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Dr Oyeyinka Oyewo is the Acting Head of Department for Communication and Language Arts at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. In addition to having a passion for teaching he enjoys taking long walks, so in Nigeria's unpredictable weather, his black umbrella is a welcome addition to his wardrobe. He also thinks that he will score major style points with his students!

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# Breaking the glass ceiling

**By Gabi Falanga**

Although this is by no means a new topic, it appears that African women are still bumping their heads on the glass ceiling. Deputy Director of Gender Links Kubi Rama hosted a seminar yesterday called "Glass Ceilings: Women and Men in Southern African Media".

Gender Links studies show that 41 percent of employees in media houses in Southern Africa are women. If South Africa is not taken into consideration in the statistic, the figure dives to 32 percent.

Men still dominate top management positions. "Women are an untapped market in all our countries," Rama said, adding that attitudes and mindsets need to be changed in order for equality to be reached in media houses. "The level of conservatism and gender bias in the media is astonishing," Rama said that women need to be proactive to prompt transformation and that media houses need to implement family friendly policies, gender policies and policies protecting women from sexual harassment. Training is also crucial, as many women do not get promotions due to a lack of technical and ICT skills.

"I think we are all working towards the day when a woman journalist is a journalist. There are a few things we need to do: change the demographics in media houses and the number of women sources, which is below 20 percent. The issue is that it has to be mainstream," Rama said.

Audience member and director of the AFP Foundation, Robert Holloway, contributed a hopeful message. "I agree that it's a man's world. But don't despair, attitudes can change very quickly," he said. He explained how AFP used to be a purely French, male-dominated organisation. Today, it is a multilingual organisation, the editor-in-chief is a woman and many

of their top reporters are women too.

Another audience member and executive director of African Women and Child Feature Service (AWC), Rosemary Okello-Orlale, said: "We need women who break stereotypes. We need role models."

Ensuring gender issues remain scrutinised in the media, Kubi Rama, Deputy Director of Gender Links reminded delegates at the Reporting Democracy presentation that South Africa has both a respected Constitution as well as a polygamous President. **Photo: Paul Greenway**



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# Broadband and economic growth in Africa

By Eric M.K. Osiakwan

A 2009 World Bank Information and Communications for Development report has analyzed the impact of broadband in 120 countries between 1980 to 2006. The report shows that for every 10 percentage points of broadband penetration, there is a 1.21% increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in developed countries and a 1.38% increase in developing countries.

Broadband has had more impact in developing countries than in developed. With this in mind, we need to seize the opportunity that broadband offers us to ride the current global

**Ghana and South Africa have taken the lead in developing National Broadband Strategies**

economic and financial crisis. Broadband is a stimulus because it creates both demand and supply.

Figures recently released by the Ministry of Communication Technologies show that the ICT sector in Tunisia grew by 17.8% in 2008. The sector's contribution to the country's GDP in 2001 was 3.9%. In 2008 its contribution amounted to 10%. In Ghana, the Telecom sector contributed 1.8% to the country's GDP in 2000. In 2005 its contribution was 6%.

Investing in broadband is an investment in economic growth and an indirect investment in development. For broadband to affect development, it must be made accessible and affordable. This would have an impact on health, education and standard of living – the three main indicators in the Human Development

Index (HDI).

However, in developing countries the price of broadband is exorbitant which makes it inaccessible. In Ghana, the total number of Internet subscribers is 47 000 which represents 0.2% of the 22 000 000 population. The total number of Internet users is about a 1 000 000 which represents 4.5% of the Ghanaian population. Only one in every three Internet subscribers has access to broadband.

Ghana and South Africa have taken the lead in developing National Broadband Strategies to increase broadband penetration by reducing the cost of broadband as well as reducing other related costs in order to ensure that it is accessible and affordable.

Broadband is not only an issue of high-speed networks – it also provides a platform

for interactive technologies that enable ordinary people to produce, share and distribute content on the Web as well as engage in commerce. These technologies are likely to become as ubiquitous on mobile devices as they are on the Internet. This poses challenges and opportunities for local content and commerce industries to generate and distribute content as well as engage in commerce with a broadband world.

Broadband can help facilitate e-citizenship and e-governance and can enhance relations between citizens and government to build and strengthen our democracy. Broadband Internet has enormous potential for strengthening community voice in public debate and decision-making and in maintaining transparency and accountability by government.

## Tell me, how should we see HIV?

By Annetjie van Wynegaard and Remy Raitt

Does circumcision reduce your chance of contracting HIV/Aids? A seventeen year old boy in Zambia seemed to think so. He performed the operation on himself a few weeks ago, said an audience member at yesterday's training workshop on effective HIV/Aids reporting.

Held by 'heartsminds', a campaign that aims to humanise the story of HIV/Aids by bringing in the voices of people living with HIV and Aids (PLWHA), the workshop was aimed at journalists, NGO representatives and other stakeholders. The session started with a documentary on effective HIV/Aids reporting in which two journalists from Botswana showcased how they tackle the sometimes fatigued subject.

Mwiika Malindima, the HIV and Aids and Gender Media Specialist of Zamcom, explained the importance of putting a human face on the story and not just relying on the grey statistics. He encouraged journalists to look past the disease. "You should convey

the feelings but still remain objective and remember that there are human beings behind the statistics," he said.

He listed the four key points of reporting on the disease: academic, content, field reporting and production and critique.

A roundtable discussion followed, and the audiences' hands shot up around the room, querying why some media houses don't have HIV/Aids policies, why some journalists stigmatise the disease and whether the technicalities of the disease should be discussed in media coverage.

A 49-year-old HIV positive woman received a round of applause when she shared the story of her infection of 18 years while questioning why PLWHA are so often depicted on their deathbeds. "They should document my life, where you can't differentiate between me and the next person," she said.

The workshop concluded in high spirits with the sounds of Lily T and Ntirelang Berman singing "Change your Hearts" as soccer balls and T-shirts were flung across the venue.

(Left to right) Mwiika Malindima, Daniel Nkalamo from Zamcom and Beth Barnes from the University of Kentucky displaying soccer balls they have been giving away to publicise their 'heartsminds' campaign. Photo: Steven Lang



## Making community news sexy

By Bilal Randeree

"Sometimes community news is not sexy enough," said Peter Kahler of West Africa Democracy Radio during the discussion "Reporting Community: Reinventing Local News". "Stories that border on development news are not being told because they appear boring," he said, arguing that these stories need to be told in novel and innovative ways.

Kahler said that his organisation seeks to ensure that communities can participate in the way that they are governed. "Our programming seeks to ensure that minority rights are played up as much as majority rights," he said. West Africa Democracy Radio partners with radio stations in many West African countries including Mali, Nigeria and Senegal.

Delegates also debated the difference between

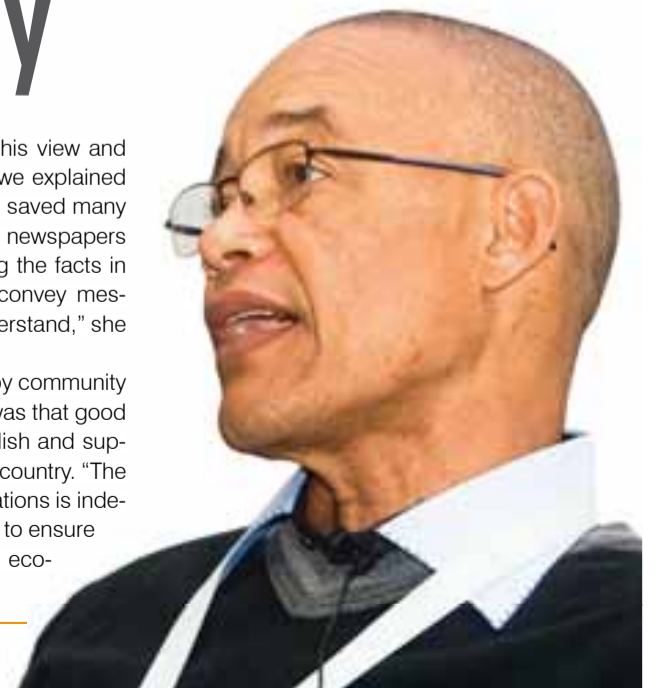
local news and community news. "The question of ownership is critical," said Adam Clayton-Powell, renowned author from the University of Southern California, "and for this we need to distinguish between local and community stations." Local radio stations are those that are owned by an individual or company but are located in a specific area and broadcast programming that is relevant to the area. Community radio stations on the other hand, are those that are owned by the community themselves and they contribute to the programming content.

Robert Kabushenga, editor of Uganda's The New Vision newspaper, said that it was more important for a community to have input into the content of a station, regardless of ownership. "My grandmother speaks in proverbs and could teach us better with stories and proverbs than my high school teacher could with proper English," he

said. Other delegates agreed with his view and an audience member from Zimbabwe explained that proverbs, art and imagery have saved many lives in Zimbabwe. "Journalists and newspapers are targeted by thugs for presenting the facts in plain English, but we are able to convey messages to people in the way they understand," she said.

While there are challenges faced by community radio stations, the general opinion was that good progress was being made to establish and support community stations around the country. "The biggest challenge for community stations is independence," said Kahler. "They need to ensure that they are free from political and economic interferences."

Peter Kahler  
Photo: Paul Greenway



# Derrière le simple '.com'

Par Vincent Huck

La fièvre du net a atteint nos sociétés à un niveau global, mais avouons que peu d'entre nous savent ce qui se passe lorsque l'on tape par exemple [www.highwayafrica.com](http://www.highwayafrica.com). Dans le langage commun, il s'agit d'une simple adresse internet, dans le langage réseaux, on appelle cela un "nom de domaine" qui remplace la série de chiffre appelées adresses IP, pour le rendre plus mémorable.

'.com' est un registre générique exploité par une société américaine et de ce fait, est sous la juridiction du lieu où ladite société est incorporée. Dans ce cas particulier '.com', il est donc difficile pour une personne ayant un contentieux avec un site enregistré sous le '.com' de demander réparation si dommage il y'a eu. "Quand vous créez donc un blog sur le .com et que vous êtes en Afrique, le contenu ne vous appartient pas de fait. Parce qu'à tout moment on peut fermer votre blog," explique Anne-Rachel Inné, directrice des relations Africaines à ICANN.

ICANN est responsable de la coordination de l'architecture mère de l'internet. Elle est née sous la tutelle du département du commerce américain avec un protocole d'accord. Les con-

séquences ne sont pas négligeables aussi parce que "les pays ne sont pas totalement souverains de leurs extensions nationales" a déclaré Inné. Prenez par exemple le cas du '.za', le registre Sud Africain est entièrement la propriété de l'Afrique du Sud. Si celle-ci veut faire un changement à la racine, elle doit passer par ICANN qui doit d'abord attendre l'acceptation du gouvernement américain avant de pouvoir procéder au changement.

Une autre problématique soulevée par le système en place est celui de la préservation de notre héritage. "Nous devons faire en sorte que par exemple si le gouvernement sénégalais ne veut pas enregistrer du .com, qu'il ait la possibilité d'empêcher que senegal.com soit exploité sans son accord" a expliqué Inné.

D'après elle, les défis pour le continent africain sont nombreux : "nous devons penser à disposer de registre générique, '.afrique' par exemple, qui serait africain: si nos réseaux locaux fonctionnent correctement, techniquement et administrativement, nous n'achèterons pas des noms de domaines ailleurs. Et nous devons œuvrer à avoir une meilleure connaissance de ce qui se passe derrière ces simples noms de domaines."



Anne-Rachel Inné  
Photos: Paul Greenway

## Un publique qui informe son journal!

Par Vincent Huck

C'est une première en Afrique et dans le monde! Grocott's Mail le plus vieux indépendant d'Afrique du sud ouvre ses portes au journalisme citoyen. Le concept est simple : dans les locaux utilisés par le journal, un espace a été aménagé pour les 'citoyens journalistes'. "Ils n'auront qu'à remplir un

formulaire qui leur donnera le droit à une carte de membre, le service est entièrement gratuit" a expliqué Michael Salzwedel, éditeur du site. "Les ordinateurs sont entièrement équipés pour permettre tout type de téléchargement."

Une fois leurs cartes de membre en poche, les membres de la communauté pourront utiliser les ordinateurs entre

10 Heures et 15 Heures afin de produire tout type de contenu (texte ou photo ou les deux réunis) pour le site internet. Des facilitateurs seront présents en permanence afin d'assister les 'journalistes' dans l'utilisation des technologies. Des formations informatiques et de technique de journalisme seront également proposées. 120 élèves des écoles alentour ont déjà partici-

ipé aux séances de formation. "Ils ont montré beaucoup d'intérêt dans le projet," a déclaré Salzwedel. "Notre objectif est d'assurer que l'information transite dans les deux sens : de nous vers la communauté et de la communauté vers nous."

Le projet est soutenu financièrement par la Knight Foundation. "Nous sommes désireux de transformer les

consommateurs passifs d'information en consommateurs actifs," a expliqué Khaya Thonjeni, représentant de la fondation. "Notre plus gros challenge," a néanmoins rappelé Salzwedel, "c'est d'assurer que les personnes qui viendront utiliser le matériel seront là pour produire du contenu et non pas pour surfer sur le web."



Stewart Pennington checks his emails before the Highway Africa MTN opening reception. Cell phones have become increasingly useful tools for journalists. Photo: Caroline Kaminju

## From bricks to business machines

By Ntombenkosi Dyosop

It was not so long ago that cell phones were "only for yuppies", turned off regularly and the size of newborns. Today, almost everybody who has a cell phone keeps it on them at all times and the small devices fit easily into your pocket. Cell phones have also become more than just communication objects.

Cell phones were initially used only for making phone calls, sending text messages, and playing basic games in monotone. Nowadays, people use their cell phones to access the Internet, log on to social networks, record videos, listen to music, take pictures and make use of a range of other technologies.

People use their cell phones for different purposes depending on their profession or social status. For instance, journalists use their cell phones to record interviews and take pictures, whereas students often use them for work-related purposes.

However, research shows that mobile access in Africa is limited. Kobina Bedu-Addo is a Ghanaian lecturer in broadcasting, on-line journalism and international communications. He says that out of a population of 22 million people in Ghana, only eight to 10 million people have access to cell phones. This means that the majority of people in Ghana do not have cell phones; a fact which is not only applicable to Ghana, but also the rest of Africa. "Mobile phones tend to be urban centric and used mostly in urban areas," Kobina says.

But those lucky enough to own a cell phone enjoy the benefits.

Rhodes student Mogorisi Malebo uses a Blackberry cell phone that enables her to access the Internet when she needs to conduct research for her assignments. She sends emails from her phone, records lectures and accesses social networks such as Facebook. "My phone has become my personal computer and it makes life much easier," she says.

### Quotes

"The level of conservatism and gender bias in the media is astonishing."  
Kubi Rama

"I think African journalists are best placed to tell the stories of the World Cup. The tournament has the ability to get us on the front foot as a continent."  
Jermaine Craig

"Sometimes community news is not sexy enough."  
Peter Kahler

"We need women who break stereotypes. We need role models."  
Rosemary Okello-Orlale

# Not only about plenaries and round tables



Jayne Morgan of Podcart  
Photo: Paul Greenway

School students Thabana Keitumetsi, Ntseho Nthatsi and Mokole Joseph attended the Highway Africa 2009 conference in a bid to improve their secondary school publication the *Moi-Sun*. Photo: Tawedzerwa Zhou



With so much to do and so many places to get to at HA 09 very few people had the time to stop and register the little home of Highway Africa in Grahamstown where this mammoth conference is put together. Photo: Madoda Mkhobeni



# Time to hit the road... but not before a dance

Highway Africa's farewell reception, hosted by SA Tourism at Nelson Mandela Dining Hall, marked the end of a successful Highway Africa 2009. It was not just speeches and formalities at the event. Marimbas, djs, and soccer balls brought out the dancer in everyone. Photos: Samantha Claasen



Catering staff member Bongani Nykilana.



Dancers from the Amaphiko Township Dance Group entertained delegates at the Highway Africa farewell reception. They incorporated soccer balls into one of their dance routines in order to celebrate the coming of the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Highway Africa wishes to thank the following sponsors: