

Eco@Africa's successful broadcast partnership model

The success story of Eco@Africa, a television co-production partnership with several African broadcasters and Deutsche Welle (DW), is a lesson for other global broadcasters.



Eco@Africa is currently being broadcast by more than 25 TV partner stations of DW in South Africa, Ghana, Gabun, Cameroon, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Seychelles and Namibia.

“DW’s science and environmental programs are generally doing really well, but [Eco@Africa](#) is definitely a success story of its own,” DW director general Peter Limbourg said on the occasion of the 100th edition of the environmental TV program, which is broadcast this week.

“This is our first real coproduction with our African partners and we are thrilled that our approach to presenting environmental issues has struck a chord with viewers around the world.”

In early 2016, Deutsche Welle and Nigerian broadcaster Channels TV decided to join forces and create a TV program to show their audiences what Africa and Europe can achieve together in the ecological sector.

Channels TV has the largest audience of any private news station in Nigeria and has been a long-term partner of DW. In the fall of 2016, Kenya’s KTN news channel, part of The Standard Group PLC, agreed to join as a co-production partner.

“This hugely popular format is a perfect example of how the media can get their viewers interested in topics that matter to all of us,” Limbourg said. “The program offers viewers scientific, educational facts and very innovative, clever ideas and initiatives. Last but not least it motivates everyone to take an active part in saving the environment. Many viewers have responded to the show’s call for action and presented their activities on social media using the hashtag #Doingyourbit.”

“To have journalists in Germany and African countries produce this environmental magazine together is a win-win opportunity,” Limbourg added. “Africa has an abundance of natural resources and ecosystems that need to be protected and Germany is a pioneer and driving force in the fields of renewable energy, international climate policy and resource efficiency.”

Cooperation

Limbourg said the cooperation with both partners in Nigeria and Kenya had turned out to be more successful than the DW team anticipated. “We even managed to get the Nigerian and German environment ministers to publicly support our joint venture at the UN Climate Conference in Paris in 2015.”



German-Africa TV collaboration

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John Momoh, chairman of Nigerian Channels Media Group, said on the joint venture: “The program Eco@Africa is a ground-breaking collaborative effort with DW on the environment, aimed at providing direction for Africa’s intended actions, to address environmental issues affecting its people and the economy. By leveraging on the expertise of a renowned broadcaster like DW, we are able to pool resources and produce good quality content for our viewers. Moreover, the production also affords us the opportunity to tap into the high end quality production skills of DW to serve as continuous learning for our staff.”

In turn, Joe Munene, managing director broadcast at Kenya’s The Standard Group PLC, said Eco@Africa “is a first-of-a-kind environmental magazine. It is both a transnational and transatlantic TV production, highlighting a globally relevant sphere of human society – the environment. This collaborative production approach has enabled us to uniquely enrich on our television content offering, by showcasing environment perspectives from across Africa and Europe, with key insights and global learnings emerging as a result. The content leveraging and cost-efficiencies arising out of this collaboration have enabled us to be more impactful and for the show to be more meaningful than it would otherwise have been. Eco@Africa was always going to be a winner for our audiences and we are happy that it has turned out to be very successful and has met our high expectations.”

Since DW was founded 65 years ago, Africa has been one of the most important regions for Germany’s international broadcaster. DW has created numerous successful programs for radio, television and, during the last two decades, for its online services too. African audiences have remained strong followers over the years.

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