

Media Focus on Africa

Review of The Team: Lessons Learned



Held on 28th June 2012

At Rosa Mystica Spiritual Centre, Nairobi

Facilitated by Mburugu Gikunda

Report compiled by Ruth Njagi

Contents

Acronyms.....	2
Introduction & Opening remarks	3
Objectives of the series	3
Experience Sharing	4
Emerging issues	7
Challenges	7
Observations and Lessons Learnt.....	9
Inter-generational forums.....	10
Conclusion	11
Evaluation and closing remarks.....	11
Appendix.....	12
List of participants	12

Acronyms

CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CEGD	Centre for Governance & Democracy
CRECO	Constitution & Reform Education Consortium
CVs	Curriculum Vitae
DPCs	District Peace Committees
MFA	Media Focus on Africa
MPs	Member of Parliament
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
SMS	Short Messaging Service
SFCG	Search for Common Ground

Introduction & Opening remarks

The meeting began at 9.10 a.m. when the Executive Producer of The Team Kenya Mr. Mburugu Gikunda welcomed the facilitators and asked them to introduce themselves. Participants were drawn from various parts of the country including Kibera, Mathare, Nakuru, Naivasha, Kakamega, Eldoret, Mombasa and Kisumu. The agenda of the meeting was to review the impact of the Team and identify the lessons learnt. In addition the workshop was to identify the strategies that worked well and what could be improved on in future interventions.

The Team is a TV and radio drama that was developed and produced as a response to the effects of the post-election violence in Kenya in December 2007 by Search for Common Ground (SFCG) and Media Focus on Africa (MFA). The series presents a microcosm of Kenyan society in which members of a fictional football team, who come from different ethnic groups and social classes, are challenged to overcome their fears and biases so that they can see one another as individuals not as members of “the other.” **The project was funded by DFID through the Governance and Transparency Fund (GTF)**

Conflict is a natural part of human interaction. It exists at all levels of society in all sorts of situations – from intrapersonal, interpersonal conflict to national conflict and even international conflict. It is important to remember that conflict can be positive. Conflict is sometimes necessary to bring justice where injustice exists. It can provide an opportunity for new social and political systems to be established and can help to shape the future. However, when conflict becomes violent it will usually do more harm than good. The central metaphor for the players in the series – and for Kenya – is: If they do not cooperate, they will not score goals, and they will lose. The series sends a strong message that the sins of the past cannot be rectified by retributive violence today.

After the introductions Mr. Gikunda went on to set the climate for the day.

Climate Setting

1. Participants to keep their phones on silent mode
2. Punctuality: Time keeper: Boaz Munanga
3. Respect for people’s opinion & comments

Objectives of the series

The facilitator opened the session by asking the facilitators to refresh their memories on what the objectives of the series were.

The following were some of the responses.

- Develop inter-ethnic dialogue
- Unite Kenyans
- Easing tensions before the next general elections
- Reaching out to Kenyans using media
- Sensitize Kenyans on democracy and gender mainstreaming
- Highlight leadership challenges in the country

- Enable Kenyans to make the correct choices when choosing leaders

He reiterated that the objectives were:

1. To create awareness by empowering people with knowledge
2. Encourage peaceful co-existence among citizens and
3. Encourage participation

Experience Sharing

Having pointed out that this was a forum to share experiences Mr. Gikunda went ahead to invite facilitators to share their stories.

Mombasa: Facilitators for Mombasa were Vivian Otieno and Osman Sadiq

The facilitators informed the meeting that sessions were held every Saturday in which 2 episodes were being screened per day. Session discussions revolved around featured themes in the screened episodes e.g. on Leadership. This was followed by dialogue between the participants on the emerging issues with local contextualization. After the screenings, the facilitators liaised with the Likoni CDF to provide refreshments for additional sessions. Participants in the dialogue sessions were motivated to form CBOs such as the Mombasa Youth Network & Mombasa Youth Parliament which continued engaging on matters relating to youth. Mombasa Youth Parliament was formed as a response to demands by politicians to get more involved in youth affairs through the Mombasa Youth Network. It was the intention of the group to divorce politics from the overall youth organization in Mombasa. The facilitators went ahead to build linkages by applying for funds from Peacenet to scale up The Team. This enabled them to reach more participants in different parts of Mombasa such as Kisauni, Tudor and Mvita. They were also able to go to other places outside Mombasa such as Lungalunga in Kwale.

Nakuru: Facilitators were Mwangi Muraya & Beatrix Arusei

A different strategy was employed to engage participants. The participants were given a chance to set their own agenda to enable them know that their opinion matters. The idea was to get the locals determine the issues they wished to dialogue on even before watching the episodes set for the day. The group then watched the episodes with their desired dialogue issue in mind after which they continued to discuss the emerging issues. Where these differed with set dialogue issues, the group started with issues they considered pertinent before discussing the set issues. On conclusion of the sessions, the participants organized themselves in an economic empowerment group with members contributing some money towards their own savings. This soon fizzled out since savings mobilization became difficult for the members.

Kakamega: Facilitators were Boaz Munanga and Clarice Sunguri

The use of experts was used by facilitators in Kakamega. For instance, the facilitators liaised with the Administration Police to sensitize the public on community policing and also invited a doctor to give additional information on such issues as rape matters. As a result of the screenings, the Western Social Forum was formed and they have been meeting 3 times a month to discuss issues such as governance and peace building.

Kibera, Nairobi; Facilitators were Cecilia Ayot and Tony Mateng'e

In Kibera, it was challenging to get experts to facilitate on issues such as criminal procedures and corruption. However on a positive note, harassment has reduced since some of the youth who were involved in criminal activities have reformed and have been preaching the message of peace and volunteering as community mobilizers with The Team. Most other groups that have been formed after The Team in Kibera have tended to adopt the name The Team with qualifications. For instance The Team Mizuka and The Team Labour both of which are comprised of members of former criminals as well as The Team Vision Mothers which comprises of young mothers in Kibera.

Eldoret: Facilitators were Tom Juma and Ken Kibet

In Eldoret, Tom Juma used social media platforms such as Facebook & Twitter to mobilize participants. There was overwhelming participation with cases of up to 120 people in attendance. The facilitators invited 35 groups each with 2 participants both male and female. Some of the sessions were emotional and hence the need to invite members of the District Peace Committees to provide expert opinion in some of the sessions. Depending on circumstances, it became necessary for the facilitators to at times deviate from the recommended format to allow participants to dialogue on emerging emotive issues. *(Eldoret and its environs witnessed some of the worst violence during the post 2007 elections violence. This violence was witnessed mainly between members of the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin communities)*



Participants listening to the proceedings of the day

Naivasha: Facilitators were Peter Kiarie and Doris Mugwika

The Team screening sessions took place in a place called Karagita in Naivasha. The facilitators would explain the objectives of the episodes before screening the series. This was followed by discussions.

Participants were drawn from different ethnic backgrounds and included both men and women. During the sessions for Season 1, participants decided to form a parallel group which came to be known as the Naivasha Coffee Bar. This was a creative and innovative concept which was open to all who considered themselves members of the youth group and resided in Naivasha. The Coffee Bar provided the youth with an opportunity to engage on matters affecting them in their areas. They also had an opportunity to meet and engage with various local officials. These included opinion leaders, provincial administration, civil servants, security officers and even members of the local business community. The forums were also participatory with participants contributing ksh50 to buy coffee. This initiative is still ongoing and the youth meet every last Thursday of the month in the afternoons at the local YMCA grounds. Besides the Coffee Bar, the local Team facilitators, Doris and Peter, have formed a CBO called AMUA based in Karagita to provide extension services to their colleagues living in the area. As part of the Amua work, they have created a database of CVs from the youth and liaised with local companies such as the flower farms to employ youth from the area. So far 418 youth have been employed.

Kisumu: The facilitators were Collins George Owuor and Miriam Abdalla

In Kisumu, although the participants expected to receive some money towards transport reimbursements during the screenings, some opted to use the money offered to start a savings scheme. This group, registered as Achok youth group, got involved in initiating business such as fish farming, tea kiosks and the provision of public toilet facilities for pay. Interestingly, the Achok group comprises mostly of people who were drug and substance abusers but who upon being exposed to The Team wanted to be involved in activities that would change their lives. Another group called The T.E.A.M (Transformative Empowerment Action Initiative Movement) was registered as a CBO which among other things works as a Civilian Oversight Committee to conduct follow ups in the estates on the running of local affairs. In addition, the team has been networking with Constitution & Reform Education Consortium(CRECO). Up to about three CBOs have been initiated by participants of the Kisumu screenings.

Miriam, a facilitator from Kisumu commended MFA for the episode on the constitution. She noted that almost everyone in Kisumu city now has a copy of the constitution. She also remarked that prior to the screenings, participants were requested to sing the national anthem which instilled a sense of nationalism among participants. Mobile technology was used in the form of SMS to mobilize participants. Further, Database of CVs is maintained by the facilitators and is used when assisting local members of the youth secure employment in local businesses such as supermarkets.



Tom Juma, a facilitator from Eldoret explaining a point during the meeting

Mathare: Facilitators were Linda Omany and Bernard Onyango

In Mathare, the format of the screenings took the recommended shape. That is screening of two episodes followed by discussions among the participants on emerging issues. Bernard and Linda invited officials from the Ministry of Youth Affairs to sensitize participants about the Youth Enterprise Fund. So far three groups have benefited from the fund. After screening of the series, participants identified major themes and discussed it in its local context. Ben pointed out that politicians are also taking keen interest in the forums. However, the facilitators moderate the forums so as to ensure that the politicians do not dominate the forums with political bickering for its own sake

Emerging issues

- Use of experts to provide an informed opinion
- Use of social media and mobile technology to mobilize participants
- Formation of networks and CBOs e.g. Mombasa Youth Network & Mombasa Youth Parliament
- Increased collaboration with relevant service providers and other NGOs e.g. Africa Youth Trust
- Facilitators have benefited from the collaborations e.g. Mwangi Muraya has been working as an intern with CEGD to conduct civic education, Miriam Abdalais a beneficiary of Youth Alive, Tom Juma is in the Conflict Management Panel while Ken Kibetis a member of the District Peace Committee

Challenges

- Some participants were asking for reimbursement and some experts were expecting honoraria yet the facilitators were not granted these resources

- Inter-clan conflict is now being experienced in certain areas where interventions have taken place e.g. in Kisumu there's discontent as to which clans should have their representatives elected governors, senators, MPs etc.



The Executive producer emphasizing a point to the facilitators

Outputs (Expected & unexpected)

Did we meet the objectives?

The facilitators were in agreement that some of objectives of the Team had been met. The message of peaceful coexistence is gaining acceptance as evidenced by the ODM party elections in Mathare whereby Kikuyus fully participated. However, in Kisumu, there is an emerging issue of simmering conflict between Asians and Africans (Rich Vs Poor)

In Eldoret, there are a few people who have still not accepted that they need to co-exist. This is evident in the transport sector where public service vehicles (*matatus*) are being branded in ethnic names e.g. Kitwek to target Kalenjins. There is therefore a subtle message that people from other ethnic groups are not welcome in those vehicles.

This message is also replicated in the estates which are still divided along ethnic lines e.g. majority of the Kikuyu live in Huruma.

Additionally, businessmen have been killed under mysterious circumstances in the town while Kikuyus have been arming themselves.

People felt that the justice system failed so they need to “protect” themselves. What we have now is negative peace. ~ TomJuma from Eldoret

In Kisumu, a facilitator noted that Luhyas are being intimidated following the recent fall out between the Prime Minister and his deputy (The Prime Minister is Luo and the Deputy is Luhya) while in other cases Kisiis were not stocking up their shops and are planning to return to their villages by December 2012. More examples were cited of cases where members of the Kikuyu community in Eldoret were engaging in short term business while others were sending their relatives back home.

Observations and Lessons Learnt

- From the information obtained it is evident that some Kenyans are moving from focusing on personalities to issues. This was evident when the case of an ally of Mr William Ruto i.e. Peris Simam was charged on corruption. Locals were in agreement that Ms. Simam, despite her closeness to Ruto, deserved to be investigated and even charged with embezzlement of funds meant for the public through the local Constituency Development Fund. (*Peris Simam is the member of parliament for Eldoret South Constituency in the national assembly*) This implies that Kenyans may be opening up to the idea that they need to look for a leader whose leadership traits and integrity is more important than which tribe they come from.
- The sessions aired have taken the peaceful coexistence and conflict transformation debates beyond the scope of the programme. For instance, the screenings have influenced local politicians (e.g. in Mathare) to be accountable to their constituents. This is an indirect impact which may be overlooked.
- The skills that the facilitators have acquired are useful in addressing other societal concerns and this is an indirect result which is often not recorded.
- Enhancing networks and linkages greatly improves the quality of information relayed to the public as was evident in the case of using District Peace Committees and experts.
- Involving all stakeholders makes the process credible and acceptable. e.g. the sessions in Naivasha which involved opinion leaders, provincial administration and civil servants
- Creative and innovative ways that involve community members such as the coffee bar in Naivasha not only reduce costs but enhance participation and ownership by all those involved.
- Documentation of the process is very important as it enhances experience sharing with other development agencies as well as acting as a resource mobilization strategy.

The Ideal/Changes we want to see

- Mapping and monitoring of hot spots for informed intervention in potential conflict situations
- Encourage youth to co-exist and preach peace
- Economic empowerment of people - Wealth creation

- Enhance access to information
- Widen coverage area
- Respecting outcome of the elections
- Respect rule of law
- Introduce Public Audit Committees to vetleaders
- Conduct continuous civic education

What could we have done differently?

- Mobilizing communities based on issues
- Inter-generational dialogue
- Expert participation in programs
- Expand scope of curriculum
- Incorporate Alternative Dispute Resolution systems e.g. those found in the traditional set-up.
- Increase the number of facilitators

Recommendations

- Include aspirants in the period leading up to the next general elections and vet them like in the case of coffee bar
- Increase the timing of the sessions to last at least four hours. The recommended time per session is three hours, including one hour of video screening
- Involve media fraternity for coverage of news
- Involve the influential people/ gatekeepers
- Documentation of best practices

Inter-generational forums

Deborah Jones pointed out that Search for Common Ground and MFA have recently received funding for a new program seeking to foster intergenerational (youth-elder) dialogues. In the proposed program, The Team content will still be used to aid in the discussions. Sessions will be conducted in Burnt Forest, Kitale, Mau Narok, Njoro, Sotik, Kwale, Busia, Migori and the other locations targeted before through the previous sessions. Our youth network will, therefore, take the lead in creating these new sessions, thus continuing the project started by Dfid in 2008.

Strategy

The Executive Producer stated that there will be need to identify 2 contact people –a youth and elder- in each location to mobilize participants and facilitate the sessions. In addition, the current facilitators will still be expected to attend the sessions as they will also be involved in the design of the sessions. This introduction raised the question of whether the locations identified were appropriate as well as the role of the old team of facilitators and that of the elders.

Plenary

On location

There was debate from the facilitators revolving around the recommended locations. A facilitator proposed Sondu because there was a concentrated population of Kipsigis, Kisii and the Luo community members who lived with tension and fear of attack from one another. In addition, there were incidences involving cattle rustling in the area and the facilitators had established existing networks. There was also a suggestion to move from either Njoro or Mau Narok to Kuresoi where the sessions could be conducted in either Kamara or Mwaragania.

On the role of the elder

There was a healthy discussion amongst participants on the role of the elder. In most ethnic groups the elder is viewed as the custodian of the community. Facilitators noted that the Provincial Administration has demarcated locations in each county whereby each village has an elder. Questions arose on what kind of elder should be chosen. Is it a Religious elder or a traditional elder?

Mr. Gikunda clarified that the design of the project is not to impose the authority of an elder on the youth and vice versa. All are equal partners. The bottom line is dialogue. The role of the elder was to facilitate the session to enable the voice of the elderly to be heard. He also acts as the entry point to mobilize other elders.

In addition, facilitators expressed fears about being left out of the process. Mr. Gikunda noted their concerns and stated that they would be taken into consideration.

Recommendations

- Fist to five facilitators should not be neglected and may be included as participants
- Widen coverage area in Nairobi – e.g. to Dandora, Kayole
- MFA needs to enhance linkages for those on the ground

Conclusion

It is important to note that the facilitators used different strategies to address issues of importance to Kenyans such as conflict transformation, good governance and the rule of law. They localized the screenings according to the needs of the participants. In future, it would be noteworthy to identify what factors enhanced the success of the strategies and what caused the failure of others. The successful strategies could be replicated in future interventions.

Evaluation and closing remarks

Most facilitators were unhappy about the accommodation. However, they expressed their satisfaction with working on “The Team”. They were in agreement that it has been a good process despite the challenge of working with communities. This however inspired them to do more for their people.

There was active participation from all the participants as The Executive Producer used participatory methods to enable the facilitators to share their experiences. He stated that the purpose of the meeting was to recognize and appreciate the effort of the Team as well as introduce the inter-generational project. The meeting ended at 4.00 p.m.

Appendix

List of participants

	NAME	LOCATION
1	Linda Omanywa	Mathare
2	Melissa Tully	Professor - University of Iowa
3	Peter Kiarie	Naivasha
4	Boaz Munanga	Kakamega
5	Osman Sadiq	Mombasa
6	Tom Juma	Eldoret
7	Deborah Jones	Search for Common Ground
8	Mwangi Muraya	Nakuru
9	Miriam Abdala	Kisumu
10	Ken Kibet	Eldoret
11	Bernard Onyango	Mathare
12	Clarice Singuri	Western
13	Beatrix Arusei	Nakuru
14	Doris Mugwika	Naivasha
15	Cecilia Ayot	Kibra
16	Vivian Otieno	Mombasa
17	George Owuor	Kisumu
18	Simon Gicia	Media Focus on Africa
19	Tony Matenge	Kibra
20	Mburugu Gikunda	Executive Producer/Media Focus on Africa
21	Ruth Njagi	Rapporteur