



Journalists and content creators taking digital storytelling training

Digital storytelling training to build capacity of journalists and content creators

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (February 15, 2023): The production and dissemination of content has been shaped and reshaped by the ever-changing communication technology. The public's consumption of content has also shown a tremendous change in light of abundant information available across the digital and mainstream media. This has presented a challenge to content disseminators since taking hold of the interest of readers, viewers and listeners has become an uphill battle.

Due to the gradual expansion of internet penetration and the increment of mobile users in many parts of the country, online consumption of news and information has been on the rise. Within the last few years digital platforms intended for producing and disseminating news and various information have been blossoming. The platform has provided citizens with an opportunity to produce and distribute content without space and time limitations. Nevertheless, most online platforms seem to be invested in transmitting poorly aggregated content without any relevant analysis. To some extent, sensationalizing online content to earn viewership and shares has also been a feature of some digital platforms. Because digital platforms are becoming the major source of

information, investing in creative ways of content production would help improve the quality of information delivered to the public.

Mersa Media Institute in partnership with DW Akademie delivered a training on digital storytelling to participants drawn from the mainstream and digital media. The training was intended to equip journalists and content creators with knowledge and skill relevant to storytelling in the 21st century. The training was also aimed at helping trainees improve their knowledge on visual storytelling and how digital platforms could be leveraged to optimize content distribution and audience reach. Further, the hands-on training also addressed the fundamentals of podcasting and online monetization. It helped trainees explore free online tools that are in the service of producing and distributing different visual stories and podcasts. The training was given by top-notch local and international trainers in the field. The training also highlighted the essence of story production in a way that adds value to audiences.

Besides the mentorship from trainers, participants were able to exchange relevant experiences from fellow trainees. To help training participants further understand the knowledge and skills acquired during the training, the institute encouraged trainees to engage in pitching story ideas, developing and producing brief visual stories and podcasts. In doing so the institute has assigned mentors to support trainees in the course of their story production. A total of 30 journalists and digital content producers participated in the training that was given in two rounds at Mersa Media Institute.