

Building Digital Opportunities (BDO) Programme

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Poverty Reduction in Sub Saharan Africa

A Learning Study (Synthesis)



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Executive Summary

The **Building Digital Opportunities programme (BDO)** is co-funded by the Department for International Development (DFID, UK), the Directorate General for International Co-operation (DGIS, Netherlands), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC, Switzerland) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Its purpose is to identify, and help remove, some of the key barriers to, and to develop genuine opportunities for, poverty-focused ICT for development. In order to address a broad variety of key issues, five non-governmental agencies implement the BDO programme: the Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC), the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO), the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD), OneWorld International (OWI) and the Panos Institute (Panos). Technical coordination of the programme is provided by IICD. BDO started at the beginning of 2001 and runs to the end of 2003.

BDO's five **strategic objectives** ('action lines') are:

- Action line 1: The capacities of regional, national and local policy makers to formulate and establish effective ICT policies and regulatory frameworks are strengthened.
- Action line 2: Local organisations are enabled to effectively apply ICTs for the benefit of poor people.
- Action line 3: The capacities of local, community, media, and public interest organisations to express themselves, nationally and internationally, through the use of new and traditional ICTs, are strengthened.
- Action line 4: The awareness by development stakeholders regarding the development potentials of ICTs is increased.
- Action line 5: The relationships and alliances among BDO and other partners are made more effective.

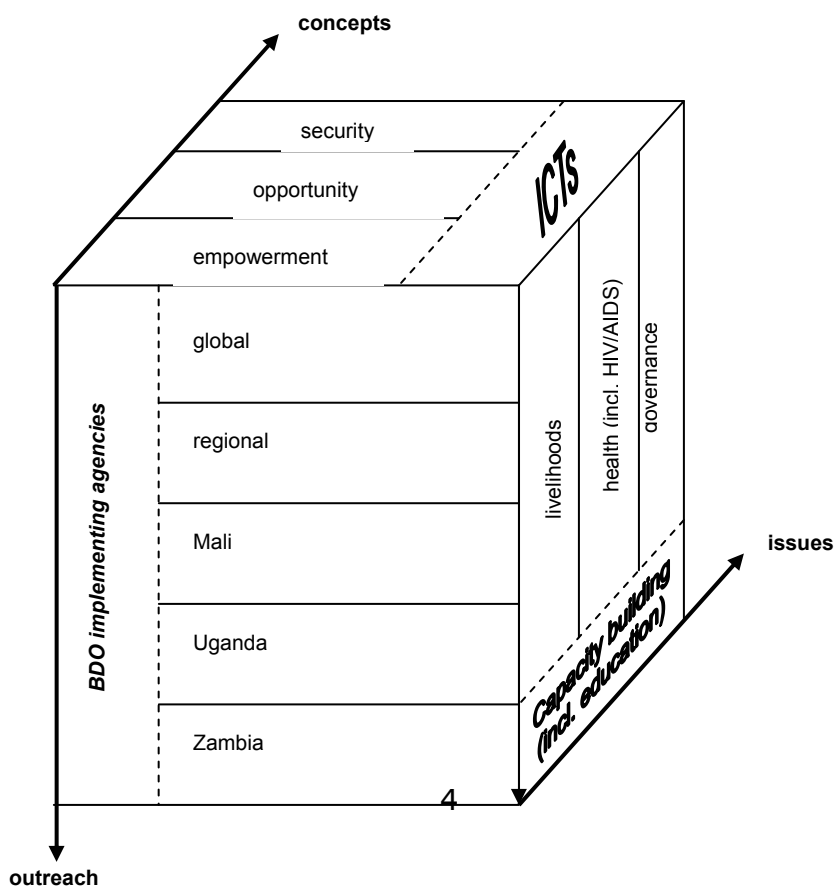


Figure 1: The BDO Learning Study cube

The **BDO Learning Study Cube** illustrates in a nutshell the thematic framework for the Learning Study:

- Poverty is seen as a multidimensional issue, and the way to poverty reduction leads via empowerment, opportunity and security of the poor;
- The key issues of the BDO programme have been identified as livelihoods, health – HIV/AIDS, governance and capacity building as cross-cutting themes;
- Areas of analysis are the activities of BDO and local partners in Mali, Uganda, and Zambia, as well as at the regional and global level.

The major **challenges** of the Learning Study were:

- In mid-2003, the BDO programme had only been operating for two years. Many interesting initiatives are just being implemented phase, but there is not as yet any track record.;
- The BDO programme in Sub Saharan Africa is extremely broad and complex with many partners and projects, which prevents a comprehensive assessment and makes the choice of activities for the learning study a rather arbitrary affair.

Targeting the poor. The BDO programme, in most of its elements, targets the poor. BDO partners, as far as shown during the Learning Study, share a concern to reduce social and regional disparities and to eliminate poverty. Overall, the BDO programme targets vulnerable and marginalised people, as evidenced by the location of many of the projects, their clientele and thematic focus

Reaching the poor. The findings of the Learning Study show a pro poor effectiveness of the BDO effort. BDO provides important ICT-focused support to development and poverty reduction. The BDO achievements demonstrate that ICTs can contribute significantly to poverty reduction in all three dimensions of empowerment, opportunity and security, and to an attainment of the Multilateral Development Goals (MDGs).

- ICTs can promote **opportunities for livelihoods**: An increase in agricultural productivity, a broadening of the food crop basket, improved market access for cash crops, and the creation of employment opportunities and higher chances of finding jobs have been observed.
- ICTs can be powerful tools for **strengthening good governance**. They are important in terms of increasing knowledge of human and constitutional rights, in making the powerful more accountable, and giving the poor a voice. The decentralisation process can be enhanced by ICTs. They have also enhanced government efficiency in service provision that is directly relevant for the poor.
- ICTs can be relevant for **health interventions** and in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Radio broadcasts deliver timely information on immunisation times; a combination of ICTs influences young people in their reproductive health behaviour, and information exchange with northern countries helps with diagnosis in the South and provides interesting data to the North.
- In **capacity building**, activities included training in international, regional and national workshops, awareness creation seminars, courses in institutions of higher learning for IT personnel, on-the-job training courses by national and international consultants and the provision of equipment. This has generally been

found to be relevant and significant considering the great need for ICT related training.

Improving the environment: The issue-based, sectoral review of achievements is complemented by an analysis of the national, regional and global dimensions:

- **National environment:** In order to realise their potential for poverty reduction, ICTs should be embedded in a suitable environment. This includes: freedom of expression, a competitive market, an independent regulator, pro-poor licence obligations for operators and service providers, a Universal Service Fund ensuring an effective service provision, community radio legislation, and integration of ICTs in PRSP.
- **Regional dimension:** A regional approach is based on the vision of closer cultural, economic, and political ties among neighbouring countries. The creation of regional strategies enables Africa to prevent a duplication of efforts and waste of resources, to build economies of scale for developing its infrastructure, and to strengthen local content creation. The results demonstrate that regional contacts, coordination and cooperation are strategically key. Strengthened regional cooperation and exchange are not, however, an automatic result of such interventions. It is intended to make regional cooperation and sharing of regional knowledge an explicit part of joint events, with an emphasis on social issues, including poverty reduction.
- **Global dimension:** BDO was set up as a project with a global reach. BDO knowledge sharing is facilitated by the use of ICTs. Its activities stimulate an information flow up from the southern grassroots, through intermediaries and the BDO partners, to the global audience. ICTs enhance the effectiveness of alliance building among partners and advocacy work. At the global level, there is a danger that agenda setting is done by the northern partners and that project-based activities ultimately are top down.

The background to the final recommendations to BDO partners is the **space for improvement** to enhance the pro-poor effectiveness by learning from the past. Because the basic philosophy behind BDO is valid, its existing five strategic objectives ('action lines') have been used as a pattern of orientation also for the future.

1 Introduction

To discuss the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for development – in particular economic development – is a mainstream concern. Looking at ICTs, their opportunities and risks, particularly as an instrument for poverty reduction, however, is still an extraordinary undertaking. If the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are taken seriously, the contribution of ICTs to poverty reduction should be a major issue in the international debate. The Building Digital Opportunities programme (BDO) is a response to that concern. It is meant to identify and help remove some of the key barriers to, and to develop genuine opportunities for, poverty-focused ICT for development. After two years of BDO-initiated activities, the partners felt it timely to look at the experience and the impact of the programme on poverty.

The terms of reference (TOR)¹ describe the **objectives** of the study as: ‘Focusing on selected regions and areas of activities, the Learning Study will map BDO implementing partners’ experience with ICTs and poverty reduction. There is an emphasis on qualitative information, with key findings illustrated by short stories. The Learning Study puts the experience into the perspective of BDO action lines, assesses strengths and weaknesses, and the value added in the field due to the BDO cooperation. The information gathered will enable BDO funding and implementing partners to improve their understanding of the role of ICTs in poverty reduction and to adapt or target their bilateral operations accordingly. It will better position the BDO partners to play a pro-poor role in multilateral forums like the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).’

The main **output** is a synthesised report (‘Learning Study’) in English. Intermediate outputs are the country case studies, which are also in English. The target audience of the synthesised report are staff of BDO, implementing and funding partners, BDO’s local country programme partners, policy makers in governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as well as media.

As an **outcome**, BDO partners’ operational decision-making capacity with regard to the role of ICTs for poverty reduction is improved. In international forums, BDO partners are better informed interlocutors who base their pro-poor ICT-related interventions on their own experience.

BDO has entrusted the Learning Study to Gerster Consulting, Switzerland, whose work has a strong focus on poverty reduction strategies as well as some experience in ICTs². For each of the three case studies, Gerster Consulting selected national consultants. There was a deliberate, and fruitful, decision to involve experts with different professional experiences. Whereas one national consultant was an ICT specialist, the other two approached the assessment with a social/poverty oriented background. The **team** involved in elaborating the Learning Study consisted of the following members:

- Richard Gerster (Switzerland), economist, Director of Gerster Consulting, team leader;

¹ The complete terms of reference and the logframes are available on request.

² See www.gersterconsulting.ch.

- Clare Barkworth (Zambia/United Kingdom), M.Sc. Agricultural Economics, Managing Director of Whydah Consulting Ltd, consultant for Zambia;
- Lucy Daxbacher (Uganda/Austria), MA Social Sector Planning & Management (candidate), consultant for Uganda;
- Abdoulaye Ndiaye (Senegal), economist, ICT consultant, consultant for Mali;
- Sonja Zimmermann (Switzerland), secondary school teacher, Project Manager of Gerster Consulting.

This ***synthesised report*** draws heavily on the three country case studies. The authors pay tribute to the merits of the national consultants, while taking the responsibility for any errors and omissions in the synthesis.

A Learning Study is always the result of an effort of many people to whom ***acknowledgements*** are due. "It is incredible how motivated every one I met during the case study was", said one of the national consultants after the three case studies were completed. This motivation and willingness to make the Learning Study a success was felt by all involved. It has been made what it is thanks to these motivated people. The international team highly appreciated the time given, the information provided, and the interest shown and would like to thank the following:

- All the many people who have been contacted by national consultants for interviews or who have shared their knowledge and time and who made the work possible;
- The funding BDO partners (DFID, DGIS, SDC, CIDA) as well as the implementing BDO partners AMARC, CTO, IICD, OWI and Panos, particularly those people who helped with contacts and logistical arrangements. Furthermore, all of those who provided critical and constructive inputs after the first draft of the Study had been provided and discussed at the BDO meeting of September 2003;
- In Johannesburg various people from AMARC Africa, ABC Ulwazi, the National Community Radio Forum, NCRF, and the community radio in Moretele, who provided a lot of insight – not only on community radio. A special thank you also to the local SDC coordination office that provided facilities for meetings;
- In Gaborone (Botswana) the Telecommunications Regulators' Association of Southern Africa, TRASA, as well as one of their consultants who made time available on short notice;
- All those people who responded to the surveys about different workshops.

For a list of all the people consulted please refer to Annex 5.

2 Methodology

2.1 Introduction

What do we mean by ICTs in this Learning Study? Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) facilitate the creation, storage, management and dissemination of information by electronic means. Such an understanding includes radio, television, fix-net and mobile telephony, fax, computer and the internet. Four characteristics describe these ICTs: (1) Interactivity - ICTs are effective two-way communication technologies; (2) Permanent availability - the new ICTs are available 24 hours a day; (3) Global reach- geographic distances hardly matter any more; (4) Reduced costs for many - relative costs of communication have shrunk to a fraction of previous values. The BDO programme includes all the different technologies mentioned, except fax.

The **challenges** of the Learning Study should be kept in mind:

- In mid-2003, the BDO programme had only been operating for two years³. The period of practical experience is short, so while many interesting initiatives are now being implemented, there is not as yet any track record;
- The BDO programme in Sub Saharan Africa is extremely broad and complex with many partners and projects, which prevents a comprehensive assessment being made and makes the choice of activities for the learning study to a rather arbitrary affair;
- The BDO programme was set up in an ad-hoc manner⁴, but it developed considerably in the two years it was operational⁵. It has been a learning experience for all involved and presents a unique setting in which donors and implementing agencies share their experiences.
- The execution of the Learning Study was based on a limited budget and a tight schedule that co-determined methodological creativity and flexibility.

As a first step, Gerster Consulting visited the head offices of all BDO implementing partners and had interviews with those in charge of, or working with, the BDO programme. The objectives of these interviews were to (1) deepen the understanding of the evaluators of BDO activities, (2) ensure comprehensive information on relevant activities, (3) identify key concerns and issues of the individual BDO implementing partners. In addition some interviews of BDO funding partners were included in the programme.

The following preparatory desk research for the Learning Study was based on an existing discussion paper, 'ICTs for Poverty Reduction?'⁶. This effort of reviewing the experience of ICTs and poverty reduction was related to the relevant activities of BDO partners as a basis for a common understanding among all the participating

³ See <http://www.icconnect-online.org>.

⁴ See paragraph 3.1.

⁵ One example of the development are the changes which have happened in the quarterly reporting sessions as well as the knowledge sharing. Oral communication at BDO meeting of May 2003.

⁶ Gerster, Richard/Zimmermann, Sonja, ICTs for Poverty Reduction?, Discussion Paper of Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), Berne 2003.

consultants. A CD-Rom, with all the documents submitted by the BDO partners, was produced as a working tool. This was distributed to the local consultants for their individual preparations. Each local consultant prepared an issue paper related to his/her country.

In order to ensure a common understanding of the underlying concepts and to facilitate the detailed planning for the three case studies, a kick-off meeting for the entire team was held in Pretoria (South Africa). After this meeting, the individual case studies were conducted simultaneously. At the same time, surveys on the regional and global level took place. Another team meeting was held in Pretoria after all case studies have been carried out in order to discuss the results. This allowed for an in-depth exchange of information. Based on this discussion and the written case studies, the synthesised report was drafted.

2.2 National dimension (case studies)

The national dimension was covered by three case study countries: Mali, Uganda and Zambia. These were chosen by BDO partners and not by Gerster Consulting. In each of the countries there was a particular, but not exclusive focus, on the three priority areas (HIV/AIDS-health, governance, livelihoods) and the cross-cutting issue of capacity building. At the country level, all activities of BDO partners were considered relevant, whether or not supported by BDO funding. Beyond the local and national level, the case studies included windows of regional and global significance. Within this framework there was a more in-depth analysis of one or two BDO partners' activities. The selection was determined by the BDO partners' activities in their respective countries, as well as by the way in which they complemented the other two case studies. The main steps of the national programme assessments were:

(1) **Kick-off meeting:** The international team of consultants (national consultants and Gerster Consulting staff) met in Pretoria on May 20-21, 2003, to ensure a common understanding and procedure for the execution of the tasks.

(2) **Review and fact finding:** A procedure for an in-depth analysis (field research, focus groups, other) of one or two BDO partners' activities and their effects on poverty reduction was developed. The choice of the activities analysed was based on an attempt to draw from broad based experiences in relation to the technologies used, BDO implementing partners, and other locally relevant issues. In addition interviews of national stakeholders were held, in order to identify relevant experiences, and to relate them to the context (including national policies). Stakeholders included BDO partners, NGOs, government, research institutions, media, donors⁷.

(3) **End-of-mission workshop:** At the end of each country case study, an End-of-Mission Workshop was conducted by the national consultant, to present the findings and to receive feedback from the stakeholders. The workshop was thus an integrated part of the mutual learning process. The participants represented the stakeholders listed above.

(4) **Feedback/synthesis meeting:** The international team of consultants (national consultants and Gerster Consulting staff) met in Pretoria (South Africa) on July 8-9,

⁷ For a complete list of all people contacted for the Learning Study, refer to Annex 5.

2003, to discuss the findings, to identify commonalities and differences of the case studies.

(5) **Reports:** The national consultants finalised their report on August 18, 2003.

2.3 Regional dimension (Southern Africa)

The Learning Study focuses on Africa, despite the fact that BDO partners also support programmes in Latin America and Asia. Within Africa, the three case study countries were chosen from three different regions: (1) Mali from the West African region; (2) Uganda from Eastern Africa; (3) Zambia from Southern Africa. **Southern Africa** was also chosen as the focus region for a closer analysis of BDO supported activities.

The assessment of the **regional dimension** of the Learning Study is based on (1) the documentation received; (2) regional windows within the interviews at the national level; (3) specific regionally oriented interviews, which were held in Johannesburg and Gabarone; (4) e-mail surveys conducted among participants of regional workshops⁸.

2.4 Global dimension

Quite a high proportion of BDO activities are not limited to certain countries or regions. Their target audience is located all over the world. This, as well as the fact that global reach is one of the key characteristics of modern ICT, justifies the global dimension in the Learning Study. A key issue on the global level is the **flow of information** between South and North, as well as South-South. In the context of this Study the focus has been on the Southern perspective: What information is contributed to global channels of information? To what extent does this information contribute to a change in perception of African countries and poverty? How is the flow of information within Africa facilitated?⁹ What are the changes relevant for poverty reduction that can be linked to BDO partner activities?

The **global dimension** of the Learning Study, like the regional dimension, is based on the documentation received, on interviews at headquarters and with others, and global windows within the interviews at the regional and the national level. The global dimension of information flows and communication was mainly assessed from a Southern perspective, focusing particularly on South – South (beyond the regional dimension) and South – North lines.

⁸ For a short report on the results of the surveys refer to Annex 5.

⁹ When looking at the flow of information, it is important to consider the dimension of time: Information flows along established channels which have been shaped over long periods of time. New technologies will only change/influence the way these channels operate if there is a need to do so. Therefore many questions on the global level need to be considered in the large social, political and economic context. The BDO programme, being barely two years old, has little chance of influencing the flow of information per se. It can contribute to the content and the quality of information, but it will be another issue to create the corresponding information needs.

2.5 Thematic matrix

The case study foci can be summarised in the form of a thematic matrix:

	Mali	Uganda	Zambia	Regional level: Southern Africa	Global level
Themes (of equal priority)	Health-HIV/AIDS Governance	Governance Livelihoods HIV/AIDS	Livelihoods Governance HIV/AIDS	HIV/AIDS Governance Livelihoods	HIV/AIDS Governance Livelihoods
Cross-cutting	Capacity development				
BDO partners present (Institutions in brackets refer to weak presence)	IICD (OWI) (AMARC) Panos	CTO IICD OWI (AMARC) Panos	(CTO) IICD OWI Panos	CTO (IICD) OWI AMARC (Panos)	CTO (IICD) OWI AMARC (Panos)

Figure 2: Thematic matrix of the case study foci

3 The World of BDO

3.1 Introduction

The underlying assumption of all BDO activities is that 'ICTs contribute to the achievement of the 8 Millennium Development Goals and 17 Millennium Development Targets... [and the purpose is] to identify and help remove some of the key barriers to, and to develop genuine opportunities for, poverty-focused ICT for Development.'¹⁰ As discussed in more detail in the following chapter, poverty is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon. This reality is also reflected by the diversity of projects implemented by the BDO partners, as they are described in paragraph 3.3. They cover many of the core developmental issues, such as education, environment, health, and governance, as well as cross-cutting issues such as information resources, and training.

The BDO programme was set up in a rather ad-hoc manner. There were some meetings with all the partners, to identify synergies and potential overlaps. However, many of the expected documents (e.g. of logistical and management nature, an established base line or terms of reference) were lacking or were developed on the way¹¹. This implies that some development did take place during the implementation of BDO. It is therefore seen by some as a learning process, also in terms of understanding of issues.¹² BDO can be compared to a platform or a framework that provides space for cooperation and the exchange of experiences of largely separate mechanisms. This creates awareness 'of what is going on at other levels in relation to the topics we work on'.¹³ However the partners are aware of the fact that

¹⁰ BDO logframe, as set out in the TOR.

¹¹ Oral communication by David Woolnough, DFID.

¹² Oral communication by Pete Cranston, OWI.

¹³ Internal notes of BDO meeting in May 2003, Knowledge Sharing session.

cooperation cannot be forced upon people. While some unexpected synergies were discovered, sometimes the expected cooperation did not take place.

3.2 Funding partners

The BDO programme was launched by DFID in 2001. In its Globalisation White Paper, DFID pointed out that 'the key issue is what public policy steps can be taken to enable powerful ICTs to be used to reduce rather than to increase [these] pre-existing divides'¹⁴. In order to avoid uncoordinated efforts among donors and to support learning from each other's successes and failures, DFID decided from the beginning to work in partnerships when it comes to ICT. Initially, there was a close collaboration with DGIS, which 'DFID views as sharing its approach to the application of ICTs and development.'¹⁵ Later on, the Swiss government (SDC also contributed to the programme's funding). Recently, the funding partners were joined by the Canadian government (CIDA), which signed a partnership with IICD in April 2003. Being part of the Learning Study is an integral part of this new partnership¹⁶.

3.3 Implementing partners

Whereas the number of funding partners has doubled over the last two years, the implementing partners have remained the same from the beginning. They are: AMARC, the Association of Community Radio Broadcasters; CTO, the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation; IICD, the International Institute for Communication and Development, OneWorld International (OWI) and Panos Institute (Panos). The number of implementing partners is an indication of the programme diversity: 'The BDO programme is not a group of homogeneous projects. It embraces a mix of different approaches and tools (ranging from internet, television, community radio, and regulatory training) and it aims to reach various target groups (from policy makers to grassroots NGOs).'¹⁷ 'It is a package of cross-sectoral initiatives to address key barriers and opportunities for ICT in achieving development targets.'¹⁸ In addition to the usual variety of approaches and tools, which provide a broad basis for learning groups, another motivation for the collaboration was the 'finding that they can have more influence together in some strategic areas than separately.'¹⁹

AMARC was founded in 1983 and has been an international NGO since 1996. It has almost 3000 members and associates in more than 100 countries. The goal of AMARC is to contribute to, and support, the development of community and participatory radio. It has an international board on which all continents are represented. Its international office is in Canada and it has independent regional offices in Latin America/the Caribbean, Europe and Africa. Within several of these administrative regions, there are specialised networks that are officially recognised by AMARC. They are the Women's International Network, the Native People's Network and the Francophone Region Community Radios Federation. AMARC's international programmes and projects are based on the Framework Action Plan,

¹⁴ iConnect offline 1, Internet.

¹⁵ Beaton, p. 4.

¹⁶ iConnect online, Internet.

¹⁷ iConnect offline 5, Internet.

¹⁸ Oneworld, 2001.

¹⁹ iConnect offline 1, Internet.

which is defined and adopted by its members. At present, the priorities are to support the emerging Francophone network of AMARC and to create a Community Media Fund. All entities work to support these two, as well as other projects, but are free to develop specific activities.²⁰

The **CTO** is a partnership between Commonwealth governments and telecommunications businesses to promote ICT in the interests of consumers, businesses and social and economic development. CTO's headquarters are in London. It has existed in its current form since 1967 and is governed by an intergovernmental treaty. It works with the Commonwealth Secretariat and other Commonwealth bodies in support of the overall objectives. CTO represents 52 countries and, due to its size, (e.g. in comparison with the ITU) there is a fairly close relationship among them and they arrive at some consensus. They have common interests and share experiences.²¹ Within BDO, CTO has an emphasis on capacity building in policy and regulation. CTO works on six main areas, among others they support regulatory institutions in developing countries, create and deliver workshops for key policy makers, and assist in developing strategies. Some of their main partners are regional regulatory authorities, such as the Telecommunications and Regulation Authority Southern Africa, TRASA. The main methods used are workshops (CTO delivers more than 200 workshops per year), consultancies and case studies.²²

In 1997, **IICD** was established by the Dutch Ministry for Development Cooperation. IICD works with practitioners to help them identify their information needs relating to problems they are having. IICD then works with them to translate these into projects and programmes that overcome the barriers to their development and that make use of all types of ICTs. These new activities are defined, set-up and implemented – with IICD's substantive and sometimes financial guidance – by local partners. Their ownership of such processes in vital sectors, such as education, good governance, health, livelihood opportunities (especially agriculture) and environment, is crucial. In brief, IICD's mission is to support developing countries in creating 'locally owned sustainable development by harnessing the potential of ICTs.'²³ The two strategic approaches in IICD's work are country programmes and thematic networks. In its activities IICD is guided by six strategic principles (ownership, demand responsiveness, multi-stakeholder involvement, capacity development, partnerships and learning by doing). IICD is working in nine countries in Africa and Latin America. IICD does not have permanent representation in African countries and relies on its partners to facilitate and organise IICD supported events.

OWI: The governing body of the OneWorld network is OneWorld International Foundation, a UK-based non-profit institution. OneWorld International Ltd. is the wholly-owned operating subsidiary of the OneWorld International Foundation. OWI's mission is to harness 'the democratic potential of the internet to promote human rights and sustainable development. [...] Putting the internet at the heart of its operations, OWI aims to be the online media gateway that most effectively informs a global audience about human rights and sustainable development.'²⁴ OWI coordinates and supports the growing worldwide network of OneWorld centres (there are currently 11 of them, distributed in Europe, Northern and Central America, Asia

²⁰ AMARC, Internet.

²¹ Oral communication by Brian Goulden, independent consultant, Botswana.

²² Oral communication by David Souter, CTO.

²³ As well as the following information on IICD: IICD, Internet.

²⁴ As well as other information on OWI: oneworld, Internet.

and Africa) by providing technology and knowledge sharing services. OWI has channels that are organised according to the media (such as OneWorld Radio or TV), as well as according to issues (aidschannel.org or debtchannel.org). Furthermore, it has a number of strategic alliances and corporate relations.²⁵ Three years ago, OWI established a regional office for Africa in Zambia, called OneWorld Africa (OWA). OWA represents the interests of Africa, providing a vehicle for the voices of Africa to a global audience through the use of the internet. OWA is in the process of establishing itself as a separate organisation. OWA has recruited 142 partners in 19 different countries.²⁶ The partnership requires access to the internet and possession of a website.

Panos: Established in 1986, before the recent ICT hype, Panos has its headquarters in London, with another twelve offices and centres around the world. Panos London has decentralised its operations to southern-based and southern-governed organisations. Panos Southern Africa (Panos SAf) is independent and is based in Lusaka. Panos Eastern Africa is based in Kampala and covers the countries of the Horn and East Africa. Within the BDO programme, Panos accentuates the information and communication aspect of the ICT issue. Its work is based on the belief that 'freedom of information and media pluralism are essential attributes of sustainable development [and] information is central to change.' This accounts for the close collaboration Panos has with local journalists: 'Panos works with journalists in developing countries to produce news, features and analysis about the most critical global issues of today.'²⁷ Thematically, Panos is concentrating on five issues: Communication for Development, Conflict and Media, Environment and Globalisation, HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Health and Gender. Together with their programme on Oral Testimony, they provide 'six broad areas of expertise'.²⁸ In these areas a variety of news, features and reports are produced, including radio programmes. Apart from information production, of which about 20% is BDO funded, the contribution that Panos receives, compared to the other BDO partners, supports only a small part of their overall activities. Panos also supports various in-country activities, such as radio listening clubs. The goal is . to distribute information as widely as possible. Therefore, activities are often structured around products. For example, when a report is published, there are seminars, radio programmes etc. organised around it.²⁹ Panos is active on a national, regional and global level, always focusing on addressing previously identified information gaps and on getting the perspective from developing countries.

3.4 BDO programme objectives ("action lines")

As just described, BDO's implementing partners represent a variety of approaches and tools, and within BDO each implementing partner has a specific focus. This is also reflected in BDO's objectives, the so-called 'action lines'.³⁰ Most partners have a diversified engagement, with the exception of CTO which is engaged in only one action line . AMARC and IICD seem to be the most diverse partners, both of them being engaged in three different action lines.

²⁵ Oneworld, 2001.

²⁶ See Barkworth 2003, Annex 7, OneWorld Africa Partners.

²⁷ Panos, Internet.

²⁸ Panos, Internet.

²⁹ Oral communication by James Deane, Panos.

³⁰ If not otherwise stated, the project description as well as the number of projects are taken from iConnect offline, Issue 5 of July 2002.

Action line 1: The capacities of regional, national and local policy makers to formulate and establish effective ICT policies and regulatory frameworks are strengthened.

Number of projects: 6³¹ (5 by CTO, 1 by AMARC)

Action line 2: Local organisations are enabled to effectively apply ICTs for the benefit of poor people.

Number of projects: 4 (2 by IICD, 2 by OWI)

Action line 3: The capacities of local, community, media, and public interest organisations to express themselves, nationally and internationally, through the use of new and traditional ICTs, are strengthened.

Number of projects: 15 (8 by AMARC, 4 by OWI, 3 by Panos)

Action line 4: The awareness of development stakeholders regarding the development potential of ICTs is increased.

Number of projects: 7 (4 by Panos, 2 by IICD, 1 by AMARC)

Action line 5: The relationships and alliances among BDO and other partners are made more effective.

Number of projects: 2 (2 by IICD)

3.5 BDO activities related to the Learning Study

As indicated in figure 2, the thematic matrix, the complexity of the BDO programme was broken down for the case studies. The following paragraphs give an overview of the BDO partners' activities in the respective case study countries and indicate the local partners contacted. As mentioned, the selection was based on the partners present in a country, the complementarity with the other case studies and the foci as defined for the Learning Study.

3.5.1 Mali

The lead BDO partner in Mali is IICD, which runs a country programme. Furthermore, Panos has an office in Bamako, which specialises in providing technical support to community radios³². The other BDO partners are not directly present in Mali and their activities have been considered to a lesser extent.

<i>IICD</i>	<i>Panos</i>	<i>AMARC</i>	<i>Other</i>
Afribone*	Panos Mali*		SDC*
CENAFOD	Panos West Africa*		USAID*
REONet*			MINTI*
Global Teenager Project*			CRT (Telecommunications Regulation Committee)*
Datatech*			SchoolNet Mali*

³¹ The project numbers have been taken from iConnect.

³² See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 1.3.

University of Bamako (health and pharmaceutical department)*			Sotelma*
National Council of Order of Pharmacists*			
Projects			
Keneya Blown*	Community Radio Tabale Bamako*		
Fana, Kita and Koulikoro Telecentres*	Kati Community Radio Belekan*		
Mali NTIC*			

* Partners visited by the Learning Study

Table 1: BDO partners and some of their implementing partners in Mali

Source: Compiled from Annex 3 in Ndiaye 2003.

3.5.2 Uganda

Panos Eastern Africa has a regional office in Kampala that supports the media to promote development issues through radio and engages with civil society organisations, (CSOs) to raise awareness and generate debate about marginalised groups, such as peasant farmers and pastoralists. The four other BDO partners are represented by local organisations who have been supported by activities or benefited from trainings. After conducting three roundtables, IICD has a large number of partners. The same is true of OWI. Partnerships with the other two BDO members are mainly based on training: AMARC has supported Radio Apac and Mama FM where some staff members have attended training courses abroad and nationally identified consultants have also carried out training for the Radio Apac staff. The Uganda Communications Commission, UCC, has profited from national, regional and international training programmes organised by CTO.

Panos	OWI	IICD	AMARC	CTO
Panos Eastern Africa*	Uganda Debt Network*	Ministry of Education and Sports	Mama FM – Uganda Media Women's Association*	Uganda Communications Commission*
Environmental Alert	Foundation for Human Rights Initiative*	Kyambogo University*	Radio Apac*	
Intermedia	Association of Indigenous Voluntary Organisations	Nakawa Institute of ICTs*		
Radio Uganda	CEEWA	Ministry of local Government*		
National Agricultural Research Organisation	Women of Uganda Network	Ministry of Tourism Trade and Industry*		
Kari*	Straight Talk Foundation*	Ndere Troupe*		
Socadido	HURINET	I-Networsk*		
	Uganda Women Network	UDN*		
		Rank Concult*		
		Global Teenager Project		

Panos	OWI	IICD	AMARC	CTO
		Southern Web		
Others:				
Uganda Development Service *				
DFID*				
NGO Forum*				

* Partners visited by the Learning Study

Table 2: BDO Partners and some of their implementing partners in Uganda

Source: Compiled from Annex 1 in Daxbacher 2003.

3.5.3 Zambia

Panos SAf and OWA have representatives in Zambia and their offices also represent their organisations in the Southern Africa region. Whereas IICD has many implementing partners with high visibility in Zambia, CTO and AMARC, who also have linkages with partners, are less visible. Many of these partners implement activities on behalf of BDO or together with the BDO implementing partners. Some of the local partners work with more than one BDO implementing partner and most of the local partners have other partners. The following table shows the institutions consulted by this Learning Study.

Panos	OWI	IICD
ZNBC*	IICD [^]	Microlink*
Community Radio*	AMARC	E-Brain*
ZIMA [^]	ZAMCOM*	E Link*
Cordaid Breeze FM	CAZ*	ZARD [^]
Family Health International [^]	NGOCC*	WFC*
Women for Change (WFC)*	E-Brain*	NAIS [^]
SAFAIDS	JCTR*	PAM
Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR)	CSPR	Global Teenager Project*
Oxfam Programme Against Malnutrition (PAM)	Youth Media*	Zambia Chamber of Commerce and Small Business [^]
World Food Programme	Afronet*	ZARI [^]
OWI*	WFC*	Co-operative Bank
AMARC	PAM	MOE
Panos SAf*	ZAMCOM*	

* Partners visited by the Learning Study

[^] Partners participated in e-Brain national workshop (end of mission workshop).

Table 3: BDO Partners and some of their implementing partners in Zambia

Source: Table 1 in Barkworth 2003.

3.5.4 Regional dimension

Out of the BDO implementing partners, AMARC and CTO have predominantly regional activities. Most of CTO's workshops are held on a regional level and AMARC's training is often language specific (i.e. either French or English, with the intention of also offer training in Portuguese in the long term). The main issues for regional activities are increased cooperation between stakeholders (which is particularly relevant for regulatory issues such as interconnection, technical standards) and exchange of information (e.g. Simbani Newsagency, which was initiated by AMARC).

3.5.5 Global dimension

BDO main activities at the global level are :

BDO partner	Global activities
<i>AMARC:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Moebius and Simbani Newsagencies- Advocacy of issues such as legitimacy of community radio, access of women
<i>CTO:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Louder voices (together with Panos)- Development of material and case studies to disseminate globally- Website: www.devagenda.com to provide access to information on international ICT issues- Design and delivery of capacity building workshops in partnership with ITU- Sponsorship of participants in international ICT meetings
<i>IICD:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Global Teenager project- I Connect- Capacity.org- Dgroups- Itrain online (together with OWI and other partners)
<i>OWI:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Thematic channels, such as AIDS channel, debt channel or digital opportunity channel- oneworld TV- Submitting stories to Yahoo news (in collaboration with Panos)
<i>Panos:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Information publication, dissemination and awareness campaigns such as HIV/AIDS, Genetically modified goods, patents, the World Bank's poverty reduction strategy

Table 4: Selected BDO activities on a global level

4 The Poverty Framework

4.1 Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals³³ (MDGs) are the result of the many UN resolutions and conferences that took place mainly in the 1990s. In September 2000, at the end of the UN Millennium Summit, 189 countries signed the final declaration and by doing so committed themselves to a specific agenda for reducing global poverty by half by 2015³⁴. In doing so, they created a vision that offers the opportunity to focus development outcomes and to coordinate efforts among stakeholders. The MDGs have become a frame of reference for just about all organisations working in development. They represent an agreement in the community to achieve measurable improvement in people's lives. Measurement is one of the three new aspects, which differentiate the MDGs from previous efforts, such as the International Development Targets, IDTs³⁵. The new aspects of the MDGs are:

³³ For details see www.developmentgoals.org.

³⁴ As well as the rest of this paragraph: Carvalho, 2003 and Worldbank, Internet.

³⁵ The IDTs were adopted in 1996 and have been developed due to the initiative of the Development Assistance Committee, DAC in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD. OECD countries reviewed their experiences and used those to plan future policies. Subsequently, in a series of expert meetings, the IDTs were used to establish quantified targets for each goal as well as indicators, most of which were ultimately incorporated in the MDGs. See Devarajan, Miller and Swanson, 2002.

- quantitative and time bound targets – emphasising systematic measurement;
- focusing on outcome – shifting the focus from inputs and sector specific work to cross sectoral approaches;
- emphasising the role of both developed and developing countries by making global partnership an explicit goal.

A recent report³⁶ reviews the implementation of the MDGs in relation to the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) principles in 48 low-income countries and concludes that getting serious about meeting the MDGs requires a concerted effort. At the current rate of progress, many countries and regions will not reach the MDGs by 2015. Other risks include: the mechanical adoption of specific indicators and neglecting sectors without an explicit MDG goal. It is therefore important that the MDGs are adapted to country and regional conditions and include qualitative dimensions of development.

The eight MDGs, which comprise 18 targets and 48 indicators, cover both income and non-income related measures of well being. Each of the first seven goals addresses a specific aspect of poverty, such as health or education. They need to be viewed together, as they are mutually reinforcing and aim to reduce poverty in all its forms. Whereas the goals themselves relate to one or more of the thematic foci chosen for the study, the last of the proposed targets of goal eight, which aims for global partnership, relates directly to ICTs: 'In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.' ICTs are tools for achieving social goals as spelt out in the MDGs. At the recent OECD Global Forum on the Knowledge Economy, Ms Karima Bounemra ben Soltane, speaking on behalf of the Economic Commission for Africa, stated that ICTs can do much to help Africa reach the MDGs³⁷.

Goals	Health	Livelihood	Governance	Capacity Development
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	X	X		
2. Achieve universal primary education		X		X
3. Promote gender equality and empower women		X	X	X
4. Reduce child mortality	X			
5. Improve maternal health	X			
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	X			
7. Ensure environmental sustainability	(X)	X		
8. Develop a global partnership for development		X	X	

Table 5: Relationship of goals to the identified key issues of the Learning Study

³⁶ <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/CDFINTRANET/Resources/MDGReport.pdf>.

³⁷ OECD Global Forum on Knowledge Economy, Paris 4-5 March 2003.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, it is important to localise the MDGs. For detailed information on the status of the MDG indicators in the case study countries, please refer to Annex 3.

4.2 Understanding poverty

In recent years, the understanding of poverty has undergone significant changes. It is no longer viewed as being restricted to material deprivation, but encompasses intangible aspects, such as lack of access to schooling or health care, vulnerability towards external events or being excluded from decision making processes. This broad approach is also reflected in the previously discussed MDGs, which address this diversity of issues. In line with the World Bank Development Report 2000/2001 (World Bank), poverty in this study will be looked at in terms of promoting opportunity, facilitating empowerment, and enhancing security.³⁸

Opportunity: Material opportunities are central to development. Many material opportunities (such as jobs, credit, roads, electricity, water, sanitation) are created by growth. However, the quality of growth is crucial. Mechanisms need to be in place to reflect local conditions and to compensate for potential losses during transitions. Or in the words of BDO: 'Expanding opportunity for poor people by stimulating economic growth, making markets work better for poor people, and working for their inclusion, particularly by building up their assets, such as land and education.'³⁹

Empowerment: Public actions are determined by the interaction of political, social and other institutional processes. Achieving access to, and accountability for, public actions requires the collaboration of all groups of society. BDO sees 'strengthening the ability of poor people to shape decisions that affect their lives and removing discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, and social status'⁴⁰ as central elements of facilitating empowerment.

Security: Increased security means 'Reducing poor people's vulnerability to sickness, economic shocks, crop failure, unemployment, natural disasters, and violence, and helping them cope when such misfortunes occur.'⁴¹ This requires effective national action to reduce the risks, as well as building assets of poor people (diversifying household activities, providing insurance mechanisms etc.).

Within BDO there is no shared understanding of poverty or other key terms, in the sense of a common terminology; clarifying discussions happen when the need arises⁴². This means that BDO implementing partners have different understanding of the significance of poverty.. Whereas for Panos or AMARC it is the starting point of activities, though still with differing perspectives - e.g. for Panos it is more political, CTO deals with telecommunications policy that is not necessarily specifically poverty related.⁴³ A shared definition and understanding might enhance the efforts in supporting pro-poor ICT strategies and programmes.

³⁸ Also the following information on opportunity, empowerment and security from World Development Report 2000/2001, if not otherwise indicated, see World Bank.

³⁹ BDO logframe, as set out in the TOR.

⁴⁰ BDO logframe, as set out in the TOR.

⁴¹ BDO logframe, as set out in the TOR.

⁴² Various oral communications on the occasion of head quarter visits, March 2003.

⁴³ Oral communication by James Deane, Panos.

4.3 Poverty reduction strategies

As illustrated above, the concept of poverty is a multifaceted one. Consequently poverty reduction strategies reflect this complexity and approach the phenomenon from different angles. All of them represent underpinning visions of the economy and society and the differences among them indicate their respective points of view. Some of the different strategies are: pro-poor growth strategy; sustainable livelihoods strategy; rights and empowerment strategy and resources and redistribution strategy.⁴⁴ For the purpose of the Learning Study, the focus on poverty reduction strategies will be one of the key issues of the Learning Study, which are health, livelihoods, and governance, with capacity development as a cross-cutting issue. All of these are relevant on a national, regional and global level.

Health: Health is an issue that cuts across all poverty reduction strategies.⁴⁵ First of all, good health is an asset, which can not be taken for granted, especially not by poor people. It is a precondition for any sustainable livelihoods strategy. Equal access to services is an issue that is key in the rights and empowerment strategy and indicates the overlapping of this area with the issue of governance. In this field, interesting experiences have been had by BDO partners in Uganda and Zambia with youth as target. The discussions around HIV/AIDS drugs are an illustration of a current topic that also touches the resources and redistribution strategy.

Livelihoods: 'Livelihood systems comprise a complex and diverse set of economic, social and physical strategies. These strategies are realised through the activities, assets and entitlements by which individuals make a living.'⁴⁶ They can, therefore, only be understood and addressed in an integrated manner. Since the majority of poor people live in rural areas (though an increasing population of poor people in urban areas has been reported in all three case study countries) livelihood strategies in this report will focus on farming and agricultural issues. There are interesting experiences related to the broadcasting of information on farming methods especially by community radio.

Governance: 'Governance focuses on the interaction between the state, the private sector and the civil society and should enable a participatory, equitable and gender-balanced, transparent, efficient and accountable management of public affairs.'⁴⁷ In relation to ICTs, a key concern in governance is policy and regulation. Issues such as rural access, interconnectivity, and monopolies for service providers are all key to the potential benefit that poor people get from ICTs (directly in terms of increased access and better quality service and, indirectly, through their role in overall development efforts). These are part of an overall enabling environment, in which the rights and empowerment approach to poverty reduction can be placed. Fundamental issues, such as freedom of expression, participation, ownership and accountability, are a prerequisite for sustainable poverty reduction.

⁴⁴ Gerster 2000. For a more elaborate discussion of these approaches to poverty reduction from an ICT perspective refer to Gerster/Zimmermann, 2003.

⁴⁵ The fact that three of the MDGs directly address health issues underlines the importance of this focus.

⁴⁶ UNDP – Sustainable Livelihoods, Internet.

⁴⁷ SDC, Internet.

Capacity development⁴⁸: The definition of this term includes two approaches: it has to define *what* is developed and *how* it is developed. Therefore, definitions are often split in statements about capacity and about development: Capacity refers to 'abilities, skills, understandings, attitudes, values, relationships, behaviours, motivations, resources and conditions that enable individuals, organisations, networks/sectors and broader social systems to carry out functions and achieve their development objective over time. [...] Capacity development refers to the approaches, strategies and methodologies used by developing countries, and/or external stakeholders to improve performance [at different levels]."⁴⁹ The key concept is change. Capacity development is fundamentally about transformation and is therefore most likely not linear (though oriented towards a goal!). This implies that it goes beyond the conventional perception of training. Other relevant points that derive from this definition and are important to bear in mind are (a) the differentiation between indigenous processes and donor-supported/-initiated processes, as well as the interrelationships between these two; and (b) the levels/contexts in which it occurs and again the relationship between them. For this study, the following levels will be considered: individual, organisational, sector/network and enabling environment.

4.4 Does BDO target the poor?

The potential and limitations of ICTs in the development process and poverty reduction are basically determined by three elements, all of which can be more or less pro-poor oriented:

- Physical infrastructure: e.g. special provisions and incentives for rural and remote areas, or low cost hard- and software that would be simple for users with low educational background;
- Human resources: e.g. train of poor people, especially women and youth, in ICT skills and support development of local language content;
- Policy environment⁵⁰: e.g. community access to ICT for all.

BDO partners, as shown during the Learning Study, share a concern for reducing social and regional disparities and eliminating poverty. Given the location of many of the projects, their clientele and thematic focus the BDO programme clearly targets vulnerable and marginalised people.

- In **Uganda**, the BDO-supported community radio Apac is located in one of the remotest and most secluded districts in Northern Uganda; e-commerce projects aim at women entrepreneurs in tourism, the radio programme, Kayiso Sesseriba, targets peasants who are almost landless, the Straight Talk Foundation's (STF) adolescent reproductive health programme targets young people who are not covered under any national health programme. Programmes supporting women's ownership of assets and protection, aired by Mama FM and Radio Apac, both recognise the unbalanced gender power relations in society that reinforce the marginalisation of women. The case study on Uganda concludes that, overall, the

⁴⁸ "The terms 'capacity development' and 'capacity building' are often used interchangeably [...]. Strictly taken, capacity development, the more recent term, emphasises the notion of an 'on-going process' which takes account of existing capacities rather than focusing solely on 'building' new capacities. The term is thus related to the approach used." (Capacity.org, Internet). For the purpose of this paper the two terms will be used interchangeably, taking into account both notions, the on-going process as well as creating new capacities.

⁴⁹ As well as the following points on capacity development; Bolger, p.2.

⁵⁰ See below chapter 6.1.

BDO programme activities have targeted the right categories of poor and vulnerable people.

- Similarly, in **Zambia** the DTR programme was reported to be used by the poor and marginalised, especially women, as a vehicle for their voice.⁵¹ Apart from women, youth have been identified as the second target group in Zambia. Printing and distributing newspapers in collaboration with schools, Youth Media reaches up to 20% of young people in Lusaka. On a more general level, it has been noted that access and availability of the ICTs remain poor, especially in the rural areas. Costs of telecommunication technology, infrastructure and access are high and users are few. Considering that 71% of the rural population in Zambia are living in extreme poverty, a high percentage of the population is excluded from the direct potential benefits of ICTs.
- In **Mali**, IICD is the most prominent organisation among the BDO partners. Apart from the activities to strengthen the important networking and policy initiatives, IICD facilitates the establishment of telecentres in rural areas and three projects in the medical sector. Panos and AMARC are involved with community radios in a poor urban environment of Bamako and in rural Mali.

Mali, Uganda and Zambia, like most of the other least developed countries, have a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in place. The key areas of the Learning Study as discussed below – livelihoods, governance, health-HIV/AIDS – are all part of the PRSPs of the three case study countries. It is obvious, therefore, that the BDO-supported programme has **potentially a high relevance for PRSP processes** - in design, implementation, and monitoring. This is said against the background that of 21 PRSPs recently reviewed, only four explicitly mentioned ICTs as a tool in poverty reduction. Six others mention ICTs in their national plans but not in their PRSPs.⁵²

5 Key Areas

5.1 Livelihoods

The BDO programme experience demonstrates that ICTs can promote opportunities for livelihoods. In that spirit, it stimulates economic growth, makes markets work better for poor people and builds up their assets. A sustainable livelihood strategy includes adaptation to new circumstances. An essential part of the way to this adaptation is identifying essential information. If ICTs are not set apart as a minor part of any development activity, they can be a more effective tool to help create an informed livelihoods strategy. A successful contribution to improving rural livelihoods lessens the pressure to migrate to urban areas. However, BDO partners have only rarely promoted baseline studies that would allow a thorough comparison before and after the supporting intervention. Moreover, the impact of the ICTs in addressing livelihood constraints does not achieve its full potential. The lack of policy constrains the opportunities offered by effective, cheap and simple ICT that are not available to the rural poor.

⁵¹ See Barkworth 2003, chapter 7.2.1.

⁵² Statement by Keith Yeomans, ICT Advisor to DFID, at the OECD Global Forum on Knowledge Economy, Paris 4-5 March 2003.

The added value of ICTs in a livelihoods oriented poverty reduction strategy are fivefold:

Increase of (agricultural) productivity: Uganda's community radio programmes aired in Radio Apac and Panos' programme in Radio Uganda, Kayisso Sesseriba, had a significant impact on livelihood strategies of farming and trade. Information on improved agricultural technology, new farming methods, improved seeds, grass preservation etc. – obtained through ICTs⁵³ – contributes to higher agricultural production, leading again to increased food consumption (maize) at the household level as well as to income gains from the sale of milk and beans:

Item	Quantity before radio	Quantity after radio	Income increase
Milk	15 litres/day	25 litres/day	Shs. 7500 to shs. 12,500 per day
Beans	7 tins /harvest season	14 tins/season	Shs. 35,000 to shs. 70,000 per sale
Maize	3-5 sacks/year	10-25 sacks/year	Shs. 10,000 to shs. 35,000 per sack
Tabacco	-	Av. 200 kgs/yr	Shs. 2,200 per kg

Table 6: Farm outputs and income benefits derived from improved farming methods and market information by farmers in Kawanda and Apac (Uganda)

Source: Daxbacher 2003, chapter 3.2

In Mali, radio broadcasts include information on prices and the weather. Using the same principle (gathering information from different sources and redistributing it widely), this results in improved decision making on selling products, as well as in better timing for seeding and locating pastures (success rates 80% – 90%) with improved crops and livestock.⁵⁴ Increased efficiency and productivity is also reported in the service sector. For example, in Mali training enabled people to better manage their businesses (pharmacy, management of partnerships, work reports⁵⁵).

Broadening the food crop basket: Information received through ICT channels may not only stimulate an increase of productivity but also a switch over to planting new crops. In Uganda, women are reported⁵⁶ to have started their own small vegetable gardens as a result of information provided by Uganda Development Services (UDS)⁵⁷. Consequently, the women now save the money that would have been spent on buying vegetables from the market. This initiative also helped women to have vegetables in the households during times of drought, which are common in the region. Savings are reported to be used for buying materials for children in school, clothing. and for paying healthcare services.

Market access for cash crops: ICT-based information may mobilise farmers to grow new cash crops when they become aware there is a profitable market . In Uganda⁵⁸, farmers learnt of the benefits of tobacco growing, as shown in the last entry of the above table, and marketing of it through British American Tobacco. The radio programme taught farmers planting and post harvest handling techniques. Through the radio's district agriculture programme, the District Agricultural Officer broadcast technical information not only on tobacco growing but also on where

⁵³ Kawanda Village, Uganda, by NRM Radio Programme, Kayisso Sesseririba.

⁵⁴ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 3.1.1.

⁵⁵ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 3.1.1. Though some of the increased activities ,such as daily reports, also raise the question; what is the value added?

⁵⁶ Daxbacher 2003, chapter 3.2, Box 7.

⁵⁷ UDS is not funded by BDO but a member of the I-Network supported by IICD.

⁵⁸ In Ayier sub county, Kole County in Apac, see: Daxbacher 2003, chapter 3.2, Box 6.

quality tobacco seedlings could be obtained. Tobacco became a key cash crop securing a reliable income for the farmers. According to the farmers, it is comparatively easy to obtain good yields because of the fertile soil. However, before the community radio started broadcasting, they were not aware of the market for their produce.

Creation of employment opportunities and higher chances of finding jobs:

Many people who benefited from training in one of the BDO partners' courses, or gained work experience (e.g. volunteers in community radios), are reported to have increased chances of finding employment. Computer skills are particularly valuable. The evidence suggests that youth and school leavers with skills in ICT are going to have better employment opportunities than those without. Thanks to capacity building in web design and other computer skills, Youth Media in Zambia is now providing graphic services to organisations on a consultancy basis⁵⁹. A former staff member of Youth Media is now with MTV in London, after working on the OneWorld AIDS channel. Similarly, medical students in Mali who have been trained by IICD, are reported to be real ICT experts ; some of them have created their own software company and support projects in the health sector. There are also some cases where successful teleworking has been reported (e.g. carrying out surveys in Mali for a Canadian company).⁶⁰ Indirectly, IICD helped to create jobs in Mali by providing collaterals for the reimbursement of credit for entrepreneurs of telecentres. This also provides income for the employed assistants.⁶¹

ICTs create social capital. Radio listening clubs, consulted in all three case study countries, are reported to have a particularly high potential for empowering their members as they organise, meet, discuss, record and listen to the responses given to their programmes. In Mali, collective farms were created⁶². Apart from listening clubs, which are intermediaries who transform information obtained via ICTs to a broader audience, this role is also often taken on by individuals: people who translate information into local languages, young people who pass information on to their families and others.⁶³ The Zambian case study regards the creation of social capital as a critical input to poverty reduction.⁶⁴ This again leads to material benefits in the form of community projects such as schools and bridges, affecting livelihoods through education, health and market access.

BDO programmes in the livelihoods domain directly contribute at the micro level to an attainment of the MDGs.

Increased quantities of food crops, as well as additional amounts of cash in poor households contribute to poverty reduction, to the availability of food and improve literacy and health. In Uganda, the additional income gained from the sales of farm produce is used to obtain food and other services such as healthcare, clothing and for paying schools fees. Despite being marginal, the income has led to significantly better conditions in diet and access to services for the majority of the households benefiting for the radio programmes.

⁵⁹ See Barkworth 2003, chapter 3.3.2.3.

⁶⁰ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 3.1.1.

⁶¹ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 1.3.

⁶² See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 3.1.1.

⁶³ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 3.1.3.

⁶⁴ See Barkworth 2003, chapter 4.3.

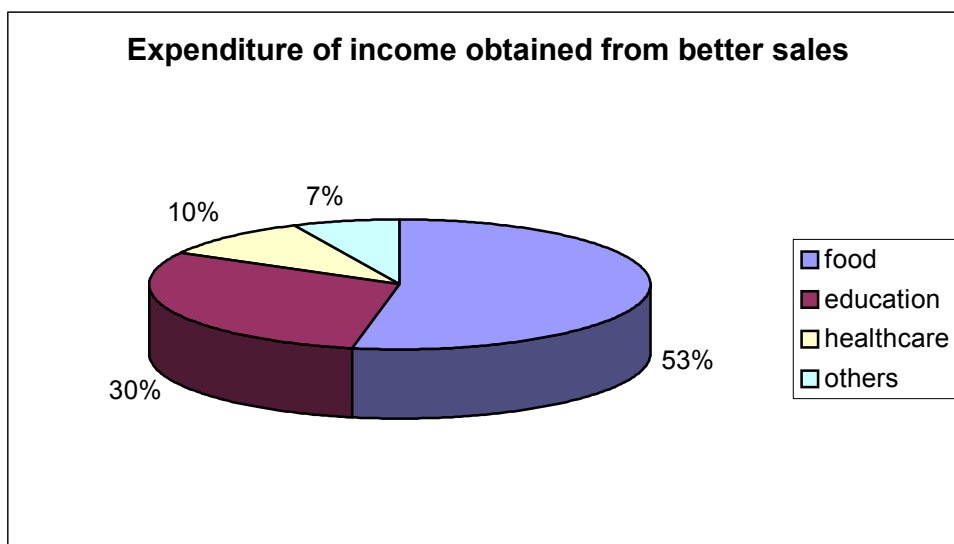


Figure 3: Expenditure pie chart of women's income obtained from better sales

Source: Information from Apac Focus Group Discussion with Iwot Ilwak Womens Club June 2003, see Daxbacher 2003, chapter 3.2

While appreciating this positive perspective drawn by women, it should be noted that some **hidden factors may negatively affect the MDG achievements**. It is well known that, in the African context, more cash income in the hands of men will often be used for alcohol instead of social benefits. This fact was also noted in several discussions with women related to the Learning Study⁶⁵. The above graph reflects the women's behaviour. Moreover, it would be naïve to look at ICTs, like mobile phones, simply as tools used for rational purposes. They are also status symbols. Therefore, it can be the case that, within a limited family budget, expenditure for ICTs may enjoy higher priority than children's needs, such as schooling or food consumption.

5.2 Governance

The BDO programme demonstrates that ICTs can be powerful tools for promoting good governance and empowerment. ICTs are important for increasing knowledge on human and constitutional rights, laws and regulations. ICTs such as radio and the internet have also been used for monitoring government programmes, thus making the powerful more accountable and giving the poor a voice. The decentralisation process can be enhanced by ICTs. In terms of service delivery, ICTs have also enhanced government efficiency in service provision that is directly relevant for the poor.

ICTs can be highly effective in enhancing transparency and accountability in the political system. In the elections in Uganda, the Government used the community radio for civic education on the rights of the people and information on the voting procedures. The use of the radio contributed to the fact that all candidates were said to have equal opportunities. Moreover, there was a transparent monitoring of the election process and an announcement of the results.

⁶⁵ See Barkworth 2003, Annex 4.

In Mali partnerships have been established between government representatives and Radio Belekan to broadcast programmes on elections.⁶⁶ ICTs are excellent instruments for exposing misuse of power and corruption at both the local and the national level. More specifically, ICTs are key tools in anti-corruption programmes, with significant gains for the population. The radio call-in programmes enable the communities to ask questions on issues where they need clarification and this often leads to favourable action by the officials concerned. Political commitment requires courage and determination, as the example in Zambia demonstrates where a radio was threatened with having its license removed because it interviewed a member of the opposition.

ICTs can facilitate giving the poor a voice. The knowledge of the poor about their basic human and citizen rights is extended by voter education campaigns. Citizen participation in elections is facilitated. ICTs, particularly rural radios, can become instruments of the people's empowerment. Zambia's DTR programme effectively contributed to providing beneficiaries, especially women, with a voice⁶⁷. It facilitated a process of interactive information and dialogue between the marginalised and the powerful. To make people's empowerment sustainable, it is important to have an environment with freedom of expression, media pluralism, and courageous journalists. Panos is funding a programme in Uganda empowering journalists with skills for development reporting and advocacy work. In Zambia, the systematic meeting, recording and collection of tapes by group leaders shows commitment and understanding of the role of DTR as a vehicle for their voice.

Box 1: Basic Needs Basket

The Zambian Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR), a leading NGO and OWA partner, publishes monthly information on the cost of living for a family of six in Lusaka. This Basic Needs Basket compares information on the cost of living and the income with a view to narrowing the gap between the two. It has been used effectively in discussions on wages and to engage government on policy issues. It provides a tool for advocacy and lobbying. The internet site on which it is published is also visited internationally.

Source: Barkworth 2003, chapter 4.5

For more information on the project see: <http://www.jctr.org.zm/bnbasket.htm>

ICTs can increase the security of the people as well as improve relationships between conflicting groups. In Apac (Uganda), the community radio has proved to be an effective means to update people about the security situation including alerts on threatening incursions by the Lord's Resistance Army. It has been observed by the local government that before the radio broadcasts, community relations with the police were very distant, as the former feared the latter. Now, due to the radio, relations are closer and considered as useful. The police are part of the community and can therefore be more effective in maintaining law and order and protecting people. Similarly, in Mali improved relationships have been reported between farmers (improved solidarity) as well as between farmers and governmental technical services. Furthermore, it is reported that there is interest in socio-cultural programmes on Radio Belekan, such as how to avoid or resolve conflicts between neighbours or between spouses.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 5.6.

⁶⁷ See Barkworth 2003, chapter 4.3.

⁶⁸ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 3.1.3.

ICTs strengthen the delivery of basic public services to people. Costs of informing people about government services are reduced. In Apac, there is a good record of the health department's performance in terms of available drugs and health information dissemination. This is partly attributed to the control of corruption through the community radio, which ensures that drugs are used for the public not private clinics. Apac district and NGOs use the community radio for organising immunisation outreach programmes, HIV/AIDS messages, child rights, girl child education, mobilisation of government workers, emergencies summons etc. It was felt that the radio was a very useful medium for facilitating the flow of information, as it has made the work of the agencies easier in terms of reaching communities. After careful research and consultations with both government and local communities, Uganda Debt Network (UDN) has managed to involve communities in monitoring and informing government on the utilisation of the Poverty Action Funds, especially the School Facility Grant⁶⁹. Poor quality school constructions, bribery in awarding tenders and political interference in the public service was exposed on the internet, on talk shows of the radio, as well as in newspapers. Public exposure has a preventive value for the delivery of public services in future.

ICTs can become a highly suitable instrument of decentralisation⁷⁰. The use of ICTs, in particular of community radio, enhances the knowledge of the population about government programmes. The most important programmes aired on community radio in Uganda relate to farming, health especially HIV/AIDS information, water and sanitation education, immunisation and malaria control. In a decentralised government structure, local media can be used to provide information adapted to the local situation. Access should be given only where services exist and the community can monitor service delivery. In Zambia, women asked, via the community radio, for anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs and were promised some, but the promise was not fulfilled nor was there a follow-up by the women or the radio. The result can be disempowerment; asking for external contributions may also distract attention from local solutions. In Mali, nearly all expertise in the medical sector is concentrated in the capital Bamako. In the country, sick people who want to be treated have to travel hundreds of kilometers to see a doctor. In the second phase of the Kenya Blown project, decentralisation is planned in terms of providing courses for staff from inside the country, as well as setting up access to specialists in Bamako.⁷¹

BDO programmes in the governance domain directly and indirectly contribute to coming closer to the MDGs. This insight is in line with other research results, showing that a reduced level of corruption, or a higher quality of bureaucracy, is more important for effective public spending on health and education than simply increasing public spending under conditions of poor governance⁷². The BDO contribution to good governance could be enhanced by systematic programming with local partners to broaden their knowledge about the potential role of ICTs for governance.

⁶⁹ See Daxbacher 2003, chapter 4.3.

⁷⁰ The UN Economic Commission on for Africa has commissioned a study on the relationship between the use of ICTs and decentralisation in Ethiopia. It is said to be the first of its kind. ECA 2003, p.12.

⁷¹ More decentralisation is also planned in the tele-radiology project, which is at the moment in the phase of financing. Through tele-radiology, long journeys for doctors should be reduced. See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 4.1.

⁷² Rajkumar/Swaroop 2002, pp. 24-25.

5.3 Health – HIV/AIDS

The BDO programme demonstrates that ICTs can be relevant for health interventions and in the fight against HIV/AIDS. ICTs can be a strong information dissemination tool for consistent management of the risk of the spread of HIV/AIDS. In Zambia, stigma is imaginatively addressed, the role of ARV drugs is better understood and youth have improved access to information, which has impacted on the Awareness, Behaviour and Change – the ABC of HIV/AIDS. Capacity building is critical to the processes. Apart from transmission of information on diseases such as HIV/AIDS, the potential of ICTs in the healthcare sector is that they can be used for consultation to give advice to rural health workers or directly to isolated patients. They are also useful in data collection and analysis and record keeping, training for health care workers and the education of targeted populations, including pregnant mothers, mothers of young children, special groups susceptible to contagious diseases and the like.

ICTs permit targeting the audience which is key in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment.⁷³ In Uganda, the BDO partner Straight Talk Foundation (STF) specialises in promoting safe adolescent reproductive behaviour and is focusing mainly on information dissemination about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS⁷⁴. Panos, on the other hand, targets various key audiences: (1) policy makers at national and global levels on the cost reduction of HIV/AIDS drugs, in liaison with a medical advocacy coalition; (2) men⁷⁵; (3) journalists who are involved in the training programme ‘Living positively’, which aims to reduce the stigma of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Through ICT channels people get access to vital health information beyond HIV/AIDS. The Zambian⁷⁶ NGO, and OWA partner, Youth Media, through its Trendsetters journal, has had an important impact on the quality of youth-friendly medical services... In Uganda⁷⁷, through the community radio in Apac, communities are able to obtain information on how to control malaria through vector control and the use of mosquito nets. The availability of drugs in government health centres, as well as information on family planning and immunisation, is communicated through the radio. ‘Before the community radio had been established, as few as five mothers could be found, under the mango tree being the meeting place. But since the radio is used for alerting mothers on immunisation programmes, its is now common to see more than fifty mothers turning up’.⁷⁸ In Mali, the frequenting of health centres is reported to have increased significantly in rural areas, thanks to transmissions of the local radio station (Radio Belekan has various health programmes).⁷⁹

⁷³ The issue of targeting the relevant audience is not only key in the health sector. In Mali young people are identified as a key stakeholders for the future, so they are also addressed specifically. See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 1.3, 3.2.1 and 4.1.

⁷⁴ Successful campaigns depend on linkages with and the availability of medical treatment at nearby clinics. STF health information is well developed in terms of content, well packaged and culturally appropriate, using eight languages. The languages used are Luo, Ateso, Lugbara, English and Runyankole, Ruchiga, Rutoro and Runyoro. Daxbacher 2003, chapter 5.3.

⁷⁵ Publications: Man and HIV in Malawi, Combat AIDS – HIV and the World's armed forces. For more information also refer to box XY in paragraph 6.5. of this report.

⁷⁶ See Barkworth 2003, chapter 5.3.2

⁷⁷ See Daxbacher 2003, chapter 5.2.

⁷⁸ Daxbacher 2003

⁷⁹ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 4.1.

Combinations of modern ICTs with traditional media can be most effective and efficient agents of change. In Uganda, STF strongly relies on print magazines like 'Straight Talk' and 'Young Talk', in combination with radio and internet, to create awareness on HIV/AIDS. Also clubs are instrumental in promoting good health and the control of STDs in schools. Similarly the above- Trendsetter journal appears in print as well as online. It has a monthly circulation of 30,000 copies, based on commercial sales. Up to 20% of youth in Lusaka read the paper, and Youth Media claim a reduction in HIV/AIDS transmission to 15 – 18 year olds can be partially explained by this large readership.

The internet facilitates linkages South-South and South-North for better health. It provides additional access to medical information for professionals. There is, however, no direct relevance for poverty reduction. Indirect effects cannot be excluded but are not obvious in a highly unequal society.

Box 2: Keneya Blown – global and local telemedicine linkages

The Keneya Blown project links five hospitals in Mali and one in Switzerland. Apart from providing an internet platform, which provides information to students and professionals in the health sector, the link to the North is used for long distance consultations (x-rays are sent to the North, where they are interpreted by specialists and the diagnosis is sent back) as well as the transmission of lectures. In a later phase it is planned to also have regional health staff linking up to courses provided by teachers in Bamako. Apart from the educational opportunities this project supports, it is also a valuable source of medical information for people in the North (the knowledge base of Mali in leprosy has been well appreciated by universities in the North), showing that there are specific information needs in the North that can be met by the South. Keneya Blown, catalysed by IICD, has received Africa- wide recognition and is mentioned in a recent report⁸⁰ by the Economic Commission for Africa of the UN.

Source: Ndiaye 2003, chapter 4.1

For more information on the project see: <http://www.keneya.net/>

The use of ICTs is key for advocacy to change trade related intellectual property rights (TRIPs) and to lower health costs. See 6.2.3 global dimension.

BDO programmes in the health – HIV/AIDS domain directly and indirectly contribute to achieve the MDGs. This domain is particularly relevant for the health related MDGs on child mortality reduction, maternal health improvement, and the combat against infectious diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS and malaria. Tracing the BDO impact is, however, limited due to the fact that baseline data is often missing.

As has been noted in the paragraph on livelihoods, there are other factors that may negatively affect such efforts. Change is always a question of the alternatives available and, as such, depends on the environment: Zambian women were bemoaning the fact that condoms were not more readily available, as they understood the importance of condoms in a polygamous society; the youth were concerned with abstinence being the main weapon against HIV/AIDS. The Learning Study notes that there remain untapped opportunities, and the realisation of the vision of e-health is a long way off for Zambia.

⁸⁰ ECA 2003, p.14.

5.4 Capacity Building

The Learning Study's terms of reference define capacity building as a cross-cutting issue. Activities undertaken by the BDO programme included training in international, regional and national workshops, awareness creation seminars, training courses in institutions of higher learning for IT personnel, on-the-job training courses by national and international consultants and the provision of equipment. In general, this has been found to be relevant and significant, considering the great need for ICT-related training. OWA partner Afronet reports⁸¹ that access to the internet and e-mail has expanded the horizon of Afronet staff, thus also improving their expertise and the institution's networking ability on human rights. Stigma is imaginatively addressed in the already mentioned programme of Panos, with the training of presenters and broadcasters in positive living and the training of journalists on how to report on HIV/AIDS issues.

Capacity building by BDO partners is targeted to enhance human capacities, as well as institutional capacities, both of which are milestones on the road to empowerment. The dominant factor in building human capacity is a country's education policy and vision that prioritises empowerment and ICTs – or not⁸². Equally, the main factors in building institutional capacity are the country's vision, regulatory environment, and policies regarding the role of ICTs⁸³. The BDO programme has contributed to capacity building of local partners by providing training⁸⁴ to their staff, by offering technical assistance,⁸⁵ and sponsoring equipment⁸⁶. Capacity building is essential for a poverty reduction approach based to empowerment. Local capacities and capabilities are the fertile ground for development processes.

In Zambia⁸⁷, Panos SAf is involved with the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) and intends to complement the quantitative indicators of PRSP with some oral testimonies on poverty, specifically looking at the impact of poverty on the fabric of the family. Findings from a study recently commissioned by Panos SAf on the role of the media in PRSP show that the media report only what the government is saying and not what is actually going on. As a result, at the end of 2002, Panos SAf supported capacity building for the media for monitoring the PRSP. It also facilitated a debate on the role of information and knowledge in development and the role of media in the PRSP process.

In Mali, there has also been evidence of the multiplier effect that is intended to be reached by the training of trainers: Two women, who were trained by Datatech, the local IICD partner on cyber cafés management, maintenance and internet, are now providing training to the satisfaction of their clients.⁸⁸

⁸¹ Barkworth 2003, chapter 6.1.

⁸² Zambia: "The curriculum does not yet address ICT in education. Students drop out of computer science classes, possibly because of the lack of trained teachers. Most government schools do not have computers or connectivity and they do not have the budget or resources for these items. Large numbers of IT teachers need to be trained and schools need to be creative in acquiring the necessary connectivity and hardware." Barkworth 2003, chapter 4.2.

⁸³ See chapter 6.1.

⁸⁴ E.g. CTO to UCC and TRASA.

⁸⁵ E.g. information about the latest technological development of ICTs in Mali, as offered by IICD.

⁸⁶ e.g. IICD computers and radio for the Laboratories in Nakawa Institute of ICTs in Uganda.

⁸⁷ Barkworth 2003, chapter 6.3.

⁸⁸ Ndiaye 2003, chapter 3.1.

In Uganda⁸⁹, support given by IICD to Kyambogo University⁹⁰ is reported to have strongly enhanced staff and students' skills in computer, radio and telephone technology. ICT basic training has been undertaken for both students and teachers and the new skills are widely used. Top management of the university all have computers on their desks and use them. ICT education has also been mainstreamed into the university curriculum. All new academic programmes developed by the Academic Senate now have an ICT component. The University is supposed to carry out an extension of this project to other National Teacher Colleges: Ngeta, Kabale, Unyama, Nkozi, Kakoba, Mubende and Nagongera.

Despite the overall positive experience some weaknesses were reported in specific cases:

Standard instead of tailor-made training: The CTO provides its local partner, Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), with technical knowledge on various aspects of regulation. UCC staff have participated in various training programmes organised by the CTO nationally, regionally and internationally. Considering Uganda's previous monopolistic background, the effectiveness of UCC in overseeing the privatisation and liberalisation of the telecommunications sector was said to have been enhanced by gaining regulatory knowledge and experiences from other countries. However, according to some training recipients, trainers should be more familiar with the reality of the country, including the poverty situation, and adapt the training to the local situation, instead of just exporting training content from developed to developing countries⁹¹. Even mainstream topics could contain more social content on access and effective use by poor people. Moreover, it was said there is no assessment of specific training needs for each individual country, based on gaps or weaknesses in the regulatory environment. Progress tracking and follow-up measures are missing as well. A similar statement was made in Mali⁹² regarding a workshop for West Africa in Ghana on competition in the telecommunication sector. The round table processes held in the country by CTO do not seem to adequately address the assessed training needs. Consideration needs to be given to replacing the standard model by tailor-made training regarding content, duration, methodology and follow-up, based on a needs assessment.

One-dimensional instead of combined support: In the case of the AMARC-supported community radios in Uganda, capacity building has largely concentrated on skills development. The utilisation of the new knowledge gained from these training events under BDO is, however, below what could reasonably be expected. The radio stations, in the case of Apac Community Radio and Mama FM, lack the equipment, such as higher level transmitters. In order to really increase capacity and to contribute to a high quality programme content, training should be combined with equipment support or technical assistance, according to local needs. An example of a multidimensional intervention is IICD's Mali agreement,⁹³ signed with a popular

⁸⁹ Daxbacher 2003, p. 44.

⁹⁰ There are in total 8,000 students in the university. 1,200 students are beneficiaries of business and telecommunications studies and out of this 1,000 of them are specialised in business courses. 350 students and 47 lecturers have been sensitised and trained on use of computers as a result of the IICD project. There are still training gaps for the rest of the students and lecturers. See Daxbacher 2003, chapter 7.1.2.

⁹¹ Similarly, a recent internal study on the BDO partnership mentioned that CTO courses focus on mainstream ICT issues and only "few courses have been offered on the social and cultural objectives and benefits of telecommunication regulation". Beaton 2003, p. 18.

⁹² Ndiaye 2003, chapter 6.1.

⁹³ Ndiaye 2003, chapter 1.3.

savings bank that specialised in micro-credit, to finance telecentre projects submitted by promoters. IICD provides the collateral for the reimbursement of the credit, as in Mali traditional banks are not used to finance micro-enterprises.

Use of international instead of local consultants: In the case of IICD, AMARC, OWI and Panos, the availability of local consultants and local institutions, both for training of BDO partners and on-going technical assistance, is of great benefit as they are based on increasing local experience (empowerment) and are readily available (cost efficient). The use of international training consultants by CTO, however, is a problem in terms of both the adequate timing of training events and the adaptation of training content to the country specific issues faced by BDO partners. This challenge could be met by incorporating local institutions and trainers into international training arrangements. Involving local consultants would also considerably reduce the costs of training and ensure the development of relevant training content. A local agenda should create, maintain and make use of a pool of in-country ICT experts.

More and targeted capacity building: The local BDO partners and community members try hard to develop their own project proposals but often lack the necessary skills. Local partners tend to be under-trained as research, monitoring and evaluation in view of impact analysis are not considered a priority when faced scarce resources. IICD's approach in initiating round table discussions pays a lot of respect to ownership, which takes time and requires a delicate design and phasing of support. Short term training does not sufficiently respond to the needs of a medium term collaborative relationship. Beyond capacity building in ICT skills, local partners may also require capacity building in programme development, content creation, management, monitoring and evaluation. Focusing on ICTs must not neglect other weaknesses of an institution that limit progress just as much. Capacity building efforts should be strengthened and targeted, e.g. including general marketing and management skills in telecentres - as in Mali. Targeted capacity building would also address the issue of poverty by specifically including pro-poor policies as a topic in regulatory workshops. However, a high percentage of activities relating to capacity building seem to be concentrated on the handling of ICTs.

BDO action line 3⁹⁴ addresses a specific aspect of capacity building: the ability of local stakeholders to express themselves. Many of the interesting experiences of BDO partners, such as the training programme by Panos for people living positively with HIV/AIDS or the many radio listening clubs, are found around the medium of radio. Also many of the organisations whose business it is to produce information are reported to be making an impact. However, in line with the need for more and targeted capacity building, it is important also to enable organisations whose core task is not information production to be effective in expressing themselves.

⁹⁴ The capacities of local, community, media, and public interest organisations to express themselves, nationally and internationally, through the use of new and traditional ICTs, are strengthened.

6 Other Issues

6.1 Environment

In 2002, out of 53 African countries, 16 had an ICT policy in place, 21 were in the process of developing a policy, whereas 16 countries had no policy development process going on⁹⁵. Obviously, there is a strong move - as well as a still considerable unmet need - to develop national e-strategies and policies in Africa. At the same time, an international debate is going on about the most conducive regulatory environment for ICTs servicing development. Astonishingly, the challenge of an explicitly *pro-poor regulatory and policies environment* in ICTs is hardly taken up⁹⁶. On the other hand, the UN Economic Commission for Africa, in a recent report, concludes: "National e-strategies ... will increasingly be geared towards addressing MDGs so that ICTs can assist in the reduction of poverty, improve healthcare delivery, provide education opportunities for all, particularly the girl-child, create employment opportunities and ensure food security"⁹⁷. From that background, and in view of the forthcoming World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), the BDO programme's experience may be of a particular interest.

The national regulatory environments for ICTs are based on national visions of challenges, approaches and priorities⁹⁸. The significance of a conducive regulatory and policy environment can hardly be overrated. Considerable differences can be noted between countries. Some governments, like Uganda's, clearly are on the move in shaping the ICT environment and policies. In other countries, like Zambia, however, the lack of ICT policy and its implementation is a major constraint on development and poverty reduction. Other highly pressing problems, like the budget deficit, political unrest etc. absorb political attention. The use of ICTs nourishes the fear by government of losing control, the reason being that not having a policy is better, since this allows for arbitrary interpretation. Furthermore, very often there is no specific regulation in the ICT sector but only in the telecommunications sector.⁹⁹ However, the allocation of broadcasting frequencies, application for licences etc. also need to be regulated in a transparent manner.

Box 3: How the lack of ICT policies affects the poor in Zambia

Transparent legal systems, liberalisation of entry, and reasonable pricing policies do not (yet) exist. As a result of the lack of ICT policies, the expansion of the telephone system to rural Zambia and the opportunities offered by effective, cheap and simple ICT technologies are not available to the rural poor. The internet-based information systems, which would significantly improve household food security by allowing a diversification of livelihood strategies, providing early warning systems,

⁹⁵ ECA 2003, p. 3.

⁹⁶ E.g. the Bamako Declaration of the Africa Regional Conference for the preparation of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), held in Bamako 28-30 May 2002, is about development but does not mention poverty. See for some material "ICT for Poverty Reduction and Growth" of the Development Gateway under <http://www.developmentgateway.org/node/133831/browser/?keyword%5flist=505328&country%5flist=0>, as well as OWI's <http://www.digitalopportunity.org/article/archive/1089/>, and for some preliminary deliberations see Gerster/Zimmermann 2003, pp. 12-13.

⁹⁷ ECA 2003, p. 18.

⁹⁸ The need for strong leadership at the national and regional level in pushing the ICT agenda in Africa has also been identified by the African Society Initiative, as it was presented at an OECD/UN/World Bank event in Paris in March 2003. See OECD/UN/World Bank.

⁹⁹ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 2.2.1.

facilitating the sourcing of inputs, marketing produce, and assisting in planning for poverty reduction, are not yet possible in rural Zambia. Without ICT skills, school leavers will not have had the opportunities for discussion, distance learning, and access to information and knowledge that their northern counterparts do. The youth of Zambia will always be at a disadvantage and the digital divide will widen. The need for a policy that reflects a vision that is liberal, flexible and pro-poor is agreed on by all stakeholders.

Source: Barkworth 2003, chapter 6.6 and 7.4

The role of BDO civil society partners in the development of a pro-poor national regulation and policy is crucial. They have the opportunity to counter governmental moves for liberalisation and privatisation because of their consequences for the poor. It may be noted here that as a result of e-Brain, OWI, Panos and their partners lobbying the Communications Authority of Zambia, the government is beginning to address issues of concern. A National Technical Committee has been formed to draft the ICT policy. Workshops and meetings with ICT providers and civil society have started.

The following key elements of a pro-poor regulatory environment have been identified:

1 A competitive environment¹⁰⁰ instead of a government monopoly, leading to lower prices and higher quality services, is a necessary but not sufficient condition; in view of pro-poor outcomes it has to be combined with targeted pro-poor policies.

In Mali, there used to be a monopoly for mobile phones, now there is a second licence. The number of users is "growing rapidly"¹⁰¹. Competition increased access, but still large areas have no coverage. Competition contributes to reducing poverty, because it lowers prices. It is also improving the quality of services - paying the same amount for better quality is also favourable to poverty reduction. It is also expanding the coverage area of mobile telephony.

In Uganda, the successful privatisation and liberalisation of telecom services is remarkable and is acknowledged by all contacts. The Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) has overseen the privatisation and the opening of the telecommunication sector to other private companies. Two national telecommunications operators have been engaged to provide telecom services, under a duopoly licence arrangement, until 2004. BDO partners enjoy a rather favourable environment for their activities.

Deregulation and liberalisation are inspired by economic thinking. They lower prices and increase quality¹⁰². In order to exploit its full pro-poor potential, the regulatory framework has to include other policies with targeted distributional pro-poor effects.

2 A clear and enforced legal framework, which should include an independent regulator, ensuring transparency and accountability, is again a necessary but not sufficient condition; in view of pro poor outcomes it has to be combined with targeted pro poor policies.

¹⁰⁰ In particular the Latin American experience demonstrates expanded access and faster growth in open markets, see Caspary/O'Connor 2003, pp. 23-24.

¹⁰¹ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 2.2.1.

¹⁰² See e.g. AFRICT, Why is the Internet so expensive in Africa?, <http://www.africt.org/pages/1/index.htm>.

In Uganda, the UCC, as a regulatory body, is independent from political and operational issues in order to maintain its objectivity. UCC is said to have managed to create a level playing field, ensuring that operators compete fairly. It has also promoted transparency, ensuring that regulatory decisions are open, fair and objective. Decision making processes, including licences, interconnection, tenders and other services are transparent. Significant achievements have been made in the telecom sector.

3 *A clear and enforced legal framework should include respect for freedom of expression, diversity and the free flow of information. Again, this is a necessary but not sufficient condition; in view of pro poor outcomes it has to be combined with targeted pro-poor policies.*

Uganda: The UCC is the regulatory body with the responsibility of managing the telecom sector and ensuring regulatory compliance with national policies and regulations. A draft policy framework for ICTs exists and is waiting for parliamentary debate. It is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that people have a right to information.

Zambia: Freedom of expression and freedom of the media are enshrined in the 1991 Zambian Republican Constitution, and amended in 1996. Freedom of expression is the basis for giving the rural poor a voice and for their empowerment. The political struggle for respect for a diversity of opinions is still continuing. OWA partner, Afronet, reported that the Zambian government sometimes tampered with website content regarded as critical.

4 *Licences for operators and service providers should include*

- ***specified obligations on how to contribute to the implementation of the universal service objectives;***
- ***reduced rates for all community ICTs, including community radio;***
- ***an e-rate for public schools as well as libraries, hospitals, and other public institutions.***

In South Africa, in fixed line telephony, between 1996 and 2000, 2.6 million new fixed line connections were established as a consequence of the universal service obligation for operators to expand coverage. In 2001, however, only 0.6 million were still working. The reasons:

- The number of mobile phones experienced an unexpected rise;
- Many people cannot pay their bills and are disconnected again by Telkom.

The lesson learnt: under these circumstances is that the universal service obligation alone may not be effective. On the other hand, the e-rate stipulated in the South African law for schools, as a part of licensing conditions, was said to be an effective instrument.

The Communications Authority of Zambia reports that it has established a pro-poor, pro-investment licensing system. The award of any infrastructure based licenses (i.e., national, mobile and fixed services) is subject to tender proceedings, whereas services that add value through investment and innovation in telecommunication are

not subject to tender proceedings. This is intended to encourage private sector investment.¹⁰³

5 In order to compensate for market failure, a national Universal Service Fund should be established to ensure an effective service provision, including local languages and local content for all; the fund must be transparently administered by an independent regulator/body, financed by a levy on the operators and possibly by overseas development assistance (ODA). Independence and transparency are essential prerequisites for creating trust and goodwill also on the part of those who are taxed.

In Uganda, to complement the progress made in service delivery by the private sector and bearing in mind the challenges from poverty, a Rural Communications Development Fund has been launched by the Government through the UCC. Service delivery, in which it is hoped access to ICT infrastructure will achieve GOU targets for the use of ICTs for development, has been franchised to four private investors. They will be responsible for 70% of the overall project cost and UCC will make up the difference.

Zambia: The Communications Authority of Zambia (CAZ) reports that it is in the process of setting up a Rural Telecommunications Development Fund to provide seed funding to entities mandated to provide telecommunication services to rural and remote areas of Zambia. The fund will be financed by a percentage of operating fees paid annually to CAZ by service providers. The authority will use the rural fund to offset any losses incurred in setting up telecommunications infrastructure in remote areas of the country. The modalities for disbursements and operational guidelines are still being developed.

From a pro poor perspective, it is important to note that the scope of a Universal Service Fund goes beyond establishing formal access only by providing subsidies for infrastructure in remote areas. Access is just a precondition of “effective use”¹⁰⁴ of ICTs. An effective use approach includes, in particular, ICT applications for local economic development, social equity, and political empowerment, all of which expand local capacities to achieve self identified goals.

6 Community radio is key in a pro-poor regulatory environment:

- **The legal framework should provide a three-tier system for broadcasting: Public radio, commercial radio, community radio.**
- **Government support and policies pursued should clearly recognise, and promote the special role of non-profit community broadcasting for, by and about the community, including them in their own communication strategy and allocating funds accordingly.**
- **Open and participatory decision making processes need to be assured in order to allow for a fair allocation of the frequency spectrum to all broadcasters.**
- **As a source of revenue, community radio must be granted permission of commercial advertising to an appropriate extent.**
- **The not-for-profit character of community radios should be honoured in taxation law.**

¹⁰³ Barkworth 2003, chapter 2.3.2.

¹⁰⁴ See Gurstein 2003, p. 5.

South Africa today has a regulatory system acknowledging the special role of non-profit community radio, and enjoys, as a consequence, a vibrant community radio sector. Despite this positive experience, the legal set-up of South Africa is almost unique in Africa (exception: Ghana).

In Uganda, BDO partner community radios are faced with major challenges, including non-selective and exorbitant taxes by government.

7 *In view of effective poverty reduction, the use of ICTs should become an integrated part of design and implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs).*

At present effective and **systematic linkages BDO – PRSP are lacking:**

- Mali: The PRSP is referred to by everybody, it is a national development plan. In the beginning, IICD worked closely with government in PRSP design, but in the programme implementation phase IICD is perceived to have cut the relationships, which led to frustration on the side of the government.
- Uganda: If BDO has primarily a poverty focus, it should have contacted the Ministry of Finance, which is leading the PRSP process. The ministry, however, is not involved at all. Furthermore, the NGO Forum, which is very relevant to the PRSP process, is not among the BDO partners. Also CTO does not interact with the Ministry of Finance and, therefore, neglects some key challenges that the UCC has.
- Zambia: The link is there, because the same people who are BDO partners are involved in the PRSP monitoring and advocacy process through the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction, but it seems to be a lucky coincidence. Policy issues present an opportunity for BDO partners to become more proactive. e.g. Panos in Zambia could be more poverty reduction focused and advocating for ICTs to be a tool for poverty reduction.

Summing up, the BDO programme leaves it at the discretion of their local partners to forge the relevant PRSP partnerships at the local level. BDO should make a systematic effort to link their programmes explicitly to the national poverty reduction strategies. When choosing local partners, their commitment and role in the fight against poverty, including the PRSP process, needs to be considered.

The link to PRSPs is not only central in terms of promoting ICTs as a tool of development. PRSPs also outline other fundamental development policies, which are key to sustainable ICT development (see point three above). In Mali, decentralisation is highlighted in national development plans and this would provide various tracks for intervention by BDO partners, however they do not (yet) seem to address this issue.¹⁰⁵

In Zambia, the PRSP recognises the poor state of telecommunications infrastructure and states that it will improve telephone services to the rural areas and in tourism locations through rural telephony projects, putting in place incentives and encouraging private sector participation in the provision of services to rural areas. However, critical development concepts, such as ownership, participation, accountability and empowerment, have not been well articulated in the Zambian PRSP. They depend on information flows, both bottom up and top down. The failure

¹⁰⁵ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 5.2.

to address these issues probably accounts for the little consideration of the role of information and communication in the PRSP process. The BDO partners and their national partners are involved in the monitoring of the PRSP. JCTR, initially through its Debt project and now through Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR), plays a leading role in facilitating the civil society input into the process of developing the PRSP, monitoring implementation, and assessing the impact.

Box 4: A voice of the poor in the PRSP process

Panos SAf has taken an initiative to ensure that the voice of the poor is heard in the monitoring of PRSP. Village meetings have been held in Kalomo – an area of Zambia badly hit by drought and food insecurity – and interviews and discussions were held with community members, local government and councillors. Most had not heard of the PRSP or its process. Three radio programmes have been made and a TV debate was organised with representatives from the Programme Against Malnutrition, MPs, Ministry of Agriculture and the World Food Programme. No direct impact on the PRSP is reported. But further media coverage will follow and may influence the PRSP update in future.

Source: Barkworth 2003, chapter 6.3

BDO action line 1¹⁰⁶ is directly related to the issue of a pro-poor regulatory environment. Ultimately, effective policies and regulatory frameworks are central to an efficient use of ICTs for poverty reduction. Training on a regional level, when experiences and insights can be shared, contributes to a better understanding of the issues involved. However, it seems that besides the many technical issues, an explicit poverty focus is lacking in the activities related to the regulatory environment. It is assumed that well-informed decision makers take the right decisions. BDO could contribute more to raise awareness of the relationship between policy and regulatory issues and poverty. This awareness is also needed on a local and even institutional level, not only on a regional or national level.

6.2 Cooperation

6.2.1 National dimension

An important outcome of the BDO programme is the creation of new networks at the national level (Réseau IN in Mali, I-Network in Uganda, e-brain forum in Zambia), ***and strengthening of existing partnerships which are clearly focused on the ICT sector.*** The formation of such alliances and linkages between local institutions has been catalysed by IICD interventions¹⁰⁷. Such an important outcome is preceded by an intensive empowerment process. In Zambia¹⁰⁸, this network has formed a strong lobby group for policy change and formulation and is linked to other BDO partners and their implementing partners. As a result, there is improved awareness of the importance of ICT in development. But not only institutionalised networks are effective in lobbying. In Mali, a group of students, which was involved in the telemedicine project Keneya Blown, has created an association in order to promote ICTs in the health sector.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ The capacities of regional, national and local policy makers to formulate and establish effective ICT policies and regulatory frameworks are strengthened.

¹⁰⁷ In the case of IN Mali the IICD facilitation was not related to the BDO programme while the other two fell within IICD's BDO mandate.

¹⁰⁸ See Barkworth 2003, chapter 3.4.4.2.

¹⁰⁹ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 6.1.

Box 5: Effective networking and lobbying in Zambia

E-brain is a national think tank and an information-sharing platform of more than 100 members. It places the discussion of ICT on the national development agenda and aims to develop a common understanding of the role of ICT in the development process. As a result of lobbying by the Communications Authority of Zambia, e-Brain, Panos, OWA and Zambian Independent Media Association (ZIMA), the government has recently formed a National Technical Committee with several technical sub-committees, specifically to develop a policy for ICT. OWA is facilitating a process of civil society involvement in the policy discussion, ZIMA is concerned with involving the media and e-Brain facilitates monthly discussions on policy issues. E-brain began as an IICD partner.

Source: Barkworth 2003, chapter 6.6

For more information on the project see: <http://www.ebrain.org.zm/>

The strategic thinking of these coordinating institutions at the national level should be enhanced in general and in view of poverty reduction in particular.

These networks provide a starting block and it should be a priority of future BDO support to strengthen this networking and advocacy function. Based on detailed needs assessments for each partner country, BDO should dedicate more of its personnel and financial resources to stimulating and supporting a conducive environment through the national networks. In particular, the BDO programme could be of great relevance in terms of mainstreaming ICTs into national poverty plans. In Uganda, although the draft ICT policy makes reference to the PRSP¹¹⁰, it does not exactly spell out how ICTs can be utilised as tools for poverty reduction to better achieve the PRSP objectives.

The BDO network at the funding, as well as at the implementing level, should be made visible as a telling major example of coordination and cooperation.

Such a visibility of the BDO programme in a country would also enhance the credibility, reputation and finally effectiveness of ICTs in poverty reduction. In Mali, it is reported that it would definitely be an asset to know that there is more than one organisation (in this case IICD) behind a project. In Uganda, DFID Uganda was not even aware of its wider BDO background beyond DFID. In that way, BDO funding and implementing partners have untapped opportunities to further enhance the role and effectiveness of local institutions. They could mobilise favourable responses from governments, such as no taxes on community radio. The local initiatives should be more empowered to enhance their lobbying, profiting from the visibility of the BDO partners.

BDO implementing partners should ensure a tailor-made partnership with their local partner organisations and include an effort for coordination among them.

At present, at the country level, there are only weak links – if any at all – among BDO implementing partners and among BDO-supported programme components; no effort of coordination is felt in the field. Cases are reported where there are no written agreements between BDO partners and their local partnering institutions¹¹¹. The local partners of OWI emphasise the importance of the relationship, because they can get information, but they would appreciate a more intense partnership.

BDO partners should ensure full support by their national partners' management to exploit the opportunities that ICTs offer for development and poverty reduction. The key challenge with internal use of ICTs by Ugandan CSOs is

¹¹⁰ The PRSP is called Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) in Uganda.

¹¹¹ In Zambia for Panos and IICD.

reported¹¹² to lie in their limited acceptance by the leading executive officers, who have not yet fully grasped the opportunities that ICTs offer. Furthermore, relevant programme management skills are necessary to measure any relevant impacts. These indicators should not only be defined by specialists, but also take into account the local situation, which can be appreciated by local partners.¹¹³

BDO action line 2¹¹⁴ is focused on local organisations, which are key to the national level. There are some good experiences of activities that are enhanced by the use of ICTs, such as the Basic Needs Basket in Zambia, and the work of Youth Media and the Straight Talk Foundation in regard to HIV/AIDS. Capacity building has contributed to improved skills among local organisations in using ICTs more efficiently. In order to make the application of ICTs more effective, also for poor people, an important task is to raise awareness about the benefits of ICTs among the management of local organisations.

BDO action line 5¹¹⁵ addresses the effectiveness of the relationship among BDO and other partners. On the local level, unspecified partnerships have been found, with local partners who are unclear about the implications of a partnership¹¹⁶. Considering that there are some partners with valuable experiences or connections, BDO should make better use of its partners, e.g. in Zambia, where many partners are involved in the PRSP process, but this link has not been utilised by BDO. Also there seem to be many partners with specific needs that one would expect to be addressed or dealt with in an effectively managed partnership. This is an action line that has a lot of potential for improvement – which also requires a deliberate and prioritised effort, considering the high number of partners.

6.2.2 Regional dimension

It should be mentioned that the **New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD)**, as a continental framework, includes an important ICT window. The Africa Information Society Initiative (AISII) serves as the channel of co-ordination of the support that United Nations agencies provide to NEPAD. Noteworthy, “NEPAD insists on strengthening the role of the Regional Economic Communities that should be coordinating national efforts and aiming at harmonising national regulatory frameworks across the sub-regions.”¹¹⁷ A regional approach is based on the fact and the vision of closer cultural, economic, political ties among neighbours. The creation of regional strategies enables Africa to prevent a duplication of efforts and waste of resources, to build economies of scale for developing its infrastructure, and to strengthen local content creation. Closer cooperation at the regional level will also facilitate having stronger voice of Africa in global governance.

Strategically, the regional dimension is a very attractive and promising level of intervention for BDO. Many BDO-supported activities have a regional dimension. For example, STF Uganda staff attend meetings and training courses such as those on counselling organised by Panos on a regional level. Similarly, Straight Talk

¹¹² See Daxbacher 2003, chapter 4.3.

¹¹³ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 3.1.1.

¹¹⁴ Local organisations are enabled to effectively apply ICTs for the benefit of poor people.

¹¹⁵ The relationships and alliances among BDO and other partners are made more effective.

¹¹⁶ E.g. ABC Ulwazi or NCRF in South Africa, which are both OneWorld members, but their representatives were not aware what this entails.

¹¹⁷ ECA 2003, p. 2.

Foundations have been set up in Tanzania, Zambia, and Kenya. In terms of programming and management, there is, however, no direct link between STF in Uganda and other country programmes. IICD held regional workshops on e-health for urban health practitioners in Uganda, Zambia, Tanzania, Malawi and Kenya, and a regional e-education workshop in Botswana in 2002/2003. For a closer analysis, the Learning Study selected two interventions, namely regional capacity building supported by CTO and AMARC.

In the area of telecommunications, efforts towards harmonisation of national policies and strategies are a step ahead of other areas. An advanced example is the **Telecommunication Regulators' Association of Southern Africa (TRASA)**¹¹⁸, a group of national telecommunication regulatory authorities from the 14 members of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). TRASA is successfully working to ensure that all SADC members align their national legislation and policy with the SADC Model Telecommunication Legislation and the SADC Model Telecommunications Policy. Model guidelines on a number of issues have been created, including "Policy Guidelines for Universal Access/Service for SADC"¹¹⁹. They include the objective to "empower disadvantaged people to have an affordable and good quality information and communication network, on an equitable basis". The model universal service obligations stipulate discounted tariffs for those economically disadvantaged - like people with disabilities - and learning and health institutions in lower income areas. As a key tool in implementing universal access and service the guidelines mention the creation of a Universal Service Fund.

Complementary to the recommendations on policy guidelines, TRASA organises regional workshops with the aim of building capacity among policy makers and regulators in Southern Africa. This is often done in partnership with CTO and the International Telecommunication Union, ITU. In July 2002, TRASA, ITU and CTO organised a **regional workshop on Universal Access and Rural Connectivity** that took place in Tanzania¹²⁰. Poverty reduction was a topic in relation to universal access. It seems, however, that among the considerable number of CTO supported courses this direct poverty relevance is the exception, not the rule. The participants agreed to have training modules developed for priority themes¹²¹ of their interest. This follow-up, however, has so far not happened.

For this Learning Study, forty participants were invited to give **feedback** by answering five short questions in relation to the workshop and its relevance for their respective country's regulatory environment and their work¹²². Thirteen surveys from eight different countries were returned. Main findings of the survey include:

- TRASA policies are being implemented in varying degrees: some countries had policies in place before the workshop was held and are not influenced by it, others are in the process of planning policies and three are in the process of implementing/harmonising some of their policies with TRASA's.
- Five participants state explicitly that the workshop led to a change in universal service and rural connectivity policies. The same number say that their policies were at least influenced or confirmed by attending the workshop.

¹¹⁸ On TRASA, see www.trasa.org. Also ITU Botswana 2001, pp.37-47.

¹¹⁹ Consolidated draft.

¹²⁰ See <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/treg/Events/Seminars/2002/Tanzania/index.html>.

¹²¹ These were (1) Universal access and rural connectivity overview; (2) Universal access program design and project implementation; (3) Universal service fund management and administration; (4) Regulatory costing and accounting models; (5) Interconnection and tariff regimes.

¹²² See Annex 4 for details.

- Ten participants say that they were able to use 50% or more of what they learnt at the workshop in their work.
- A majority of the participants see a positive relationship between attending the workshop and the cooperation among regulators in the region.

Box 6: The human factor in regional cooperation

In spite of the technologically enhanced information exchange, face to face contacts across national boundaries cannot be replaced. This fact is confirmed in training and workshops, which also present great opportunities for networking. Many issues surrounding ICTs have a regional or global dimension (interconnection, technical standards etc.) and an exchange on best practices and experiences during a workshop is often more efficient than an anonymous database. However, capacity building does not only happen on the level of the participating institutions, it can also be a key for individuals: "I am now regarded as a potential resource person and my level of articulation on these issues has improved." (participant from a regional workshop). CTO and AMARC in particular support regional trainings.

Source: Survey results Annex 5

For more information on the project see: <http://www.ictdevagenda.org/>

The Learning Study undertook a second feedback survey regarding a training opportunity offered by AMARC, the **Simbani News Agency Correspondents Course**. With the aim of building a network of local correspondents for the Simbani News Agency, AMARC conducted three regional training courses in May and June 2003 (two in Johannesburg and one in Ouagadougou). For this Learning Study, 25 participants of two of these courses were contacted¹²³ and asked to answer five short questions in relation to the workshop and its relevance for their work. Ten surveys from as many different countries were returned. The thematic focus of the workshop was related to food security issues, because of a collaboration between AMARC and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, FAO. The other key issue was to train the participants on reporting and production skills. Main findings of the survey include:

- Out of ten stations, seven are preparing a broadcast on food security issues for the World Food Day, one of them has not previously addressed issues of food security.
- Out of ten stations, eight have previously addressed issues of food security.
- All stations are using local content in food-related broadcasting.
- Six replies indicate the usefulness of the workshop to be 50% or more.
- Half of the participants did not indicate that attending the workshop increased cooperation between stations.

Comparing the survey results of the study training courses by CTO and AMARC, a strengthened regional cooperation and exchange does not seem to be an automatic result of such a training. Whereas in the TRASA/CTO/ITU workshop a majority of responding participants confirm more intense regional contacts, in the case of the FAO/AMARC food security course such a result cannot (yet) be traced. ***This indicates that regional cooperation and sharing of regional knowledge should be an explicit part of such events, with an emphasis on social issues, including poverty reduction.***

¹²³ See Annex 4. Contacts were both in French and in English.

6.2.3 *Global dimension*

BDO was set up as a project with a global reach¹²⁴ – in contrast to CATIA¹²⁵, which is clearly focused on Africa. It is not surprising, therefore, that two of the most practical products of BDO collaboration - Dgroups and iConnect are also located at the global level. Dgroups is "the starting point for fostering groups and communities in international development"¹²⁶. At the beginning of July there were 347 groups registered, with a total of 7887 members. Out of these, 76 groups fell into the global category. Similarly, iConnect "is a jumping off point for information on the application of knowledge and ICTs in sustainable development."¹²⁷ Whereas Dgroups concentrates on providing a platform for discussion, iConnect concentrates on providing links to information. It is also the only place where the BDO programme is promoted and the newsletters are used to report on the BDO activities.

BDO activities offer platforms for a global exchange of experience, including an intense South – South communication. OWI, for example, operates the Digital Opportunity Channel, which is running a discussion forum, "Information Society: Voices from the South", in partnership with Bytes for All, a South Asian online volunteer network, and in coordination with Sri Lanka-based 'Mandate the Future'. The forum started on May 15 and lasts until December 2003. The platform aims to "help stakeholders from the South to exchange ideas and debate issues about the emerging information society and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)", and hopes to "take their voices to policymakers in order to influence national, regional and global strategies". During the first phase from May 15 to June 15, 2003, on the topic "Information Society: What does it mean for the South?", 320 people subscribed to the discussion group and sent 162 messages¹²⁸. 40% of the contributors were from South Asia, 17% from Africa, 6% from South East and East Asia, and 2% from the Middle East. The remaining 35% were from North America, Europe, Australia or of unknown origin¹²⁹.

BDO activities create an information flow up from the Southern grassroots, through intermediaries and the BDO partners, to the global audience. A considerable part of BDO partners' activities is not limited to certain countries or regions. As a consequence, their potential target audience is located all over the world. In such a way, the BDO programme contributes to a better informed public, including decision makers, which again may lead to better informed decisions on development. The One World Radio member research showed that there is a great potential – still untapped – of topics from the grassroots that could be uploaded onto the net¹³⁰. The grassroots perspective includes, in particular the situation of the ordinary people, the poor majority. In Zambia, OWI has used stories, which were published in bulletins locally by JCTR, and uploaded them onto their website.

¹²⁴ The present Learning Study has a special focus on Sub Saharan Africa.

¹²⁵ The Catalysing Access to ICTs in Africa (CATIA) programme aims to enable poor people in Africa to gain maximum benefit from the opportunities offered by ICT and to act as a strong catalyst for reform. It supports a package of strategic activities to improve affordable access to the full range of ICTs, from Internet to community radio. CATIA is a three year programme of the Department for International Development (DFID) in close collaboration with other donors and players (e.g. Sida, IDRC, CIDA, USAID and Cisco). The CATIA programme consists of nine distinct component projects. See www.catia.ws.

¹²⁶ See www.dgroups.org.

¹²⁷ See www.iconnect-online.org.

¹²⁸ See http://www.dgroups.org/groups/IS/docs/IS_summary1_knowledgesociety.htm.

¹²⁹ Communication from Partha Pratim Sarker, moderator (www.bytesforall.org)

¹³⁰ OneWorld radio 2003, p. 15.

Box 7: Information with a human face gives the poor a voice

In partnership with the World Bank (WB), journalists from Malawi, Tanzania, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia have been trained in how to report stories on HIV/AIDS. The 6-month training course was facilitated by the WB and Panos SA using video conferencing. Journalists met in Distance Learning Centres (usually the local World Bank offices), for presentations, discussions, questions and answers. The journalists then undertook 3-month assignments. The learning process continues with WB support through the Media AIDS Communication Network, which coordinates project activities. The journalists write stories on HIV/AIDS as inserts to the national papers every month. The stories give a human face to HIV/AIDS and make the poor listened to.

Source: Barkworth 2003, chapter 5.2.6

ICTs enhance the effectiveness of alliance building and advocacy work. Radio, internet and e-mail are commonly used by the BDO partners in lobbying and advocacy work. ICTs have been used by the BDO partners to link both themselves and communities with the outside world. The internet has enabled Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to participate in networks, to effectively communicate and co-ordinate their activities, and to link local concerns to national and international issues. In Zambia, Afronet – a human rights organisation and partner of OWA – reports that their website has proved an excellent tool for spreading and archiving human rights alerts and press statements. The Government of Zambia is said to refer to NGOs¹³¹ because both organisations have the reputation of providing solid information that is internationally respected. This may have an impact on a solid African voice on the global scene. Less formal/institutionalised networking is done on an individual level. Quite a high proportion of Africans live abroad. Contacts maintained among family and friends not only contribute to the social well being of poor people, in many cases the people living abroad benefit from higher salaries and send money back or arrange for valuable contacts.¹³²

Example 1: BDO-supported activities created South-North as well as North-South linkages regarding the issue of drug patenting (TRIPs). Panos, in liaison with a medical advocacy coalition, targets policy makers at national and global levels on the cost reduction of HIV/AIDS drugs. The situation in Zambia: Panos London published 'Patents, pills and public health. Can TRIPs deliver?' in 2002. This publication aimed at providing the media, policy makers, civil society and other concerned groups with an introduction to the issues related to the international agreements on Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) and public health. A workshop on HIV/AIDS, Poverty and TRIPs was held in Zambia in 2002 to launch the publication.

Example 2: BDO partners¹³³ in Zambia were involved with the Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) discussion during the food crisis in Southern Africa. They were involved with stopping the distribution of GMO maize and argued that the long-term livelihoods of farmers were being protected by not allowing the GMO maize to be distributed. In hindsight, nobody starved and communities coped. Perhaps the use of ICT at the village level in an appropriate form could have helped to avoid the situation by, for example, providing a village level early warning system. The NGO position not to allow the distribution of GMO food until the necessary

¹³¹ Panos and JCTR.

¹³² See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 3.1.2.

¹³³ Panos and JCTR.

biosafety policy was in place was taken up by government¹³⁴. The international analysis prompted substantial local and regional activities with little global references.

At the global level, there is a danger that agenda setting is done by the Northern partners and that activities ultimately are top down. IICD's Global Teenager Project (GTP, see box 8) is an example of an activity that is attractive to the participating individuals. It brings students together in a virtual campus of over 200 schools worldwide. The GTP is working in seven schools in Zambia – five in Lusaka and two in the Copperbelt¹³⁵ – four in Mali¹³⁶ and in Uganda¹³⁷. In the few cases examined, it was rather a project for the elite¹³⁸ and will continue to be for as long as the government cannot ensure that a majority of the public schools can participate.

Box 8: Global Teenager – bridging global gaps, widening national divides

The Global Teenager project gives schools from all over the world the opportunity to participate in "Learning Circles" in a virtual classroom, in which they can communicate with each other online (via web or e-mail) and share information about specific topics. More than 200 schools worldwide are engaged. The major limitation for this cross-cultural learning opportunities is the infrastructure of schools as well as their internet connection. In Mali and Zambia these are only available in schools with students from privileged backgrounds¹³⁹. However, those that participate gain not only valuable knowledge about life in other parts of the world, but also basic IT skills. Depending on the training these include maintenance and basic problem fixing on computers, all of which will help later with job opportunities.

Source: Ndiaye 2003, chapter 6.1; Barkworth 2003, chapter 8.5

For more information on the project see: <http://www.iicd.org/virtualcampus/>

The limitations of internet access in Sub-Saharan Africa should be kept in mind when assigning pro-poor priorities in the next BDO phase. The BDO programme creates a number of products using the internet, as do Dgroups, iConnect, ictdevagenda. In today's African context, access to the internet is very restricted.. The OneWorld Radio members survey shows that, even with internet access, the poor IT infrastructure, including the slow speed of downloads and the lack of training, prevents members from using the audio exchange database effectively¹⁴⁰. Local partners in Zambia, instead of downloading from itrain online, asked for CDs or hard copies of the material¹⁴¹. The limitations of internet access, due to high costs and erratic connections, has been mentioned several times in Mali as well, where this is a major issue, named by all three visited telecentres.¹⁴² Even if there is a connection, many partners seem to be reluctant to use the possibilities offered by the internet. In Zambia, Youth Media knows about discussion groups and iTrain, but has not yet used them; Women for Change send contributions to OWI, but don't participate in e-mail discussions¹⁴³.

¹³⁴ Barkworth 2003, chapter 4.6, 6.2.

¹³⁵ Barkworth 2003, chapter 3.4.4.1 and Annex 5.

¹³⁶ Ndiaye 2003, chapter 1.2.

¹³⁷ Daxbacher 2003; <http://www.iicd.org/globalteenagers/>.

¹³⁸ In contrast to the Learning Study's experience, the IICD monitoring and evaluation tool got the following responses on the question "What is your household income related to other people in your country?": Below average 17%; average 79%; above average 4%. It is open how reliable answers to such a delicate and difficult question are.

¹³⁹ In the case of Zambia, the latest schools joining the network are two poor schools in highly impoverished urban areas of Lusaka; in other countries schools from a slum environment or Islamic girls classes participate. Source: IICD.

¹⁴⁰ OneWorld radio 2003, pp. 3, 13.

¹⁴¹ See Barkworth 2003, p. 29.

¹⁴² See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 3.1.

¹⁴³ See Barkworth 2003, pp.32.

BDO knowledge sharing should be done more strategically. For the Learning Study, the BDO partners submitted almost 90 documents to Gerster Consulting. Most of these documents are of strategic nature (such as information sheets, reports or programme descriptions). However, many of the reports have a regional or global relevance in terms of knowledge sharing and learning. In this respect the BDO programme has generated a wealth of material that is also of value outside of BDO and offers the opportunity to give it wider life. Knowledge sharing and learning have been an important part of BDO. They seem not only to have developed positively during the programme, but also mainly to have happened on specific occasions of collaboration or when perceiving differences among the BDO partners' concepts. In conclusion, with the recommendations that were made to the CATIA programme on the occasion of the BDO meeting of May 2003, the BDO programme should make use of this wealth of information in a more strategic manner.

6.3 Sustainability

The sustainability of BDO-supported partner operations is a major issue for long term success. Sustainability is not a static but a dynamic' concept of institutional functionality over time. Sustainability dimensions include institutional, staffing and financial concerns:

- ***Sustainable institutions:*** Ownership of the process by the local people is the basis for an institution to have the chance of becoming sustainable. The sustainability can be enhanced by well-targeted capacity building. In order to arrive at stable and interested users or audience, relevant local content has to be identified and inserted, strengthening the empowerment of the beneficiaries. Ultimately, it is the content that contributes to poverty reduction, whereas the financial side is just a precondition for sustainability. IICD¹⁴⁴ spends 75% of its resources and time on institution building and training of staff for local ownership and empowerment of their partners.
- ***Sustainable human resources:*** Training of key personnel is one issue, keeping the trained staff is another. Institutions, like community radios, working with volunteers¹⁴⁵ have a high turnover of staff, as the most capable ones are engaged by commercial stations. This fluctuation poses a problem for the institution but also has positive effects. The sustainability of cooperation is not ensured where everything depends on one or two people¹⁴⁶. When formalised procedures are weak or even lacking, the staff in charge fills the vacuum. It is very difficult to find out what to do for that one person, and finally (s)he relies a lot on feelings and personal experience¹⁴⁷.
- ***Financial sustainability***¹⁴⁸: Financial sustainability does not refer to profitability; the challenge of financial sustainability differs for non-profit organisations and commercial institutions. Usually, only a combination of public and private funding will secure sufficient resources to continue the programmes in the medium and

¹⁴⁴ IICD communication.

¹⁴⁵ Oral communication by Community Radio Moretele as well as Barkworth 2003, chapter 4.2.

¹⁴⁶ E.g. Afronet in Zambia, see <http://www.digitalopportunity.org/article/view/64870/1/4856>.

¹⁴⁷ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 1.3. IICD in Mali reported that among other issues, such as a change in the political environment, one major reason for the delay in work was due to human resource and their relationships with local partners.

¹⁴⁸ In discussions it has been recommended that financial sustainability should be defined differently for profit and not profit oriented programmes. See Ndiaye, chapter 6.3 for more details.

longer term. The recently published OWI case studies¹⁴⁹ of Southern Africa emphasise that financial sustainability is a key concern. A spirit of entrepreneurship is required to market the services rendered and to secure additional grant contributions. A careful cost-benefit analysis, including the transaction costs involved, is necessary to differentiate between priority programs and wishful thinking.

Donors are often faced with challenges in several, and sometimes contradictory, ways that can only be mastered by tailor made individual solutions. The Learning Study has identified the following sustainability related insights:

Sustainability requires systematic planning. Due to poor monitoring and lack of follow-up, women's groups in Apac (Uganda) became inactive after training and an initially good response on how to use the AMARC-supported community radio to express their needs. There is a need for systematic sustainability planning in cooperation with the BDO partners who may require technical assistance in sustainability planning methods, strategic alliance building, and policy advocacy to secure funding. IICD does not have permanent representatives¹⁵⁰ in the partner countries to avoid any destabilising disempowerment of local efforts; instead, it relies on local partners to follow up and monitor activities. According to IICD¹⁵¹, once proposals are formulated and accepted, all activities are based on long term formal contracts with project partners, or medium term agreements (2-3 years) with intermediary partners.

Sustainability can be undermined by donor dominance and aid dependency.

The Ugandan BDO partner, Straight Talk Foundation, and the radio drama series by Panos are entirely donor dependent. Generation of other sources of income – including tapping Government funds – is vital to have a chance of survival in the longer term. BDO programmes that are part of government programmes have a greater possibility of being sustainable, as they are mainstreamed into government programmes and budgets. In Uganda, the IICD facilitated BDO projects in Kyambogo University, the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry projects on e-commerce and the Ministry of Local Government projects on e-governance are such examples. Even with government support, the sustainability of projects remains a challenge, since governments often delay disbursements.

Sustainability is in danger where the programme is not an answer to felt needs of the partner and the necessity of the services provided may be in doubt and/or the information content is not adapted to the needs of the partners. Improvement in sustainability would have to come with programme management. One example is the method of OWI of using the internet as the main tool for distributing information, OWA has reported that though training material is available on the internet, via iTrain Online, many partners request a copy on CD. OWA has recently established itself as a separate organisation from OWI, which might give them more flexibility to adapt to the local needs.

Participation must lead to benefits for the participants in order to become sustainable. In Zambia's DTR programme, national level policy makers and experts

¹⁴⁹ See <http://www.digitalopportunity.org/article/frontpage/321/4853>.

¹⁵⁰ There is a contradicting statement in the Mali case study which is based on a misunderstanding. See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 1.2.

¹⁵¹ In contradiction, in the Zambia case study it is said there is no formal contract or Memorandum of Understanding between IICD and its local partners. See Barkworth 2003, chapter 7.3. It has to be assumed that this statement is based on incorrect information.

are asked to respond to the women's questions and discussions. Panos SAf reports that it consistently manages to obtain appointments with high-ranking officials for their comment. It should also be the responsibility of the producers, not only the local listeners, to follow up the responses to ensure that the promises are honoured with some action. If not, local participation will diminish and ultimately fail.

The sustainability/viability of telecentres depends partly on the implementation of government policy. A study, commissioned by e-Brain, shows that telecentres in rural areas of Zambia face the constraints noted elsewhere of poor infrastructure, inadequate entrepreneurship skills, expensive connections and subsequent low demand. In Mali, it has been reported that a careful follow-up is needed on the risks that IICD is facing by supporting telecentre loans.¹⁵² Telecentres are obviously high attractive to governments and donors because of their universal access policies, but they require a careful examination regarding cost-benefits and sustainability.

6.4 Gender

The majority of the poor are women. In relation to effective poverty reduction it is crucial to take gender aspects into account. The potential benefits of ICTs for women are widely acknowledged¹⁵³. At the community level, it has been said that community radios were of greater benefit to women than men, as radio required little skills to operate and broadcast. There were voices in Uganda talking even of the marginalisation of men¹⁵⁴. Communities interviewed in Uganda reported a significant change in attitudes.

In the three telecentres visited in Mali¹⁵⁵, all managers were men but women dominated the support staff. In Kita for instance, two women were in charge of training and customer care. Among beneficiaries, there were more men than women but the latter were better organised through their associations and an increasing number of women are becoming telecentre users. In Mali, IICD hired women coordinators for the Global Teenager Project and the Mali NTIC programmes, while the IICD', top position is held by a man.

Women for Change¹⁵⁶ is a Zambian NGO committed to working with, and empowering, remote rural communities, especially women, through gender analysis, popular education methodologies and advocacy to contribute towards the eradication of all forms of poverty. Women for Change staff members have participated in the OWA training programmes for website development and content. In Zambia's DTR¹⁵⁷ programme, run by Panos, women participate enthusiastically, despite high opportunity costs in terms of time and distance they travel. The benefits include improved access to, and provision of, information, and the community projects that have been identified and implemented as a result of the women's radio programmes. Increased access to, control, and use of the radio by women has resulted in empowerment of the women. This outcome could be enhanced if the DTR programme also provided the groups with several wind-up radios.

¹⁵² See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 3.1.1.

¹⁵³ See e.g. Daly 2003.

¹⁵⁴ Daxbacher 2003

¹⁵⁵ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 6.2.

¹⁵⁶ See Barkworth 2003, chapter 3.3.2.4.

¹⁵⁷ See Barkworth 2003, chapter 4.3.

Box 9: Targeting men in HIV/AIDS

In partnership with Panos London, Panos SAf assisted with the international publication 'Role of Men in HIV/AIDS', including a country specific publication for Zambia that has been in huge demand, (available on-line and in print). Panos SAf held workshops that discussed men's behaviour, social aspects of masculinity and traditional roles specific to their country. Based on these publications and workshops, and in partnership with UNAIDS and SAFAIDS, Panos SAf facilitated an awareness campaign that made the role of men central to the fight against HIV/AIDS. Social issues were addressed and men – previously a neglected group in the fight against HIV – became central to the discussion. Previously, HIV/AIDS had been considered a health issue more of concern to women. As a result of the campaign, there are more activities targeting men. For example, trucking companies are now allowing wives to join men on long haul journeys. This shows that a target audience as well as stakeholders relevant to that target audience can be well reached by providing information with a combination of ICTs, as well as additional activities such as workshops.

Source: Barkworth 2003, 5.2.2

The BDO programme and its local partners cannot ignore the existing cultural situation and the power relations between men and women. This reality came to light on various occasions:

- Men often own and/or control access to ICTs like radio and mobile phones that reduce the effectiveness of BDO information programmes (Uganda);
- Due to a low intake in formal education up to university, only few women among health students are involved in ICT projects (Mali).

Efforts for gender sensitive programming have been made by all BDO partners in terms of ensuring that both men and women participate in development programmes. Overall, the promotion of gender equality in relation to poverty reduction has not lost its importance and remains a major cross-cutting issue for the continuation of the BDO programme.

6.5 Technology

The Learning Study found that the appropriateness and effectiveness of ICTs used largely depends on the context¹⁵⁸. What issues are addressed? What audience is targeted? Where is the target audience located? What is its level of knowledge and skills on ICTs applications? Traditional ICTs such as radio and telephony were found to be more broadly applicable than other technologies.

The BDO programme should explore ways of promoting livelihoods, using the potential of mobile telephony combined with other ICTs¹⁵⁹. Mobile telephony is a success story: in many African countries the number of mobile subscribers exceeds those linked to the fixed net. For both the fixed-net telephone and the mobile phones, infrastructure and affordability are the main limiting factors of coverage. There is a possibility of networking with Foodnet, which has developed an online system using mobile telephony for farmers to access price information via messages (SMS). Information on commodity prices can easily be sent via teletext. Wireless internet may seem a highly advanced technology but such a combination of mobile phones with internet is seen for developing countries as an "appropriate technology

¹⁵⁸ See e.g. Daxbacher 2003, chapter 6.4.

¹⁵⁹ See e.g. ITU, Internet for a Mobile Generation, Geneva 2002.

given the high penetration of mobile phones and low internet penetration¹⁶⁰. Although this will be restricted to those who have phones and are literate, a significant number of beneficiaries could be reached. The mobile telephone services of MTN (Ugandan telephony provider) are widespread even in remote rural areas. However, the poor cannot yet utilise this opportunity fully, due to their inability to purchase a mobile telephone set and pay service fees and airtime costs, and their lack of skills to use pay phones that have been installed in many locations.

Ambitious ICT programmes focusing on the internet run the danger of replicating or even reinforcing the digital divide at the national level instead of bridging it. The lack of technological and affordable access to the internet is a major obstacle in rural Africa. In the case of the Non Governmental Organisation Coordinating Committee (NGOCC) in Zambia¹⁶¹, a OWA partner, only about 10 of the 73 NGOCC members have access to the internet, so local members generally are not (yet) able to access a website. Also, for other partners, like Women for Change, connectivity is a problem due to poor infrastructure. Those BDO partners in Zambia who based their programme on the internet alone have not been as successful as planned and run the risk of reinforcing the digital divide between rich and poor and rural and urban¹⁶². OWA notes that their programme was based on a strategy to use the internet, which was inherited from OWI. While this might have been appropriate for the north, it was not necessarily appropriate for facilitating African content and voice on the global scene. OWA has redesigned their strategy so that their programme has a wider focus than website development, content and management. The OWA activities are now based on the information needs and responses of those organisations working with HIV/AIDS.

In relation to poverty reduction, the internet can be an attractive tool for advocacy purposes. In Uganda, internet and e-mail were cited as being crucial in organisational administrative efficiency, networking, alliance building and advocacy work¹⁶³. Most CSOs interviewed cited e-mail as a very important tool in their work. They also utilise websites for advocacy campaigns on debt relief, death sentence, rights of children and fund raising. The poor are often not involved in defining their information needs themselves in order to get relevant answers. In most cases the BDO partners present the issues and answers on their websites and for their networks. So the target group is mostly represented by the CSOs. In the case of websites of CSOs, the information provided in the net is in English, not in the local languages..

Given its limitations in the context of rural regions in Sub-Saharan Africa, television can be used only as a complementary advocacy tool to reach the elite. It has a very limited audience¹⁶⁴ that is concentrated in urban areas and restricted to those who can afford sets. Its target audience is mostly the educated and elite. It is, therefore the least appropriate technology in direct poverty oriented programmes using ICTs. The advantage of television is that policy makers and other CSOs members can easily be reached, since news hours and talk shows are listened to by most policy and decision makers. In Uganda, BDO partners mostly use Uganda Television, a nationally owned station, and WBS, a private station.

¹⁶⁰ Minges 2003.

¹⁶¹ See Barkworth 2003, chapter 3.3.2.2.

¹⁶² Barkworth 2003, chapter 7.2.1.

¹⁶³ Daxbacher 2003, chapter 6.4.3.

¹⁶⁴ Daxbacher 2003, chapter 6.4.5.

An overwhelming majority of people interviewed identified radio as the most appropriate and cost effective means of promoting information and communication for development. The speedy development of the radio sector, from having one government station in Uganda to having 115 privately owned radio stations, reinforced the argument. Mali, too, has an impressive record of community and private radio stations (presently around 170, of which 115 are registered and recognised by the government¹⁶⁵). Despite the positive record of community radios in Sub Saharan Africa, inadequate infrastructure and limited staff skills set narrow limits to the success story. The community radio staff have not yet reached the stage of developing their own content for broadcasting and rely on district and NGO programmes. The challenge is in promoting development programmes in the very aggressive entertainment world of the numerous city based FM stations. Often, coverage is very limited for technical and financial reasons. Also beneficiary involvement in content formulation is often far from ideal.

Box 10: Champion of effectiveness: Community Radio

Community radios can be an answer to many pressing problems local communities face. Radio Apac in Uganda has enhanced communication and dissemination of information with the following results:

- benefits in agricultural production,
- increased turnout for immunisation,
- higher voter attendance at elections,
- strongly reduced corruption,
- improved security.

However, these impressive results are negatively affected by two main issues: inadequate infrastructure (the transmission capacity of 300kw only covers 35 km, regular power failures) and insufficient staff skills. The two are also closely related – staff training is most efficient if it happens in relation to the available infrastructure. It would require upgrading its transmission capacity from 300kw to 3000kw to adequately cover the entire district.

Source: Daxbacher 2003, chapter 3.3

For more information on the project see: <http://interconnection.org/radioapac/home.htm>

The combination of the internet with other ICTs, radio in particular, has a significant potential also for poverty reduction purposes. Radio and internet, radio and print media, radio and mobile phones, print media and internet, print media and e-mail were all combinations that were encountered during the Learning Study for enhancing the opportunities for poverty reduction. In Zambia, the convergence of the internet with community radio was identified by several partners covered by the Learning Study as an important development to explore for Africa¹⁶⁶. Far from making radio less important, the internet is opening up new possibilities. The potential has been eloquently described in the form of case studies¹⁶⁷. There are chains of indirect links from the community level to the global level and back, so that even without direct access of the poor the internet can positively or negatively impact on their livelihoods. A telling example of how information and treatment costs can be substantially reduced is the telemedicine project in Mali¹⁶⁸.

Box 11: Diversity of services at telecentres

¹⁶⁵ See Ndiaye 2003, chapter 1.3.

¹⁶⁶ AMARC, OWA, IICD and Panos SAf are working together on a programme called 'Catalysing Access to Technology in Africa' (CATIA), based on this philosophy. See www.catia.ws.

¹⁶⁷ FAO 2003.

¹⁶⁸ Ndiaye 2003, chapter 4.

Despite a mixed track record¹⁶⁹ and the well known difficulties with internet connections (high costs as well as unreliable services), telecentres remain a practical option in the complex field of ICTs: one centralised point of access. Since internet access alone rarely makes a profit, a high diversity of services is usually offered: telephony, photocopy, printing, publishing, distribution of horse racing wager bulletins or training, to name only a few. Independent of the BDO programme, a dozen multipurpose learning and information centres (CLICs) are planned across the country. But not only diversity in services is needed, innovation and initiative is also required when acquiring customers. One of the telecentres visited in Mali has the monopoly to provide internet access to the nearby military camp, another established a partnership with the municipality to train its staff in typing and sending out official documents, such as birth certificates. Therefore, capacity building is needed not only in terms of technological know how and/or infrastructure, but equally important is training in marketing and entrepreneurship. The telecentres in Fana, Kita and Koulikoro were started by three private entrepreneurs after an IICD roundtable.

Source: Ndiaye 2003, chapter 3.1

Box 12: Successful combination of ICTs for young people

Both in Uganda and Zambia the approach of using a combination of ICTs and working with schools and other relevant local institutions in the health field has proved to be very effective for the local youth. This had direct results in terms of impact: there has been reported improvement in health services, change in sexual behaviour of students, as well as decreased rates of transmission of sexually transmitted diseases. So the information provided in the newspapers or on the internet not only enables the young to protect themselves, it also gives them a voice and allows them to demand services. In addition, it presents young people with opportunities to gather work experiences and specific skills. For one former staff member the story continued like a fairy tale: she continued to work on the oneworld AIDS channel and is now with MTV London.

Source: Daxbacher 2003, chapter 5.3; Barkworth 2003, chapter 5

For more information on the project see: <http://www.straight-talk.or.ug> and <http://www.youthmedia.org.zm>

Considering ICTs as a tool and not an end in itself, an integrated approach beyond technology, is absolutely essential. BDO partners were aware of that when creating the programme. But experience again confirms the key character of this insight. In Uganda, the government's ICT draft policy is almost exclusively concerned with technical issues. It should be widened, after a broad consultation procedure, to reflect social concerns. It is evident that linkages of farmers to existing development programmes can produce added value to the BDO programme on information dissemination. Farmers find that they can do more with the information being given by BDO if complementary services, such as financial schemes and follow-up, are also offered¹⁷⁰. This makes linkages of the ICT policy and the BDO programme with major government schemes, such as the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO), and NGO programmes inevitable.

BDO partners should keep partners updated on technological developments that are of pro-poor relevance. Technological development¹⁷¹ is very fast and it is difficult for local partners to be regularly and professionally informed on innovations that arrive at the market. Updating on technological innovations should include promising combinations of different ICTs. To arrive at a sustainable flow of information, a pool of local experts should be created, or strengthened, by BDO partners. People should be advisors who have an interest in, and understanding of, both social and technological issues.

¹⁶⁹ Among many, see Caspary/O'Connor 2003, pp. 9-11.

¹⁷⁰ Daxbacher 2003, chapter 3.4.

¹⁷¹ For an overview on technology options for rural ICT access see Caspary/O'Connor 2003, pp. 13-19.

BDO action line 4¹⁷² provides the link between ICTs and poverty by asking for increased awareness regarding the development potential of ICTs among the development stakeholders. depending on who is defined to be a development stakeholder, This has very different implications. In the case of the poor themselves, ICTs (mainly radio and mobile phones) seem to be used effectively, in relation to the existing possibilities and skills, and the poor are aware of the potential of ICTs ("Apac radio is like god here. Communities take radio news as gospel truth."¹⁷³) Hardly an organisation would like to do without the efficiency of e-mail. However, a lack of awareness has been identified at the management level of local organisations. On the global level the awareness of ICTs in development is there – endless discussions on mailing lists show the timeliness of the issue.

7 Recommendations

The background to these recommendations is the **overall positive appreciation** of the BDO effort. Through various channels, and with a multitude of partners, BDO provides important ICT-focused support to development and poverty reduction. BDO is not about technology transfer to developing countries but about strengthening local skills and capacities to live a decent life in a fast-changing world, with ICTs offering untapped opportunities. BDO is a framework for locally owned ICT livelihood projects, for ICT regulation and training activities, as well as media development with an emphasis on accessible media, like community radio. This manifold operational backbone makes BDO a unique platform for exchange of experience and learning. It is important to continue with the BDO cooperation and to enhance the pro poor effectiveness by learning from the past.

Because the basic philosophy behind BDO is valid, BDO's five **strategic objectives** ("action lines") are an excellent pattern of orientation also for the future. In presenting our recommendations, we follow the five action lines¹⁷⁴.

Action line 1: The capacities of regional, national and local policy makers to formulate and establish effective ICT policies and regulatory frameworks are strengthened.

- **Recommendation 1: Strengthening the capacities of regional, national and local policy makers to formulate and establish effective ICT policies and regulatory frameworks should be supplemented by strengthening informed civil society advocacy with the same purpose.**
- **Recommendation 2: Capacity building for policy makers, as well as for civil society, should include a major focus on shaping effective ICT policies and regulatory frameworks with an explicit pro poor focus.**
- **Recommendation 3: Capacity building interventions should be tailor-made, responding to the local situation and needs and systematically involving local institutions and consultants.**

¹⁷² The awareness by development stakeholders regarding the development potentials of ICTs is increased.

¹⁷³ See Daxbacher 2003, chapter 3.3.

¹⁷⁴ In some cases, the recommendations could be put under several headings.

Action line 2: Local organisations are enabled to effectively apply ICTs for the benefit of poor people.

- **Recommendation 4: To make effective use of ICTs for pro poor outcomes, BDO partners should apply an integrated approach when choosing, designing and implementing a programme, paying particular attention to sustainability and the choice of technology.**
- **Recommendation 5: BDO partners should ensure adequate project management capacities, including monitoring and follow-up capacity, to contribute to a sustainable partnership and to keep the difference between pro- poor promises and delivery at a minimum.**
- **Recommendation 6: When choosing local partners, BDO should value their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to shape a programmatic portfolio.**

Action line 3: The capacities of local, community, media, and public interest organisations to express themselves, nationally and internationally, through the use of new and traditional ICTs, are strengthened.

- **Recommendation 7: BDO partners should acknowledge the experience that community radio is effective and cost-effective in a remote and poverty stricken environment and assign priority to this medium.**
- **Recommendation 8: BDO partners are encouraged to build on high participation of clients (listeners etc.) in the supported programmes to ensure relevant content and a broad audience, and vice versa¹⁷⁵.**
- **Recommendation 9: In order to encourage local initiatives and enable capacity building, BDO partners should be cautious when formulating global projects.**

Action line 4: The awareness by development stakeholders regarding the development potentials of ICTs is increased.

- **Recommendation 10: BDO partners should make sure that the management of their in-country partner organisations has visions related to the use of ICTs, and acknowledges and mainstreams their development potential.**
- **Recommendation 11: BDO partners should provide advice and support for combinations of old and new ICTs, as well as of technical innovations up to pilot projects that can be relevant for poverty reduction.**

¹⁷⁵ In Mali, where the Keneya Blown website is specialised on health and HIV/AIDS, the quality of the content notably increases participation on the website (students from health department, doctors and others), and it also creates interactivity among them. Community radio is usually started by people from the community, not by outsiders, which means there is already ownership and participation. The question is, how do you keep it. When interactivity between radio and listeners/community is kept, then the needs are evolving.

- ***Recommendation 12: BDO donors and implementing partners should make an effort to tie into and mainstream ICTs in the PRSP design, implementation, evaluation and the upcoming revisions.***

Action line 5: The relationships and alliances among BDO and other partners are made more effective.

- ***Recommendation 13: BDO partners should continue their efforts in supporting national coordinating ICT networks by enhancing their capacities, in particular strengthening their strategic thinking in view of poverty reduction.***
- ***Recommendation 14: BDO – as a cooperation model – should intensify internal cooperation¹⁷⁶ and share its wealth of experience and knowledge on ICTs4D and poverty reduction more deliberately at the national, regional and global level.***
- ***Recommendation 15: BDO – donors, implementing and in-country partners – should use their expertise to take a coordinated pro poor stance at the multilateral level, including the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS¹⁷⁷).***

¹⁷⁶ It may be interesting to note that Beaton's internal assessment concluded: "For a stronger, more coordinated BDO partnership, partners will need to share resources and contacts, dovetail projects and build greater links with Southern NGOs and civil society". Beaton 2003, p. 56.

¹⁷⁷ The International Development Committee of the House of Commons, United Kingdom, recommended to the British Government to do more in GATS negotiations "to guarantee that the right to regulate will include the right to regulate for pro poor development and poverty reduction" (IDC 2003, p. 3).

8 Annexes

Annex 1: Abbreviations

AISI	Africa Information Society Initiative
AMARC	Association of Community Radio Broadcasters
ARV	Anti Retro-Viral (Drugs)
BDO	Building Digital Opportunities
CAZ	Communications Authority of Zambia
CATIA	Catalising Access to ICTs in Africa
CDF	Comprehensive Development Framework
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSO/s	Civil Society Organisation/s
CSPR	Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (Zambia)
CTO	Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
DGIS	Directorate-General for Development Cooperation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
DTR	Development through Radio
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GMO	Genetically Modified Organisms
GOU	Government of Uganda
GTP	Global Teenager Project
ICT/s	Information and Communication Technology/ies
IDC	International Development Committee
IDTs	International Development Targets
IICD	International Institute for Communication and Development
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JCTR	Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NGOCC	Non Governmental Organisation Coordinating Committee
NRM	Natural Resource Management
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OWA	OneWorld Africa
OWI	OneWorld International
Panos SAf	Panos Southern Africa
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan (Uganda)
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SAFAIDS	Southern Africa AIDS Information Dissemination Service

SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SMS	Short Message System
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
STF	Straight Talk Foundation
TOR	Terms of Reference
TRASA	Telecommunications Regulators' Association of Southern Africa
TRIPs	Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights
UCC	Uganda Communications Commission
UDN	Uganda Debt Network
UDS	Uganda Development Services
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
WB	World Bank
WSIS	World Summit on the Information Society
ZIMA	Zambian Independent Media Association

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Annex 3: Statistical data for Case Study Countries and Region

Part 1: Communication data

If not otherwise indicated, all data is taken from ITU webpages, <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/>

	Mali	Uganda	Zambia	Southern Africa
<i>Population (mio)</i>	11.6	24.7	10.7	
<i>GDP per capita (US\$)</i>	236	224	312	
<i>° Daily newspaper (per 1'000 inhabitants)</i>	1	2	12	12
<i>Main telephone lines per 100 households</i>	1.96	1.35	3.10	
<i>Number of mobile phones (per 100 inhabitants)</i>	0.44	1.59	1.3	
<i>Total telephone subscribers (per 100 inhabitants)</i>	0.92	1.81	2.13	
<i>Estimated PCs (per 100 inhabitants)</i>	0.13	0.29	0.75	
<i>Internet Hosts (per 10'000 inhabitants)</i>	0.15	0.91	1.03	
<i>Internet Users (per 10'000 inhabitants)</i>	28.85	25.18	49.01	
<i>* Radio broadcast stations</i>	1 AM 28 FM 1 shortwave	7 AM 33 FM 2 shortwave	19 AM 5 FM 4 shortwave	
<i>* Television broadcast stations</i>	1	8	9	
<i>Television receiver (per 100 inhabitants)</i>	1.4	2.7	13.4	

* from The World Fact Book 2002: <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/>

° from the World Bank: <http://www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2002/pdfs/table%205-10.pdf>

Part 2: MDG data

All data is from World Development Indicators database, April 2002, <http://www.developmentgoals.org/Data.htm#CT>.

	Mali (2000)	Uganda (2000)	Zambia (2000)	Sub-Saharan Africa (2000)
1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	<i>2015 target = halve 1990 \$1 a day poverty and malnutrition rates</i>			
<i>Population below \$1 a day (%)</i>	72.8 (1995)	82.2 (1995)	63.7	48.1
<i>Poverty gap at \$1 a day (%)</i>	37.4 (1995)	40.1 (1995)	32.7	..
<i>Percentage share of income or consumption held by poorest 20%</i>	4.6 (1995)	7.1 (1995)	3.3	..
<i>Prevalence of child malnutrition (% of children under 5)</i>	26.9 (1995)	23.0	23.5 (1995)	..
<i>Population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption (%)</i>	20.0	21.0	50.0	32.9
2 Achieve universal primary education	<i>2015 target = net enrollment to 100</i>			
<i>Net primary enrollment ratio (% of relevant age group)</i>	43.3	109.5	65.5	..
<i>Percentage of cohort reaching grade 5 (%)</i>	94.5	..	80.6	..
<i>Youth literacy rate (% ages 15-24)</i>	37.1 (2001)	79.4 (2001)	88.7 (2001)	78.0
3 Promote gender equality	<i>2005 target = education ratio to 100</i>			
<i>Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education (%)</i>	66.3	88.9	92.4	..
<i>Ratio of young literate females to males (% ages 15-24)</i>	54.0 (2001)	85.0 (2001)	94.6 (2001)	88.9
<i>Share of women employed in the nonagricultural sector (%)</i>	...	..	..	..
<i>Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (%)</i>	12.0 (2001)	18.0 (2001)	10.0 (2001)	..
4 Reduce child mortality	<i>2015 target = reduce 1990 under 5 mortality by two-thirds</i>			
<i>Under 5 mortality rate (per 1,000)</i>	231.0 (2001)	124.0 (2001)	202.0	170.6
<i>Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)</i>	141.0 (2001)	79.0 (2001)	112.0	105.4

	Mali (2000)	Uganda (2000)	Zambia (2000)	Sub-Saharan Africa (2000)
<i>Immunization, measles (% of children under 12 months)</i>	37.0 (2001)	61.0 (2001)	85.0	57.8
5 Improve maternal health <i>2015 target = reduce 1990 maternal mortality by three-fourths</i>				
<i>Maternal mortality ratio (modeled estimate, per 100,000 live births)</i>	630.0 (1995)	1'100 (1995)	870.0 (1995)	..
<i>Births attended by skilled health staff (% of total)</i>	46.0 (1995)	37.8 (1995)	46.5 (1995)	..
6 Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases <i>2015 target = halt, and begin to reverse, AIDS etc.</i>				
<i>Prevalence of HIV, female (% ages 15-24)</i>	2.1 (2001)	4.6 (2001)	21.01 (2001)	9.3
<i>Contraceptive prevalence rate (% of women ages 15-49)</i>	7.0 (1995)	14.8 (1995)	25.9 (1995)	
<i>Number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS</i>	70'000	880'000 (2001)	570'000 (2001)	..
<i>Incidence of tuberculosis (per 100,000 people)</i>	267.1	351.0	529.2	..
<i>Tuberculosis cases detected under DOTS (%)</i>	17.0	50.0	..	..
7 Ensure environmental sustainability <i>2015 target = various</i>				
<i>Forest area (% of total land area)</i>	10.8	21.3	42.0	..
<i>Nationally protected areas (% of total land area)</i>	3.7	9.7	8.6	..
<i>GDP per unit of energy use (PPP \$ per kg oil equivalent)</i>	..	..	1.2	..
<i>CO2 emissions (metric tons per capita)</i>	0.0	0.1	0.2	..
<i>Access to an improved water source (% of population)</i>	65.0	52.0	64.0	..
<i>Access to improved sanitation (% of population)</i>	69.0	79.0	78.0	..
<i>Access to secure tenure (% of population)</i>	..	..	..	..
8 Develop a Global Partnership for Development <i>2015 target = various</i>				
<i>Youth unemployment rate (% of total labor force ages 15-24)</i>	..	..	..	..
<i>Fixed line and mobile telephones (per 1,000 people)</i>	8.2	17.2 (2001)	19.4 (2001)	40.6
<i>Personal computers (per 1,000 people)</i>	1.2	3.1 (2001)	7.0 (2001)	9.9

Annex 4: Summaries of electronic surveys

Both surveys were conducted for this Learning Study.

Part 1: Simbani News Agency Correspondents Course (AMARC)

Summary

With the aim of building a network of local correspondents for the Simbani News Agency, AMARC conducted three regional training courses in May and June 2003 (two in Johannesburg and one in Ouagadougou). For this Learning Study, 25 participants of two of these courses were contacted (both in French and in English) and asked to answer five short questions in relation to the workshop and its relevance for their work. Ten surveys from as many different countries were returned. The thematic focus of the workshop was related to food security issues, due to a collaboration between AMARC and FAO. The other key issue was to train the participants on reporting and production skills.

Main findings from the survey include:

- Out of ten stations, seven are preparing a broadcast on food security issues for the World Food Day, one of them has not previously addressed issues of food security.
- Out of ten stations, eight have previously addressed issues of food security.
- All stations are using local content in food-related broadcasting.
- Six replies indicate the usefulness of the workshop to be 50% or more.
- Half of the participants did not indicate that attending the workshop increased cooperation between stations.

Introduction

AMARC Africa is in the process of establishing Simbani News agency, which aims to be an information source for grassroots and general media, as well as a strategic partner for development agencies, institutions, NGOs etc.¹⁷⁸ At the moment it is functioning for special occasions such as Press Freedom Day and World Food Day, but the goal is to operate on a daily or weekly basis. Such an agency relies on capable local correspondents. With this need in mind, AMARC Africa conducted three training sessions, two in English in Johannesburg (May and June 2003) and one in French in Ouagadougou (May 2003). For the regional aspect of the Learning Study, 25 participants have been contacted and asked to fill in a short survey. The following information is based on the ten answers received (seven in French and three in English).

Relevance

¹⁷⁸ AMARC Africa, News Agency Correspondents Training Report, internal document, May 2003.

The relevance of the findings for this Learning Study is twofold: On one hand, it addresses the regional and global dimension of BDO activities. The workshops were conducted with participants from Southern, Eastern and Western Africa. One reason for bringing local correspondents from different countries together was to increase cooperation among radio stations and correspondents in these regions as well as to promote the exchange of information. The global dimension will become more relevant in the long term: Simbani News Agency aims not only to support information exchange within Africa, but to be a credible information source for the media and therefore also being a voice from the South providing information to the North. In this respect it is interesting to note that the initial nature of the AMARC and FAO partnership seems to have changed. While in an article of December 2001¹⁷⁹, it seems that the dissemination of information provided by FAO was at the centre of the news agency, the distribution of information from the grassroots now seems to be at least equally important.

The second point of relevance comes from the content of the training. Food security is a key issue when discussing livelihoods. Furthermore, the training in production skills is capacity building, which is the crosscutting issue of this Learning Study. However, since this has been addressed in the case studies, and the global dimension is too early to be looked at, the survey focused on the regional dimension.

Food security

One of the general objectives of the training was to capacitate participants on food security information. Out of the ten stations which replied to the survey, eight are now preparing a broadcast on the occasion of the upcoming World Food Day on October 16. Many of those preparing broadcasts seem to address issues related to food security regularly, especially issues that are relevant in their communities. However, given that only five stations said they were preparing broadcasts on food security issues for other opportunities than October 16, it seems that food security issues are well integrated into everyday programming. The two stations that were not preparing a programme for this October have previously addressed issues of food security. Out of the ten stations that answered the survey, only two had not addressed the issue of food security before attending the workshop. One of these two stations is now preparing a programme on the topic for the World Food Day, with the other station it is not clear.

These results indicate that the topic of food security is one that has been on the radio stations' agenda already before attending the training. It would be interesting, therefore, to know whether participating in the training increased the quality of the broadcasts. However, from the information available, any improvement/change is difficult to judge, since it had not been directly requested in the survey. In terms of using local content, many stations indicate that they already used local content in preparing their programmes (localising information as well as using local information sources has been an aspect of the correspondence course, since Simbani will give precedence to local content¹⁸⁰).

Networking

¹⁷⁹ FAO News and Highlights, Internet: <http://www.fao.org/News/2001/011205-e.htm>.

¹⁸⁰ AMARC Africa, News Agency Correspondents Training Report, internal document, May 2003.

"To facilitate the process of sharing knowledge among community radios in Africa"¹⁸¹ has been one of the general objectives of the training. However, none of the stations that replied to the survey explicitly stated that attending the course had led to an increase of exchange and cooperation between theirs and other radio stations. Some of them indicated that there was some form of cooperation with other radio stations, as well as with other local organisations. However, it is unclear to what extent this cooperation existed already for a longer time (and maybe received a new impulse thanks to the course) or if they have been initiated because of inputs received at the course. Of the stations that were given as examples for cooperation none attended the course. So it seems that there was no new cooperation between stations that attended the course.

Usefulness of the course

The participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they had been able to apply solutions that were discussed in Johannesburg, on a given scale from 0% to 100%. Six indicated 50% or less and three indicated 67%. Many comments given under this question give an idea of the technical difficulties that many radio stations face every day. It is not only lacking or broken infrastructure that hinders effective broadcasting, but also other issues, such as licensing, lack of logistical support or funds. It also needs to be borne in mind that the participants' perspective on the usefulness of the workshop might change over time (some indicated this in their replies) and that it is too soon to judge.

Together with information gathered from interviews and documents, the usefulness of a regional training course for news correspondents seems to be limited. A key issue in such a course is the technology used. When one looks at the specific objectives of the course for each module, purely technical questions (e.g. use of the internet or of Cool Edit) or questions that are based on infrastructure (e.g. planning and production) make up a large part of the programme. Considering that all studios work with different equipment, it makes little sense to train them on equipment that they might not know. The main argument for bringing them together is the networking, which seems not to have been fulfilled in this particular course¹⁸². To some extent though, this judgement seems to be shared by AMARC, as they say that individual training in stations is the most effective.¹⁸³

Part 2: Universal Access and Rural Connectivity Regional Workshop (TRASA, ITU and CTO)

Summary

One of the central functions of TRASA is to make recommendations on policy guidelines. Another key element is the organisation and implementation of regional workshops with the aim of building capacity among policy makers and regulators in Southern Africa. This is often done in partnership with CTO and ITU. In July 2002

¹⁸¹ AMARC Africa, News Agency Correspondents Training Report, internal document, May 2003.

¹⁸² However again it needs to be borne in mind that the survey was done very shortly after the course, so it might also be too early to assess this aspect since the need has not yet arisen for collaboration.

¹⁸³ Oral communication by Nkopane Maphiri.

TRASA, ITU and CTO organised a workshop around the issue of universal access and rural connectivity in Tanzania. For this Learning Study forty participants have been contacted and were asked to answer five short questions in relation to the workshop and its relevance for their respective country's regulatory environment and their work. Thirteen surveys from eight different countries were returned.

Main findings from the survey include:

- TRASA policies are being implemented in varying degrees: some countries had policies in place before the workshop was held and were not influenced by it, others are in the process of planning policies and three are in the process of implementing/harmonising some of their policies with TRASA's.
- Five participants state explicitly that the workshop led to a change in universal service and rural connectivity policies. The same number say that their policies were at least influenced or confirmed by attending the workshop.
- Ten participants say that they were able to use 50% or more of what they learnt at the workshop in their work.
- A majority of the participants see a positive relationship between attending the workshop and the cooperation among regulators in the region.

Introduction

TRASA' as an association of independent national telecommunications regulators, has limited or no implementation power in respect to the guidelines they elaborate. That is up to the respective regulators of each country. Therefore, one of the main goals of TRASA is to empower its members, based on the assumption that informed and empowered regulators will implement adequate regulation. TRASA sees itself as a "catalyst to regulators and policy makers in the region by providing sound, harmonised model regulations and model policies aimed at attractive and sustainable economic development of the telecommunications industry."¹⁸⁴ Apart from USAID, CTO and ITU are important partners for TRASA, especially when it comes to capacity building. Every year they jointly implement several workshops. In July 2002 they held a workshop on Universal Access and Rural Connectivity in Tanzania. For this Learning Study, forty participants of the workshop were contacted and asked to answer five questions. The following analysis is based on the thirteen answers received from participants of eight different countries.

Relevance

As the name suggests, TRASA – Telecommunications Regulators Association of Southern Africa – is active on a regional level. The region of Southern Africa is a diverse market with segmented parts. Therefore, a regional actor, such as TRASA, has an important function in shaping the creation of unified regulations etc. (which among others will also make the region more attractive for investment). Furthermore, TRASA is dealing with regulators whose decisions have a direct relevance for poverty reduction (e.g. availability of frequencies, costs of licensing – see also chapter 6.1 for a pro poor regulatory environment). Regulatory issues are a key element of an overall enabling environment and well-informed decision makers who are aware of the consequences their policies have, could make major contributions towards using ICTs for poverty reduction.

¹⁸⁴ TRASA Mission Statement, Internet:
<http://www.trasa.org/article.php?articleid=1§name=aboutus&deptid=29>.

Universal access and rural connectivity

As part of the workshop, model policies on universal access were presented and discussed. The objectives of the TRASA policy guidelines include the delivery of affordable, equitable, good quality and efficient information and communication services to everyone, as well as the empowerment of disadvantaged people to have such services on an equitable basis. In this respect, the survey tried to establish the relationship between the model guidelines and the state of implementation one year after the workshop in Tanzania. It seems that Tanzania, Mozambique and Zimbabwe are implementing the TRASA policies on a universal service fund, as well as on introducing mandatory service obligations on licensed operators. However, Tanzania had done so already before the workshop. The same was true for Uganda, but the workshop helped to reflect on the management. Others said they would "use TRASA policies as a guide" (Botswana) – But to what extent? Hardly any countries seem to encourage community participation in ICT service provision; only Botswana and Tanzania are considering it. The same two countries report activities besides those discussed above, such as conducting consultative workshops on universal service or promotion, demonstration and incentive regulation.

So, overall, one can say that a year after the workshop the content input does not seem to have had major impacts. It is mainly used in processes already happening but hardly creates new initiatives.

Networking

When asked about the influence of the workshop on the regional cooperation, only one person stated that the quality of the cooperation was not affected at all. Two saw little connection or found it difficult to say. This leaves nine people who judged that attending the workshop influenced the regional cooperation positively, from saying it "brought common understanding of issues"¹⁸⁵ to praising it as an "invaluable opportunity for networking."¹⁸⁶ It seems that the participants are aware of the relevance of cooperation in the region and make use of the opportunities such workshops offer. This might also be affected by the content of the topic: regulatory issues are complex and have many consequences, also for regional and/or international cooperation. Therefore, an early coordination among those involved is helpful (this is not necessarily the case in the previously discussed AMARC training, where the focus is more on the individual reporter/station and collaboration is not of such high relevance).

Usefulness of the course

Ten of the participants were able to apply 50% or more from the issues discussed at workshop in their daily work. Furthermore, seven people said that other relevant input (besides universal access and rural connectivity, which were the focus of the workshop) in terms of ICT and poverty reduction policies was given at the workshop. Examples include questions of ownership, participation, investment, and good governance. However, some also said that at the moment they are still idea(l)s, but have not yet turned into reality.

On an individual level, participation in this workshop seemed to be useful. Several people said that their increased knowledge had led to new status, such as this

¹⁸⁵ Participant from Tanzania.

¹⁸⁶ Participant from Malawi.

participant from Tanzania: "I am now regarded as a potential resource person and my level of articulation on these issues has improved."

Documents from the workshop can be found under.

<http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/treg/Events/Seminars/2002/Tanzania/documents.html>

Annex 5: List of people consulted for the Learning Study

Mali

1. Mr. Marcellin Issiaka Traoré, Kati Community Radio Belekan
2. Mr. Boubacar Kanté, Manager Afribone
3. Ms. Haby Diallo, Kati Community Radio Belekan
4. Mr. Maïga Mohamadou Talata, Maison de la Presse
5. Mr. Bréhima Diallo, JCE Koulikoro
6. Mr. Adama Soumaré, Manager Fana Telecentre
7. Mr. Ousmane Berté, Manager Datatech
8. Mr. Xavier Gillot, Axe formation Penserpouragir.org
9. Dr. Cissé Djita Dem, National Council of Order of Pharmacists
10. Mr. Mohamed Doumbia, SchoolNet Mali
11. Miss Bintou Ly, Coordinator Global Teenager
12. Mr. Sounkalou Dembele, SchoolNet AIERRN Mali
13. Mr. Tohouri Romain-Rolland REO.NET
14. Dr. Mahamadou Touré, Teleradiology Point G Hospital
15. Dr. Edem K.Kossi, REO.NET
16. Ms. Martine Keita, USAID
17. Mr. Ousmane Bamba, MINTI
18. Dr. Cheikh Oumar Bagayoko, Keneya Blown
19. Pr. Abdel Kader Traoré, Director CNAM / President Mali NTIC
20. Ms. Rokia Bâ Touré, Coordinator Mali NTIC
21. Mr. Mamadou keita, Director Delta-C, IICD Focal Point
22. Dr. Mady Keita, Phamacist Fana
23. Ms. Bintou Diakité, Engineer Fana
24. Mr. Idrissa Dembele, Statistician Fana
25. Dr. Abdoulaye Diarra, Medical cabinet Terrya Fana
26. Mr. Fofana Cheikh Abdel Kader, Centre Multimedia Koulikoro
27. Mr. Brahma Diallo, Accoutant Koulikoro
28. Alfousseini Fofana, student Koulikoro
29. Mr. Abdoulaye Diallo, Manager Kita Telecentre
30. Moussa Sidibé, Coordinator PNIR project Kita
31. Ms. Keita Salimatou Madeleine, Kita Twinning Committee with Voorchoten (The Netherlands)
32. Mr. Keita Mamadou, Chief Meteorology Station in Kita
33. Dr. Koné Mahamane, Doctor INPS
34. Dr. Keita Samakoum, Bata-Sekou Clinic Kita President of Association against HIV/AIDS Kita
35. Ms Sidibe Khadidia Traore, Midwife Kita
36. Dr. Kodjo Gbegnedji, student at faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy Bamako
37. Dahirou Diallo, General Secretary Sotelma bamako
38. Dr. Mamadou lam Diallo, Chief MINTI
39. Mr. Abdoul Aziz Diallo, Panos Institute Bamako
40. Mr. Tiemogo Konate, Community Radio Tabale Bamako
41. Focus group in Bamako: 40 listeners and 10 animators
42. Mr. Sory Coulibaly, President of Stockbreeders Cooperative Kati
43. Mr. Soumana Coulibaly, President of Circle Council of Kati

44. Mr. Soumaila Bayni Traore, Lawyer in Human Rights Kati
45. Mr. Modibo Kamara, Director of CRT (Telecommunications Regulation Committee)
46. Mr. Jean Luc Virchaux, Director SDC Bamako
47. Miss Ramata Ly, student Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy Bamako
48. Marc Deflander – Institut Panos Afrique de l’Ouest (IPAO) – Dakar
49. Eric Bernard – Institut Panos Afrique de l’Ouest (IPAO) – Dakar

Uganda

Organisation/Project	Name	Position
ACACIA Projects UNCST	Ms. Patricia Litho	Manager
Apac		Mothers Union
Apac		Awe Okoko Club
Apac		Dii Chunyi Piloboni Club
Apac		Tiginokeli Club
Apac District	Mr. Tingol Olwe	Chief Administrative Officer
Apac District	Mr. Bwa George Washington	DEO
Apac District		LC V Chairman
Apac District		Director of Health Services
Apac District		District Health Visitor
Apac District		Iwot Ilwak Women’s group
Apac District		Chan Kwia Goro Women’s group
Apac District	Mrs. Florance Adoko	Women Mobiliser
ARIN Project	Mr. Stephen Rwenjezi	Director Ndere Troupe
DFID EA	Mr. Graham Carrington	Conflict and Humanitarian Advisor
FHRI	Ms. Elisabeth Sentamu	Resource Centre Manager
I-Network	Mr. Vincent Waiswa Bagiire	Team Leader
Kamuli District		NAADS Co-ordinator
Kamuli District	Mrs. Daisy Mukungu	Co-ordinator Women Groups
Kisoko High school		Straight Talk Club Members (12 people)
Kisoko High school		Patrons of Straight Talk Club (2 people)
Kyamobogo University	Mr. Kasumba	IICD Projects Manager
LCV Kamuli District	Mr. Baligeza K. Isabirye	Chariman
LCV Kamuli District	Hon. Bangu Fred	Vice Chairman
MOFPED, UPPAP	Mr. Richard Ssewakiryanga	Team Leader
MTTI	Mr. John Ssenyonjo	IICD Projects
Nakawa Institute of ICTs	Dr. Peter Jehopio	Ag. Principal
NGO Forum	Mr. Warren Nyamugasira	Director
Panos EA	Mr. Serumaga	Regional Director
Panos EA	Ms. Zawadi Kamango	Deputy Director
Panos EA	Ms. Sara Osiya	Pastoralist Communications Programme
Panos EA	Ms. Athieno Ndomo	Governance Co-ordinator
Panos EA	Mr. Albino	Peace Building Co-ordinator
Radio Apac	Jimmy Opio	Founder and Executive Director
Radio Apac		Staff Members and Volunteers of Radio Apac (15 people)
Rank Consult (I-Network)	Eng. Elisha Wasukira	Manager
STF	Ms. Anne Fielder Akia	Programme Director
STF	Mr. Denis Lutwama	IT Officer

Organisation/Project	Name	Position
STF	Mr. Nicodemus Ogwech	Asst. Finance Manager
STF	Ms. Ms. Annet Kyosiimire	Radio Producer
STF	Ms. Susan Ajok	Operations Officer
STF	Mr. Godfrey Walakira	Clubs Co-ordinator
UCC	Mr. Fred Otunnu	Corporate Affairs Officer
UDN	Ms. Allen Mwebeika	Communications Manager
UDS	Mrs. Rita Epodoi	Programme Manager
Uganda Film and TV Institute	Mr. Paul Kavuma	
UMWA (Mama FM)	Mrs. Margaret Sentamu	Director

Zambia

Organisation/Project	Name	Position
Care, Kopana Project	Njekwa Lumbwe	Programme Officer
Chikuni Community Radio Station	Father Andrew Father Teddeus	
Communications Authority of Zambia	Susan Mulikita	
Development Trough Radio	Magoye Womens Radio Listening Clubs: 54 women Mwanachingwala Womens Radio Listening Clubs: 32 women Ndeke Radio Listening Clubs: 10 women – 2 groups	
E-Brain	Patricia	Programme Officer
E-Brain	M. Chilwesa	IICD Project Associate
E-Brain	M. Mwale	Chairman
E-Brain Forum/ Computer Association of Zambia	UNIC Various schools Consulting Engineers Computer Companies Care International USAID – IT for Education Canadian High Commission COMESA CSO ZESCO Pronet ISP Zambia Consumers Association	over 50 members
E-Link/Coppernet Solutions	Philip Chitalu	Acting CEO
E-Link/Coppernet Solutions	Cedric Sikazwe	Training Manager
JCTR	M. Muweme	
Mazabuka Community Radio	Kelvin Chibomba	Manager/Producer
Microlink	John Taylor	CEO
Microlink	Chiluya Mushosha	Training Department Manager
NGOCC	Golden Nachibingwa	Information Officer
NGOCC	Grace Kanyangwa	Director
Onewold.net	Patricia Lumba	
Oneworld.net	Priscilla Jere	Regional Coordinator
PanosSAf	Walter Tapfumaneyi	Regional Programme Officer HIV/AIDS
PanosSAf	Simon Muloumbi	Programme Assistant Media and Pluralism
PanosSAf	Vianola	
PanosSAf	Fackson Banda	Director
Rhodes Park School	Musonda Sakala	IT Teacher
Rhodes Park School	Barbara Mumba Chaiwa Mushauko Martin Lukwasa	Pupils

Organisation/Project	Name	Position
TICAD IT Project, Ministry of Communication and Transport	Victor Mbumwae	Project Coordinator
TICAD IT Project, Planning Unit Ministry of Communication and Transport	Lubasi Munukayumbwa	Systems Analyst/Programme Assistant
UNIDO, IICD	Dr. Nyirenda	Consultant
Women for Change	Lumba Siyanga	Information Officer
Yatsani Radio	Sister Janet	
Youth Media	Mary Tembo	Director
ZAMCOM	Dr E. Kasongo	Director
ZAMCOM	Yese Bwalya	Computer and Research Officer
ZAMSIF, Panos	Mercy Khozi	Information Officer, Ex Programme Officer Media Pluralism and Information
ZNBC	Reaper Mayambo	Producer, Yonga
ZNBC	Simon Mwila	Producer, Bemba
ZNBC	Regina Mwalima	Producer, Lozi
ZNBC	Ormond Musonda	Producer, Kaunde

Other

Organisation/Country	Name	Position
ABC Ulwazi, Johannesburg	John van Zyl	Executive Director
AMARC Africa, Johannesburg	Lettie Longwe	Programme Director
AMARC Africa, Johannesburg	Nkopane Maphiri	Regional Technology Programme Officer
AMARC Africa, Johannesburg	Chris Kgadima	Journalist
AMARC Africa, Johannesburg	Michelle Ndiaye Ntab	Regional Director
AMARC International, London	Steve Buckley	Deputy President
Botswana	Brian Golden	Independent consultant
CTO, London	Isabel del Arbol Stewart	Programme Manager BDO
CTO, London	David Souter	Chief Executive Officer
DFID, The Hague	David Woolnough	ICT and knowledge
IICD, The Hague	Stijn van der Krogt	Team Leader Country Programmes
IICD, The Hague	Ingrid Hagen	Team Leader, Corporate Services and Partnerships
IICD, The Hauge	Denise Clarke	Programme Manager Capacity Development
InterWorld Radio, London	Francesca Silvani	Editor
Moretele Community Radio, South Africa	Masela Tebogo	Programme Manager
National Community Radio Forum, Johannesburg	Faiza Abrahams-Smith	Training and support service
National Community Radio Forum, Johannesburg	Chris Armstrong	Projects
oneworld international, London	Branislava Milosevic	Radio Coordinator
oneworld international, London	Jackie Davies	Radio Manager
oneworld international, London	Pete Cranston	Network Relations Director
oneworld international, London	Jenny Eschweiler	Membership Coordinator and Editor
Panos Institute, London	James Deane	Executive Director
Participants of the TRASA, ITU, CTO workshop on Universal	13 answers to e-mail survey from 8 different countries	

Organisation/Country	Name	Position
Access and Rural Connectivity, July 2002		
Participants of the AMARC Africa News Agency Correspondents Course, June 2003	2 answers to e-mail survey from 2 different countries	
Participants of the AMARC Africa session de formation des correspondants de l'agence de nouvelles "Simbani"	9 answers to e-mail survey from 9 different countries	
TRASA, Botswana	Richard Mwanza	Programme Manager
TRASA, Botswana	Kagiso Baatshwana	