

2008 John Manyarara Investigative Journalism Awards winners

Charles Mpaka and Mike Chipalasa of the *Daily Times*, Malawi and Conceição Vitorino of *Canal de Mozambique* have won the 2008 MISA John Manyarara Investigative Journalist of the Year Award and the MISA John Manyarara Upcoming Investigative Journalist of the Year Award respectively.



From left to right; Evelyn Groenink (FAIR), Kaitira Kandjii (RD, MSA), Conceição Vitorino, Mike Chipalasa, Charles Mpaka and MSA TFB member Beatrice Metwa

Charles Mpaka and Mike Chipalasa received a cash prize of €4000 for their entry "MSCE Examination Leaked" which was an exposé of the selling of Malawi School Leaving Certificate (MSCE) exam papers which resulted in some officials working in the country's examinations board being brought to book. In the Upcoming Investigative Journalist of the Year category, Conceição Vitorino won a cash prize of €2000 as well as a scholarship to the tune of €6000 to further develop her investigative journalism skills. She won for a series of stories she wrote on the powder magazine explosion.

John Grobler was awarded runner-up in the Investigative Journalist of the Year category for his story "Mafia Linked to Namibia's Gems". Orirando Manwere and Busani Ncube were runner-ups in the Upcoming Investigative Journalist of the Year category for the series of stories on a scam in Zimbabwe's High court.

The awards were handed out on 28 October, 2008 at a Power Party which is part of an ongoing three-day 'power' reporting training workshop that brings together investigative journalists and aspiring investigative journalists from Africa as well as abroad.

While giving her welcome remarks at the party, 2008 Benjamin Memorial Award winner and MISA Trust Fund Board (TFB) member, Beatrice Metwa, noted that the celebration of investigative journalism in the developing world is particularly important because of the many obstacles that investigative journalists encounter including repressive and draconian legislation, poor remuneration, absence of mentoring due to the skills flight from the profession among others.

The regional director of MISA, Kaitira Kandjii, noted the increase in the number of entries to the awards from about 16 last year to a total of 40 this year. He also thanked the partners who convened the Power Reporting Workshop and party including the London Centre for Investigative Journalism (CPJ), Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE), Wits Journalism School, Forum for African Investigative Reporters (FAIR), Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), The Valley Trust, the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism (IAJ) and the Gorthe Institute.

The judges look for work which:

- Demonstrates investigative journalistic or production flair
- Displays the highest standards of journalism and/or programme making
- Tells the story in a clear and balanced manner
- Communicates stories or issues from Southern Africa in a comprehensive way
- Includes the voices and views of women, men and children in all their diversity
- Displays well-organised research, depth and insight

- Required great perseverance or bravery to realise
- Is substantially the product of the reporter's own initiative and effort
- Uncovers facts that someone or some agency may have tried to keep from public scrutiny
- Is about issues of public importance to the readers, viewers or listeners.
- Was broadcast or published between 1 January and 31 December, 2007, with proof supplied.

MISA inaugurated the John Manyarara Investigative Journalism Awards on May 3, 2001 after identifying investigative journalism as an important field of expertise, which is much needed in Southern Africa. The awards are named after one of the region's freedom of expression exponents the honourable Justice John Oliver Manyarara - himself a journalist turned lawyer - who was the founding chairperson of the MISA Trust Fund Board (TFB) (1994-2000). He retired from the TFB on September 8, 2000.

The awards were brought about in conjunction with FAIR who bring investigative journalism expertise to the judging process as well as the criteria and the Netherlands Institute of Southern Africa (NiZA) who sponsor the awards.

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