



IBA CHAMPIONS FAIR AND RESPONSIBLE ELECTION COVERAGE

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ABOUT THE IBA

The Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) was established through an Act of Parliament No. 17 of 2002, which was amended by the IBA (Amendment) Act No. 26 of 2010 and No. 18 of 2017. The main function is to regulate the broadcasting industry in Zambia.

IBA VISION

An effective and efficient regulator that ensures a quality and professional broadcasting industry in Zambia.

IBA MISSION

To promote professionalism and enhanced standards of the broadcasting industry through effective regulation

FUNCTIONS

- To regulate the broadcasting industry in Zambia;
- To grant, renew, suspend, and cancel broadcasting licences for radio and TV stations;
- To develop regulations for the broadcasting sector;
- To ensure programming standards are followed by broadcasting stations in Zambia;
- To receive, investigate and decide on complaints concerning broadcasting services including public broadcasting services; and
- To collect and administer Television levy.

CORE VALUES

Commitment; Excellence; Transparency; Accountability; Integrity; and Innovation.

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Foreword from the DG

It is with great pleasure that I present the January–June 2026 edition of the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Digest, which captures key developments, milestones, and initiatives that have shaped the broadcasting sector during the first half of the year. This edition reflects the Authority's continued commitment to fostering ethical broadcasting, strengthening stakeholder engagement, and advancing the growth and modernisation of Zambia's broadcasting landscape.

The first half of 2026 has been a period of heightened activity for the Authority, marked by preparations for the General Elections scheduled for 13th August 2026 and significant strides in strengthening Zambia's broadcasting sector. The IBA remained steadfast in promoting responsible, fair, and ethical broadcasting, recognising the sector's critical role in safeguarding democratic processes and ensuring citizens' access to accurate, balanced, and credible information.

Public awareness remained central to the Authority's work. Through participation in the World Consumer Rights Day commemorations in Kabwe and the Kuomboka Traditional Ceremony in Mongu, the IBA engaged communities on their rights and the complaints process. These efforts strengthened visibility and advanced the Authority's 2027 strategic goal of broadening visibility.

To strengthen consumer protection



and accessibility, the Authority introduced the IBA Online Complaints Portal, a milestone initiative designed to improve efficiency, transparency, and accessibility in complaint handling. This innovation modernises regulatory processes and fosters greater public trust.

The Authority reinforced collaboration with stakeholders to address issues such as misleading advertising, while guiding the

sector on the responsible use of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and deepfakes.

As Zambia approaches the August polls, the IBA calls upon all broadcasters to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, accuracy, and fairness in their coverage. By doing so, the sector will contribute to a peaceful, credible, and inclusive electoral process, reinforcing public trust in both media and democracy.

Moving into the second half of 2026, the Authority remains committed to fostering a broadcasting sector that is professional, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of the Zambian public.

I invite you to explore this edition of the IBA Digest for deeper insights into our work and the evolving broadcasting landscape.

Webster Malido
DIRECTOR GENERAL

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Group photo at the Election Reporting Workshop held by IBA in Choma, Southern Province.

IBA CHAMPIONS FAIR AND RESPONSIBLE ELECTION COVERAGE

INTRODUCTION

AS Zambia prepares for the August 13 2026 general elections, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) reaffirmed its commitment to an ethical and professional broadcasting sector by convening a landmark Election Reporting Workshop in Choma, Southern Province. The event brought together broadcasters from across the country to sharpen their skills and reinforce their role as guardians of fairness, accuracy, and integrity during the electoral process.

One of the key milestones of the workshop was the launch of the IBA Complaint Portal, hosted on the Authority's website. Designed to enhance efficiency and transparency, the portal modernised the complaint-handling process enshrined in the IBA Act by ensuring that both the Authority and stations addressed public concerns more effectively.

MEDIA AT THE HEART

The workshop was designed to highlight the central role of the media in shaping public understanding and participation in democratic processes. Facilitators from the IBA, Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ), PANOS, and the Zambia Police (ZP) guided participants through sessions that underscored the importance of

balanced reporting in safeguarding the credibility of the broadcasting sector and the electoral process.

Main areas of focus included: legal and regulatory frameworks governing broadcasting and anticipated changes under the new IBA Act, electoral laws and compliance requirements, ethical dilemmas faced by journalists in politically charged environments, and best practices in fact-checking, source verification, and balanced reporting.

Throughout the sessions, facilitators emphasised that credibility remained the media's most valuable currency. Broadcasters were urged to remain professional, verify information rigorously, and resist ethical lapses that could erode public trust. Emerging challenges such as misinformation, disinformation, and the influence of social media were also addressed, with participants encouraged to adopt strategies that counter these threats while keeping up to date with trends.

VOICE OF LEADERSHIP

Officiating at the workshop was the former Minister of Information and Media, Hon. Cornelius Mweetwa, MP, who reaffirmed the government's commitment to media reforms in the country. The Minister cited the enactment

of the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act No. 25 of 2025 and the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation Act No. 26 of 2025 as milestones in strengthening the Sector.

“As the country heads toward the August 2026 elections, I urge the media to exercise the highest standards of responsibility. This means avoiding the dissemination of unverified information, rejecting hate speech and inflammatory content, and upholding integrity by ensuring that all information shared with the public is accurate, balanced, and thoroughly verified,” The Minister remarked.

IBA COMMITMENT

In his welcoming remarks, IBA Board Chairperson Mr. Chikosola Chuula explained that the Workshop and the associated focus areas were carefully designed in response to compliance monitoring and public feedback. “Through our monitoring of broadcast content, experience and feedback from the public, we have identified gaps that we think could be addressed through training like this workshop,” Mr Chikosola said.

The IBA also stressed its readiness to work with broadcasting stations to achieve professionalism in the Sector. The Workshop was one of the Authority’s 2026 strategic activities aimed at strengthening the broadcasting sector ahead of the August polls.

ZP AND ECZ VIEW

Zambia Police spokesperson, Mr. Godfrey Chalabi, reminded journalists of the risks associated with covering the electoral process. Mr. Chalabi emphasised ZP’s commitment to strengthening media safety through training in human rights and journalist protection. “Journalists and police must collaborate to ensure safe, orderly, and transparent election coverage.”

He underscored the importance of journalists adhering to established protocols, including obtaining accreditation from relevant institutions, displaying accreditation cards at all times, and introducing themselves to commanders in the field.

Meanwhile, the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) highlighted the challenges posed by social media during elections, particularly the spread of misinformation and disinformation, and misinformation. The Commission



PARTICIPANTS at the Election Reporting Workshop held by IBA in Choma, Southern Province.

shared best practices for mitigating the risks of these challenges.

BROADCASTERS’ REFLECTIONS

Participants welcomed the workshop as timely, acknowledging that broadcasters faced pressure during the elections.

“The effort by the Independent Broadcasting Authority IBA Management to bring together all Media heads and representatives from all ten provinces of Zambia under the burner election reporting, for me, I looked at as a great idea aimed at uniting us Media practitioners in the Country,” Kenmark Broadcasting Network (KBN) Station Manager Innocent Phiri commented.

“Yes, such workshops are very important in the way that they give us a deep insight about journalists to be extremely conscious about disseminating information which is not authenticated by ECZ,” Radio Lyambai Station Manager Joseph Ngenda remarked.

And Cloud FM Editor in Chief Wilson Pondamali observed that such workshops would be crucial as Zambia heads to the polls in August. He called for continuous engagement among stakeholders to sustain ethical conduct, especially in the face of artificial intelligence.

CONCLUSION

As Zambia prepares for the upcoming elections, the Choma workshop stands as a timely intervention. It reinforced the idea that ethical reporting is not optional; it is a cornerstone of democratic governance. The IBA pledged to continue rolling out similar initiatives across the country, ensuring that every broadcaster is equipped to deliver coverage that informs, educates, and empowers citizens.

DEEPAKES: OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS FOR BROADCASTING



DEEPFAKE technology is reshaping broadcasting by simultaneously offering innovative storytelling opportunities, but also posing serious risks to credibility, ethics, and public trust.

Broadcasters, therefore, face the dual challenge of harnessing the creative potential of deepfakes while defending against misinformation and manipulation.

WHAT ARE DEEPAKES?

Deepfakes are AI-generated synthetic media - video, audio, or images that convincingly mimic real people or events. This technology relies on neural networks trained on large datasets to produce realistic but fabricated audiovisual material or images. The term was coined in 2017 but now encompasses a wide range of manipulated audiovisual material.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR BROADCASTERS

Deepfakes, for broadcasters, present notable opportunities. They can enable innovation in storytelling by recreating historical figures or dramatising events for educational

programming. They also enhance visual effects and immersive narratives that appeal to younger, tech-savvy audiences.

Additionally, deepfakes can simulate scenarios that help journalists and students learn about ethical reporting and misinformation detection.

THREATS TO BROADCASTING

The opportunities presented by deepfakes are counterbalanced by serious ethical and credibility challenges. In broadcasting, Deepfakes can result in the spread of false narratives, such as fabricated statements or fake news clips, resulting in widespread misinformation. Further, malicious actors may exploit deepfakes to destabilise societies by influencing discourse.

These threats risk eroding public trust in broadcasting by casting doubt on the authenticity of broadcasts, thereby undermining the credibility of the sector.

In Zambia, the Independent Broadcasting Authority, as the broadcasting regulator, has a critical role in promoting ethical

broadcasting, accountability, fairness, accuracy, and responsible content dissemination. The emergence of deepfake technology reinforces the importance of broadcasters adhering to professional and programming standards that safeguard the public against misinformation, manipulation, and harmful content.

STRATEGIES AGAINST DEEPAKES

While deepfakes may be difficult to detect using conventional verification methods, new strategies and verification tools are increasingly becoming available.

One such strategy is frame-by-frame analysis. This reveals unnatural facial movements, inconsistent lighting, or glitches around edges. Another strategy is Audio irregularities, such as robotic pacing, odd intonation, or abrupt cuts. This equally signals possible manipulation.

Reverse image and video search tools, including Google Reverse Image Search and InVID, help trace the origins of files and reveal whether content has appeared in other contexts. Metadata inspection can expose tampering through missing or inconsistent data.

Emerging AI detection tools, such as Microsoft's Video Authenticator, Deepware Scanner, and Sensity AI, further assist by identifying manipulation signatures left by deepfake software.

BEST PRACTICES FOR BROADCASTERS

To maintain credibility and stay ahead of misinformation, newsrooms must adopt proactive measures. These

include establishing verification protocols to ensure consistent standards for authenticating visual and audio content. Another strategy is training journalists in digital literacy, which equips them with the skills to identify fake media and use forensic tools effectively.

Collaborating with cybersecurity specialists and AI researchers provides access to early warnings and advanced detection methods. Providing context in reporting, clarifying what is real, what is fake,

and how verification was conducted, builds transparency and trust. Finally, informing audiences through media literacy initiatives empowers the public to critically assess content and resist disinformation.

Broadcasters must also ensure compliance with regulatory and ethical obligations established by the Independent Broadcasting Authority, particularly regarding accuracy, integrity, protection of the public interest, and responsible broadcasting practices.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Deepfake technology presents both opportunities and risks for broadcasting. While it can enhance storytelling and support education, its misuse can undermine journalism and erode public trust. To protect the sector's credibility, broadcasters must invest in stronger detection and verification tools, reinforce editorial oversight, and uphold the broadcasting standards and ethical obligations promoted by the Independent Broadcasting Authority.

BALANCING AI AND EDITORIAL JUDGMENT IN BROADCASTING

Artificial Intelligence (AI) continues to reshape industries across the world, and the broadcasting sector is no exception. From content production to audience engagement, the growing influence of AI is transforming how media organisations operate and deliver information.

While many have welcomed the technology for its efficiency and innovation, there are increasing calls for responsible use to ensure that AI enhances human work rather than replacing it.

Industry practitioners have also echoed similar sentiments regarding the role of AI in journalism.

Reflecting on the subject, Diamond TV journalist Best Jere believes while AI has become an important tool in broadcasting, it falls short in the application of editorial judgement and physical execution of tasks.

"AI should remain a support tool and not replace professional journalistic judgment, ethics, and editorial responsibility. Because no matter how advanced technology becomes, it still cannot chase a politician for a comment the way Zambian reporters do after a press briefing ends unexpectedly," Jere remarked.

Jere explained that AI is increasingly

being used in newsrooms for research, transcription, translation, content organisation and fact-checking, helping journalists manage the demands of fast-paced reporting environments.

"In a fast-paced newsroom environment, AI helps journalists meet deadlines more effectively while allowing more time to focus on storytelling and field reporting. But despite all its intelligence, AI still cannot survive a live cross at Soweto Market with minibuses hooting in the background and traders shouting," he says.

The conversation on AI also took centre stage on February 13, 2026, as the world commemorated World Radio Day. Marking the occasion in Zambia, Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Director General Webster Malido underscored the importance of preserving human editorial oversight in journalism, even amid rapid technological advancements.

"The IBA has noted that emerging technologies are increasingly shaping content production, programming, and audience engagement in the broadcasting sector and has emphasised that while Artificial Intelligence offers opportunities to improve efficiency and drive innovation, AI must remain a supportive tool and must not replace human editorial judgment or accountability," he said.

The Authority has consistently advocated for the responsible use of emerging technologies and continues to sensitise stakeholders on the need to uphold professional and ethical standards within the broadcasting industry.

As AI continues to evolve, the broadcasting sector faces the challenge of embracing innovation while preserving the principles of accuracy, accountability and editorial integrity that remain central to journalism.

BROADCASTING AND ELECTORAL INTEGRITY: A CALL FOR RESPONSIBLE ELECTION COVERAGE

As Zambia prepares for the 2026 General Elections, the broadcasting sector has a vital responsibility to provide citizens with accurate, balanced and credible information. Radio and television remain among the most trusted sources of news, making broadcasters key players in promoting informed decision-making, democratic participation and peaceful elections.

The electoral period, however, presents challenges such as misinformation, disinformation and inflammatory content, which can undermine public trust and national cohesion. Broadcasters are therefore expected to uphold high editorial standards by ensuring that all election-related content is factual, verified, fair and impartial.

To support responsible election coverage, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) has issued the 2026 Election Coverage Guidelines, which outline professional and ethical standards for broadcasters. The Guidelines emphasise fairness, accuracy, impartiality and equitable access to broadcasting platforms for all political players, while discouraging

hate speech, incitement and misleading information.

As the country heads towards the August 2026 polls, broadcasters have an important opportunity to strengthen information integrity, promote national unity and contribute to peaceful, credible and inclusive elections through responsible and professional reporting.

CELEBRATING MEDIA EXCELLENCE: IBA RECOGNISES STATIONS



IBA Board Chairperson Mr. Chikosola Chuula with Vice Chairperson Mrs. Victoria Mupwaya at the IBA Press Briefing

Chikosola Chuula announced awards in categories such as Best Newcomer, Most Improved Station, Most Consistent, Most Resilient, Most Innovative Station, and the prestigious Chairman's Award. This initiative aims to celebrate excellence in the broadcasting sector while inspiring other stations to pursue higher standards of performance.

Best Newcomer Awards were presented to Chibombo Community Radio, Luna Lifestyle TV, Lumezi Community Radio, Rusangu University Community Radio, Ng'umbo Radio, NAC 28 Television (Religious), Yusufu Community Radio (Religious), Ekot FM Radio, Nvumabaranda Radio, and Buloz Television.

Most Improved Stations included Maranatha Community Radio, Mafken FM Radio, Mnkhangya Community Radio, Namwianga Community Radio, K-FM Radio,

One Love Radio, Mpika Community Radio, Lutanda Community Radio, Mwinilunga Community Radio, and Mungu FM Radio.

The Most Consistent Station Awards went to KNC FM Radio, Sun FM Radio, Breeze FM Radio, Sky FM Radio, Bangwela Community Radio, Phoenix FM Radio, Radio Christian Voice (Religious), TBN Television (Religious), Iso Community Radio, Radio Mano (Community), Solwezi FCC Community Radio (Religious), and Oblate Liseli Community Radio (Religious).

Most Resilient Stations recognized were Spice FM Radio, Mafken FM Radio, Feel Free FM Radio, Chikuni Community Radio, K-FM Radio, Q-FM Radio, Delight Kwitonta FM Radio, Kasama FM Radio, Kabangabanga Community Radio (Religious), and Oblate Liseli Community Radio (Religious).

For a second consecutive year, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) recognized broadcasting stations excelling across diverse categories.

At the 2025 end-of-year press briefing, the IBA chairperson Mr.

STAKEHOLDERS MOVE TO TACKLE FRAUDULENT ADVERTS

For many viewers and listeners, advertisements offer information, solutions, and opportunities. But in recent years, a growing number of broadcasts have crossed the line from persuasion to deception, making unverified claims of miraculous healing, instant wealth, restored relationships, and guaranteed employment.

Concerned by the increasing prevalence of such content, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) this year convened a high-level stakeholders' meeting aimed at finding lasting solutions to fraudulent advertising on broadcast platforms.

The meeting brought together a diverse group of institutions whose mandates intersect with public welfare and consumer protection. Representatives from the Zambia Institute of Marketing, the Evangelical Council of Zambia, the Ministry of Tourism, the House of Chiefs, the Health Professions Council of Zambia (HPCZ), and the Traditional Health Practitioners Association of Zambia joined the Authority in a collective effort to address the growing challenge.

At the heart of the discussions was the need to protect audiences from misleading content that often targets vulnerable individuals seeking health remedies, financial relief, spiritual intervention, or personal breakthroughs. Stakeholders expressed concern that some broadcasts were using coercive messaging, fear, and threats to promote unverified medical and spiritual interventions, placing consumers at risk.

Chairing the meeting, IBA Board Member Bishop Benson Banda called for stronger collaboration among regulators, professional bodies, faith-based organisations, and traditional leaders to curb the spread of fraudulent and misleading content on the airwaves.



DELEGATES from IBA, ZIM and THAPAZ at the stakeholder engagement meeting in Lusaka.

The engagement provided an opportunity for participating institutions to outline their respective mandates and share the ethical standards that guide their sectors. Discussions highlighted the importance of accurate, respectful, and responsible communication, particularly when dealing with sensitive health, cultural, and spiritual matters.

Participants agreed that the challenge could not be addressed by a single institution alone. Instead, there was a shared recognition that closer cooperation, stronger oversight mechanisms, and improved compliance were essential to safeguarding the public from harmful and misleading broadcasts.

The meeting also underscored the importance of promoting content that respects cultural values while remaining aligned with national health, advertising, and consumer

protection standards.

One of the key outcomes of the engagement was a proposal to convene a broader multi-stakeholder workshop to further examine the issue and develop practical regulatory frameworks and guidelines for addressing misleading advertising and programming.

The IBA commended the participating organisations for their commitment to protecting the public interest and reaffirmed its dedication to coordinating future engagements that strengthen ethical broadcasting practices across the country.

As the meeting concluded, stakeholders left with a shared resolve: to work together in ensuring that Zambia's broadcasting landscape remains a trusted source of information, free from content that exploits hope, fear, or vulnerability for personal gain.



Minister of Information and Media Hon. Cornelius Mweetwa- MP being welcomed by IBA Board member Oliver Kanane during the election coverage reporting in Choma



PDU Head Ms. Kusobile Kamwambi and Director General Webster Malido during a stakeholder engagement meeting.

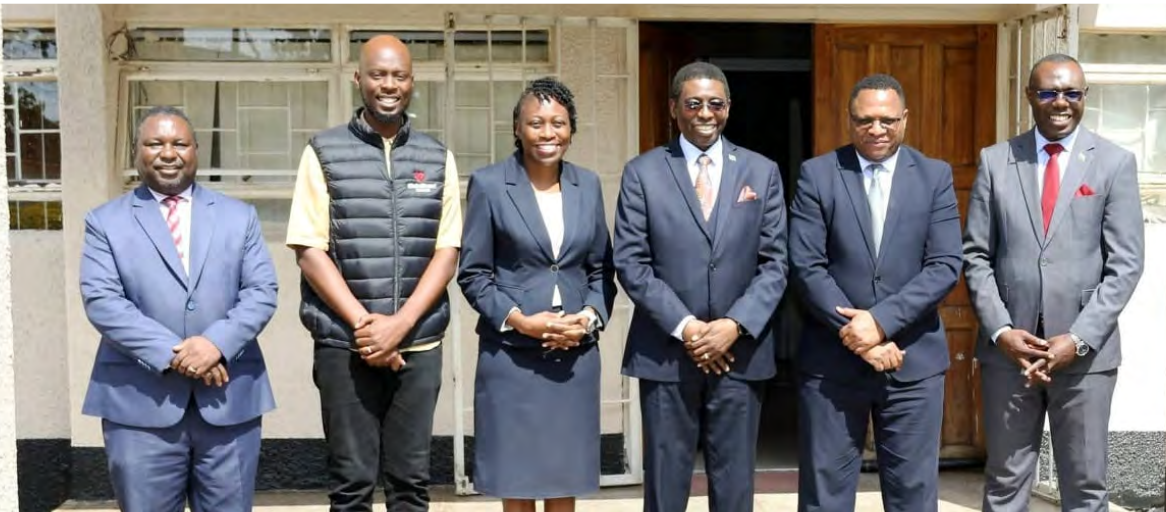


PS in the Ministry of Information and Media Mr. Thabo Kawana at Power FM Radio in Livingstone, during an IBA tour of stations in Southern Province



IBA Director General Mr. Webster Malido and team after a meeting with Inspector General of Police Gaphel Musamba on media safety and collaboration.

PICTURES



IBA team led by Director General Mr. Webster Malido and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia team led by Bishop Prof. Joshua Banda after an engagement meeting in Lusaka



IBA staff participate in World Press Freedom Day commemoration in Lusaka.



IBA staff commemorate Youth Day in school uniform.



IBA staff commemorate Africa Freedom Day through a cultural day celebration.

STRENGTHENING CONSUMER PROTECTION IN BROADCASTING: IBA COMPLAINTS PORTAL

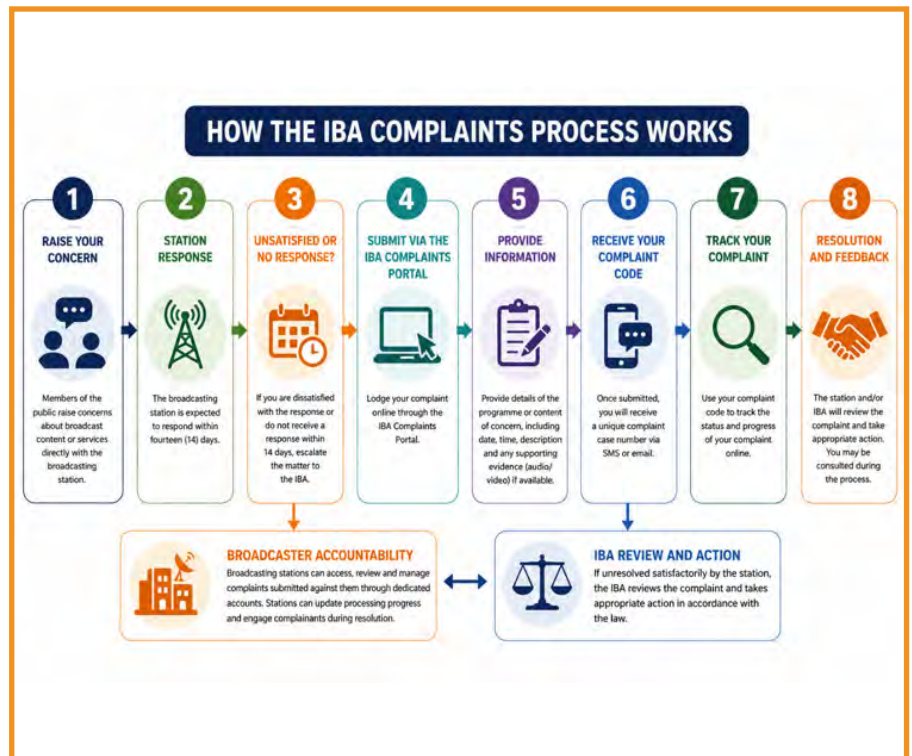
The broadcasting sector plays an important role in informing, educating and entertaining the public. As audiences continue to engage with radio and television content across the country, the need for accessible and effective mechanisms for addressing public concerns has become increasingly important.

In line with its mandate to promote responsible broadcasting and protect the interests of audiences, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) launched the Online Complaints Portal in March 2026. The platform was introduced to enhance transparency, efficiency and accessibility in the handling of broadcasting-related complaints.

The Complaints Portal provides members of the public with a structured and convenient way of lodging and tracking complaints relating to broadcast content and services. The portal was developed to ensure that complaints are properly recorded, processed and addressed in a timely and accountable manner.

The initiative reflects the Authority's continued commitment to strengthening ethical standards, promoting accountability and ensuring that broadcasting remains responsive to public expectations.

Under the existing broadcasting complaints framework, members of the public are encouraged to first raise concerns directly with the broadcasting station involved. Broadcasting stations are expected to respond within fourteen (14) days. Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the response or does not receive feedback within the prescribed period, the matter may then be escalated to the IBA for review and appropriate action in accordance with the provisions of the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act.



The Complaints Portal simplifies this process by allowing complainants to submit concerns online through a step-by-step system. Users are guided through the process of selecting the broadcasting station, entering personal details and providing information about the programme or content of concern, including the date, time and description of the complaint. Supporting evidence such as audio or video clips may also be attached where available.

Once a complaint has been submitted, the system automatically generates a unique complaint case number which is sent to the complainant via SMS or email. This reference number allows users to track the status and progress of their complaint online.

The portal also enhances accountability among broadcasters by enabling stations to access, review and manage complaints submitted against them through dedicated accounts created by the Authority. Broadcasting stations can track complaints, update processing progress and engage complainants during the resolution process.

Importantly, the complaints process is not only intended to address grievances but also to support continuous improvement in broadcasting standards and strengthen public confidence in the sector. Public feedback remains essential in promoting responsible broadcasting, professionalism and compliance with regulatory standards.

BRINGING BROADCASTING RIGHTS CLOSER TO THE PUBLIC

From Kabwe to Mongu, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) is taking its message directly to the people, helping broadcasting consumers understand their rights, access complaint mechanisms, and play a more active role in promoting accountability in the media sector.

The Authority intensified its public sensitisation efforts during the 2026 World Consumer Rights Day commemorations in Kabwe and the 2026 Kuomboka Traditional Ceremony in Mongu, two significant national events that provided valuable opportunities to engage diverse audiences on broadcasting regulation and consumer protection.

The outreach forms part of the IBA's broader commitment to enhancing public awareness of its mandate and increasing the visibility of its regulatory role across the country.

Held under the global theme "Safe Products, Confident Consumers," this year's World Consumer Rights Day highlighted the importance of consumer protection and informed decision-making. In line with the theme, the IBA emphasised the need for safe, responsible, and ethical broadcasting content, reminding members of the public that they have a right to protection from harmful or inappropriate material.

At both events, the Authority established exhibition stands where members of the public interacted directly with officials and learned more about the IBA's mandate, their rights as broadcasting consumers, and the procedures for lodging complaints against broadcasting stations.

During the Kuomboka Traditional Ceremony, the Authority extended its reach by deploying teams at both the harbour and the palace,



An IBA officer with a member of the public during a public sensitisation.

enabling broader engagement with thousands of attendees gathered for one of Zambia's most celebrated cultural events.

The sensitisation campaign also extended into the digital space. Through its Facebook platform, the Authority shared highlights from both events, showcasing public interactions, explaining complaint procedures and regulatory processes, and raising awareness of consumer rights in broadcasting.

These online engagements complemented activities on the ground by reaching audiences who could not attend the events in person while reinforcing key messages on consumer empowerment and accountability.

Public sensitisation remains central to the IBA's mission of promoting professionalism and enhanced standards in the broadcasting industry through effective regulation. By equipping consumers with knowledge of their rights and the available channels for redress, the Authority is helping to build a more informed public capable of contributing to higher broadcasting standards.

Through sustained engagement, both physical and digital, the IBA continues to strengthen public understanding of its role while reaffirming its commitment to protecting broadcasting consumers across Zambia.



Pupils from Nelson Mandela School visit the Independent Broadcasting Authority.

PROTECTING CHILDREN IN BROADCASTING

As children across Zambia tune into radio and television for news, entertainment, and education, what they hear and see continues to shape how they understand the world around them. On this year's International Children's Day of Broadcasting (ICDB 2026), the conversation turns once again to a critical question: how safe are children in today's media landscape?

The Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) renewed its call for broadcasters across the country to strengthen protections that shield children from harmful content. The appeal came as the world marked ICDB 2026 on 1st March, under the theme *"Safeguarding Children in Media and Beyond,"* which places emphasis on collective responsibility in ensuring that media content supports the wellbeing and development of minors.

At the heart of the message was a reminder that broadcasting is not only about reaching audiences, but also about protecting them, especially children, who remain among the most vulnerable media consumers. The Authority stressed that broadcasters have both a legal obligation and a moral duty to ensure that content aired on radio and television does not expose minors

to material that could negatively influence their physical, mental, or moral growth.

To support this responsibility, broadcasters are encouraged to strengthen internal systems that guide what is aired and when it is broadcast. This includes properly classifying and scheduling programmes that may be harmful to children, while taking steps to minimise their access to such content. It also includes avoiding material that may corrupt or mislead minors, particularly in programming that is widely accessible.

Special attention is also being drawn to the way children are portrayed in the media. The Authority emphasised the need to protect the privacy and dignity of minors in news and other programming, ensuring that children are not

exposed to harm, exploitation, or undue intrusion.

In addition, broadcasters are reminded to strictly observe watershed hours between 22:00 and 05:00, a period reserved for content unsuitable for younger audiences. The consistent use of programme classification systems is also encouraged to help parents and guardians make informed choices about what children watch and listen to.

Beyond compliance, ICDB 2026 is also used as a moment to encourage more positive engagement with young audiences. Broadcasters are urged to produce and air quality child-focused programming, while also creating space for children to participate in content creation and discussions that reflect their realities, challenges, and aspirations.



A cultural group performing at the official re-launch of Musanza TV in April in Lusaka.

MUSIC, CULTURE AND BROADCASTING STANDARDS

Music continues to sit at the heart of broadcasting in Zambia, driving entertainment, shaping identity, and influencing how audiences, especially young people, interpret the world around them. But with that influence comes responsibility over what ultimately reaches the airwaves.

The Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) issued a reminder to broadcasters to pay close attention to the kind of musical content they select and schedule, underscoring the need for programming that reflects Zambia's cultural values, norms, and expectations.

Beyond its entertainment value, music carries messages that can shape attitudes and behaviour. It is this reality that informs the Authority's emphasis on careful editorial judgement by broadcasters when deciding what is suitable for public consumption.

The guidance draws on Section 24(1) (a) of the IBA (Amendment) Act of 2010, which requires broadcasters to ensure that their programming reflects the culture, character, needs and aspirations of the Zambian people. In practical terms, this means that content aired should not only engage audiences but also remain consistent with the country's legal and cultural framework.

Television broadcasters have been particularly encouraged to preview both locally produced and acquired musical and film content before it goes on air. This is aimed at ensuring that material is appropriate

for general audiences and aligned with established broadcasting standards.

The call also extends to content creators, who are being encouraged to remain mindful of cultural sensitivities and legal requirements when producing material intended for broadcast platforms.

As the media landscape continues to evolve and diversify, the Authority maintains that responsible broadcasting remains central to protecting audiences while promoting creativity within acceptable standards.

STATION SPOTLIGHT:

Radio Mano 89.3 FM – The Pride of the North

By Christian Kasonde



Radio Mano Community Radio Station proudly carries the theme “The Pride of the North.” Situated at Plot No. 2731 along Luwingu Road in Kasama, Northern Province, the station provides extensive coverage across eight districts in Northern Province and one district in Muchinga Province.

Its signal reaches the entirety of Kasama and Mungwi districts, while extending to parts of Chinsali, Mbala, Nakonde, Mpika, Luwingu, Chilubi, Lunte, and Mporokoso.

Broadcasting in both English and Bemba, the station serves audiences across all age groups. Programming is delivered predominantly in Bemba (80%), complemented by English (20%), ensuring inclusivity and accessibility for diverse listeners.

Radio Mano was established in 1999 in response to the long standing lack

of adequate radio communication in Northern Province. The station commenced test transmissions on 20 September 2003 and officially began full broadcasting on 2 January 2004, following the issuance of its broadcasting licence by the then Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services.

In November 2005, the Government of the Republic of Ireland, through Irish Development Cooperation, joined the initiative by providing funding to establish a state of the art radio communication station in

Northern Province. The equipment and infrastructure, secured under a title deed from the Ministry of Lands, are owned by the community radio station, reinforcing its sustainability and community driven mandate.

Radio Mano is dedicated to delivering its services with integrity, transparency, and accountability, while maintaining deep respect for the community it serves. As a community radio station, it provides a vital platform for issue based programming that reflects the voices and concerns of its members.

The station envisions a Northern Province where all community members actively participate in sharing information on issues that affect them, contributing positively to sustainable development. Its core objective is to inform, educate, and entertain through quality broadcasting, while fostering active citizen participation in support of long term social and economic progress.

What sets Radio Mano apart is its remarkable record of over 15 years of uninterrupted operation, a testament to its consistency and resilience. This achievement reflects the station's unwavering commitment to fulfilling all statutory obligations and upholding broadcasting ethics and principles.

Radio Mano has maintained a professional and dedicated workforce, focused on delivering accurate and reliable information to its audience. Importantly, the station safeguards its editorial independence by ensuring that advertisers or commercial interests do not influence its programming or compromise its standards, guidelines, and values.

In addition, Radio Mano strives to reflect a diversity of opinions in its news and programming in the interest of objectivity and balance, while respecting the culture, traditions, and religions of the people it serves.

Radio Mano's core programming includes:

- **News:** Covering commercial, political, social, and entertainment stories generated within the community and shared back to the community.
- **Announcements:** Paid messages of commercial, political, social, and entertainment nature, designed to inform and engage the

community.

Radio Mano has established collaborations with institutions, NGOs, and government departments through signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs). These partnerships provide a platform for informative, educative, and entertainment programmes, sustaining the station's operations while deepening community engagement. Contributions include voices from traditional leadership, notably Paramount Chief Chitimukulu of the Bemba-speaking people.

Signature shows such as "Ifikala Chimbwi Tefikala Inama Yikata", Tuchinkulane, Ukufunda Umwana Kufikapo, traditional songs, Abenda Ebaleta Amakasa, Nkalamo Ubuntunse, and Imilumbe Nenshimi enrich the community by providing culturally relevant information and entertainment.

To sustain its operations, Radio Mano offers a range of income generating services. The station provides live coverage of outdoor events on a fee paying basis, extending programme reach while keeping the community informed about important occasions. In addition, it hires out its state of the art public address (P.A.) sound system to enhance communication during outdoor events.

The station also supports the community by offering transport services through the hire of its 29 seater bus, further diversifying its revenue streams and reinforcing its role as a community driven institution.

Radio Mano is organised into three functional divisions, each headed by a Head of Department and reporting to the Station Manager. These divisions are the Accounting Department, the Programmes Department, and the Administration

Department. The station currently employs 20 members of staff on contracts ranging from two to four years and engages 13 volunteers who receive a volunteer allowance.

Owing to its strong influence in the broadcasting space, Radio Mano Community Station has earned several notable recognitions over the years.

- In 2014, it was voted the Most Investigative Community Station in Zambia by MISA Zambia Southern Chapter.
- In 2015, the station received an award from Her Honour the then Vice President, Mrs. Inonge Mutukwa Wina, in recognition of its role as an Advocate of Peace and Stability in Zambia at the Mulungushi International Conference Centre.
- In 2018, Radio Mano was honoured with the Best Media Institute Coverage Award during its exposition.
- Additionally, the station received a certificate of appreciation from the Zambia National Blood Transfusion Service for its contribution to national celebrations.

Radio Mano Community Radio Station stands as a beacon of resilience and community empowerment in Northern Province. With its strong commitment to integrity, inclusivity, and editorial independence, the station has not only bridged communication gaps but also amplified local voices and cultural heritage. Its sustained operations, diverse programming, and notable recognitions underscore its vital role in informing, educating, and entertaining, while fostering citizen participation and sustainable development. Truly, Radio Mano lives up to its theme—"The Pride of the North."

OMETRIA MWEEMBA: FROM STUDENT BROADCASTER TO STUDENT LEADER

BEFORE SUNRISE AT THE MIC

Ometria Mweemba's day starts before sunrise, with headphones on and a script in hand. As a newscaster, presenter, and news writer for Rusangu University Radio, she is already shaping the day's conversations before most listeners have had their first cup of tea. For this third-year Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Communication student, the microphone is not just equipment. It is tuition. It is independence. It is proof that passion, when paired with grit, can pay your way through school.

LEARNING BY DOING

"I write the news, I read the news, and I learn from the news," Ometria says with a laugh. Balancing lectures with live broadcasts has not been easy, but the station gave her something lectures alone could not: real responsibility. Every bulletin she writes and every interview she hosts helps cover her tuition fees. That hustle turned her into more than a student broadcaster. It turned her into a self-sponsored journalist with a personal stake in her future.

FROM THE CLASSROOM TO THE ZNBC NEWSROOM

That mindset took her to Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) for attachments, where theory met the fast pace of national newsrooms. She spent months learning practical journalism: chasing stories, editing under pressure, and watching how seasoned reporters turn chaos into clarity. She was especially pleased by how her traits provided value to the Corporation. Being open-minded helped her absorb feedback. Being social and approachable opened

doors to mentors. And being intelligent, she says, meant she could connect the dots quickly when deadlines were due. "ZNBC taught me that journalism is about listening first, then speaking with purpose," she reflects.

BREAKING BARRIERS IN STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Those same qualities followed her back to campus and into politics. Ometria made history at Rusangu University by becoming the first female President of the Student Representative Council. Students did not just vote for a title; they voted for a communicator who believes in inclusivity, transparency, innovation, and progress, and who has already proven she can represent them on air. As SRC President, with the slogan "From Promise to Progress," she brings the same teamwork and creativity she uses in the studio to council meetings, pushing for student representation that is less about speeches and more about solutions.

INTERVIEWING THE IBA DIRECTOR GENERAL

During the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Radio Stations Provincial Tour, Ometria wrote interview scripts with the dream of interviewing the Director General, Mr. Webster Malido. It was a thrilling moment when Mr. Malido granted her that chance, yet she conducted the radio interview professionally, blending Tonga and English perfectly to match the target audience.

A LEGACY BEHIND THE TITLE

At 23, Ometria is clear about where she is headed: a career in journalism and communication that creates



impact. She is committed to excellence, to continuous learning, and to using collaboration to lift others as she grows. Whether she is behind a radio console or chairing an SRC session, her goal is the same: to tell stories that matter, serve people without pretense, and grow with every broadcast.

From being a work programme student to breaking barriers in student leadership, Ometria Mweemba is showing Rusangu students that the microphone and the mandate can belong to anyone bold enough to pick them up. As the first female SRC President at Rusangu, she knows her legacy is not just the title. It is the door she has opened for the next girl with a notebook, a question, and the courage to run.

Ometria's story resonates with students across the country because she embodies resilience, showing that hardship can be transformed into opportunity. Her journey is a reminder that courage is not the absence of struggle but the decision to rise above it.

KNOW YOUR ACT: BROADCASTING PROGRAMME STANDARDS – MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS



Did you know that Section 33 of the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Act No. 17 of 2022 requires the IBA and all broadcasting stations to develop and adhere to codes of professional standards? These standards must include:

- i. Respect for human dignity, human rights and freedoms, and promotion of tolerance for differing opinions and beliefs.
- ii. Comprehensive, unbiased and independent news and current affairs programming, with commentary clearly distinguished from news.
- iii. Procedures for correcting factual errors and addressing unfairness.
- iv. Observance of the right of reply.
- v. Protection of children through the clear classification and appropriate scheduling of programmes that may negatively affect their development.
- vi. Clear separation of advertisements from other programme content.

Broadcasting stations should display their professional standards and IBA complaints procedure posters in prominent areas to promote public awareness and accountability.



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