

MDG Press Award results

Mexico City, September, 28 - UNDP awarded journalists from Brazil, Honduras, Mexico and Uruguay for producing the best news articles on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The winners of the first edition of the Latin America and MDG 2007 Journalism Award were selected by a five member international jury, whose decision was released today.

The series "Working Children" written by a team led by Marcela Turati, reporter of the Mexican newspaper Excelsior, won the first prize of the contest. Organized by UNDP and the news agency Inter Press Service (IPS), the first prize is worth US\$5,000.

The series describing how hundreds of children risk their life in Mexico's farming fields was selected among 466 works that were submitted in the contest, which seeks to encourage regional media to spread the word about the challenges associated with accomplishing the MDGs, which include halving poverty by 2015.

"The reports submitted to the contest are a representative sample of what is done today by Latin America journalists around the MDGs and the great effort and creativity they are investing on it", pointed out Rebeca Grynspan, UNDP regional director for Latin America.

The second prize, worth US\$2,500, was awarded to Bruna Cabral de Vasconcelos and her team for the series of articles about health and gender entitled "Faces of Maternity", published by the newspaper Jornal do Comercio from Brasil.

The third prize was shared by Zósimo Camacho and his team, of the Mexican magazine "Contralínea", for the series "Dying in Poverty", and Paulo Aurelio Martinelli and his team, of the Brazilian newspaper Correio Popular, for the series "Mata Atlantica, the forgotten forest". Each team will receive US\$1,000.

We consider that the Award's result "is exceptional, due to the great number of stories submitted, the quality of the information included and the critical look, accuracy and forceful arguments of the articles. Among a great amount of high-level works, it was really difficult to decide on the winners", the jury commented when informing its decision.

The jury also congratulated the applicants on exercising a kind of journalism capable of creating awareness on the main issues associated with the MDGs: poverty, hunger, child education, maternal mortality rate, gender disparity, fight against AIDS- HIV and environmental degradation, among others.

The fourth prize was awarded to César Enrique Bianchi, for the article "The Small Comcar", published in the Uruguayan newspaper "El País".

The fifth prize was shared by Humberto Padgett León, for the article "Extreme Violence at School" of Emmequis Magazine from Mexico, and César Antonio Rivera Irías, for the series "Tolupanes, Haven for the Abandoned", of the newspaper "El Heraldito" from Honduras".

The fourth and fifth prizes are not worth an economic award and, just like the others, will be published in a book. The awarding ceremony will be held in October in Mexico City.

The jury was made up by the Mexican writer Carlos Monsiváis; the Cuban author Leonardo Padura; the president of Colombia Press Freedom Foundation, María Teresa Ronderos; IPS general director Mario Lubetkin, and UNDP regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean, Rebeca Grynspan.

Carlos Monsiváis defined as "productive and moving" the experience of reading the articles. "They are truly exceptional", the writer said when highlighting "the level of observation, sharpness, narrative skill and respect for the rules of investigative journalism".

The eight goals were adopted in 2000 during the United Nations Millennium Summit by the heads of government of 189 countries, to eradicate poverty around the world. This year is the midway point in the timeline, whose completion date was set at 2015.