

NATIONAL RECORD

By PETER MWANGI

THE Ministry of Information and Communications, in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and key stakeholders, has developed a programme to train journalists and elevate the status of media as agents for development.

Information and Communications minister Samuel Poghisio said development communication is a concept that involves creating mechanisms to broaden public access to information on reforms and strengthening clients' ability to listen to their constituencies and empowering grassroots support.

In a speech read on his behalf by Permanent Secretary Biunge Ndemo during the launch of the programme, Poghisio said that the role of the media in today's world should go beyond public watchdog and agenda setting to that of exercising good governance.

Ministry, UNDP to train scribes on development

"In today's globalised world the overlapping objectives are increasingly clear: a duty to exercise good governance. Gender equality is integral to all the indicators of good governance," he said.

He said that media should ensure that there is legitimacy, accountability, competence, human rights and the rule of law, safeguarding the environment and ensuring social inclusion in governance.

In this regard, the minister noted that this initiative will outreach the culture of communication for development through the promotion of policy

and regulatory frameworks as well as support for the development of a free and independent media.

He further said that it would also revitalise the practice of communication for development through the promotion of professionalism, internal checks and balances to ensure a responsible media that is a tool for development.

"Communication for development means a broader canvas of tools and strategies to ensure stronger governance and participation and should be promoted by UN agencies as an important part of development

effort," he said.

The Media Council of Kenya, University of Nairobi School of Journalism and Editors Guild will develop the project so as to create avenue for sharing of information, and addressing of issues, where local partners can be brought together to resolve specific gaps in media profession.

The PS further said that through the initiative, journalists are expected to abide by their code of conduct and media houses to be accountable of their programming content and initiate and share substantive action in pursuing the national development goal.

Ndemo said media in Kenya

has made a major progress in addressing key issues that are important in peace building and the development of the country, adding that in the next two weeks the Information and Communication Bill (ICT) will be tabled in Parliament.

He challenged media institutions to ensure an objective and comprehensive reporting by positively raising and criticising issues.

On her part, Elizabeth Lwanga, Resident Representative, UNDP-Kenya challenged the media to be analytical and show credibility in their reporting if they wish to be recognised by the society.

Lwanga urged journalists to show patriotism to the country instead of isolating themselves from the rest of the society, adding that this will be through an in-depth reporting of the issues that are key to national development.

The project will mentor young Kenyan journalists aged 20 to 30 years through a media fellows component, to be a new crop of well informed and analytical development writers and broadcasters.

The University of Nairobi will develop a curriculum on development communication to ensure a comprehensive training in that field.