

Celebrating African podcasters at Africa Podcast Day

It's impossible to have a conversation about the pan-African podcast space without mentioning Melissa Mbugua and Josephine Karianjahi. As the co-directors of Africa Podcast Day, these two women are breaking barriers and creating a space for African podcasters to be celebrated.



On Saturday, 12 February 2022, the annual Africa Podcast Day took place. The hybrid, virtual and in-person, celebrations were broadcast to 434 people online and 20 live guests. Hosted live in Nairobi, Kenya, by Mbugua and Karianjahi - the event themed "Podcasting is Freedom" was an incredible production filled with speakers, presentations, live podcast interviews, podcast launches and spectacular costume changes by the hosts.

"We are a community-driven organisation that has its roots in physical meetups. Since the global pandemic sparked us to experiment with new ways to gather online, we have found that there is incredible potential for hybrid models, where we can harness the power of the internet to spread across geographical barriers while also creating opportunities for local communities to gather where they can. For us, it is important to create inclusive spaces for podcasters and their supporters to form joyful connections, whether offline or online" explains co-director Josephine.

Speakers included a host of local and global thought-leaders including: Khayriyyah Muhammad Smith (USA), Ar Ducao (USA), Francheska Njanja (Kenya), Susan Oshiche (Kenya), J. Ogure, (Kenya). Kevin Y Brown (USA) and Molly Jensen (Kenya/USA) from Afripods. Kim Chakanetsa of "The Comb" and Doris Onyango (production manager at SemaBOX Africa).

Among the podcasts that were launched was KaBrazen - a podcast for children created by Laura Ekumbo, Aleya Kassam and Anne Moraa from Kenya. KaBrazen, brings together stories and songs, mythologizes our women heroes by sharing complex and rich histories through audio.

In addition, the United Nations Department of Global Communications (DGC) and Africa Podfest launched the highly anticipated Africa Renewal podcast. The podcast focuses on Africa's development from the perspective of people living and working on the continent and with a solution-oriented lens.

The third podcast launched at the event was the Mindful Podcast, created and hosted by Julian Yeates, from South Africa. The Mindful Podcast communicates information around mental wellness in a creative, fun and engaging manner.

Attendees enjoyed a day filled with so many exciting and inspiring presentation sessions including roundtable discussions, workshops, expo booths and networking possibilities. With hosts from various countries across the continent giving a unique taste of variety while having pioneering conversations.

"We are encouraged by the incredible support from our community of African podcast pioneers, many of whom have participated in our activities since the very beginning from various parts of the world. This success is testament to the power of collaboration and we could not have done it without the support of our local and global community" Melissa expressed.

For the past two years the global pandemic restricted what could be done, however, learning from previous experiences and working with production partner SemaBOX, Africa's largest podcast incubator and an audio-visual production studio in Nairobi, the co-directors left no stone unturned.

"Learning from our experience last year and incorporating feedback from our audience, we expanded the visual range and sense of movement to make the virtual experience feel more engaging and create higher interaction with the audience online and in the studio," said Mbugua

She also acknowledged the partners who supported them saying, "We are grateful for the support of our partners Africa No Filter, Baraza Media Lab and Afripods who made it possible for us to execute our vision for the event.

In the coming weeks the presentations, panel discussions, podcast launches will be available online.

Looking ahead in 2022, the Africa Podfest team will be connecting with the pan-African podcast audience in unique ways.

"We plan to continue with our year-long events and research, deepen the community collaborations that exist and spark new connections among the growing community on the continent and diaspora," said Karianjahi.

One thing is for sure, there hasn't been a better way to start off the year than with Africa Podcast Day. See you in 2023 for a bigger gathering with more opportunities for community engagement and learning.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>