



Evaluation Blog Series



**HARVARD
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 **Knight Foundation**

Kenya Evaluation Blog Series

Ushahidi-Kenya Evaluation: First Steps

by Melissa Tully and Jennifer Chan

This is the first in a series of posts documenting a 9-month Ushahidi evaluation project in partnership with the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative supported by the Knight Foundation.

During the first two weeks of January, we traveled to Nairobi, Kenya, to begin phase one of a 9-month evaluation of Ushahidi-Kenya projects. As part of a team, Jennifer and I met with individuals and groups who have incorporated the Ushahidi software into their programming as well as other partners to better understand how organizations have implemented and used the platform to improve their programming and organizational goals.

This evaluation has multiple purposes. In addition to writing case studies of some interesting and dynamic projects that use the Ushahidi platform: [Unsung Peace Heroes](#) and [Building Bridges](#), and [Uchaguzi](#) in both [Kenya](#) and [Tanzania](#); we plan to document our progress through a series of blog posts; and to create practical and interactive tools. These resources can help organizations decide if Ushahidi is right for them through a self-assessment and evaluation process. Implementers can use these resources throughout the entire project period to track their progress and strengthen monitoring and evaluation. We're in the very early stages of development, but based on discussions with people in Kenya who have used Ushahidi and members of the Ushahidi team and community, we think we're developing some very useful stuff. Currently, we're focusing on the "pre-implementation assessment" and "implementation" resources so that we can get feedback from current and future deployers on these key areas.

We're working closely with the Ushahidi team and others involved in developing the [Ushahidi Community](#) page to integrate the case studies and tools into this part of the site and to add to the already existing [resources](#) for Ushahidi users. Another goal is to link to guides, case studies, tips and tricks or anything else out there created by the vast Ushahidi community worldwide to better serve the entire user community.

Wrapping up Phase 1 of the Ushahidi-Kenya Evaluation

by Melissa Tully and Jennifer Chan

This is the second in a series of posts documenting a 9-month Ushahidi evaluation project in partnership with the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative supported by the Knight Foundation.

The [Ushahidi-Kenya evaluation](#) is off to a strong start. Since returning from Nairobi in January, 2011 we have worked on the self-evaluation and assessment tool for individuals and organizations interested in using Ushahidi. The purpose of the tool is to help interested organizations learn about the Ushahidi platform via a web-based learning tool and to provide access to [community resources](#) and to actively plan their Ushahidi project, through a project cycle. An off-line manual will also be available for those with limited bandwidth. The learning tool has three parts:

1. The *assessment* module will help new users a) incorporate Ushahidi into project goals and objectives b) plan to collect information that will be mapped, c) identify partnerships and technology resources. This tool may include budget and project timeline templates.
2. The *implementation* module will help users go through setting up the instance and further plan any media/publicity campaigns to help information collection and much more. It is meant to support organizations as they launch and maintain their Ushahidi project.





- The *analysis & evaluation* module will support users as they actively collect, map and make decisions with their Ushahidi instance. It will also provide tools with which to evaluate the project – helping organizations report their successes and challenges to donors, the user community and others.

Ushahidi User Community- Self Assessment/Evaluation Tool
Helping you take the first steps to determine if the Ushahidi platform is a fit for your project

You can use the Ushahidi Platform for information collection and sharing, visualization and interactive mapping. There have been over 3000 uses of Ushahidi/[Crowdmap](#). People have used it for many different projects and programs. Here are some common types of uses of the Ushahidi platform. ([press here for a video intro to Ushahidi](#))

icon	Hot Flash	For emergencies like natural disasters, unexpected events....(more text here).	Examples Ushahidi Prototype Haiti Crisis Map 2010 Snowmageddon Chilean Earthquake
icon	Slow Burn	For ongoing or complex emergencies, to track changes in communities or responding agencies (more text)	War on Gaza DRC Egypt Maps
icon	Point on a Calendar	For events like election monitoring, media campaigns with ending dates.... (more text)	Uchaguzi-Kenya Sudan Vote Monitor Unsung Peace Heroes (case study)
icon	Long Term	For ongoing programs and initiatives (more text)	Voice of Kibera KANCO (case study) EveryMap - Australia

*Please choose the instance type that best fits your project
.....or if you are unsure click here.*

? I'm not sure

This image is an example of a screen shot of the Assessment Tool. Organizations can learn about the instance types (icons on the left) and link to examples of how other organizations have used Ushahidi. We hope that this will help new and existing community users learn and make decision for their projects and programs.

Jennifer is off to Nairobi this week to share our progress and get feedback from the local Ushahidi community.

We are completing our first case

study on [Unsung Peace Heroes](#) and [Building Bridges](#). These two projects used Ushahidi to map peace related information. [Unsung Peace Heroes](#) was designed to recognize individuals who participated in peace efforts in the violent aftermath of the December 2007 Kenyan General Election. These heroes often risked their lives to help members of their community. [Building Bridges](#) is an extension of [Unsung Peace Heroes](#). [Building Bridges](#) was designed to map peace initiatives throughout Kenya as well as recognize and reward Kenyans who participate in peace initiatives and promote conflict resolution.

These two projects offer interesting lessons for the greater Ushahidi community. [Media Focus on Africa Foundation](#) and [Butterfly Works](#), the implementing organizations:

- Relied on strong partnerships with local organizations.
- Used multimedia strategies including radio, television, newspaper and online advertising; interpersonal communication at events throughout Kenya; mobile communication and social media.
- Produced materials in English and Kiswahili.
- Had clear goals and timelines.
- Customized the Ushahidi platform to meet their needs. This was particularly true for [Building Bridges](#) as they integrated Ushahidi with [Joomla](#), a free and open source content management system.

The full case study will be available for download later this year.

As we wrap up this phase, we will move onto phase two, which includes a case study of [Uchaguzi](#) in both [Kenya](#) and [Tanzania](#) and completion of the self-assessment tools. We look forward to continued feedback from the Ushahidi community.



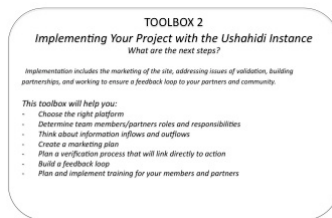


Kenya Ushahidi Evaluation Phase 2: Making Progress with Community Feedback!

by Melissa Tully and Jennifer Chan

This is the third in a series of posts documenting a 9-month Ushahidi evaluation project in partnership with the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative supported by the Knight Foundation.

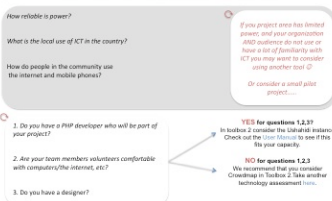
We have made great progress on the Ushahidi Kenya evaluation. Jennifer has been back at the [iHub](#) continuing to build the 3-part assessment and self-evaluation tool. The goal of this toolbox is to help interested organizations learn about the Ushahidi platform using a web based interactive tool, also with a low bandwidth and no bandwidth option as detailed in our earlier [post](#).



You can use the Ushahidi Platform for information collection and sharing, visualization and interactive mapping. There have been over 3000 uses of Ushahidi (crowdsmap). Here are some common types of uses of the Ushahidi platform ([Ushahidi video introduction](#)) ([FAQs](#)). And more.



Technology
Ushahidi is a software and the ways it collects information is based on ICTs.



TIPS: Think about how your partners and audience communicate now? What are they comfortable using to communicate? Text phones, sms, internet? What do they have access to and can afford?

In Nairobi, Jennifer met with organizations and individuals that have used the Ushahidi platform for election monitoring, peace campaigns, crisis response and other community programs.

She also met with new organizations interested in the toolbox. They will be testing Toolbox #1 and #2 for their projects and also providing recommendations on how to improve them.

Here are some examples of what they look like. Each toolbox will have different sections that will help you work through different stages of your project. Like this one from the Toolbox #2:

In Toolbox #1 you can select a type that best fits your program, and click on links to other Ushahidi instances to learn more about what people have done in the past or even doing right now.

You can also take a technology assessment. There will be rotating panels where you see the RED circle arrow that will show you more tips and examples.

Thank you everyone for sharing very helpful tips and examples and for testing out the tools! It's still a work in-progress but we're looking for more people to test the toolbox, especially if you have used Ushahidi in the past. Please let us know if you would like to help out by adding a comment to this post.





Join the Ushahidi.ke Evaluation Launch

By Heather Leson

You are invited to attend our **Ushahidi.ke Evaluation Launch** on Thursday, August 25, 2011 at the [iHub](#) in Nairobi, Kenya.

The [Harvard Humanitarian Initiative](#) and *Ushahidi* are collaborating to build educational tools to help community users. Three toolboxes have been built by and for the community. The Assessment, Implementation, and Output toolboxes are interactive and will allow people to self-assess and evaluate the different stages in using *Ushahidi* or *Crowdmap* for their projects. For more information about the project check out the blog series:

[Ushahidi Kenya Evaluation First Steps](#)

[Wrapping up phase 1 of the Ushahidi Kenya Evaluation](#)

[Kenya Ushahidi evaluation phase 2: Making progress with community feedback](#)

The Ushahidi .ke Evaluation Launch has two goals:

- *introduce you to some of the research findings, and

- *give you a chance to interact shape the content.

We need your help to test Ushahidi toolboxes. Your feedback will help Ushahidi users in Kenya and around the world.

Register today:

Thursday, August 25, 2011 10:00 – 16:00 EAT

iHub

Nairobi Kenya



Schedule (subject to change)

10:00 – 10:30 Introductions and Research overview

10:30 – 10:45 iHub Research Program

10:45 – 11:00 Break

11:00 – 11:15 Ushahidi.ke demos

11:15 – 12:30 Toolkit interactive sessions

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch

13:30 – 14:45 Policy working groups (eg. usability, security)

14:45 – 15:00 Break

15:00 – 16:00 Group Brainstorm and Next steps

We will provide lunch and toolbox documentation. We ask that participants register to help us plan accordingly.

The Ushahidi.ke Evaluation Launch is in partnership with the [Harvard Humanitarian Initiative](#) and supported by the [Knight Foundation](#).

More details





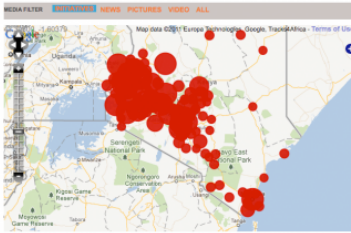
We will be using [Meetup](#) to build community events around the world. Whenever possible, we'll provide streaming and interactive participation. There will be more event announcements soon. If you have ideas or want to host a meet-up, I'd be happy to hear from you.

Thanks!
Heather L.

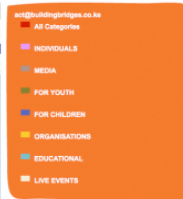




HOME BLOG VIEW MAP INITIATIVES CAMPAIGN JOIN PEACE PARTNERS



SUBMIT AN INITIATIVE



Perspectives from the MamaBits team: Rukia and Tobias

By Heather Leson

Preparations for the [Ushahidi .ke Evaluation launch](#) are running full speed ahead. Jennifer Chan, [Harvard Humanitarian Initiative](#) and I visited Rukia Sebit and Tobias Ouma of [MamaBits](#), the coordinators of Building Bridges deployment.

Building Bridges is a project to encourage people to encourage, map and connect people working on peace initiatives in Kenya. Their work was one of the featured deployments for the evaluation.

Building Bridges

Rukia and Tobias provided further feedback on their deployment: successes, observations and things to improve.

Highlights:

- **OUTREACH:** Communication targeting of audiences differed for rural and urban areas and diverse age groups. For example, rural areas were reached by radio rather than newspaper. However, the radio programs were sometimes aired in different vernacular language to accommodate all listeners. The impact was great, even neighbouring countries such as Uganda received the information from the website and created their profile online. This required more intensive report verification based on location. The power of mobile in .ke is amazing. Telco providers like Safaricom will allow short codes to accompany hash-tags which will redirect to a website, like Building Bridges. The campaign was successful due to the SMS program and pervasive use in .ke.
- **REPORTS:** As part of the campaign, the Building Bridges team telephoned over 6000 people. These calls were often to verify the content or to request clarification. Some content was translated into English for the map from telephone calls. Some reports were web-based submissions in Swahili. It would have been useful to have a bilingual map: Swahili and English. People who filed reports often required feedback or follow-up on their content. These involved counselor-type telephone calls. This community approach was essential to build comfort and trust. Some report providers preferred that their content be provided verbally and their report listed by “peacemaker” to maintain their privacy. The majority of the reports were submitted via SMS with the other reports far below in numbers (in descending order): telephone calls, email and, lastly, web-based form reports.
- **KEY LESSONS:** The plan was revised to accommodate more SMS reports (sometimes 700 a day). Education (digital literacy) was a large component of the telephone calls for feedback loops. The number targets were given less weight over time in lieu of qualitative content and relationship-building with the reporters. And, this type of project is easily replicable in other regions using Ushahidi’s platform.





A very special thanks to Rukia and Tobias for their contribution to this project and for their time today. Check out their other projects including mobile education games such as [Get H20](#).

There are still a few spots left open for the Ushahidi .Ke Evaluation Launch. [Register via Meet-up](#). We will be testing toolboxes, talking best practices and building forward.

Heather L.

