

ICT and Zambia: Two Cases of Exploration

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ICT in Developing Societies

- Use of ICT is rare in developing countries.
- However, when used, it usually have a very large effect.
- Examples of successful ICT use: e-Choupal (India), HealthNet (Uganda), Grameen Telephone (Bangladesh), Voxivia (Kosovo).

Zambian ICT Capabilities

- Zambia - Teledensity (Amongst the highest in sub-Saharan Africa)

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But Zambian ICT Costs...

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What can we say?

- ICT is Rare in Zambia, but studies have shown that it is growing very rapidly.
- ICT still remains very expensive
- Companies discouraged from investing in ICT; investors are mostly foreigners (South Africa, UK, USA).
- Therefore, ICT access is not available to those at the Bottom of the Pyramid.

In The Presentation...

- Two case studies of spectacular success
 1. Radio Farm Forum (RFF)
 2. Inter-African Network for Human Rights (Afronet)

The Radio Farm Forum (RFF)

- Background
- Impact Analysis
- Beneficiary Feedback
- Lessons Learned Analysis
 - Factors Promoting Program Development
 - Implementation Challenges
 - Future Outlook
- Conclusions and Recommendations

RFF Background

- Goal: Sustainable economic development
- Problem: Lack of effective means of agricultural information dissemination
- Solution: Radio Farm Forum
 - Produced by NAIS
 - 2 Main Components
 - 30-minute radio program
 - Radio listening groups

RFF Impact Analysis

- Partnerships
 - Educational and Research Institutions
 - Ministry of Community Development and Social Services
 - Government of the Republic of Zambia
- Capacity Building
 - Feedback
 - Large-scale Information Dissemination
- Technology
 - Radio

RFF Beneficiary Feedback

- Extensive amount of positive feedback
- RFF has positively changed the lives and behaviors of rural farmers
 - Mixed farming
 - Soil conservation
 - Using donkey as draught animal
 - Growing drought-resistant crops
 - And many more

RFF Lessons Learned Analysis: Factors Promoting Development

- Use of the Radio
 - Overcomes communication barriers
- Radio Listening Groups
 - Provide sense of ownership
- Feedback
- Partnerships

RFF Lessons Learned Analysis: Implementation Challenges

- Technical
 - Unavailability of radio batteries and radio repairmen
 - Poor radio reception
- Moral/Ethical
 - Offensive and inappropriate topics
- Educational/Training
 - Inadequate training of RFF broadcasters and technicians
 - Illiteracy of radio listeners (i.e. rural farmers)
- Miscellaneous
 - Competition for air time
 - No provision for replaying radio programs

RFF Lessons Learned Analysis: Future Outlook

- Problems
 - Inadequate funding
 - Agricultural officers being laid off
- Unfortunate Effects
 - Not enough experienced staff to produce programs
 - Not enough funding for program continuation

RFF Conclusions

- Program has provided an effective means of disseminating agricultural information
- Keys to success thus far
 - Partnerships
 - Radio Technology
 - Radio Listening Groups
- Key to future success
 - Funding
 - Long-term Sustainability Plan

Inter-African Network for Human Rights and Development (Afronet)

- To create a common network for human rights activities and organizations all over Africa.
- To gather and disseminate information on the enhancement of human rights in Africa.
- To challenge corruption by initiating programs of empowerment and instituting accountability at all levels of the African society.
- To enable African NGO's to be heard in front of international bodies, institutions and gatherings devoted to human rights.

In order to achieve these goals...

- Afronet Incurred massive communication costs (of over 2.5 billion kwacha – or 500,000 dollars).

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Solution...ICT

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- Website designed to assist international clients
- Communication with Asian countries became much easier
- Provided opportunities for volunteers to come in and work.
- Over 2 million hits per month
- Local clientele not affected much

Further Enhancement of ICT

- Local Area Network
- PCs and Internal Networks (US AID)

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Not so easy...

Yuyo Nachali-Kambikambi *“most people like hard copy instead of a website”. There is no need for cost reduction, since the publication and dissemination of our quarterly magazines are funded anyway and there is no subscription fee”*.

“Afronet is the most famous human rights organization in Southern Africa now, and I suppose that is because of the website as well”.

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Note so Easy (II)

- Web-site not updated regularly
- Government Intervention
- Bandwidth limitations

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Summary

- ICT Implementation has been effective in reducing costs for Afronet.

Cost/Year	39,000
Returns/Year	163,000

- ICT has reached the BOP; implemented by students at UNZA, used by clients worldwide.
- While benefits are many, implementation difficulties are hard to overcome. Institutional rigidities, the lack of acceptance of new – non-traditional – methods are often hard to institute immediately.

What is needed to successfully implement an ICT-related project in Zambia?

- Choose technology wisely
- Form effective partnerships
- Create sense of involvement and empowerment for target groups
- Have project ideas come from “within”
- Secure adequate funding
- Have a plan for expansion and long-term sustainability