

## **A Champion in Our Midst: Lessons Learned from the Impacts of NGOs' Use of the Internet**

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### **Abstract:**

Research investigating the use of Email and the World Wide Web in the South has focused solely on the users of the technology, ignoring the ability of those without connectivity to benefit from the outputs of their stakeholders' Internet use. This paper examines the findings of an evaluation into the efficiency and effectiveness with which Internet-equipped non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were able to use the technology as a tool to assist their unconnected stakeholders, or those stakeholders which do not have connectivity but who are in a position to receive information which their supporting NGOs have acquired through the use of the Internet. Focusing primarily section dealing with the impacts of NGOs' Internet use on their community stakeholders, the paper presents evidence to indicate that NGOs are sharing information acquired on the Internet with their unconnected community stakeholders, and cites specific examples from two of the three NGOs examined in this study. The paper also finds that the difference between those organizations which demonstrated a tendency to share Internet-acquired information with their stakeholders and those which did not is two-fold: those organizations which shared the information with their unconnected community stakeholders not only have both email and WWW access, but they also have experienced leaders in information technology (IT) to assist them in the integration of the technology into their programs. The findings of these three case studies illuminates the fact that without the presence of an Internet Champion, or staff who appreciate the value that ICTs can offer to organizations and their unconnected community stakeholders, such technologies – and the potential they hold for rural development throughout the world -- will never be able to live up to the expectations which society has created for them.

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### **1. Introduction**

Much has been made of the potential that information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as the Internet hold for rural regions throughout the world. While in the past, "rural" was associated with isolation not only from having access to information but also the ability to communicate with others in similar environments, email and the world wide web are now recognized as technologies which can help bridge these gaps. The Internet is purported to empower its users like no other technology before it. Indeed, Richardson (1996) notes that the Internet is the first ICT to enable every individual with connectivity to become a narrowcaster and a broadcaster.

Yet while the hype surrounding the Internet is great, the hard facts to support its expansion are much less evident. Many of the early Internet-related evaluations and reports concerning Internet use in developing countries consist of anecdotal information and rhetoric, while recent evaluations have focused on national IT policy, the business output of Internet service providers (National Research Council, 1998), and the institutions and organizations that are themselves equipped with the technology (Gomez, 1998; Graham; 1997; Lanfranco, 1997; Young et al, 1997). While these evaluations have been valuable in increasing the degree to which society understands how ICTs are being integrated into developing countries and used among the people with the connectivity, they have done little to shed light on whether such technologies have impacts on the acquisition of information by those who do not have connectivity, a group referred to by this author as the "unconnected" (McConnell, 1998a). Despite numerous authors' recommendations that IT research include in its scope evaluations on those who are the non-electronic receptors of Internet-acquired information (NRC, 1998; Rice et al, 1988; Richardson, 1996), there has been little movement in this direction.

In January 1997, an evaluation framework (McConnell, 1998b) was utilized to test the efficiency and effectiveness with which three Internet-equipped NGOs in Uganda were able to utilize the Internet to acquire and share relevant information located through the Internet with their unconnected community stakeholders (see McConnell, 1999). This paper summarizes the specific findings of that study as they relate to the impacts of Internet use on the unconnected. In reviewing the findings, the paper highlights the need for organizations to ensure that within their ranks they have Internet Champions -- individuals who are experienced with Internet technology and who possess a vision of what it can do for their organizations and the unconnected communities they serve. Without these champions, the Internet risks becoming a device underused by local development communities around the world, and one which is unable to facilitate greater access to communication and information resources to those who need it most.

It is necessary to state that for the purposes of this paper, the term Internet will be used to describe *both* email and the world wide web (WWW); references to the individual technologies will be made wherever appropriate.

## **2. Methodology**

This research is based on fieldwork conducted between January and July 1998 using an evaluation framework which was created for the study (see McConnell, 1998b). The framework evaluated NGOs' use of the Internet as a tool to assist their unconnected community stakeholders, focusing on the efficiency, effectiveness and impacts of the NGOs' use of the technology. Efficiency was defined as the extent to which the use of the Internet allows each of the NGOs to provide the greatest amount of assistance, services, and information to their unconnected stakeholder communities using the least amount of inputs. In evaluating efficiency, the researcher measured *Quality of the Internet service; the Capacity of the NGO to acquire, disseminate, and respond to Internet information; and the Costs of the Internet for the organization*. Effectiveness was defined as the extent to which the use of the Internet enables each NGO to locate and disseminate information that can be used in their programs with their unconnected stakeholder communities. Effectiveness was evaluated according to the *Appropriateness of the Information that is forwarded to the NGOs' community stakeholders; the Dissemination of information to the community stakeholders; and the degree to which Gender Equality exists within the NGO with respect to Internet use*. Finally, the framework evaluated the impacts of each NGO's use of the Internet both on their own operations as well as on the operations with its unconnected stakeholder communities. Impacts were assessed according to *Direct Impacts; Indirect Impacts; Multiplier Effects; the*

*Appropriateness of Information delivered to the community stakeholders; and the Sustainability of the information exchange process between the NGOs and their community stakeholders.* As previously stated, the Impacts component will be the primary focus of this paper.

Three organizations were chosen to represent three separate categories of Internet-equipped NGOs. These distinct categories were identified in a preliminary research report involving 33 Ugandan, Internet-equipped NGOs (McConnell, 1998a). The first NGO was chosen to represent those organizations which had both email and WWW access, and which demonstrated an ability to integrate the technology into its programming. This organization, Uganda Rural Development and Training Programme (URDT), was an indigenous NGO based approximately 280 kilometers west of the capital, Kampala, in the town of Kagadi, Kibale District. The organization had email and WWW access at its Kampala office, but no access at its headquarters in Kagadi. A total of nine program staff and two office administration staff were interviewed at URDT. In addition, two focus group meetings were held with representatives of 8 local community stakeholder groups that were working with URDT in the district.

A second NGO was chosen to represent those organizations which had the same characteristics as the first category of NGOs, but which also had remote Internet connectivity with one of its field sites. This organization, COOPIBO-Uganda, had provided evidence during the preliminary interviews which indicated that the Internet was being utilized for the benefit of both its own staff as well as for members of its community stakeholder groups. COOPIBO had both email and WWW access in Kampala as well as email access at its field office in Mbale, Mbale District, approximately 120 kilometers east of Kampala. Three program staff and one office administrator were interviewed at COOPIBO-Uganda, and interviews were also conducted with a total of seven staff members from two of its seven unconnected partner organizations.

The third and final NGO selected for this research represented those organizations which had email-only access, and which had not yet seemed to have integrated the technology into their programming to any great extent. This organization was WAYS Project, a Kampala-based organization operating in the town of Gayaza, Mpigi District, approximately 30 kilometers north of the capital city of Kampala. As it happened, the organization was unable to maintain its email system soon after participating in the preliminary interviews due to funding difficulties. The financial difficulties experienced by this particular organization proved valuable for the larger overall scope of the study, in terms of enabling a comparison of the costs of the three NGOs' use of the Internet and the implications that such costs had for them. Interviews with four WAYS program staff were conducted in Kampala, as well as with representatives from three of its youth programs in the community.

The NGO case study investigations consisted of personal, open and closed-ended interviews with office staff, including those who did and did not use the technology. Interviews were focused on learning what, if anything, the NGO staff utilized the Internet for, and whether they believed there were any impacts on the organization from its use of the Internet. To learn about the flow of information between the NGOs and their beneficiary groups, interviews and focus groups were also conducted with representatives of each of the NGOs' stakeholder communities. At the conclusion of the research, full reports were written and presented to all three NGOs and for each of the four community stakeholder groups who participated.

Given the nature of this study, the biggest limitation of the results are that the degree to which the Internet assists the NGOs in acquiring and sharing information with their community stakeholders rests with the impressions of the NGO staff members, themselves. Because of the difficulty of tracking information from the organization's use of the Internet

through to the reception of this information at the community level, it is difficult to rely on anything more than the users' own impressions of their abilities to integrate the technology with the needs of their community stakeholders. Consequently, the framework does not utilize the input of the community stakeholders as much as it should with respect to the amount of information received from the NGOs which was acquired through the Internet. Furthermore, a second limitation to this study is the fact that it compares three case study organizations against one another. Obviously, generalizations can not be made with any accuracy, but it was felt that these three organizations were strong representatives of the three categories of Internet-equipped NGOs identified and researched in the study which preceded it (see McConnell, 1998a).

### **3. Summary of Findings for Impacts Section**

#### **3.1 Direct Impacts**

From the interviews completed with ICT-using staff, 89% believed that their organizations were meeting their objectives for acquiring Internet connectivity. These objectives ranged from a desire for staff to have access to information that could be used to improve their respective programs, to having access to a medium that allowed relatively inexpensive communication mediums with their overseas donors and partners. While URDT and COOPIBO, the two organizations with both email and WWW access, sought connectivity as a means to communicate with their partner organizations and have access to information and resources for their programs, WAYS obtained their email account based on the recommendation of a technician as a replacement for their fax machine, which had proved to be a costly technology for international communication and which did not always produce legible outputs.

Staff from all three NGOs reported that as result of having the Internet, the amount of time and cost associated with transmitting messages was reduced. In many cases, sending an email message to another local organization with connectivity was believed easier, cheaper and more efficient than attempting to reach the desired individual by telephone. Whereas email enabled the message to be sent immediately to the inbox of the intended recipient, telephone calls required the caller to attempt to reach the intended recipient in the office at the time of the call, something which was not always possible. Furthermore, email – unlike the telephone -- did not depend on making person to person contact, and thus it was believed to be easier to deliver messages from one individual to another; the difficulty in obtaining a clear and uninterrupted telephone connection for the duration of a phone call to another person was another factor in raising the value of using email. However, despite the benefits of utilizing email for local and international communications, COOPIBO-Uganda staff reported that they would often telephone their local partner organizations to remind them to check their email accounts for the message that awaited them. The ability to send attached files was also reported as an advantage to using the email, which enabled their organizations to maintain close contact with overseas donors and out-of-country headquarters.

93% of the staff from all three NGOs reported that the use of email and/or the WWW assisted them in achieving their organization's operational goals and objectives. These goals and objectives were being met through the ability to undertake such tasks as collaborating on-line with other organizations on reports and proposals, and conducting better project and program planning through access to more up to date and relevant information. In all cases, the NGO staff members reported that the ability to share information with donors and partner organizations on-line assisted them in their ability to carry out their responsibilities.

83% of the NGO staff from COOPIBO and URDT who were interviewed reported that they believed that their organizations' use of the Internet had increased their ability to deliver

information to their community stakeholders. Staff at both URDT and COOPIBO identified information that they had forwarded to their respective communities after being acquired through either email or the WWW. URDT, for example, cited the example of information related to a solar energy system which was proposed for one of its communities in Western Uganda. URDT staff used the web to locate information on the various technological options available to their community members, including system specifications and price. Once this information was presented in non-electronic format to the community members for assessment, a decision was made by the community as to which particular solar energy's company would be involved in further negotiations. The result of this process was that community members were able to select and utilize micro-credit to purchase a total of 130 solar energy systems which were appropriate to their needs and financial capabilities. A similar example occurred in URDT's acquisition of over 60 water harvesting tanks which were purchased by the community members after the technology was refined through Internet-facilitated interactions with Canadian-based technicians. A final example of information acquired by URDT staff from the Internet and shared with community stakeholders was related to information on the Year 2000 millenium bug, which was requested by a group of local businessmen. One URDT staff member used email to contact an acquaintance who had access to the requested information, and this was quickly made available to URDT and its concerned stakeholders.

COOPIBO's staff were unanimous when they reported that as a result of their access to the WWW, they were able to access important documents that benefited not only their own stakeholders, but other development organizations and agencies in Uganda as well. Following the conclusion of the 1997 World Food Summit in Rome, COOPIBO staff were able to use the web to access the official 1997 World Food Summit Declaration, which they were able to download, photocopy and distribute to over 200 NGOs in Uganda. It should be noted that through COOPIBO's use of the web, these organizations were all able to receive copies of the documents before the local UN and FAO offices had acquired official copies of their own. Staff members also used the web to download documents related to the field of Organizational Development; this information was used to assist staff in delivering organizational capacity assessments to local and international partner organizations. Where before COOPIBO reported having to hire external consultants to deliver the training sessions, the web enabled their own staff to gain the necessary background information required for them to deliver the sessions themselves, something which reportedly saved the NGO on much needed program funds.

Despite these examples of information which was acquired from the Internet being shared with the community stakeholders, two of the nine staff from URDT and all three of the staff at WAYS stated that the Internet had not played a role in enabling their organization to share more information with their community stakeholders. The two staff from URDT stated that while the Internet had assisted them in their on-line communications with their one, Internet-connected partner organization, it had done nothing to assist them in communicating information with their communities and partners which did not have connectivity. None of WAYS' staff members agreed with the statement that their use of email had made any difference in their organization's ability to deliver information to its community stakeholders

### **3.2 Indirect Impacts**

67% of the three NGOs' program staff, the majority of whom were from both COOPIBO and URDT, believed that their organizations' use of the Internet had a positive effect on the relationship between themselves and their community stakeholders. Among the reasons given for these impressions were the beliefs that in using the Internet for their programming needs, the NGOs were provided access to new and relevant information for their respective

programs. With more potential information and resources available to them, closer linkages between project staff and the communities they were working with could be developed. One URDT staff member went so far as to suggest that the community's level of confidence in the NGO increased with its ability to deliver more relevant and timely information to them. Staff members also reported that their use of the Internet to acquire relevant information translated to community-level cost savings. URDT's use of the Internet to assist them and their stakeholders in the selection of appropriate solar energy technologies, and COOPIBO's use of the Internet to assist in the delivery of capacity enhancing programs for their partner organizations are cited as primary examples.

A final example of NGOs's use of the Internet assisting their relationships with their stakeholder communities revolves around the NGOs' abilities to conduct better, more coordinated planning for its programs and projects. Staff members from all organizations mentioned being able to organize field visits, workshops and visits by out-of-country visitors much more ahead of schedule than before when they did not have access to the Internet. This all resulted in better organized programs with community members who were more prepared for events as a result of having the information delivered to them more ahead of time than before. One of the three staff members from WAYS indicated that their use of email as a communication tool had reduced the communication gap which existed between their organization, their donor agencies and their communities, thus enabling their community members to be informed of the status of project and program funding through messages received by the organizations through email.

20% of all of the NGO staff in the three organizations believed that there had been no change in the relationships with their community stakeholders. Two staff at WAYS and two staff at URDT indicated that they believed their organizations' use of the Internet had done nothing for their relationships with their stakeholder communities. Two COOPIBO staff members indicated that while the relationships they had with their unconnected community stakeholders had not been effected by the use of the Internet, the relationships that they had with other on-line organizations had improved.

### **3.3 Multiplier Effect**

The majority of Internet-using staff members from all three NGOs (78%) indicated that their organizations' use of the technology resulted in other organizations incorporating the Internet into their own program operations. All told, the staff members identified a total of 14 projects and/or organizations which had integrated email and/or the WWW into their programming as a result of exposure to their organizations' use of the Internet.

### **3.4 Sustainability of the Communication Process**

The importance of this section relates to the purpose that two of the NGOs in this study, and many more of those outside of it, choose to acquire an Internet account: to receive access to relevant information to assist their programs. If the Internet is to be a valuable tool, NGO staff must have faith in their organizations' abilities not only at disseminating relevant or appropriate information to their stakeholders, but also in listening to their stakeholders and providing them with an outlet to share their own experiences and information with the NGO. If such two-way processes do not exist in the relationship between the community stakeholder and NGO, then the relationship and efforts at disseminating information will not be a sustainable one.

Reports from the NGOs' staff members indicated that two-way information exchange processes between all of the organizations and their community stakeholders existed, and that these processes were sustainable. 60% of NGO staff stated that their belief that their stakeholders were able to provide feedback related to information passed along to them

through established communication channels, a point that was supported by 100% of the community stakeholder representatives who were interviewed. While some staff members did not believe that all the information which was intended to be shared with the communities was actually received by them, most staff members did have faith in the channels which were set up to enable the community stakeholders themselves to communicate with the NGOs. It should be stated that not only did all of the NGOs' community stakeholders who were interviewed for this study indicate that they believed they had the opportunity to share information with their organizations, but they also unanimously expressed their belief that the NGOs considered their feedback important.

The sustainability of the two-way communications process between the NGOs and community stakeholders also appeared to be assisted by the use of email to transmit organizations' project reports which contained community stakeholder experiences and knowledge. In spite of the fact that none of the three NGOs had web sites of their own, and that staff members reported neither posting documents nor reports to other organizations' web sites, the use of email as a tool with which to share community stakeholder experiences is a starting point towards strengthening the two-way flow communication between the NGOs and their community stakeholders.

#### **4. Discussion**

When assessing the three organizations in terms of their reported impacts, two major areas of divergence emerge among the responses from the NGOs: 1) the ability of the organizations to serve their communities better; and 2) the fact that the relationships between the organizations and their community stakeholders were seen to improve through their use of the Internet as a medium to acquire relevant and appropriate information. Moreover, what is most interesting is the fact that the responses of the two organizations with both email and web connectivity are so very similar, while the responses of the NGO with only email connectivity differ greatly.

The majority of staff at both URDT and COOPIBO-Uganda indicated that their use of the Internet assisted the work that they did for their stakeholder communities. Examples of this included efforts to provide information to their stakeholders that was relevant to them, such as URDT's provision of information related to both the solar energy and water harvesting projects in the remote district of Kibale; and COOPIBO's ability to acquire 1997 World Food Summit documents for their partners throughout the country. The majority of staff from both organizations also reported that through their use of the Internet, their relationships with their community stakeholders had improved. This was seen to be related to the fact that their ability to acquire more information for their stakeholders more readily than before strengthened the relationships, and brought the NGO staff into closer contact with their stakeholders. This latter observation was seen in the case of COOPIBO-Uganda, whereby the NGO was able to deliver programs for their partner organizations and other country offices that they would have earlier been forced to contract out. One URDT staff member even suggested that the confidence of the communities had increased for the NGO due to the increased ability it now had to deliver information that was requested by members of the communities.

Yet while the two email and WWW-equipped NGOs reported success in terms of their ability to use the Internet to assist the needs of the communities directly, none of the staff at WAYS – the only NGO with an email-only account -- reported that their organization's use of the Internet had any impact on their ability to deliver information to their community stakeholders. A similar case was reported with respect to the relationship that the NGOs had with their community stakeholders: WAYS staff members reported that they did not believe that their use of email had had any impacts on the relationships they had with their

community stakeholders. One WAYS staff member summed up the situation at his organization when he stated that there could not be any impacts of the NGO's use of the Internet on its community stakeholders if the communities themselves did not have connectivity.

While it is easy to identify the differences in the responses of the NGO staff members with respect to their organizations' use of the Internet and the impacts that use has on their community stakeholders, the more difficult task is in identifying the cause for such differences. The most obvious observation to be made when assessing the difference between organizations which reported the Internet having the largest impact on their own organization and on their unconnected stakeholder communities, versus the one which reported having no impacts at all is that the former were equipped with both email and the WWW, while the latter organization was only equipped with email. It is true that the task of locating documents and information relevant to one's own particular programs might be easier or more accessible for those staff who are able to have access to the WWW to search the hundreds and hundreds of potentially relevant sites on the Internet. However, there is evidence to suggest a much larger factor which is responsible for the discrepancy between those organizations which were successful at utilizing the Internet for their programs and community stakeholders and those that were not: the degree to which the organization had its own Internet Champion.

Perhaps more than any other factor, the presence of an individual to champion the use of the Internet within an organization is most crucial. Champions of the Internet come in many forms: keen cheerleader-types who encourage others to actively use the technology for their information and communication needs; enthusiastic teachers for those who wish to learn about the technology but who have held back for fear of failure or of admitting ignorance; and visionaries who can catalyze further growth and use of the technology in their organization for the future. Richardson summarizes the importance of the Internet champion to organizations when he writes,

"Without enthusiastic champions most Internet projects will fail. It is not enough for development planners to build wonderful network systems and provide people with computers and modems. Potential users must identify with a vision for beneficial applications, and they are most likely to respond to the visions of enthusiastic peers and colleagues" (Richardson, 1997, 4).

Internet champions were in existence at both URDT and COOPIBO-Uganda. URDT's Chairman understood the potential of the Internet for his organization, and ensured that money was invested to maintain a connection in Kampala even though his organization's headquarters was located close to 300 km away in a place with very little infrastructure. His objective in acquiring the connectivity was to enable his staff members to have access to news and information which was coming from other parts of the world and which was relevant to their programs. The support that he gave to a second Champion in the organization, the Program Head for Appropriate Technology, enabled URDT to maintain contact with experts throughout the world, acquire information to assist their programs which would otherwise have taken much longer to acquire, and ultimately deliver stronger programs to their community stakeholders.

The Executive Director at COOPIBO played an equally powerful role as a Champion of the Internet for her organization. This individual had previous experience with the Internet through studies undertaken in the U.K, and it was because of her experience with the technology that she led the acquisition of Internet connectivity not only for her own organization's branch in Uganda, but for its U.K. headquarters as well as its five other branches located throughout Eastern Africa. The objective in acquiring the organization-wide

connectivity was to enable all program staff to communicate more freely and more readily than before. Coupled with the Executive Director were two program officers who were also experienced with the Internet, and who used their opportunities to better the programs they were involved in. This was demonstrated through their acquisition of information related to the theme of Organizational Development. This information was located on the Internet and used by one of the Program Officers to learn how to conduct organizational capacity assessments for their partner organizations. Not only did the acquisition of this information enable COOPIBO's staff to increase their knowledge about Organizational Development, but it also placed them in the position where they could assist their partner organizations and fellow country office staff in strengthening their own capacity; the immediate result for COOPIBO was that this eliminated their need to hire external contractors to deliver such workshops for them. The Internet also enabled COOPIBO to, among other things, share UN-related documents with over 200 partner organizations before the local UN-affiliated organizations had even received copies of their own.

Despite the fact that WAYS staff reported that the Internet did not play a large role in the organization's ability to deliver assistance to its community stakeholders, the Executive Director of WAYS can still be viewed as Champion of the Internet for her efforts in acquiring email connectivity to provide more efficient means of communicating with their foreign donors. Despite the fact that very little Internet-acquired information was reportedly transferred from the organization to its unconnected community stakeholder groups, and despite the fact that its staff reported that their use of email did little or nothing to improve the relationship they had with their community stakeholders, WAYS was reportedly meeting its objectives for having access to faster, cheaper and more efficient communications with its international donors. However, the lack of an experienced Internet champion at WAYS meant that the application of the email system was only as versatile as the vision of its sole user, the Executive Director. Without the understanding of the potential that email could bring to her organization and its stakeholders in the form of greater access to local, regional, national and international information, WAYS' Executive Director's potential with the technology remains very limited. Woherem emphasized the role that ICT-experienced management personnel can play in ensuring that IT is integrated into an organization's programming when he wrote, "Managers who are enthusiastic and supportive of IT systems are those who are literate themselves: they understand the nature and benefits of computers and the skills or training required to man the systems when introduced" (Woherem, 1993, 87).

The presence of Internet champions within the three organizations was crucial in their efforts to integrate the use of the technology into their programs, and to attempt to share that information with their unconnected community stakeholders. Of the three NGOs examined in this research, however, the two which had multiple, experienced, Internet champions among their staff – URDT and COOPIBO-Uganda -- showed a greater ability to utilize the technology not only to acquire information for their fellow staff members, but also to acquire and exchange relevant information with their community stakeholders.

## **5. Conclusion**

This paper identifies the impacts that Internet-equipped NGOs are able to have on their unconnected community stakeholders through the acquisition and sharing of information that is appropriate and relevant not only for the organization's own programs, but for the communities' needs as well. Yet while the paper demonstrates that Internet-equipped NGOs are sharing the information and resources they acquire through the Internet with their unconnected community stakeholders, there is a more crucial point emphasized in the work: the presence of an experienced Internet Champion is vital to the sustainable and successful

use of ICTs. Champions who combine technological experience with an appreciation of what the technology can bring to an organization and its stakeholders can do more for information and knowledge sharing than any computer ever will. The presence of such individuals at COOPIBO and URDT played a large role in enabling their staff and stakeholders to have access to the potential that the Internet could offer to them. However, the lack of such a champion at WAYS limited the vision and scope of what it can accomplish with its email connectivity.

Future efforts at introducing the Internet into NGO offices and field sites – both in the context of indigenous and internationally based organizations – must ensure that Internet Champions are present in the planning process from the beginning to oversee the integration of these technologies into the culture of their organizations. Having an experienced Internet Champion within the organization helps create an environment where staff members are encouraged to utilize the technology that is available to them; where they can develop their technological skills and share their awareness and enthusiasm with their peers; and where staff are able to see the potential that their access to on-line information and resources holds for their unconnected community stakeholders. Without the presence of staff who appreciate the value that ICTs can offer to both their organizations and their unconnected community stakeholders, such technologies – and the potential they hold for rural development throughout the world -- will never be able to live up to the expectations which society has created for them.

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**APPENDIX A: RESEARCH MATRIX SHOWING OUTPUTS OF CASE STUDY RESEARCH**

| ISSUE       | FOCUS              | Uganda Rural Development Training Programme (URDT)  | COOPIBO-Uganda  | WAYS Project   |
|-------------|--------------------|---|---|--|
| 3.0 IMPACTS | 3.1 Direct Impacts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two staff members reported that URDT's objectives for using the Internet have been met; one disagreed.</li> <li>• Objectives being met through cheap communication exchanges, more staff becoming active users, and through sending more documents as attached files</li> <li>• Two of the three Program staff who use the system said that delays in retrieving messages from Kampala and sending them to Kagadi reduced the impact of the technology</li> <li>• All staff but one believe that the Internet is assisting them in achieving the goals and objectives of URDT</li> <li>• 8 of 9 staff believe that the Internet is assisting the organization in providing information to their stakeholder communities</li> <li>• Use of the WWW enabled staff members to acquire information related to both the Solar Energy Program and Rain Water Harvesting Program</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The majority of staff believe that COOPIBO's goals and objectives in acquiring email and the WWW are being met, resulting in less charges for fax, courier and post, and stronger communication with Belgium</li> <li>• One staff member reported that the WWW is not yet being exploited by the organization, and that staff have still not found a balance between using the Internet for information searches and using traditional resources</li> <li>• All staff believe that the Internet is assisting them in achieving the goals of COOPIBO</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff members reported that they believe WAYS is meeting its objectives in acquiring the email</li> <li>• Two of three staff in Kampala believe that the use of email is enabling them to achieve the goals and objectives of WAYS</li> </ul> |

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| <p><b>3.0 Impacts (cont.)</b></p> | <p><b>3.2 Indirect Impacts</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 of 9 staff believe that URDT's Internet use had had a positive effect on the relationship between URDT and the stakeholder communities, resulting in strengthened interaction, credibility and confidence in terms of URDT's ability to provide reliable information</li> <li>• 2 staff believe that the use of the Internet have had no effect on the stakeholder communities</li> <li>• Web sites identified on Satellite television programs in Kagadi are referenced for later use by URDT staff</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff report that the use of the Internet has increased COOPIBO's ability to provide information to its partner organizations</li> <li>• Two of three program staff believe that the Internet use has impacted the relationship with other NGOs with connectivity, but not with its own unconnected stakeholder communities</li> <li>• One staff said that the use of ICTs had enabled COOPIBO to conduct more of its own workshops with partners and other COOPIBO country offices</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None of the WAYS staff members believe that their use of email is effecting the organization's ability to provide information to its stakeholder communities</li> <li>• Two of three staff members believe that email has not had an effect on their relationship with stakeholder communities in Gayaza</li> <li>• One staff member believes that the email reduces the communication gap which exists between donors, WAYS, and its communities</li> </ul> |
|                                   | <p><b>3.3 Multiplier Effect</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three Ugandan NGOs were identified by URDT staff as having added email and/or the WWW to their programs as a result of their exposure to URDT's use of the technology</li> <li>• The soon-to-be implemented Community Media Project will have IDRC-funded email connectivity to further facilitate communication among the three radio sites in Kenya, Tanzania, and Kagadi</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Alert, and the five other COOPIBO country offices have incorporated email into their communications systems</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three local NGOs utilize the service at WAYS to send and receive messages</li> </ul>   |

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| <p><b>3.0 Impacts (cont.)</b></p> | <p><b>3.4 Sustainability of the Process</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All URDT staff interviewed believe that the communication system in place ensures that information disseminated to the stakeholders does reach them</li> <li>• Staff described the ability of all stakeholders to deliver feedback to URDT as weak. Feedback system is informal, but communities have the opportunity to pass information through written reports, committees, Chairpersons, and through personal visits with URDT staff</li> <li>• Community members reported that unless feedback is requested, they do not offer it; feedback occurs mainly via written reports from village committees</li> <li>• The majority of members reported that they believed URDT considered their feedback important</li> <li>• The majority of members indicated that they would like to see communication between themselves and URDT improve</li> <li>• Email is used to disseminate the experiences and knowledge of the stakeholder communities through the transmission of reports and letters to donors and friends of URDT</li> <li>• The Internet has become an important component in URDT's communications and information gathering system</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff members report that there is no formal mechanism in place to ensure that the partner organizations and their stakeholders receive the information that COOPIBO disseminates to them</li> <li>• Staff report that feedback from partner organizations is possible, but it needs to be requested of the partner groups</li> <li>• Almost all KDG and UCAA staff indicated that feedback to COOPIBO was possible through a variety of channels, though one KDG staff said the flow was still very much one-way</li> <li>• Email is being used to share the experiences and knowledge of the partner organizations with donors and other NGOs; WWW is not</li> <li>• Email and to a lesser extent, the WWW, has become an integral part in COOPIBO's ability to deliver information to its partner organizations, as seen through communication with donors, ability to access relevant documents for capacity building of both staff and partners</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff members reported that they can ensure that WAYS is able to ensure that the information disseminated to the stakeholders is received by the stakeholders</li> <li>• All staff members report that community members are able to provide the organization with feedback through reports; group leaders; discussions at seminars, drama presentations; and through Gayaza staff who file monthly reports for Kampala</li> <li>• 60% of the youth group members who reported receiving information from WAYS believe that they are able to provide feedback, through telephone, letters, and direct visits with WAYS staff in Gayaza</li> <li>• Email is used more for reception of information from outside sources, than as a means of sharing information with others</li> </ul> |