événement Précis*, Benin
- Nigel M. Nassar, *The New Vision*, Uganda
- Portia Solomon, TV3 News, Ghana
- José Bouças de Oliveira, Televisão Santomense, São Tomé
- Nkula Zau, Televisão Pública de Angola, Angola
- Kipchumba Some, *The Standard*, Kenya
- Nnamdi Okosieme, *Next Newspaper*, Nigeria
- Mark Klusener, eNews Africa, South Africa

CNN International's Inside Africa will include a report on the awards on Saturday, 2 July at 5.30pm BST.

For more:

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- Official site: www.cnn.com/africanawards
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