RIC-NET ANNUAL REPORT 2010

UG077102

Capacity Building for the Integration of ICT in Rural Development

Approved by

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Report Summary

RIC-NET successfully implemented the project "Capacity building for the integration of ICT in rural development" from 2008-2010. The project established over 42 rural information centres at county and sub county levels in the Rwenzori region.

The skills of using ICT in the information sharing process have not only been applied in the intended project focus of Agriculture and Health sector but also in strengthening citizens' participation in governance and demanding for feedback from leaders. The success realized from the pilot e-society project in Kasese led to other Districts in the region to incorporate e-society as component of the different actions implemented by these Districts.

Citizens' participation in election observation process will ensure that proper leadership is put in place. ICT leverage in election observation enabled each person to report in real time election incidents through the sms medium and receives feedback on the actions taken by those in authority.

Knowledge, skills and experiences acquired from "enhancing civic competence" project implemented by RWECO were applied on election monitoring project implemented by CEW-IT in Eastern(Teso), West Nile (Arua), Rwenzori and Northern Regions of Uganda.

The projects are supported by

Hivos people unlimited

iicd People - ICT - Development

Oxfam Novib

CEW-IT Citizens Elections Watch-IT

Global Plant Clinic

Ric Net Rwenzori Information Centres Network

Acronym

BIC   Bwera Information Centre
BRIC   Busongora Rural Information Centre
CIS   Semuliki Information Centre
CPF   Community Process Facilitator
CSO   Civil Society Organization
CU   Coordinating Unit
EC   European Commission
GFS   Gravity Flow Scheme
GHFRD   Good Hope Foundation for Rural Development
GPC   Global Plant Clinic
HIVOS   Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries
HUMC   Health Unit Management Committee
IICD   International Institute for Communication and Development
IWDP   Integrated Women Development Programme
KALI   Karambi Action for Life Improvement
KACOICE Kamwenge Communities Information Centre
KIC   Kabarole Information centre
KRIC   Kyaka Rural Information Centre
KRC   Kasese Resource and Research Centre
LC   Local Council
LG   Local Government
NAADS   National Agricultural Advisory Services
PAF   Poverty Action Fund
PC   Plant Clinic
PRMT   Poverty and Resource Monitoring Tool
PTA   Parents and Teachers Association
RIC   Rural Information Center
RIC-NET   Rwenzori Information Centres Network
RWECO   Rwenzori Consortium for Civic Competence
SATNET   Sustainable Agriculture Trainers
SNV   Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers
ToroDev   Toro Development Network
SC   Sub County
SMC   School Management Committee
UPE   Universal Primary Education
UCE   Uganda Commodity Exchange
VOT   Voice of Toro
WOUGNET Women of Uganda Network
WUC   Water User Committee

Introduction

Founded in 2005, RIC-NET is an information sourcing, sharing and documentation Network. It's owned by farmer groups and CSO who actively participate in processes and actions that enhance timely, relevant information sharing and documentation in the Rwenzori Region. RIC-NET's primary focus is to harness available resources and opportunities that strengthen knowledge and skills sharing for improved livelihood of the rural peasants. In the year 2010, RICNET implemented four major projects funded by HIVOS, European Union, IICD, Global Plant Clinic and Oxfam Novib. The staff of RICNET reviewed the activities implemented in the year 2010, the achievements based on objectives and the challenges encountered in the year 2010 at reflection meeting in January 2011. This report is a product of this reflection process and input from both the boards of Directors, others CSO and the normal users /beneficiary of the projects.

1.0 THE CONTEXT

RIC-NET operates primarily in the seven Districts of Rwenzori Region; Kabarole, Kyenjojo, Kamwenge, Kasese, Kyegegwa, Ntoroko and Bundibugyo Districts in Western Uganda. The leverage of RIC-NET projects is now country wide. Though RIC-NET is a network of other centres/CSO; it has become members to several Networks and consortiums to ensure that its expertise is put to the service of a wide community. This vision of operating in the whole of Uganda through partnership with other local CSOs ,local government leads to shared results of RIC-NET's efforts and up scaling of the impact to other regions unlike Rwenzori region only before.

BUSONGOARA RURAL INFORMATION CNENTRE (BRIC)

2.0 INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

2.1: Legal status

There was no change in the legal status. RIC-NET is registered as a Non Governmental Organization by Kabarole District Board (CBO) with Reg. No: **CD/CBO/078** and Company Limited by Guarantee under the companies Act (Cap. 110) Reg. No: **85565.**

2.2: RIC-NET with Information Centres

RIC-NET is a thriving network of information centres from the regional level up to the grass root community in the villages. The network is supported by the contribution of the rural peasants who are the owners of the rural information centres.

Centres by 2009, reported a membership of about 9,000 people at the grassroots and this number was kept steadily as the strategy to consolidate the service to the members.

There are eight county information centers and 32 active rural information Centres (at sub- County) .There is an increase of 5 centres that have been established as market plant clinics which operate every market day. The plant clinic centres have increased direct contact with farmers who come at the market every week. The plant clinics provide answers to farmers' information needs on farm pests and diseases management.

INFORMATION CENTRE	AREA OF COVERAGE	LOCATION (DISTRICT)
1. Kyaka Rural Information Centre (KRIC).	KRIC Operates in three (3) out of six (6) sub counties of Kyaka County	Kyenjojo and Kyegegwa
2. Kamwenge Communities Information Centre (KACOICE).	KACOICE operates in one (1) of the six (6) sub counties of Kamwenge District.	Kamwenge
3. Kabarole Information Centre (KIC)	Operates in one (1) out of eleven (11) sub counties of Kabarole District.	Kabarole
4.Semuliki Information Centre (CIS)	*CIS operates in three (3) out of six (6) sub counties of Bwamba County, with two plant clinic centres.*	Bundibugyo

5. Busongora County Information Centre (BRIC).	*BRIC operates in six (6) of the twelve (12) Sub counties of Busongora County*	Kasese
6. Bwera Information Centre (BIC).	*BIC operates in all of the eleven (11) sub Counties of Bukonzo County, with 3 plant clinic centres*	Kasese
7. Mwenge Information Centre (MIC)	Operates in one (1) sub county out of 8 in Kyenjojo District.	Kyenjojo
8. Kitagwenda Information and Resource Centre	Operates in one (1) out of five (5) sub counties of Kitagwenda County.	Kamwenge

2.3: policy level

RIC-NET does not have major changes in the policies and modes of operation. It has strengthened working with other NGO/CSO but maintaining its niche of information documentation and sharing, and promotion of using ICT tools.

2.4: Staff and Executive Members

The staffing structure has been changed; the head of secretariat is referred to as **Executive Director**, Deputized by the **Head of Programmes** and three **Programme officers** for Community Outreach, Information & Media, and ICT Solutions.

The Executive Committees (Board of Directors) of RIC-NET remained as in 2009.

There has been an increment in the staffing; five fully established staff, six local volunteer and one Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) Volunteer.

2.5: Major Policy Decisions in Regard to Mission, Objectives, Strategies

There is no major change in the vision, mission and objectives as from 2008.

2.6: Type and frequency of meetings at RIC-NET

In this reporting period, RIC-NET had six (6) board meetings. There were four (3) meetings for RWECO steering committee attended by some members of RIC-NET board. The staff had meetings on a weekly basis; every Monday morning.

Four (4) reflection and planning meetings were held with the Executive Committee, the Staff of RIC-NET, Staff members of County Information Centres and partner organizations.

RIC-NET STAFF AT REFLECTION MEETING IN KASUNGA TRAINING CENTRE

Two of the reflection meetings were facilitated by the STAR team composed of consultants from TINO and NIALB sent by HIVOS STAR programme. In these meetings, the staff harmonized their working relationship and made plans for strategic joint venture.

2.7: Office premises

RIC-NET offices are located on plot 18 Mugurusi Road, Fort Port Municipality after SATNET offices. The photo for our location is below.

RIC-NET OFFICE ON plot 18 Mugurusi Road Fort Portal

3.0 ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS AS PER HIVOS PROJECT

3.1 Result Area 1

To initiate new information centres and strengthen the capacity of existing five information centres in Rwenzori Region through offering technical, equipment coordination and advisory support vital for efficient information and Knowledge sharing for 5000 peasant farmers by 2010.

There are eight (8) county information centers and 32 active rural information Centres (at sub- County). An addition of the 5 centres has been initiated as plant clinics that are operated in the Market place on every market day. Of the eight county information centres, six were initiated, nurtured by RIC-NET and the 2 by KRC.
"**All county and sub-county information centers do have member groups. The number of member groups range from 10 to 30 consisting of 15-25 individual persons each**." **Petra Stammen and Moses Kisembo pg 32**[1]
For the year 2010, the centres were supported in documentation process and provided internet mobile internet facilities to boost their information sourcing and sharing plans.

Each of the five centres received a minimum of five computers from RICNET to support their training and content documentation plans. Two centres BIC and CIS received equipments that support the centre to conduct mobile information centers in the markets in the name of plant clinic.

BRIC, CIS, KACOICE and KRIC received each a photocopier from RICNET. BRIC and BIC were connected to local Area Network (LAN). Technical experts made over 6 Trips to every centre for maintenance purposes, advisory session and sharing experiences. This led to equipments of the centre to be kept in good running condition and reduce their costs on repairs and maintenance.

From the training on process documentation to the staff of the county information centres and CPF held in 2009, 2 centers started repackaging information: for example BIC and BRIC with some support from RIC-NET staff.

Case:
"**All visited county and sub-county information centers do source a certain amount of information themselves. Farmers and member organizations were mentioned as the main information source. All centres visited reported that they get information from their members. Model farmers of Kibito and Bukuku sub-county centers do source e.g. information on the banana bacteria wilt themselves.**
Besides, radio stations and newspapers are main information sources used by the centers. Village meetings, worship places and local leaders were mentioned repeatedly

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[1]   Preliminary DRAFT Report_ Evaluation of the KRC Information Project (2008-2010) funded by BD

as adequate information sources. On the level of organizational content providers, in general, RIC-NET was mentioned first, SATNET as second and KRC as third." By **Petra Stammen and Moses Kisembo –pg 25**[2]

3.2 Result Area 2

To increase knowledge & information sourcing, documentation, repackaging and sharing among the community through initiating a regional information team and conducting knowledge sharing seminar/symposiums focusing on about 210 farmers' groups before the end of 2010.

Four (4) quarterly trainings were conducted on WEB 2.0 tools, information documentation and plant clinics management.

RIC-NET participated in three farmers' forum to disseminate information on Pineapple wilt management, Maize production chain, and best practices of water conservation through the "YY" strategy.

RIC-NET published 5,000 magazines on different topical areas as suggested by the community e.g. pest controls for pineapples, how to establish and manage a sunflower garden, managing a soya bean garden and best practices water managements.

100 (CPF) community Process Facilitators were given magazines and trained on how to use then in informing the peasant on the issue therein. There is an estimate of at least 10 times trickles down on sharing of the information from the magazine by CPF. So, we estimate that about 1,000 may have read or heard of the content in the magazine.

Information sharing meeting with different stake holder

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[2]   Preliminary DRAFT Report_ Evaluation of the KRC Information Project (2008-2010) funded by BD

RICNET has participated in 3 regional sharing for forums where 165 farmers groups from the 5 district participated. The fora were on pineapple, Sunflower and Soya bean.

RICNET actively participated in the annual Agriculture Fair 2010 and annual civil society 2010. During these fairs, RIC-NET shared out its publication with farmers and farmers groups, screened video to the public on topical issues and conducted a public seminar. Over 200 people visited the RIC-NET stall.

Radio programmes have been used to disseminate information on several issues ranging from governance, health, Agriculture. Most of radio programmes were held in conjunction with other partner organisations that are specialized in a specific sector. For instance, we held radio programmes with Mountains of the Moon University on public health, Kogere Foundation on women enterprise and emancipation; apart from those held together with RWECO member orgainsation.

RIC-NET participated in statistical information generation along with DENIVA and UBOS under the Plan for National Statistical Development (PNSD) project of along statistical information sharing on the use of public pay phones and market information.

FIT Uganda has partnership with RICNET on collecting of market information that is published in the News paper every week. RIC-NET participated in several symposium held in the region on market information and on the national level.

http://missymposium.fituganda.com/presentation.php

http://api.ning.com/files/3g5Re5CJZOzvc3xtOPGKMxhrf72xrtblkDkkI1eSVn6vJPPLOeIQ1k
KDPxrU7omIie4AUvPRMescCYlgJc9V1*wmn1IGpDu4/ProceedingsofAPFMISsymposium.pdf

http://pamojamedia.com/2010/07/knowledge-sharing-in-rural-africa/

Plant clinic; a process of sharing with farmers information on regards to their diseased crops has been initiated in five (5) centres. Kisinga plant clinic alone had already registered 116 farmers since September 2010. In total, the entire five plant clinic had assisted successfully 660 unique farmers in their six months of operation. These farmers have been helped to control or eradicate some plant pests and disease on their farm and accessed information general crop and animal management.

Five clinics have been established that is one in Bwera under Karughe farmers and BIC, Kisinga Mutiba Foundation and Good hope, Bundibugyo town under Semuliki information centre and NARRACCOL, Bubandi under Bubandi information centre.

Training of plant clinic nurses, plant nurse demonstrative plant diseases to farmers

Ten plant nurses (7 male and 3 female) have been trained with skill on identifying pests and they were facilitated with basic equipments in form of tables, chairs and posters. The nurse provided Fact sheet on the problems / tests presented by farmers.

RICNET offers ongoing Support supervision for the plant nurse and runs radio programs and jingles to alert farmers on the plant clinic. A Radio program has been conducted to create awareness on the plant clinic and how it will be run in the region.

The plant clinics are implemented in collaboration with the local government especially the extension staff and the farmers and the plant clinic nurses are encouraged to link up with the service providers of the pesticides can help the farmers.

RICNET established a partnership with community library in the line of information. There is sharing of content in relation to young people.

 http://www.ugcla.org/members.htm

3.3 Result Area 3

To support women and persons with disabilities [PWD] to actively Utilize information centres to boost their knowledge and increase participation in decision making, create gender responsiveness and empower and raise 30% women attendance to public health service in the region in 2010

RIC-NET member centres have promoted PWDs by offering them opportunity to become members of the executive committees of the information centres. Five people with disabilities are actively taking part on executive of five information centres. RIC-NET is in a process of documenting content that is specifically for people with disability.

RICNET established partnership with other CSO in the region and conducted joint radio programmes together e.g. Koogere foundation-Radio programmes on women emancipation and their participation in development; Mountains of the Moon University-radio programmes on public health.

"The evaluators found evidence that there is information flow from the regional bodies to the County Information Centers, Sub County Information Centers, Parish Points, and to the farmer groups. There was also evidence of information flow from the Sub County Information Centers back to the County Information Centers."
By **Petra Stammen and Moses Kisembo**

RICNET established a partnership with the community library in the line of information sharing in relation to young people and all the information centres are members.

4.0 REFLECTION ON THE INDICATORS FOR UG077102

Seven county information centres were initiated and nurtured and one centre of Mathyoro established in collaboration with other partners. Four audio videos information contents were developed, the two were fully supported by HIVOS, two supported by SNV. The videos developed under HIVOS focused on success story for implementing information centres and trade fair and public health. Those supported by SNV focused on use of water resources and primary education, use of IEC and school committees.

"In general, county and sub-county information centers had (if at all) one to max five different DVDs (mainly from RIC-NET and SATNET) at hand." **Petra Stammen and Moses Kisembo pg 28.**

RIC-NET held 4 regional expert farmer knowledge sharing exercise on crop production and value chain, marketing, Pineapple pests and disease management.

Two quarterly magazines were produced but the funds which were available were used to reproduce the information packages.

RIC-NET enhanced its cooperation with local government through the establishment of the e-society centres jointly. There is evidence that people have accessed the E society Resource center because it is meant for the community who could access information about the districts.

Local governments departments are able to share information with the community through the e- library, CSO Portals, district websites, magazines and news letter.

The community and local government have been able to interact through D-groups, radio program, public expenditure monitoring and audit plus trainings. The public is also able to access internet from information centre and plant clinics at a community level.

Planned process documentation activities that were supposed to be funded by KRC did not take place because funds to support the activities were not released by KRC for the reason known to them.

Case "For activities to be implemented in 2010 it has to be noted that the activities on project level initially planned to be realized together with RIC-NET did not take place. The question arises here how KRC plans to compensate or adapt the project plan. Are a number of planned activities just cancelled?" By **Petra Stammen and Moses Kisembo pg 31.**

Sign post at Kasese showing the direction of e-society centre

5. O HIGHLIGHTS ON OTHER PROJECTS IMPLIMENTED BY RIC-NET

5.1 Plant Clinic

A plant clinic was established as results of the lessons leant from the HIVOS project. The project was implemented in partnership with SATNET which has been running farmers' field schools.

Five plant clinics were established in August 2010. Ten farmers (a representative of CPF and the information centre from each centre) and 2 staff were trained and are managing the plant clinics who work hand in hand with the district Agricultural Officer.

The participants were trained in documentation of problems on plants in relation to pests which were reported at the plant clinic. The signs and symptoms of particular plant pests were identified at the initial stage and addressed in the community. The trained Farmers are spreading the knowledge to other members of the community.

The plant clinic complimented the HIVOS funded project to upscale its results of providing timely, relevant information to the farmers. The plant clinic offers an intermediate clinic where the farmer gets information on specific problems depending on need. The trained plant nurses interact with the farmers during the market days and offer guidance to the farmers on plant pests and diseases control. This addresses the farmers' challenges like distance thus increasing the number of beneficiaries to the project.

http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2010_08_01_archive.html#uds-search-results
"The plant doctor (trained at SATNET), for instance, comes on a voluntary basis one day a week on Thursdays for consultations to the information center and farmers can bring samples of infected crop leaves (e.g. on the banana wilt) etc. for a diagnosis. About 10 farmers use the services of the plant doctor per consultation day. Kyondo Information center uses a variety of information sources, namely farmers, BIC, KRC, the radio or the Internet (in Kasese). Besides extensive consultancy field visits to farmers and visits to farmer group meetings,…" ibid pg. 36

5.2 Citizens' participation in Governance

The governance action was taken together with IWDP, KALI and GHFRD and the consortium later named RWECO with support from HIVOS and EU. The achievement of this project is a combination of the stakeholders' efforts and Partners

The project aimed at; making local government's structures affordable, transparent and efficient in delivering services to the poor women and men in Rwenzori region.

Specifically the project it looked at:

Improving civic participation in planning and accountability processes in Local Governments in 3 districts / 20 sub-counties in the Rwenzori; strengthening the capacity of citizens to participate in local government planning processes and demand for accountability; strengthening the capacity of the local governments to account to the community for better service delivery and ensuring that the participating civil society organisations have improved capacity to influence local government service delivery. The aspects above contribute consequently to improved dialogue between civil society and local government.

RIC-NET had specific tasks in this project such: Strengthening communities' ability to access relevant information from government through increased use of the internet, notice boards, radio programmes, community drama and feedback meetings, on-spot visits to government departments and information offices.

RIC-NET STAFF TRAINING CSO and LG STAFF AT KABAROLE INFORMATION CENTRE

RIC-NET was to source, document and provide adequate information to the citizens on basic human rights, local government planning processes, Poverty Eradication Fund (PAF) policies, and public expenditure projects through community radios and IEC materials.

5.3 Establishment of an e-society resource centre at one pilot district

The result of the Roundtable discussion on information sharing led Kasese local government to commit resource for pilot e-society project with additional support from the EU, HIVOS and IICD. http://www.monitor.co.ug/Business/Technology/-/688612/816942/-/tv6sdf/-/index.html http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/9/32/741232

http://rwecovoice.blogspot.com/2010/12/kasese-e-society-centre-realising-its.html

RIC-NET as a member to RWECO spearheaded the implementation of the e-society project. Tasks in this action included induction of district governments to e-Governance, set-up a digital information platform, train citizen organisation leaders in use of online platforms, the CSO portal and the district e-library, website and d-group. The platforms enable citizens and government staff obtains a range of government information e.g. plans, budgets and reports service delivery, and enable citizens to give feedback.

The Development of a digital government information platform was based on private public partnership ideals where civil society, private sector and local government contribute to a single project.

Precise results of this e-society

A designated e-society hub has been established at Kasese local government where CSO and citizens access information both online and offline. This e- society resource centre with a high speed internet connection is used by the District staff and society members to upload information on different platforms and participated in online discussions. There are 817 members of government and community members have used the e- society resource centre by December 2010.

Online platforms for example, the E library, CSO Portals, district website and the district blog which help in the access of information within and outside the districts have been developed, operational and used by both the CSOs and Local government staff.

http://rwecovoice.blogspot.com/2010/12/kasese-e-society-centre-realising-its.html

Information sharing information with the world and the community has been strengthened. RICNET produced and disseminated 500 posters, 2 banners, 2 sign posts and poems, stories and painting from the community and students on issues affecting the community in the water, education and health sectors.

Sub county development plans and other government documents were collected by RIC-NET in hard copies and shared with the community; and local government leaders were

encouraged to share the development plan, service delivery reports with the communities through radio programs.

2000 copies of quarterly news letter magazine were published. These magazines have information compiled from for more than 20 sub counties in Rwenzori Region.

PUBLICATION FROM RIC-NET AND OTHERS DISPLAYED FOR PUBLIC USE AT KIC

http://ricnet.info/files/publications.html

RICNET documented community meetings which were facilitated by other partners like IWDP, Kali and GHFRD both in video and prints of which 4 are gender budget meetings and 3 are public expenditure audits.

CSO staffs of participating organizations were trained to use ICT tools as platforms for Information sharing. 90 CPFs were trained on how to document issues which they discover from their monitoring activities and how to use the digital camera provided by the project to take good pictures and short videos.

"The CPFs have the needed amount of leverage, status and credibility. They are equipped with adequate knowledge, skills and experience. They have the means to be mobile. They have a certain amount of autonomy and flexibility with regard to the allocation of their own time and relevant resources." **Ibid pg 37**

CSO and government staffs who were trained and responded that the trainings were relevant and timely, and enabled them to share information better. The e-society resource centre documented UNAIDS HIV/AIDS survey statistics for Kasese district, Health

department and computer was given to the district by UNAIDS in return to boost the information office.

http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2010/12/letter-of-request-from-cao-kabarole.html

http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2010/09/appreciation.html

http://rwenzoriruralhealthservices.blogspot.com

A d-group platform was designed to facilitate online dialogue between citizens who can access internet and the local government leadership. The platform provides a hot debate on the issue of splitting Kasese District and the issue on the behavior of health personnel. How, the unreliable internet connectivity and the lack of serious animator have made the group sluggishly move on.

http://dgroups.org/ViewDiscussion.aspx?c=06190e42-e0f5-4576-9b4d-18637aa0016b&i=6e4890c5-2d65-4a01-aff2-db3d89d15b55

RIC-NET has been seen as a Consultant in ICT issues by participating CSOs and other institutions. RIC-NET help the CSOs on verification of procurements of the ICT equipments, setting up the Local Area Network (LAN), websites, blog and audio visual content development.

Dialogue between Local government and CSOs was strengthened through roundtable meetings. The roundtable meetings were used to discuss information sharing and documentation mechanism among stake holders, to formulate sustainability strategies for the e-society project and give feedback from field monitors. This boosted and led to realization to some extend dialogue among local government staff, CSOs and citizens. Joint ICT needs assessment and tools to be used were done prior to the implantation of this project. Cfr: ICT Needs assessment report on RIC-NET website under resources.

5.4 Citizens election watch -IT

The election process observation project aimed at developing a harmonized approach to enhancing civic participation in the electoral process, decision making, monitoring and information sharing using modern ICT and other pragmatic approaches. RIC-NET was in charge of developing the ICT platform that would enable citizens to participate effectively, and establish data processing centres in several regions of Uganda.

The project was implementing in two phases:

Phase 1 was by members of the civil society in the Rwenzori region under the umbrella of Rwenzori Consortium for Civic Competence – RWECO in partnership with HIVOS.

Under this phase RIC-NET developed an Ushahidi instance which helped to display issues from voter registration and verification of the voter register. This instance was appreciated both locally and by the diplomatic core on the voter registration process particularly in the Rwenzori region.

http://www.rwenzoripeoplesvoice.org

http://rwecovoice.blogspot.com/2010/09/rweco-share-election-experience-with.html

As a transition to the second phase, several local meetings were held between RWECO, PAC, ACCORD and CEFORD in which RIC-NET participated and disseminated the issues discussed in real time. RIC-NET participates greatly in organizing the East African stakeholders' round table meeting in Kampala on election observation using ICT, with support from the Election Watch project of HIVOS.

A ROUND TABLE MEETING ON USE OF ICT IN ELECTION OBSERVATION IN EAST AFRICA

http://rwecovoice.blogspot.com/2010/10/kampala-election-process-workshop-going.html

This consequently gave birth to the CEW-IT project as second phase of the election observation project with support from HIVOS and Oxfam Novib.

http://rwecovoice.blogspot.com/2010_09_01_archive.html

The second phase was implemented under the consortium CEW-IT composed of CEFORD, PAC, RWECO and ACORD – working on issues of promoting good governance in West Nile Teso, Rwenzori and Acholi regions respectively

The project aimed at contributing to building the competence of the grassroots citizens in civic matters and working together to strengthen civic participation in the promotion of fairness and transparency in the electoral process in Uganda. RIC-NET role was to manage the ICT sector before, during and after election. The website

was built to help people share incident message and blog was made for observers to report in more details.

RIC-NET members participated in referendum observation in Kenya and General election observation from Tanzania. The experiences from these countries formed a good basis for planning process and preparation for handling the Ugandan election process under CEW-IT.

The result from this ICT venture is the establishment of four regional data centres in Teso, Gulu, Arua and Rwenzori.

http://rwecovoice.blogspot.com/2010_10_01_archive.html

www.uchaguzi.co.ug

http://uchaguzi-uganda.blogspot.com

TRAINING OF ELECTION REPORTING INCENDENTS BY SMS

6.0 LESSONS LEARNT

Staffing based on project led to over load and inefficiency in implementation of activities; so staffing will be done based on skills required in the project at specific moment or per thematic area on the project.

The niche of RIC-NET has been clearly recognised as documentation of local content in text and video; and developing online ICT platforms. The documentation and ICT platforms will be focused on rural individual and ensure information sharing focusing on responding to an individual need /skills or household development approach.

There is need for RICNET to documentation of the implementation processes of several projects it has participated in.

A combination of farmer to farmer learning forums, famers field schools and plant clinic session where the best tool to share pest & disease control knowledge and skills that would have real impact on production.

RIC-NET needs to market its services to the private sector to boost sustainability of the centres and staff needs to multi –skilled and given further practical trainings and exposure visits.

There is need to share information in a multi-media approach with stress on more personal interaction among partners than mealy leaflets if we need to cause great impact at individual and community levels.

The stress of the self sustainability at centre may lead to some centre operating as normal internet café with minding a lot on information sharing as a social responsibility.

7.0 SUSTAINABILITY

The social sustainability of information centers depends centrally upon effective community ownership. This means that the community is represented in the work of the center/point, its processes, ideas, the development of local content etc.

Case "The visited information centers show a certain degree of social sustainability. This means that many centers do reach out to a wider community (e.g. when a public drama show is staged or public worship places or community meetings are attended)." **By Petra Stammen and Moses Kisembo p.g 31.**

The financial sustainability of information centers includes that realistic budgets are at hand and that the information centers generate own income and possibly identify local, national and international financial opportunities in view of having a funding mix.
RICNET managed to generate income at both county level and at the regional levels. The bulk of the funds generated were from the sale of services and consultancies. Key consultancies were received from SNV with a consultancy of over UGX 14 million, FIT Uganda UGX 460,000, RWETEL UGX 5 Million, SATNET UGX 1 million and local

governments in the regions. RIC-NET secured funds from sale of its services and hire ICT equipments to other CSO and institutions.

RIC-NET membership to RWECO and CEW-IT ensured that the resources attained through these consortiums can be accessed by RIC-NET and the projects implemented can have a great impact through the contribution of these partners.

Case: "All information centers visited use the equipment at hand to generate income.
Sometimes a clear "business wing" is mentioned apart from the information services. Besides membership fees the centers (especially on county level) do run depending on their infrastructure a commercial Internet Café, offer public phone and secretarial services (typing, printing and photocopying), ask for a fee from people watching entertainment TV/video programmes or shoot (as in one case) videos on demand. A risk can be noted here that the business sections may overrun the purpose of the centers."
By Petra Stammen and Moses Kisembo pg 33.

Sources of Funding In Euros
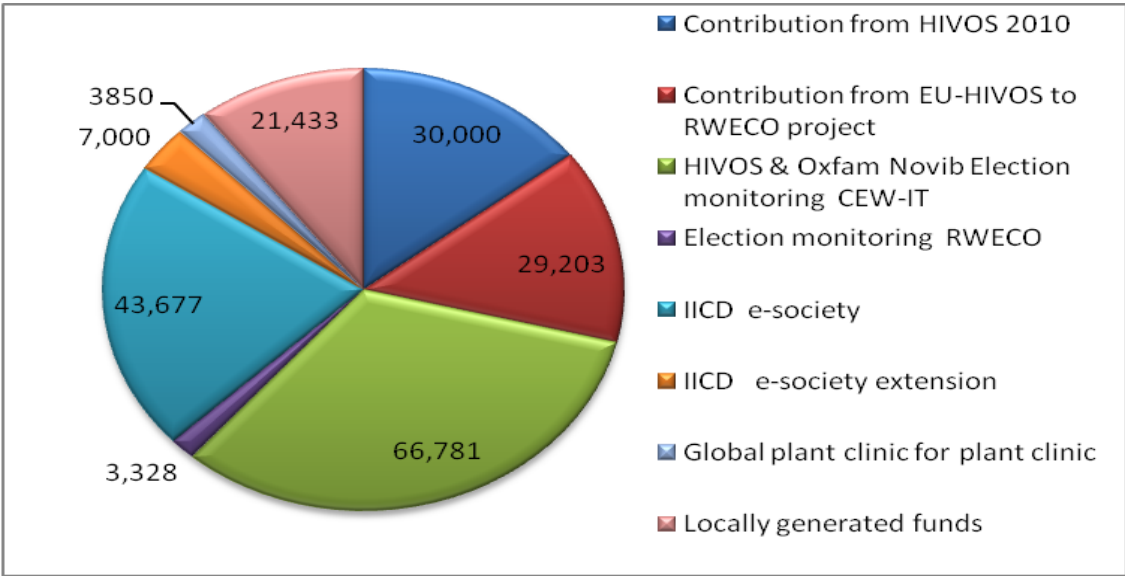
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	205,272 Euros

Recognitions

RICNET received a certificate of recognitions from Mountains of the Moon University department of public Heath, 5th Prize from E-learning Africa photo competition, Letter of appreciation from Chief Administrative Officer- Kabarole Local Government, District information Officer- Kasese District Local Government, Letter of appreciation from Rwenzori rural health services and a certificate from Uganda Community Libraries Association (UCLA) and several good comments from the visitors book.

http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2010/12/letter-of-request-from-cao-kabarole.html

Partnerships

RICNET is recognised as a partner to Mountain of Moon University, Koogere foundation, Global plant clinic, VSO, SATNET, FIT Uganda , Uganda Pentecostal University, SNV , Local governments of Kasese, Kabarole and Kyenjojo, KADDNET, CPTH, RWECO, Agro-pro focus , DENIVA, KRC,CEW-IT, RANNET , Uganda Meteorology Department and the Uganda Bureau of statistics .These partnerships have boosted RICNET's implementation of several project and contributed strongly to information documentation and sharing process.

Workshops/ conferences attended

Members of staff attend the listed workshop or conference as forums to learn or share information for development:

- East Africa University Symposium in Munyonyo
  http://www.eastafricasymposium.org/report.php
- M and E training by UBOS at Uganda Management Institute (UMI).
- Plant Clinic Nurses and Doctors training by CABI
- IEC material development training by IICD & I-Network.
- Sector statistical program training ; Budget analysis Trainings by DENIVA

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Project Activities as Reported by the Media

http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/9/32/741232

http://www.ngonewsafrica.org/?p=718

 http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/18/733904

http://www.monitor.co.ug/Business/Technology/-/688612/816942/-/tv6sdf/-/index.html

http://llafrica.com/stories/201010040296.html

http://pamojamedia.com/2010/07/knowledge-sharing-in-rural-africa

http://www.i-network.or.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=350

http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showpost.php?s=23a3df2b64334f6b8e7224bb9f6ea032&p=69027071&postcount=294

ANNEX 2: Platforms Developed for Information Sharing

http://www.kasesecso.org/ - Kasese CSOs Portal

http://www.kasese.go.ug/ - Kasese District Website

http://kaseseelibrary.org - Kasese District E-Library

http://dgroups.org/iicd/kasese - Kasese Community D- Group

http://kasesenews.blogspot.com/ - Kasese District News Blogs

http://rwecovoice.blogspot.com/ - CSOs News Blog

http://www.kabaroledistrict.go.ug Kabarole District website

www.uchaguzi.co.ug Election incident reporting website

http://uchaguzi-uganda.blogspot.comElection observation related news blog.

ANNEX 3: RIC-NET Staff as by December 2010

	Names	Sex	Qualification	Title
1	Murugahara John	Male	Bachelor of Info. Tech. (BIT), Dip. Educ., Dip. Philo, Cert. M&E., cert. consulting Skills.	Executive Director
2	Timothy Balikenga	Male	Bachelor of Philosophy, Dip. Mass Comm, MA (student)	Programme Officer (Media & information)
3	Tuhaise Geoffrey Rwaheeru	Male	BSC. Accounting and Finance	Finance & Admin officer
4	Bwambale Edwin	Male	Bachelor of Information Technology (BIT)	Programme officer (ICT &Solutions)
5	Rajamohan KG	Male	M.A.,(English) M.A.,(Sociology) , Bachelor of Law Dip.United Nations IU Dip.Personnel Management	Information System Advisor (VSO Volunteer).
6	Oluka Emmanuel	Male	Bachelor of Computer Science (BCS).	Systems Administrator (CEW-IT).
7	Mukasine Betty	Female	BIT	ICT officer (CEW-IT)
8	Baluku Yosia	Male	BCS	ICT officer (e-society)
9	Muhindo Vicent	male	BCS	ICT officer (CWE-IT)
10	Angeinda Erastus	Male	Bachelor of Mass Communication	Documentation Officer
11	Mugasa Evelyn	Female	Dip. Computer Science	ICT Assistant
12	Kabugho Agnes	Female	Dip. Secretarial studies	Administrative Secretary (e-society)
13	Emily Asiimwe	Female	Dip. in Accountancy	Administrative Assistant

ANNEX 4 Voices from the Community

Date	Name and address	Comment / remarks
15/01/2010	Kasimbazi Emmanuel	
	ACAO/ SAS kibaale / lecturer MMU	Good reception that welcomes visitors
28/01/2010	Safari mark Kamwenge District	To access information about education and farming.
05/02/2010	Enoch Titus KIMOME village connect information center – kijura Kyenjojo district.	Good work done by RIC-NET staff.
05/02/2010	Mwesigwa M Richard	To seek for an explanation technician to service a DVD player.
	Bubandi community information center	
	(BUCICE) Bundibugyo district	
08/02/2010	Dr. Oddia .N	Looks impressive.
	Fort – Portal Regional referral Hospital	
22/02/2010	Tamme Hansma	Always a nice place to support
	HIVOS	
3/3/2010	Dr. Oliver Schmidt	To discuss about cocoa opportunities and how we can work with RIC-NET in information dissemination about micro finance and banking.
	Mountains of the moon University	
	Banking and micro finance department	
	0782904039	
03/03/2010	Bahiizi Zachary	For agriculture purposes.
	Mountains of the moon	

university, 0772488073

13/04/2010	Tunanukye George Kamwenge district	To share with the programme manager how our information center will run effectively.
29/04/2010	Safari Vincent , CARE- Uganda. Fort portal branch 0772654951	Invite RIC-NET to attend our Dialogue meeting.
05/05/2010	Robert Reeder ,CABI Global plant clinic .Bakeham lane, Egham Uk	Meeting with RIC-NET about plant clinic.
24/05/2010	Twesigye Dan Bank of Africa 07184441143	Nice welcome Interesting project with famous. Keep it up
25/05/2010	Kaahwa Kayondo Fred Rwenzori consortium for civic competence (RWECO) 0772400284	Follow up of training on ICT for election monitoring
31/03/2010	Dr. Oliver Schmidt Academic advisor Micro Finance and banking department. Mountains of the moon university	Discussing Micro Finamce role in Rwenzori region.
31/05/2010	Kalinde Henry Uganda Bureau of statistics 0752801777/ 0776801777	Collecting data on non – profit institutions in Kabarole district.
17/06/2010	Gumoshabe Benon MBADIFA, 0779955050	Study tour on how Rural information system is working in RIC-NET .Good work and keep it up.

17/06/2010	Njamba Richard TRIAS –Uganda 0712957621	Good warm welcome and good information given. Well done.
17/06/2010	Peter Veneven, TRIAS –Uganda 0772714390	Thanks for the good presentation and warm welcome
28/07/2010	Rev. Manyindo Jimmy P .o .box 735 , 0772395503	To check information about HIV/AIDS
09/08/2010	Annette Isla (0774317147 Mountains of the moon university	To get information on community libraries association and translated information.
24/08/2010	Rwakoojo Grace Kanyabugara	Good work, thanks ,I had come to report my complaint of disqualify Katuramu dues from NRM
27/08/2010	George muganyizi . KYEFA director, 0772932980 kyefa@yahoo.co.uk	To look for information about agriculture. Keep up with the spirit of good work.
06/09/2010	Mugarua Anan	To express the dissatisfaction of the alteration of results of women representative to parliament Ntorooko district.
06/09/2010	Jeniffer K.Mujungu	Express my dissatisfaction of the NRM office alternating my results.
7/09/2010	Kule Abraham Rwenzori action for life improvement (RALI) 0782138237	Seeking for partnership with RIC-NET
8/11/2010	Isaak lumbuye DENIVA , Kampala.	Data collection for statistical abstract.

ANNEX 4: Extract from the RWECO report on RIC-NET

Publication of Newsletter, Brochures, Posters and murals/wall paintings

RICNET had a key role of developing Information and communications materials for the consortium. This included producing a bimonthly newsletter – both soft and hard version – for the members, which highlights project activities, achievements and challenges. In the two years RICNET published 8 editions of the Rwenzori People's Voice newsletter. The newsletter, brochures and other literature were shared among several stakeholders including the EU Court of Auditors, Local Governments in the region and in schools. The publication of these materials helped raise the visibility of the project and also to sensitize the communities on the various project activities taking place hence calling upon them.

To further enhance the visibility of the project and popularize the findings and actions being taken in implementing the project activities, the RIC-NET published flyers, banners and posters depicting real life situations in the community. These IEC materials were used to complement discussions by lending evidence and credence to findings by the field based monitors at public dialogue meetings and conferences.

As a follow up to these meetings, RICNET together with the project Coordinating Unit conducted consultative and follow up meetings with the district administration of Kasese, Kabarole and Kyenjojo to drum support and work out a mechanism for implementing the e-society. RICNET and the CU had several meetings with Marc Lepage of IICD, Ben White and Johan H. the PHD student and other ICT experts in Fort Portal and Kampala to enrich the concept of e-society being piloted in Kasese.

An ICT round table workshop, which was attended by 44 participants (35M, 9 F), was organized in Kasese to provide stakeholders with a platform for identification, prioritization and formulation of one logical programme (which can consist of several components) to create opportunities for access to and sharing of information, knowledge and services in order to improve overall dialogue between civil society and local Government. The RTW was facilitated by IICD with Ms. Jane Nakintu as the lead facilitator. The workshop focused on three key issues:

- Building and strengthening interaction (using ICTs) between stakeholders
- Guaranteeing a coherent approach towards improving the dialogue between civil society and local Government,
- Encouraging government – civil society interaction and collaboration through the development of a digital government information platform, in co-operation between these stakeholders (civil society and local government).

The highly interactive 3 day workshop, that involved both group work and panel discussions, was attended by key leaders including the District Chairman, the Bishop of South Rwenzori Diocese, LCV Council members, Heads of Department and Civil Society Representatives. The immediate output of the meeting was a road map for operationalization of the e-society concept in Kasese District. The road map was discussed at several follow up meetings between Kasese District Local Government and RICNET, and also between RICNET/CU and IICD among others. ………….**the detailed extract is attached as separate document**