

FEATURES...

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- Cocktail Evening -
- World Press Freedom Day
- “So this is Democracy”
- Media resource guide
- ...and much more!

# MISA NAMIBIA



## E-NEWSLETTER

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### WOMEN IN THE MEDIA WORKSHOP!



• **Julia Grossmann**

“Being a journalist does not depend on whether you are a female or male, but rather on the passion you exude of being a reporter.”

This was highlighted by General Manager of Radio Services at NBC, Umbi Karuaihe-Upi who facilitated a workshop themed “Women in the Media”, in Windhoek recently.

Karuaihe-Upi says that although there has been a steady increase in the number of women professionals over the past 20 years, most mainstream press coverage continues to rely on men as experts in the fields of business, politics and economics.

The facilitator says ideally it would be great if women could also be assigned to stories of this nature, but the truth of the matter is that they are regarded as the “weaker gender”, and therefore mainly cover stories of a human interest nature, education and health.

”Stereotypical thinking dominates most parts of our life even subconsciously and that also influences the female position in the media. In Namibia there are nearly no women in leading positions when it comes to media, even along the staff reporters there

are few. Headlines or images in the media often reinforce stereotypes of women as objects of beauty and victims of violence”, notes Karuaihe-Upi.

She points out that as women continue to struggle for equality in the media, the biggest difference is made by the women who actually work in the industry, but that behind the scenes, they can also have a definite impact on the way women are portrayed on the screen and in print. Karuaihe-Upi explained that a lasting change could be created if female journalists raised their standards and changed their limiting beliefs and strategies.

Reporters attending the workshop concurred that the workshop was very helpful in that they viewed themselves in a different light after the workshop.

”I feel like I now have a purpose to inform the nation, and that includes informing the nation on every subject, or topic possible, said one participant.

The workshop organised by MISA Namibia in line with the International Women’s Day campaign.

**“A lasting change can be created if we as female journalists raise our standard, change our limiting belief and strategy.”**

**Umbi Karuaihe-Upi**



**World Press Freedom Day**

The defense and promotion of press freedom is of vital importance in order to ensure the free flow of information, pluralism and independence of the media necessary in a democratic society. For this reason, World Press Freedom Day is proclaimed a day of recognizing and upholding the right to freedom of expression globally.

While the Namibian Chapter of the Media Institution of Southern Africa brings World Press Freedom Day to the Southern town of Keetmanshoop, MISA Regional will commemorate the event in Maputo, Mozambique at a regional level. The celebrations which will take place on 03 May 2008, will also be seeing the launch of the book, 'So this is Democracy'.

This year's theme is 'Press

Freedom, Access to Information and People's Empowerment'. Presentations and debates will be centered around this topic organised by UNESCO and MISA.

World Press Freedom Day is commemorated worldwide to raise awareness of the importance of freedom of the press and reminds governments of their duty to recognize the right to freedom of expression stipulated under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The proclamation of the World Press Freedom Day by the UN General Assembly dates back to 03 May 1991, which is the anniversary of the Declaration of Windhoek, a statement of free press principals founded by various African journalists.

UNESCO marks the World Press Freedom Day by assembling media professionals, press freedom organizations and UN agencies to evaluate the state of press freedom and discuss solutions for addressing challenges. With each conference comes a different theme by which delegates discuss and address issues related to the topic at hand, be it around coverage on terrorism, the media's role in post-conflict countries or impunity.

At this year's World Press Freedom Day celebration, UNESCO would like to explore how media freedom and access to information feed into the wider development objective of empowering people. Empowerment is a multi-dimensional social and political process that helps people gain control over their own lives. This can only be achieved through access to accurate, fair and unbiased information, re-

presenting a plurality of opinions, and the means to actively communicate vertically and horizontally, thereby participating in the active life of the community.

**Freedom of expression, access and empowerment**

**Press Freedom contributes to empowerment**

In order for citizens to engage in public debate and to hold their governments and others accountable, key elements of living in a participatory democracy, citizens must have access to free, pluralistic, independent and professional media. The idea that communication and dialogue between different members of society will occur naturally cannot be taken for granted, and the media provide a means of access to information and igniting dialogue.

**The role of community media**

Even though many media outlets have made provisions for audience participation and have therein become more accessible to the people they serve, nowhere is accessibility and specificity of purpose so well defined as with community media. Currently radio is the most widespread form of community media in the developing world because it is cheap to produce and to access, can cover large areas, and overcomes illiteracy.

**Access to Information**

Information can change the way we see the world around us, our place in it, and how to adjust our lives in order to maximize the benefits available through our local resources.

For more information go to:  
portal.unesco.org

## EDITOR'S NOTE

On Saturday, May 3, the world will be celebrating World Press Freedom day, and Namibia is no exception. MISA Namibia with regards to this, will be celebrating WPF in the Southern town of Keetmanshoop!

An important event that will also take place on May 3 in Keetmanshoop, is the launch of the 14th edition of "So This is Democracy?"

So this is democracy documents media freedom and freedom of expression violations, recorded by the Media Institute of Southern Africa in 2007.

Below is an excerpt taken from the 2007 edition of "So This is Democracy?"

### State of media freedom and freedom of expression in SADC

The state of the media and enjoyment of freedom of expression rights in 11 Southern African countries monitored by MISA, remains a case of one step forward and two back. This statement is aptly supported by the myriad of challenges media organisations practitioners and freedom of expression activists face on a day-to-day basis. The key issue in 2007 is the volatile relationship between governments and the media. While Zimbabwe remains dominant in terms of the number of alerts issued on the media and freedom of expression violations, other countries such as Lesotho seem to be top contenders for this infamous crown. In 2007 MISA issued a total of 181 alerts.

General elections in Lesotho have always remained a highly controversial process and often resulting in serious violations of media workers and freedom of expression rights. This points to the obvious lack of appreciation of the fact that the media could play a positive role in national processes. The belief in official circles remain that the media should dance to the tune of those in power, a situation that invariably pits the critical media voices against the ruling elite.

This scenario again points to the fragility of democracy not only in Lesotho but also in Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Malawi and other Southern African countries where statespersons and working at cross purpose with the broader national interest.

It is therefore not surprising that in all the 11 countries covered in this publication, state and media relations dominate media alerts issued, these range from government orchestrated media and freedom of expression violations and /or policy pronouncements of intentions to gag the media. The media is still viewed with suspicion in official circles hence the verbal attacks, threat of enactment of regulating laws and arrests. This is true from Dar es Salaam to Pretoria, from Harare, Luanda to Windhoek.

The need to defend and promote media freedom remains a high priority, not only for those directly affected but the rest of society. Interestingly, a flurry of activities in some countries to introduce new laws that impact on the media, directly and indirectly, are being proposed. These include Mozambique, Tanzania, Swaziland, Botswana and South Africa.

While many of the proposed laws are unhealthy for the media, the Mozambique government seems to have set a different example. It has resorted to wide consultation on its proposed Freedom of Information Act. The new law being proposed either to control or promote openness points to a new battle-front being opened. The onus is now on the civil society to be more involved in the process and thus ensure that any new law or amendment is best designed to serve the society and not narrow political and economic interests.



**INFORMATION  
ADVOCACY  
OFFICER**

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## EVENTS/HOLIDAYS

- 03 May: International Press Freedom Day
- 12 May: International Nurses Day
- 15 May: International Day of Families
- 17 May: World Telecommunication Day
- 21 May: World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
- 22 May: International Day for Biological Diversity
- 29 May: International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers
- 31 May: World No Tobacco Day
- 04 June: International Day of Innocent Child Victims of Aggression
- 05 June: World Environment Day
- 16 June: Day of the African Child
- 17 June: World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
- 20 June: World Refugee Day

## COCKTAIL EVENING—APRIL

In line with the World Health Day, MISA Namibia based the monthly Cocktail Evening on presentations around Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS.

Namibia Planned Parenthood Association (NPPA) Programme Officer, Gloria Sisego touched on topics such as the safety of motherhood with women living with HIV/AIDS, sexual health and principal modes of transmission and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD's).

Sisego also elaborated on basic issues concerning HIV/AIDS as well as the increasing rate of the disease amongst young people.

She further challenged media practitioners to look for more aggressive ways to tackle the issue of HIV/AIDS via the media.

Present at the cocktail evening were journalists from Informanté, Namibian Sun, One Africa and media students who eagerly participated in the discussion of the evening.

According to the views of some participants in the audience, the media needs to be more informed and have a sound understand of issues around HIV and Aids. There was even consensus that media information alone could not about a change to the fight against HIV/AIDS.



Over the past decades, according to a World Health Organization report, the international community has reiterated calls for integrating and strengthening linkages between sexual and reproductive health services for prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

This is because HIV is essentially a sexually transmitted infection transmitted during pregnancy, child birth and breastfeeding.



Namibia Planned Parenthood Association (NPPA) Programme Officer, Gloria Sisego

STORY BY THERESIA TJIHENUNA

## INSUFFICIENT KNOWLEDGE ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

According to a survey, which was published with the help of MISA Namibia, 75 % of the journalists in Namibia have a vague or incorrect understanding of Freedom of Information, although they are the ones who benefit from this knowledge. The Freedom of Information concept aims to give all information held by public institutions to the country's citizens. This includes more transparency in the governance process.

In the Namibian Constitution one is only able to find Freedom of Expression, which most of the respondents identified as the same as Freedom of Information. But Freedom of Information extends more into other legal, political and economic rights. Namibia adopted a right which comes close to the

principles of Freedom of Information, with the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expressions in Africa in 2002. No one in the survey was aware of this declaration and the linked opportunities for the citizens.

The media is the mediator between institutions and the citizens. With that high number of journalists who do not know their right properly the Namibian media has not yet reached the full freedom it could have with an introduction of a Freedom of Information Act.

The problem might be that the Freedom of Information concept has never been promoted enough to the public. This is underlined by the 'ASK' Campaign of MISA in 2005 which showed that the government's programs to disseminate information are inadequate.

It's not just the journalists who do not have a fully understanding of the concept of Freedom of Information. It came out that more than 90% of the Namibians struggle to explain Freedom of Information.

What is even more striking is that 100% of the Members of Parliament were wrong when asked to explain Freedom of Information. This might also explain why Freedom of Information was not yet introduced into the Namibian Constitution. Also here most respondents thought that Freedom of Information and Freedom of Expression are the same. Without the action of the Members of Parliament the government still has the opportunity to act without the citizens knowing. This is why there needs to be more enlightenment for all citizens.

• **Selma Shipanga**

Aid has come to the rescue of journalists in the form of a Media Resource Guide booklet from the University of Namibia (UNAM). The booklet, UNAM's first ever Media Resource Guide, which was launched in Windhoek depicts various expertise in selected fields from the University.

The booklet provides a background of the Experts' qualifications and work experience, as well as their research interests. Their contact details such as their email addresses, telephone and fax numbers are also provided.

According to Communications and Marketing Director at UNAM, Edwin Tjiramba, the booklet is meant to not only display the university's wealth of experts, but aid media practitioners to easily get expert commentary when writing on topics and subjects that need skilled analysis.

UNAM Vice Chancellor and Pro-Vice Chancellor: Academic Affairs and Research, Professor Osmund Mwandemele stated at the launch that following informal talks with a number of media practitioners, the university identified key issues and areas of interest that the media regularly needs expert commentary on.

"These include Politics, Economics, Education, Health, Agriculture, Tax and Finances, Law, and Science," he said.

Mwandemele added that expert commentaries enrich news stories with insight and analysis from authoritative sources. "Because of the respect and credibility attached to expert sources, they are often quoted in the media and therefore constantly act as sources of reference for journalists," said Mwandemele.



**UNAM Vice Chancellor and Pro-Vice Chancellor: Academic Affairs and Research, Professor Osmund Mwandemele**

"Expert commentaries enrich news stories with insight and analysis from authoritative sources.."



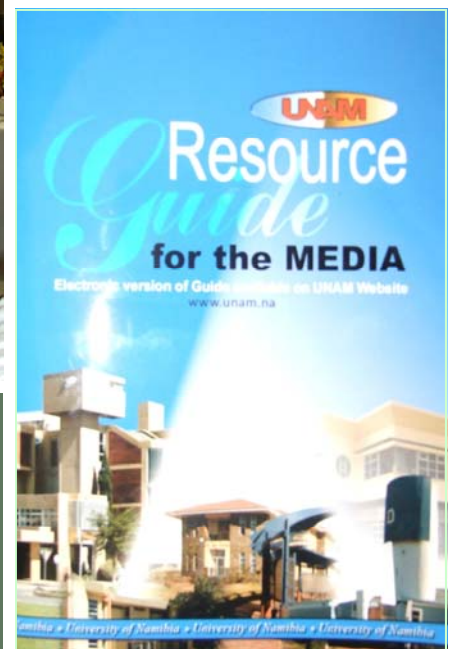
**Leadership, Communications and Strategy Development Specialist, Professor Gustav Puth!**

"As academics, you have to make a move, rather than waiting for the media to find you..."

Also present at the launch was Leadership, Communications and Strategy Development Specialist, Professor Gustav Puth, who urged Academics to market themselves more available to the media. "As academics, you have to make a move, rather than waiting for the media to find you," he emphasized. Another important point he highlighted was for academics to convey what they do in simple English terms. "Speak English. Convey what you do in consumable terms to the public out there," he noted.

As for journalists, Puth urged them to stop thinking theory when they think of Universities. "Accommodate academics and don't only focus on administration faults. The media must reveal the truth for the greater level of society," he said.

Puth further stated that there is much to be gained when Universities and media work together and encouraged media practitioners to go far beyond the Resource Guide booklet when doing research. "Journalists should see this booklet only as a stimulus for something more," he concluded.



The Media Institute of Southern Africa, a regional media and freedom of expression advocacy organisation, based in Windhoek and working through national chapters in 11 Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) countries joins the rest of the world in marking the World Press Freedom Day on May 3 2008. MISA commemorates May 3 under the theme "Press Freedom, Access to Information and empowering the people." This theme captures all we expect from our media, and the role our governments should play in promoting media and freedom of expression rights.

The 2008 World Press Freedom Day comes at a time when the enjoyment and respect for media and freedom of expression rights in Southern Africa is on the slide. We mark May 3 under the shadow of a crisis in Zimbabwe and the deterioration of media freedoms throughout the region notably in Lesotho, Angola and Swaziland.

May 3 comes at a time when the international spotlight is once again on Southern Africa, home to some of the world's archaic and repressive media environments with Zimbabwe taking the lead. We mark May 3 with mixed feelings, while we have made substantive strides since the Windhoek declaration in 1991, the last three years has witnessed a steady deterioration of media freedom, reminiscent of Africa's one party state era of the 70's and early 80s, characterized by the suppression of the basic fundamental rights of freedom of expression, assembly and human dignity.

The southern Africa envisaged in the Windhoek Declaration of 1991 is a far cry from the arrests, beatings, torture and detention of journalists and the general repression of free of expression that are characteristic of Zimbabwe and the region today. The democracy we fought for so hard is not the model we have witnessed in Zimbabwe and Angola where the state rules with absolute impunity, with no respect for the rule of law and total disregard of the will of the people. The SADC leadership we envisaged 10 years ago is a far cry from what we have today, where some of our leaders sacrifice their morality and integrity in the face of unspeakable human suffering and state decay in Zimbabwe.

Southern Africa is a region at a cross roads, with a choice to regress or move with the rest of the world and reap the benefits of a free and diverse society. South Africa, a beacon of hope as a result of its advanced constitution which protects basic rights and its political and economic leadership is slowly showing signs all too familiar with Africa's post colonial nationalist governments. That is the intolerance towards criticism and leaning towards legislative power to seek protection from public scrutiny. The threats of a Media Tribunal proposed by the ruling ANC government, the deterioration of confidence in the and the ensuing tussle for control of the public broadcaster the SABC as well as the proposed Protection of Information law is a serious retrogression from the spirit of 1994, the spirit of a peoples victory and freedom. On May 3, the ruling party and government in South Africa need to take stock and introspect with a positive mind, on the relationship between the state and the media and also look at the role that the media plays in checking on centres of power to ensure accountability. More critically, South Africa should look at its leadership role and the implications to the rest of the region and the continent on the reversal of the enjoyment of basic rights in that country.

On May 3, we emphasize that SADC governments should work to consolidate media and freedom of expression rights through improving protocols such as the SADC Protocol on Information, Sport and Culture. More work needs to be done to ensure the enforcement of these protocols and Declarations on freedom of expression. More should also be done to strengthen the capacity of protective bodies such as the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights and the SADC Tribunal as a way of enhancing their role in defending basic rights. The knee-jerk response to the crisis in Zimbabwe serves as a reminder on why SADC and Africa need stronger and effective protective regional and continental bodies.

On May 3, MISA celebrates the sacrifices being made by journalists, media organizations and communities in defending media and freedom of expression rights, often under serious threats of all sorts. MISA commends the few governments that continue to maintain a healthy, interactive and consultative relationship with the media and civic society. May 3 is therefore that time to take stock, and ask the question how far have we come?

**Kaitira Kandjii**  
**Regional Director**  
**MISA**

## TIPS ON GETTING A JOB IN JOURNALISM — [www.ctjt.biz](http://www.ctjt.biz)

- Target one or two papers, magazines, websites that really appeal to you and do everything to ingratiate yourself with the editor and staff there: do work experience; offer to do freelance assignments; ask to meet the editor to discuss your career prospects; offer to help out at busy times; find stories and send them in – anything and everything to get your face known and to prove your worth, so you are the obvious recruit if a vacancy becomes available. It is vital that you present yourself as being keen, persistent and highly motivated.
- Write application letters on spec to editors of papers where you would consider working – you might need to be prepared to work away from home. Send, say, 3 letters a week, asking about job opportunities, asking them to keep your details on file. But make sure you write to the Editor *by name*, and spell it correctly! Avoid 'bog-standard' mailshot letters – otherwise you will get a bog-standard, mailshot reply! Make each letter personal – find reasons why you would be a good match for *that publication*. Follow them up with a phone call.
- Network – speak to everybody and anybody you know in journalism, get them to listen out for job opportunities.

- Be prepared to start small – any job is better than no job. Accept *anything* (within reason!) to get your first break into journalism. Once you're in, it's easier to get that second job. But be willing to work anywhere and to accept low pay in order to get started.
- Be prepared to travel. Don't limit yourself to working in one particular place.
- Be prepared to work in any medium – newspaper, magazine, web ... don't be fussy. You'll find plenty of fussy would-be journalists at the Job Centre. The time to get fussy is *after* you have succeeded in your first job and are looking for your second one.
- If you manage to get an interview, or a pre-interview, tell the interviewer what you can do for them – offer great ideas, enthusiasm and an array of talents that they cannot do without. Don't make demands.
- Don't give up. Expect numerous rejections and setbacks. It just takes *one* editor to like you! If you give up, then you probably weren't cut out to be a journalist!

### ONLINE COURSE



**What will I learn?** Sound plays a vital role in online and broadcast journalism, and good audio results from a deliberate process of planning, working in the field and producing in the studio. "Telling Stories with Sound" covers this process from start to finish, equipping you with the tools needed to gather, process and combine audio, creating effective, memorable narratives. This course outlines the basics of audio reporting and editing, with an emphasis on finding stories well-suited for audio, eliciting strong interview clips, and gathering interesting and

natural ambient sound that sets the scene for the listener. Along the way, you'll collect interview clips and natural sound elements, with a chance to produce your own narrative in the **Sound Mixer** activity.

In the **Overview** section, you'll learn why sound matters and browse a gallery of great audio narratives, with a chance to add your favorite stories.

**In the Field** covers everything you need to know to gather audio on location: from interviewing for sound, to eliminating white noise, to mic selection and placement, to collecting ambient and background sound. **In the Studio** by scriptwriting, recording voiceovers and mixing down the final audio.

**How long will it take?** This course takes one or two hours to complete. **Cost:** This course will be available free of charge to registered users of Newsu.

<http://www.newsu.org/>

### INTERESTING TRUTHS

- A lion's roar can be heard from five miles away.
- Snails can sleep for 3 years without eating.
- There is about 200 times more gold in the world's oceans, than has been mined in our entire history.
- Hair and nails do not continue to grow after death.
- About 8 million blood cells die in the human body every second, and the same number are born each second.
- It takes about 20 seconds for a red blood cell to circle the whole body.
- Hair is the fastest growing tissue in the body, second only to bone marrow.
- Dolphins don't automatically breathe; they have to tell themselves to do it.
- The term Cop comes from Constable on Patrol, which is a term used in England.
- Guinness Book Of Records holds the record for being the book most stolen from Public Libraries.
- Charlie Chaplin won third place in a Charlie Chaplin look alike contest.

<http://www.berro.com>

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