

# ELECTION SAFARI

## WORKSHOP

*June 5th - 7th 2017*

# REPORT



■■■ HEINRICH  
BÖLL  
STIFTUNG  
EAST & HORN  
OF AFRICA

*“The youth of Kenya need to think about the country. We cannot continue to be individual based”*

**WE ARE WATCHING YOU!**



# Introduction

*Election Safari is a program that trained 44 young people from counties around the country on basic writing skills to encourage them to document events happening around them in their communities related to elections leading up to August 8th National Election Day.*

This is to document youth experiences which will eventually be published into text that will be designed to target an audience under 40 years of age. Stories captured are those that are often ignored by media but dealt with by the public. Also – a unique document that covers youth perspectives during an election period which can be utilized to gauge future elections and how youth perceive information, matters that were of particular concern to them during that time, how they communicate and where they get their information

The gathering was to be held in February but due to unavoidable circumstances, it was delayed to June. This meeting was to understand the challenges that participants have with keeping a journal. Also learn new methods and tools that can be used during the process.



## Timelines

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**August-** documenting Election Day is one of the mandatory days that each participant must input information

**October** – all information will be collected so as to be broken down and edited. Deciphering what information can be utilized will be done during this period.

**December/ January 2018** – launch of published work

## Expectations of Participants

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1. Interact, learn and exchange ideas or challenges
2. Learn to improve writing skills
3. Know what is happening around them politically
4. Follow up with stories that can be a challenge. How to follow up
5. Sharpen skills and know what is going on in their particular county
6. Youth agenda in the county and getting to engage more with other youth groups
7. Knowing more about the role of women
8. Learning how to discuss issues online and also spreading awareness online
9. Understanding each other more through diversity
10. Continue with the Election Safari program and ownership

## Challenges faced by Participants

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- a. Keeping up with a journal has been a challenge
- b. What to write about. Choosing a relevant topic has been difficult to decipher
- c. Whether enough is being written and knowing the adequate measurements
- d. Re-location and movement – some participants have had to move due to employment or school
- e. Adding photography has been difficult with a journal
- f. Lack of motivation

Initially the number of participants was 44 but had to be reduced to 11. This was so that information captured would be more in depth, easier to track and follow. Members were divided into groups of 3 to discuss the various activities that they have been involved in and also to see areas that they feel we need to pay attention to in coming months.



## Group 1

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*This group comprised of Samwella/ Chebet/ Andrew (Samburu, Elgeyo Marakwet, Bomet)*

The main issue is youth being used by politicians to cause violence. There are several gangs that are being utilized by politicians to cause chaos in the community and instill fear, also harass competitive candidates.

Activities suggested to participate in:

- **Fact check the manifestos** - measuring whether goals are being achieved.
- **Devolving SP to counties**
- **Engaging with youth leaders** (gang leaders) and involving them in activities. They carry a massive influence in the community

## Group 2

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*This group comprised of Jeff/ Diana/ Seline (Nairobi, Kericho, Uasin Gishu)*

The main area that needs to be focused on is Unity. They illustrated how there have been recent developments of hate speech online and even in their communities as we get closer to elections.

Activities suggested to participate in:

- **Peace walk** – through an organization called 'Footprints for Peace', is a good starting point. They will also have international

basketball peace tournaments

- **Shows and rallies** - people to sign a peace agreement / peace accord
- **Support a fair election - credible** – How can we as a group reduce the tension between IEBC and the public eye. Perhaps by understanding how are they preparing for the elections, polls and ballot boxes and disseminating the information in our networks



## Group 3

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*Group 3 - Stanley, Aden, Becky (Baringo, Wajir, Meru)*

The main issues was lack of transparency when it came to information

Activities suggested to participate in:

- **Transparency of the election and disseminate the information to people in the villages**
- **Youth engagement and electoral processes** - report on issues related to electoral process discrepancies

## **Tribless Youth – Shikoh Kihika**

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Founding member of 'Tribless youth' which is a peace initiative platform that encourages young people to defy ethnic hate speech. Shikoh shared her experience with beginning the initiative, sharing challenges and also opportunities. Tribless youth is currently working on an initiative where they will be interviewing new youthful aspirants to give them a platform to air their mandates and manifestos while also using these promises as a foundation to hold these leaders accountable.

## **Jiactivate – Mary Josephine and Sheena**

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Jiactivate is a campaign that is being ran to encourage youths to get out and vote. This is due to the large numbers of population who have been apathetic toward voting this year. They have collaborated with several youth organization's to spread the message while at the same time conducting a research on youth issues: Identify and measure what issues are most important to young Kenyans in 2017.

From the research conducted by GeoPoll- they demonstrate that youth are concerned about:

- Corruption
- Unemployment
- Food security (Famine and Drought)
- Health care

What was presented was the information gathered on health. Several young people do not have access to healthcare. NHIF is 500 shillings a month and the least you can pay 160 shillings as the minimum

amount which is still too high for many. One of the recommendations following their research will be a health care insurance that is specific to youth and make it more affordable and accessible.

In July they plan to put all the research findings into one document, and present it as a declaration to all presidential candidates.

## **Voting history in Kenya's elections – Aggrey Oriwo**

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Understanding Kenya's electoral history was a presentation made by Mr. Aggrey Oriwo representing IPSOS. The first elections held in Kenya were in 1920 by the white settlers. Many at times, people quote the elections of 1957 as the first elections because those were the first that black people were permitted to vote.

Historically, Kenya has always voted in tribal blocks, and tribal voting is deeply rooted, Kenya has always struggled to be united. 1988 had the lowest turn out in Kenya with a turn out of 40%.

Also in 2002 is a year that killed KANU, a new candidate was flaunted and internal clashes made powerful candidates leave the party. 2007 land was a huge issue because people in coastal regions did not have title deeds. Land, drought, famine, development and ethnicity will drive 2017 general elections.

"The youth of Kenya need to think about the country. We cannot continue to be individual based"

## Women participation in governance, is there a shift?

- Sarah Muhoya

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Sarah Muhoya shared her experience in working in politics as a woman. Her involvement began in 2004 and she mentioned how one of the rules at their political meetings was for women not to serve tea. It may not appear as a major action – but it was- women are often defined as servers and it was always expected of them to pray and serve the meals. Small actions such as those made major rises politically because it allowed men to view women as equals. Devolution has also helped women get into politics.

Mrs. Muhoya mentioned that in 2013, 0 women were voted as President, 0 women were voted as Senator, 0 women were voted as Governor and only 83 were voted in as MCA compared to 1450 men.

The difference is dire and this year, these numbers are predicted to increase. Therefore she is hopeful that indeed, Kenyan women have progressed when it comes to political representation. “General awareness has also improved the space for women in politics”

## New and interactive methods

- Robert Munuku

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“Using pictures to tell a story can be a powerful tool.” Mr. Munuku made a presentation of how to take proper photographs which will be usable.

Additionally, some stories are more impactful with video and using a simple

smart phone the right way can make a difference. Other important factors:

- Getting facts for stories
- Research and read other writers so as to improve one’s writing
- Practice by consistently writing more content

## Below are some of the changes that were made to improve the program:

Media – bi- weekly articles in the Sunday Nation to share some of the stories that are being submitted

Website – a tab on Siasa Place website to disseminate articles every week

WhatsApp – a group has been formed with the representative from different groups to communicate more efficiently

## Recommendations

- Grayson Marwa

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At the completion of the workshop, participants agreed that the following need to done:

- Election Safari in constituency/ wards
- Fact checking of manifestos by politicians
- Forums for aspirants
- More research on the election process so as to disseminate information to public

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