

## Embracing Media Advancement for Realization of Millennium Development Goals in Kenya

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### Abstract

Language being the human capacity for acquiring and using complex systems of communication is intertwined and interrelated with different communications; Computing, fine art, life science, music, conversations and dialogue as part of the aspects of media. Thus, language and media are key factors in realization of millennium development goals that comprise of total universal education, gender equity, end of poverty and hunger for all, optimum child health, control and combat of HIV/AIDS, realization of environmental sustainability and achievement of global partnership. To achieve this, Kenya must address fields under social sciences and humanities such as; anthropology, archaeology, business administration, communication, criminology, economics, education, government, linguistics, international relations, political science, geography, history, law, psychology, philosophy, religion, visual performing arts like theatre works, area studies and cultural studies among others.

Infrastructure development is vital in realization of social, economic, political, psychological and physical stability of any nation. Equitable and sustainable funding in social sciences and humanities, in language development, technological improvement and media freedom is necessary to shape the society positively in terms of cultural aspects, norms and believes. A well informed society is critical in strategizing for realization of millennium development goals in Kenya.

**Keywords:** Language and media; Millennium development goals

### Introduction

Media has a purpose of entertaining, educating and informing. The masses rely on the media for information dissemination, consumption and distribution. Media entails and cuts across cultures, Nations and professionalisms. Recent years have witnessed immense and rapid growth and advancement in technology and technological aspects associated with the media. The era of face to face on physical contact in communication is slowly fading and the era of computers internet and overall digital communication is taking roots in all the media outlets. Digital technology has created and is continuously maintaining a total new environment for human thinking, learning, experience and communication.

Distance or geographical locations are no longer barriers in disseminating information to individuals and has transformed the physical contact social beings to “digital contact” social beings. People communicate through digital accessories such as computers, mobile phones, television, radio and satellite accessories. Advancement in technology and the virtuous utilization of new technology in media has witnessed advancement in media literacy. Language has been revolutionized and intertwined-correlated to the digital era. Short messages in mobile phone communication (sms), combination of audio and visual aspects of communication, utilization of internet social forums in communication, graphic and sign language as well as body languages are continuously changing the mode, mood, strategy and channels of communications in the media industries.

The old culture of oral communication and information retention by individuals has been replaced by print media and currently by electronic or digital media. In the old days content reference was heavily relieved on either written information or memory of concerned members but the print media relies on a combination of images and print while digital-electronic media relies on digital accessories to save and

retrieve information both audio and visual. These accessories include easily portable devices such as flash disks; digital video drives, external hard discs, modems and floppy discs. Other accessories include internal hard discs in desk top computers laptops and palmtops computers.

Language has thus been coded, interpreted and designed in ways to suit contextual and environmental experiences. It is a total revolution of language through technological advancement and development. Social media space has witnessed advancement in language coding and interpretation. Cyber social space and chat rooms such as: Facebook, Twitter, Skype, Netlog, Wayn and Badoo among others are now more popular among the youths in Kenya.

Kenya could take advantage of this revolution to catalyze the processes of attaining millennium development goals by either empowering the citizens, sharing development oriented content or strategize to make technological equipments and accessories affordable to all or to majority Kenyans.

### Millennium Development Goals in Kenya

Kenya has set the year 2030 as the “deadline” for achievement of: industrialization, total democracy, affordable social amenities and improved modern infrastructure aimed at realization of millennium development goals. All the aspects of social-economic, political, physical, physiological, psychological and environmental issues have to be improved by then, to improve the quality of human life.

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Millennium Development Goals in Kenya are centered on the issues of: total universal education, gender equity, end of poverty and hunger for all, optimum child health, control and combat HIV/AIDS, realization of environmental sustainability and achievement of global partnership. The following (Figure 1) illustrates the inter-relation of advancement in technology, media and language.

(Figure 1) outlines and displays the interrelation of utilization of new technology through revolutionized language and media to realize vision 2030 in Kenya. Technological advancement in communication and media cyberspace acts as a catalyst towards achievement of equitable and sustainable development.

It is projected by the year 2030 Kenya will have advanced from “developing” to “developed status” where industrialization and education for all will have been achieved. Infrastructural development in terms of transport networks would be the best, no Kenyan will die of hunger and there would be affordable and accessible good health care, the country would be enjoying “the green” environment since every Kenyans would be conserving the environment.

There would be no cases of HIV/AIDS and social-economic lives of individuals would be comfortable and enjoyable. The masses would be enlightened and employees’ opportunities would be available and well paying. Global partnership in matters of: political, economical and social would be attained. Majority of Kenyans would be living in the digital times where most activities and undertakings would be done electronically from education, banking, transportation, business transactions and investments among others. Though a virtue, millennium development goals does not take into account issues of: contributions and donations to alleviate hunger, individualized unity of purpose and crisis management.

### Languages and Media for Sustainable Development

Traditional media involved ranges of cinema, graphic media, print media and oral media. Over the years media has witnessed immense

advancement adding value, taste and fashion in human communication by way of oral, print and visual aesthetics. Language arts have revolved on print media and general media literacy. Cinemas, graphic and multi-media comprise critical media literacy for all citizens. It is worth to note that most people in developing countries depend on broadcast media for information dissemination.

Old traditional media comprised of: radio, telephone, print press, postal service, diagramming, cinematic viewing and theaters while the current revolutionized media and language enjoy variables and entities of development. They include: digital broadcasting, digital media, internet utilization, multimedia usage, video games and simulations cinematic and theaters media, graphic and print media. The following accessories and outlets are part of the current media, iPods tunes, blogs, web pages, pad casts, e-print, hyperlinks, digital libraries, word processors, laser print, e-mails, e-graphics, diagramming, card drawing, Google image Photoshop, e-cinematic, movies, video conferencing, e-learning, CD-Rom, power point and Hyper-studio among others.

With all these avenues of information dissemination, the masses can easily access, discuss, disseminate and consume information, set public agenda, control the political and leadership ideology as well as engage in positive economic activities.

Revolutionizing language and media has advanced the avenues and process of content dissemination. The internet and digital media utilization has created new e-media and emergence of e-broadcasting and e-reporting as well as e-reading.

This new media is hereby referred to as “digital media” the masses are now using word processors for writing engaging processes of revision, collaborative writing and peer review thus replacing the pen or pencil and paper work. Digital sending of short messages “sms” has taken root within the young and old class. Is not a shock to find high school students who cannot compose or write a friendly or official letter due to the culture of “sms” among peer groups.

Most individuals are now reading newspapers and magazines online hence e-print and e-media. This has gradually reduced the cost of accessing the information and saved time as well as environment. Interactive multimedia can now be shared easily over the internet and collaborative language communities have emerged. Educative video games and simulations have been developed online to engage both the old and the young in “mind” or “thought” games replacing the physical oriented field games. Imagery language in communication has taken root and it seems easy to understand and interpret across cultures.

Thus proper utilization of technological revolution, media advancement and language development would in turn enhance sustainable development by attaining advancement in infrastructural development, creating and implementing, proper policies of education, improved transportation and social amenities, affordable energy sources that are friendly to the environment, affordable and efficient housing improved communication and media outlets, and democratization of political and leadership process. Kenya is in the process of managing and improving the road networks through agencies such as: Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA), Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KeRRA) and Kenya National Highway Authority (KeNHA), <http://www.Krb.go.ke/>.

### Embracing Language in Digital Media for MDG’S in Kenya

Language has been adversely revolutionized in the current digital

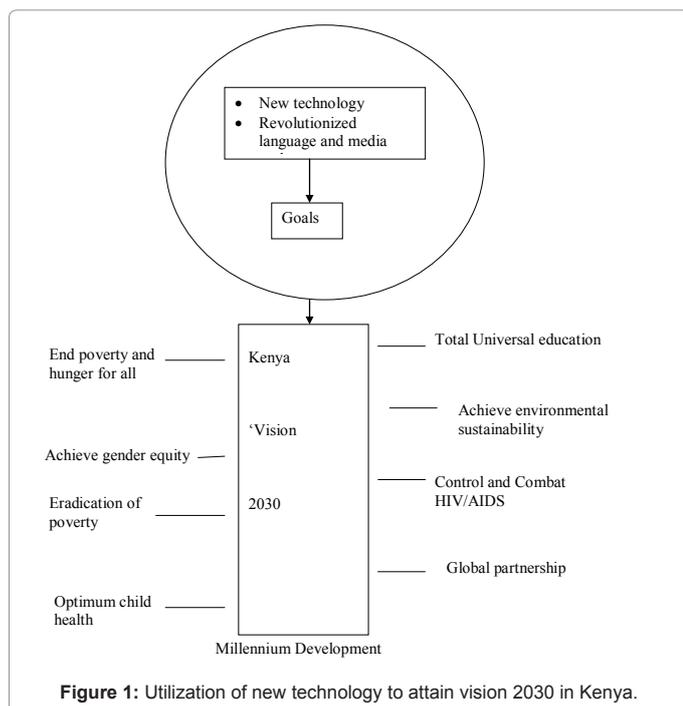


Figure 1: Utilization of new technology to attain vision 2030 in Kenya.

media outlets whether print or electronic ranging from broadcasting acting, reporting, commentaries and art of reviews. Broadcast language coding ranges from: news headlines, news reports, sport communities holiday programmes, art reviews interviews and group discussions, financial reports to internet e-media.

To continuously achieve the MDG'S then the digital media has to be embraced with the syntax and semantics of language coded in audio, print and visual for imagery purposed. This is well depicted in the following (Figure 2).

(Figure 2) outlines the interrelationship of advanced and revolutionized media and language in embracing MDGs and the road map towards realization of vision 2030 in Kenya. Utilization of modern technology in media will continuously enhance achievement of set goals for social economic and political development.

Evaluating success and maintaining sustainable development in Kenya is vital for implementation of MDGs and achievement of development status as depicted on vision 2030. To effectively attain the level of industrialized Nation then all the stakeholders and sectors be it government or non-government must be actively involved.

### Challenges of Revolutionizing Media and Language for MDG's

Revolutionized language and the media embrace technological advancement and actualization of the digital era. Internet availability would be termed as timely blessing though coupled with challenges of accessibility and utilization by all in Kenya. There are great disparities in

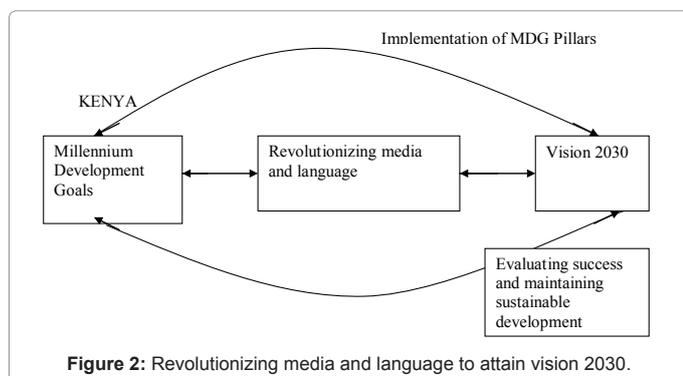


Figure 2: Revolutionizing media and language to attain vision 2030.

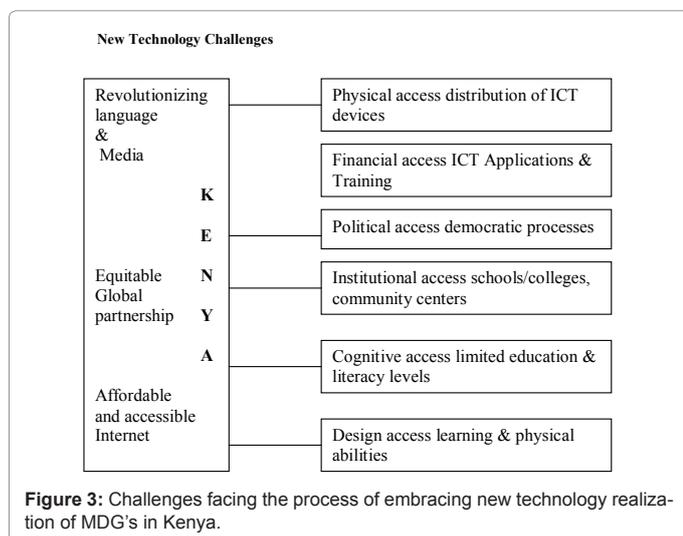


Figure 3: Challenges facing the process of embracing new technology realization of MDG's in Kenya.

opportunities to access the internet in Kenya. Some regions are still battling with the struggle to access basic needs such as food and clothing. Education and business oriented advantages ties to the internet is yet to be accessed by majority Kenyans. The disparity is even globally causing global digital divide [1].

Due to the un-even regional and global development, internet has developed unevenly throughout the world [2], leading to: poor technology, education systems, labor markets, democracy and governance, tourism and infrastructure as well as poor strategies of disseminating and imparting knowledge to the masses.. Krueger (1993) notes that computers and internet provide users with improved education and higher wages hence improved quality of life and therefore those nations and people with limited access are disadvantaged and the issue of equality in information sharing and knowledge platforms differs greatly.

The following (Figure 3) illustrates some of the challenges facing the process of revolutionizing language and media for sustainable development and realization of MDG's by the year 2030 in Kenya

### Conclusion

Language revolutionizing and media advancement are two inter-related and interviewed variables that (if) well utilized in the digital era would in term transfer the society, mobilize the masses, instill confidence in the leadership and deliver Kenya from the crisis of poor planning and privatization to a self sufficient and stable economy where every Kenyan will be happy, healthy, wealthy and well educated.

To achieve equitable and sustainable development there is need to empower the masses and especially the poor. Ann Tibaijuka, former head of UN-HABITAT noted during the State of the World's cities 2006/2007 report, "When the mass of people are in one place, if you don't empower them they will empower themselves through revolution, if we want to avoid chaos we have to empower the power people". Such empowerment will enhance gender equity, effective social structures and sustained development in a country.

The report compiled during the East Africa media workshop on Millennium Development Goals held on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> August, 2008 at Arusha Tanzania notes that, "Though the classical role of the media is that of setting the agenda, with respect to MDGs the media has to develop workable strategies in highlighting these goals to the masses. Journalists should go beyond discussing MDGs as a policy document and dig deeper to get to the issues behind the whole concept of MDGs. Media should look at the story from all angles, not just at the state and its obligations and provide solutions rather than reflecting on past mistakes"

Information is power and may either build or destroy a society. The digital media, imagery communication and e-language are the route towards achievement of sustainable development and realization of millennium development goals by the year 2030. This would in turn change the culture and perception of the local community and embrace the power of globalization.

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