

REPORT ON NAKURU WORKSHOP ON 13TH, 14TH, AND 15TH

The workshop had been planned for the various Residents' Associations that have previously partnered with KAS. The aim was to review the partnerships and restructure the cooperation between KAS and RAs. Furthermore certain Aspects of the Social Market Economy have been introduced to the RAs in order to observe them in their distinct counties.

To bring the participants into focus, the facilitators set them into 3 work groups. They were expected to share what they have been doing previously and the challenges they faced, and then choose one of them to report in the plenary.

Group 1

This group reported that the specific members have been involved in civic education, peace-building and conflict management, had worked with the Ministry Of Justice on a project called 'Active Citizen', they conducted Social Audits on public funds, worked with other community based organisations, and other independent NGOs like the Red Cross and Support groups for 2007/8 Post election violence victims on trauma counselling and support.

The challenges members in this group gave out included and not limited to political interference, conflicts with other groups, insufficient funding, bureaucratic challenges posed by organisations contracted to work on behalf of KAS, lack of transparency on the part of such contracted organisations, technical incapacity and legal access to justice.

Group 2

This group reported that most of their activities have been conducted in cooperation with the Dialogue Africa Foundation. Some had worked as volunteers with other NGOs and participated in women empowerment activities. Some members in this group had been involved in youth programme and the land question. Some members have been working with youth groups especially from the universities on voter education, on resource management, devolved governance training and lobbying to be included in the public funds committees in their local areas.

Group 3

This group like the others had the same activities but some members were so much involved in peace-building and devolved funds civic awareness. Some members helped in creating report cards on the use and implementation of public funds and projects, respectively. Others helped their communities in priority ranking of needs and projects for possible funding by the Government agencies. Other members participated in human rights advocacy and promotion of project ownership. They also served as the community watchdogs by documenting and sharing information with the media and the public. On ethnic diversity, some members have partnered with other NGOs to sensitize on the need for ethnic tolerance and integration. Since there

are international and national companies in some parts of the country, those members who are closer to those companies have had meetings on environmental issues and how to live in harmony with the local people. Such companies are Sony Sugar Company in Migori, Dominion Company in Siaya and Tobacco firms in Kisii and Kuria.

The challenges they faced ranged from harassment by Local Authorities on individual members, financial constraints, lack of awareness to majority members, legal challenges of the associations and a platform for a legal redress.

Their recommended inputs included a fair support on logistics, establishment of functional offices, creation of networks and share information to improve on their synergies, public information and dissemination to reduce personalised risks, update the civic awareness approach and creation of a documentary that can help in de-ethicizing the Kenyan politics and political administration.

In the evening a documentary on the EU program: Partnership for Peace was screened and the participants were taken through a discussion on the peace building issues highlighted.

Day two was started early and the workshop dwelled majorly on the new guidelines expected of the partners and how to do activity proposals. Dr. Karsten Duemmel and Mrs. Iris Karanja facilitated these sessions. Participants were also introduced to the concept of the Social Market Economy.

The third and the last day of the workshop dealt so much on the way forward and evaluation of the whole exercise. Some members appeared to have been new to the idea of the RA program. The reason was because, most of the leading officials had left and the new comers were not so much engaged but after the workshop, things appeared to restart again. Some associations had fallen out due to bureaucratic issues and hoped to be involved again. Some had been lost for over five years ago.

KAS welcomed the different RAs to send in their activity proposals for a future consideration.