

STRATEGIC ELECTION PLANNING MANUAL FOR KENYA ELECTION

2017

HILLARY ANG'AWA

“RUNNING A DIGITAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN”



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1. National Council for Law Reporting (www.kenyalaw.org)
2. Independent Election and Boundaries Commission (www.iebc.or.ke)
3. Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW)
(www.creawkenya.org)
4. Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK) (www.amwik.org)
5. Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA)
(www.eisa.org.za)
6. National Democratic Institute for international Affairs (www.ndi.org)

Recommended publications for election campaigning in Kenya:-

- “Running for Political Office”-Published by the Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW).
- “Election Agents Manual”-Published by National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and the I.E.B.C.
- “A Handbook on Kenya’s Electoral Law and System” by Ongoya Z. Elisha and Willis E. Otieno and published by Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA).
- “Handbook on Elective Posts”-Published by I.E.B.C.

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1. INTRODUCTION

There was a time only a few years ago that “standing” for an elective seat in Kenya meant literally standing on a platform with a microphone and loudspeakers and addressing a crowd at a trading centre or urban estate on why they should elect you and not your opponents.

Your campaign team would have planted your campaign posters on every lamp post or wall, hoping to have more posters than your opponents and if necessary getting your youth group to tear down your opponents’.

In those days there were “promises” given to prospective voters among the crowd although in some cases children were the majority. Of course the “promises” were like castles in the air, soon to be forgotten as soon you were elected and then re-cycled five years later for the next election.

With the advent of multi-party democracy, the party who sponsored you had to have a manifesto and you needed to have a development vision for your constituency and an agenda (action plan) detailing exactly how you intend to uplift the lives of your constituents in case they elect you.

Posters and standing on a platform and addressing a crowd are no longer enough to get one elected. Kenyans have become more educated and technologically minded, with many now using social media tools such as mobile phones, internet, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, e-mail and listening to FM radio stations and watching digital TV channels.

New campaign tools include web-sites for individual candidates or advertising on an election web-sites, Facebook pages and groups, SMS campaigning, WhatsApp groups, FM radio and TV talk shows, but also digital tools like giant TV screens and giant billboards. The old tools like newspaper adverts, flyers and of course campaign posters are still useful and effective.

Now anyone who hopes to take part in Presidential, Parliamentary, Senatorial, Gubernatorial, Women Rep or County Assembly Ward elections is called an “aspirant” until the day he or she wins their sponsoring political parties’ nomination, then they became “candidates”.

The 2017 General Election is bound to be the most hotly contested due to several factors, among them the stiff competition in the gubernatorial elections; and the high salary earned by Members of Parliament (MPs, Senators and Women Representatives) and Members of the County Assemblies (MCA).

In the old days of the one party state, you did not have to worry about standing as long as you were a loyal member of KANU and received a clearance certificate. All your opponents were also KANU members hence the General Elections from 1969 to 1988 were actually party primary elections and you were only declared elected when you presented your election certificate to the Return Officer a few days later.

Now with the advent of multi-party elections and passage of the new constitution in 2010, an aspirant can select to vie for any seat on the ticket of any party of his or her choice from among the over 60 registered political parties and even stand as an independent candidate hence still get a chance of standing as a candidate for Presidential, Parliamentary, Senate, Women Rep, Gubernatorial and County Assembly Ward elections.

Aspirants and incumbents who will WIN in the 2017 General Elections will do so due to three or more of the five “P”s:-

- ✓ PERSONALITY-some candidates are so charismatic that they will get elected no matter what party they stand on.
- ✓ PARTY-some candidates will get elected due to the popularity of their political party in its stronghold Counties, Constituencies and Wards.
- ✓ PROJECTS-some candidates will get elected due to projects initiated and a good development record.
- ✓ PROSPERITY-some candidates will get elected due to their ability to financially assist their constituents directly or indirectly.
- ✓ PLANNING-Only candidates who use Strategic Election Planning can expect to win a primary election and ultimately the General Elections.

The purpose of this manual is to assist aspirants and incumbents in 2017 General Elections on how to use Strategic Election Planning to prepare for their elections or re-elections. It is for only serious candidates who really want to win their respective seats and are committed for a rigorous election campaign and the huge financial outlay it entails. It is also useful for political parties when planning for their party primary elections, nominations and election campaigns.

2. CAMPAIGN ACTION PLAN

(a) What is a Campaign Action Plan?

A Campaign Action Plan is crucial and must be prepared by experienced, trusted people who are close to you. A Campaign Action Plan is the same as any project plan. It is the simple process of setting goals and deciding how to reach them. Planning is an inherent part of the campaigning process, from deciding what kind of campaign outfit to form, to organising fund-raising and other campaign events. It will help you:

- **Make better use of your resources: Time, money, people, etc.**
- **Make clear goals**
- **Identify problems early**
- **Avoid pitfalls and surprises**
- **Get everyone marching in the same direction.**

A campaign is a road map to help a candidate get enough votes (50%+1) to win an election. It recognises that there are different stages (landmarks) on the road to victory. The plan, therefore, identifies them, develops strategies to deal with them, details activities at every stage and finally costs them. The campaign plan also identifies resources required to mount a successful campaign. On this aspect, it answers the questions:

- Who will raise them?
- How will they be raised?
- How will they be utilised?
- What will they be used for?
- When will they be raised/used?
- Who will be responsible for them?
- How will they be accounted for?

A C.A.P. sends out a message to supporters, potential contributors and your opponent that you are a serious candidate. It gives them a window through which they can assess your seriousness and capacity, depending on your campaign outreach. Before embarking on the plan, familiarise yourself with the electoral process and its timelines. The size and scope of your plan will depend on the elective seat. It will also depend on how much detail you want to include.

(b) Elements of a Campaign Action Plan

The campaign plan should take into account the following ten basic elements:

- 1) Set goals:** Define specific objectives as these will be the foundation upon which the whole campaign will be based.
- 2) Research:** Put facts together, gather data on the County, Constituency or Ward, identify problems, identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, identify allies and opposition, study issues; analyse your data.
- 3) Identify targets:** Map out the different areas, personalities (opinion leaders), groups, interests, among others, in your County, Constituency or Ward.
- 4) Strategies:** Select courses of action and decide policies.
- 5) Media and publicity:** Develop a strategy to reach different electoral areas making sure it is broadcast to reach as wide an audience as possible through print, broadcast, digital and social media.
- 6) Support/Funds:** List the resources you need, e.g. materials, people, money, time, etc. Then develop a fundraising strategy.
- 7) Schedule:** Establish a timetable for starting and completing every action; identify priorities.
- 8) Responsibilities:** Assign responsibility for each decision and action. You could have a big support base but if it is not focused, it is useless and could sometimes become destructive. List roles, responsibilities and tasks then assign accordingly.
- 9) Budget:** Put a price tag on every item and action. This will give you an indication of the amount of funding you need to raise. A budget determines the type of campaign you are going to mount. The bigger and intense a campaign is, the higher the budget required will be.
- 10) Launch:** The launch must attract great attention so that it is memorable. During the launch, the campaign message, slogan, symbol and party you are running on are going to be revealed.

You must share your C.A.P. with your campaign secretariat, donors and volunteers. Monitor the campaign and strictly follow the I.E.B.C. Operational Timelines and alter where necessary for maximum impact and results.

Reference: “Running for Political Office”-Published by the Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW) (www.creawkenya.org).

3. WHY STRATEGIC ELECTION PLANNING?

As part of your Campaign Action Plan, (CAP), Strategic Election Planning and Data Analysis is a defined plan using demographics, past election trends and social media tools to target both registered and new potential voters in an upcoming election. US President Barack Obama's successful election campaigns in 2008 and 2012 used Strategic Election Planning to achieve victory against great odds. His presidential campaign relied heavily on social media to engage voters, recruit campaign volunteers, and raise campaign funds. The campaign brought the spotlight on the importance of using internet in new-age political campaigning by utilizing various forms of social media and Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to reach new target populations. The campaign's social website utilized a low cost and efficient method of mobilizing voters and increasing participation among various voter populations, including the youths (who rarely vote) while helping all populations organize and promote action.

1) WHY YOU MUST WANT TO WIN

How you plan your campaign will depend if you are an incumbent, former winner, previous candidate or a new comer. Incumbents have an obvious advantages-name recognition, well-funded, party patronage and experience of campaigning. Former winners also have advantage of name recognition and experience and previous candidates may have both, even though they have lost in the past. New comers have the most daunting task as it will be the first time they will be standing, hence will lack name recognition and experience.

Incumbents and former winners also have disadvantage in an election as they must account for failing to implement election promises and projects. This makes them very vulnerable as Kenya voters are very unforgiving, hence the high turnover of Members of Parliament every five years, sometimes as high as fifty percent. Previous candidates still have a chance of winning if they can re-invent themselves to the voter, while new comers represent a new face and fresh start, especially if they target the youth.

You are standing to be a Member of County Assembly, Governor, Senator, Woman Representative in the National Assembly, Member of Parliament or President because you want to win. Some candidates announce that they are

standing for a particular seat with the sole aim to be bribed to step down for a favorite candidate, and then announce their support for that candidate. Strategic Election Planning is only for serious candidates who are willing to go the “whole hog” and invest their money and resources on setting up a campaign. An aspirant must be committed to his constituents and be ready to serve them once elected. His or her Election Vision and Agenda must be a serious document, setting up the candidate’s action plan to help develop the Country, County, Constituency and Ward for the next five years. The Vision and Agenda must be distributed to his or her constituents via Website, Facebook and Email and also by adverts in the print media, TV, FM Radio and in printed hard copies in English, Kiswahili and the vernacular (see Chapter 9 on “PREPARING YOUR ELECTION AGENDA”).

Your name, photo and campaign slogan must be visible on social media, print media, broadcast media (Radio and TV), clearly stating the seat and constituency you are standing in and the party whose coalition you are seeking nomination for. The same must be also be visible on the ground, on posters, billboards, T-shirts, caps, reflective jackets, etc. depending on your budget. A slogan must be simple and easy to remember, e.g. “VOTE JOHN BOSCO FOR MP CHANGAMWE 2017” or “TUJENGE KIAMBU NA JOHN MWANGI FOR GOVERNOR 2017” or “ELECT PHILIP OMONDI FOR MCA UPPER SAVANNAH 2017” or “VOTE AHMED MOHAMED FOR SENATOR WAJIR 2017” OR “CHAGUA ANGELA WAFULA FOR WOMAN REP BUNGOMA COUNTY 2017”. Note that slogans show both names of the candidate, the seat and the year of the election.

2) VOTER NETWORKING AND TRAGETING

(a) TARGETING NEW POTENTIAL VOTERS

As explained in the introduction, any aspirant can win an election if he has at least three of the five “P”s, one of which must be “Planning” and applies Strategic Election Planning and Data Analysis. The Kenya Election Database, which is integrated with the Kenya Election Campaign Management System, has the 2017 projected population for each County, Constituency and Ward as well as estimated voters based on 80% of the adult population (usually 50% of the population). Hence the Maximum Potential Voters (MPV) minus the Current Registered Voters (CRV) will give you the Unregistered Voters (URV) of that County, Constituency or Ward. The formula is:-

MPV-CRV=URV

[MAXIMUM VOTER POTENTIAL-CURRENT REGISTERD VOTERS=UNREGISTERD VOTERS]

If you take Changamwe constituency (no 001) for example, its 2017 population projection is 165,998 hence potential voter estimate in 2017 is 66,399. It had 58,972 registered voters as at 2013 hence about 7,427 unregistered voters, i.e. (165,998-58,972= 7,427). The Independent Election and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) is still conducting voter registration and has yet to release the current figures as at September, 2016, but you can edit the voter registration data in the Kenya Election Database to get the latest data. Note that in some constituencies, especially in Nairobi County, the data on 2017 potential voters is negative due to the registered voters in 2013 exceeding the adult population which is an indication of voter importation or transfer.

Most unregistered voters are youths aged 18 to 23 years who were below 18 years in 2012 or did not possess Identity cards at the time of the 2013 elections. They number about 4.6 million and aspirants and political parties will need to target them to register and vote for them, first in the primary elections (party nominations) and then in the General Elections (read blog “Where are Kenya’s youth potential voters found?” at www.kenyaelectiondatabase.co.ke).

These young potential voters will tend to be tech survey and huge users of social media, but also the most uninterested in politics and elections. They will tend to be found in secondary schools, colleges, universities, doing casual jobs (hawkers, matatu touts, manual work, etc) while others will be in business (boda boda, fishing, drivers, mechanics, turn-boys, etc) or in employment (house-helps, shamba boys, herdsman, shop assistants, etc). Others will be jobless, but hanging out in trading centres, matatu/boda-boda terminus or training and playing football, athletics, etc. They will be aged from 18 to 23 but some can be as old as 28 but would have never voted.

The first step is to recruit volunteers who will be in the same age group, to go out to identify young potential voters at their educational institutions, work places, trading centres, matatu/boda-boda terminus, sports fields, etc. Your volunteers will collect their data, including names, mobile no, identity card no (if already issued), residential area and profession (student, employed, in business, etc) and most important of all, if they have registered as voters. Your volunteers will be trained to first introduce you as an aspirant, the seat you are seeking and your manifesto and agenda. They should give out your fliers, caps,