



In collaboration with



2008 Edition

RESULTS OF ADJUDICATIONS

---- 25/02/2009 ---

At the end of adjudications by the pan-African jury, **four prizes** were awarded: three prizes corresponding to the three categories announced, and a special award of encouragement.

The jury has rewarded blogs that illustrate good editorial line, quality of expression, interaction with internet users, originality, regular posts, a variety of format for content, blog developed by African journalists working in African media.

10 other blogs (all categories) have also attracted the attention of jury members and received their congratulations.

All best blogs will be properly promoted.

A - WINNERS

Category 1: Best French-speaking journalist's blog

Winner: Cedric Kalonji, DRC, with his blog <http://www.cedrickalonji.net/> (old congoblog.net blog)

Award: 1 million CFA francs (about USD 2, 000)

Introduction and motivation - Kalonji Cédric

"I have been working for five years as a journalist for Radio Okapi (<http://www.radiookapi.net>) in Kinshasa. In 2005, I created a Blog on which I posted pictures and personal thoughts on ordinary daily life in Congo. More precisely, it all started in September 2005. At the time I was using a small digital camera that my mother had given me as a present. I posted my pictures and wrote captions to explain the content of the photos in more detail. (...) Very quickly I received comments and points of views from visitors, mainly from Congolese living abroad. At that time, there were very few pictures of Kinshasa on the Internet; this was a result of the 32 year-long dictatorship under Mobutu (...) I come from a country where most of the journalists are praising those in power, in order to receive protection and rewards. It is difficult, in that context, to be an independent journalist. You have to withstand strong criticisms and sometimes even threats. Thanks to the Internet, I can publish my articles without fearing the censorship that the ordinary newspapers are subject to. (...) My desire to share experiences of my daily life was driven by a deep need to express myself freely. Thanks to my Blog, I had the opportunity to develop a media of my own, and to talk freely on subjects that matter to me, without being censored. Nevertheless, I was and am very careful with my editorial line, and always take into account my own security.

Comments from the jury

C'est un blog très bien présenté, facile à lire et à parcourir, avec un contenu divers tant sur le plan des thèmes abordés et de l'approche rédactionnelle.

"Blog entries solicit a high amount of feedback from users making it a vibrant platform for debate on diverse topics in Congolese society"

Category 2 - Best English-speaking journalist's blog

Winner: Rosebell Kagumire, works for « The Independent », Uganda, with her blog <http://ugandanjournalist.vox.com>

Award: 1 million CFA francs (about USD 2, 000)

Introduction and motivation - Rose Kagumire

I write mainly about my job as a journalist and also I comment on socio-political issues in Uganda and Africa mostly. I also write about opportunities that my colleagues can benefit from especially media related training. I write about conflict and the work I write in other media is always brought to feature on my blog. (...)Though very new my blog gives people my views about my life, my country and life generally (...)My interest in blogging is to express myself in sometimes ways that cannot be accepted in the media. I believe also it's important for people and friends to know my thought, principle and values which are all reflected in the different posts on my blog. I also think I can trigger discussion about many issues some of which I write about and others that are featured in the media for positive change. I get discussions going especially by posting my blog posts on facebook to share them with my colleagues. Through such discussion i get to know how the society views certain issues.

Comments from the jury

"Attractive blog, interesting and diverse content. Easy to read and navigate. The image makes it more interesting".

"Using this blog to document events in Uganda and also offer personal reflections about events in her immediate community, makes this blog unique among the entries for this category. Blogging is more than reporting. It is also about conveying the blogger's own voice. The site is easy to use with content that is regularly updated with a moderate level of interactivity from users. The separation of content and graphics ensures that readers with limited bandwidth are still able to use the site without getting frustrated."

Category 3 – Best African Civil Society Organization's Blog

Winner: www.lusakatimes.com, Zambia

Award: 2 millions CFA francs (about USD 4, 000)

Introduction and motivation - Lusakatimes.com

LT is an electronic news platform that allows all types of users to have an open discussion on the day to day current issues in Zambia. The idea that is powering Lusakatimes today was birthed in 1998 as a casual conversation between friends. In 1999, the idea was made manifest with the launch of Lusaka Information Dispatch. The project was funded by the Dutch IICD who provided seed capital

for the equipment and operational costs for a limited duration. However, the operational model for Information Dispatch proved too difficult to sustain at the time. In 2002 Information Dispatch suspended its operation after key members quit the group. In January 2007, the site was re-launched under the new URL address called lusakatimes.com and a new operational model. Today Lusakatimes is run by a number of people distributed around the world, working in an open source type of structure, purely driven by hobby and ambition to provide Zambians around the world with current news content based on facts and not speculation. Our day to day news content comes from known Zambian sources like Zambia Daily-Mail, Times of Zambia, ZNBC and ZANIS. These are the giants whose shoulders we stand on. Our added value to the commodity called news is the speed with which we deliver it to our readers and the community, feeling and experience we have created around the news content on our website. Additionally, Lusakatimes also provides a platform for any Zambian who wants their article published, provided they take full ownership and responsibility of the content. The ability of our users to be able to read news and anonymously provide immediate feedback is something we have always highly valued from the Information Dispatch days. (...) Lusakatimes.com was ranked as the most visited website in Zambia under traffic listing on <http://www.alex.com/browse?&CategoryID=25784>

Comments from the jury

"Lovely blog, with lots of activity, very current (...). an informative blog"

"It is very well presented; the site is dynamic, interactive and the content diverse (...). The public reaction is also high".

Special PIWA Prize for West Africa

Israel Yoroba Guebo from Côte d'Ivoire: <http://leblogdeyoro.ivoire-blog.com>

Award: 500 000 CFA francs (about USD 1, 000)

«Tout à commencé en 2006 alors que je gérais la page internationale du quotidien ivoirien «Le Courrier d'Abidjan »....Aujourd'hui, plus qu'une passion, c'est un « métier ». Je me lève tous les matins en me demandant ce que je mettrai sur mon blog. Un espace qui a d'ailleurs agrandi son lectorat.... Je trouve qu'après 5 années de guerre, il était important que la Côte d'Ivoire soit présentée autrement. Et c'est que je m'efforce de faire en alimentant ce blog chaque jour. J'essaie de montrer ce qu'il y a de beau mais aussi de parler des peines et des situations difficiles que vivent les populations (...) Le Blog de Yoro» c'est un regard un peu décalé de l'actualité ivoirienne. Tout ce que mes yeux voient et mes oreilles entendent, tout ce qui peut intéresser les Ivoiriens, et aussi ceux qui désirent connaître la Côte d'Ivoire. C'est également l'actualité que les journaux de la place ne diffusent pas. C'est enfin mes notes de voyages, mes reportages (et mes enquêtes) ainsi que mes réflexions »

This special award of encouragement is offered by the Panos Institute West Africa, to reward the best West African journalist's blog selected by the jury and not included in the three main categories.

Comments from the jury

« Ce blog est bien présenté, original avec des illustrations, images qui attirent forcément l'attention du lecteur. On y note une information de qualité très variée avec des rubriques assez originales et riches. »

"Including a link to his Facebook profile shows originality and appreciation of how contemporary social networking sites like Facebook can potentially be used to attract and engage blog readers."

B. RUNNERS - BLOGS THAT RECEIVED CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE JURY

Category 1: Best French-speaking journalist's blog

Non-hierarchical classification:

- Edouard Tamba from Cameroun <http://edouardtamba.wordpress.com>
Globalement, je le fais dans l'intention d'« amplifier la voix de l'Afrique sur Internet à partir du Cameroun ». (...) il y est possible de se prononcer sur un ensemble de sujets, assumer ses prises de position, sans forcément engager la rédaction qui nous emploie. (...) Ensuite, je blogue parce que je considère Internet comme étant un point de convergence qui va conditionner l'avenir. Il se trouve que ses contenus font la part belle aux productions occidentales. La faute à la fracture numérique causée par des soucis de gouvernance (pas seulement publique), et de mentalités. Enfin, je blogue pour faire savoir ce que je sais faire. C'est une façon de s'exposer à la critique, d'élargir ses horizons, ses relations et d'enrichir ses savoirs.

- Ramata Sore from Burkina Faso <http://ramses1.blog4ever.com>

Je blogue pour échapper à la "censure" parce que dans mon journal je n'aurai pas pu de façon continuelle discuter infiniment sur un sujet donné à cause de l'espace, de l'actualité chaude qui supprime toujours celle froide et de la périodicité. Celui-ci est un bimensuel. Le blog par contre lui, est un espace illimité qui me permet de réagir immédiatement sur un fait, d'en discuter à l'infini et d'évoquer divers types de sujets. (...) Je publie selon l'actualité et surtout selon les infos que j'ai envie de diffuser. Ces infos choisies, je les enrichis et je les publie contrairement aux autres blogs de mon pays qui copient in extenso les publications parues sur le site web des journaux de la place. Je blogue donc je suis, dirai-je, par le feedback des lecteurs. Leur réaction me pousse à fouiller pour appréhender plus profondément les contours d'une problématique.

- Basile Niane from Senegal: www.senegalmedias.blogspot.com
J'avais envie de partager mon émission avec les auditeurs, leur donner une possibilité de pouvoir l'écouter sur le net d'où la naissance du « Sénégal qui bouge ». C'est un blog typiquement journalistique. Il est aussi ouvert à ceux qui veulent s'informer. Car le blog contient les dernières infos sur les TIC et sur toutes les infos en général. J'ai nommé ce blog « Le Sénégal qui bouge » pour montrer mon appartenance mais également pour promouvoir la culture et l'expertise sénégalaise dans le monde entier.

Category 2 - Best English-speaking journalist's blog

Non-hierarchical classification:

- Emmanuel Onyango from Tanzania, www.eonyango.blogspot.com
To mention a few of my interest, I blog because it helps keep me informed about many greatest passion to share what I have and hear others' experiences and opinions. I blog to make the society know of what is going on apart from making use of the new technology for mass media, therefore I do learn and want to learn more particularly on Information and Communications Technology issues which surrounds us. I blog because, being a writer it gives me better exposure and the opportunity to interact with my readers as well as honoring my writing skills so as to promote my journalistic work and mixing views among the audiences.
- Conrad Dube from Zimbabwe, <http://mwanawashe.wordpress.com>
My blog is dedicated to tell what Zimbabweans are going through everyday as I also survive in this country were the economy has virtually collapsed. I have worked for respectable media organisation in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Independent and the banned Daily News. I do not have broadband and I use internet cafes where congestion sometimes makes it difficult to upload pictures and let alone video. The cost of internet also limits me from spending more time on the internet to constantly include some features like links on the stories.
- Khaya Dlanga from South Africa: <http://khayav.com>
The reason I blog is because I felt that ordinary people's voices need to be heard, especially in my country of South Africa. One of the things that motivated me was the misinformation I found about South Africa on YouTube. Many people across the globe would send me emails on YouTube asking me if what they heard on videos about South Africa was true or not. I decided to give myself the responsibility of disproving the falsehoods I kept hearing about my country by vlogging, (video blogging). One of the videos I made has over 400 000 views. Because of my contribution to the website, I even had the honour of asking then Senator Barack Obama a question on YouTube.

Category 3 – Best African Civil Society Organization's Blog

Non-hierarchical classification:

- Réseau des médias africains en lutte contre le SIDA, la tuberculose et le paludisme www.remastp.org
Le Réseau Régional dénommé REMASTP de lutte contre le Sida, le Paludisme et la Tuberculose a été créée à l'occasion des premières assises des médias engagés dans la lutte contre le VIH et Sida organisés du 25 au 28 mars 2008 à Abidjan par le Réseau des médias des Arts et du Sport engagés dans la lutte contre le Sida en Côte d'Ivoire. (...) Après l'installation officielle du réseau, nous avons jugé bon de mettre en ligne un blog qui nous servira de cadre d'échange et de partage d'informations. Aujourd'hui, tous les membres publient leurs productions et réflexions sur les trois pandémies sur lesquelles nous travaillons.
- Penplusbytes – covering 2008 elections in Ghana
<http://www.ghanaelections2008.blogspot.com/>
Local content about Africa in general and Ghana is particular is very few on the Internet. The powerful western media will only cover African content only if it contains violence, a case in point is, the recent Ghana elections, because it was peaceful online coverage of this important elections was totally negligible. The

Ghana elections blog was nominated because it was one of the few places online where Ghanaian journalists had the opportunity to tell our own elections story.

- REgul-Telco-Afrik : ICT Regulation and reglementation, Senegal Sénégal. <http://www.regultelcoafrik.org>
My Blog talk about ICT and medias policies and regulation in Africa and the world in general. This space aggregates all the recent information about these two sectors (Medias and ICT) to allow to the visitor to have in only one website all the information and updates about ICT and Medias. Apart from me, other people participate to feed this space.
- 20mai.net, Cameroon - www.20mai.net
20mai.net est un blog participatif, ou plutôt un média citoyen orienté vers la libération de la parole des citoyens camerounais, né du constat que les magazines papier traditionnels avaient du mal à être libres du fait de la censure sans cesse présente au Cameroun. Ainsi, 20mai.net permet aux particuliers de publier leurs avis personnels sur des sujets de leur choix (respectant tout de même la législation) sur le site après s'être inscrits, et de discuter autour des articles publiés en toute liberté. A terme, **20mai.net** ambitionne de devenir une plateforme sur Internet où tous les camerounais auront l'intime conviction qu'ils peuvent s'y exprimer sans craindre de censure.

C – OTHER BLOGS

These blogs captured the attention of jury members individually, but were not unanimously selected for different reasons.

- Nigeria, Remmy Nweke www.itrealms.blogspot.com
- Benin, Martin Aihonnou <http://martinsaihonnou.blogg.org>
- Côte d'Ivoire, Nadine Kouamouo-Tchaptchet <http://babiwatch.ivoire-blog.com/>
- Vusi Gumede, South Africa www.thoughtleader.co.za/vusigumede
- Khaya Dlanga, South Africa <http://www.thoughtleader.co.za/khayadlanga>
- Shashank Bengali, Kenya <http://washingtonbureau.typepad.com/nairobi/>

The WAXAL -- Blogging Africa Awards (BAA) are an initiative of Panos Institute of West Africa (PIWA, www.panos-ao.org) with the partnership of Highway Africa (www.highwayafrica.com) and Global Voices (www.globalvoicesonline.org). WAXAL (pronounced WA-HAL) means "speak" in Wolof (Senegalese language) and the word captures the essence of the evolution of the worldwide web as a platform for conversation and for the raising of marginalized voices. For this first edition, the WAXAL Awards will seek to recognize the production of blogs by people working as journalists (from all kind of media: print, online, radio, TV) and by African organizations working to favour the production of alternative information and citizen expression. More information <http://blogs.haayo.org/waxal/>