

Training/Trip Report
VOA Affiliates
Building Digital Capacity -- Part II
February 10– 14, 2020
Abuja, Nigeria

The training was designed as a follow-up in depth workshop for the Building Digital Capacity Part I which was conducted April 2019 in Abuja. The workshop aimed at defining transferrable skills for a digital future by demonstrating to participants how they can work to address the human and technical capacity challenges in media by enhancing digital skills. This training emphasized utilizing digital platforms and social media in disseminating and enhancing information and news coverage to increase the VOA affiliates audiences.

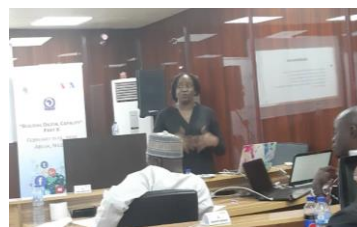
The workshop for VOA affiliate digital managers was conducted in Abuja from February 10 - 14, 2020. All invited delegates attended the training which was held at Channels Academy Training Centre, 1607 Cadastral Zone A09, Asokoro Extension Guzape District, Abuja FCT, Nigeria. Kathryn Peterson (RMO), Muhammad Abba (Nigeria RMR), Sani Mohammed (Nigeria RMR), and Aliyu Mustapha (Hausa Service Chief) attended.

The trainer, Chioma Agwuegbo, took the participants through key areas in building their digital capacity such as Classification/Categorisation of Social Media (Social Networking Sites, Social Review Sites, Image Sharing Sites, Video Hosting Sites, Community Blogs, Discussion Sites) and how to maximize the use of key social media and other digital media platforms in spotting fake news and authenticating information.



**A cross section of participants at the Abuja Building Digital Capacity workshop.*

Training Outline covered: Characterization & Elements of Social Media (Chioma), Writing for Social Media: Things to Note (Chioma), Fact-checking Social Media Content (Chioma + Sani Mohammed), Distributing Content on Social Media - Facebook (Chioma), Building a personal brand via social media (Chioma), Distributing Content on Social Media - YouTube, WhatsApp & Instagram (Chioma), Gender-Sensitive Reporting via Social Media (Chioma), Media Ethics and the VOA Firewall (Sani Mohammed), Building a Competitive Edge (Sani Mohammed), Media Branding (Muhammad Abba).



Kathryn Peterson gave an opening speech of the training on the concept of “change” in the media industry. Also, the chief of VOA Hausa Service, Aliyu Mustapha, delivered keynote address on the new featured programs of VOA Hausa.

During the training, several guests visited the training hall including the UN Assistant Secretary General, Amina Muhammad, and the Governor of Kaduna State, Malam Nasir el-Rufai. Amina Muhammad said the participants of the training should understand the power they possess as media practitioners and they change so many things for better in the course of their work.



Pic 1: Malam Nasir el-Rufai and Muhammad Abba

Pic 2: Amina Muhammad and Malam Nasir el-Rufai

Feedbacks from Participants:

Participants expressed their feedback on the training. The listed bullet points highlight what the attendee thought was most useful parts of the workshop:

- Using Social Media Apps more confidently in gathering news and information
- Embracing change and uncompromising good content.
- Striving to be unique in our brand
- Team building capacity
- Enhancing digital changes in my station
- Embracing digital media in my station
- Understanding my target audience and serving them appropriately.
- Using social media enhancers in promoting my content.
- Maintaining core values
- Gender sensitivity in reporting news and events
- The importance of audience insight.
- Using snippets on my website
- Using analytics of digital platforms to target my audience appropriately.
- Using the VOA firewall example to enhance credibility of my media organization.
- Being more conscious of gender balance by focusing on women sports.
- Offering variety of content on my website.
- Organizing a retraining session with my subordinates using the training I received.
- Expansion of the digital unit in my station.
- Understanding the dynamics of media broadcasting in Nigeria.
- The importance of accuracy of information.
- Creating value for my content.

- Marketing posts that can stand out in a crowded media market.



One of the participants created a video of his journey. From taking the bus to the training center from his hometown about 500KMs in Owerri South East Nigeria, he captured every moment from departure, training and returning home with pictures and videos. It was an interesting watch.



VOA Independent Media Organization

Sani Mohammed led a training segment on the VOA's firewall and independence. He asked the trainees at the beginning of his presentation, what is VOA Mission? Answers ranged from a place the US Presidents can get his policies out to the world to US State Department messaging to promote US interest in Africa to pure propaganda. The firewall video was viewed by the class with permission from Steven Springer. After the students were asked if their opinions changed about VOA mission. All agreed their thoughts had been changed and saw that VOA is not influence by government.

Need Additional Info?

If you have questions or comments on any of the information contained in this travel report, please contact Kathryn Peterson at Kpeterson@usagm.gov or Muhammad Abba on +234.818.024.0055 or e-mail him at muhammadabba1@gmail.com.