

Positive news creates winners

'An HIV positive woman's rape ordeal turns into a testimony of hope'

'A man on death row is being kept alive by anti-retrovirals'

'Two people confront stigma and their courage liberates those around them'

These good news stories about people living with HIV have earned accolades for three Kenyan journalists, the producers of the first, second and third place stories in the radio category of the HIV and AIDS Red Ribbon Media Awards for Excellence in Journalism, 2007. What's more, the three journalists work in the same newsroom, they are all from the Catholic radio station, Radio Waumini, based in Nairobi. And all three are senior Internews trainees, which means they have attended two or more Internews workshops.

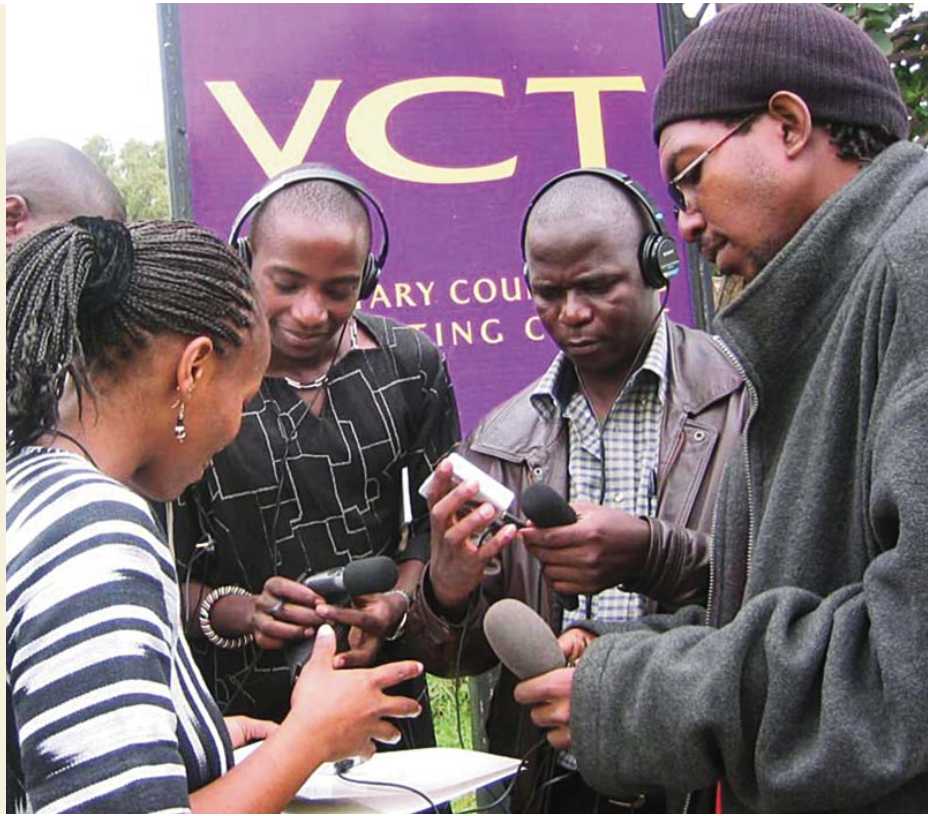
The first prize winner, Nicholas Waigwa says he was touched by the ordeal of an HIV positive woman, Rosalinda, who was raped, then discovered she was pregnant. Rosalinda decided she'd have the baby, enrolled in a PMTCT (prevention of mother to child transmission) programme and gave birth to baby Esther, who is HIV negative, thanks to a successful programme. "Journalists should stop at nothing to get their stories. We should remember that all ➤

Two of the winners, Nicholas Waigwa and Eudias Kigai, Radio Waumini



Journalists should stop at nothing to get their stories. We should remember that all that is known out there about HIV is as a result of the work of journalists – *Nicholas Waigwa*

Right, Internews trainees at a senior PMTCT workshop. Award winner Nicholas Waigwa in black shirt with headphones



► that is known out there about HIV is as a result of the work of journalists”, says Nicholas. His winning story was put together from material gathered at a PMTCT researcher event and from the field trip of an Internews senior journalist workshop.

The second prize winner is Nandika Amatieku, who submitted a series of two stories detailing the downs and ups of a death row prisoner. In her first story, he is in desperate need of anti-retroviral drugs; he may die of AIDS-related illnesses before being executed. In the second story, the changed Kenyan government policy means he gets access to treatment and is assured a better quality of life. “The people who sentenced him to death are keeping him alive, because his human rights have been recognized. The ironic twists in this story must have caught the judges’ attention”, says Nandika. Nandika traveled to Kodiaga prison in Kisumu in the West of Kenya, courtesy of two Internews travel grants.

The third story tracks two people’s experience with stigma. No one wants to buy food from an HIV positive widow as they believe she may have infected the goods at her kiosk in rural Kakamega. But she confronts stigma and teams up with a man who also learnt to tackle his HIV sta-

tus head on. Now they are helping others towards acceptance. “It’s a desperate situation initially, but now they give hope”, says Eudias Kigai, who traveled to Indagalasa village on an Internews travel grant to do the story.

The award organizers say the radio category attracted far more entries than other media categories. Entrants came from all over Kenya and these three stories stood out, because of a winning combination: a solid issue which is given life through the experiences of real people with whom we can identify.

Nicholas, Nandika and Eudias say the awards have re-energised them to look for more of the untold stories of HIV.

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