News

Jemima Cheruto bends to fetch water outside her home in Ortum, northern Kenya. Like many women in the region, she once relied on livestock but is now adapting to the effects of climate change. (Michael Kwena)

by GSR Staff

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For the second year in a row, Global Sisters Report's Kenya-based Africa regional correspondent Doreen Ajiambo has been honored for her reporting on climate justice and women of faith during the United Nations climate summit, or COP30.

The back-to-back prestigious honor comes from the Covering Climate Now Journalism Awards, which recognize outstanding reporting on the climate crisis from around the world. Ajiambo won in the International Relations category.

Her award-winning stories, in a series called "African Voices, Women of Faith, and Frontline Communities at COP30," centered on women in frontline communities who know firsthand the loss and damage of irreversible consequences of climate change and are demanding representation and equity in global negotiations.

"Ajiambo surveys three decades of COP summits, showing the widening gap between promises and action," the award states. "And she introduces us to faith leaders who are challenging governments on their continued support for fossil fuels, framing climate inaction as a moral failure."

Contest officials said coverage of the COP summits is usually focused on parts per million and annual limits, but Ajiambo's stories are about how those affect real people.

"Judges applauded Ajiambo for bringing underrepresented perspectives into the climate diplomacy discourse; whereas COP coverage often leans technical and bureaucratic, they added, 'this is a compassionate and morally forceful package' that imbues the proceedings with the weight and meaning they deserve," they wrote.

The more than 1,200 entries in the sixth-annual contest were judged by a panel of 120 journalists from 30 countries. Organized by Covering Climate Now, a global journalism initiative, the awards are a globally recognized standard for excellence in climate storytelling.

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Ajiambo said it is particularly meaningful to her that African climate stories are being recognized internationally, as she tries in her reporting to go beyond negotiations

and statistics to show what climate change actually means for ordinary people and how communities, including Catholic sisters, are responding to the crisis.

"I am really deeply honored to receive this award for the second consecutive year in the same category," Ajiambo said. "For me, the recognition is also about the people whose stories I've been privileged to tell, especially religious women, faith communities and people on the frontlines of climate change in Africa. Their experiences can sometimes be overshadowed in global climate discussions, including at COP, so I'm grateful that this reporting is helping bring their voices into that conversation."

She said this kind of recognition enables more reporting of this kind.

"This award gives me confidence that the work I am doing — connecting the experiences of ordinary people affected by climate change to conversations on the global stage — matters," Ajiambo said. "It strengthens my determination to continue pursuing climate change reporting, a passion I have had for years."

CCNow co-founder Kyle Pope said climate reporting is more important than ever.

"Lifting up excellence in climate reporting is particularly important this year, as some newsrooms around the world have retreated from climate coverage even as the effects of a warming planet become more urgent," Pope said in the awards announcement. "This work offers a blueprint for re-engaging with the climate story."

Below are Ajiambo's award-winning stories honored this year:

- 'We are asking the world to act': African women on frontlines of climate change demand justice at COP30;
- For 30 years, leaders have promised climate action. The Earth has waited in vain.
- Faith leaders confront the world's fossil fuel hypocrisy at COP30.

You can read her stories awarded last year here, here and here.

Covering Climate Now was co-founded in 2019 by Columbia Journalism Review and The Nation magazine in association with the Guardian and WNYC in New York City.