

# Copyright workshop back to centre stage

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INVESTMENT in the Creative Industry (CI), is crucial so as to ensure a bright future for the East African Region. Hence, the belief that investing in the culture sector will help create job opportunities and income generating activities for many people, not least, youngsters. Such is the belief held by Norway, according to their locally-based Ambassador, Hanne-Marie Kaarstad.

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The Scandinavian country's envoy expressed such sentiments, at the opening of a 10-day training programme, on collective management of copyright and related rights, here in Dar es Salaam, last Monday. She then went on to suggest that in order to support all the related creative entrepreneurs that are in the culture sector, there is a need to enhance and develop a professional management culture.

“The speed of technical development and innovation in the communication industry certainly brings up new challenges but also opportunities, if handled well,” she stated. Therefore, the envoy suggested, it is important to have a functioning copyright management system in operation, to ensure the “right holders” are compensated for the use of their works.

This, she maintains, is also in line with the UN Human Rights Declaration Article 27.2 and the Bern and Rome Conventions for the “Protection of Copyright”.

Be that as it may, Amb Kaarstad also stated that unfortunately, today there are many examples where public broadcasters “do not pay royalties” to musicians, when they use their music.

It is for such reasons that she suggests there being a need to strengthen the CI’s position in this regard, by increasing public awareness of the copyright system.

This, she says is a “fundamental guarantor of the rights of authorship”. It is because of this that she also thanked the Norwegian Copyright Development Association (NORCODE), the African Regional Intellectual Property Organisation (ARIPO) and the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) academy, for what she referred to, as the “important job” they are doing. That is to empower and protect creative entrepreneurs.

This point was taken-up by the Chief Executive Officer and Copyright Administrator of the Copyright Society of Tanzania (COSOTA), Doreen Sinare, when she addressed participants.

She started by thanking NORCODE for their continuous support in copyright related training for African countries and generally raising the copyright profile of Tanzania and many other African countries. She also reminded participants that the training programme, they were going to embark on, had been tailored for persons in a leading position in government and collective management organisations.

It had been deliberately designed with an aim to understanding collective management works in different types of creative industries and how best to have systems operating for the better economically and socially, in a sustainable development manner.

The participants of the training programme are drawn from Uganda, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Malawi, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Namibia and Zambia, together with the Tanzanian Mainland and Isles of Zanzibar.

These, Sinare said, are well versed in their own capacity and have the necessary expertise to conduct the training, being from Africa together with developed countries.

“This is a positive sign that our continent has not lagged behind and a sign that we are one, when it comes to copyright, so that we can share experiences to help our offices perform better,” she said.

The COSOTA’s CEO made it clear that such training was being done in Africa for the first time. Previously, she proudly added, people on the Continent had to travel outside to get what has now come on their doorsteps.

“I’m of the view that although we all enjoy participating in these trainings outside of Africa, seeing that everyone likes travelling, the set-up of doing the training in African countries will also help the host country to raise awareness in copyright issues,” she suggested.

Before finishing her address to participants, Sinare expressed her gratitude to the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), for accepting to conduct an awareness seminar on “Copyright in the Digital Environment”, for their stakeholders this coming Monday and Tuesday.

No wonder Amb Kaarstad had referred to the gathering as being “timely” and “important” in support of a professional and well-organised cultural sector here and in other countries in the region.

It was for this reason that she was very pleased that their Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the University of Agder, in Norway, had been instrumental in making the training programme a reality.

“Both the Tanzania and Norwegian government recognises the importance of culture for development. There’s currently a great potential of contribution to the social-economic growth hidden in the culture sector.

A vibrant cultural sector is an important building brick in developing open functional and democratic communities and societies,” she added. Culture, she maintains is about identity and also basic communications across all the divides that might exist in societies, such as gender, age, language and ethnic differences.

She also reiterated her belief that investment into the culture sector and the CI’s will be a crucial investment in ensuring a bright future for Tanzania and the East African Region.

Source

<http://www.dailynews.co.tz/index.php/sport/27-entertainment/54395-copyright-workshop-back-to-centre-stage>

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