

E-lection Bridge East Africa

Political Communication in Kenya – a cooperation with the KAS Media Programme Sub-Sahara Africa

On 6th of October KAS Kenya in cooperation with the KAS Media-Programme Sub-Sahara Africa conducted a workshop about Web-TV and the diversity of possible uses.

The participants represented different political parties of Kenya such as the Democratic Party (DP), the Party of National Union (PNU), the Orange Democratic Union (ODM), the National Rainbow Coalition of Kenya (NARC-K) and Ford-Kenya. Furthermore, representatives of the media and the Media Development Organisation (MDA), a longtime partner organisation of KAS, were attending the workshop.

The workshop was facilitated by Markus Brauckmann of KAS Media Programme Sub-Sahara Africa. He has vast experience as a journalist and TV producer. Decisive for the workshop was his work in the election campaign of Angela Merkel, the German chancellor. As the head and producer of CDU.TV, an election campaign instrument, from 2007 to 2009. His experience gained during this time served as an example for the workshop.

However it has to be considered that in the African context with slow internet connections, lack of technology and resources something like Web-TV seems to be unfeasible. Especially in the rural areas, where access to the internet for the normal people is often out of reach.

Having that in mind Markus Brauckmann emphasized right from the beginning that the production of small video clips is not impossible, but can be done with very little resources. So far the title of the workshop could as well have been "It is doable – This is not Hollywood".

For the illustration of the doable, some video clips from other African countries of astonishing quality were shown, filmed with nothing more than mobile phones. The message and the translation of the message were proved to be more important than the technical equipment and the financial resources. A simple camera and a laptop for further editing serve the purpose sufficiently.

The produced video clips can not only be shown online but also in overland busses, during party conventions or might be sent via mobile phones. Web-TV can however transfer emotions, establish direct contact to potential voters, create heroes and offer more than written text and pictures. But despite all the potential that comes with these new media in election campaigns it is crucial to keep in mind, that they can only add value to the traditional means of election campaigns, such as posters and speeches in the market squares.

By showing various examples of produced video clips Markus Brauckmann provided the participants with ideas of video clips for election campaigning. Furthermore he offered advice on important issues which have to be kept in mind. It is considered to add value if the ordinary party members are given a voice. Additionally it is possible to create trans-

parency by showing exclusive material from the backstage area. This will also create interest among the viewers.

Using CDU.TV it was demonstrated how a video sequence can be shot, edited, approved and uploaded on to the internet in a single day. Using examples Markus Brauckmann emphasized repeatedly on what little capacities and resources were necessary. In order to facilitate the translation of ideas into video clips a number of motivational impulses were given. Some time was also given to discuss questions and to exchange ideas.

The workshop can be considered a great success. Punctuality (which is not typical for Kenya), the absence of mobile phones ringing during work sessions and especially the uninterrupted attention were mayor signs of high interest by the participants and the relevance of the subject for the Kenyan context. Right after the end of the workshop, further discussion of ideas and the exchange of contacts could be observed. For now, one only has to wait for the first video clips of the represented parties to be posted online.

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