

Fall 2022 Professional Fellow

Name: Alan H Onyango
Country: Kenya
Job Title and Employer: TV Host and Producer, Signs Media TV Kenya
Founder and CEO, Black Albinism
Project Title: Using New Media as Advocacy Tools to Influence Civic Engagement of People with Disabilities in Kenya

Problem: People with disabilities continue to be underrepresented and excluded from the political process in Kenya (WFD, 2020). However, the increasing penetration of mobile technology in Sub-Saharan Africa (CA, 2021; Pew Research Center, 2018) creates opportunities to use mobile technology and new media to enhance civic participation for persons with disabilities.

Project Objective: Alan plans to use new media forms and trends as advocacy tools to influence civic engagement by helping people with disabilities and their advocacy organizations enhance their media literacy skills and capacity.

Project Description: Alan will use a multi-faceted approach to implement his project. First, he plans to recruit five disabled persons' organizations (DPOs) in Nairobi County and train their media representatives on how to use citizen and mobile journalism and social media tools to engage their constituents and amplify their disability advocacy and messaging to key stakeholders in public policy and government. He will also train these representatives on how to monitor and measure engagement. Secondly, Alan will recruit 15 persons with disabilities, all members of the five DPOs, and train them on how to engage with social media platforms and use the platforms to influence public discourse on disability issues. The hope is that the 15 participants become "disability social media influencers" and encourage others with and without disabilities to engage and help drive the public discourse.

Certified in mobile journalism by the International Center for Journalism (ICFJ), Alan will leverage open-source training materials from the ICFJ, the Global Investigative Journalism Network, and other sources and modify the content to make it accessible to his target population. He will address the following topics in the trainings:

- raising awareness of the role of people with disabilities in civic participation
- using mobile technology for citizen journalism
- understanding social media platforms
- understanding the structure of the government
- understanding engagement mechanisms

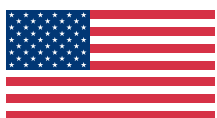
Thirdly, partnering with the DPO media representatives and disability social media influencers, Alan plans to create 100 hours of content relating to inclusive civic engagement and share this content through his program and networks.

References

Communications Authority of Kenya (CA) (2021). Sector statistics report. Retrieved from: <https://www.ca.go.ke/59-million-mobile-phone-devices-connected-to-mobile-networks-as-at-september-2021-ca-report-shows/>

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Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) (2020). The state of political inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWD) within political parties in Kenya. Retrieved from: <https://www.wfd.org/story/persons-disabilities-kenyan-political-parties-face-systemic-exclusion-new-research-finds>



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