News



Doreen Ajiambo, Africa regional correspondent for Global Sisters Report, is honored at the Annual Journalism Excellence Awards, with Victor Bwire, the deputy chief executive officer, Media Council of Kenya. (Courtesy of Doreen Ajiambo)

by GSR Staff

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Doreen Ajiambo and Global Sisters Report were honored May 3 as first runner up in the Annual Journalism Excellence Awards, presented by the Media Council of Kenya during World Press Freedom Day.

AJEA is produced by the Media Council of Kenya and celebrates excellence and professionalism in the media industry.

"Being selected for this Annual Journalism Excellence Award means a lot to me as a journalist, especially a journalist reporting on religion," Ajiambo said. "It means my efforts have been recognized, and that the stories affecting human life can also be told accurately through a religious perspective. It is the first time a religious media organization has appeared on the final list among secular organizations in this country. It's also an honor for the Global Sisters Report to be recognized among many."

Ajiambo and Global Sisters Report were recognized in the digital category for this story about climate change: Africa cries out for 'loss and damage' funds to combat effects of climate change, published Dec. 1, 2023.



This photo of a child walking through the flooded water in Samburu, northern Kenya, was published Dec. 1. 2023, with Doreen Ajiambo's story, "Africa cries out for 'loss and damage' funds to combat effects of climate change" for Global Sisters Report. (GSR photo/Doreen Ajiambo)

"This recognition means that we have excellent journalism, and our work is recognized in the U.S. and local media. So this award is a win for me and for Global Sisters Report," Ajiambo added.

The event drew hundreds of delegates, including ambassadors, senior government officials, representatives of nongovernmental organizations and journalists, and was broadcast on all local television stations.

"Doreen has distinguished herself as a journalist and we are so pleased that her hard work is being honored," said Gail DeGeorge, editor of Global Sisters Report. "It is important to bring to light the human suffering and cost of climate change, as Catholic sisters have long been doing."

The story from the COP28 climate talks included an interview with Maryknoll Sr. Susan Nchubiri, who had warned governments and businesses that failing to implement the pledges they made during COP27 on loss and damage funds would lead to more deaths and suffering for those vulnerable to climate change.

Global Sisters Report and National Catholic Reporter previously were also honored by the Religion News Association for reporting in 2023.

In awards announced April 20, during the association's annual meeting held in Pittsburgh, GSR staffers Chris Herlinger, Doreen Ajiambo and Rhina Guidos, along with GSR freelancers Patrick Egwu, Thomas Scaria and Tawanda Karombo won third place in the Renner Award for Excellence in Enterprise and Serial Religion Reporting for the series "Hope Amid Turmoil: Sisters in Conflict Areas."

Brian Roewe, NCR's environment correspondent, won third place for magazine/nondaily newspaper religion reporting. NCR senior correspondent Heidi Schlumpf was named a finalist in the analysis and commentary categories.

The judges said of the yearlong "Hope Amid Turmoil" series, which focused on the ministries and witness of sisters in countries riven by conflict: "The breadth of these stories about Catholic women religious serving in different communities around the world takes this series far beyond the focus of a single religious tradition to highlight the range of issues facing people of faith and the way they live that faith through service. The choice of stories, the writing and the photography make for a complete package of superb journalism."

The U.S.-based Religion News Association is the premier professional association for journalists reporting on religion in American news media. The awards showcase religion journalism excellence in the news media among 13 categories of print, online, multiple media, broadcast and book entries.

The annual awards attract entries from both secular and nonsecular publications that include National Public Radio, The New York Times, The Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, the Associated Press, CNN, The Christian Science Monitor, Sojourners and Religion News Service.

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The "Hope Amid Turmoil" series also was recently awarded highest honors in the Religion Communicators Council's 2024 DeRose-Hinkhouse Memorial Awards.

Contributions to the series by Chris Herlinger, GSR's international correspondent, won Best in Class in the "Periodicals" category during the council's recent convention, held April 4-6 in Louisville, Kentucky.

In addition, a story by Ajiambo has been longlisted in the One World Media Awards. Her 2023 story, "Sisters foster healing for survivors and perpetrators of Sierra Leone's civil war," was also part of GSR's "Hope Amid Turmoil" series.

Ajiambo's story was one of 540 entries from 117 countries vying for the award, and is among 10 publications included in the longlist print category, including international publications such as The Guardian, Reuters and The Economist. The

finalists will be named May 8.

The longlisted entries are available to view on One World Media's website. The awards ceremony will take place June 19 at Curzon Soho, London, and will be livestreamed.