Over 73 journalists from across Rwanda are participating in a workshop designed to boost their role in public health awareness. The initiative, launched on June 17th at Lapalisse Hotel in Nyamata, Bugesera District, is a collaboration between the Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC) and ABASIRWA, a media network focused on health promotion.

The workshop is organized to equip journalists with the skills to effectively report on health issues. A key focus is debunking myths and misinformation surrounding prevalent diseases like HIV, STIs, HCV, and mental health.

According to the organizers, the workshop also includes field trips to different districts across the country, allowing journalists to see these issues firsthand.

ABASIRWA's president, Grace Ingabire, warmly welcomed both new and returning journalists to the workshop. She emphasized the network's unwavering commitment to prioritizing health, making it a cornerstone and fundamental requirement of the media network focused on health promotion.

Innocent Bahati, Executive Secretary of ABASARWA, highlighted the importance of the media in mobilizing communities to fight health challenges. "This workshop goes beyond just training journalists," Bahati explained. "We want to empower them to become champions for public health, leading to a more informed population that can make better health decisions."

Innocent Bahati, Executive Secretary of ABASARWA

The workshop emphasizes accurate health reporting, ultimately aiming to create a healthier Rwanda.

LGBTQ rights advocate Andrew Uwayezu, Executive Director and Counselor at WICECEKA (Women's Initiative in Self-Empowerment – Community Support Organizations), urged health journalists to champion non-discriminatory healthcare access. Uwayezu stressed that all Rwandans, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, deserve to receive health services without bias."

The workshop concludes on June 20th in Bugesera before journalists embark on a three-day field study in various districts until June 24th.