



# KICTAnet

## Online Discussions

Role of Civil Society, Private Sector and Private  
Public Partnerships in ICT4D

eDiscussion Report

May 19<sup>th</sup> – May 30<sup>th</sup> 2008

## **Acknowledgments**

It is always a great challenge to mount and execute an online discussion - particularly where participants are extremely busy and engaged in their regular day to day activities. For such a discussion to succeed, some of the participants must be willing to share their insights for the benefit of the others. I am therefore grateful for those who found the time and spared the effort to pen their thoughts. May their shared 'bytes' remain valuable to the rest who silently participated by way of reading their insights.

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## **Executive Summary**

ICT for Development (ICT4D) has been the concern of various stakeholders for over two decades and has produced mixed results. KICTAnet commissioned this discussion with the aim of establishing the role that Civil Society, Private Sector and the Public Sector played within the ICT4D arena. In addition, the various motives and challenges each of the above stakeholders had, or experienced were explored in order to establish the areas of improvement and collaboration in terms of Private Public Partnerships.

It was shared that the Civil Society had the most prominence and presence within the ICT4D arena. Most of its activities centred on provisioning of ICT Information Centers to marginalized communities within the rural areas. The Challenges experienced included poor infrastructure support such as lack of reliable Internet and or electrical supply. In addition, duplication rather than synergetic collaboration from similar government initiatives was also cited as a significant challenge.

The Private Sector seemed to participate in ICT4D initiatives mainly by sponsoring Civil Society groups or through their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) outfits. There was relatively little shared in terms of Private Sector challenges but their motives were questioned by some members who felt their contributions were more self-centred than otherwise presented.

The Public Sector (Government) was seen to have made significant strides in the ICT4D domain within the last five or so years. This was demonstrated by the gazettment of the National ICT Policy, commissioning of the eGovernment Secretariat and the ICT Board amongst other initiatives. The challenges cited included the relatively poor uptake or adoption of ICT usage within the wider public service and the duplication of some ICT initiatives that would preferably be executed better through Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSP) approaches.

With regard to the Policy frameworks governing ICT4D, the Public Sector was considered to be more established with well-defined Policy, Regulatory and Procedural structures. The Civil Society was considered less governed -despite having an NGO Council mandated to guide their Operations. Private Sector's governance structures were seen to lie between the above two extremes, - setting a fertile ground for misunderstanding when the three parties attempted to collaborate on ICT4D initiatives.

In conclusion, it was also shared that whereas Public Private Partnerships (PPP) seemed to have gained much attention in recent times, Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships may provide better returns on ICT4D investments. Another interesting observation was that Profit motives as demonstrated by Private sector need not be in conflict with the Public good and could therefore be simultaneously pursued. Finally, it was observed that Civil Society activities within ICT4D were relatively un-governed and there maybe need to technically equip the NGO Council in order for them to provide the necessary oversight.

# Introduction

## ***Background***

Huge resources in terms of time, funding, infrastructure, personnel have been spend on ICT initiatives for socio-economic development. The results however, seem to indicate that the returns are often far below the inputs and expectation. This discussion set to explore why this may be the case and how the situation could be improved.

## ***Program Setting & Description:***

The Key stakeholders within the ICT4D arena, namely, Public Sector, Civil Society and Private Sector were identified and their Activities, Motives and Challenges discussed. It was hoped that through this discussions, their areas of convergence would identify opportunities for more successful Public Private Partnerships.

## ***Program Design (Data Collection, Data Processing)***

### *Data Collection:*

The Online Discussion was structured along the following themes that were discussed electronically over a period of 2 weeks according to the following schedule:

- Terminologies and background (ICT4D, PPP, etc) – Day 1
- Review existing Policy frameworks for ICT4D – Day 2
- Appraise Civil Society Roles (activities, motives & challenges) Day 3-4
- Appraise Private Sector Roles (activities, motives & challenges) Day 5-6
- Appraise Public Sector Roles (activities, motives & challenges) Day 7-8
- Review PPP models (motives and roles of partners, operational models & challenges), Day 9-10

### *Data Processing:*

The various contributions from the Participants were analysed and collated into a Final report.

***Aim:*** To establish the role Civil Society, Private Sector and Public Sector play in the ICT for Development arena.

## ***Objectives***

The Objectives of the exercise included:

- Understand the terminologies and define the Key Stakeholders (Civil Society, Private and Public Sector)
- Investigate existing Policy frameworks that informs Stakeholders activities in ICT4D
- Appraise Civil Society activities, motives and challenges with regard to ICT4D
- Appraise Private Sector activities, motives and challenges with regard to ICT4D
- Appraise and take stock of Public Sector activities, motives and challenges with regard to ICT4D
- Investigate existing and possible models for PPP within the context of ICT4D

## ***Main Outcomes/Deliverables***

The key outcomes of the exercise included:

1. Summarised eParticipants contributions
2. Final Report for subsequent dissemination to members and other stakeholders

### **Tools**

Online Tools (email, listserver, internet)

## ***Resources.***

Moderator (Online)

Participants (Online)

Web Resources

<http://www.weforum.org/pdf/GEI/Partnerships.pdf>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/>

[http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what\\_is\\_civil\\_society.htm](http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what_is_civil_society.htm)

<http://www.ngobureau.or.ke/aboutus.asp>

<http://ict.developmentgateway.org/>

<http://www.developmentgateway.org>

<http://www.ngobureau.or.ke/aboutus.asp>

<http://www.drumnet.org/projects.htm>

<http://dotrust.org/>

<http://www.pfore.org>

Listserver (KICTANet) archives

## **eDiscussion Proceedings (2 week Discussions)**

### ***Theme 1: Terminologies and Background (1day)***

#### **Planned Activities**

- Discuss basic definitions and term such as Civil Society, Private Sector, Public Private Partnerships, etc.

#### **Contributions: Day 1 of 10- Definitions**

##### **J. Walubengo, (Moderator).**

He welcomed members to the first day of the discussion and introduced the day's theme saying that it was simply a background day where members were expected to identify stakeholders and define various ICT for Development terminologies such as Civil Society, Public Sector, Private Sector, and Public Private Partnerships (PPP) amongst others.

##### **Mike Eldon (Symphony)**

Mike said the term Civil Society was used in different ways. At its broadest it could mean all non-state actors, from NGOs to private sector (including the media) to Faith and community based organizations. But, he added that it is often used merely to refer to groups like human rights activists or peace-builders.

He continued to say that as far as PPPs were concerned, they were simply vehicles for the Public and Private sector to work together towards common goals. He said that in the last decade or so PPPs had gathered pace, with the intensified efforts of organizations such as FKE (Federation of Kenyan Employees) and KAM (Kenya Association of Manufacturers) and with the emergence of KEPSA (Kenya Private Sector Alliance) as the Private sector umbrella body. Government too has been increasingly reaching out to the private sector, in the spirit of what can be called constructive engagement. He concluded by saying that PPPs could also mean the institutional bodies that drive e.g. large-scale infrastructure development, such as the undersea cable

##### **John Walubengo (Moderator)**

Walubengo concurred with Mike's submission and said that it matched with the understanding from Wikipedia, and quoted the same definitions as given below:

Civil society: refers to the arena of un-coerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values.

Private Sector: is that part of the economy which is both run for private profit and is not controlled by the state.

Public Sector: part of economic and administrative life that deals with the delivery of goods and services by and for the government,

ICT4D: refers to the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) within the field of socio-economic Development.

**Louis Othieno (Peace Corps, Kenya Office)**

Louise qualified that the word "civil" in "civil society" definitions above must be intended to exclude violent advancement of those shared interests. A terrorist group, for instance –while otherwise fitting in the definition of civil society as above, could not properly qualify to be so referred.

He therefore suggested that we expressly limit our definition to non-aggressive, peaceful advancement of a shared interest. He agreed to the PPP definitions but added that for further clarity, it might help to note that PPP has become more widely accepted in recent years with increasing realization that the pursuit of profit is not always at the expense and detriment of the common good. Furthermore, he said that in some cases, the common good is best served through the coincidental pursuit of private profit. PPP are therefore about identifying such situations and agreeing ways of working for mutual advantage

**Tim Unwin (UNESCO, ICT4D)**

Tim contributed by saying that many people were now using the term MSPs to refer to Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships that combine Civil Society, Private Sector, Governments, Donors, and International agencies amongst others - instead of simply PPPs. His own view was that it was very important to distinguish between civil society and the private sector – although he knew that others may disagree. He added that one of the reasons why so many initiatives have failed was because they tended to concentrate on PPPs instead of MSPs. He said that civil society and others must be involved if we were to have any hope of delivering successful ICT4D initiatives!



## **Theme 2- Existing Policy Frameworks governing ICT4D Initiatives (1 day)**

### Planned Activities

- Review the governance structures informing stakeholders behavior in ICT4D

### **Contributions: Day 2 of 10: – The Policy Frameworks**

#### **J. Walubengo, (Moderator).**

Walubengo said that the previous day was dwelling mainly on the basics where good thoughts from Louis, Tim and Mike were shared. He wanted to pick the members thinking on the second day's theme on Policy Frameworks. He asked if there were any policy frameworks that governed the behavior of Civil Society, Private Sector and/or Public sector with regard to ICTs for Development. He also wondered if each of the Stakeholders, namely Civil Society, Private Sector and Public Sector defined their own methodologies for operating with the ICT4D arena.

#### **Tim Unwin (UNESCO, ICT4D)**

Tim wanted to know what was exactly meant by Policy Frameworks given that there existed many different models of good practice, but there was little international agreement on how to do it. Furthermore he said, most ICT national policies do address issues of partnerships in some form or another

#### **Barrack Otieno (Project Discovery)**

Furthermore, Barrack said, each sector was governed by their own Policies that safeguarded "Sectarian Interests". In his opinion the issue of 'Universal Access', which should be under the mandate of CCK in the Kenyan context, should provide the suitable framework for all ICT4D initiatives

#### **John Walubengo (Moderator)**

Walubengo clarified that day's theme aimed at understanding the governance structures for directing the various ICT4D initiatives - from each of the three main stakeholders perspectives that is the Civil Society, the Private Sector and the Public Sector.

He was of the opinion that the Public Sector (mainly government) did have specific policies on how they planned to deliver ICTs for Development. At least there were clauses in the National (Kenyan) ICT Policies that guided these initiatives. With regard to Private Sector he felt that most companies had some sort of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) divisions that guided ICT4D initiatives. Finally, from the Civil Society perspective, he felt that each donor agent maybe had different governance structures for different initiatives. In brief, he concluded that the theme wanted to stimulate discussion on these structures and establish if they were sufficient or could be improved.

**Leonard Mware (Maseno University)**

Leonard wondered whether there was need for such frameworks. A policy framework should help make the playing field level for everyone. Maybe self-regulation might be the better approach or perhaps sectoral ICT4D policy frameworks for the civil society, public sector and the private sector respectively.

He added that having a national framework meant that a lot of other interventions must be in place to make the guidelines work. For example, one may need to have a 'policing' body to ensure that the playing field was indeed level. Finally, he said that the Civil Society had the NGO Board but wondered whether they had ICT as an agenda or even the capacity to effectively monitor any ICT4D policy that maybe in place.

**John Walubengo (Moderator)**

Walubengo felt that the current governance frameworks for ICT4D were too liberal particularly within the Private Sector and Civil Society circles. This may serve them well within their sub-domain but was likely to create challenges when they tried to engage with the Public Sector - which by nature thrived on laid-down Policy, Regulatory and other Procedures.

**Maruti (World Corps)**

Maruti said that the reason for the establishment of NGO Board (by some 1990 Act of the Kenyan Parliament) was to oversee the registration and coordination of NGOs and Civil Society in Kenya. His experience was that while NGO Board as currently constituted was doing a good job ensuring Civil Society Organizations were registered with them and were submitting annual accounts, they were ill equipped to drill deeper into the work (from annual reports) of each NGO registered in order to effectively advice on something as specific as 'areas upon which NGOs doing ICT4D work should focus'. He concluded that the NGO Council was best placed to provide this sort of overarching policy framework for ICT4Ds within the Civil Society Sector.

## **Theme 3 – Civil Society Roles in ICT4D- 2days**

### **Planned Activities**

- Discuss the Roles, Activities, Motives and Challenges of Civil Society in the ICT4D arena.

### **Contributions: Day 3&4 of 10: What is the Role of Civil Society in ICT4D arena?**

#### **J. Walubengo, (Moderator).**

Walubengo said that the Day's theme required that members rapidly scan the activities initiated by Civil Society on ICT4D landscape. Members were expected to cite an Organization and what that organization was doing within the ICT4D arena. In addition, he added, members were required to list the objectives and challenges facing such organizations while they executed their ICT4D initiatives.

He said that he wanted to kick off the discussion by citing -The Computer for Schools initiative which he said was involved in importing, refurbishing and deploying used-computers to various primary and secondary schools. From observation, their motive or objective was to ensure that all schools have PCs that students can use. He felt that possible challenges could be whether those schools had the pre-requisite requirements to exploit or use these PCs. Such pre-requisite would include whether the Schools had IT Teachers, Electrical Power Supply, ICT Training Content, or even time allocation to teach IT within the otherwise over-loaded Primary and Secondary Curricula

He asked members to feel free to share their experiences, observations or comments using any Civil Society Initiative and reminded them that they had two days to discuss this theme.

#### **Joseph Maruti (World Corps)**

Maruti talked about an interesting initiative that he had seen at DrumNet (<http://www.drumnet.org/projects.htm>). They used ICTs to extend Markets, Finance and Informational services to small-scale farmers. Another initiative that came to his mind was the Digital Opportunity Trust (<http://dotrust.org/>) who worked in Kenya, the Middle East and USA. He said they assisted communities to learn to leverage ICTs in making their life better.

#### **Samuel Njuguna**

Samuel said that he had found the resources on the Development Gateway, a portal for sustainable development and poverty reduction quite relevant to the current theme and asked members to visit: visit the Development Gateway at <http://www.developmentgateway.org> where individuals, communities and organization were working together to reduce Poverty

### **Jose. Ngunjiri (Kimathi Information Center)**

Jose talked about the Kimathi Information Centre based in Kamukunji constituency and had its offices in Kimathi Estate. He summarized the activities and challenges they faced as outlined below:

#### **ACTIVITIES**

- 1) Use of computers as a tool in catalyzing Macro and Micro businesses to get skills on how to use office based applications.
- 2) Offering trainings/workshops for Macro & Micro enterprises on how to write Business plans, letters and business etiquette.
- 3) Providing convenience to the community inhabitants in offering Internet based services as its main sustainability model.

#### **CHALLENGES**

- 1) Convincing the stakeholders to fund initiatives e.g. Workshops/Symposiums.
- 2) Poor Internet connectivity- which unfortunately was their sustainability model.
- 3) Capacity building on training staff on changing trends in the ICT field. Even though it was notable that various stakeholders like the ICT Board, KICTAnet, etc were addressing this issue.

### **Louise Othieno (Peace Corps)**

Louise introduced the Peace Corps Initiative where he said every year the ICT programme at the U.S. Peace Corps received and assigned about eight American ICT professionals to work for up to two years on Voluntary basis with ICT ventures across Kenya. He said that their skills varied with some being trained and experienced in hardware maintenance and networking, while others were programmers and experienced in setting up huge and complex databases. Some were involved in teaching basic ICT skills while others were computer graphics designers and web-developers and programmers -including establishment of e-commerce enabled websites for small businesses and co-operatives. He added that a few had worked on programming in wireless environments -to take advantage of the wide cellphone coverage in Kenya

He continued to say that Computers for Schools Kenya (CFSK) - earlier mentioned, was one of the Peace Corps clients. Others were Land O Lakes -which was currently beta-testing a program known as co-op works created with assistance from FAO. Co-op worked as an ICT platform that integrated all aspects of running a Dairy Co-operative and with minor modifications would work for other kinds of co-operatives as well.

In addition, he said that Peace Corps Volunteers were involved in programming the software for Drumnet - also earlier mentioned. Peace Corps Volunteers were assigned to support a pilot effort in Western Kenya to bring Internet Connectivity wirelessly to twenty schools within a 15 km radius using refurbished satellite equipment from Eastern Europe, and then deliver Interactive education content through this means

He added that the Peace Corps Initiatives did not directly advance its own ICT agenda. Rather it supported efforts to make ICTs more relevant and impactful upon the lives of rural populations - especially low income segments of this population; whether the impact is long-term (as in education) or short term e.g. an e-commerce enabled website for Malindi Handicrafts co-operative society. Finally, he concluded by saying that Volunteers also shared their ideas about opportunities to deploy ICT for the benefit of poor rural populations in the hope that some local institution might get interested and "sponsor" the prototyping and testing of the idea.

### **Frederick Okono (CFSK) -**

Frederick shared that CFSK was actively involved in taking ICT to the people. They did this through provision of youth intensive environments such as educational & training institutions, community information access & resource centres.

He said CFSK were engaged in all the activities comprising the digital pipeline, from acquisition and placement of computers; through sensitization, training, content development, evaluation and certification; to environmentally friendly and sustainable disposal of decommissioned computers and related equipment.

He said that in the five and a half years CFSK had been in existence, they had placed well over fifteen thousand computers in over five hundred institutions; and were offering training (ranging from simple user proficiency to professional-level competence) to thousands of teachers and institutional managers. Their work had touched over half a million youth, and since they mainly worked with resource-poor communities many of them would otherwise not have had the opportunity and exposure to ICTs..

He said that CFSK was an example of communities, private sector corporations, national and international civil society and government working together to transform the lives of communities that are often marginalized and suffering endemic poverty with no apparent means to escape the vicious cycle in which they found themselves.

He gave a listing some of the organizations that had made momentous contributions to the CFSK phenomena. They included IDRC (that supported the pilot phase and has been with them ever since - and without whom CFSK would probably not exist); Microsoft (who provided legitimate software for every single computer they placed); the Safaricom Foundation (which directly worked with them to bring computers to 80 schools around the country and indirectly in many other areas); AccessKenya Group who provided quality Internet access.

He also mentioned Kenya Airways; Barclays Bank; Cadbury's; Unilever; Total Oil; Kenya Airways; AfricaOnLine; Nation Newspapers; Hewlett Packard as some of the many other partners in Kenya. Internationally, he said, ComputerAid International, Digital Links International, FAIR Norway, Siso, Partners Worldwide, Computers for Schools Canada, Computers for Development (Netherlands) and many others had also supported them.

He said that the model that CFSK operated on was considered an exemplar of sustainable provision of ICTs to resource-challenged communities, and active efforts were ongoing in many African countries to replicate the same. Indeed, the Rwanda ICT miracle had been significantly fueled by lessons they picked from CFSK!

He concluded by saying that ICT was the greatest development facilitator available to Kenyans as they aspired for NIC status by 2030 and that CFSK hoped to continue to make their contributions towards the realization of that noble vision

### **Leonard Mware (Maseno University)**

Leonard felt that the achievements as mentioned by Frederick indicated that their contribution as an "Implementing" Civil Society had been more successful than what the government had achieved in the same area over time. He then wondered what then was the CFSK secret as well as what hindered the Public Sector (government) from moving as effectively as CSFK. Finally he requested Frederick to share the impact assessment, if any, of the CFSK's rollout.

Lastly, he said, there was another category of Civil Society (that included KICTANET) involved in policy advocacy rather than implementation. He asked which of the two approaches was more relevant; the "implementing" civil society (less talk) or the "policy advocacy" civil society? He mentioned that some countries were so efficient in churning out policy documents but very little was actually taking place on the ground. Furthermore, he added that some Civil Societies in the name of advocacy maybe hindering development by over "advocating" issues such as environment and human rights.

He went on to suggest to the forum that KICTAnet should now come out strongly and advocate for the implementation of the policies that it has helped nurture in Kenya.

### **Frederick Okono (CFSK) -**

In response, Frederick said that the success of CFSK was largely based on the following approaches:

- 1.. A clear-headed analysis of the problem they wished to address, which turned out to be a multi-faceted challenge underpinned by a lack of resources;
- 2.. Crafting an integrated solution, that addressed the multifaceted challenge on a "one-stop shop" model;

3.. Truly and constantly listening to and engaging with the partners they sought to uplift, and inputting their feedback into the Programmes;

4.. An uncompromising world-wide commitment to the clearly defined and reasonable standards in all we do;

5.. A rare organisational 'esprit de corps' driven by a caring and unassuming chief executive and powered by an incredibly enthusiastic, fired-up and innovative young staff;

6.. Finally, building strategic partnerships with partners that shared our vision and feel for our mission - whoever they were, wherever they were: Government, Private Sector, Civil Society, etc.

He continued by saying that the Government - particularly in the last five or so years - had done tremendous amount of work to promote ICTs:- removing a great proportion of taxes previously chargeable on computers; establishing a Directorate of eGovernment within the pivotal Cabinet Office in the Office of the President; allocating a quantum of funds for ICT integration in the budgetary provisions for all Ministries; establishing the ICT Board amongst others. And at CFSK, he said, they had enjoyed enormous goodwill and moral support from the Government of Kenya, including space to host a number of their Regional Centres.

He however wished they could also get some budgetary allocation since it would enable them to tremendously upscale and outscale their operations. Also, he said, if there were more ICT savvy personnel at the upper echelons of the Civil Service, Members of Parliament and at Cabinet level, their impact would have been more prominent.

His opinion was that the Government's approach was faulty in that it had failed to work with existing programmes that had proven their worth, as opposed to establishing its own programmes that replicated those other programmes - often without the benefit of the expertise and responsive structures that characterize these Non-Governmental programmes (an absolute essential in this dynamic field).

He also pointed out that Government initiatives were often hampered by a lack of personal buy-in from the officers that were directly responsible for Implementation - irrespective of what the "high-up policy" was. In other words, a computer literate officer, addicted and dependent on his computer like most of us would be a more enthusiastic proponent for more ICTs (from their personal appreciation of the same) than the illiterate officer who was merely attempting to implement policy but had no personal experience or appreciation of the same.

Another challenge for government, he said, was that they had to take a bird's eye view of the needs of the nation, requiring delicate balancing given the limited resources available. The tunnel vision - worms-eye view - of sector players like Civil Society may limit their appreciation of the other demands made on the Government; leading them to question the failure to do more in the specific sector. A fairer demand should be that the public resources allocated to our specific (ICT) sector is put to the best possible use.,

With regard to which was the better approach between Advocacy and Implementation, he said that both had an important role but at CFSK they firmly believed in an integrated approach - they implemented as they advocated. Subsequently the kind of advocacy they engaged in was firmly informed by the practical hands-on experience they had garnered in the field. As an example, he said that whereas 'Desktop' advocacy may indicate that refurbished computers presented eWaste dumping opportunities, the position on the ground was quite contrary and the refurbished machines often gave several years of useful service to the marginalized communities. He concluded by saying that unfortunately there had not yet been an Impact Assessment study but plans were underway by IDRC to do so.

**Brian Longwe (InHand Ltd)**

Brian said that certain Civil Societies get so caught up in talking that they either forget their is a 'doing' part or are caught completely off-balance when their demands/wishes are met and they are now invited to take action.

He said that this had been experienced a little by KICTANET and he used the Kenya ICT Policy and subsequent attempted drafting of an ICT bill as an example. He said that push and subsequent follow-through on the ICT Policy from KICTANET was excellent and working as an MSP, they rallied together Civil society, Government, Private sector, Academia, Media amongst others to produce a first class, first-time policy for the country and then saw it through approval and adoption by the Cabinet.

KICTAnet, however, seemed to have slipped a little bit when the draft ICT Bill came to light. They were not very coherent in designing an intervention that would guide the process and instead reacted rather than responded to the opportunity. However, it was not KICTAnet alone, but almost all ICT stakeholders who were caught off-balance when the call came to provide input into the draft Bill. Such was the subsequent flurry of disconnected activity and inputs that the original draft didn't really change much and was so rough that when it went before Parliament it was thrown back to the drafters.

He said that stakeholders now have an opportunity to prepare themselves for follow-up activities. For example, he said that it was not possible to address all the issues in the ICT sector with one Bill/Act. This was because of the need for a certain level of detailed, specific Acts that would deal with far ranging issues such as electronic transactions, digital security and encryption as well as modifications of existing laws to incorporate ICT related issues such as admission of electronic evidence, cross-border issues with computer-based/aided crimes amongst others. He wondered if KICTANet and others could rise up to the challenge of these subsequent activities.



## **Theme 4 – Private Sector Roles in ICT4D- 2days**

### **Planned Activities**

- Discuss the Roles, Activities, Motives and Challenges of the Private Sector in the ICT4D arena.

### **Contributions: Day 5&6 of 10: What is the Role of Private Sector in the ICT4D arena?**

#### **John Walubengo, (Moderator).**

He thanked all those who took time to contribute on the deliberations. He was encouraged that the discussion was getting to the level he had anticipated but there was now need to move onto the Private Sector Roles with regard to ICT4D.

He asked members to contribute by citing some of the activities the Private sector was doing in the area of ICT4D. Specifically, they should share the activities, objectives and challenges along the lines cited earlier in the case of Computer For School Kenya (CFSK). He reminded members that they had only two days on this theme.

#### **Tim Unwin (UNESCO, ICT4D)**

Tim provided some examples of some ICT4D multi-stakeholder partnerships in education as listed at the "Partnerships for Education" database -<http://www.pfore.org>. He said that the site content was wider than just ICT4D related agenda, but there were many good examples of what the private sector was doing - and some case studies from Kenya.

#### **John Walubengo (Moderator)**

Walubengo thanked Tim for the resourceful link and said that it would also come in handy particularly towards the end of the week when discussion on various PPP models arises.

He then encouraged members to share on the Private Sector theme, citing CISCO as an example by saying that it was doing a lot particularly on the Training side where they had sponsored the so-called CISCO Academies. They donated Study Kits and Equipment to train Networking Professionals at a subsidized rate.

### **Leonard Mware (Maseno University)**

Leonard said that the private sector had been active in the ICT4D sector for a while. He said that looking at the CFSK website for example, one would see the support that the private sector gave CFSK.

He however said that the main challenge was establishing the motives for support from the private sector. What do they stand to gain by supporting ICT4Ds especially in the education sector? He said that there was a straightforward correlation between private sector support and their strategic objective. As an example, he said that although Microsoft gives licenses for each refurbished CFSK computer, they had a long-term strategic objective to position their products ahead of competition – through the newly employed graduates of the training.

He wondered also about the motives behind the Safaricom Support given that central role mobile telephony had in ICT development. He said that a Multi Stakeholder Partnership (MSP) between all players would be critical but the Private sector should also ensure that their objectives in that kind of partnerships were understood. He concluded by saying that at the moment few people understood or asked why they were involved.

## ***Theme 5 – Public Sector Roles in ICT4D- 2days***

### **Planned Activities**

- Discuss the Roles, Activities, Motives and Challenges of the Public Sector in the ICT4D arena.

### **Contributions: Day 7&8 of 10: What is the Role of Public Sector in the ICT4D arena?**

#### **J. Walubengo, (Moderator).**

Walubengo welcomed members to the Day's theme, which aimed at focusing on what the Public Sector (Government) was doing with regard to ICT4Ds. He said that from his observation, there had been quite some impetus in the last five or so years by Government within this area.

He cited several initiatives such as the commissioning of the eGovernment Secretariat and the ICT Board, the liberalization of ICT sector through the Kenya Communication Act 1999, the gazettement of the National ICT Policy, the Privatization of the national Telco Provider and the initiation of the East Africa Marine System (TEAMs, submarine) project.

He encouraged members to share their opinion on the activities and challenges surrounding the above and any other government sponsored ICT4D initiative and gave two days for the theme.

#### **Barrack Otieno (Project Discovery)**

Barrack said that the commissioning of the e-government Secretariat, formation of the ICT board and liberalization of the ICT sector had all been fantastic initiatives, however there was need to strengthen Public private Sector collaborations if we were to realize more gain.

He said that there was need to undertake entrepreneurship training so that the country may tap into the benefits of new technologies before they were obsolete. He also mentioned that Policy should be made in public interest rather than parochial(private) interests – particularly where individuals or private enterprises stand to lose against Public good. He concluded by saying that it was important to coordinate all ict4d initiatives whether fronted by Government, Private or Public sector

**Dr. Bitange Ndemo (Ministry of Information and Communication)**

Dr. Ndemo said that the issues under discussion were complex. In some cases, he added, Civil society was known to be part of the problem in development. Take the slum areas for example, one would find it difficult to significantly push anything positive without resistance from civil society. It is as though they were protective of the status quo- in order to get more funds.

**Barrack Otieno (Project Discovery)**

Barrack agreed with Dr. Ndemo and said that in his opinion Civil society should ensure enforcement of government policies in addition to complementing development initiatives by encouraging innovation and sharing of best practices. This was the only way some of these projects could be sustained.

**John Walubengo (Moderator)**

Walubengo said that he thought Government had kicked off in the right direction with regard to initiatives for ICT4D. However, he felt that most of these had remained at a fairly high-level. He was not quite sure that the vision and urgency experienced at the top was shared at the bottom ranks of the Public Service.

More specifically, he felt that the ordinary public servants lacked the right disposition to embrace ICTs. Finally, he doubted whether there are sufficient, if any incentives to socialize the wider public service (teachers, nurses, police, chiefs and others) into the Information age. He concluded by saying that Government seemed to have the right strategies but lacked an 'implementation' strategy that is - they knew exactly what needs to be done but maybe shallow on documenting how it would be done

**Dr. Bitange Ndemo (Ministry of Information and Communication)**

Dr. Ndemo said that this was perhaps an area needing intervention because most ordinary civil servants wrongly thought that ICTs would take over their jobs hence presenting the greatest resistance to ICTs. He added that there have been numerous training programmes for all cadres in the civil service but until everybody accepts that ICTs are enablers, there shall continue to be sabotage from within.

He suggested that we learn from Ugandans given that they quickly implemented their Integrated Financial Management Information System while it has taken Kenyans more than eight years and we still cannot claim to have implemented the system. Majority of the users only see the negative side.

He said there was need for significant social transformation in order to achieve some of these initiatives. He further suggested that maybe a little of benevolent dictatorship may come in handy. The Malaysians and Singaporeans had it and worked wonders for them - therefore a democratic approach may at times be self-defeating. Another challenge he pointed out was the government procurement procedures, which tended to hamper the speed at which ICT projects could be implemented.

### **Barrack Otieno (Project Discovery)**

Barrack concurred with Dr. Ndemo saying that benevolent dictatorship is what was needed in the Public sector to get things moving given that Kenya was blessed with some of the best brains in ICTs in Africa and yet appear to be in some sort of paralysis. This was because of over analyzing issues at the expense of implementation. He added that what was needed is probably a political wing to champion ICT policies and issues

### **Mike Eldon (Symphony)**

Mike joined in and said that he had for years pushed two issues as summarized below: Firstly, he said it was not enough to run general IT literacy programmes for Public servants. It was not even enough to train people on how to use specific applications. What was needed beyond that was a sufficient appreciation at senior levels of the whole concept of 'ICT Strategy' ( that is Costs and Benefits, Return on Investment, the overall BUSINESS approach, etc). Senior Public Offices must understand how such an ICT strategy must be aligned to overall organisational/government Strategy.

Secondly, he said that when most organizations looked at Costs and Benefits of introducing ICT systems, they tended to merely do so at the global, departmental or functional levels. What keeps missing is how the individual at the desktop was affected. Management must consider what is the benefit to them? Too often, he said, no benefits had been built in, hence the resulting resistance that manifested itself in terms of - loss of control, poor utilization of the new system, etc.

### **Owino Magana (e-Kazi)**

Magana said that the issue of low ICT uptake or resistance in the public service as mentioned by Dr. Ndemo and perhaps applicable to initiatives such as the digital villages programme can be addressed in part through what Mike Eldon had proposed, that is:

1. Sensitization of public service leadership
2. Alignment of ICT strategy to organizational strategy
3. Training of target users in various ICT applications

However, he added that he saw a strong case for traveling the extra mile to the province of entrepreneurship and providing the following:

1. Empowerment of the target groups via practical business management skills focusing on entrepreneurship (job and wealth creation, incubation) Indeed, there may be a case for educational reform to enable the fusion of the same into our primary, secondary school and tertiary learning curricula.
3. Training on Project Management: how to translate strategy into results through structured implementation. Again, this needs to be emphasized in our educational system. He felt that all was not lost since these skills were practical and could be taught with reasonable effectiveness to those already employed. He concluded that there will be no ICT uptake without articulating the individualized incentives or benefits. This he said, was the only way to sustain ICT uptake within the country - the challenges was therefore more entrepreneurial than technological.

## **Theme 6 – Review of PPP Models (2days)**

### **Planned Activities**

- Discuss existing Public Private Partnership models within the ICT4D arena.

**Contributions: Day 9&10 of 10: What are the existing PPP models within the ICT4D arena?**

### ***J. Walubengo, (Moderator).***

He welcomed members on the last theme whose aim was to review the various Public Private Partnership Models for ICT4D initiatives. He said that he was not privy to the details of the Models governing several PPP initiatives and would like to be enlightened where possible.

Such initiatives included the TEAMs initiative with various Telco Operators, the Ministry of Education Kenya ICT Trust Fund with Microsoft, the World Bank TCIP (Transparency & Communication Infrastructure Project) with the Kenya ICT Board amongst others.

His general opinion was that managing such alliances was bound to be problematic given the diverse and often conflicting motives of the players - particularly when one side (Govt) was heavily procedural, Private Sector was moderately procedural while the Civil Society was largely un-procedural. He wondered how one harness such dialectic groups to read from the same ICT4D script and what were the type of Challenges experienced. He asked members to contribute over the subsequent two days.

### **Barrack Otieno (Project Discovery):**

Barrack said that businesses will always aim to increase their market share by making a good name (CSR) while Civil Society was largely comprised of ideologists while government had to manage the two by ensuring that the policies they developed jointly were adhered to. He added that there was a need for a system of checks and balances to ensure that all players adhered to their mandate along the same lines of Public Procurement Oversight Authority which ensured that all government institutions adhered to procurement regulations set for government. He wondered if, the Regulator CCK could be charged with such a role to manage PPPs within the ICT sector.

**Samuel Njuguna**

Samuel felt that Public Private Partnership Models for ICT4D Initiatives in developing countries could only succeed if they were associated with other social Policies, particularly those relating to education.

He said that in developing countries, the struggle to increase access to public services (education, security, health, justice) required a constant struggle against digital exclusion. Obviously, he added, that this did not mean that one must wait until we are able to eradicate illiteracy in order to develop ICT4D. He recommended an integrated approach that aimed to provide social or public services via ICT4D initiatives saying that there will never be universal access to ICT4D without universal access to other social goods.

He said that currently ICT4D activities were used by sectors of society that already had a basic level of education and a relatively higher income – an exclusive rather than inclusive approach. He suggested that a better and more inclusive approach would be using an educational network to provide for example provide universal Internet Access since educational institutions are more accessible.

He mention that the workplace was another important factor in ICT4D. ICT4D initiatives should create incentives to increase the number of companies that used computers and the Internet. Companies should also offer computer and Internet courses to their employees.

Finally, he said that the emphasis should be on digital inclusion of the individuals and gave an example of how ICT4D initiatives could be an important instrument to improve the collective quality of life in low-income communities by making available information and services of great cultural, social and economic utility.

**Patrick Mburu (Advanced Technical Solutions Africa)**

Patrick felt that Information Security concerns should be not be left out and instead must be an integral part of any ICT4D and PPP initiatives. He suggested that Private Sector could include it within their CSR programs

## **Evaluation & Feedback**

### ***Technical***

There was excellent technical reliability with no reported incidents of technical failure.

### ***eParticipants***

During the eDiscussions, the KICTANet listserv had around 250 (two hundred and fifty) subscribers with about ten of them contributed actively to the eDiscussions.

### ***Moderation***

Most members felt that the subject matter was not easy to engage with, particularly because the notice for the discussion was short – resulting in little or no preparation time from members. However, the few participants showed exemplary and useful insights that could be used to inform and influence the way ICT4D initiatives are managed.



## **Appendices:**

### ***Appendix I – Glossary & Abbreviations***

CSR- Corporate Social Responsibility

FAO-Food and Agriculture Organisation

GoK – Government of Kenya

ICT4D- Information Communication Technologies for Development

MSP-Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships

PPP- Public Private Partnerships