

MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Evaluation Report Executive summary Kenya

Journalists and citizens: Dealing with social conflicts
in highly populated rural areas in Kenya

Background

The population and media professionals of Kenya, especially in rural areas, are exposed to a high degree of violence, often fuelled by ethnic conflict, poverty and disparity. Kenya ranked 100 of 180 countries with regards to freedom of the press in 2015, losing 28 places compared to 2013. Since then, Kenya has moved up to place 95 out of 180 on the world press freedom index (2017). But the situation for Kenya's media professionals has not greatly improved. Freedom of expression and access to information remain difficult topics in Kenya, with local and national government still exerting significant influence on what is aired and printed.

The BMZ-funded project in Kenya "Empowering of media and citizens" has the following objective: "The rural population, especially women, of selected highly populated regions of Kenya (Nyanza, Western, Rift Valley and Central) informs itself about social conflicts and how they are processed and expresses their opinion thereof publicly". The project is being implemented by DW Akademie, working directly with 10 commercially oriented community radio stations and in close collaboration with its main partners Article 19, the Kenya Correspondents Association (KCA), the Media Council of Kenya (MCK), the Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK), and the DW Akademie Alumni-Kenya. The current phase started in 2015 and will be concluded end 2018.

The evaluation focused on assessing the project against the OECD/DAC criteria. For the DAC criteria a rating system with a 5-point scale is used: 1) comprehensively fulfilled, 2) generally fulfilled, 3) partially fulfilled, 4) minimally fulfilled and 5) not fulfilled at all.

In addition, for the first time in the Africa evaluations key questions were asked, which explicitly focus on digital aspects of the projects: D1) Digital collaboration, D2) Digital relevance and D3) Digital security. For these digital questions, no assessment was required, but only a section in the report with an inventory and, if appropriate, recommendations.

The evaluation included a mission to Kenya and used a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods (desk review, interviews, survey, focus groups). The results of the evaluation were discussed at a change workshop in DW Akademie's headquarters in Bonn.

Conclusions of the project evaluation

DW Akademie's intervention remains highly relevant in Kenya's current media landscape, which has been subject to increased restrictions and violence in recent years. DW Akademie has well positioned itself as a relevant actor in promoting access to information and freedom of expression in Kenya. Through its close collaboration with key players in the Kenyan media sector, DW Akademie has been able to participate in the national debate and train media sector professionals on highly relevant topics. The project targets the high population regions Nyanza, Western, Rift Valley and Central through the strengthening of 10 local radio stations. The choice to work with county-level radio stations is particularly relevant with

regards to reaching women. In the rural context, and mainly among women - many of which cannot read - listening to the radio is the most popular way of accessing information. Furthermore, listener clubs - an increasingly popular way of allowing listeners to participate in the radio stations' commercial activities and program - are giving marginalized women access to more knowledge thereby enabling the process of empowerment. A stronger engagement of the project at national level through the further strengthening of partner organizations could increase the relevance and ultimately the impact potential of the project. The project activities are considered to be coherent; in terms of complementarity and coordination there is significant room for improvement. The criterion **relevance** is rated to be "generally fulfilled".

Despite the lack of a local DW Akademie office, the project management and trainers have shown commitment to maximising its local and virtual presence. A great added value of DW Akademie's approach is secured through the continuous collaboration with a number of local partners. Nonetheless, the project management approach is regarded as being too centralized. A reviewed project approach, in which partners - perhaps increasingly - take on more responsibility for the implementation, could have a positive impact on ownership and long-term sustainability of project activities and results. Similarly, trainers who have a long-term engagement with the project should be a central part of the strategy-making and planning process and be more included in the overall project implementation and tracking. The project follows a flexible planning approach: regular consultation cycles ensure that the annual training programme is shaped based on the concrete needs and interests of the radio stations, as well as changes in laws and regulations affecting the media sector. The quality of trainings and advisory provided by the project is rated as very good. Gender aspects are demonstrably and systematically interwoven into all activities. The performance of the radio stations was found to have significantly increased: quantity and quality of programs, increased ratings, increased listenerships' participation (especially women), improved financial performance, increased collaboration with listeners clubs. The location, number and duration of trainings generate debate and the general feedback points towards a need to narrow down the number and increase the focus of DW Akademie's interventions. In this context a more differentiated approach to delivering support to the 10 radio stations, putting a stronger focus on organizational development rather than on skills development, would be more effective and could have a greater impact. The criterion **effectiveness** is rated to be "generally fulfilled".

The project has made an excellent use of budget, time and resources and has achieved very good results despite the difficult framework conditions in Kenya and the lack of a local presence. The criterion **efficiency** is rated to be "comprehensively fulfilled".

DW Akademie's work already shows some impact: media professionals targeted have significantly increased their knowledge and skills, radio stations' programs and content have improved, and all radio stations are performing well financially. The stations have more programs that encourage listener participation and women have become more and more active, both within the stations' programs as well as through the listener clubs. It can be concluded

that county-level listeners of the 10 radio stations have better access to information than they did before DW Akademie's intervention and that more listeners are being reached than in 2015. The commercial nature of the radio stations targeted, on the other hand, might somewhat dilute the impact potential of DW Akademie's activities in terms of freedom of expression and access to information. The financial viability and sustainability of the radio station are the priority while the link between quality of programming and success does not seem to be sufficiently recognised by the top management/owners. At the national level, the project has probably very little influence on the country's enabling environment for freedom of expression and access to information. By bringing DW Akademie's partners closer to the project DW Akademie could expand its impact at this level. Project partners have to some extent improved organizational and individual capacities and new networks for collaboration and exchange have formed. The criterion **impact** is rated to be "generally fulfilled".

The project has invested considerable time and resources in providing advisory and training on strategies to ensure the financial sustainability of the commercially oriented stations with great results. Five of the radio stations have formed a consortium to jointly acquire new clients and sponsors, further strengthening the sustainability of the businesses. Radio stations do not yet have adequate knowledge management processes in place, which would be an important element to ensure that knowledge is institutionalized and sustainably retained within these organizations. The project's partners can and must play a key role in ensuring the sustainability of the project beyond the project's lifetime and to date there is no clear strategy on how they will be prepared in this regard. The development of a sustainability strategy is therefore strongly recommended. The strategy should include a roadmap on how the ownership by local institutions is to be enhanced. Furthermore, collaboration with local universities and training institutes could be a strategy to institutionalize local trainers that have been trained by DW Akademie. The criterion **sustainability** is rated to be "partially fulfilled".





DW Akademie

is Germany's leading organization for media development and Deutsche Welle's center of excellence for education and knowledge transfer.

As a strategic partner of Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development we strengthen the universal human rights of free expression, education, and access to information.

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The objective of the external evaluation is to provide a constructive assessment of the project results. It does not necessarily align with the perspective and planning of DW Akademie. Nevertheless, all findings were discussed in order to allow lessons learned to be incorporated into the development of future strategies.