

UNESCO sponsors Namibia Media Awards category

WINDHOEK: The Namibian Chapter of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) held the 2010 MISA Namibia Media Awards late last week in Windhoek. The awards aims to recognise the outstanding achievements of Namibian journalists. UNESCO sponsored the Best Community Reporter category.

The winners were selected out of 79 entries, received from 25 journalists from various media houses in Namibia. The criteria for awarding the best journalists included accuracy and balance, creativity and fairness, significance and effectiveness, enterprise and ingenuity, quality of writing and mastering of style, quality of research and sources used, adherence to journalistic standards and ethics.

Best Community Reporter winners:

- Des Erasmus from *Die Republikein* for "Erongo" (first place);
- Selma Shipanga from *The Namibian* for "State of places of safety for OVC's" (second place)
- Emsie Erastus from *The Namibian Sun* for "Fatal stabbing of woman blamed on police inaction" (third place)

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) supported the category of the awards on Health and HIV/AIDS. The main sponsors of the event, both UNESCO and UNFPA, aim to recognise the essential role that journalists play in freedom of expression, independence of media from political and commercial interests, and pluralism of views in a country.

MISA Namibia Media Awards started in 2003 as a contest to help set standards and recognise role models for outstanding journalism. The main objectives of the awards are encouraging journalistic achievements that contribute to the advancement of the profession; raising professional standards of journalism in informing, educating, entertaining and protecting the rights of citizens; and promoting a critical, independent and investigative media as the lifeblood of democracy.