



## Greetings from Kampala, Uganda.

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) held a training session for all partners in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. CHARM was represented by Maria Kaddu, our coordinator. In the pages below she shares how the two-day training session went.

Additionally, we had an eye-opening conversation with an award winning South African journalist Deejay Palesa Manaleng about how the media portrays and tells the stories of people with disabilities (PWDs). Ms Palesa is the current lead for Wits University research on how the media portrays PWDs. She advocates for the inclusion of PWDs in the storytelling of natural disasters, emphasizing that their perspectives and experiences are crucial for comprehensive coverage. She also stresses the importance of representing PWDs in the media profession through the adoption of assistive technologies that can facilitate their participation and contribution.

The 2024 Hub UnConference is scheduled for 24 to 25 September 2024 at Moto Republik in Harare, Zimbabwe. As the country's leading annual gathering on digital media, civic tech, and the creative economy, the event will focus on the collective pursuit of progress, innovation and positive social change during challenging times, under the theme "Level Up". The meetup, which always draws participants from all over Africa, is a platform to discuss trends, events and solutions in the digital arena.

This is a critical conversation in the face of war, fake news, and climate breakdown across the African continent, particularly with the role of digital media. CHARM is proud to be among the partners of this event, which is setting an important trend for digital freedoms in Africa.

CHARM's full team meeting is set to take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on the 15- 16 October 2024. The two-day meeting will be a chance for the team to reunite, strategise and reflect on its successes and consider areas of improvement.

Enjoy your read

## The Coordination team



A snippet on how the last full team meeting, held in Kampala, Uganda, went. The team is slated to meet once more this October in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.





# CHARM

Consortium for Human Rights and Media in Sub-Saharan Africa

## Empowering Gender Equality: Insights from the Gender Training in Addis Ababa

On 28–29 August 2024, the Embassy of Sweden in Ethiopia organized a gender training workshop at the Ramada Hotel in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with 41 participants from SIDA staff and partners in attendance. The workshop was a pivotal step towards promoting gender equality in development initiatives and signaled the growing recognition of the importance of gender equality in sustainable development. Empirical research has linked empowering women has been directly linked to productivity and in turn economic growth.

The training, led by gender expert Viktoria Saxby, delved into key gender concepts, gender-transformative approaches, and practical tools for gender analysis and budgeting. Through interactive sessions, participants learned how to integrate gender perspectives at every stage of program design, implementation, and evaluation, ensuring that development efforts benefit both women and men equally.

A standout discussion held focused on the power of gender transformative approaches—strategies that actively challenge and shift harmful gender norms. By reshaping societal structures, participants explored how development programs can go beyond gender mainstreaming and foster long-term, positive change. Participants gained valuable skills and a deeper understanding of how to integrate gender perspectives into their work, promoting more inclusive and equitable development.

A key takeaway was the significance of gender budgeting, an approach that ensures resources are allocated equitably. Through practical exercises, participants saw how gender-sensitive budgets can address disparities, especially in sectors like education and healthcare. Morocco's successful gender budgeting model was highlighted as a prime example of how these strategies can improve women's access to essential services.

The training concluded with key recommendations, including the need to engage men and boys in gender equality efforts and enhance leadership for gender-sensitive practices.

The Embassy of Sweden reaffirmed its commitment to gender equality as a central pillar of its development cooperation, paving the way for more inclusive growth in Ethiopia and beyond.



*Participants at the recent training by SIDA on Gender equality, held at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.*

*By reshaping societal structures, participants explored how development programs can go beyond gender mainstreaming and foster long-term, positive change. Participants gained valuable skills and a deeper understanding of how to integrate gender perspectives into their work, promoting more inclusive and equitable development*



## **PWD should own their stories- WITS researcher proposes.**

In 2014, Palesa Deejay Manaleng's life changed due to a cycling accident that left her paralyzed from the waist down. Facing both physical and emotional challenges, she adapted to life in a wheelchair and found strength in para-athletics. Despite these challenges, she has continued to break barriers, demonstrating that disability does not limit one's potential. She now advocates for greater inclusion and accessibility for people living with disabilities, embodying perseverance and courage.

As a part of her advocacy work, Palesa is currently leading the research on Persons living with Disabilities, (PWDs) in South Africa conducted by Wits University under the CHARM program. From the research findings PWDs have been sidelined when it comes to the way their stories are told in the media, including having their voices stifled in situations of national calamities in South Africa.

"There's a parent who said to me that the biggest problem with how society treats people with disabilities is because of the media. They portray their stories as people who are cursed, weak, helpless and a burden, and treated harshly due to what they have seen in the media," said Palesa, the Journalist.

She points out that the assumption that there are no persons with visible or invisible disabilities in any catastrophe has effectively silenced them.

"We have witnessed informal settlements razed down, strikes by miners and other mass actions in Johannesburg and it's hard to believe that there are no PWD in these scenarios. Journalists should be deliberate in including them in every storyline instead of looking for how to separate them as the only way to change society," said Palesa, Journalist.

In her view, Deejay thinks that media houses should appoint PWDs to leadership and management positions. This would improve issues related to reasonable accommodation and the development of policies for them. She notes that when it comes to employment of PWDs in media houses, many think they are doing PWD a favor, despite their qualifications, including academic credentials.

She advocates for the adoption of new technologies for journalists who are PWD, emphasizing that such advancements can significantly enhance their ability to contribute effectively



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For a journalist in a wheelchair who cannot be in the middle of a protest running up and down chasing people, dodging bullets, a drone gives me the ability to record everything and still be able to contribute to the newsroom,”

Palesa Deejay Manaleng,  
Journalist.

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## MAGAMBA gears up for the annual Hub UnConference.

The tenth annual Hub UnConference is set to take place on 24- 25 September 2024 in Moto Republik, in Zimbabwe. This annual event attracts students, media practitioners, new media startups and tech enthusiasts. This year's theme will "Level Up," a call for young people to stay ahead of emerging trends such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and adopt technology for the common good. The focus will be on emerging trends in media, climate justice, civic tech, and AI.

The event will feature a variety of activities and sessions, including series of fireside chats, lightning talks, captivating showcases, panel discussions, and masterclasses. Attendees can look forward to cutting-edge talks from a range of speakers, such as Kenyan Comic, Justine Wanda, Senegalese musician, Makhtar Fall widely known as Xuman, Dr. Millie Phiri from Conversation Africa (South Africa), Antonio Kisemboi from Media-Challenge Initiative Hub (Uganda), Steve Horn from Politically Awah (South Africa), Nkosinathi Mcetywa from Civic Tech Innovation Network, and leading Zimbabwean academic Professor Nehemiah Chivandikwa.

"This year promises some exciting new elements to the programme, as we investigate how, amid conflict, misinformation, and environmental crises, we can leverage digital media, civic technology, and artistic activism to 'level up' by amplifying the voices of youth, women, and marginalized communities, fostering impactful dialogues, and seeking solutions to significant societal and global challenges," Takudzwa Musakasa, Coordinator, Hub UnConference.



The 2024 Hub UnConference is scheduled for 24 to 25 September 2024 at Moto Republik in Harare, Zimbabwe. The annual gathering brings experts in the digital space to discuss on trends and events in the digital arena. It attracts participants from all over Africa.



## Upcoming events:

The AIJC African Investigative Journalist of the Year Award is now open, offering a prize of US\$5 000. African journalists can submit entries showcasing investigative reporting that reveal untold stories, hold authorities to account, question public figures and serve the public interest. Entries should be from any African media platform and must have been published or broadcast in African media between 1 July 2023 to 1 July 2024. The deadline for submissions is 14:00 on 27 September 2024. The award ceremony will take place at the African Investigative Journalism Conference in Johannesburg, South Africa.



Civil Rights Defenders is seeking qualified consultants to conduct an end-of-project evaluation for a recently concluded project in South Sudan. This evaluation aims to assess the impact and effectiveness of the human rights initiatives supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The successful consultant will provide valuable insights into the project's outcomes, contributing to the advancement of human rights in the region. Read more about the opportunity [here](#).





## About CHARM

CONSORTIUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND MEDIA IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (CHARM) aims to promote and protect human rights, civic space and media freedoms in Sub-Saharan Africa.

CHARM is a partnership of CIVICUS, Civil Rights Defenders, DefendDefenders, Fojo Media Institute, The Wits Centre for Journalism, Réseau des Femmes Leaders pour le Développement, and Magamba Network.

The partnership acknowledges the role that a free and active media and civil society have in the protection of robust democracies and the promotion of national development.

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