

[What Is News?](#)

A free press is often called the oxygen of democracy. That's because one cannot survive without the other. Democracies — established or emerging — depend on the consent of an informed citizenry. And to keep these citizens informed, journalists must provide information that is fair, accurate and independent from outside influence.

What Is News? is the first in a series on media development. Simply click on the titles below, in blue, to expand a section and learn more.

[What is News?](#)

News is what is new — what's happening. What makes a story newsworthy depends on these things:

Timeliness: Did something happen recently?

Impact: Are many people affected? Does your audience have an emotional response to the story?

Proximity: Did something happen close to home or involve people from home?

Controversy: Do people disagree about this? Does the story involve conflict, tension or public debate?

Prominence: Is a well-known person involved?

Currency: Are people talking about this?

Oddity: Is what happened unusual?

Intended audience: Who is reading or listening to the story? Different groups of people have different concerns, which make them interested in different types of news.

Need to know: Do people need to know about this to go about their daily lives?

[Types of News](#)

Hard news: This is what is on the front page of the newspaper, at the top of a Web page or at the start of a news broadcast. It may be politics, war, business, crime or a natural disaster. It is timely, controversial and has a wide impact. Hard news stories place the most important information first.

Soft news or feature: This is a human-interest story involving a prominent person or someone with an unusual story. It covers lifestyles, the arts, entertainment, sports, food, health and education. Features often begin with an anecdote to draw the audience's interest.

[Where News Comes From](#)

- Unplanned, naturally occurring events, like disasters and accidents.

- Planned activities, like government and business meetings and news conferences listed in what is called a “daybook.” Staged events, such as demonstrations. Journalists must be wary of organizers who want to tell only their side of the story.
- Press releases.
- Documents, data and public records.
- Reporters’ enterprise — Journalists find stories by looking around and listening to what people are talking about. Ask the people you meet what is going on in their lives or their neighborhoods. Ask what has happened since the last time a story was in the paper or on the air. Follow-ups often lead to more newsworthy stories than the original report.

Other parts in this series include [Getting the Story](#), [Telling the Story](#), [Ethics and Law](#) and [Taking Good Photographs](#).

(Adapted from an [article](#) by Deborah Potter published in the *Handbook of Independent Journalism*. Potter is executive director of NewsLab, an online resource for journalists in Washington. [Download the complete Handbook of Independent Journalism \[PDF 834kB\]](#).)

Leadership: A Personal Reflection on Key Concepts

A guest post from [Sadhana Hall](#), an instructor for the [YALI Network Online Courses](#), including  lessons on “[Networking to Get Ahead](#),” “[Creating and Managing a Team](#)” and “[Setting and Achieving Goals](#).”

I am fortunate to reflect on leadership and management concepts regularly, but not because these ideas are necessarily “new.” Many leadership concepts may be simple, but they are not just “common sense”; if that were the case, why don’t we see them being practiced more frequently? In my experience, I’ve found that great leadership requires intentional reflection on key concepts; here are a few that are important to me.

Effective management and leadership begins with **being self-aware**. This simply means that you need to work hard to intimately understand your strengths and weaknesses, model ways in which your values are congruent with your behavior, and develop a culture of respect for yourself and for others on your team. Recently, a new employee said to me: “Although I already had a strong sense of my core values before joining this organization, working here has pushed me to practice a higher level of professionalism. Our organization’s culture doesn’t just teach leadership to our students, but expects faculty and staff to model what leadership actually looks like on a daily basis. We are responsible for an array of excellent courses, effective programs, and skill-building events, but the most personally rewarding aspect of my work is participating in an internal culture that is congruent

with our external message.” Explicit and implicit in this employee’s observation is the way in which our team practices shared management and leadership with awareness and authenticity.

Consider also what **integrity** means to you as a manager or a leader and why it matters. Integrity has been defined and described in many ways, but there is one idea that has stuck with me: A person’s integrity is a matter of the value of his or her word, nothing more and nothing less. If you keep your word for every task, large or small, people will naturally trust you with more complex responsibilities. Responsibility and trust create credibility, which then makes the conditions ripe for leading people towards achieving common goals. This is how your organization and your role within it can grow. So consider developing a habit of keeping your word — to yourself and to others. I know from personal experience that this is not an easy thing to do all the time. If you break your word — to yourself or to another person — apologize and figure out a way to fix the problem you might have created by breaking your word.

Finally, as a leader, pay attention to **self-care**. Taking care of your team starts with taking care of yourself. Understand your limits and what you can reasonably accomplish in a finite period of time. Identify tasks only you can accomplish and delegate other tasks in ways that will engage your team members and encourage their development.

These are my reflections on self-awareness, integrity, and self-care. What do these concepts mean to you?

[‘Join Us to Conserve’](#)

Mount Cameroon National Park intern Cynthia Sama explains the  basics of conservation to a park visitor. Courtesy of Cynthia Sama

Thousands of tourists visit Mount Cameroon every year, leaving behind crumpled food wrappers, plastic bags, beverage cans and other nondegradable trash that blemishes the sides of the 4,040-meter volcano.

Their garbage is more than an eyesore. It is a threat to nearby communities who look to the mountain’s forest as a source of food, fuel and medicine and as a place of worship.

It is also a drag on what could be a thriving and sustainable ecotourism industry.

YALI Network member and Mount Cameroon National Park intern Cynthia Sama works with a team to clear up the problem. “The beautiful nature inspired me to choose this field,” she says. “I love to see people very happy, living in harmony with nature and themselves.”

Sama's team helps visitors and their guides understand that conserving forest biodiversity and wildlife is essential to enjoying the mountain now and in the future. It encourages tour operators to do their part by picking up trash from trails and disposing of it properly.

The government helps in other ways. It identifies "high-value" ecosystems and employs "eco-guards" and foresters to protect them. It has adopted laws and policies and provides funds to sustainably manage the country's natural resources and wildlife. And it sponsors training for people in mountain communities in how to cultivate cassava, plantain and yam, and how to raise bees.

Bolstering these efforts are environmental groups including [Green Cameroon](#) and [ICENECDEV](#), both based in Sama's hometown of Buea. Working with local communities, these groups provide environmental education and have introduced agriculture, water and sanitation, and health projects to improve residents' lives in ways that are good for the environment.

Sama, 25, hopes that businesses will join the nonprofits. First, business owners can financially support conservation awareness campaigns. Then, they can start ventures in areas like producing products made of natural materials, opening trash sorting and recycling plants, starting tree seedling nurseries, and even setting up nature-themed amusement parks, she says.

She believes that businesses that implement these practices will grow by attracting "environmentally friendly customers, especially foreigners." Those businesses also can serve as examples for other businesses in how to promote conservation and generate jobs, she adds.

Long-term, Sama wants "every single Cameroonian to be able to know what conservation is all about" and not to do things like "dumping wastewater on the floor" instead of flushing it into a sewage receptacle.

Sama also wants YALI Network members to appreciate the flora and fauna around them. "Nature is life," she says.

She urges members to "try as much as possible to keep nature clean and friendly for yourself and for your next generations. Obey the environmental rules and regulations of any country."

"Join us to conserve the ecosystem," she says.

Join #YALIGoesGreen this month. Learn how to get involved at yali.state.gov/climate

[Essential Resources for Growing Your Ecotourism Business](#)

The travel and tourism industry continues to grow, offering new business opportunities. 
(rcrhee/Wikimedia Commons)

Despite occasional dips in annual growth, travel and tourism has flourished over the last decade, and the industry is expected to take back its role in driving global growth, creating jobs and alleviating poverty. In fact, the World Travel and Tourism Council estimates that 3.8 million jobs could be created by the tourism industry in sub-Saharan Africa by 2023. If you are ready to enhance your travel and tourism project — or to jump into this exciting industry — check out these resources.

Developing your plan. Building a new business is hard work. The U.S. Small Business Administration reports that 50 percent of new businesses disappear by the fifth year of operation. New businesses fail for a variety of reasons, from lack of capital to poor management. Yet there is one step that helps to address many of these issues, which is to develop a comprehensive business plan. Get started with USAID's toolkit [Sustainable Tourism Enterprise Development: A Business Planning Approach](#) [PDF - 3 MB].

Telling your story. People travel for a variety of reasons: to escape, explore, understand and participate. But at the core of the experience lies the destination — the place that hands something to the traveler to keep forever and share with others. Whether your destination is rural or urban, rustic or hip, you need strategies to best tell your destination's unique story. Begin with USAID's workbook [Tourism Destination Management: Achieving Sustainable and Competitive Results](#) [PDF - 4 MB].

Figuring out what makes your destination unique can help attract tourists — and grow your  business. (Chris 73/Wikimedia Commons)

Managing your people. Because people are essential to the travel and tourism industry, managing them well is essential to success. To help managers in the travel and tourism industry assess, design, implement and evaluate their workforce development plans, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has created this [Guide to Assessing and Designing Tourism Workforce Development Programs](#) [PDF - 9 MB].

Powering your business. Rural tourism is a rapidly growing sector of the global tourism industry. Since rural tourism operations are often in remote locations, ensuring a reliable supply of energy can be a special challenge. To help your tourism venture plan for reliable energy, read USAID's guide to [Electrification and Efficiency Options for Rural Tourism Facilities](#) [PDF - 1 MB].

If you are hungry for more tourism-related resources, consider enrolling in USAID's free [Sustainable Tourism Online Learning Program](#).

[Lessons Learned in Public Land Management](#)

Crested Pool is just one of the thermal features that earned Yellowstone its national park  distinction in 1872. (Neal Herbert/flickr)

Singled out for its unique thermal landscape, Yellowstone became the world's first national park in 1872. Since then, the U.S. government's approach to public land management has evolved, influenced by science and public opinion. National Park Service officials Patrick Gregerson and John Dennis offer lessons learned to others interested in public land management.

Identify unique attributes. What are the scenes, sounds, smells and stories that separate this land from other tracts? For Yellowstone, it is the park's position on one of the world's largest calderas and its possession of two-thirds of the world's geysers.

Consider cultural value. "I've really become sensitive to the park's cultural resources, and to seeing that they are of equal value to the natural resources," said Dennis, who began as a plant biologist. Although valued for its natural resources, Yellowstone holds spiritual value among Native American tribes and witnessed storied westward expansion by early settlers.

Make a plan. "Planning provides a logical, trackable rationale for decisionmaking," Gregerson said. A good plan answers questions like these: What is this park's purpose? What makes it significant? What are its fundamental resources and values?

Involve everyone. "All citizens have a role in planning," Gregerson said. The park service asks for input from state, local and tribal governments, nonprofit organizations and private industry whenever it is considering any action that might have an environmental impact. It records all discussions publicly and allows the public to comment throughout the process.

Keep an open mind. The U.S. Forest Service, for example, wanted to use a herbicide in Pacific Northwest forests to encourage conifer growth. Concerned about toxicity, a coalition of planters, scientists and residents worked with the agency to develop a plan that did not rely on herbicide for tree growth. That's typical. Gregerson said agencies tweak most plans before implementing.

Look for mitigating measures. Agencies request a "mitigating measure" when environmental harm is done or public access lost. If the Bureau of Land Management extracts minerals, the park service could ask its sister agency (both are under the U.S. Department of the Interior) to offset the harm done by buying adjacent, equivalent — down to the number of trees — land.

Seek tourism and preservation. Managing parks so people can enjoy them is a park service mandate. "Many people have argued there is conflict between preservation and enjoyment," Dennis said. "I've come to realize that it's not a conflict — both are absolutely necessary to meet the purpose of the parks."

Highlights from a #YALICHAT with Ambassador Cathy Russell

U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues Cathy Russell held a Twitter chat with the YALI Network on Wednesday, March 18th to talk about challenges facing women in Africa and to support the #Africa4Her pledge.

Hi everyone! I'm excited to talk with you about investing in women and girls today. [#YALICHAT](#) [#Africa4Her](#) pic.twitter.com/Lp9sOxtPgw

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

Ambassador Russell started with a question for the YALI Network...

What are some challenges you see young women facing in your communities? [#YALICHAT](#) [#Africa4Her](#)

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

And received some critical answers:

[@AmbCathyRussell](#) Some of the challenges include unemployment, education and early marriages [#YALICHAT](#) [#Africa4Her](#)

— Dorcas Aba Annan (@NABAFOUNDATION) [March 18, 2015](#)

The situation I see it worrying is teenage pregnancy in Ghana, especially the fishing communities. [#Yalichat](#) [#Africa4Her](#)

— #MGWV Nana Yaw (@nayakjnr) [March 18, 2015](#)

We have very few women proficient in IT (I.C.T.) in Ghana. At my workplace, I share much IT skills/protocols with them [#Africa4Her](#) [#YALICHAT](#)

— Sam Adzaka (@samdzaka) [March 18, 2015](#)

[@AmbCathyRussell](#) [@YALINetwork](#) *unless married, a woman is never taken seriously*
[#YALICHAT](#) [#Africa4Her](#)

— Afro Ginger (@cathychansa) [March 18, 2015](#)

What was ur biggest challenge & how did you overcome it ? & be where you are right now.
[@AmbCathyRussell](#) [#YALICHAT](#) [@YALINetwork](#) [#Africa4her](#)

— Frehiwot Negash (@FrehiwotNG) [March 18, 2015](#)

[@FrehiwotNG](#) *It can be uncomfortable to be in the spotlight. But I've found it's worth it to be out there to support women & girls.* [YALICHAT](#)

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

.@AmbCathyRussell *in what specific ways can we educate men & children on respecting & supporting women's rights?* [@YALINetwork](#) [#YALICHAT](#)

— EAWi (@EAWinitiative) [March 18, 2015](#)

[@EAWinitiative](#) [@YALINetwork](#) *1/2 Need to remember that women's rights are human rights and that women are drivers of change.* [#YALICHAT](#)

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

[@EAWinitiative](#) *2/2 We can also recognize the traditional role women already play as leaders in communities and families.* [#YALICHAT](#)

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

[@AmbCathyRussell](#) [@YALINetwork](#) [#YALICHAT](#) *how can a developing nation best address gender stereotypes? Especially in young peoples.*

— Jack Kafwanka (@Rjkafwanka) [March 16, 2015](#)

[@Rjkafwanka](#) [@YALINetwork](#) Education/opportunity are key & recognizing the many ways women contribute to stability/econ growth [#YALICHAT](#)

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

[@YALINetwork](#) [@AmbCathyRussell](#) please let us know your advices upon how men can engage to respect women right?

— colomba (@letlubero) [March 16, 2015](#)

[@letlubero](#) Men and boys are critical allies to advancing rights of women/girls. We cannot do this alone. [#YALIchat](#).

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

[@letlubero](#) [@YALINetwork](#) Men can stand up against violence, discrimination & support girls education. [#YALICHAT](#)

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

[@YALINetwork](#) [@AmbCathyRussell](#) What is your recommendation on combating [#GBV](#) as you are working globally on women issue? [#YALICHAT](#)

— Frehiwot Negash (@FrehiwotNG) [March 17, 2015](#)

[@FrehiwotNG](#) We have to approach it holistically by addressing health, education, legal reform, enforcement, econ empowerment. [#YALICHAT](#)

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

[@FrehiwotNG](#) We also need to encourage men & boys to take an active role in preventing [#GBV](#). [#YALICHAT](#)

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

[@YALINetwork](#) [@AmbCathyRussell](#) focus is as an African woman in Kenya how accessible are jobs as opposed to starting a business ?

— Brenda Kemunto (@bkemunto) [March 18, 2015](#)

[@bkemunto](#) Our AWEP-WECREATE centers in Africa will support wmn entrepreneurs, hopefully createa new jobs. <http://t.co/1yZTuzgKKf> [#yalichat](#)

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

Ambassador Russell signed off with a pledge to the YALI Network

Thank you so much for all your great questions and for sharing how women face challenges in your communities. [#yalichat](#)

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

I'm proud to take the [#Africa4Her](#) pledge to invest in women and girls. [#YALICHAT](#) [#LetGirlsLearn](#) pic.twitter.com/74AubUsSbz

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

Join me in pledging to invest in women and girls today -> <https://t.co/S53vPbONXP> [#yalichat](#) [#Africa4Her](#)

— Cathy Russell (@AmbCathyRussell) [March 18, 2015](#)

The YALI Network looks forward to more #YALICHATS with Ambassador Russell!

[#YALICHAT](#) [@YALINetwork](#) Thank you YALI for an interesting chat with Ambassador Cathy Russell. Looking forward to more brainstorming chats.

— Hadiza Idris (@tweetdijenow) [March 18, 2015](#)

[@bflowmusic](#) continue with that spirit bro empowering women [#yalichat](#)

[#YALICHAT with the U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, Cathy Russell](#)

Cathy Russell serves as the U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues. Previously she served at the White House, coordinating the development of the Obama Administration's strategy to prevent and respond to gender-based violence globally. Join Ambassador Russell ([@AmbCathyRussell](#)) for a Twitter #YALICHAT on Wednesday, March 18th at 13:00 UTC. Additional details below.



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ssell visits girls at a school in Zambia

As young African leaders and followers of the YALI Network, you already know that the United States invests in women and girls because it's the right thing to do for gender equality and the smart thing to do for our foreign policy.

When policies and programs consider women and girls, they're more successful. They promote stronger democracies and more durable peace agreements. They increase food security and make for healthier families. They improve public service delivery. And they lead to fewer conflicts and more rapidly growing economies.

As the U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, it's my job to work with my colleagues across the U.S. government and with leaders around the world to advance the status of women and

girls worldwide. Every day I talk with government officials, world leaders, and women and girls around the world about how women have contributed to global progress and why we need to break the barriers keeping women and girls from fully participating in society.

Earlier this month, I had the privilege of presenting ten women from ten countries with the Secretary of State's [International Women of Courage Award](#). These women, including Marie Claire Tchecola from Guinea and Beatrice Epaye from the Central African Republic, have shown exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for women's rights and empowerment.

As an emergency room nurse in Guinea, Marie Claire Tchecola has been on the front lines of the fight against Ebola. When she became infected with the Ebola virus, she took precautions to protect other workers and her family from contracting the disease - and when she recovered, she went back to work. Through her leadership in the Ebola Survivors Association of Guinea, Marie Claire continues to spread awareness about the disease and fight the stigma associated with its survivors.

When Seleka rebels stormed the streets of Bangui and overtook the Central African Republic's capital, one of their first stops was the office of Beatrice Epaye, an outspoken activist who raised her voice to condemn the horrors of civil war and to call for peace, human rights, and good governance. Refusing to be intimidated, Beatrice took to the radio and met with local and international organizations, eventually becoming the president of the Preparatory Committee for the National Dialogue.

Ms. Tchecola and Ms. Epaye are proof of how women can and do transform societies with little fanfare through their everyday actions. Yet in every country - from Guinea to Germany to Guatemala - women and girls face challenges and barriers that keep them from fully participating. A family may choose to send a son, but not a daughter, to school because there's only enough money for one child's fees. A woman may be kept from launching a new business because she can't access capital. Or bias and stereotypes about women's roles in society will keep a woman from her rightful seat at the peacekeeping table or in Parliament.

It will take all of us - men and women, boys and girls - to achieve the progress we need to unleash the power of women and girls. But if every one of us takes action, we can break down these barriers and open doors for women and girls of courage.

I urge you all, both my fellow women and our male allies, to [take the #Africa4Her pledge](#) and tell us how you will invest in women and girls. Show us how you will raise, educate, protect, support, mentor, and elevate the many women and girls of courage in your life.

Join the YALICHAT on Wednesday, March 18th at:

12:00-13:00 Cape Verde Time (CVT)

13:00-14:00 UTC/GMT

14:00-15:00 West Africa Time (WAT)

15:00-16:00 Central Africa (CAT) and South Africa Standard Time (SAST)

18:00-19:00 Eastern Africa Time (EAT)

19:00-20:00 Seychelles and Mauritius (SCT/MUT)

#YALIVotes: Join Your Community

“May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears”

« Que vos choix reflètent vos espoirs, non vos peurs. »

- Nelson Mandela



Credit: AP Images

Africa is rising and Africa is voting. In the coming months, many Africans across the continent will be heading to the polls. These elections are important not just for you and your country, but for the entire continent of Africa and across the globe. Elections are the fundamental means by which citizens connect to their government and the world - but your responsibility and opportunity doesn't stop there. As young leaders, you can show the importance of participating in elections and staying actively engaged in civic life after the polls close, to make your voice heard.



Credit: AP Images

L'Afrique est en pleine croissance et l'Afrique vote. Au cours des prochains mois, beaucoup d'Africains se rendront aux urnes. Ces élections sont importantes non seulement pour vous et votre pays, mais aussi pour tout le continent et le monde. Les élections constituent le lien fondamental entre les citoyens et leur gouvernement, d'une part, et le monde, d'autre part mais votre responsabilité ne s'arrête pas là. Vous, jeunes leaders, vous pouvez vous faire entendre en montrant combien il est important de participer aux élections et en restant activement engagés dans la vie civile, même après la fermeture des bureaux de vote.

Show your community that #YALIVotes to bring about a more prosperous, democratic and peaceful Africa. Tweet or share on Facebook what you believe is important about Africa's upcoming elections by filling in the blank: “#YALIVotes because ____.”

Montrez autour de vous que la communauté YALI est prête à voter pour rendre l'Afrique plus prospère, démocratique et pacifique. Tweetez et partagez sur Facebook ce qui vous paraît important dans les prochaines élections en complétant la phrase : « #YALIVOTES parce que ____ ».

Read more about the importance of elections and

democracy:

[Nigerian YALI Member Stands Up to Violence](#)

[To Get Change, Vote](#)

[Afrobarometer Tracks Opinion and Democratic Trends](#)

[#YALICHAT: Engaging Youth in the Democratic Process](#)

[Civil Society: At the Core of Democracy and Human Nature](#)

[How to Launch Women into Political Leadership](#)

[Candidate Debates Are Centerpiece of Democracy: 1 of 3](#)

[Organize a Candidate Debate: 2 of 3](#)

[Partner With the Media: 3 of 3](#)

[#YALIVotes Tweets](#)

ENGAGE WITH US:

[Follow @YALINetwork](#)

#YALIVotes is a campaign of the Bureau of International Information Programs in the U.S. Department of State for the Young African Leaders Initiative Network in Africa.

[Tanzanian Plans to Inspire Youth to Vote](#)

Join Chedi on the video #YALICHAT Engaging Youth in the Democratic Process on Wednesday, February 25th at 1400 UTC.

Chedi Ngulu. Photo Courtesy: 

State Dept./Dartmouth

Chedi Ngulu has big plans for young people in Tanzania. The 2014 Mandela Washington Fellow and YALI Network member in Dar es Salaam wants to use popular music and technology to inspire the new generation of Tanzanians to participate in their country's upcoming constitutional referendum and general elections and to help build long-term and sustainable democracy and peace.

To do that, Ngulu will implement #PigaChata (formerly #AHADI), a voter education and turnout

campaign. Through the campaign, he wants Tanzania's youth to sign a pledge that they will "vote responsibly in 2015" for both the referendum and elections. They can either sign the pledge in-person or online, Ngulu says.

The head of MegaMark Communications has a passion for communications, media, business and music. Already he has led several major commercial and social marketing campaigns for companies, government and international organizations and has organized major events like concerts and conferences.

#PigaChata, slang for "leave a mark," is modeled after the successful "Rock the Vote" campaign in the United States launched in 1990 to motivate American youth to participate in the electoral process. Rock the Vote is the largest nonprofit and nonpartisan organization in the United States driving youth to the polls.

#PigaChata will target those between ages 18 and 25, focusing on four major cities: Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Mwanza and Zanzibar. It will recruit well-known and up-and-coming hip-hop artists to collaborate on a signature campaign song that promotes responsible civic engagement, with a focus on registering and voting. All recordings will be pushed for play on radio and television. College debates, town hall meetings and grass-roots engagements will expand on campaign awareness.

Digital media makes one of the most important components of this campaign. Social media — especially Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube — will be used intensely, and thanks to U.S. African Development Foundation (USADF) funding, #PigaChata is working on a voter education and information mobile app that will also feature an interactive SMS platform.

Ngulu also has plans for a series of free, public concerts in each of the target areas with artists touring local schools and hosting town forums to engage youth. "The concerts, music and art competition events will draw out people so that we can sign up large groups at once," he says.

Ngulu notes that 65 percent of Tanzanians are under age 24, and there are over 6.6 million Tanzanians between ages 18 and 24. "This age cohort alone has the potential to determine the next president of Tanzania," he says.

The campaign will also reach young people who are not old enough to vote, Ngulu adds. These youth "will be impacted by the messaging, allowing us to plant seeds in future voters," he says.

A survey of youth after 2010 elections, during which voter participation was nearly half of what it was in 2005, reinforced the need for a strong outreach campaign "that both educates young Tanzanians about their voting rights and the registration process and that also inspires them to be more engaged," according to the businessman.

He notes that the campaign will also support the goals of the national and Zanzibar-region strategies for growth and the reduction of poverty, greater citizen participation in democratic governance, and improving democratic institutions and national unity.

[#YALICHAT: Engaging Youth in the Democratic Process](#)

Voting is one of the greatest civic responsibilities of a citizen. However, many youth across Africa are unaware of the steps one needs to take to participate in the electoral process in their countries. Join two Mandela Washington Fellows, Sobel Ngom from Senegal and Chedi Ngulu from Tanzania, to learn about their initiatives to educate youth about their voting rights and the registration process. They will discuss how they initiated their projects, mobilized volunteers and other organizations to help them, and how they used traditional and social media to spread the word.

For more about the program, read "[To Get Change, Vote](#)"

About the Program

Sobel Aziz Alfred Marie Ngom, Senegal

[Sobel Ngom](#) is the Founder and Executive Director of Social Change Factory, a citizen leadership center created in whose mission is to inform youth of their civil, economic and social responsibilities. In 2012, he designed and implemented the Voix Des jeunes (Voices of Youth), a program that provide key information regarding the voting registration and process during the 2012 elections in Senegal.

Chedi Festo Ngulu, Tanzania

[Chedi Ngulu](#) is the founder of MegaMark Communications and has led several major commercial and social marketing campaigns for companies, government, and international organizations. He plans to implement #AHADI, a voter education and registration campaign to increase youth engagement in the upcoming 2015 general elections in Tanzania.
