



# Raising the bar on development reporting

East African Media Workshop on the Millennium Development Goals  
7th and 8th August, 2008, Impala Hotel, Arusha Tanzania



**ENDPOVERTY**  **2015.ORG**  
millennium campaign

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## 1.0 Introduction

*“When a critical mass of people are in one place, if you don’t empower them they will empower themselves through revolution, if we want to avoid chaos we have to empower the poor people,” Anna Tibajuka, head of UN-HABITAT during State of the World’s Cities 2006/07 report.*

Ever since Millennium Development Goals were proclaimed by the world leaders in the year 2000, they have received limited attention in the East African media. The situation is largely attributable to the lack of appreciation of the importance of the goals among many media houses in Africa, capacity constraints amongst journalists, fixation with politics and other “hot” competing issues and finally limited interaction between organisations working on the MDGs and the media.

Although the classical role of the media is that of setting the agenda, with respect to the MDGs, the media has not directed a conscious and concerted effort in highlighting these Goals.

To address the challenges described above, the UN Millennium Campaign hosted an East African media capacity building workshop in Arusha. Held from 7th to 8th August, 2008, the workshop brought together representatives from media houses in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zanzibar and Burundi. Representatives from several CSO organisations including GCAP Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania also participated in the workshop.

The workshop objectives were as follows:

- To review MDG progress in East Africa and define what needs to be done if MDGs are to be fulfilled by 2015.
- To develop strategies for effective media coverage to shape government MDGs policies
- To facilitate creation of a platform for civil society organisations and media organisations to develop joint strategies for campaigning for the MDGs.
- To enhance information sharing of MDG related products amongst participants from the region

The workshop discussed the limitations and challenges that journalists face in reporting the MDGs. It provided a platform for the establishment of linkages between MDG campaigners and the media.



Participants developed strategies for effectively reporting on the MDGs and dealing with challenges identified during the workshop. Journalists present agreed to collaborate with each other and to share information relating to MDGs.

At the end of the workshop, the journalists agreed to form a pan-African media organisation which they called the African Media Initiative on Development (AMID), Africa. The organisation will act as a platform for capacity building, information sharing and MDG advocacy amongst African journalists. The journalists agreed to first form country chapters in all East African countries represented at the workshop before coordinating its roll-out across Africa.

### 1.1 Official Opening

The meeting was officially opened by the Mayor of the Arusha Municipal Council, the Hon. Lawrence Heddi. In his speech, Mr. Heddi said the workshop was significant to East Africans because the Millennium Development Goals touch on the lives of the poorest of the poor. He called on the media to pay close attention to issues affecting excluded communities noting that the press have a responsibility to set the agenda for policy makers and should therefore enlighten the public on the MDGs. He lauded organisers for bringing the media and CSOs together during the workshop noting that the two constituencies needed to share knowledge and experiences so as to fill the gap which exists between the journalists and CSOs. He noted that bridging the gap between media and CSOs would ensure that MDG stories are kept alive in the media.

The Mayor urged workshop participants to address themselves to issues of ethics within the media, especially when dealing with issues of governance, peace and security. He reiterated that strengthened democratic, responsive, transparent and accountable media institutions are the only way through which people will ultimately be able to liberate themselves from the shackles of poverty.



He urged the media to work closely with local governments since they are responsible for the welfare of the people at the grassroots level.

The Mayor said that the Tanzanian government's decentralisation process was having a positive impact on poor people across the country. He noted that the programme had led to a transfer of power to the people and was enabling them to own and manage their developments. He assured participants that government in Tanzania was fully committed to press freedom and would do whatever it takes to support the media to play their role effectively.

### 1.2 Setting the Agenda for the Workshop

Reporting on the MDG progress in Africa, UN Millennium Campaign Communications Coordinator Sylvia Mwachuli said that many countries in Africa are doing well on all the MDGs, among them Rwanda, Mozambique, Tanzania, Mali, Burkina Faso and Ghana. She attributed this to good leadership from the top, proper adoption of the MDGs into national goals, clear plans, policies and strategies, prioritization of MDGs in the allocation of resources within the national and regional budgets and a special focus on improving delivery mechanisms at the local level.

Ms. Mwachuli urged the journalists to focus greater attention to the issue of poverty and the Millennium Development Goals. She said that journalists should be concerned because millions of people in the region still go to bed hungry every night, while thousands of others are homeless with no one to turn to. She urged that participants in the workshop to join the global movement against poverty by becoming campaigners in their own right. She said that journalists should be outraged

by the high levels of inequality situation in East Africa noting that it was a shame for one per cent of the population to own more than the remaining 99 per cent all together. Reviewing the progress on MDGs, she said that the implementation of Universal Primary Education (UPE) programmes has been a great success in East Africa. However, she urged journalists to go beyond reporting on the enrolment rate to take a critical look at the conditions in which children are learning. She revealed that education is being hampered by lack of teachers and facilities such as classrooms, toilets and learning material. On women empowerment, she noted that Rwanda and Uganda have made some commendable gains which should be emulated by other governments in East Africa. She accused the Kenya government of being the least committed to meeting the Gender empowerment goal within the entire region noting that there was limited involvement of women in decision-making processes in Kenya.

Ms Mwachuli urged the media to support the UN Millennium Campaign's advocacy initiatives on the health-related Goals. She noted that one of the biggest scandal to-date was in relation to the Goal on maternal mortality where thousands of women continue to die needlessly in childbirth. Ms Mwachuli noted that although health structures may exist in many parts of Africa, the software to run them is missing. She regretted that people are dying due to lack of access to basic medical care. She told journalists to undertake vigilant investigations into the reasons why poor people are dying in East Africa.

Ms. Mwachuli regretted the wide gap of inequalities in access to healthcare where politicians and the rich go for check ups in the West, while the poor are made to use poorly funded local health institutions. She urged journalists to write about the wasteful behaviour seen amongst the rich with poverty. She gave an example of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni flew his daughter to a German hospital to deliver her child, claiming that he could not trust her to the local health service providers.

On HIV/AIDS, she noted that most countries were doing well on this Goal. However, she urged the media to pay attention to the fact that the number of people dying is still mounting. By comparison, in the West, HIV/AIDS is no longer an emergency disease. Sylvia urged journalists to move beyond reporting the statistics and to highlight the real issues that are affecting people living with HIV/AIDS and TB. She noted that it was a shame that

Ministries of Health across the region have been accused of mismanaging funds from the Global Fund and returning funds to their Treasury Departments because of lack of capacity to utilise the funds. For instance, last year, the Ministry of Health in Tanzania returned back Tshs. 200 billion shillings meant for HIV/AIDS programmes.

Ms. Mwachuli urged journalists to work closely with CSOs on the area of public expenditure tracking. She urged them to look at national budgets beyond the budget day and to go beyond the surface by digging deeper in their reporting. She called on media houses to invest in specialisation amongst their reporters.

In response, participants agreed that there was a need for journalists to report beyond the face value of the MDGs debate. It was however noted that to track budgets effectively media houses would need to invest in more personnel. This, participants noted, would be a huge challenge particularly in view of the fact that private media houses are keen on profits and may not wish to invest in specialization. As a solution, Sylvia recommended that the media and CSOs consider building strong partnerships where CSOs provide information to the media for publication.

Responding to the debate a participant from Tanzania noted that there was no satisfactory link between Tanzanian CSOs and the media houses. He regretted that the media attempts to be a master of everything and thereby ends up scratching on the surface. He gave an example of budget reporting where the media often focuses on the budget story totally ignoring the expenditure story. He therefore urged his media colleagues to shift focus to demand that government ministries explain their unspent budgets. Another participant called on journalists should challenge the glossy reports from government so as to ensure that the real picture comes into focus. He noted that though NGOs are good at doing analysis they rarely share it with the media. The media were also urged to be proactive by contacting NGOs for information and policy positions on contemporary issues. The participants also observed that the media hardly challenges statements made by government officials during press conferences. To get to real picture, the media should get in touch with communities at the grassroots. Another participant proposed that the media focus their efforts on building up community voices to counteract what politicians said.



A critical issue discussed during the workshop related to the conditioning of audiences by the media. Participants felt that media houses were responsible for the lack of appreciation of development and issue-based messages amongst the citizens. There is therefore an urgent need to influence and reorient audiences to be more receptive to issue-based messages. In doing this, the case of the West African media, particularly Ghana, which has shifted to issue-based messages, should be closely studied.

### 1.3 Summary of the Key Points to take note of

- Journalists should go beyond discussing MDGs as a policy document and dig deeper to get to the issues behind the whole concept of MDGs
- They should link what is happening to political processes, for example poverty could be linked to bad governance
- They should focus on the poorest of the poor and avoid being trapped in the laments of the relatively well-off middle class
- There should be the media to push for the localization of MDGs.
- CSOs should step up their watchdog role.
- There is need to report on MDGs through a human rights framework

### 2.0 Strategies for using the Media as an advocacy tool

Making his contribution, UN Millennium Campaign Policy Advisor, Thomas Deve told journalists to ensure that the statistics that they use in their stories reflect the reality in their locality. He urged them to localize the understanding of the MDGs. He noted that the mainstream media is very compartmentalized and demands very specialized people. This may make it difficult for MDGs to get to be headline news. He however explained that MDGs can become headline news by use of practical examples and real life stories informed by the reality of ordinary people.



He told journalists to validate poverty-related statistics by using real life examples. Deve argued that public media should inform people on development and meet the expectations of tax payers who fund it. He therefore urged CSO participants present to target the public media to have it do the right thing.

Turning to the private media, he said that although they are pushed by private interests and profits, private media organisations should also be made to focus on development as a priority. Community media on the other hand can easily focus on MDGs, although it may not be as professional as mainstream media. Another component of media he identified was alternative media, which he said exists where citizens have opportunity to talk on issues affecting them. He urged the development practitioners present at the meeting to choose the right media channel when doing their campaigns. On access to information, he urged participants to familiarise themselves with the issues at hand and to link them to the issue of poverty.

Mr. Deve urged journalists to change the focus of their coverage to reflect new realities on the ground. He noted that there was a need to strengthen journalists' training so as to provide opportunities for them to be 'embedded' with the poor people and thereby ensuring that trainees learn how to cover stories from poor people's perspective. To achieve this, there may be need for structural transformation of policy and practice of journalism. He concluded by advising journalists to use evidence when writing on MDGs and to always aim to package MDGs messages to attract attention.

During the plenary session, a participant proposed that the potential of the media either to take people to task be tapped to enhance delivery on the MDGs. She noted however said that reporters often faced huge challenges selling MDGs stories to uncooperative editors who mainly want to cover politics. She said however that despite challenges faced, the media should continue speak the truth to powers that be without fear.

In response to the observations, Deve urged the media to familiarise themselves with targets set for each and every MDG and to focus greater attention on people living below a dollar a day. Mr. Deve urged CSOs to invest in capacity building programmes for media institutions urging them to work with local universities and media training institutions to address the curriculum question and to deal with training gaps that exist. On editors who are impenetrable, he proposed that they should be specially targeted by CSOs and made to understand why the MDG story was important.

On the budget process, Thomas reiterated the need for journalists to begin tracking it at the planning level, not just to wait and report when it is about to be read. They were further reminded to look at positive aspects focussing on government achievements too and not just report on the failures.

Journalists were urged to improve their negotiating skills and explore as many possible ways of convincing editors as possible. They for instance should not use big terms like MDGs when talking about poverty but could instead use human interest examples that can enable their editors understand the issues at hand. They should connect directly to people's minds and use words that report poverty without using the mantra of a dollar per day.

## **2.1 Winning the CNN African Journalist of the Year, 2007: The Case of Richard Kavuma, The Weekly Observer, Uganda**

### **Quotable quote:**

*'The things we do for ourselves are buried with us, those that we do for others live on for years and years to come'* - Richard Kavuma, CNN Multichoice African Journalist 2007

Mr. Kavuma produced a series of media reports that transformed the MDG from abstract statistics into memorable stories highly appreciated by readers in Uganda. Explaining his methodology, Mr. Kavuma said that he used the strategy of putting life into the Goals. What made the whole difference was the fact that he wrapped the Goals in human actions and faces. On maternal mortality, for instance, he wrote about real families who had been affected through the loss of their mothers in child birth. By transforming the Goals to touch on people's lives, it became possible to use MDGs to generate and maintain public interest. He went beyond the statistics and qualified the numbers to find out the real story behind the numbers.

Mr Kavuma also discussed some of the challenges that he met when writing on the MDGs. Firstly was the challenge of finding resources to facilitate the project. Fortunately he was able to mitigate this challenge when his employer, Weekly Monitor, agreed to finance the project. Without this support, it would have been impossible to come up with the eight stories he wrote. He also sought and received support from UNDP to get the work done. Kavuma was doubtful that mainstream media organisations would have adopted the approach that he used, mainly because of the huge financial support required. He noted that many mainstream media houses often want to spend resources on stories that generate immediate interest. Another major challenge that Kavuma met was travel logistics. Many of the stories involved travel to far-flung villages. He however explained that he succeed because he was motivated to do the right thing and was not focused on the monetary outcome of the task.

During the plenary session, a participant sought to know how journalists could move from dry reporting to writing stories that impact peoples' lives. Participants noted that good development reporters are few and agreed that more people were urgently needed to support the development agenda. The noted that media reporting has a direct impact on government policies and behaviour and agreed that it was sad that many media houses choose to cover development stories as one-offs with no follow ups. Participants thus called on media houses to change their reporting styles and processes when dealing with development issues. Media houses were asked to emulate their counterparts in Ghana where the media is focussed on reporting on development issues.

Another participant urged journalists to change with the times in a manner that is progressive. For instance, they should aim to simplify stories and avoid dropping statistics and jargon when reporting on poverty. Participants also requested Richard to suggest how to mitigate risks from stories that appear to be a direct attack to government.

A participant asked Richard to explain how reporters can deal with obstinate and rigid editors who are against reporting on development issues. She regretted that many editors have rigid mind sets and do not link MDGs and the poverty they see. This was possibly attributed to the non-reaction by government to previous stories covered.



In responding to the issues raised, Mr. Kavuma told participants that to gain the attention of editors, journalists must reflect the fact that they are passionate about the issues they want to report on and sincerely believe that their stories can make a difference to the poor. He urged them to be very courageous when pushing for the agenda they believe in. Kavuma asked the reporters to be clear on what policy changes they want to see and thereby to become advocates for that policies they want to be changed.

Mr Kavuma noted that to mitigate exposure from "risky" stories, the media house could consider partnering with other media houses to collectively report on sensitive issue. An example given was running the same banner headline - "Save our country" during the post election crisis in Kenya. On the question of uncooperative editors, journalists were urged to consider sharing information with other networks and colleagues in the media to ensure that their story does not die. However, for this to be effective, media personalities would have to eliminate the idea of 'scoop' and competition.

Thomas Deve pointed out to participants that the purpose of the media should be to get people upset about the issue of poverty and incited to take action. For concrete action to take place however, there must be solidarity between CSOs and the media. He urged the media to devise feedback mechanisms, to enable their audiences interact with them.

## 2.2 Out of the Box Reporting

The presenter, Jenerali Ulimwengu began by saying that "out of the box reporting" means coming up with new and innovative ways of reporting on issues. It implies moving away from the tried and tested. Mr Ulimwengu called on reporters to ensure that they communicate properly and avoid snippets of information. They should also avoid fixatedly reporting on the "big man" and instead focus on a holistic and balanced reporting. They should communicate exactly what one wants to say and avoid wrong interpretations. In



short, reporters should convey meaning, sharpen their communication skills and comprehend the issues at hand. They should note that even in situations of competition, it is possible to get people interested. They should not put words in the mouths of the speakers but let the speakers, especially if these are community members speak for themselves. They should use local expressions to explain local conditions and realise that talking about MDGs in abstraction does not make sense for ordinary people. Using the local settings e.g. Referring to real examples of poverty, disease and illiteracy could work wonders for audiences.

Mr. Ulimwengu asked the media to track the implementation of the policies that governments have developed but to ensure that they linked the policy agenda to real people and real stories. They should make sure that their stories are factual and interesting while at the same time portraying a great deal of empathy with the poor thereby stirring readers' emotions. They should attempt at all times to give flesh and blood to accounts of the failures of the state. In doing this, the power of shock that outrages people should be employed. They should however ensure that they portray the dignity of the people they are covering. He condemned a photo-journalist who photographed a starving child in Ethiopia as the child struggled to get away from a stalking vulture. The journalist did not help the child and only reported the death later. He urged the media to be bold by naming and shaming the culprits who cause poverty, whether it is the State, political or community leaders or even corrupt CSOs. Ultimately, reporters should strive to make the report on poverty as easy and friendly to readers as possible.

During the plenary session, a participant observed that in Tanzania, there is too much reliance on verbatim reporting on what leaders say. He therefore urged local journalists to shift away from this and provide a platform for people's voices. He accused the local media of ignoring the common

man and thereby missing out on a lot of opportunities for advocacy. Saying it was wrong for the media to portray the common man as ignorant, he urged reporters to add humour to their poverty reports so as to avoid presenting dry facts that put off readers.

Another commentator wanted to know how the media can create a rapport with CSOs to collectively represent people's views. Furthermore, she sought to know how the media can sustain pressure from the government and private interests when it is reporting on critical issues. In response, Mr. Ulimwengu advised media practitioners to survive hostile pressure by building solidarity with each other. He urged them to avoid looking "lonely" since this would provide their critics with the opportunity to give them a lot of trouble. They were however asked to weigh the consequences of putting out controversial stories vis-a-vis their personal convictions.

### **3.0 MDG Reporting: Case studies from East Africa**

Participants also shared their experiences in reporting on MDGs. Below are some of the case studies and subsequent critiques that participants directed towards the presentations:

#### **3.1 Reporting for Development: The Case of NTV Uganda:**

This presentation was made by Kato Williams, a News Producer at NTV Uganda. Kato said that NTV Uganda is a new television station. However in its short existence, the station has worked closely with UNDP Uganda and sometimes on its own to monitor and analyze the MDGs in some parts of the country. The following are the topics covered under this arrangement:

1. A visit to the UNDP Millennium Village Located in Western Uganda - Here the focus was put on success to safe water and nutrition as a way of fighting malnutrition, and enhancing education in line with the government policy of Free Universal Basic Education and the fight against poverty through efforts being undertaken by the local communities.
2. Interest in the Environment – NTV Uganda believes that environmental protection is very crucial if the MDGs are to be realized. As such, it has sent teams out to produce stories on global warming and its effects, environmental degradation and alternative

means of energy to save the forests. All these have been linked to the MDGs.

**3. Poverty Reduction and Hunger** - The station has done elaborate features that involve going to poverty stricken areas and those affected by hunger (like the Karamoja area). Emphasis was put on analyzing the existing government programmes in the fight against poverty and whether such programs are able to meet people's aspirations.

**4. Health Reporting** - NTV has covered stories on HIV/AIDS and Malaria, as well as infant and maternal mortality. In this respect one of the health reporters went to South Africa for the "Countdown to 2015" workshop. That exposure helped her to further understand more on MDG-related issues in Africa and NTV used her to localize lessons learnt.

**5. Dissemination of UNDP research** - The UNDP has come up with a report on MDGs which it has disseminated amongst communities. NTV Uganda has constituted a team to capture the reactions of the communities in regard to the findings.

Since following up and analyzing MDGs cannot be adequately covered in news reports of one to two minutes, much of this have been done by way of special reports which covered issues that had not received adequate coverage in the mainstream Ugandan media.

On the NTV video presentation, participants observed that the video's pictures were good in terms of capturing the audience and making it interesting. They were pleased that the video covered a number of MDGs and could be easily transformed into a series of video presentations on MDGs. On the negative side however, they observed that the presenter should have personalized the issue of poverty from the start. He should have visited more poor people and allowed them to speak for themselves. They observed that the story presented in the video contrasted sharply with the rosy picture painted by the Ugandan government and gave voice to too many policy makers. In response, the NTV reporter Kato admitted that the story should have focused more on the people and less on the policy makers. He said that this would be improved in future. He explained that putting the story together took about a week and explained that the biggest challenge they faced in putting it together was the travel logistics.



### **3.2 The Case of the WBS, Uganda**

The presenter, Mary Nakajju, explained that WBS was the first private TV station in Uganda and its target audience was the common man. She begun by explaining the TV station's policy on reporting poverty and later presented story done by her during last year's Stand Up Campaign.

Ms Nakajju said that since it was founded in 1999, WBS has reached out to the common man. As a result the station has over years, continually hosted programs that are aimed at Uganda realizing the MDGs. The station has hosted hundreds of talk shows and in-depth features on poverty and how it can be alleviated. It has analyzed some of government programs towards poverty alleviation and how best they can help the common man. WBS has also carried out its own campaigns on women empowerment. The station is committed to reporting on MDGs and there is a story on the Goals at least once every week.

Participants commended WBS for their reporting but urged them to focus more on the human interest angle. Participants suggested that WBS reporters go beyond reporting poverty-related events in hotel rooms and bring on board the voices of the people.

### **3.3 The Kenyan cases**

#### **3.3.1 MDG Score Card on Health**

The story was done by KTN's Isabella Kituri. On a positive note, the clip was able to bring out the voices of the poor. The reporter did not come in the way of the story. Participants agreed that the score card presentation was very balanced noting that various synergies came out clearly.

However, participants observed that the presentation was hurried because editors wanted the story short. The introduction should not have referred directly to the MDGs as an acronym. She also needed to define difficult terms used in her story.



### 3.3.2 MDG Score Card on Education

The story was done by KTN's Anne Soy. Participants lauded the reporter for capturing messages of hope from various stakeholders and thereby proving that Goal Number 2 can be achieved. However, the workshop took issue with the reporting style noting that the report was not well balanced and gave too much emphasis on the achievements by the government while ignoring the challenges faced by schools and teachers. Participants noted that the presenter should have interviewed at least one teacher and focused on all aspects of education such as availability of teachers. The story should have gone further and enquire about the fate of children who are out of school and interrogated their reasons for staying away from "free" schools.

### 3.3.3 The Scorecard on Goals 7 and 8

Two videos were also presented to assess performance on Goals number 7 and 8. The stories were done by Catherine Wambua and Beatrice Marshall. Participants at the workshop said that both features were very well done. They especially commended the narration. They however took issue with the "upmarket" dressing of one of the reporters noting that the dress code may make it difficult for one to gain the confidence of poor people being interviewed. Participants suggested that the two reporters could have made their stories more policy-focused by referring to budgets allocated to the Goals they were analysing. Some participants critiqued the repeated use of the term MDGs, saying it sounded too technical and could put people off.

### 3.3.4 Radio Simba, Kenya

Radio SIMBA is primarily a Kiswahili language entertainment station. It plays African Music. The station was launched with presenters in August, 2006, and since then has developed into an energetic product, playing a mix of good music from the continent and focusing on issues in a meaningful way. The station's association with MDGs began with an interview with Mr. Charles Mwangi of the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP)

in early 2007. Mr. Mwangi drew the station's attention to the importance of the MDGs and to the fact that little attention was being paid to them by government and other parties.

Radio Simba's, Nicola Munene explained that their station has a strong social justice slant in its news content, interviews and features. MDG-related programmes include:

- 1) **Ushauri wa Daktari-** a daily, health programme
- 2) **Maisha ya Ghetto-** An education programme focused on conditions in Nairobi's informal settlements.
- 3) Promotion of Kenyatta Hospital and AMREF'S annual fistula clinics.
- 4) An ongoing collaboration with the National Civil Education Programs (URAIA), which aims to improve the public's understanding of the political/ social issues which affect them.
- 5) Environment: Currently in discussions with the UNEP on the possibility of regular programming Nairobi's rivers:
- 6) January 2007: Daily one hour magazines produced on behalf of the PANOS Institute on the World Social Forum in Nairobi.
- 7) August, 2007-August, 2008: Weekly one hour programme on women in politics,
- 8) Bango la Radio Simba:- This is Radio Simba's corporate responsibility billboard. Five times daily, the station advertises events such as free medical clinics, appeals, fundraising events are covered free of charge.

### 3.4 Burundi: The Case of the African Public Radio (RPA)

Burundi's Gerald Nibigira said his radio station frequently highlights poverty related issues and the MDGs. Speaking on the issue of press freedom in Burundi, Mr. Nibigira described the press as relatively free in Burundi, although a number of journalists have been jailed for negative reports on government. He noted that the public media is extremely partial to government and does not report any negative stories even when government officials have erred. On the relationship between the media and CSOs, he reported that the two stakeholders have a very bad relationship and that the media regularly criticizes CSOs because of perceived poor governance practices. As a result, the government has introduced regulations to control and regulate CSOs.

He noted that for the MDGs to be achieved in

Burundi, many elements must be combined. They include participation of citizens and collaboration between government, local governments and NGOs. He revealed that, 90 per cent of Burundians depend upon agriculture and breeding sectors and many of them need assistance to improve their yield. The country faces several challenges compounded by the high population growth rate. In addition, the country has a fairly weak industrial base, a situation that contributes to the alarming poverty levels. There country also needs to urgently promote quality and access to education by building schools and universities. Similar interventions should be made in the health sector. He noted that the government seems keen to address the poverty situation and reported that on July, 25th, 2008, the Deputy President of Burundi promised that the Government will redouble its efforts in fighting poverty in Burundi.

In the plenary, it was observed that community media extensively covers the issue of poverty in Burundi. On conflicts in the country, it was reported that these are currently being managed. He reported that the election of President Nkurunziza has reduced conflict, with government engaging rebels in peace talks. However, many guns still remain in the hands of civilians and this has increased violent crime in Burundi.

#### 4.0 The Stand Up Campaign

Making the presentation, Sylvia Mwachuli said the Stand Up Campaign was one of the ways of reminding governments to keep their promises. The Campaign has led to the creation of a growing global movement of people around the world who are demanding that their governments honour their commitments to make a better world for all by achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Stand Up is a creative way of campaigning for MDGs since it provides opportunity for people to raise their voices against poverty. Stand Up is now 'the largest coordinated movement of people in the history of Guinness World Records'.

She explained that UNMC wants to use Stand Up as a platform to deepen its media outreach and enhance global knowledge on the indignity of poverty. It intends to bring on board new constituencies to ensure broader participation by people from all walks of life. For the campaign to be successful there is ardent need for media support. A participant sought to know whether government responds to campaigns such as Stand Up. In response,



Ms Mwachuli said that Stand Up was getting the attention of several world leaders and informed participants that a number of African leaders were volunteering to get involved with the Stand Up Campaign. It was further noted that in 2009, Stand Up will be localized so that people can stand up for whatever they believe in. Participants suggested that all East Africans should leverage on previous numbers mobilised in the whole region.

#### 5.0 Media and NGOs: How NGOs perceive the media

Neema Moshi, World Vision Tanzania said that NGOs would like to nurture a closer relationship with the media because they understand that they cannot do much alone. She noted that the media has a major role to play in facilitating NGO work. She said that NGOs see the media as a critical partner as they provide a good platform to shape public opinion and instigate debates. However, she accused some NGOs of using language that is exclusive to their staff and peers and thereby marginalises and puts off the media. She said that there is need to step down NGO language and to adjust relations between NGOs and media. CSOs should move away from calling media to cover events but rather involve them in the process. She advised NGOs to get the media on board from the very beginning of projects and let them understand what is happening. They should identify the media to work with by isolating individual reporters and using them to push NGO agenda. She noted however that one of the key challenges faced by CSOs when working with the media relates to demands for bribes from some media houses.

Her colleague Rita called on the CSOs and the media to come up with joint strategies to track public expenditure. She further suggested that CSOs consider using social audits to measure government progress on the MDGs. This would move the MDGs away from the national and global level using. She said that there is a wide range of social audit tools available to help entrench the MDGs at the grassroots level.



### 5.1 A journalist's perspective of MDGs reporting and the Civil Society

Khadija Mohammed of Zanzibar lauded CSOs for playing a major role in advocating critical social problems such as gender based violence. She said that reporting in Zanzibar is however a major challenge since the media in the country is small. Nevertheless, she emphasised the need for NGOs and media to work together.

### 6.0 Way Forward

Session facilitator, Thomas Deve asked media practitioners to take advantage of their capability to influence government policy. He urged them to generate local debate in the follow-up to the UN New York meeting noting that there was a need for a coordinating framework to push for proposals given. He reminded participants that the key implementers of the proposals were the national coalitions and urged journalists to consider focusing on the following issues:

- Developing a strategic partnership with CSOs to support programming on MDGs
- Reporting and interrogating results from Citizens Score cards
- Hold panel discussions on radio and television involving high profile personalities.
- Involving citizens through community media and promoting citizen's media especially blogging.
- Engaging parliamentarians and local government authorities
- Publicising postcard petitions to enable African citizens' voices to be heard
- Providing a platform for UNMC African spokespersons and GCAP Ambassadors to speak out about the MDGs.
- Publicising the contents of UNMC/ GCAP policy briefs and fact sheets
- Supporting the Stand Up and Kick Out Poverty Campaigns. .
- Supporting UNMC and partner events e.g. Stand Up Marquee

events, student's essay competition, poverty hearings etc

- Undertaking public expenditure tracking and deepening investigative journalism
- Publicising policy asks with the aim of strategically influencing Government reports on MDGs.

### 6.1 Group Work for developing an action plan

Participants were asked to develop action plans focusing on areas highlighted throughout the training. They came up with the following responses:

#### 6.1.1 Kenya

- To prepare a mailing list of participants in order to keep members updated on the progress
- Field visits to be organised by GCAP.
- Patrick Mugo of KTN will coordinate media liaison
- Special focus to be given to three goals – health, education, and agriculture.
- GCAP to keep in touch with media personalities, not necessarily media houses and owners. GCAP was asked to target magazines such as Drum, True Love etc
- For international exposure they agreed to target Al Jazeera.
- In run up to September, a series of activities will be undertaken coordinated between media and CSOs by Nicola and Mwangi.

#### 6.1.2 Tanzania

- Tanzania will hold a meeting in one week's time to bring more stakeholders on board
- The media will focus on the MDGs.
- They will hold a press briefing on the CSOs shadow report
- The CSOs will undertake sensitization on the September Summit
- The CSOs will run a public hearing which will be televised
- The CSOs will adopt a new word for Stand Up – AMKA
- The TV stations will each host a talk show on MDGs
- The team will target journalists at the district level and embed them within the whole framework of mobilization.

### 6.1.3 Uganda

- Media and CSOs pledged to participate in a planning meeting to look at the various areas of activities identified
- Media will identify important personalities in certain critical areas – They will bring on board journalists who have a passion for development
- CSOs will synergise their programmes so that they avoid duplication of activities
- CSOs will step up engagement with MPs – will identify the MPs to work with and bring on board
- CSOs will work with the media to meet president to make him recommit himself to the MDGs
- CSOs will utilize platforms such as the Uganda youth platform, Uganda teachers' union, Faith Based Organisations, Local Authorities etc to push for the achievement of MDGs.
- During Stand Up, the media will mobilize and cover all the events that are going to take place



- Focus on the poorest of the poor and not just on the middle class;
- Push for active monitoring and watchdog role for CSOs
- Media should ensure that statistics reflect the reality their localities and localize the understanding of poverty;
- Should have a mechanism that for monitoring progress on MDGs e.g. Use MDG Monitor website;
- Media should be clear on what policy changes they want to achieve since this would help them target their advocacy activities.
- Should pursue collective reporting in cases of reporting on sensitive issues;
- Map out clear dates of action so that they can prepare in advance to cover them;
- Ensure that they focus on the issue of the budget when analysing what the government has achieved through its poverty reduction programmes. This would give a clear policy direction to policy makers;
- Look at the story from all angles, not just at the state and its obligations and provide solutions rather than reflecting on past mistakes.
- Think of ways to localize the media workshop so as to reach the grassroots and ensure that all media practitioners are interested in poverty.

## 7.0 Conclusion

### 7.1 Summary of Workshop Key Points and Recommendations

- Media should not tire of reporting on poverty, however much the topic may get boring
- There is need for the media to build synergies with other players such as CSOs to focus deeply on the issues of development that are at hand, such as MDGs;
- The media should go beyond reporting on the budget reading to budget expenditure and process to get out the real expenditure story
- Media should get in touch with grassroot communities where the real problems are
- They should go beyond discussing MDGs as a policy issue but also get to the story behind the story.
- They should carefully package their reports on MDGs so as not to put off audiences;
- They must go beyond the rhetoric coming from government and CSOs and statistics n poverty and put flesh and blood in the figures
- Link what is happening to political processes – e.g. Link poverty to bad governance etc



## 8.0 Appendices

### 8.1 List of Participants

Name	Organization/Country
Patrick Mugo	Researcher KTN, Kenya
Salim Said Salim	Senior Reporter, Zanzibar
Khadija Muhammed	Communications Officer, Sahiba Sisters, Zanzibar
Richard Kavuma	Editor, Weekly Observer, Uganda
Isabella Kituri	Reporter KTN, Kenya
Catherine Wambua	Producer, Al Jazeera, Nairobi Office, Kenya
Evelyn Liri	Reporter, The Monitor, Uganda
Ceasar Mukasa	Reporter, New Vision, Uganda
Gerard Nibigira	Reporter, Radio, Burundi
John Mwendwa	Editor, K24, Kenya
Nicola Munene	Radio Simba, Kenya
William Kato	NTV Uganda
Zaa Twangeleti	Programme Officer, TANGO and Global Call to Action Against Poverty, Tanzania
Mwangi Waituru	Global Call to Action Against Poverty Coordinator, Kenya
Jenerali Ulimwengu	Media Consultant, Tanzania
Mary Nakajju	WBS, Uganda
John Mary Odoyi	Uganda Joint Christian Council, Uganda
Thomas Deve	Policy Advisor, UN Millennium Campaign, Kenya
Rita Nihibangira	Programme Officer, World Vision Tanzania
Neema Moshi	Communications Manager, World Vision, Tanzania
Sylvia Mwichuli	Communications Coordinator, UN Millennium Campaign, Kenya
Gilbert Muyumbu	Global Call to Action Against Poverty, Kenya

# THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER
2. ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION
3. PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN
4. REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY
5. IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH
6. COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES
7. ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
8. DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT



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