



# SPIDER STORIES 2012

 **SPIDER**



Stockholm  
University

Spider Stories 2012

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Cover: CHRAGG staff testing the SMS for Human Rights system at CHRAGG offices in Dar es Salaam.

Photo by CHRAGG.

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## Foreword

This publication aims to give you an overview of results from our ICT4D projects initiated in 2011-2012 in collaboration with project partners in Cambodia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. In partnership with local organizations, we have supported innovative ICT4D projects in democracy, education, and health. Our project partners have also explored Spider's crosscutting themes, from Free and Open Source Software and mobiles for development (M4D) to cultural creativity and youth empowerment. Indeed, you will find that projects have used drama and music in creative ways to engage in dialogue and empower local communities to strengthen good governance, along with digital cameras and video. You will also find that mobile phones have been used with great success, not least among young people, but even among technologically illiterate elders.

In many cases, Spider support has helped build the institutional capacity of our partner organizations, thus strengthening existing ICT4D actors and enabling new ones. We are pleased to acknowledge that all project partners have managed to live up to rigorous financial audit standards, along with stringent routines for reporting. This is a mark of quality assurance that we hope our partners can benefit from in their future efforts. We can also note the overall success rate of Spider projects, all of which have produced good results, in many cases surpassing our expectations.

We have chosen 'stories' as a narrative format to capture the voices of our *project partners* as well as the ultimate beneficiaries of their ICT4D efforts: ordinary people in different social settings. We have encouraged our partners to complement their formal reports with stories in their own words, and it is a selection of these stories we share with you here. These stories are told through words and photos, to describe, reflect upon, and communicate experiences, knowledge, and lessons learned. Some partners have taken the opportunity to write poems, others offer touching accounts and statements from project beneficiaries. All of them offer a vivid presentation of results achieved so far.

In this year's edition of *Spider Stories* you can enjoy results from Cambodia, our new partner country. In 2012, we initiated 4 projects in Cambodia, most of them focusing on democracy, one on health. We recognize that ICT4D is a new field in the country and we appreciate that our project partners are already contributing to building ICT4D capacity in Cambodia. This year we can also share the results of our ICT4Democracy East Africa network, which has proven to be one of our most successful initiatives so far. The efforts of all participating project partners have translated into a very potent network for ICT and democracy in East Africa and beyond. We are also pleased to share the results of our recently completed projects in Tanzania, along with education and health projects in East Africa, as well as our projects focusing on corruption.

We recognize that capacity building in ICT4D continues to be a key element in all interventions. In many cases, project partners engage in awareness training and training of project beneficiaries, but they can also contribute to a greater uptake of ICT in their own organizations. By spreading ICT skills in communities around the world, we recognize that our project partners are contributing to long-term, bottom-up development for the benefit of future generations.

“It was the best 6 months of my life,” Jiawei Kang concluded when he presented his experiences of being a Junior ICT Expert at a Spider ICT4D Seminar on 7 May 2013. Here you can read his story, reflecting on his work with the Serengeti Broadband Network in rural Tanzania. To his great surprise, Kang started his work by removing a honeycomb from a telegraph pole to get the network back online. After spending 6 months of sharing his expertise with local actors, Kang realized that what he received in return was no less than an appreciation of “the true value of life.”

We hope you enjoy these stories and we thank all the storytellers who made this publication possible.

Paula Uimonen  
Director of Spider



[www.ict4dcambodia.org](http://www.ict4dcambodia.org)

The Spider ICT4D Cambodia Network is the most recent addition to Spider's Network modality. The partners in the network are; Open Institute, InSTEDDiLabs, Women's Media Center, and East West Management Institute. The projects in the Network were all initiated during the first half of 2012 and fall within the Spider thematic areas Democracy and Health. The formation of a network was initiated during a workshop in August 2012 and have since then shared expertise and resources and submitted joint proposals for collaborative projects.



[www.apc.org](http://www.apc.org)  
[www.ict4dcambodia.org](http://www.ict4dcambodia.org)

*The global network/organization Association for Progressive Communication in South Africa and the Open Institute in Cambodia are the organizations behind the project “Holding Government Accountable for Violence Against Women”. The project aims to gather data on the incidence of violence against women and make it available to women’s groups and other actors to track the progress in combatting violence against women. The project is based on previous work carried out by APC and is replicated in Cambodia to address the issues with violence against women. Data on violence against women is gathered through the Commune/Sangkat councilors (the most local level of government) and is complemented by data provided by women’s groups and other NGOs. A map of all data is continuously updated on the Ushahidi platform and the results can be used not only to trace the incidences but also as a base for future work.*

## Global Teamwork in Cambodia

*“Starting a project can have unanticipated achievements and challenges. Add technology and different time zones and it becomes even more interesting!”*

As with most starts to a new project, APC started meeting with Open Institute to work out a concrete and sustainable approach for meeting the objectives. Regular online meetings were held and the work began on shaping and building the Ushahidi map. A large part of this project is visualizing information via an online map which would be an ongoing monitoring of responses from governments and services providers to gender-based violence. This means establishing categories which fit with the data being collected and finding ways of making this visible, useful and applicable to the participating organizations. A small global team working across time zones started planning, analyzing and testing the Information Architecture of the platform.



*Welcoming Remarks by Ms. Manavy at the first meeting on GBV questionnaire  
31 Aug 2012*

What is interesting about working in a global team is firstly to find times to meet when time differences can be up to 6 hours. Then one has to take into account connectivity issues, such as the power of thunder and rain storms to affect connectivity, and then understanding across language differences. Imagine working in Khmer with a platform developer whose home language is Tagalog, and working in English to build a platform which is then translated into Khmer! It brings depth to the project as the team works together to make the platform happen. The notion of “learning by doing” definitely comes into play!



*Presentation on the overview of GBV project at the first meeting on GBV questionnaire 31 Aug 2012*

Teaching over Skype, sending email instructions and going over difficult sections in order to make sure that the platform reflects the needs and that the project leaders are confident to teach beneficiaries how to understand and add data to the platform, has been time-consuming but at times fun.

The technology itself can be challenging when for example the platform developer has to teach the project coordinators how the platform works. How to input data at the same time as taking guidance from the implementers on creating meaningful categories



*1st meeting on GBV questionnaire  
31 Aug 2012*

Developing a questionnaire collaboratively is never easy. The needs of a diverse but dedicated group have to be negotiated, listened to and included. But the final result has to speak to the project objective and reflect the realities of the people using it. But it soon became evident that the project needed to take into account the advice of partner countries who wanted a more detailed questionnaire to capture evidence on GBV in Cambodia. OI drew on the experience and skills of partners such as Commune and Sangkat councilors from Phnom Penh, Kompong Thom, Siem Reap and Battambang as well as women’s organizations and partner networks.

The process started with setting up a partner meeting about the GBV questionnaire to seek feedback, comments and constructive criticism on the draft and to obtain specific comments in relation to the scope of the questionnaire, the specific wording of the questions, and the applicability to the National League of Communes and Sangkats.

Once the OI and APC team had the draft questionnaire, it soon became evident that the Ushahidi platform which had been developed to visualize the GBV data collected would not be sufficient to capture such detailed information. We discussed this at length and knew we had to come up with a technological response which would add value to the project and not jeopardize the platform. Our “techie” then suggested Limesurvey to capture this detailed data and that we use the Ushahidi platform for just the section of the questionnaire related specifically to data which would be useful to visualize.

So, unexpected challenges can be turned into achievements! And finding a technology solution which enables the valuable data to be collected and aggregated online adds value to the project.

And so the project team continues to meet across time zones, finding reserves of patience for unpredictable weather and inconsistent connectivity. We are learning about each other’s cultures, social realities, lives outside of work, and sharing local news about gender-based violence. We discuss the similarities and differences in government policies, how police respond to domestic violence and the ongoing and tireless work of women’s organizations.





[www.open.org.kh](http://www.open.org.kh)  
[www.ict4dcambodia.org](http://www.ict4dcambodia.org)

*Open Insitute is a well established and recognized Cambodian organization that is the local implmenting partner for the project “Holding Government Accountable for Violence Against Women”. The organization works closely with Commune/Sangkat councilors to spread information about violence against women and to gather information about the incidents. The project incorporates ICT in a variety of ways. The Ushahidi platform not only makes it possible to present results in an intuitive way but also to gather information from a variety of sources and organizations. The project also allows people to familiarize themselves with ICT and the way new technology enables sharing, aggregating and presenting information.*

## Combating Gender Based Violence through ICT

Ushahidi is a software program designed by a non-profit software company that develops free and open source software for information collection, visualization and interactive input. The Open Institute, with our partner the Association for Progressive Communications (APC), initiated the program of using the Ushahidi platform to mitigate gender-based violence in Cambodia in 2011. To share this experience and expand the beneficiaries of this program, the Open Institute held a series of training sessions in December 2012 with a target group consisting of the councilors from Phnom Penh, and three provinces. By using the Ushahidi platform, the councilors and grassroots organizations in the gender equity field know how to keep track of GBV cases in Phnom Penh, Battambang, Siem Reap and Kampong Thom provinces.

The trainings were among other activities of the project on Gender Based Violence (GBV), a joint project between the APC and the Open Institute funded by the Swedish Program for ICT in Developing Regions (SPIDER). After the training, participants are expected to collect data for a survey on GBV focus in Phnom Penh, Battambang, Siem Reap and Kampong Thom provinces.

Before Mr. Cheng Chouh Heang, a counselor of Jaksa Sangha Commune of Siem Reap, participated in the “Training on the Use of Ushahidi platform and GBV data collection”, his work in Siem Reap did not have much focus on the elimination of gender-based violence. One of the main reasons was that they did not have access to a practical tool to deal with GBV cases.



*Photos: Open Institute.*

Accepting the Open Institute’s invitation to come to Phnom Penh and to participate in the training, he was curious about new technology and the responsibility to his own commune. Mr. Cheng, came to the training and started learning about this new application.

These trainings aim to build the capacity of women’s rights organizations and councilors to use ICT in order to keep track of and report GBV cases in Cambodia. The project will also assist the government in improving its mechanism of response to GBV. The Open Institute in cooperation with the National League of Commune/Sangkat (NLC/S) and the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWA) conducted four training courses on the use of the Ushahidi platform and the collection of data for GBV research. There were 108 participants (54 females), holding various positions, including the following: Commune/Sangkat councilors; the chief of Commune/Sangkat; the deputy chief of Commune/Sangkat, members of Commune/Sangkat Committee in charge of Women and Children (CCWC); the three of Secretariat from Commune/Sangkat councilor associations in Kampong Thom, Battambang and Siem Reap; and the representative officer of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs.

The problem of violence against women has been identified as a key development constraint. Thus, the use of the Ushahidi and Gender-Based Violence survey helps women's rights organizations, councilors, relevant service providers and legal support groups to gather data and then to report, keep track of and develop response strategies to incidences of GBV. This survey will contribute to other institutes involved in developing strategies and principles in preventing and eliminating all forms of violence against women. The creation and realization of surveys to collect data has helped to implement the National Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Prevention of Victims and has also supported Neary Rattanak III.

"I am really excited to learn the method of collecting data and visualizing GBV cases by using the Ushahidi Platform," Mr. Cheng Chouh Heang said to us after the training. "It is the first time in my life that I am aware that the new ICT can be used as a tool to deal with some social problems like GBV. It is new to me, and also new to most of the residents and grassroots organizations in my commune. Therefore, since I now have the knowledge of this tool, I am going to share it with my entire commune so that we can work together to mitigate the GBV in Siem Reap and create a better community for us to live."

It was not just Mr. Cheng Chouh Heang who became committed to working on gender-based violence in Cambodia by using what he learned in the training provided by the Open Institute. Most of the councilors who participated had the same feeling as Mr. Cheng.

With the councilors and women's organizations from the provinces empowered by this data collection method and the Ushahidi platform as a tool, and perhaps most importantly, their commitment to and faith in the elimination of GBV in their provinces, Cambodia is approaching the fulfillment of our commitment to the international community to meet the Cambodia Millennium Development Goal 3.





[instedd.org](http://instedd.org)

[www.ict4dcambodia.org](http://www.ict4dcambodia.org)

*InSTEDD iLabs South East Asia is an organization that focuses on building technological capacity for addressing health, safety and sustainable development in the Mekong Delta. The Verboice system is a Free and Open Source Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system that enables organizations to disseminate and/or collect information through mobile technology without relying on literacy. The project is working closely with Open Institute and Women's Media Center to adapt the system to manage the content flows of each organization, in this way putting the developed system to the test and adding functionalities to further develop and adapt the system.*

## Interactive Voice Response System Empowering Cambodians

A number of health and social organizations in Cambodia are working hard to support and improve the health and livelihood of people in Cambodia. To generate a big impact for this important work, there is the need for two-way communication that can reach out to people directly and overtake the literacy barrier.

Through funding from the SPIDER network, InSTEDD iLab South East Asia began the project to assist Women's Media Center (WMC), Open Institute (OI) and other partners in Cambodia in implementing a series of mobile-based information lines, scheduling advice systems and question boxes for women and children that complement and extend the reach of their current mass media projects.



*Training VerVOICE to a team from Open Institute*

InSTEDD has already developed an open source IVR system called VerVOICE. The objective in this project is to implement the VerVOICE platform to answer the requirements and needs in Cambodia. We work with partners from different dimensions of expertise, who have existing programs going on that would benefit from expanding their content and program through an IVR system.

We began working with Open Institute and the Women's Media Center of Cambodia. Open Institute intended to use IVR for their existing program on Gender-Based Violence. WMC thought of extracting IVR content from their existing radio content, but later they want to use IVR in combination with their radio shows, such as setting up quiz call-ins with their listeners.



*In this photo, Mann from iLabSEA is testing new prototype design with Ms.Chanthenh from OI*

We have other new partners interested in using VerVOICE for their existing programs. The ILO Better Factory program wants to use IVR for a labor law quiz and "tip of the week" to factory workers in Cambodia. BBC Media Action group wants to expand their existing youth program "Loy9" to IVR. Marie Stopes, a reproductive health organization, wants to use this IVR for post-abortion surveys and follow-up.

We work with all partners to identify their use cases and content, and assess the different types and complexity of existing content. Further modifications to Vevoice are made as needed, to enable partner organization to adapt it to their own design flow and content.

We also provide frequent demos and training to groups or individual partners so that they have more understanding about the system. We set up phone lines connected to a system for testing, so that our partners can design their content and test it. With the existence of this test line, we encourage and assist our partners in designing their call flow and testing the content with their selected target group, so that they could include their caller feedback earlier and revise the content.

**New reminder schedule**

Phonebook type  
Pregnancy

Call flow  
Please select

Channel  
Please select

Start on  
/ /

Call time  
From [ ] to [ ]

Recurrence  ON

Sun  Mon  Tue  Wed  Thu  Fri  Sat

Every [ ] week(s)

*Extraction of prototype of Reminder Scheduling*

Through the collaboration with OI we received a contribution of a server computer from their SPICE program. This server will be used as a Verboice server for our Cambodian partners.

The screenshot shows the Verboice web interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the 'InSTEDD Platform' logo and a 'ព័ត៌មាន' (Information) link. Below the navigation bar is the Verboice logo and a 'Demo' section. The demo section contains a horizontal menu with options: 'ទិដ្ឋភាពទូទៅ' (Overview), 'ហៅ' (Call), 'លិខិតអរហោរ' (Thank you letters), 'ឧទាហរណ៍' (Examples), 'កាលបរិច្ឆេទ' (Dates), 'សៀវភៅខ្មែរសិទ្ធិ' (Khmer rights manual), 'សេវាមានប្រយោជន៍' (Useful services), and 'ការកំណត់' (Settings). Below the menu, there is a text input field with the placeholder 'ប្រើប្រាស់ឈ្មោះអ្នកទាក់ទងក្នុងការហៅទូរស័ព្ទ និង ការហៅចេញ' (Use contact name for calling and outgoing calls). A dropdown menu is set to 'លិខិតអរហោរទាំងអស់' (All thank you letters). Below this, there is a download icon and the text 'ទាញយកឯកសារ CSV' (Download CSV file). A section titled 'បង្ហាញទាំង 6 Call log' (Show all 6 Call log) contains a table with the following data:

លេខសម្ងាត់	បានចាប់ផ្តើម	បានបញ្ចប់	រយៈពេល	លេខសម្ងាត់អ្នកហៅ	ទិសដៅ	ទំហំ
125	6 ថ្ងៃ ago	6 ថ្ងៃ ago	គិតជា 20 វិនាទី	1000	incoming	7

*Development of language pact support*

For scalability of the implementation we also have been processing a partnership agreement with the telephone operator “Smart Mobile” to provide phone lines for partners in the country to use to connect with Verboice. In addition, we also collaborate with other programs such as SPICE in getting additional connection with other telephone operators.



[ewmi.org](http://ewmi.org)

[www.ict4dcambodia.org](http://www.ict4dcambodia.org)

*East West Management Institute has strived to strengthen democratic societies by bridging government, civil society and the private sector since 1988. The organization has worked in Cambodia since 2001 focusing on human rights, justice and land rights. The latest addition to a number of successful projects is Open Development Cambodia, a Free and Open Source Mapping online resource that gathers official data on land conversion and other crucial issues in Cambodia. Information is scattered across various sources, many are specialized or hard to access. The data is drawn together from a number of reliable sources, confirmed, mapped and presented in a unified format to facilitate overview and analysis.*

## Mapping Cambodia through Collaboration and Open Data Standards

The online presence of the site Open Development Cambodia has not motivated any comment or pushback from the government nor has there been any significant attempt to hack the site (unlike more biased advocacy/mapping sites). In fact, risks to the organization/site from the government appear less significant than originally anticipated. This is no doubt due in part to the way in which data has been introduced systematically to the site, based on defined confidence levels and always showing supporting data. Hence it was decided that transitioning ODC to independent organizational status will be the best option for its sustainability.

The site now has a well-established reputation, and is known for its objective and professional presentation of data. Professor Surya Subedi, the Special Rapporteur on human rights in Cambodia, cited ODC numerous times in his report on the situation of human rights in Cambodia<sup>1</sup>. ODC screen shot pages appear in official government presentations, and positive feedback about ODC's usefulness has come from environmental groups, the private sectors, and donors.

### Supporting NGOs, Facilitating Cooperation and Sharing Turns up new Information<sup>2</sup>

The project has cooperated with several NGOs to build out more comprehensive concessions maps. This first required convincing groups to share their data, something which most NGOs resist since they often see data as proprietary. Through a series of meetings it was agreed, in principle, that using ODC as a single data aggregation point offered many advantages to NGOs (and others) that could then turn their attention to data analysis and advocacy. In July, ODC began reconciling data sets from the NGO Forum, the UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR), and Extractive Industries Social and Environmental Impacts group (EISEI), along with partial data from ADHOC and LICADHO, while also referencing Cambodia's Royal (Legal) Gazette, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests, and Fisheries website, and other government websites. In doing this, the team discovered concessions which were either not on ODC maps or which had different supporting data. ODC mappers worked on reconciling the various data sets to ensure that ODC has the most reliable and comprehensive information possible. This included finding appropriate information and publishing, where possible, new listings for more than 100 concessions. In the meantime, ODC continued to receive data from various NGOs on new concessions and developments.

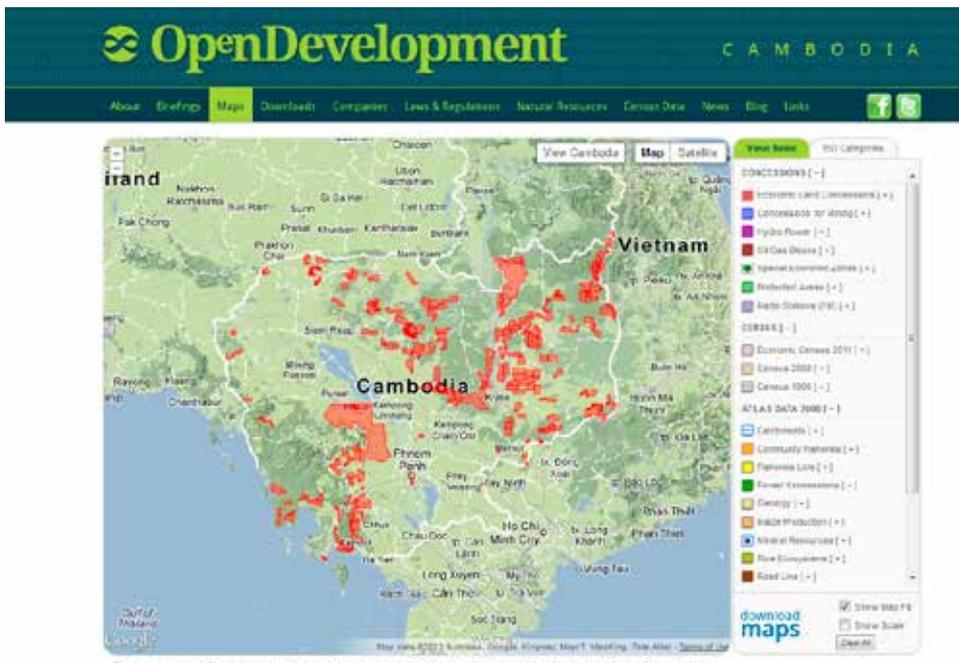
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<sup>1</sup> A human rights analysis of economic and other land concessions in Cambodia, 24 September 2012

<sup>2</sup> We would prefer that this section be kept confidential since some most organizations share information confidentially.

## Facilitating Crowd-Sourced Mapping of Cambodia and Communicating it to the World

The ODC co-hosted Monthly Mapping Meet-up has motivated a collaborative effort to improve Cambodia's representation on Open Street map. ODC/House 32 twice hosted mapping marathons where as many as a dozen mappers contributed to refining Cambodia's administrative borders and Phnom Penh streets. Several of the mappers were students who improved their mapping skills as a result. Collaborative mapping continued via crowd-sourcing. ODC also assumed management of the Mapping Meet-up Facebook page, where mapping issues are discussed and information shared. ODC staff made presentations on various aspects of the site on two occasions.



Screenshot of Open Development Cambodia website.

## Regionalizing ODC

Project coordinator Terry Parnell presented ODC at a regional workshop<sup>3</sup> in Myanmar in November. There was considerable interest in setting up parallel sites in Myanmar, Vietnam, and Laos, with groups from Myanmar and Vietnam committing to concrete steps to initiate such work. Since ODC is built as an open source site, any of these groups could readily adopt and adapt the site for their own country. It was agreed, however, that a coordinated regional approach would increase efficiency across the groups, ensuring that IT efforts are not duplicated unnecessarily, and ensure shared standards such that a portrait of the lower Mekong region could begin to emerge. This will be critical to helping to motivate and

<sup>3</sup> The workshop was sponsored by Global Witness which is maintaining a low-profile for their work in Myanmar and the region. For public purposes, it would be best not to mention their name.

inform regional dialogue on cross-border issues. EWMI and ODC will be essential to advising the development of other country projects in the future. Subsequent to that meeting, EWMI began discussions with groups in Myanmar about how to support a parallel initiative in that country.

### **Significantly Extending the Range and Format of Available ODC Data**

For the first time ODC published concessions based on “secondary source” data, primarily made available by the companies themselves on their websites or in public reports. Prior to this, ODC had published concessions based only on “government complete data” and “government partial data.” Protocols were established for determining under which confidence level to publish data. A fourth confidence level of “other data” based on media mentions, photographic and other evidence is planned. More than 80 concessions for which the team could find no supporting data in the public domain will be published in February, under “other data,” with the caveat that these concessions have been named in NGO reports or in the media, with no government or company documentation to back them up. Eventually, ODC will back up such concessions with photographs, GPS points, and land-sat images where possible, working with volunteers.

The team also developed and implemented a table format listing of concessions. Previously concessions and other developments were listed by companies only, with individual profile pages. The table allows users to more easily survey and compare the totality of developments. The ODC team expects to build out more fields for the table in the coming months. The expanded table will allow users to compare what documentation is available to track how the concessions were approved.



[www.open.org.kh](http://www.open.org.kh)  
[www.ict4dcambodia.org](http://www.ict4dcambodia.org)

*Open Institute is a well-established Cambodian Organization that aims to increase the access to high quality education, information, communication, and technology to contribute to a more developed and just Cambodia. The project Dialogue on Development is a part of the democratization and decentralization of government and aims to increase democratic participation and good governance by training youth and Commune/Sangkat councilors (local government) in access and sharing of information and the use of ICT and youth participation in elections. The project is implemented by Open Institute in collaboration with the organizations People Health Development Association (PHD), Khmer Youth and Social Development (KYSD), the organization National League of Commune/Sangkat (NLC/S) and the radio station Voice of Democracy (VOD). The project has carried out trainings, discussions, forums and debates. It has also reached far beyond direct project participants through social media, radio programs and televised debates.*

## Stories of Change: Empowerment through Dialogue in Cambodia

Ms. Voerng Sina is 23 years old, a peer, and volunteer of the People Health Development Association (PHD). Her home town is in Bantey Chhay village, Speu commune, Chamkar Leu district, Kampong Cham province. She is the youngest of 3 children whose parents are farmers. Her two elder brothers have received vocational training. She is being supported by her parents to continue her study of English Literature at Puthisatra University where she received a scholarship.



*Sina presents her group result in training session*

Due to her family situation – her parents are farmers; she could not afford to pay for accommodation in Phnom Penh. Fortunately, she was given a place to stay at Kolab Tyboun, which is a government-run establishment with current support from Family Cares where orphaned children live. Ms. Sina was selected to attend the training on “Access to Information” and “Citizen Journalism” because she was not familiar with the concept of information and how to write an informational piece that would include an important message. She had always thought about the information she got from media like radio, TV, newspapers, and magazines, etc. She always blamed the Commune Chief for not providing sufficient information. She didn’t know the proper way to find information and how to write brief informational reports, nor did she know much about journalist ethics and laws. When she shared information with her friends, she would copy an article, she did not understand if she had the correct writing style. When she heard the word “democracy” she simply thought it meant that she could always do what she wanted. After attending two courses, run by the Open Institute, she has greatly improved her knowledge and understanding on the way to access information by approaching the public services provider like Commune/Sangkat. For instance, when she came to register her name on the voting list for the 2013 Elections, she received information about the registration period, and other requirements. Moreover, through “Citizen Journalism” training, she was able to understand the libel code, journalist ethics and the law, and she could write articles, such as hot news, press releases and media advisory documents, and could post in social media like Facebook contributing to discussions. In support of her new abilities, Mr. Leav Kim Lay, PHD volunteer and her friend on Facebook, expressed to her that her text was easy to understand with important messages to share and that her discussion on her Facebook page was opposite to what it had been before, as he sometimes didn’t understand what she wanted to discuss in the past. She also appreciated the importance of sharing text about good governance and national election information. Ms. Sina was pleased to have improved her knowledge from those two trainings and committed herself to disseminate what she had learnt to her friends at University and her Facebook friends.



**Mr. Bet Borith** is 22 years old, and studies at IIC of Technology University and is currently in his second year. He is studying information technology and is a youth volunteer at the National Youth Senate (NYS). Previously he didn't know about the role of authority or ways of communicating. He didn't care about the national elections and thought that this wasn't his responsibility. He didn't understand the advantages of having access to information and requesting documents from authorities. After he participated in the

two courses on "Access to Information" and "Citizen Journalism" he realized the importance of ethics, law, and the dissemination of information through Facebook and blogs. He will bring all the knowledge that he gained from these two courses to train his friends and the community in his village.

**Ms. Kim Sopheak** is 21 years old and studying at Panhasatra University and is currently in her second year. She is studying international relations. She is also a peer from the People Health and Development Association (PHD). She learned a lot from the two courses "Access to Information" and "Citizen Journalism". For instance she understands issues such as human rights, ethics, laws relating to journalists, the role of authority, Khmer typing, Open Office, and searching the Internet. She will organize and share what she has learned with her friends and peers at University. She said that before the training she didn't know about ethics and libel, and when writing an article she always included her opinion.



**Mr. Bun Sophorn**, is a youth club member in Anchanh village, Krang Skea Commune, Teok Phork District Kampong Chhnang Province. He said, "I am very happy to have participated in this workshop on youth's role for using ICT to promote democracy, and this is the first time that my village got an important workshop like this." He continued "because youth KYSD provided the training which was supported by Open Institute (OI) it has given me an opportunity to learn the new technology that I didn't have before. He added, "I think that I have understood about youth's role in promoting democracy in my village via using mobile phones and other public services. I am committed to continuing to use and spread this information to other people."





*Ms. Douch Malin Chief of Yeang Commune at Siem Reap Province was present at the training on "Access to Information with Gender Perspective Approach" on 29–30 August, 2012.*

**Ms. Douch Malin**, Chief of Yeang Commune, Puok District, Siem Reap Province is a 52 years old widow. She is raising her 5 children (2 daughters and 3 sons) alone as her husband passed away many years ago. Her current address is in Yeang commune of Puok District located around 37 Km from Siem Reap city and nearly 60 Km from Siem Reap Provincial Administration's hall. Ms. Malin finished her education after grade 6 during the period of Lon Nol regime (1970-1975,) which similar to grade 8 in the current education system. She could not continue her studies after escaping the Khmer Rouge regime due to her family situation and not having peace in her region.

In the third mandate as Commune Councilor, Ms. Douch Malin was elected as Chief of Yeang Commune in Puok District through Commune/Sangkat election on June 03, 2012. Included in this mandate, is Ms. Douch Malin as Commune Chief for three mandates, and she is one of three women holding a position of a commune chief in the Siem Reap province, and is the only woman elected as commune chief of Puok District. Through her experience in local governance and local development, citizens living in her territory like her very much. However, according to her, "I admit that much information related to commune work and procurement for any developing programs does not reach out to all of my villagers because I use a one-way methodology in sending an invitation letter to the focal person." She added that "I am a bit busy with the district, and province, so I use the existing mechanism by flowing information to villagers through the village chief, but it doesn't work well."



*Ms. Douch Malin is in computer lab during the training on "Citizen Journalist" on 17-20 September 2012*



*Ms. Douch Malin in forum on "Youth and the 2013 National Election" on November 21, 2013 in Phnom Penh.*

Since the project operation in June, 2012, Ms. Malin has been invited to attend the training on "Access to Information with a Gender Perspective," "Citizen Journalism," and the forum on "Youth and the 2013 National Election." Through those training sessions, Ms. Malin said that "I have gained much knowledge on how to disseminate information to my villagers through an information board standing in a public/gathering space. I also intend to conduct meetings village by village with my villagers and village

chief to announce and get feedback on electoral information, such as encouraging them to check their name on the voting list, and for teenagers ages 15-18 to register." She added "I really liked the Citizen Journalism session and I try my best to minimize and simplify all information on technical issues for delivery to my villagers due to their capacities." However, she said that "at my age, I could not interact well with the computer, Internet, and Facebook, but I will try it when I am free of work."





[www.ict4democracy.org](http://www.ict4democracy.org)

*The East Africa ICT4Democracy Network, formally established in June 2011, is made up of seven organizations working together to effect a more democratic culture in the region through the use of ICTs, the seven organizations are;*

- *Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC)*
- *iHub – Research, Kenya*
- *The Collaboration on International ICT Policy in East and Southern Africa (CIPESA), Uganda*
- *The Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG), Tanzania*
- *Transparency International, Ugandan Chapter (TI-U)*
- *Toro Development Network, Uganda (ToroDev)*
- *Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET)*

*The collaborative spirit in the network is visible in how the partners identify synergies and opportunities to enhance the individual projects, as this disparate group of actors rely on each other's strengths, in sustaining not only the on-going initiatives but the network as a whole. 2012 brought a number of positive developments for the network, not least of which was the growing recognition through a number of international publications such as the Global Information Society Watch that regard the network website as a good resource. The recognition is also evidenced by extended invitations to the regional facilitators, iHub – Research and CIPESA, to present and discuss the network's activities at the Africa EU Cooperation Forum by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology in Lisbon, Portugal. The following story is a summary of events by CIPESA on this occasion.*

*CIPESA, as co-facilitators of the ICT4Democracy in East Africa Network, was invited to participate in the 2012 Africa-EU Cooperation Forum by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT, [www.fct.pt](http://www.fct.pt)). The network was humbled by FCT's recognition, as it showed the impact and visibility of our work as democracy actors, not only in the region, but beyond as well. Below is a summary of events on this occasion.*

## ICT4Democracy Network at Africa–EU Cooperation Week On ICT

iHub Research and CIPESA attended the 2012 Africa–EU Cooperation Week<sup>1</sup> on ICT from Nov. 26–30, 2012 in Lisbon, Portugal to participate in the e-Government & e-Democracy session<sup>2</sup>. Vasilis Koulolias of Gov2U and Angela Crandall of iHub Research moderated the e-Gov/e-Dem discussion session. Ashnah Kalemera of CIPESA represented the ICT4Democracy Network. The 90-minute session was attended by a range of stakeholders including the African Development Bank, academics from Europe, technology consultants from Africa and Europe, and government representatives.

The e-Gov/e-Dem session opened by asking panelists their opinion regarding the conditions that need to be in place for e-governance to work. Participants gave examples from their own work and emphasized that one needs to be sure to understand the problem and the role of ICT before beginning to implement an e-Governance initiative. Some of the additional key conditions that the panelists raised included the following: trust in the technology; political will; organizational setting; and cultural, social and technological maturity. Panelists also agreed that in many cases, a change of mindset is needed within governments as well as citizens and other stakeholders.



Hindrances to the e-Governance initiatives that were mentioned by the panel were the hierarchical nature of governments, and the lack of mechanisms for accountability. At the end of the session, it was agreed that there is no magic recipe for the implementation of e-Governance, but that a conceptual model is needed of how e-Governance/e-Democracy can work that can then be localized for the specific governance issue one is trying to solve. Transformational change is still very much needed in individual and institutional mindsets, and the way forward is both challenging and exciting.

<sup>1</sup> For an overall summary of the conference see: [http://euroafrica-ict.org/files/2012/12/EuroAfrica-ICT\\_P8\\_Forum\\_Event\\_report.pdf](http://euroafrica-ict.org/files/2012/12/EuroAfrica-ICT_P8_Forum_Event_report.pdf); [www.ict4democracy.org](http://www.ict4democracy.org)

<sup>2</sup> To see the PowerPoint presentation used to set the scene for the e-Governance/e-Democracy session, please go to: [http://euroafrica-ict.org/wp-content/plugins/alcyonis-event-agenda/files/e-Gov\\_&\\_e-Democracy\\_Setting\\_the\\_scene.pdf](http://euroafrica-ict.org/wp-content/plugins/alcyonis-event-agenda/files/e-Gov_&_e-Democracy_Setting_the_scene.pdf).



[www.cipesa.org](http://www.cipesa.org)

[www.ict4democracy.org](http://www.ict4democracy.org)

*The Collaboration on International ICT Policy in East and Southern Africa - CIPESA's strength and focus has primarily been on affecting ICT policy through research with recommendations and policy briefs. But in their project "Catalyzing Civic Participation and Democracy Monitoring Using ICTs" they partnered with grassroots organizations (in the north, west and southeast regions of Uganda) in order to train journalists and citizen journalists in service delivery reporting. Providing the established centers with IT equipment, training, as well as support, these communities have gone on to blog about service delivery, such as the e-Kasese center in southwestern Uganda<sup>4</sup>, grassroots partner BROSDI in south-eastern Uganda<sup>5</sup> and a wiki developed for the different centers to share experiences on using ICTs for democratic purposes<sup>6</sup>.*

*CIPESA has also equipped their partners with crowdsourcing knowledge and has developed an Ushahidi platform for purposes of mapping poor service delivery in these different regions. <http://ushahidi.cipesa.org>.*

*CIPESA's transition from a traditional ICT policy actor to a project implementing partner has been a learning experience, and its story is a reflection of this ongoing journey.*

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<sup>4</sup> <http://rrhskasese.blogspot.com>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.pearlwriters4dev.wordpress.com>

<sup>6</sup> <http://eparticipationuganda.pbworks.com/w/page/48580762/Home%20page>

## ICTs and Governance: Learning through Interactions

Understanding precisely what role Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) play in governance, and how, is very important to our work. Over the past 18 months, we have interacted with organizations at country, regional, and international levels that utilize and promote the use of ICTs in governance. These interactions have served as a learning opportunity for us, since the use of new technologies in governance processes in developing countries is not one with a long (recorded) history. But while these interactions have helped us to understand better how ICTs can have a good chance of delivering positive outcomes in –governance—and in many other areas—they have also helped us to share knowledge and resources with diverse actors.

And while our own understanding of the role of ICTs in service delivery, in encouraging participation, and in promoting governance is steadily changing, we have noticed that the way different stakeholders view this role differs rather widely. There are various facets to the matter. Some look at it from the access and affordability angle; others from the utility side (value and functions of ICTs). There are also cultural issues, which in some instances hinder the use of ICTs by women, and which many—particularly at the grassroots level—are eager to point out. A related one is the low level of literacy generally and in particular about using ICTs.



*Training at the e-resource center in Kasese.*

Not forgotten are social issues, such as who influences use of a technology in a community, or the use of technology for personal benefit versus use for community benefit. Here, from various interactions, it seems that where individuals will have direct, tangible, personal benefits from using a technology, they will be more likely to use it – which explains why in Uganda there are 8.9 million mobile money users<sup>7</sup>, or ardent Facebookers<sup>8</sup>, as well as thousands that read newspapers online, and many others that do online sports betting, but then the numbers for those engaging in online civic/ political actions remain low.

In many countries, ICTs are presenting a number of opportunities and alternatives in the delivery of services from both public and private sectors. The value delivered over these technologies is growing, especially in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. Because of these capabilities, the demand for transparency and accountability through the use of ICTs is increasing.

As part of its iParticipate Uganda project, CIPESA has conducted a series of citizen journalism trainings to empower communities in the use of ICT, especially social media, to report on governance issues. Based on a citizen journalism training manual we developed, CIPESA has equipped community members in three districts with skills for seeking and disseminating information related to reporting and monitoring of service delivery concerns. The trainings were conducted at grassroots-based partner centers, the Northern Uganda Media Club (NUMEC), Busoga Rural Open Source and Development Initiatives (BROSDI) and the e-resource center in Kasese.

These trainings also help to clarify what community workers understand about ICTs and governance, and what they see as possible areas where ICTs can promote governance. But beyond the trainings, many obstacles – sociocultural, political, and economic – stand in the way, and in our region there are few success cases that can be used to promote the uptake of ICTs in governance. And so we have realized, again, the need to promote access and awareness. We have also realized that government has a big role to play in this regard, itself being a champion of the use of ICTs, and having in place policies and practices that encourage citizens to use ICTs.

Additional difficulties include low awareness of the benefits of digital communications, high costs of accessing ICT tools, the low spread of access centers such as Internet cafes and telecenters, and misunderstandings about the intentions of initiatives that seek to hold leaders accountable and transparent. These are not minor problems. They are big problems, and they are well recognized by CIPESA itself, but even more so by our grassroots partners and the communities they serve. We have discussed some possible remedies – sensitization of citizens on the benefits of using ICT, trainings on the use of ICT for citizen reporting, lobbying leaders to become role models by adopting active use of ICT in their work – but all these take time and money. CIPESA will continue to advocate for use of ICT in enhancing citizen participation and also act as a center of expertise on the same.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://mobile.monitor.co.ug/Business/Mobile-money-deals-hit-Shs11-trillion-in-four-years/-/1055106/1719176/-/format/xhtml/-/11kot1jz/-/index.html>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.socialbakers.com/facebook-statistics/uganda>

The interactions and learning that we have done during 2011 and 2012 are a fulfillment of one of the objectives of iParticipate Uganda, namely network development among groups and institutions involved in the ICTs for citizen empowerment/ democracy work.



*Participating in the Open e-Governance in Bangkok 2012*

CIPESA has shared experiences and had the opportunity to voice collective concerns and advocate for the use of ICTs in governance not only at a regional level, but on the global stage too.



*Uganda Internet Governance Forum 2012*

As we recognize the power of the Internet and its contributions to society, it is equally important to promote online safety, online freedoms and the free flow of information as well as freedom of expression. Research remains crucial in informing ICTs in governance interventions.



[www.khrc.or.ke](http://www.khrc.or.ke)

[www.ict4democracy.org](http://www.ict4democracy.org)

*Kenya Human Rights Commission – KHRC’s commitment to human rights and good governance has seen a surge in the organization’s advocacy work with their project “Reforms through citizen participation and government accountability”. KHRC set out to build the ICT capacity of their partners known as the Human Rights Networks (HURINETs), in the lead-up to the country’s general elections which took place in March 2013. The HURINETs, as KHRC’s grassroots partners, were already trained in and working with issues of governance and human rights in their various constituencies. To augment their engagement with these issues, ICTs were brought on board and the HURINETs were equipped with knowledge on Web 2.0 tools, basic knowledge in application programs such as MS Word, and the use of the SMS platform for service reporting purposes, to name a few. The HURINETs have been very active on these platforms, creating blogs, posting videos on KHRC’s YouTube account, some of which are of interest to local and international journalists.*

## Engaging the Public in Human Rights: A collection of short stories

During a community reflection meeting with HURINETs in May 2011, KHRC introduced the idea of ICT4D, especially the idea of using social media platforms for human rights work. The participants were a mixed group of people with wide age, education and social status ranges. At the time, there was as much excitement as there was skepticism among the HURINETs, with a number of the older ones doubting their ability to learn and grasp the new technologies. Most of them had never used a computer before and were afraid of it. However, some of them took the challenge and opened up to learning new things.

Two years down the line, through training and other informal step-by-step interactions, individual members of the HURINETs are able to use varied ICT platforms to articulate their advocacy issues.

### Hellen Ongere: Age is but a number

Hellen, a 54-year old grandmother and a member of the Nyando Human Rights Network based in Western Kenya, is a volunteer human rights advocate. She monitors human rights violations within her village and constituency, and engages the local duty bearers to hold them to account on various violations or service delivery in the Nyando district where she lives.



*Hellen Ongere being shown how to navigate her Facebook account*

Through her network, she has been involved in monitoring activities and reports to KHRC. Hellen was trained by KHRC as an election monitor. Upon getting to know about ICT4D, she became interested even though her HURINET was not among those selected for the project. She has since learned how to operate an email account and also opened a Facebook account where she reports issues around her. Hellen does not have a computer at home or an Internet-enabled mobile phone, but takes long trips to go to the nearest town where she can find a cyber café to send her emails as well as use her Facebook page.

### **Kwale Human Rights Network: Increasing Citizen Participation in County Budget**

Despite being some of the most taxed citizens of the world, Kenyans have had little say about the manner in which their economy is managed. Since the country's independence in 1963, the national budget, normally announced in June every year, dictates the costs of basic commodities and essential services.

Weeks before the minister for finance makes the important budget speech in parliament, many unscrupulous traders deliberately create a scarcity of particular commodities whose prices they expect to go up on the *Budget Day*. This unpopular trend has affected items such as sugar, cooking oil, maize meal, petrol and kerosene, just to mention a few, and those who suffer most are the low-income households.



*Immediate former chair of Kwale HURINET and Coordinator of Kwale Participatory Budget County Committee, Mahmoud Barroh addressing participants during a PBCC forum in Matuga Constituency*

Of crucial concern is the prioritization of the budgetary allocation which has been left to the discretion of the Finance Minister and most of the time is skewed to favor certain ministries and departments at the expense of others. The end result in such circumstances has not been very helpful in the general growth of the national economy.

The Constitution of Kenya (2010) through Article 174 has, however, given much impetus to the ordinary citizen to participate in the management and decision-making processes in governance social, economic and political issues. Based on this constitutional right, the Kwale Human Rights Network in partnership with Fahamu Social Rights Network a non-governmental organization, took the opportunity to sensitize the communities to developing their budgets at the ward level in a forum dubbed Participatory Budget County Committee (PBCC). Using their Facebook account the HURINET was able to engage the local residents and mobilize them to attend the community budget forums. They furthermore took video clips of their forums which they share on Youtube to encourage others to replicate this participatory budgeting as a best practice. Clips of their community forums are available on Youtube<sup>1</sup>.

### **Mt. Kenya HURINET: Promoting the Rights of the Girl Child**

AlSubra is a faith-based organization working at the community level in the County of Nyeri, in Central Kenya. It is part of the Mt. Kenya HURINET, Coordinated by Salma Uledi. AlSubra teamed up with other self-help community groups in a community forum dubbed the Maridadi Movement to help further the education of the girl-child in Nyeri County by providing affordable reusable pads.



*Salma Uledi (center), Mt. Kenya HURINET Coordinator and Binti Africa trainer (left) enjoy a happy moment as one of the ladies work on a pad*

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/user/Maishainkwale/videos?view=1>

In Kenya, many girls from low-income families miss school during their monthly periods because they cannot afford sanitary pads. As a result, the girl-child from a poor household is disadvantaged and performs poorly because of the school days missed. A number of initiatives have been put in place to mitigate the situation. Promotion of re-usable sanitary pads is one of those initiatives. Salma Uledi, through her self-help group Al Subra, which is a member of the Mt. Kenya HURINET, started the project of making the pads both as a solution to this problem and also as an income-generating project for the young women who make the pads. With the capacity building received from the KHRC ICT4D project, through training and equipment, the group has set up a Facebook page called the Maridadi Movement<sup>2</sup> to promote the initiative.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/maridadimovement?fref=ts>

## Social Organizing: Blowing the Whistle on Greedy Members of Parliament

KHRC's ICT4D project has also led to better usage of social media as a tool to reach and rally the public around important issues. Kenyan Members of Parliament (MPs) have a habit of awarding themselves hefty pay packages at the expense of an already overtaxed citizenry. This flies in the face of the constitutional provision that created a Salaries and Remunerations Commission that is mandated to set the salaries and any other remuneration of state officers.

In October 2012, after a public outcry, President Kibaki rejected the Finance Bill that among other things gave MPs a generous gratuity, saying the increments were unaffordable and unconstitutional. However, the MPs sneaked the Bill again as part of Miscellaneous Amendments to be passed together with a raft of 29 other Bills. Once again, KHRC, together with other civil society organizations, joined hands to rally the public to protest against this heinous act of MPs raiding the public coffers to enrich themselves, when they already were among the highest paid parliamentarians worldwide. KHRC utilized both traditional and new media, i.e. Facebook and Twitter, to organize the protest march.



*Rev. Timothy Njoya, a veteran human rights activist and clergy leads prayers outside Parliament Buildings in Nairobi, Kenya, during the protest march against MPs attempt to award themselves hefty perks.*

## Kakamega HURINET in Western Kenya: Water Policy Advocacy

Kakamega HURINET has experienced challenges in effectively using ICT platforms for their advocacy work. However, they have managed to take photos showing environmental degradation and used them to document the effects of the destruction of water catchment areas as they lobby for revision of water policies and a review of land use.



*Portrays the health hazard situations of water sources in most parts of Ikolomani, Western Kenya*



*What used to be water catchment areas now put under food crops..*



*This area used to be a forest and was swampy. Now it has been cleared and there is little trace of the indigenous trees that were formerly present.*





tiuganda.org  
www.ict4democracy.org

*Locating their activities in Northern Uganda, specifically in the health sector, Transparency International – Uganda (TI-U), have empowered a number of communities in this region which has been plagued by endless adversities. As the region endeavors to recover from the 26-year-old civil war, this course is being hindered by poor service delivery, corruption and a community that is unaware of their human rights. TI-U, through their project titled “Promoting Social Accountability in the Health Sector in Uganda,” are targeting health service delivery and have mobilized the leaders and the community to actively engage in monitoring health worker absenteeism, bad service delivery, and corruption. Using a toll-free center, radio programs and radio jingles, this installation has given voice to many in the community in reporting the challenges that plague this sector. Not only have health workers themselves called into the toll-free center, to voice their own challenges (e.g. why they are late or absent from work), the community has taken to using the same technology to seek medical advice. The installation was set up to target a specific problem, but has evolved into several projects for TI-U. Such a project, much like ICT, can be configured towards addressing a specific need or problem but when confronted with reality, it is rarely limited or bound to the original ideas that may have shaped its conception.*

## Empowered and Involved Communities through ICT

Years after the rebel insurgency in northern Uganda civil society organizations moved in to rebuild the region by improving service delivery and ensuring improved accessibility of resources and service delivery in different sectors; however, the use of technology for people empowerment and engagement was hardly seen in the region. The region was blessed to receive the SPIDER health project in Lira and Oyam through TI-U, which widely uses ICT for people empowerment. The toll-free call center was installed in May 2012 and has greatly improved health service delivery in northern Uganda through community empowerment and engagement in monitoring health service delivery at their respective health centers. Men and women have used the call center/technology by calling in to report various challenges such as coming to work late, absenteeism, drug theft, poor hygiene and poor work performance in the health centers. Call conversations are always so touching. To some people the issues or challenges being reported by community health users are mythical but in reality the hard conditions are deeply felt while these calls are being received, and it's only through empathy that one can truly understand what happens at the health centers.

There was a situation where a midwife worked for 24 hours without resting because her colleague was absent, the poor midwife could be seen dozing off while she explained to Betty (TI Uganda staff) during the health center verification visit. Meetings are always convened at the health center, together with the person in charge and other health workers, to locally discuss and come up with solutions. During one of the meetings health workers justified their reasons for being absent and reporting late for duty as being caused by inadequate accommodation because some of them do not reside within the health center, and they requested Transparency International Uganda to help present this problem to district officials. One amazing thing about this is that the intervention has provided both the health workers and community health users the opportunity to freely share their side of the story whereas in the past only a few community health users and politicians would share their grievances through publicized radio programs and political campaigns. Technology has now enabled the different stakeholders to equally share both in presenting health challenges and in providing lasting solutions.

As a result of advocacy meetings with district health officers, the construction of some of the health staff houses, which had been delayed, was completed, and staff began staying within the health center establishments. It is pleasing that by engaging the district officials in solving these challenges, the project has attained positive results. For example, there is a great improvement in staff arrival time because now they reside within the health center compound and have pledged better timeliness in service delivery.

Both social media ([www.facebook.com/StopAbsenteeism](http://www.facebook.com/StopAbsenteeism)) and local FM radio programs have been used to inform, educate and engage local communities and global Internet users in sharing knowledge and ideas towards improving health service delivery. One interesting thing about community technological adaptability is the fixation in people's minds that FM radio stations are for people's entertainment, not empowerment. This made it very hard in the beginning to win listenership. Through daily advertising of radio programs and the toll-free line, the community became more interested in learning and sharing with presenters the health challenges at their respective health centers. Community participation improved so much during

subsequent radio programs where many were calling in to share their views, comments and suggestions. It was an appropriate time for the community members to interact through ICT. A caller named Albina said, “we love this program, it’s educating us and may you continue educating the community because many do not know their health rights.” Another caller said, “I have listened to most radio programs and it’s amazing how your program is approaching challenges at the health centers. Could you please extend the same program to our district as well because there are similar challenges we are facing in Dokolo, and I feel empowered and ready to be involved.” In response, Simon (TI-U – Project Coordinator) stated, “we would love to scale up the intervention to every part of northern Uganda but we are limited by resources; with more funding realized Transparency International Uganda will surely consider your district.”

Project sustainability has always been a point of concern for every humanitarian worker. TI Uganda tactically through radio programs organized for development pact signing. This is an agreement which enables the local communities to know and gain the commitment of the leaders, stakeholders and duty bearers by pledging their commitment towards improving healthcare service delivery and to realize continued participation and involvement of different stakeholders in carrying out project intervention beyond the project lifetime. This was one of most marvelous activities that the community members have ever enjoyed and participated in willingly. It was an instance of pledging commitment by the district officials, local leaders, health workers, voluntary accountability committees, HIV/AIDS focal persons, sub-county chiefs, village health teams and the general community towards improving health service delivery and creating good working relationships between the health workers and the communities by writing and signing their commitment on paper.

This was a very powerful moment for the community members, which was accompanied by a dramatic performance, which also was an eye-opener to the people, as it was not only entertaining but also educational. The drama covered late arrival of health workers, absenteeism, drug theft, mistreatment of patients and the benefit of development pact signing.



*Left: Health center in-charge signing development pact at Iceme Health Center II (Oyam District)  
Center: Chairman Voluntary Accountability Committee signing development pact at Iceme Health Center II (Oyam District)  
Right: Sub County Chief of Iceme signing development pact at Iceme Health Center II (Oyam District)*

This time the community members, the local leaders and the health workers were all free to interact on concerning issues taking place at their community health centers. Community members stated, “Thank you so much, Transparency. You have opened our eyes and we are now united and empowered.”

Technology itself alone cannot impact a community, and that’s why Transparency International Uganda values people empowerment and engagement in rightfully using technology for sustainable development. In our different capacities we can use ICT to greatly impact people’s lives; we therefore call upon every story reader to promote and support the different projects in making the world a better place.



*Youth Drama group from Justice and Peace Commission presenting anti-corruption drama at Iceme Health Center III (Oyam District)*



torodev.co.ug  
www.ict4democracy.org

*In June 2012, Toro Development Network (ToroDev) began their project called “Converging ICT4D tools to promote public accountability for improved service delivery and democratic engagement.” Taking into account which ICTs are accessible to the people of the Rwenzori region whom the project targets, ToroDev converges traditional and new media in empowering rural women and youth with information and knowledge that can allow them to actively engage in monitoring service delivery. Women and youth experience the brunt of poor service delivery and yet culture dictates that by virtue of their gender and age, they should not disrespect those in authority by speaking in public. However, through the radio and mobile phones, the situation is changing in that more women and youth are dialoguing with the district leaders in their areas. ToroDev’s story illustrates this change.*

## Advocacy Brings Results in Health

On January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, ToroDev staff members Solomon Akugizibwe (Media & Communications Officer) and Sheila Amanya (M&E officer) trekked, under the scorching sun, to the lowlands of the Rwenzori Mountain ranges in Kabarole district to track changes caused by ToroDev's ICT-enabled engagement and advocacy activities in the rural community. Their first stopover was at Mugusu Sub-County headquarters along the Fort Portal-Kasese highway. The team later met Ms. Anna Tukahirwa, who was in charge of Mugusu Health center III, and engaged her in a 30-minute discussion.

Interestingly, Solomon and Sheila actually found out that Mugusu Health center III had received more staff from the Kabarole district local government after complaints by the local citizens about inadequate medical staff which was affecting the delivery of effective and efficient health services at the center! This was through the ToroDev-supported Local Citizens' *Advocacy Forum* which used FM radio broadcasting advocacy on the "*Listeners Forum*" live talk show that combines broadcast media, mobile telephony and online technologies to empower local citizens to engage their local leaders on accountability for improved service delivery.

"We now have many health workers, especially nurses, to serve the increasing number of patients, except we have a problem of inadequate accommodation for them to effectively carry out their work," said Anna Tukahirwa. Ms. Tukahirwa hastened to add, "Now, our only remaining need is a Lab Assistant, but the government has already advertised the post and we expect to have one by March, 2013. The drugs are also coming in time after the complaints from the local people on radio. We received drugs in December 2012, and we shall also receive another dispatch in February 2013. We are getting a lot of drugs for HIV/AIDS patients, and in addition the laboratory equipment is now considerably sufficient. All this has been made possible because of the intervention of the local leadership and the local communities, especially the Mukwano and his group" (referring to Mr. Senyonjo Mukwano, chairperson of *Mugusu Advocacy Forum for Development* initiated and supported by ToroDev).



*Stephen Tibenda (Secretary, Mugusu Advocacy Forum for Development), Anne Tukahirwa (In-charge of Mugusu Health center III), Absolom Tibasaga (Member, Mugusu Advocacy Forum for Development) inspecting the health center during the visit in January 2013.*

We used radio programs to mobilize the local community's to demand for improved service delivery at the health center. People used it to make calls and send Short Messaging Service (SMS) on the radio talk shows, discussing issues affecting the health center, ranging from inadequate staff to delays in the delivery of drugs. This forced the local leaders to listen and act," said Tibeha Stephen, General Secretary of *Mugusu Advocacy Forum for Development*. Tibeha adds, "When mapping our priority service delivery needs, we identified a number of issues which were affecting effective health service delivery at the district which included the lack of enough drugs, inadequate staff, poor patient care by nurses and limited laboratory equipment."

The chairperson of *Mugusu Advocacy Forum for Development Club*, Mukwano Senyonjo (also rural monitor trained in online advocacy using Ushahidi platform) indicated that during the mobilization meetings for mapping priority service delivery needs, calls, SMS and radio programs were instrumental in mobilizing the local communities to participate in the dialogue meetings where they got a chance to demand accountability from their local leaders and engage them on their priority service delivery needs. Mrs. Rosemary Sande Byabagenyi, Vice Chairperson of Mugusu Sub-County, admits that the radio talk shows and community dialogue meetings organized by the Mugusu Forum for Development Club have played a commendable job in improving the delivery of government services especially in the health sector. "The radio talk shows have helped mobilize the local community and created awareness of the service gaps in the health facility (Mugusu Health center III) and there is a positive change now, we are working with them (local communities) to improve service delivery in the health center, and we are also lobbying for the ministry of health to expand the health center because of the increasing number of patients using the services," said Mrs. Byabagenyi.

Tasked to explain what the forum will do to ensure the availability of accommodation for the health workers, Mukwano indicated that "working with the local government, ToroDev and the local people, we shall organize other dialogue meetings with the chairperson Local Council III, Councilors, and Sub-County Chief and Health Assistant to find accommodation for the health workers at the health center. We shall also mobilize communities using both SMS and radio programs to lobby local leaders to allocate more funds for the construction of accommodation for health workers."<sup>9</sup>

ToroDev is currently supporting the initiation of rural *Advocacy Forums* in the seven districts of the Rwenzori region to ensure effective monitoring of service delivery and participation of local citizens in local government planning and budgeting processes using the most appropriate ICT tools like FM radios, mobile phones and online social media tools. So far, seven advocacy forums have been formed and ToroDev is strengthening their capacity in using online social media tools to monitor service delivery, skills in broadcasting for community development and skills in mapping their priority service delivery needs.

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<sup>9</sup> For more information about this local citizens' forum, please go to: <http://torodev.blogspot.com/2012/10/youth-advocacy-forum-tasks-local.html>





[www.wougnnet.org](http://www.wougnnet.org),  
[www.ict4democracy.org](http://www.ict4democracy.org)

*Through the Voluntary Social Accountability Committees (VSACs) of the Women of Uganda Network, WOUNET continues to “empower local people and communities to monitor district service delivery through ICT.” Mobilizing the VSACs entailed training them in advocacy skills, monitoring service delivery as well as in using ICTs such as mobile phones and digital cameras to document their evidence. Although communication infrastructure remains a challenge to using ICTs in the northern districts of Uganda where the project is located, the VSACs persevere and continue to effect change in their communities. Noteworthy in WOUNET’s project is the specific focus on promoting the woman’s cause where 70 percent of the beneficiaries, i.e., the VSAC members, are women. The project is anchored in 5 northern districts and the stories that follow are from three of these areas.*

## Empowerment, a Cornerstone to Better Service Delivery in the Community

Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET), through its project aimed at empowering local communities to monitor services delivery in Northern Uganda, has increasingly built the capacity of rural people in the districts of Apac, Kole, Oyam, Gulu and Amuru to fight corruption, demand for better service delivery and hold their leaders accountable.

The Voluntary Social Accountability Committees, which are composed of 15 members per parish of whom 11 and 4 are female and male respectively, were trained and equipped with ICT skills and tools, especially mobile phones, digital cameras and the web-based platform Ushahidi to monitor, report and disseminate their findings on the status of service delivery and corruption within their respective communities.

The committees were also trained on good governance as well as their rights, roles and responsibilities as citizens. Emphasis was placed on the importance of citizens getting involved in monitoring service delivery. This has empowered them to fight corruption and improve services delivery within their respective communities through exposure, naming and shaming. The bad governance issues identified in the community during monitoring are generated and compiled into a report and disseminated to the different stakeholders using different avenues such as district engagement meetings, face-to-face meetings, radio talk shows, WOUGNET's website, Facebook and Twitter pages and the Ushahidi platform.

A national conference was also organized in the capital city of Kampala to share the field findings with development partners at the national level, including the different ministries, Members of Parliament, non-governmental organizations, the press and the media, among others.

The major issues raised at the district engagement meetings conducted in Kole and Gulu included absenteeism, shoddy work by contractors, overcharging of National Agricultural Advisory Services - NAADS beneficiaries, hidden costs and late reporting to work by public servants. The voluntary social accountability committee presented the issues identified during their monitoring to the different district officials present and the latter were tasked to give feedback on matters raised.

For instance, the district Health Officer and NAADS coordinator-Kole district were tasked to explain why the beneficiaries were being charged fees higher than what is stipulated. At the health center, citizens incur some hidden costs yet services are supposed to be free of charge. The District NAADS Coordinator promised to hold a meeting with his sub-county NAADS coordinators and find out why things were happening as reported by the committees so as to improve on the situation.

The District Health Officer noted that the staff at Bala Health center were arriving late to work because the health unit has too few staff who end up being overworked and this further makes it difficult for them to handle both day and night duties. He also informed them that the issue had been reported to the Ministry but as of that date nothing had been done about it.

The committees appreciated WOUGNET for its initiative in creating space for them to dialogue with their leaders. They said that the workshop was very informative and some of them also had the opportunity to meet some of their leaders whom they had never seen before. Others noted that it was an eye-opener for the district officials who realized that they need to be more transparent and always give feedback to the public or else risk being named and shamed thus affecting their reputation, since the people they are working with are now empowered and know about their rights, roles and responsibilities.

The VSACs further expressed their gratitude to WOUGNET for the initiating the project. This is because they have been trained about the need for good governance and effective services delivery. Some of them have also had their ICT skills enhanced and are able to monitor and report poor services delivery and corruption incidences. They have also been empowered to interact freely with their leaders unlike in the past when they were so fearful.

The project has also inspired other local communities who are not VSACs to actively participate in monitoring service provision and fighting corruption in their communities by informing the VSACs of what is happening. This is a great achievement because previously they had been apathetic and thought that it was the role of their leaders to monitor services even if they saw things going wrong.

The Voluntary Social Accountability Committees have promised to continuously work harder to ensure that service delivery improves and corruption is minimized, therefore making their communities a better place to live in, using the knowledge and skills received through WOUGNET's support.



*The photos above show the Voluntary Social Accountability Committees from Awio Parish, Oyam District learn how to use a digital camera for documenting poor services in their communities; and District Health Officer Kole, during a District Engagement meeting, attempting to respond to issues raised by the VSACs. Among the issues raised in Kole was the shoddy construction of a twin staff house in the Angic primary school in Bala sub-county whose floor cracked just two months after completion*

## Shoddy construction of staff houses in Angic



*Twin staff house at Angic P/S  
By Mercy Apio Ogema WOUNGNET*

*Cracked floor, two months after hand over of the building*

## Community Awareness – a stepping stone in rebuilding service delivery in Northern Uganda

For over 20 years Northern Uganda experienced an armed conflict between the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) and the government of Uganda, which devastated social services and physical infrastructure in virtually all the districts. The latter was a result of massive corruption coupled by poor service delivery and shoddy work, to the extent that in some districts over 90 percent of the public resource was misused and mismanaged by the duty bearer. It was not until 2006 that some calm started to appear in the region as a result of peace talks between the rebels and the government, when some people decided to go back to their former villages, and the government also responded by initiating a plan of action, called the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) to guide the return and reconstruction process in the region. Amidst the various issues the PRDP is supposed to address, service delivery and local participation in governance processes have stood out as major challenges in the rebuilding process.

Several civil society organizations supplement the governmental efforts by initiating grassroots project geared towards empowering people regarding their rights and roles through the creation of community awareness and effective and better service delivery. This approach is in view of the fact that if the citizens, who are the end users of government services, are aware of services meant for them, they will be empowered to cause change in their communities. Hence the need to build their capacity and fashion avenues for their engagement with their leaders, thereby enabling them to voice issues that affect their lives and also receive feedback.

Notably, Women of Uganda Network (WOUNGNET) responded to this struggle through its project entitled “Empowering local communities to monitor service delivery through ICT” by forming Voluntary Social Accountability Committees (VSACs) in the five districts of Amuru, Gulu, Apac, Oyam and Kole of Northern Uganda. The formed committees were trained on good governance and effective service delivery, and they were also equipped with ICT skills to enable them to actively monitor service delivery in their communities. The VSACs were taught to report

on identified bad governance issues and advocate for improved service delivery. The committees were also set up to help create awareness among the local communities on the role and responsibility of each citizen in enhancing effective service delivery.

Since the formation of the committees, remarkable achievements have been registered. The committees have also actively raised awareness about the roles of community members in enhancing effective service delivery and reducing corruption in public programs, and furthermore the committees have empowered their communities to demand better service delivery from their leaders and hold them accountable through effective monitoring of service provision.

As a result of the committees' efforts, there is an increased civic awareness among the local people about good governance, their roles and responsibilities in obtaining effective service delivery, and especially concerning the roles of their district leaders. This has enabled the community members to mobilize themselves and rise up to demand, advocate and demonstrate for better service delivery.



*A case in point was last year on 21st July when Tegwana VSAC mobilized the community of Tegwana in Pecec Division, Gulu Municipal to block one of the roads called Ring Road in Tegwana Parish due to its poor state and they vowed not to open the road until Municipal Council authorities, particularly the office of the Town Clerk or Mayor, gave an account of why work on this road was delayed.*

During the community awareness meetings, VSACs members also trained and equipped their community with skills in several areas. Such as, how to monitor local government activities, find ways to identify corruption and mismanagement of local public resources, networking, and monitoring the policy process to promote social accountability. The VSACs efforts have increased citizen commitment in the target parishes and brought together a vibrant citizen group, who are willing to monitor service delivery, expose corruption and poor service delivery cases within the community and engage with their local leaders to improve service delivery.

The concept of government programs being demand driven, in the sense that it's the community members who are supposed to put forward their interests to local leaders, is something that the majority of people in the community are not aware of because they have never been told. But as a result of WOUNET's committee interventions, communities are encouraged to demand government programs and monitor how such projects are implemented by using ICTs, especially mobile phones which are owned and used by a majority of people, to report any form of shoddy work and corruption emanating from public program provision in the communities.



*Sarah Akulu, a member of Tegwana VSACs, sensitizing Layibi Central Communities on the role of community in enhancing effective service delivery. During the meeting the citizens of Layibi Central were also encouraged to use ICTs to monitor, document, report and expose shoddy work and any form of corruption in their community to the Tegwana VSAC for intervention. The ICTs skill was done practically.*

In a nutshell, majority of the VSACs in Amuru and Gulu reported that they have conducted community meetings in their parishes on the roles of the community in enhancing effective service delivery and reduced corruption in public programs. The committees noted that they are planning to extend their awareness-raising program to all parishes. According to them, the awareness-raising meeting was a pilot meeting in the parish and it is the first of its kind organized to bridge the information gap that exists between the leaders and communities. They also promised to use ICTs, especially mobile phones, cameras and radios to monitor, document, report and disseminate information to the public to raise awareness on poor service delivery, shoddy

*In Amuru, the contractor who was supposed to supply quality indigenous female goats under NAADS program bought very tiny goats and during monitoring, the voluntary social accountability committees raised this issue to the Regional District Commissioner (RDC). The RDC instructed the supplier to take back the goats and bring better ones. After the VSAC intervention, better goats were supplied.*



work, misuse of public resources and diversion of government programs. They noted that this will encourage their communities to actively oversee how government programs or projects are implemented and will empower the community to hold their leaders accountable.

*Compiled by Gilbert Egwel, Project Assistant , Amuru and Guru districts*



[www.ihub.co.ke](http://www.ihub.co.ke)

[www.ict4democracy.org](http://www.ict4democracy.org)

*iHub Research's project, "Exploring the conditions for successful mobile governance (M-Governance) in Kenya" took a more targeted approach in July 2012 when focus was directed towards water governance. In this study, iHub Research has sought to establish how the mobile phone can contribute to improving water service delivery. From administering almost 900 questionnaires to as many households, some of the preliminary findings indicate the following:*

- *women are most affected by the lack of clean water, and they also have the least access to the mobile phone*
- *more Kenyans have access to a mobile phone than they do to clean water*

*On the basis of this second point, the potential for mobile phones to contribute to better service delivery in the water sector is enormous and this is currently being addressed through a number of mobile applications in Kenya. iHub Research prepared a poem highlighting the importance of having access to water.*

## Water is Life

Water is life  
Water is a human right  
Why then is there no water transparency?  
Citizens can barely access information on water  
Where can I find water after my main source runs dry?  
Water information is scarce, let's make it open

Water is life  
Water supply and delivery is linked to poor performance  
The urban and rural are all affected  
Children, women and men are all affected



Photo by iHub-Research

They have no ways to advocate and access basic needs  
Water problems are non-discriminative  
They don't care whether you are young or old  
Water is life, let's make it accessible

Water is Life  
Water sanitation and hygiene are human rights  
Citizens want to be informed on water quality  
Our water is now called cholera water



*"The water we drink here at Kilala, has changed color."*

Water quantity is still an issue  
Our sources have dried out, where next do we go?  
We walk long distances to look for our right  
We are hit by high prices/bills  
These problems have become part of us  
Water is life, let's make it accessible

Water is life  
For how long will these problems continue?  
Who do we report to?  
Our local authorities are not credible  
What if I complain, then they lock me in jail?  
I am poor I cannot complain  
I complained to my chief but I don't think he is the right person  
He asked me for 'chai' for my issue to be resolved  
When I refused, he gave me no feedback or action  
Water is life, let's make it accessible

Water is life  
Transparency, accountability, accessibility, participation,  
Citizens want to be educated, participate and access their right  
Without water, our society will die of thirst  
Our children will die of cholera  
Our mothers will also die of stress and diseases  
Our fathers will die too  
Water is life, let's make it accessible

*A poem composed by Hilda Moraa, iHub Research*





[chragg.go.tz](http://chragg.go.tz)

*The Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG) is an independent department of the government of Tanzania responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights and good governance in Tanzania. The department has developed a mobile/web system that enables citizens to report abuses against human rights and good governance per SMS, saving citizens in remote rural areas fear of the costly trip to lodge a complaint through CHRAGG and the time-consuming communication per post. By the end of 2012 the SMS for Human Rights system was developed and ready to launch.*

## SMS for Human Rights System

The Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG) has developed and begun to use *SMS for Human Rights System*, the system which enables citizens to submit complaints to the Commission via Short Messaging Service known as SMS. The SMS for Human Right system has been built using Open source technology and it does not require an expensive phone to be able to submit complaints. The system can be run on any platform but the Commission has decided to run it on Linux –Ubuntu Server, as the user does not require any additional programs s/he just uses text messages to send the complaints, which are then submitted to a server that is located at the Commission’s office.



*CHRAGG staff testing the SMS system by sending in reports and checking the automated responses. Photo: CHRAGG*

The investigation staff working at the Commission will have to log onto the system for security purposes in order to see the complaints received. The system is web based which means the Investigation staff will be able to access the system using a web browser. No additional software is required but having Internet access is important.

Currently the system is available 24 hours and 7 days in a week. The SMS for human rights system enables staff to work on the complaints from any location. It is accessible from anywhere in the world as long as staff have Internet access. A number of people who have seen and tried the system have commended the Commission for taking concrete steps for ensuring easy accessibility of the Commission to all citizens. Earlier the Commission used to receive complaints

via letters, emails, complainant's own initiative and people who bring the complaints by visiting the Commission. But providing text messaging for reporting human rights violations has broadened the ease and timeliness that citizens can have with the Commission and its services.

The SMS for human right System was demonstrated during a commemoration day of Human Rights on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2012. Visitors who participated commended how the system has managed to reduce acknowledgement time. Many felt that they will appreciate if the processing time of a submitted complaint is shortened. Currently the system sends an automatic reply to the user to acknowledge receipt of the reported incident at the same time the response contains a message offering the sender an option to submit additional information through email.

One of the main complaints that the Commission was receiving from general public prior to the SMS for Human Rights Project was CHRAGG not being able to acknowledge receipt of complaints on time. As a result many complainants saw it as a major weakness of the Commission. This was attributed to the fact that the Commission used ordinary post to reply and there were delays and dispatch problems as well as missing letters. This was tarnishing the image of the Commission in the public eye.



*Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania Hon. Mizengo Pinda receives informations on the function of SMS for human rights system from Mr. Wilfred Warioba head of the ICT for the Commission during the demonstration.  
Photo: CHRAGG*

At the commemoration of Human Rights Day the Commission demonstrated that complainants were also able to receive legal assistance.



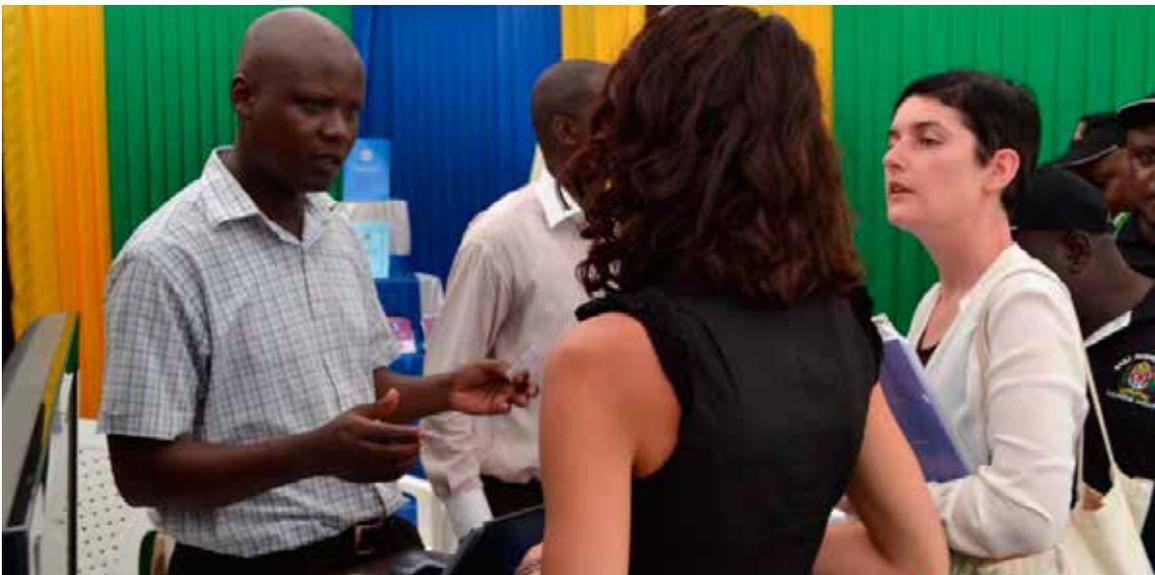
*Director of Legal Services Mr. Babor Assey provide a legal aid to people who visited the Commission during a Commemoration of Human right day week at Mnazi Mmoja grounds.  
Photo: CHRAGG*

Many people who visited the Commission highly praised the Commission for coming up with a solution which intends to help majority of the citizens to be able to submit their complaints before the Commission for investigation.

Currently there is coverage of at least two or three mobile phone service providers in every town and usually one member in many families owns a basic mobile phone. It is clear that the SMS for human right system has come at the right time.

The task ahead is to make the general public aware of the system; the Commission intends to conduct awareness campaigns throughout the country when funds become available. In order for the citizen to be able to utilize the system, the Commission intends to take human rights and SMS system awareness campaign to the remote areas.

The Commission acknowledges the fact that no one has ever attempted what we have done; therefore this will be a learning process to see what the technology can offer us. The mobile phone was meant to be used for making calls and sending SMS to business, friends and relative. Now the Commission is using it for improving services to the Citizen, the Commission expects more challenges but it will remain focused.



*Mr. Warioba responding to questions to the visitors at the Commemoration of human day held at Minazi Mmoja Grounds  
Photo: CHRAGG*



*The Spider Tanzania Network was formed in January 2012 by uniting the Spider supported projects initiated in 2011 into a more formalized unit. The network has organized workshops where the partners have shared information and experiences from their projects and discussed joint activities and events. The network was also a way to leverage the collective expertise in exploring future collaboration and opportunities for further funding and up scaling. The partners in the network are; Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance, National Museum and House of Culture, Jua Arts Foundation, and Invention and Technological Ideas Development Organization (ITIDO).*

## A Center for Knowledge Sharing and Exchange

**Spider Tanzania ICT for Development Network Facilitation (STINF)** is a project funded by Spider with the aim of coordinating and facilitating Spider-funded ICT4D projects in Tanzania. The idea is to bring together ICT4D stakeholders to exchange knowledge and share experiences and lessons learned during project implementation

STINF was formed in January 2012 and has provided opportunities for project partners to meet regularly and share knowledge and project updates. During the last meeting in December 2012 held at National Museum of Tanzania (House of Culture) project partners mentioned that STINF has been a good platform for them to meet regularly to share experiences, exchange knowledge and learn from each other especially and on best practices that can be applied to make the projects more successful. STINF also helped them to know what was going on with other ICT4D projects.

Project partners thanked Spider for providing the catalytic funding, which has, allowed them to apply and turn their ideas into reality. The projects helped to show proof of concept and provide solutions to challenges facing the Tanzanian community. According to the project partners Spider funding has provided implementing organizations with visibility to different stakeholders who have shown interest in the work as well as interest in supporting some of the projects.

Spider funded four projects in Tanzania which are **e-RCH for Better Care, SMS for Human Rights, Chanjo ya Rushwa** and **ICT for Public Access to Cultural resources**

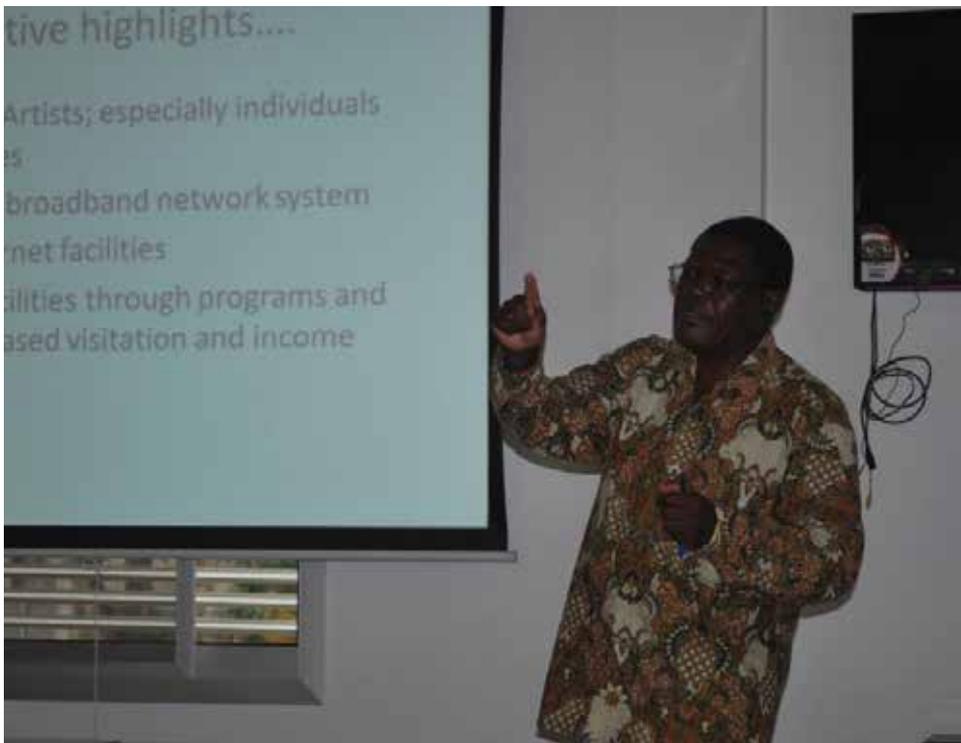
**e-RCH4BC:-** Electronic Reproductive and Child Health for Better Care project that aimed at improving reproductive and child health using ICT intervention was implemented by ITIDO in collaboration with CSSC, Softmed and NeSC. This project was one of the models that Spider was testing to bring different organizations to work together in a consortium approach to achieve something and bring impact to the community. The e-RCH4BC project manager Jacob Mtalitinya mentioned that the consortium approach is a good model but partners forming the consortium need to avoid rushing into creating something together but rather should take time first to know each other well, find common a bond, define clear tasks and responsibilities with respect to budget allocation and provide strong commitment to work on whatever the consortium is working towards.



**SMS for Human Rights** aimed at enhancing the complaint handling mechanisms for CHRAGG with SMS capabilities for public use in Tanzania. By expanding the current system for filing complaints and tracking of cases with a web/mobile platform that will save many people in rural areas costly trips to CHRAGG offices. The SMS for Human Right project manager Wilfred Warioba mentioned that the system was



launched and it will be very useful to the community and will provide an easier mechanism for them to submit their complaints and track the statuses of their reports. This will also reduce the need to go to CHRAGG offices, which will save time and costs to the complainants. The project Manager mentioned some few challenges faced during project implementation such as government procurement processes and logistics that caused delays in the project.



**The project ICT for Public Access to Cultural resources** aims to enable The Museum and House of Culture to be equipped with ICT so that children, youths, cultural professionals and visually impaired persons are able to record and document their activities and pro-

grams and access cultural resources. The Project manager Dr. Paul Msemwa thanked Spider for providing the catalytic funding which has also contributed to attracting other development partners to work and support them. He mentioned that the project was of interest to the Government of South Korea who are supporting them by donating books, which have been placed in the National Museum library facility.

**Chanjo Ya Rushwa (Corruption Vaccine) Project** aimed to fight corruption through music performances. The Chanjo team conducted a musical tour throughout Tanzania and the project was implemented through the Jua Arts Foundation. This project has contributed to creating awareness among communities on their role and importance to fight against corruption and to report corruption incidences once they occur.



STINF National Project Coordinator Theophilus Mlaki thanked Spider for their support and called upon Spider to look for ways to support these exciting projects to up-scale them and bring more impact. Mr Mlaki also called upon Spider to support STINF towards becoming a strong ICT4D knowledge center in Tanzania so that interaction among ICT4D experts and project implementers within and outside the country can be strengthened.

*by Jacob Mtalitinya – e-RCH4BC project Manager and STINF Project Assistant*



[chanjoyarushwa.blogspot.se](http://chanjoyarushwa.blogspot.se)  
[chanjotv.blogspot.se](http://chanjotv.blogspot.se)

*Jua Arts Foundation for the Children is a local organization in Bagamoyo Tanzania that works with art, music and imparting Tanzanian culture to future generations. The project Chanjo ya Rushwa was a campaign against corruption, selfishness and laziness through a music tour. The tour covered altogether 21 regions, where urban poor and rural people could listen to songs and share their own experiences of corruption, which were also recorded on video. The tour could be followed online on [chanjoyarushwa.blogspot.se](http://chanjoyarushwa.blogspot.se) and Facebook, while video recordings of performances have been shared through Youtube and [chanjotv.blogspot.se](http://chanjotv.blogspot.se).*

## Corruption is an Enemy of Development

We have had a break and at the end of this year to rest, we have inspiration to continue with the second and final part of our Chanjo tour with a renewed spirit. We have lessons learned from the first tour under our belts. Some members who made the last tour difficult have been excluded from continuing with us and we have others coming on board who we believe can bolster our campaign. This time we are heading deeper into the southern parts of Tanzania.



*A sign welcoming travelers to Lindi*

We have experienced very challenging circumstances during this tour. The rainy season in the south of Tanzania has made roads nearly impassable. The scariest moments during our travel in reaching people in rural areas have been while passing through the Selous Game Sanctuary where our bus got stuck in the mud many times!

We have been to the regions of Lindi, Mtwara, Ruvuma and back to Pwani (Coast). We physically reached an estimated 16,500 people with 21 performances in four regions just between early October and mid-December 2012.

We played our music and held discussions about corruption everywhere we have performed. People have agreed that “**corruption is an enemy of development**” and when people were given a chance to speak through the microphone, they spoke openly about the injustice of corruption and other social problems, for example, the unreliability of power (electricity). We have heard opinions of teachers, students, farmers, pastoralists, students, clergymen, politicians, drivers and businessmen. Apart from reaching Tanzanians directly through music and frank discussions about corruption on Chanjo campaigns, we have also been able to reach them through social media



*Screenshot from [www.chanjoyarushwa.blogspot.com](http://www.chanjoyarushwa.blogspot.com).*

We have been blown away by people’s enthusiasm for our message as evidenced by the level of engagement in our discussions and support for our cause. Young people who listened to us in one part of town would volunteer to help us organize and set up for another event in another part of town. Families welcomed us and fed us and made sure we had the safest guest houses to spend nights in.



[www.houseofculture.or.tz](http://www.houseofculture.or.tz)

*The National Museum and House of Culture is a part of a consortium of five national museums in Tanzania and is a place in the center of Dar es Salaam where Tanzanian history and culture is shared together with contemporary programs and events. With support from Spider the House of Culture installed a music recording studio, video recording and editing equipment to document and spread contemporary practices of traditional Tanzanian culture. The project also provided computers and multimedia equipment for museum visitors, especially school children, to familiarize themselves with ICT, as well as a fiber optic Internet connection to improve communication.*

## Multimedia Approach to Communication and Cultural Production

Eighteen months ago the Swedish Program for ICT in Developing Regions (Spider) extended to the National Museum and House of Culture a catalytic seed grant of SEK 500,000 for a project called “ICT for Public Access to Cultural Resources.” The objective of this project was to enhance the Museum and House of Culture’s capacity to provide opportunities for target groups to become familiarized with ICT and multi-media technology and how to use it for communication, learning and the production of cultural products such as photographs, record traditional music, dance, video documentaries, etc. In the long run, with a fast and interactive website and an equipped multi-media center and state-of-the-art recording studio, the Museum and House of Culture was expected to become an open public education resource center with well-documented, preserved and accessible cultural heritage resources.



*Left: Museum staff member demonstrates how to use digital cameras to students (photo: Rashid Njechele).*

*Right: students use the digital camera Photo: Enoch Kihali*

The results achieved thus far under this project include an increased public awareness about cultural resources, an empowerment of children and the promotion of artists with disabilities. Support received from Lions Club of Oyster Bay, Dar es Salaam to acquire murals of outstanding Tanzanian artists as well as in-kind support (books, furniture and equipment) received from the UNWTO-ST-EP Foundation of the Republic of South Korea to furnish and equip a children’s studio, multi-media center and conference room, serve as testimonies to the visibility of House of culture facilities. These successes have inspired the National Museum of Tanzania (NMT) to expand the ICT project to include the other five National Museums.

NMT’s commitment to expanding the project has not been easy to achieve, because in the beginning resistance among staff and NMT Management to incorporate technology in the institutional operations was common. Forms of resistance to projects of this nature have included delays in decision making, complicating procurement procedures, and lack of cooperation. Indecision may signal the following important phenomena: the person tasked with making decisions is either inexperienced or is presented with inadequate data and information by staff who, for instance, are insufficiently informed in preparing specifications for goods and services to be procured and /or are ignorant about procurement procedures. However, if the staff have all the necessary skills in preparing specifications and are knowledgeable on procurement pro-

cedures, then indecision, complication of procurement procedures and lack of cooperation would signal to the project manager sabotages or an environment for corruption, which one needs to pay attention to.



*Student using Computer to download Picture, photo taken September 2012. Photo by Rashid Njechele*

There have also been a fear among museum staff of exposing their ignorance in technology, especially ICT, and that they would lose their jobs, whereas others worried the institution would lose control over the information and data under their custody and violate individuals' privacy. Indeed, it is because of this fear and ignorance about ICT that museums in general have been slow in incorporating technology. Unfortunately, and also unknowingly, museums have denied stakeholders access to cultural resources under their custody. The current willingness of the National Museum of Tanzania (NMT) to incorporate ICT is attributed to many factors; among them are external auditor reports, which for two years consecutively have recommended NMT to institutionalize recruitment of ICT staff and of young people to increase project visibility. Also the quality of the "Wajukuu wa Mwalimu" program produced and aired twice weekly on National Television and the DVD profiling of marginalized artists, both produced using equipment procured with SPIDER funds, as well as the installation of a broadband network system, have all led to public awareness and the public is now demanding fast and reliable services.

Indeed, from this project I have learned that children are more keen to learn all about ICT more than adults and that once an institution integrates technology (ICT) in its management system, more human resources are needed to cope with stakeholders' demands for fast and reliable services. It is the first time ever in the history of National Museum of Tanzania to have received permission from the government to recruit forty staff of which fifteen are for the National Museum and House of Culture. Instead of replacing employees' jobs, ICT is creating more jobs!



[www.itido.or.tz](http://www.itido.or.tz)

*Invention and Technological Ideas Development Organization (ITIDO) is a local organization that focuses on technical innovation and social development. The project e- Reproductive and Child Health 4 Better Care (e-RCH4BC) has focused on developing a SMS/web system that would enable community health workers in the Rufiji district to send information to the health worker at the local health facilities. The project not only trained the Community Health Workers in using mobile phones to provide health services but also on how to recognize danger signs and provide emergency health assistance.*

## Timely Health Support Outreach

It was a normal day with normal routines for all Community Health Workers (CHW) who were participating in implementing the e-RCH4BC project in the Rufiji district. Everyone went to follow up visits of clients, who were pregnant mothers and children under the age of five, to encourage them to attend clinics visits so that they can know their health statuses. ITIDO staff also conducted visits in order to identify new clients.

It was a memorable day for Tumaini, a Community Health Worker from Utete, which is the headquarters of the Rufiji district. It was a day of saving someone's life. As usual, Tumaini woke up in the morning, did her daily activities at home, and then in mid-morning she set out to visit her clients. On her way she met the village officer who told her about a lady who was pregnant but was not visiting the clinic for regular check ups. Upon her visitation she was able to identify that this woman was on her last day of her pregnancy and it was also her first pregnancy.

Tumaini talked to this pregnant mother and told her about the importance of regular check ups at the clinic, and the danger she would likely face as she neared the birth time. Then the woman told her that she was seeing a lot of white mucus coming out from her vagina. Tumaini told her that if she continued to stay at home she might lose the baby and also discussed the situation with the woman's husband and family.

Fortunately they agreed with what they were told by Tumaini and they took the woman to the hospital where she was admitted and a day later this woman gave birth. If Tumaini had not been there to advise them, they might have lost their first child due to ignorance. Many babies die in the village because of the lack of maternal health care information.



*“I think we need to have a lot of people who will volunteer to educate the community about RCH issues, especially to provide basic knowledge of pregnancy and of health for children under five. Anyone can be like Tumaini and can save peoples’ lives in the areas where they live. It doesn’t need to be just people like us engaged in a certain project to inform others about maternal health. To serve pregnant mothers and children under five it’s the all our responsibility.”*

Sometimes it doesn’t require huge amounts of money but rather time and passion to reach those women and children who are living in marginalized areas and make them aware so that they may know the right time to take action to save their own lives and those of their unborn children.

On the other hand there are people like Tumaini in those marginalized areas who are willing to give their time, knowledge and labor to help and educate the entire community about maternal health so as to save the lives of pregnant mothers and their newborns. But the challenge is that they do not have enough facilities to support them. These people need reliable transport to reach those who are currently unreached by RCH staff from the health facilities they are depending on.

Based on the experience we had when we were implementing the e-RCH4BC project, transport was the first and most challenging problem for all community health workers with whom we were working. They were always complaining that transport was the major obstacle for them in reaching their clients who were living far away from their areas.

Let us join hands and help these community health workers economically and morally, and give them more knowledge about maternal health. Together we can save life at birth.

*Note: The names used are not actual names of people told in the story.*

## **Additional Spider Projects**

Spider is a network organization and similarly encourages partners to work with or collaborate with other actors in ICT4D through thematic or geographic networks. However, some of Spider's partners, while they are engaging with other actors, are not located within specific Spider-formed networks. Some partners are actively working to expose corruption through ICT, and cannot, due to security reasons, adhere to Spider's network modality. Other partners have pursued projects that did not fit into existing networks. Their stories are shared here.



[www.khi.ac.rw](http://www.khi.ac.rw)

*Kigali Health Institute (KHI) a well-established health training institution in Rwanda. The regional project Research on Customized Economical e-Health Services (RECHE) in the African Great Lakes Region focuses on extending internet connectivity and e-health services to rural communities. The project was initiated by Kigali Institute of Science and Technology in 2011 and transferred to KHI in 2012. The regional partners are Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology (DIT) in Tanzania and Makerere University in Uganda. The project will establish connectivity to rural health centers and implement a field test of a Drug Management System. This regional collaboration will underscore similarities and illuminate the differences in e-health applications between the three partner countries.*

## Regional Collaboration for e-Health Implementation

Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania, like most other developing countries, face a challenge of limited number of health personnel to provide health care delivery to populations in different settings. The effort to train and enhance the capacity of different health personnel can be time-consuming, costly and sometimes beyond the means of individual countries.



*Ministry of Health E-learning coordinator orienting new e-learning students using videoconference at Kabgayi School of Nursing and Midwifery at Kigali Health Institute*

Also, it has been shown that the traditional systems used in the health care facilities are such that they cannot efficiently and effectively bring about desired outcomes for the sick, let alone address disease prevention. In that regard, e-Health is a plausible cost-effective option to deal with the challenge of the paucity of health providers in these countries and situations. Fundamentally, e-Health refers to the various uses of information and communication technology (ICT) in health care: in the management of clinical and administrative information (health informatics); provision of health care at a distance (telehealth); sharing information and knowledge with health care providers, patients and communities (e-learning); and more recently the involvement of mobile phones in health care provision (m-health) to further enable the provision of e-health systems.

The customized economical e-Health services in the rural African Great Lakes Region sponsored by SPIDER will help academic institutions in Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda to deploy the appropriate connectivity infrastructure in rural areas, and to form a networking team which will support the deployment of economical e-health services in rural areas.

KHI Regional e-health center has recently collaborated with the Rwanda Ministry of Health to establish the equipment needed for telehealth programs in Rwanda to support distance education programs in 49 hospitals and also to afford these hospitals more consultation opportunities. There are approximately 500 public health centers and the majority are not connected to the Internet. The last mile connectivity option will help them to access the Internet. Hospitals that are already connected to high speed Internet still need to maximize the utilization and impact of their investment by reducing the costs of traveling in rural areas.

E-health applications, such as drug management, will have an obvious impact on the health sector economy by enabling efficient drug ordering. Without a proper system, there is a risk of ordering too many drugs that may not be required. This is the reason why different countries have put more efforts into creating drug management systems. This project will sponsor some activities in Tanzania and Uganda for field testing of the system.

Remote consultation between referral hospitals and district hospitals and e-learning opportunities could be done once high speed Internet has been acquired. RECHE hosted at KHI has carried out an inventory of videoconference systems, equipment, and IT staff in Rwanda. A multi-videoconference unit has been donated and some learning sessions have been conducted.



*Ministry of Health E-learning coordinator orienting new e-learning students using videoconference at Rwamagana School of Nursing and Midwifery at Kigali Health Institute*

Ten videoconference sessions have been conducted between KHI and University of Kwazulu Natal in South Africa in the teaching of the Telemedicine and Medical Imaging module.

Four health business meetings have been conducted using high-definition videoconference systems at KHI and Faculty of Medicine, Kigali Teaching hospitals and Butare Teaching hospitals.

Five videoconference events have been conducted between KHI and Rwanda Ministry of Health during the orientation for nursing e-learning program where in-service rural nurses will be upgraded from A2 secondary certificate level to advance diploma in Nursing in Midwifery.

Three sessions have been conducted between KHI and National University of Rwanda with an American university where a medical case presentation and research interest were shared.

The availability of connectivity and e-health systems will solve economic issues in rural areas. A network of higher learning institutions has been created between KHI, KIST, NUR and Makerere University, Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology, and is supported by the Royal Tropical Institute to provide Information Communication Technology to support health sector service delivery.



[cordioea.net](http://cordioea.net)

*Coastal Oceans Research and Development in the Indian Ocean East Africa (CORDIO EA) is an organization based in Mombasa Kenya that focuses on marine ecology and capacity building. This particular focus on education, empowerment and livelihoods strengthens the sustainability of both human and natural resources. The project is built on local adaptation of the Swedish “Folkbildning” concept that utilizes study circles and participatory learning, and has provided local groups of youth and study circles with training in literacy, ICT and various livelihood skills that were defined and requested by the groups themselves.*

## Mobile Phone as an Agent of Change

*“Mobile phone technology a ray of hope for the hopeless and illiterate”*



This story is of **Bakari Hamadi Koye**, a fisherman aged 66 years and a member of the Mwaembe Beach Management Unit. Bakari was not fortunate enough to attain formal education in his early days. His parents did not see the value of education but preferred training their children, particularly boys, in fishing skills, farming and to some extent livestock keeping, while girls trained in household chores and to be good wives and mothers in their marriage.

Bakari grew up and went into fishing full time to make a living and to provide for his family. At a certain point he felt that he needed to acquire his own fishing equipment to improve his economic base rather than work for others who would pay very little. To buy equipment, he needed more money, so he moved to the city of Mombasa to seek employment to achieve his dream. With no education he could not get meaningful employment and instead found employment as a porter at the Kenya Ports Authority.

In Mombasa, he faced challenges in communicating with his family back home in Msambweni. Just like other people he had no mobile phone; he could only keep contact with the family through notes written by friends as he dictated, or sending messages through fellow villagers travelling home at the time. As a result, no information was confidential. He used the same method while sending remittances to his family back in the village and at times the money did not reach the intended persons. After working for ten years in Mombasa he decided to go back home and continue fishing. But he had failed to make enough money to acquire his own fishing equipment, so he was hired as a captain in a neighbor's boat.

Before the emergence of mobile phones he used to go to government offices or phone booths to make calls. In the Mkunguni village where he comes from only the rich used to have mobile phones. He could not afford his own because of cost, as phones were expensive, costing up to Ksh 6000. By the end of 2011, when the price of a new phone came down to Ksh 1000, he finally felt he could save enough to buy his own handset. However, he did not know how to use the phone, and had to learn day by day through his fellow fishermen and children. When he was part of the CORDIO-SPIDER project, he asked the trainers to concentrate only on critical buttons that would help him receive and make calls and how to switch it on and off. He used a calling card of between Ksh10-50, an amount he could afford. He has no electricity at home and charges his phone within the neighborhood at Ksh 20, an amount he believes is affordable.

He memorized the use of specific buttons and now he uses the phone to communicate with his wife, family members and friends. He also uses the phone to receive money from his children staying away from the village, and for sharing information. In July 2012 is the sixth month since he acquired the gadget and for him the benefits are amazing and he describes mobile phone technology as something that could change the lives of poor people in the villages. He believes mobile phones are better than radios, and he hopes researchers will continue to improve on the device and make it more useful and affordable to many people. For him whoever made the mobile phone saved the world by making communication easy and cheap.

In his household, five family members, including his wife, own mobile phones. His wife is also not educated but learned using the phone the same way he did, while the children have the knowledge and use it for many things such as listening to music, taking pictures and other activities. He stated the following: mobile phones help in information sharing, they save time and money, the phone works in a similar way as the radio but much better, and they are useful to arrange meetings with fellow fishermen and fish traders.

Bakari also pointed out extra things people do with mobile phones, such as doing calculations, and saving money to use when need arises. In the future, the project hopes that mobile phones will also be used to report illegal fishing activities to the Beach Management Unit chairman, report sea accidents, and arrange for rescue and for planning meetings. Bakari would be keen to learn these extra applications given the opportunity. He has seen a computer before in the area and thinks it could be a much better machine than mobile phones. He believes so because whenever his phone breaks down he takes it to a technician who in turn uses a computer to do repairs.

According to Bakari mobile phones have also caused problems in the village, as there have been increased incidences of family separation and divorce, misinformation, many people are no longer faithful, and crimes are committed through phones. However he believes the advantages surpass the disadvantages and this is shown by the majority of people in the village owning phones despite the challenges. We concluded the interview with Bakari admitting that mobile phone technology could be used to reduce poverty and create awareness, but he thinks he should join the Study Circle class in the area and later get to learn how to use a computer as well.





[www.notinmycountry.org](http://www.notinmycountry.org)

*NotInMyCountry.Org (NIMC) is a project aimed at tackling corruption in Uganda's universities. Students can use the developed website to submit corruption reports in a secure and anonymous environment. Corruption stifles economic growth and contributes to poverty, and Uganda's universities are especially marred by this malady. As these are the milieus where futures are developed and nurtured, targeting universities can hopefully instill and create a generation that abhors corrupt behavior.*

*The poem submitted by the NIMC team speaks of actual experiences by students who have submitted reports to the website.*

## A Dark Sea of Corruption

Do you know what it's like to be a student at a university here?  
 Student life in Uganda, you see, is about always living in fear  
 Of your lecturers and administrators who don't want to teach,  
 Instead they abuse their power, yet they still love to preach,  
 "This is just how things are in Uganda, nothing will ever change,"  
 But we at Not In My Country thought such thinking to be strange.  
 So we built an anti-corruption reporting website where students can  
 Expose corruption committed by their lecturers throughout this land.  
 You see, here, when you go to class, you are harassed by your teacher,  
 Who always asks for a bribe, so you wonder, "How is this person my leader?"

At Not In My Country, you can expose "leaders" like those,  
 And tell the world about them so everyone knows.  
 You can rate your lecturers on some quiet corruption factors,  
 Like not showing up to teach or being fair only to their benefactors.  
 And you can report hard corruption that you experience at the hands  
 Of a lecturer, for example, who can't keep his privates in his pants.  
 This is no joke - if a female student asks why her marks haven't been turned in,  
 Her lecturer will likely say, "I was waiting for you to come join me for some sin."

We know this because students have sent us a number of corruption reports,  
 About experiences with their lecturers that should be heard by the courts.  
 But here in Uganda, the justice system is so corrupt, you won't believe,  
 And complaining to a university official? Well, that's just naïve.  
 But with Not In My Country, a student can at least tell someone,  
 Without fear of retribution or deciding that they have to run.  
 So here's what has happened in our first 8 months of operations,  
 We'll turn now to our users' stories and relay their tribulations:

I was heading to graduation but my lecturer hadn't marked my work,  
 "Give me 50,000 and I'll submit your marks," he said with a big smirk.  
 What could I do? I needed to graduate to get a job and survive,  
 So I gave this thief his 50,000. Should I not have paid this bribe?  
 I had my phone with me during an exam, which, I know, is not allowed,  
 So I turned it off and put it in my bag, hidden from the student crowd.

But the lecturer saw what I had done and told me,  
 That if I didn't pay, he'd inform the committee  
 And I'd fail the exam and it would ruin my life,  
 So I gave him 20,000 to avoid such strife.  
 I know I broke the rules by having my phone with me.  
 But it doesn't excuse his actions - demanding money! \*\*

I had a sexual relationship with my teacher, a lady,  
We met at secret hotels to have fun, it was a bit shady.  
I broke things off, I wasn't interested anymore,  
But she was too mad: "I'll fail you," she swore.  
And so here I am still dealing with this terrible mess,  
I wish I had never allowed that very first caress.  
The school I go to gave me a scholarship to attend,  
But I don't get to study, they don't even pretend.  
Instead, they make me do manual labor at the campus,  
I must toil for a full year, and every class I shall miss.  
For it is way too dangerous to even think of complaining,  
If I do, they'll throw me out and claim I'm misbehaving.  
This scholarship of mine, paid for by some Westerner,  
Actually goes in the pocket of our powerful administrator.  
The Westerner doesn't know that his donation is misused,  
Or that before I learn a thing, for one full year I'm abused. \*\*



*Screenshot of the NIMC website*

I went to my lecturer's office and complained for my marks that were missing,  
He told me that I failed, but that could all change if we started kissing.  
This bad man promised that if I had sex with him I would pass,  
So, I did it. I had to. I needed good marks in his class.  
He then got scared and called me up and yelled,  
"If you tell anyone, I'll make sure that you're expelled!"  
What could I do but keep quiet about this awful crime?  
It's sad, but I know he'll strike again, that creepy slime. \*\*

These are some of the facts reported to us here at Not In My Country.  
But they're only a tiny fraction of what happens in this dark, corrupted sea.  
It's everywhere, no matter where you turn,  
But we're here to help, so you can freely learn,  
And have a chance to reach those dreams for which you yearn.

*\*\*Note: these stories are based on real corruption reports we received.*

## **Junior ICT Expert**

*The Junior ICT Expert Program is another avenue that Spider supports to contribute to knowledge transfer and project activity development. Spider in collaboration with the international student body organization AIESEC-Sweden [www.aiesec.org/sweden](http://www.aiesec.org/sweden), places ICT graduates from Swedish universities at Spider-supported organizations in partner countries. Jiawei Kang was successfully placed at a project in Serengeti, Tanzania for 6 months, and he shares his experience in his story.*

## An Amazing Experience in Tanzania

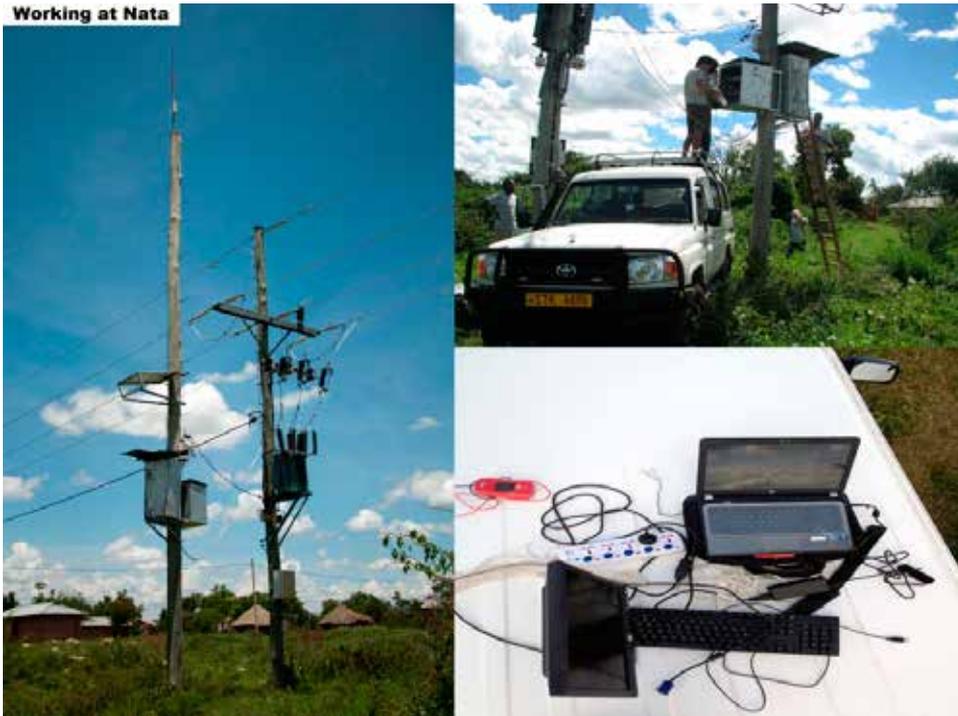
As a lucky graduate, I was selected by SPIDER to work for the Serengeti Broadband Network (SBN) project in Tanzania for six months. Most of my time was spent in Mugumu, which is considered the capital town of the Serengeti District with an approximate population of 20,000. I was assigned to accomplish three main tasks: local technician training, Bifrost router and drug management application field tests, and implementation of a network monitoring system.





I could have hardly imagined my work in Serengeti would start with the removal of a honeycomb on a telegraph pole! The Mugumu network had been down for more than 7 months before I arrived there; thus the most crucial task was to revive it and reconnect all of the end-users. Some of our equipment is placed inside a wooden cabinet on telegraph poles due to security concerns, and one of them became an insect house with bees settled in. I went there with a local technician during the night after the bees fell asleep. We bought a bottle of mosquito killer, sprayed it onto the bees, waited until the majority of them died and then removed the honeycomb. At that time I was not able to figure out a better method which could save the bees and the honey, so we had to do it in a cruel manner.

On one occasion we had a data collection problem with the router charge controller at Nata, which is a village located 40 km from Mugumu but at least one hour's drive. I was supposed to reset it and recover data reading on-site. When my mission was completed, I rebooted the router to ensure everything worked fine. However, the router would not start anymore and an exception message showed up on the display screen. I was disconcerted since the single error would collapse the whole Mugumu network and there were more than 30 users who may need it the next morning. To find a solution was also challenging as the Bifrost router is a new device that was developed by Swedish researchers and it's not available on the market yet. I used my mobile to email my professors and we had several phone conversations. Eventually I made a new bootable flash disk and returned to Mugumu before nightfall. I learned a lesson from this experience that backup is always essential to be prepared for unexpected situations, and it also encouraged me to write documentation on installing Bifrost for local technicians for future use.



I have learned and consolidated a lot of useful knowledge from the project, including fiber and wireless networks, Linux server administration, and data collection and analysis. Meanwhile, my communication skills were significantly improved due to my functioning as a team player. Apart from work, life in Tanzania was an exciting adventure that I should not fail to mention. Eating Ugali (Tanzanian traditional food) with my hands, bathing with rain water, piling into and travelling in the *dala dala* (Tanzanian minibus): everything was novel to me and I was impressed so much. It was far more than simply living in a new environment for six months; a window was opened for me to meet different people, experience other cultures, reflect and appreciate the true value of life.

At last, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Spider for providing me with the golden opportunity and support on all aspects.

*Story by Jiawei Kang*











## *Spider Stories 2012*

*This publication will give you an overview of results from Spider projects initiated in 2011-2012 in collaboration with project partners in Cambodia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. In partnership with local organizations, we have supported innovative projects in democracy, education, and health. Our project partners have also explored Spider's crosscutting themes, from Free and Open Source Software and mobiles for development to cultural creativity and youth empowerment. We have chosen 'stories' as a narrative format to capture the voices of our project partners as well as the ultimate beneficiaries of their efforts: ordinary people in different social settings. These stories are told through words and photos, to describe, reflect upon, and communicate experiences, knowledge, and lessons learned. Some partners have taken the opportunity to write poems, others offer touching accounts and statements from project beneficiaries. All of them offer a vivid presentation of results achieved so far.*

Spider is a resource center and knowledge broker in Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) at Stockholm University. Our aim is to support the innovative use of ICT for poverty reduction and development. The vision of Spider is to contribute to an interconnected world built in the spirit of digital solidarity.

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**Stockholm  
University**