## ICT4Democracy in East Africa: Disseminating Project Results Workshop

October 16th, 2013, Protea Hotel, Kampala

Workshop Proceedings by
**Facilitator East Africa ICT4Democracy Network**
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The ICT4Democracy Network is composed of 7 partners in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Through application of information and communication technologies (ICTs) partners in the network empowers communities in the region to hold their leaders accountable by monitoring service delivery and fighting corruption.

**Introduction**

With Support from the Swedish Program for ICT in developing Regions (Spider), the East Africa ICT4Democracy Network was formed in 2011 involving 7 partners in the region that are harnessing the opportunities ICT presents to empower communities to hold their leaders accountable by monitoring services that are delivered and hence fighting corruption. The workshop held at the Protea Hotel in Kampala aimed at disseminating the results of the project that has been running since 2011 and to build further networks to enhance the sustainability of the initiatives and up-scale the project interventions. Presentations of the results were made from all the 7 partners in the Network as well as from development partners. Questions/comments and Answers were instituted for more clarity, interaction, ideas as well as to provide feedback to the participants.

**Key Issues emerging out of the Workshop**

▸ Traditional ICT tools and Social Media have great potential to contribute to development of communities. ICTs can cause change, raise awareness and improve levels of citizen participation in the democratic processes
▸ Sustainability of ICT Projects is always a challenge. There is need for greater involvement of communities in ownership of projects and innovations as well as engagement with development partners, local community leaders to support innovative ideas especially with reference to women and ICT use and applications
▸ More advocacy and awareness raising at community level to ensure increased civic participation, adoption and use of ICTs and in upholding rights and freedoms
▸ There is need for greater efforts in ensuring security and safety of internet users. Some community members fear to be followed up or traced.
▸ Low level of literacy hinders use of ICT and ICT Platforms by majority of people and hence few people adopting the use of some tools e.g. crowd sourced platforms like Ushahidi
▸ There is need for greater partnership and collaboration with development partners to pull resources and contribute towards the development of rural communities. Policy makers should contribute to the success of development initiatives

**Strengths of the ICT4Democracy Network in East Africa**

▪ The Organizations in the network have solid structures and effective institutional capacity to implement projects for empowerment and democratic processes in the region
▪ The Partners have a strong partnership and collaboration with different development organizations within and outside their respective countries that are keen to support the projects morally, financially and in kind. Besides there exists greater synergy and cooperation among the partners which has ensured success of the project at community level and also presence of committed and qualified staff
▪ Partners recognizes the issue of sustainability in projects and have developed systems to ensure continuity of the project both through offline or online engagement strategies of communities, local leaders and or re**le**va**n**t authorities

- Some partners have presence of Information Centers/Resource points acting as sources of information and Regional Offices at community level. The presence of such structures forms an important basis in which the community members and local leaders continue to interface and engage.

Currently, the network is in good shape to continue with the important community work and build on the successes as well as identify opportunities that help partners and/or the network to fill in the gaps. Some of the gaps identified include limited responsiveness of government actors to provide feedback to citizens/communities and get the issues addressed, limited ICT skills among communities, poor infrastructures in rural areas e.g. lack of grid electricity as well as lack of awareness of the potential of ICTs in development and addressing gender issues.

## Way forward for the Network
- Need for greater partnership and collaboration with local community, leaders and development partners
- Need for more/joint/individual fundraising
- Need to sustain projects beyond donor funding
- Need for greater involvement of government actors and Government in the project

▶ **Presentations:**



**Commission on Human Rights and Good Governance – M4D as a key role on service delivery for equitable and just society**

CHRAGG is based in Tanzania formed in 2001 and it plays both the role of ombudsman and human rights commission for the protection and promotion of human rights as well as good governance. Through their project, *"SMS for Human Rights",* CHRAGG works in about seven regions in Tanzania to raise Human Rights awareness through SMS. CHRAGG developed an SMS for Human Rights system which is integrated into its Case Management Systems to enhance systematic reporting of complaints and how the complaints subsequently get addressed.

**Results**

- Increased reporting on Human Rights and good governance hence increasing awareness and public accountability
- Increased partnerships and collaboration established with Human Rights organization to improve handling of huge volumes of complaints
- Team building strategies to ensure complaints are handled appropriately and expeditiously within CHRAGG
- Receive and forward complaints to relevant authorities hence improving response rate on Human Rights issues in the country

**Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) – ICTs for Human Rights and Democracy.** Through their project on *"reforms through citizen participation and government accountability"* KHRC has empowered 10 selected Human Rights Networks( Hurinets) in Kenya out of the 27 with ICT skills to enhance monitoring and reporting on Human Rights violations. A crowd sourcing platform was deployed to facilitate reporting and was particularly active during the election. Institutional strengthening, capacity building, training in basic ICTs and equipment support to Hurinets were instituted to facilitate reporting on human rights violations. In addition, a civic action website www.hakizetu.com was developed to facilitate information sharing and citizen participation by engaging with the duty-bearers.

**Results**

- Increased visibility of Human Rights Networks in Kenya which has enabled some of them raise funds for their projects;
- Empowerment of Human Right Networks and communities through access to information;
- Improved reporting on Human Rights violations because of easy to use methodologies, leveraging the ubiquity of ICTs including SMS technology;
- More partnerships and collaborations instituted which has led to policy advocacy work;
- Curation of human rights complaints and information by KHRC by increasing KHRC's online presence.

**Participation through ICTs - A case study during the Ugandan election.**

This presentation was done by Ms. Anna Karafelt from the Embassy of Sweden, Addis-Ababa. The study was on the 2011 Uganda election. DEMGROUP had set up 2 SMS enabled election monitoring platforms including the Uganda Watch which is an open crowd sourced platform for citizens monitoring via SMS. In particular, the study was to examine the nature and opportunities as well as challenges while using mobile phones and other web based platforms for civic participation in Uganda

**- ICT for Health Service Delivery**

TIU implements ICT for improving the Health sector service delivery for communities in Northern Uganda. Key results under the project include:

- Un-coordinated transfers of health workers without immediate replacement was solved by the district health offices, most of the transfers are now being done with immediate replace.
- Capacity of health workers was built and hence staff were more willing to work as a team

- Health Center visitors were empowered and informed of their health rights and now demanding social accountability of Health workers
- Hygiene routines at Amach, Anyeke,Ogur, Agulurude, Barr and Aromo Health Center have improved
- Through development pact signing communities and their leaders acquired new ways of jointly working towards improving health service delivery
- District local government leaders investigated and followed up recommended health care challenges in health centers that required government  action/input
- Some health workers have faced disciplinary measures leading to their improved code of conduct  of the health workers that faced disciplinary One Health Center Kitchen was built in Agulurude Health Center III
- Reduced level of health workers absenteeism
- District local government have constructed staff houses at the different health centers in Oyam and Lira

 **– Converging ICT tools to promote public Accountability and Democratic engagement for improved service delivery**

ToroDev Project illustrates the successful convergence of traditional and digital media in empowering communities in the Rwenzori region, Western Uganda

The Project uses crowd sourcing platforms including Ushahidi to document, map and report cases of service delivery within their respective communities and then broadcast them of radio as a "hub" for information and knowledge sharing opportunities to reach the majority grassroot citizens in the region. Through this project, ToroDev using ICTs for mobilization, has also created and facilitated both virtual or electronic and physical (14 citizens' advocacy forums) platforms for democratic engagements between local citizens and their leaders to identify, plan and budget for priority essential service delivery needs in 7 districts of the region.

**Results**

- Increased use of ICTs to lobby for service delivery.
- Gravity flow scheme extended after radio discussions and community mobilisation using ICTs. On 8th April, 2013 Mugusu Sub County Local citizens Presented a petition to the Kabarole District Chairperson who accepted to extend gravity water flow scheme to Magunga Village
- Kisanja - Kihondo road in Kicwamba worked on as a result of radio discussions, community meetings mobilised using ICTs

- Mugusu Health Centre III received more staff after complaints of inadequate staff on radio, Ushahidi, blog, etc (January 2013)
- Improved awareness about the meaning of accountability. Prior to the training delivered, Gold FM had never discussed issues relating to accountability on air, after the training however, the station has aired two debates on accountability
- Improved information sharing on online platforms by radio and Citizen journalists
- Leaders increasingly giving accountability as a result of advocacy using ICT tools.



**WOUGNET- ICT for improved Service delivery**

In their project "*Empowering local people to use **ICTs to monitor district service de**livery"* WOUGNET critically addresses the inclusion of women in the democratization process through application of ICTs. Technical and democratic processes are in itself inaccessible for women due to culture and the gender structure in place.

**Results**

- Increased civic awareness on good governance and effective service delivery
- Increased community involvement in monitoring public services and resources and reporting to responsible authorities and WOUGNET
- Voluntary Social Accountability Committees (VSACs) ICT skills strengthened
- Increased exposure of corruption and shoddy work
- Improvement in service delivery in most communities
- Some community members have been able to benefit from government programs e.g. NAADs
- VSACs influenced some head teachers to call general meetings to address issues within their schools.
- Increased involvement of some parents in school programs (VSAC emphasis on transparency and accountability)
- Some shoddy constructions under NUSAAF II have been demolished and rectified.
- Some VSACs have influenced the incorporation of some community issues into the sub county development plans
- Repair of broken boreholes as a result of follow-up by VSACs

**U-Report in Uganda and Globally – Erik Frisk, Project Manager, U-Report UNICEF**

The U-Report is a SMS program that engages children and youth on issues they care about. Signing up is voluntary at no cost across all network. 10 primary partners including NGOs, CSOs and FBOs – Uganda Scouts Association, BRAC, BOSCO, GEM, RIC-net, UPFC, World Bank. Collaboration and relationship with several GOU Ministries including MGLSD, MOH, MAAIF.

U-Reporters are polled twice /week on average. The poll content is decided by partners and U-Report team. There is also automatic feedback and data analysis. Mr. Erik Frisk said the U-Report is integrated with other traditional and social media tools such as radio, TV, social media and newspapers. He also stated that U-Report uses available data for advocacy and empowerment of local people through direct connections with their Members of Parliament in which the Members of Parliament are able to ask questions directly from the U-Reporters.

Erik Frisk from UNICEF Uganda makes his presentation on U-Report

 **mGovernance: Improving Transparency In Water Governance through Mobile Technology**

iHub Research is the Research arm of iHub, an innovation hub in Nairobi that embraces open technology. In their Research project, *"M-Governance: Exploring conditions for successful Mobile Governance in Kenya"*, iHub Research illustrates the gains towards employing the use of mobile technology in governance processes. The Research is systematically focused on water channels by enhancing transparency and Access to information.

**Research Activities conducted in the past 18 Months**

- Exploratory research: Exploratory Survey on Kenyan Service Delivery and Government Interaction
- User Experience pretest on mGovernance applications – Mzalendo, Huduma, Msemakweli
- Workshops with stakeholders (3)
- Fieldwork - Questionnaire surveys administered to 896 citizens in 3 counties
- In depth iinterviews with 9 water organisations in water sector
- Water ideation workshop
- Monitoring and evaluation



**Challenges faced in the water application development**

- Scalability  (capacity, scalability model)
- Funding

- Lack of Support
- Partnerships
- Lack of Buy in from the Government
- Others developing mobile apps- for the sake of competition

### Summery of findings

- Huge information gaps exist between the citizen and the stakeholder.
- Finding a preferred communication channel to use to transmit information between the stakeholder and the citizen still remains a challenge
- Majority of the challenges faced by local stakeholders revolve around communication means they use to interact with citizens.
- There is a strong belief by the organizations interviewed that use of mobile applications can greatly improve service delivery and access to water information in the water sector.

### Achievements of the research

- Research Papers -
- Water Ideation toolkit
- Book Chapter in Botswana-" Technology development and platform enhancement for successful global e-government design- University of Botswana
- Presentations in workshops in different forums
- Articles in popular blogs and websites- Accountability Lab/ Italian News Article
- Paper published IST Africa 2012 publications
- Research used as reference point for other projects
- New Opportunities for research –in the area of citizen engagement

 **The Collaboration on International ICT Policy in East and Southern Africa**

Established in 2004, CIPESA focuses on decision making that facilitates the use of ICT in support of development and poverty reduction. In their Project, *"iParticipate Uganda - Catalyzing civic participation and democracy monitoring using ICTs"*, CIPESA carried needs assessments, including surveys of the knowledge, attitudes and practices among individuals, citizens, groups and local governments regarding utility, effectiveness and security of using ICTs in citizen participation and monitoring of democracy.

### Results

- Provided support to ICT support to 3 community centers:-
    1. E-society center Kasese – western Uganda
    2. Northern Uganda Media Club
    3. Busoga Rural Open Source Development Initiative (BROSDI) – Eastern Uganda

e-society resource  center is the district's focal point for ICT trainings and Internet access. A total of 4001 users accessed the center in 2012 including: students, local government leaders, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and local community members. The center provided training for 129 community members in basic ICT use, out of these, 46 were women. Further in mid 2012, CIPESA administered citizen journalism training at this center. As a result of this training, it was observed that Kasese residents begun taking active engagement in governance matters in their district as evidenced in the increased use of  internet based platforms to access news about the district. Some of the most popular web portals in the district include: - the Kasese district Online news, district website, CSO Voices, Rwenzururu facebook discussion group. The Kasese News blog post however remains the most used and accessed portal for news, events happening in the district.

At NUMEC, CIPESA created a Ushahidi based platform to monitor health Sector service delivery under the Peace Recovery and Development Programme (PRDP) in Northern Uganda. This was done with additional funding from the Indigo Trust. The portal currently receives updates about the PRDP status as well as document health workers absenteeism reports from Transparency International Uganda.
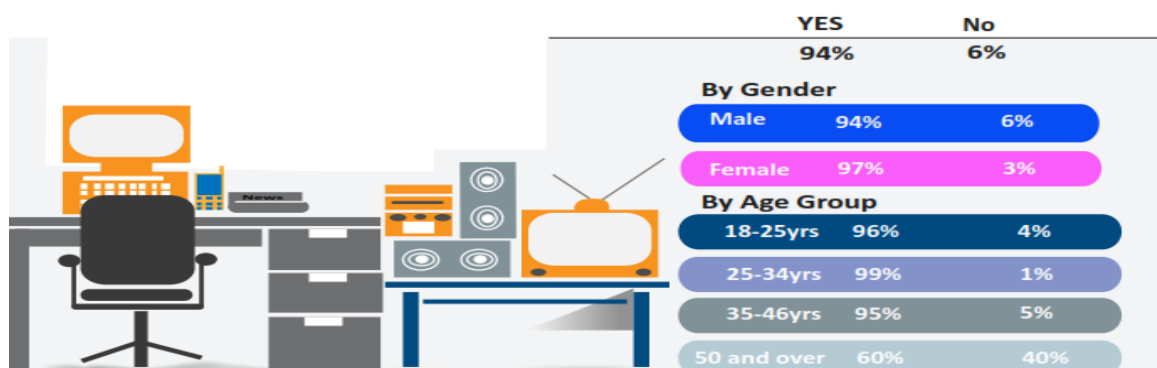
CIPESA also created a public wiki – www.eparticipationuganda.pbworks.com that its partners use to document stories in their communities.

> Championed the development of a network of CSOs, media, citizens groups and local governments that use and promote the use of ICTs in governance.  CIPESA conducted round-table discussions advocating for access to information. With this, the Open Development Partnership in Uganda was formed in partnership with Development Research and Training (DRT) and Development Initatiaves (DI) Uganda. The initiative brings together government, civic society, academia, citizens and development partners working on open development iinitiatives, such as open data, open government, open budget, open aid.

Carried out a survey to understand the knowledge, attitude and practices and needs of Ugandans on the utility, effectiveness and security of ICTs in citizen participation and monitoring of democracy.

> *Illustration below*

## Awareness of ICT-based tools for participation

|  | YES | No |
|---|---|---|
|  | 94% | 6% |
| **By Gender** | | |
| Male | 94% | 6% |
| Female | 97% | 3% |
| **By Age Group** | | |
| 18-25yrs | 96% | 4% |
| 25-34yrs | 99% | 1% |
| 35-46yrs | 95% | 5% |
| 50 and over | 60% | 40% |

The internet was the most well known ICT based tool for participation, followed by the mobile phone. Print and broadcast media were perceived as 'non-ICT-based'.

## Use of ICT-based tools to participate

| Social Media | Radio | Email List | SMS chat | Discussion groups | Television | ENewsletters | Web Portals | EForum |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 60% | 48% | 42% | 41% | 37% | 20% | 18% | 15% | 8% |

Social media including Blogs, Facebook and Twitter are the most widely used eParticipation platforms

More about the KAP study can be accessed here, http://www.cipesa.org/?wpfb_dl=64

The East Africa ICT4Democracy Network currently facilitated by Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET) is made up of 7 partners in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.

With support from the Swedish Program for ICTs in Developing Regions (Spider), these organisations are leveraging ICTs to empower citizens, hold their leaders accountable, fight corruption, monitor service delivery, promote human rights and contribute to building a democratic culture in the region. Present in the workshop was also Spider team 1) Caroline Wamala 2) Edna Soomre and 3) Paula Uimonen – the Executive Director of Spider. Other Development partners represented at the workshop include Diakonia, Embassy of Sweden in Addis-Ababa, UNICEF, CEWIGO and Twaweza Uganda among others.

**The Network Partners include:**

1. Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG) in Tanzania
2. Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC)
3. Transparency International (TI) Uganda
4. Toro Development Network (ToroDev) in Uganda
5. Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET)

6.  iHub Research in Kenya
7.  Collaboration on International ICT Policy in East and Southern Africa (CIPESA) in Uganda

The above network partners in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania with support from the Swedish Program for ICTs in Developing Regions (Spider) are leveraging ICTs to empower citizens, hold their leaders accountable, fight corruption, monitor service delivery, promote human rights and contribute to building a democratic culture in the region. For more information about this network, visit www.ict4democracy.org