

## **ADDENDUM: Stories from the HURINETs**

Two HURINETs have deployed some of the ICT4D tools introduced to them during ICT4D training in March 2012.

- Laikipia HURINET: Facebook, twitter, youtube and a crowdmap
- Kwale HURINET: Face Book, Twitter, YouTube Blog

1. **Laikipia HURINET**, located in Laikipia, in the South Rift Region of Kenya, works to empower the Laikipia County Community through promotion of Human rights, free information dissemination, training, and networking. During the month of June their activities focused on civic education on devolution; collaborating with other CSO's in developing Laikipia Natural Resource Management Network (LAICONAR) and identifying public utilities and enhancing public protection of the utilities.
  - i. Using Facebook, the HURINET made a link with Constitution and Reforms Education Consortium (CRECO), a network of civil society organizations that belong to the broad human rights, governance and democracy category of NGOs, [www.crecokenya.org](http://www.crecokenya.org), and other resourceful institution & individuals, and also drew in other members of the HURINET to begin using Facebook for engagement in the human rights advocacy.
  - ii. The HURINET has also began using Twitter to follow news both locally and globally.
  - iii. The HURINET also participated in a fact -finding mission in Marmanet area within Laikipia on dairy farmers complaints due to mysterious loss of milk sales to two companies; Brookside and the Marmanet Cooperative society. Facts collected were analyzed and a recommendation made for the farmers' economic rights be respected.
    - The Company head office manager ordered the Nyahururu branch manager to carry out investigations immediately collaborating with the Marmanet Cooperating society office and device a plan of compensating the farmers.
    - The two partners have had several meetings discussing how to compensate farmers. The Brookside Company has planned to transfer the staff involved in the case to other branches and further plan to deduct their salaries to pay the farmers.
    - The Marmanet cooperative society was forced recorded a statement to the police.
    - But now some farmers have withdrawn supplying their milk to the companies due to fear victimization from the two partners

Pictures and a video clip of farmers giving out information on how the loss of their dues was orchestrated by the two companies' staff and the detailed report uploaded on <http://www.laikipiacivicaction.crowdmap.com>

### ***Challenges***

- Slow internet connection (mostly 2G) makes the cost of internet expensive.
- Recruiting locals to join online debates is a challenge due to internet illiteracy, however efforts are being made to not only engage locals but to reach the wider part of the Kenyan society
- There are major transport challenges largely due to having to travel long distances to for actual fact finding and follow-up on issues as well as document them using the one camera that the HURINET has now acquired.

### ***Opportunities***

- The ICT4D project has enhanced Laikipia HURINET activities in handling human rights violation cases and sharing of opinions with other stakeholders since we received the equipments.
- If the above challenges are overcome, the objectives of the project will be achieved especially during this transition period that needs active citizen awareness and monitoring of electoral processes through the available channels

2. **Kwale HURINET** is located in Kwale, on South Coast of Kenya. Their work focuses on civic education on the implementation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 with special emphasis on Bill of Rights, Devolution, Leadership and Integrity among other constitutional provisions; para-legal services on child rights and labour; security, equality and justice.

The focus during the month of June was on advocacy on land rights; labour rights, children's rights and peace-building among others.

- Some of their activities on Facebook included contributing to the protests that the civil society including the KHRC made on Parliament's handling of crucial Miscellaneous Amendment Bills particularly on the minimum academic requirements for aspiring Ward representatives, MPs, Senators and Governors; amendments that were watering down the new Constitution. These protests which were a concerted efforts including court action led to the President refusing to assent to that Bill and has since been referred back to Parliament.
- Posted videos of Kwale community's reaction to President Kibaki's controversial deployment of County Commissioners. The incident occurred at Kwale County Hall during a public forum convened by the Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA) LINK: CRA FORUM 1 <http://youtu.be/6qN4XmCfrZE> and CRA FORUM 2; The videos have also been Twitted on <http://t.co/sj0LQCaw>- By maishainkwale
- The HURINET also has a blog : [genesisforhumanrights.wordpress.com](http://genesisforhumanrights.wordpress.com) where they have posted a story on child rights.



*Child labourer at work on the disputed land: Members of the community claim Mountain City Co. Ltd used unorthodox means to acquire the nearly 50 acre plot that used be the source of their livelihood.*

- iv. **Land rights advocacy** on illegal acquisition of land by a private company in Ukunda by Mountain City Company Limited that affected 86 peasant farmers. The matter was reported to the Kwale HURINET office in Diani. The HURINET secretariat wrote a petition which was sent to the minister for lands and copied to various relevant government departments as well as non-state actors including the **KHRC**. As a result, the representatives of the farmers travelled to Nairobi and managed to have an audience with the Minister for Lands, and the matter is currently under review by the line ministry.



A section of Ukunda Farming Community in a public baraza (a local public forum) called to condemn the illegal acquisition of a community land. The community developed and submitted a petition to the Minister of Lands and Settlement with the help of Kwale HURINET and Msambweni Human Rights Watch.

### ***Challenges***

The HURINET is waiting eagerly for the publishing of the civic action website in order to help them publicize more of their work, violations reports and engage further.

There is still difficulty is still difficulty in establishing and using crowd map technique.

### ***Opportunity***

The ICT4D has enable the HURINET access and dispense with information in a shorter period than in the past when we undertook secretarial services at cyber-cafes .