

MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Evaluation Report

Executive summary Uganda

Participation through citizen media: Strengthening young people, journalists and bloggers in Uganda

Background

The DW Akademie project is based in Uganda, a country that – particularly in its capital Kampala – enjoys a fairly vivid and diverse media landscape. However, in rural areas, where 80 percent of the population lives, media access is rather limited. Apart from information broadcasted nationwide by the public radio channel Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC), a large number of private media provide information and give the population the opportunity to participate in public dialogue. This also includes well-researched and critical reports, which shape public opinion. Particularly in rural areas radio is still by far the most important medium with more than 90 percent coverage. Generally, the Ugandan population is able to exercise their right to freedom of expression enshrined in the 1995 constitution. However, observers have been emphasising a continuous deterioration of both freedom of expression and the media in connection with President Yoweri Museveni and his government's aim to consolidate power. Furthermore, the right to freedom of expression enshrined in the constitution is being limited by a number of national laws that, for instance, regulate admission requirements for journalists and publishing opportunities. In addition, the introduction of new laws allows for far-reaching control of citizens' digital communication by the authorities.

More than three quarters of the Ugandan population are under 30 years of age. Many youth long for information and a voice in society; however, they lack proper opportunities for participation. The project focuses on strengthening young people, journalists and bloggers whose rights are being particularly infringed or challenged. The two action areas of the project are aligned to the strategic fields of Participation in society, Qualification as well as Professionalism and economic viability of the media sector. At the outcome level the measure pursues two objectives:

1. Young people aged between 13 and 24, particularly girls and women, make use of the various media offerings provided by local radio stations in order to inform themselves on relevant issues and to express themselves publicly.
2. Journalists and bloggers exercise their control function and, for this purpose, utilize a competency centre for research and security purposes.

The project's executing agencies include the Centre for Media Literacy and Community Development (CEMCO), the Uganda Radio Network (URN), the Hub for Investigative Media (HIM), the Media Challenge Initiative (MCI), the Uganda Christian University, the Islamic University in Uganda and various citizen radio stations.

Cooperation partners include the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) as well as Amnesty International (AI).

This external evaluation aims to constructively assess the impact achieved by DW Akademie projects after three years of the first funding phase (funding period: 2015 – 2018) and to make recommendations that may be integrated into the design of future projects. The evaluation is based on the OECD/DAC criteria and uses a mix of quantitative and qualitative methodologies including the analysis of

internal data and project documents as well as interviews with target groups, executing agencies and cooperation partners in Uganda. For the DAC criteria a rating system with a 5-point scale is used: 1) comprehensively fulfilled (dark green), 2) generally fulfilled (light green), 3) partially fulfilled (yellow), 4) minimally fulfilled (orange) and 5) not fulfilled at all (red).

In addition, for the first time in the Africa evaluations key questions were asked, which explicitly focus on digital aspects of the projects. In the evaluation of Uganda all digital questions were considered: D1) Digital collaboration, D2) Digital relevance, D3) Digital security, D4) Human Centered Design, D5) Digital scaling, D6) Digital range and D7) Digital openness. For these digital questions, no assessment was required, but only a section in the report with an inventory and, if appropriate, recommendations.

Conclusions of the project evaluation

The cooperation with citizen media has created diverse opportunities for the general population (particularly in rural areas, for women and youth) to participate in existing information flows and to articulate their own interests. Through citizen radios and the system of citizen reporters, information is being exchanged and local news dealing with interests and problems relevant for the respective groups are being spread. The relevance of choosing this particular population group is being underlined through the high motivation and initiatives shown in particular by young citizen media actors. New information and communication technologies are of great importance as young people are interested in these new forms of communication (social media in particular) and are willing to utilize these for their individual purposes. Strengthening social criticism and the capacities of journalists and bloggers to hold those in power to account is highly relevant for freedom of expression and the country's development overall. The measures in the field of investigative journalism are of relevance as they facilitate improved and conflict-sensitive reporting. Through promoting the use of specific digital security tools and methodologies, the project has captured a key digital challenge of the target group. Overall, the criterion **relevance** is rated "comprehensively fulfilled".

In order to assess the DAC criterion effectiveness the results logic of the project was analyzed according to the present strategy and the results model including objective indicators. The aspiration level of the formulation of objectives is adequate and the objective indicators mentioned in the proposal allow for an assessment of the effectiveness. Based on the indicators, the project has entered its target corridor while some of the indicators' target values have already been met one year prior to the project phase's completion. With a high level of learning, flexibility and the ability to use lessons learned to adapt the project's strategy and make small changes, it is highly likely that the measure will achieve the objective according to its indicators agreed upon in the proposal. The existence of the local office positively influences the learning and steering processes and the close exchange with the project partners as well as the respective advisory services provided to these partners. Overall, the criterion **effectiveness** is therefore rated "comprehensively fulfilled".

The project and the executing agencies make efficient use of the funds provided. Measures are being effectively calculated; means of funding are being used efficiently and transparently accounted for. Through the cooperation with other actors the project creates synergies. The intention of the DW Akademie in Uganda to develop its digital approaches by using the Human Centred Design approach can be viewed very positively. In doing so, DW Akademie proves its high level of learning. Regarding the development of the citizen reporter systems the project has sought for and identified cost-efficient and easy to manage reporting solutions. Overall, the criterion **efficiency** is therefore rated “comprehensively fulfilled”.

Regarding the impact achieved so far, tendencies are already becoming visible and areas where the project contributes to medium- and short-term impact have been identified. Furthermore, it is already becoming evident which impact is likely to be achieved in the long-term. When considering project objective 1, it becomes evident that through the creation of participatory empowerment opportunities the measure has contributed to increased social participation of the population. This particularly holds true for young people in the rural areas. Greater density of news and dialogue opportunities in the intervention areas result in communities being better informed and able to contribute and discuss their own issues and problems. Through the support of dedicated journalists, who advocate critical and independent reporting and denounce grievances, they will be strengthened in the exercise of their own rights and as mediators for others (objective 2). In order to achieve the project’s objectives and intended impact, the potential of growing digitalization is being harnessed. Addi-

tionally, the project takes into account that the target groups increasingly use social media to access information and interact with peers. For this purpose, innovative concepts were developed and new digital technology and application opportunities explored. In summary, the criterion **impact** is rated “generally fulfilled”.

After only three years into the project phase, strong ownership among the project’s executing agencies already exists. However, due to the short time period an overall assessment of the DAC criterion sustainability is difficult, as measures and financing concepts have not yet been comprehensively institutionalized within the responsible institutions. Through qualification measures the network of citizen reporters is continuously spreading and it offers the potential to become a “fast-selling” success in the long-term. Various efforts aim to institutionalize the measures and make them financially independent. Within this framework, radio station staff, for example, were trained in the field of financial and structural sustainability. At the end of the first three years of the project phase, the level of ownership by all the executing agencies has been assessed very positively. In summary, in view of the fact that the evaluation took place at a relatively early period of time, the criterion **sustainability** is rated “generally fulfilled”.

The project very actively pursues the process of donor harmonization and tries to create synergies. Diverse cooperation potentials and additional financing opportunities exist and are being accessed by the project. Overall, the criterion **coherence, complementarity and coordination** is rated “comprehensively 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.