Ushahidi Use Case Summary: Unsung Peace Heroes

The Project: Spreading a Positive Message of Peace

The idea behind the Unsung Peace Heroes project began as a way to recognize individuals and organizations that participated in peace efforts in the violent aftermath of the December 2007 Kenyan general election. The goal of the campaign is to "motivate and symbolize goodwill amongst (young) Kenyans towards each other in the aftermath of the violence and conflict which started in December 2007." The Unsung Peace Heroes campaign was developed by Butterfly Works (www.butterflyworks.org) and Media Focus on Africa Foundation (www.mediafocusonafrica.org). Unsung Peace Heroes used Ushahidi to collect nominations, post the nominations and map the locations of the peace efforts. Nominators could send nominations via the Peace Heroes Ushahidi site, via SMS and email, and by filling out a paper nomination at various peace events. Unsung Peace Heroes received nominations through all four options. The nominations are listed and the data is mapped at www.peaceheroes.ushahidi.com.

Implementation: Mapping Nominations

The implementation questions reveal that Unsung Peace Heroes had little difficulty setting up their Ushahidi site. When asked in the questionnaire about the usefulness of the features, Kevin Madegwa from Nairobits digital school and volunteer with Unsung Peace Heroes responded, "The features available are very useful to my project because I can easily modify ideas and easily make corrections." He also responded that the categorization was "super nice," and indicated that he liked it. On all questions regarding setup and navigation, Kevin responded that it was easy or not difficult to use.

Post-implementation: Visualizing Nomination Results

When asked about the effectiveness of Ushahidi for meeting their objectives in mapping data, Marten Schoonman, Projects Coordinator at Media Focus on Africa Foundation (MFOA), indicated that not only did they learn where peace initiatives and positive action took place, but also where violence occurred. According to Marten, the peace nominations they received map onto the places where the most violence was reported. The Unsung Peace Heroes campaign was the first time mapping was used as part of a MFOA campaign. According to Marten, comparing the mapping with an SMS campaign from last year, the visualization of the data helps. Using the visualizations based on location, it was easier for the data managers to see that a particular hero was actually nominated by people in the area. Marten noted, "It is a nomination process. Representation of what is going on in an area is helpful." However, he also indicated that there is one major drawback of an Internet-based project: "The people who MFOA is targeting do not have Internet access - We want to bring the results back to the people using mass media." As a result of MFOA's goals, Internet is only a part of their larger projects and campaigns. For the Unsung Peace Heroes project, MFOA used a multimedia approach, including an online presence, newspaper ads, radio and television appearances, participation in live events and word-of-mouth. For this campaign, the site enabled "MFOA to select winners from various parts of the country more easily."

In total, Unsung Peace Heroes received over 500 peace hero nominations. Combining an offline and online strategy yielded the most nominations. After advertisements were placed in the daily newspapers and flier distribution at peace events, nominations increased. The first peak (43) came after a half page color advertisement was placed in *The Standard* newspaper (see graph below). The peak of 80 occurred after flier distribution at peace event in Njoro organized by Citizen Assembly. The peak of 70 is also after distribution at a peace gathering in Nairobi. At both events, the students in the project team got some friends to assist them in distributing fliers. The campaign used one advertisement to promote the Unsung Peace Heroes competition, 2000 A4 posters and 20,000 A5 fliers. All the media

products used the same design. They also mailed posters and fliers to partners in other cities and towns, including Mombasa and Kisumu for a total of about 12 towns. According to Marten, "the distribution of fliers by hand during relevant events (peace in this case) worked wonders." Volunteers distributed fliers during Generation Jipange, Peace event in Njoro, and Huruma and Jamhuri Day. Marten believes that distributing fliers at the events was successful because "people participate with a certain mindset for that day and find it attractive to participate and spend a few shillings."

Unsung Peace Heroes Daily Nominations
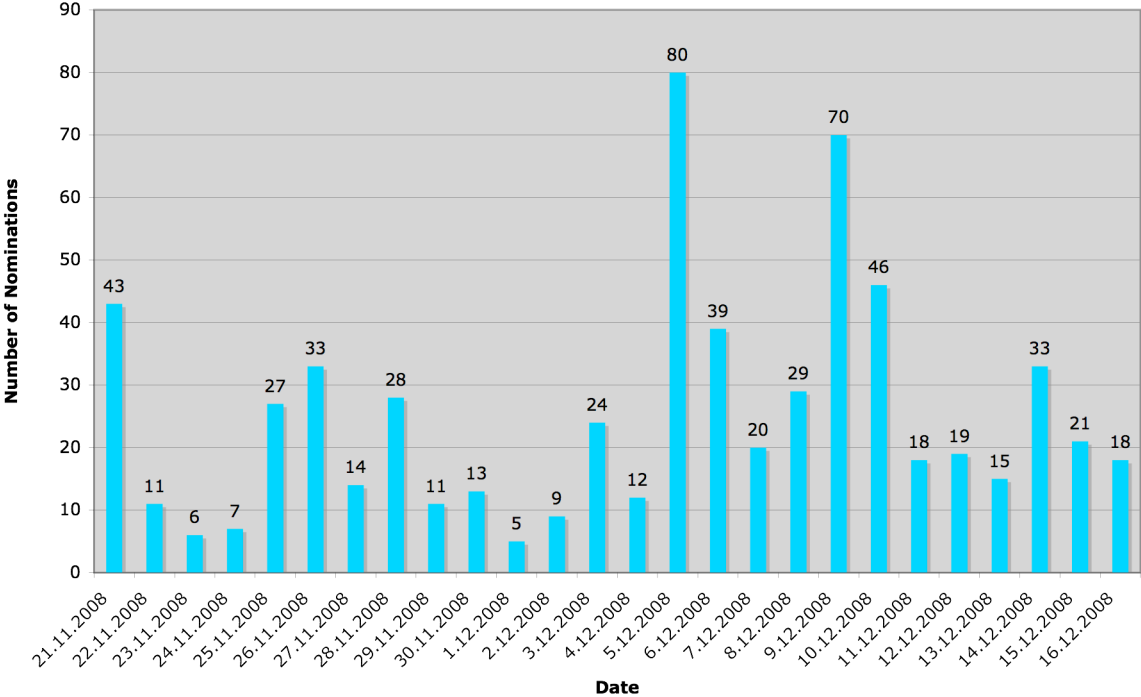
Peace Heroes:

During the nomination period, Kenyans nominated peace heroes for protecting others from violence even if it meant putting their own lives in danger, for distributing food and goods to those in need, and for promoting peace through organizing peace marches and singing peace songs. In early 2009, Unsung Peace Heroes announced the results of the contest, showcasing 8 winners. The winners represent Kenyans from various parts of the country, backgrounds and ways of life. For a description of their peace efforts during the post-election violence go to http://www.peaceheroes.ushahidi.com/winners.php.