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

- 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".
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost/Year</th>
<th>39,000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Returns/Year</td>
<td>163,000</td>
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• 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