News



Sr. Jane Wakahiu (right) and religious sisters participated in the launch of the Communications Network for Catholic Sisters in Nairobi, Kenya, on June 14. Wakahiu holds a book that outlines a code of conduct for sister communicators and resources to help them improve their journalistic skills. (Courtesy of AOSK)



by Doreen Ajiambo

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

NAIROBI, Kenya — June 24, 2024

Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Dozens of religious sisters under the Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya (or AOSK) gathered on June 14 at the Radix Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya's capital, for the official launch of the Communication Network for Catholic Sisters. The project, CNCS, empowers sisters working in their ministries to tell their own stories through media such as print, broadcast and digital.

Sponsored by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation's Catholic Sisters Initiative, the project organized a two-day workshop before the launch to train 13 sisters who are already involved in communication and media. After completing the program, they can also teach other sisters to tell their own stories as well.

Sr. Jane Wakahiu of the Little Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi lauded the project, saying it's important to religious sisters in their evangelization, especially in an age where media plays a vital role in shaping public opinion and influencing people's lives.

Wakahiu reminded the sisters of their contribution towards helping the poor and vulnerable in the community through education, health care, advocacy, social service and other ministries. However, she said, their contributions are rarely reported, and "therefore, it is urgent to have sisters themselves tell their stories through their own eyes and understanding."

"For many years, sisters' work has not been recognized or celebrated as much. The sisters, too, rarely tell their own stories of their contribution to evangelization," said Wakahiu, the associate vice president of program operations and head of the Catholic Sisters Initiative at the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

Wakahiu encouraged religious sisters to tell the world their stories in a positive manner that gives hope to everyone, unlike the mainstream media, which, she said, mostly concentrates on negative stories. "Let's be a source of hope by bringing in positive news since the world is now full of negativity. We can be the light of the world through media," she told the sisters.



Religious sisters pose for a group photo during the launch of the Communications Network for Catholic Sisters in Nairobi, Kenya, June 14. (Courtesy of AOSK)

Sr. Josephine Kangogo, the chairperson of AOSK, commended the Hilton foundation for funding the project and urged the sisters to use the opportunity to gain journalistic knowledge and skills that will help them uniquely tell their stories. (The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation is a primary funder of Global Sisters Report.)

"It is your time to shine and tell your own stories in your own way," she told the sisters during the launch. Kangogo, the provincial superior of the Daughters of the Sacred Heart, encouraged sisters to strive and tell the numerous untold positive stories of their congregations, noting that "it's the goal of the CNCS project and the Hilton foundation for our stories to be told well and by us."

The sisters reflected on how they would use various media platforms in their church, such as radio, television and social media, to communicate internally in their congregations and engage with the outside world on their church activities and projects.

Advertisement

Sr. Henriette Anne Owino of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Anna said the two-day training would positively impact her ministry as a communicator. "From the knowledge and skills I gained from this training, including news writing skills, I will become a better journalist," she said. "I have also gained knowledge in photography, and all these skills will benefit my congregation and the local church. I will now be able to offer communication services with greater confidence."

Sr. Ann Nayieso of the Little Sisters of St. Joseph, Kenya, told GSR that the training had helped her to finally achieve her dream of being a communicator. She noted that training will help her improve her knowledge of online media and artificial intelligence and how she can effectively do her work as a journalist.

"This training has aroused my interest in using social media and helped me overcome the fears I had about using social media," she said. "Now I can publish stories about religious events on social media."