



“ POVERTY IS MORE THAN A LACK OF MATERIAL WEALTH. IT IS ROOTED IN UNEQUAL SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS, BOTH LOCALLY AND AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE THAT DIRECT POVERTY ALLEVIATION GOES HAND IN HAND WITH FIGHTING UNEQUAL AND UNJUST POWER RELATIONSHIPS.”
HIVOS ANNUAL REPORT 2012, PG 12



RIC-NET ANNUAL REPORT

MARCH 2014

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MESSAGE FROM ED

Dear friends and partners,



I am honored to share with you a summary of activities that RIC-NET implemented in 2013. From our humble beginning in 2005 with only 600,000 Ugx, RIC-NET has been able to expand her operation and mobilise resources up to over 500 million shillings a year. We are growing strong and we hope to do better in 2014.

I take the pleasure to thank our dear staff, Board members, centres staff, partners and

several volunteers who have tirelessly offered themselves wholeheartedly in order to realise the results illustrated in this report.

We shall focus on building and deepening our partnerships in 2014 in order to make a contribution to eradication of poverty and injustice and also strive to ensure that the rights of the poor and excluded people are protected, promoted and fulfilled. We shall stress household approach, people centred development and advancing people centred alternatives, strengthening their voices and civic actions to tackle root causes of poverty and building peoples resilience and capacity to respond to vulnerabilities and actively participate in governance and wealth creation.

PROJECTS IN 2013

We shall build consensus among citizens and support citizens led campaigns from grassroots to ensure that citizens influence the way their governed and demand political and social accountability from the leaders.

I request you to become part of this successful team RIC-NET in any way possible. We look forward to strengthening the organisation further by effectively facilitating the management boards, acquiring a permanent home for RIC-NET secretariat and building an internal fund for our programmes.

Together we shall realise all these and more in 2014.

Regards,

M John Silco
Executive Director
RIC-NET

RIC-NET implemented **five** projects funded by Donors and **one** project funded from internal sources.

Operationalise and facilitating use of open source ICT for social accountability with a focus on Rwenzori region

**HIVOS-RICNET
1005338**

Enhancing civic competence to strengthen social accountability in Rwenzori region.

**HIVOS-RWECO
1002681**

Enhancing civic competence to strengthen social accountability in Uganda

**EU-Hivos-CEWIT
1004399**

RIC-NET FIGURES

Support teaching and learning English in Rwenzori region.

Connect for change (C4C)-Computer for schools(CFSU)-RWECO

A video documentary on the impact of information to poverty eradication endeavors in Rwenzori region.

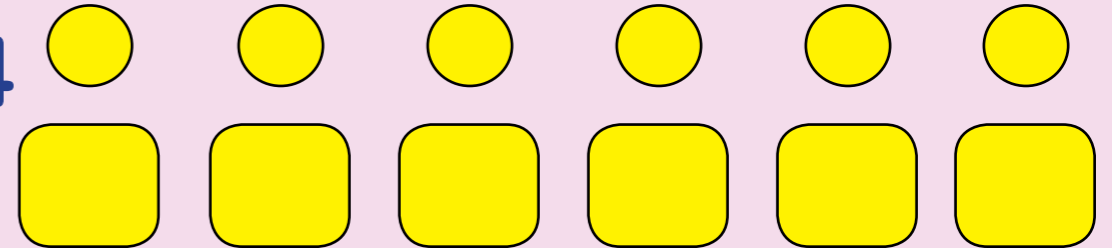
Development Initiatives (DI)-Development research and training(DRT)-RIC-NET

Health plants for Healthy People- Plant Clinics

RIC-NET local resources.

69,864

unique visitors accessed information on blogs



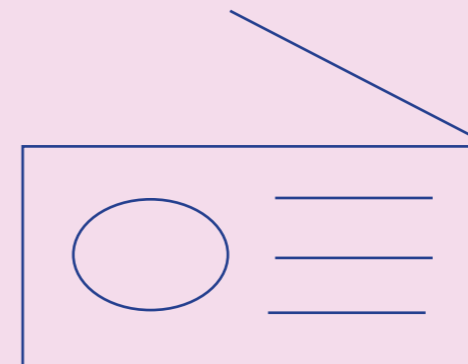
12,733

people used the services at the established 7 District e-society centres

73,682

25

accessed information from the District websites and e-libraries

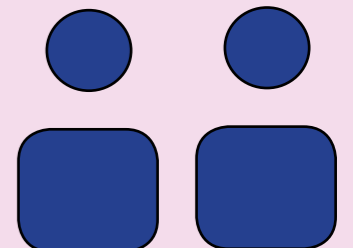


14,919

citizens responded to the opinion questions on the radios through trac fm;

2,372

participated in information sharing processes through symposiums and sensitization workshops;



SUMMARY OF OUR RESULTS

10,506 IEC materials on social accountability/ civic engagement continuously displayed information to thousand of youths, CPFs, monitors, elected leaders and general public

people shared their concerns on service delivery through discussion groups

18,794



3,000

copies of Quarterly Newsletters

1,000

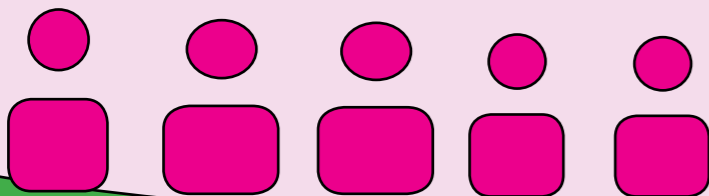
copies of annual report and 100 copies of the social accountability video magazine gave permanent accounts of CSOs and citizens' actions on social accountability

9

Short videos amplified citizens' voices on service delivery issues and shared their testimonies on the state of services in their home area through YouTube

538

viewers and National TV station (UBC) for the leaders to take key notice/ action. <http://www.youtube.com/user/ricnet2005>



- Enhanced Civic engagement and Feedback on service delivery status improved among the political leaders, CSO and citizens. Over 73,682 accessed information from the 25 District websites and e-libraries; 2,372 participated in information sharing processes through symposiums and sensitization workshops.
- Increased access the information through information centres, e-society resource centres, CPF, plant clinic has led to informed citizens' participation in governance and creation of wealth. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOZVNz1X5Q4>
- Skilled youth able to attract employment opportunities or start income generating enterprises. We have trained a total of 327 youth in computer literacy, entrepreneurship and vocational skills.

- Timely Citizens feedback mechanism with the elected leaders leading to quick action on service delivery anomalies. Radio programmes, discussion groups, community neighbor assemblies and sms based tracfm platform has enabled effective citizens engagement with their elected leaders without a putting themselves in compromising situation. Over 14,919 citizens gave their opinion through tracfm to leaders on radio program and 18,794 people shared their concerns on service delivery through discussion groups.
- Better information sharing and reduced costs because of using the e-society facilities by the District local government staff attained better ICT skills and increased access or use of internet, secretarial services from e-society centres leading to reduced operational costs, quick response to citizens and administration issues and better service the delivery. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y2wqLKvtShY>
- Established and equipped 15 information and e-society centres that enable the citizens, youth and Civil society members to use internet, access resource books /materials, attain computer literacy and ICT skills.
- Farmers have control Cassava mosaic, Banana Wilt, Pineapple Wilt, on the farm using the information accessed through resource centres, video, posters, radio programmes, roundtable meetings and 'plant clinic'. The plant clinic has filled that gap left by the lack of Sub County Agricultural extension officers.
- The students, school dropouts especially girls have attain computer literacy skills that have enabled them to get employed or start small secretarial bureau in their towns.

- Over 2337 students from the 6 secondary schools and two teachers colleges that benefitted from our ICT enabled English learning process project have demonstrated improvement in the use of the four skills on English language. This will not only after their performance in exams but their use of English in their life. [Http://soma-schools.blogspot.com](http://soma-schools.blogspot.com)
- RIC-NET have built partnership and offered ICT training, documenting services to 57 CBOs/ NGOs, local government and educational institutions to that support the youth and especially girls in and out of schools.
- http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21511:850-schools-connected-to-the-internet&catid=85:education&Itemid=106 http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21487:local-govts-need-more-money-for-computers&catid=53:interview-&Itemid=67



OUR APPROACH

The Network cherishes a holistic approach to development that recognizes the provision of information as an essential element to the transformation of rural community productivity and sustainable development in social, political and economic spheres.

We emphasize participatory approaches that involves the participation of local communities in identifying their information needs, participating in designing strategies (that use ICT) to meet their needs and monitor the process. RIC-NET implements through a Network rural 50 information centres and points, 20 Community Information Facilitators, 15 “Plant Doctors”, 7 District E-society resource Centres and 57 CSO CBOs.

BENEFICIARIES



The beneficiaries of our programmes are based on our focus to fight poverty right from a house hold.

Our primary beneficiaries are the poor and vulnerable persons with potential to move out of poverty; rural farmers, the youth, women and Children, socially excluded persons, and persons with disabilities at households and community levels.

Secondary beneficiaries are structures, groups and institutions that have or can influence decision, respect of rights, resource allocation that alleviate poverty; local CBO/NGOs, local Government structures, Private Sector, opinion leaders (religious, cultural and political), and general citizenry through mass actions.

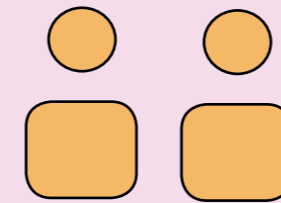
PROGRAMME AREAS

1. Community Empowerment and Youth (CEY); unlocking people potentials by offering a range of skills development services or tailor-made training and apprenticeship opportunities for the youth and women. Other interventions under this thematic area are geared towards improving livelihood at households through Agriculture, preventive and reproductive health, and support to entrepreneurship.
2. Knowledge sharing and Advocacy (KSA); Building an information society by facilitating access to reliable, timely and relevant information, knowledge and skills in the field of Agriculture, Education, Health, Human Rights and Governance for sustainable food security and health people active at civic engagement. Use of information for poverty eradication at individual and community levels.
3. Technology for Social Accountability and Development (TSAD); collaboration efforts in designing and deployment of different

WE WILL ALWAYS BE.....

platforms that allows citizens to engage with their leaders without putting themselves at risk and building capacity of both CSOs and civil servants to use ICT for development. Amplifying citizens' voice on social accountability and service delivery.

4. Social inclusion, Rights and livelihood (SIR); voicing the Silent voices of the social excluded persons to assert, demand and realize their human rights. Sensitizing the community to tolerate and defend the minorities' rights and Dignity. Build their capacities to generate wealth and reduce their poverty exacerbated vulnerability



People centred...

We are uniquely rooted in communities. Use the household as a building block and entry point in citizens' empowerment, participation, access to basic services and unlocking production capabilities. We support initiatives that empower the people to continuously create wealth and demonstrate strong changes in people's lives at households.



Voicing the silence...

We advocate and campaign for better practices and policies to fulfill the rights and entitlements of the social excluded and vulnerable youth, women and children; access to better services particularly those marginalised and living in poverty. Strengthen access and use of information for civic competence and participation in governance.



Use Participatory Methodologies....

Empower, enable grassroots people and their organisations with information and skills to engage and eliminate poverty. We carry out open space/ roundtable meetings, Neighbourhood Assemblies, Action research, development of alternative model to poverty eradication and justice, and document evidence to support our policy advocacy and campaign work.

PERFORMANCE AS PER THEMATIC AREA IN 2013



Deepening Partnerships...

We promote Grassroots and regional linkages. Link our work with people, groups and networks in order to amplify the voices of poor and increase the pressure for change. Collaborate with media, CSO, private sector and government agencies to share knowledge, influence others and build capacity to ensure the vulnerable rights and better services are met.



Focus on the vulnerable and socially excluded....

women, youth and children form a majority population and any effort for change must involve them if its to be sustained. We mobilise and support them in building civic awareness and actions to shape a more democratic, equitable and sustainable world.



Converging ICT & Media Platforms...

We combine traditional media with the new form of ICT. Promote building an information society without exclusion. Using open data, ICT and Media to amplify people's agenda, empower them to tell their own story, engage with their leaders on governance and Democratization aspects, and influence decision making, service delivery and justice to eradicate poverty.

ICT is deeply intertwined with almost every aspect of economic and social activities, and it continues to hold the promise of tremendous innovation and growth opportunities going forward if the right enabling conditions are put in place.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND YOUTH (CEY)

The Rwenzori region has an estimated population of 2.5 million in 2010; the estimates for the Districts affected most by conflicts are: Kasese 650,000, Ntoroko 79, 900 and 217,500 Bundibugyo. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kasese_District http://ug.geoview.info/ntoroko_district,8030583 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bundibugyo_District

The young people (aged 10 to 24) make up approximately 33% of the population in Uganda. As per 1991 census approximates 1.2 million Orphans, 11.3% of the population of children. The current estimates are 2.3 million or 19% of Ugandan children. <http://www.ids.ac.uk/files/UgandaCh3.pdf> Estimated 17 million in 2009 out of total Child population or 65% are vulnerable due to poverty, insecurity, diseases and conflicts.

Some inhabitants of the region are marginalised ethnic tribes: the Batwa, Bayabindi and Basongora. The Area is remote and inhospitable with mountainous terrain, impenetrable rainforest and flood plains that are highly vulnerable to severe and persistent poverty. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CesNYVs3lpo> The region has a high population growth rate and big numbers of

“Adolescents who get pregnant are seen as outcasts, which in many cases, causes family breakdown. The girl gets displaced; she is isolated at home, at school and from her spouse”.

Orphans, IDP and Refugees because of ADF rebel insurgency since 1996, high HIV/AIDS prevalence and poor service delivery. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7EVmJaVmTM>

The communities have a high male dominated culture. Differential socialization of Girls and boys imply that Girls grow up with little ability to negotiate or bargain their rights within marriage, the household and the community.

Most youths are still vulnerable due to several factors:

- Despite Uganda's push towards MDG number 2, "Universal Primary Education", about three in ten girls and boys aged 6-9 years have never attended school. <http://savethechildren.org/publications/brief-write-ups>
- About 80% of the cases of child abuse reported by media and annual crime report from the Uganda Police are of sexual assault by nature i.e. mostly defilement .
- 1.76 million Children are engaged in child labour with majority being the orphans and school drop-out.
- Early marriages, early unwanted pregnancies; unsafe abortions, STDs, HIV/AIDS and low contraceptive use are common with the youth.
- The rate of contracting AIDS is six times higher among Girls (15-19 years) than their male counterparts. <http://savethechildren.org/publications/brief-write-ups>
- Children with physical and mental impairments marginalization and discrimination impacts on their performance at schools. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=979yNa4D8No>

RIC-NET's intervention has been to nurture youth's skills and transform them into practical citizens who can exploit the available opportunities and resources to improve their livelihoods and become job creators. RIC-NET embarked youth apprenticeship, mentoring and training in entrepreneurship, leadership, life skills and practical skills that enables them to acquire the right attitude, skills and competencies that match market demands leading to youth employability and employment opportunities.

- Using the e-society centres in the seven Districts of the Rwenzori region, RIC-NET trained 725 youths in ICT and entrepreneurship skills.
- We supported 18 Teachers and 1,260 students in four Secondary (St. Charles Vocational, St. Theresa Girls school, Kilembe Secondary) and Bwera Primary Teachers' College with opportunities to learn English language using ICT enabled methodology. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rigi2htwjQQ> We supported these schools with a two sets of computers, laptop, generator, projector and a sound system.
- We have documented the plight of girl child and disabled persons in the education institutions on social media and print media as advocacy for increased resource allocation in this sector. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=979yNa4D8No>
- We offered and arranged apprenticeship or internship opportunities for 32 university students. Most of our beneficiaries are orphans or from hard to reach areas or from marginalised communities or single mothers or formerly living in IDPs/ refugee camps. <http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2013/07/internship-placement-opportunity-to.html>

All these intervention has led to the targeted youth to gain skills which they have used to start they own business or get employed and start getting income to change their livelihood.



KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND ADVOCACY (KSA)

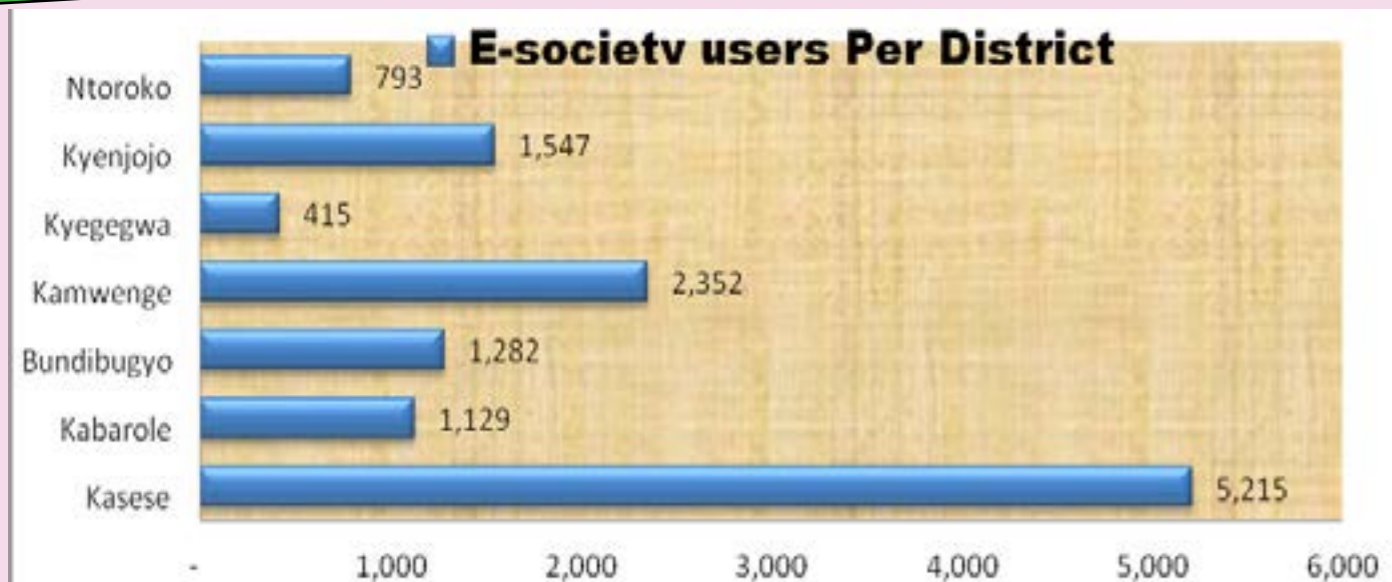
Concerted efforts were put on working with partners to realise greater impact and ensure sustainability of projects by signing an additional 14 MOUs with District Local Governments (a total of 28 MOUs so far signed with Districts) and 13 MOUs with local NGOs and institutions and 2 MOUs with NGOs in Kenya and Tanzania.

E-SOCIETY CENTRES

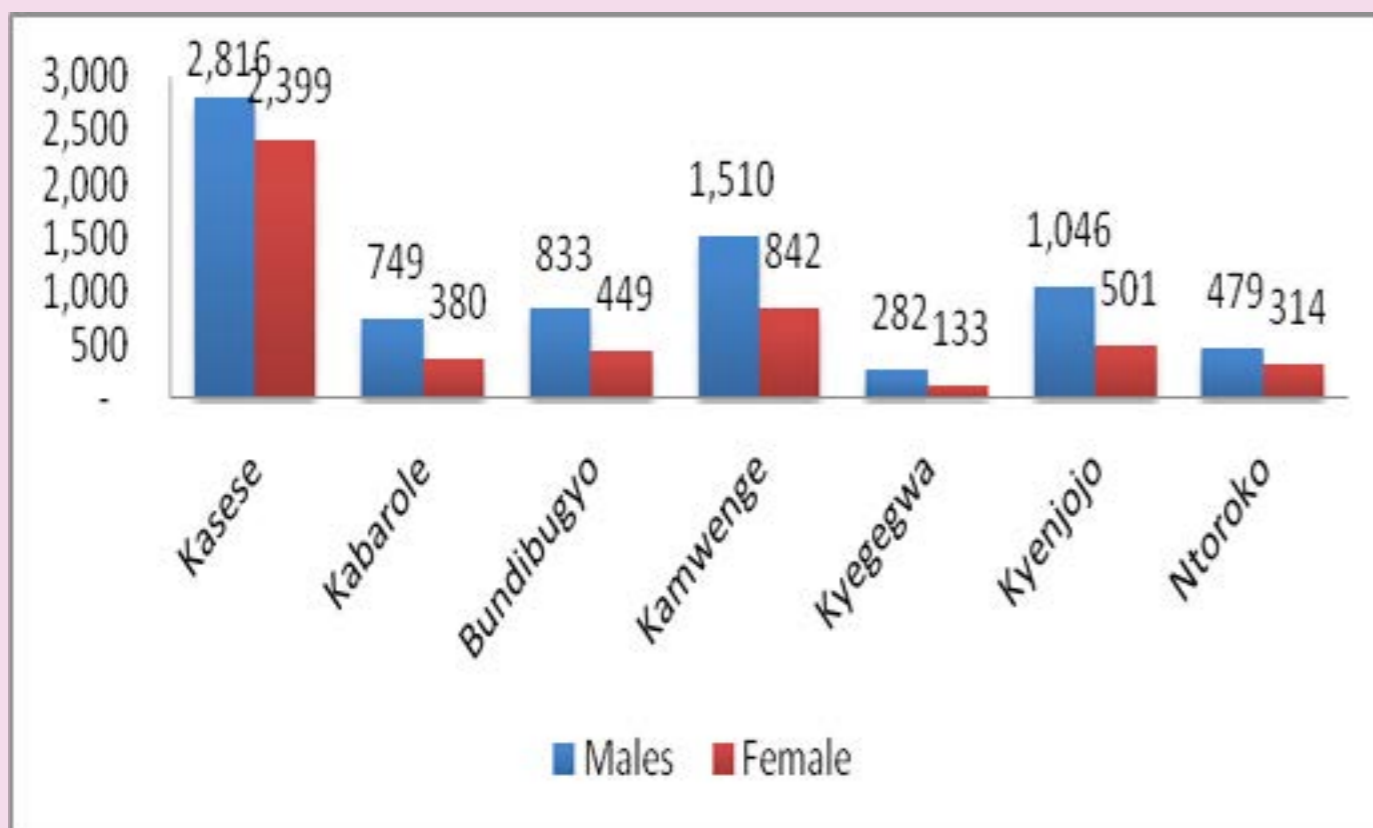
RIC-NET completed the setting up of 3 additional e-society centres for the Districts of Ntoroko, Kyegegwa and Kyenjojo in 2013. Each Centre is equipped with 5 desktop computers, a photocopier/scanner/printer, furniture, a computer blower, one power stabilizer, a functional LAN and power extension cables.

The current 7 e-society centres in the region have so far been used by 12,733 persons for training, internet access, research, and secretarial services.

http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2013/02/kamwenge-e-society-center-has-prooved_21.html <http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2013/03/journalists-and-rural-monitors-in.html>



E-Society users by gender 2013



District officials and CSOs have given testimonies of how the e-society centre services and trainings have built their capacity and enabled them to save or mobilise more resources, share information timely and get feedback from the community through different platforms e.g. d-groups and social media.

“Lots of thanks to RIC-NET/RWECO for its support and partnership which has helped improve the IT skills for the staff and created a linkage with the stakeholders, it has helped the staff make timely reports.” Mr. Ashaba CAO Ntoroko District

“This centre is the first of its kind in Kyegegwa, Am grateful for the services that it offers. Since I started using it I no longer have to travel long distances to fort portal and Mubende to access internet or even pay for it. My expenditures have been reduced”. Hon. Jane Rose Ngonzi of Kyegegwa District

<http://youtu.be/wR8Ej0aouGg>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICw0GM1Phrc>

DISTRICT WEBSITES AND E-LIBRARIES

RIC-NET designed, deployed and hosted 25 e-libraries and 25 District web-sites <http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2013/08/twenty-five-websites-and-e-libraries.html> that have so far been visited by 73,682 unique persons for different information. These web portals have enabled local government of-

officials to share with citizens different government documents. The CSOs and CPFs have used the information to prepare presentations at neighborhood assemblies and mobilise the citizens to hold their leaders accountable. Cfr <http://elibrary.kyenjojo.go.ug> Mr. Katuramu Abel, District bio-statistician- Kamwenge District wrote after training in e-library updating,

“This is now good; I can now access reports from all departments. Thanks RIC-NET for developing for us this system”.

BULK SMS PLATFORM

The sms are intended to mobilize the community for social actions, act as alerts and reminders to a specific activity. 10,332 sms were sent in both English, Lhukonzo and Rutooro, to mobilize and remind citizens of several key issues in the governance cycle (planning meeting, council meeting) or CSO activity (neighborhood assembly) or alert them to take action such as universal children immunization days (Child days Plus), remind them of key radio programmes, mobilizing for support for victims of floods in Kasese, disease prevention alert for cholera and alerts to parents to take their children back to schools.

The sms have enabled several citizens to get informed on what is current and take appropriate actions. Several persons who have participated in radio programmes have sent a sms alert compared to when we do not remind them. <http://www.tracfm.org/p/view/648/> and <http://www.tracfm.org/p/view/680/> . People are used to the pro-

grammes and listen to radios and participate through trac fm or telephone calls to the studio.

NEWSLETTER AND IEC MATERIALS

3,000 newsletters produced 1000 annual report popular version, and 100 copies of video magazine. <http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2013/08/the-power-of-information-sharing.html>
<http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2013/09/promoting-farmers-entrepreneurship-in.html>
<http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2013/08/ric-net-showcases-in-regional-farmers.html> Over 15,000 persons have accessed the newsletters and videos (both offline and online). http://ricnet.co.ug/?page_id=3958).

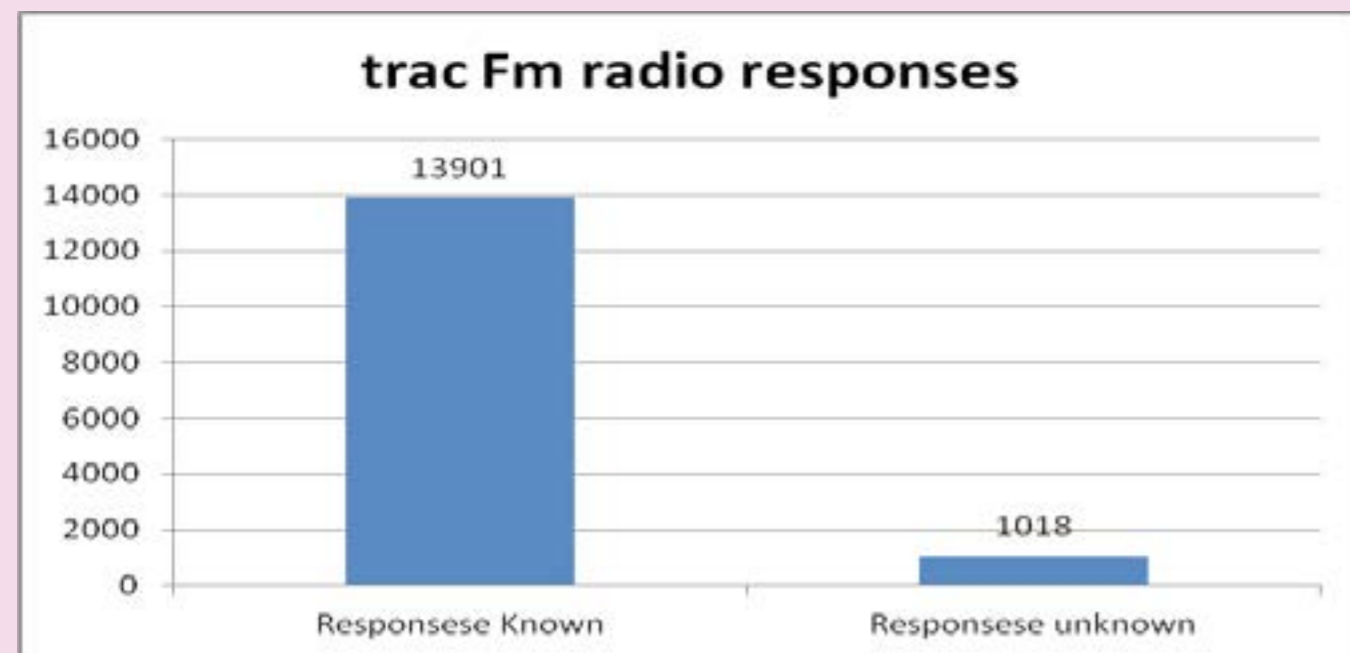
Newsletters were shared through RWECO members 80 CPF and affiliated CBOs, 7 e-society centres, 45 information centres, 4 community/ public and 74 schools , 28 District headquarters offices, 3 regional CSO symposiums (Fort portal, Mbale and Kampala). Produced and disseminated 10, 506 IEC materials; 2,500 stickers on District online platforms and 1,000 on RIC-NET, 1,000 RIC-NET calendars, 5,000 quarterly newsletters, 1,000 project brochures), 2 project banners and 4 pull up stands. These IEC and Newsletters have been a source for sharing key issues and feedback from the community to the elected leaders and wide public. This has enabled citizens to trust that their issues are appropriately presented to responsible stake holders.

Over 201,208 people have been reached by various online line platforms the blogs: <http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com> <http://rwecovoice.blogspot.com> <http://somaschools.blogspot.com> YouTube: <http://>

www.youtube.com/user/ricnet2005 D-groups : <https://dgroups.iicd/kasese>

RADIO PROGRAMMES

RIC-NET held 11 radio programmes and 140 radio sport mentions on Kasese Guide, Life FM and Beta FM. Also trained 19 (13 male and 6 Female) staff of three fm radio station, District information officers



and RWECO programmes officer trained in use of Trac FM and moderation of the interactive radio programmes that gives citizens an opportunity to engage with the leaders over radio.

ROUND TABLE AND NEIGHBORHOOD ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

We Conducted 14 sensitizations and feedback meeting (two per District) in Rwenzori region. <http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2013/04/how-relevant-is-access-to-information.html>

RIC-NET participated in 22 neighborhood assemblies meeting with average of 50-60 old persons organized by its partners under RWECO <http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2013/10/kyegegwa-district-to-own-first.html> <http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2013/04/civil-society-organisations-in-rwenzori.html>. These were avenues to disseminate information on governance and other programmes to the citizens.

TECHNOLOGY FOR SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT (TSAD)

CITIZENS' USING ICT TOOLS IN REPORTING ON SERVICE DELIVERY

"TRAC FM has eased my work of identifying the peoples opinion on human rights related issues from the public and increased participation of the public in the radio programs. I send my question three days

RIC-NET deployed trac fm software on three radios; Life fm, Voice of Kamwenge and Kasese Guide Radio FM. The platforms enabled citizens to report on issues of service delivery as discussed by their leaders on radio.

In 2013 14,919, citizens have been able to send their opinions to the several radios using track FM. <http://www.tracfm.org/p/view/339> <http://www.tracfm.org/p/view/648> <http://www.tracfm.org/p/view/471> <http://www.tracfm.org/p/view/435>

CSO have used the statistical figure received to hold the leaders accountable. A case in point was the citizens' demand to be allowed to contribute to funds for welfare of pupils and teachers which the politicians had resisted for long because of their political ambitions of providing free education at primary levels. <http://ric-netnews.blog>

spot.com/2013/04/civil-society-organisations-in-rwenzori.html ,86% of the 726 parents , responded to radio programmes agreed to pay money for pupil's lunch amidst the politicians' objection of levying such a fee. <http://www.tracfm.org/p/view/311>. RIC-NET trained Radio and CSO staff on the use of Trac Fm, 19 Participants (13 M, 6 F) attended the training, held at St. Joseph's INN Virika in Fort portal town. <http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2012/11/ric-net-partners-introduced-to-another.html>.

D-GROUPS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

“

Kyenjojo District e-society Twitter account is followed by the Rt. Hon. Aama Mbabazi,

RIC-NET deployed seven discussion groups for each of the Districts in Rwenzori region and one d-groups for the national consortium of CSO. citizensvoice.hivos@dgroups.com <https://dgroups.org/hivos/kyenjojo>
<https://dgroups.org/hivos/ntoroko>
<https://dgroups.org/hivos/kyegegwa>
<https://dgroups.org/hivos/kamwenge>
<https://dgroups.org/hivos/kabarole>
<https://dgroups.org/hivos/bundibugyo>
<https://dgroups.org/hivos/iicd/kasese>

These specialized d-groups have a total membership of so far 346 and 53 discussions; while the open face book based discussion groups have membership of 18,794 people.

The discussion groups generated issues that have been picked by the elected leaders at different government levels for action. CSOs and District Local Governements have been signed up to sev-

eral social media such as blogs, face book, Twitter and Google++. These media have enabled the elected leaders to give feedback to the citizens on several issues.

Some Districts and government institutions have made face book discussion groups that discuss issues that concern their own area, e.g. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/432607300124016>. Kasese municipal Mayor always updates residents on issues concerning the town leading to residents ably voicing their concerns on service delivery on face book.

We have received 69,864 unique visitors in 2013 from the several blogs that have been initiated by RIC-NET. <http://kasesenews.blogspot.com> <http://rwecovoice.blogspot.com> <http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com> <http://kabarolenews.blogspot.com> <http://somaschools.blogspot.com>

Some of the social media accounts deployed have been widely marketed and followed by District elected leaders, Members of Parliament and Ministers. This enables the citizens who use them to share information directly with the elected and top government leaders. Cfr. Annex 4, (last person on the print screen page).

District officials and CSOs have given testimonies of how the e-society centre services and trainings have built their capacity and enabled them to use the social media such as Skype in the sharing of information and d-groups to respond to community issues as testified in our recent video documentary. <http://youtu.be/wR8Ej0aouGg>

PRODUCTION OF VIDEO ON SERVICE DELIVERY ISSUES

Nine (9) Short videos amplifying citizens' voices on service delivery

were produced and shared with CSOs on DVDs and with the public on YouTube while three of them were aired on the National TV station (UBC). The most attractive cases were the health situation in Buhinga hospital.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7EVmJaVmTM> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCYMYIF9F6o> which led to the intervention of the local District leaders and Area MP, the plights of Children in schools without lunch <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2JI1nAriBw> which led to several CSO coming together to sensitize parents and school administrators on lunch issues and hold District key stake holders dialogue; and the voices of students on human rights (rights of the disabled people) and corruption. On average, most of these videos have been watched on YouTube by 538 people, and we hope that several thousand viewed them when they were screened on the National TV.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5vyN75Jsz6M> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=979yNa4D8No>

OPERATIONALISE SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PLATFORM

RIC-NET completed mobilization the CSOs and signed with them MOUs with local Government in Rwenzori region on use of Huduma www.citizensvoice.ug when it's ready for deployment. This will be an additional platform for citizens to use for feedback on service delivery.

SOCIAL INCLUSION, RIGHTS AND LIVELIHOOD (SIR):

RIC-NET Social inclusion and sustainable livelihoods programme encompasses aspects of poverty as a key factor leading to vulnera-

bility of individuals or groups in their effort to demand and realize human rights.

We focus on building the capacities of socially excluded persons based on gender (women and girls) and sexual orientation. RIC-NET trains the socially excluded person in order to empower them to engage demanding for their rights and enterprises to attain better social and judicial services and fight poverty among them. This reduces their vulnerabilities to community injustices.

RIC-NET carried out 4 training attended by 60 women leaders on leadership, psycho social support, entrepreneurship and reproductive health. In addition, we conducted radio programmes to provide information and mobilise the socially excluded people– in particular women and girls – to demand for respect of their rights, take part in decision-making processes and influence public policies.

We developed a working partnership with Queer youth Uganda and other organisation to amplify the voices of the socially excluded persons.

Hillary Clinton U.S. Secretary of State once said, "Those who advocate for expanding the circle of human rights were and are on the right side of history, and history honors them. Those who tried to constrict human rights were wrong, and history reflects that as well".







PLANT CLINICS

We provided timely access to agriculture related information on better seeds and



inputs, pests & Diseases control and climate change adaptation for sustainable production and food security through farmers plant clinic. We linked supported agribusiness growth, access to markets for increased household income; and participated in advocating for Land rights, women's sexual reproductive health rights, conflict prevention and peace building, combating gender based violence to reduce women and girls vulnerability.

Summary of cases reported to the Plant Clinic as per crop

Crop	Major problem	Number of cases reported	Number of farmers	
			Male	Female
	Bacteria and pests leads to Leaf spots, holes in branches, drying of leaves, brown patches	367	169	198
	Maize stock, trige weed problem, stunted growth, yellowing	526	185	341
	Stunted growth and yellowing	501	124	377
	Rush, premature dropping	76	67	09
	Yellowing and drying of the fruits before the ripe period, black spots,	85	61	24
	Attack by warms and stunted growth	67	23	44

Crop	Major problem	Number of cases reported	Number of farmers	
			Male	Female
	Premature fruits, pests attack	310	131	179
	Stunted growth, yellowing of leaves	190	124	66
	BBX leads to yellowing	446	201	245
	Stunted growth, yellowing	216	50	166
	Pests attack on the plants, leaf yellowing	42	12	30
	Attack by warms	10	01	09
	Cassava mosaic, yellowing	344	42	302
	Bacterial wilt leading to yellowing and fruits falling down, rush	101	57	44
	Wilting of the leaves from the top.	33	23	10
	Total number of cases	3189	1270	1919

<http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=4314390908347382146#editor/target=post;postID=7852221275366802961;onPublishedMenu=allposts;onClosedMenu=allposts;postNum=50;src=postname>

TRAINING AND RESEARCH:

5 trainings had been attended by some of the Plant Doctors, 4 males and 4 females attended. These had been organized by MAAIF, Makerere University and CABI. Training were in Module 1& 2 held in fort portal, operations of Plant clinics, Special training On Coffee and Bananas held at Kabanyoro training Institute, special training on cereals held at Kabanyoro training institute.

Training In M&E of plant clinic activities held in Kampala organized by CABI. This was attended by 2 RIC-NET staff, 1 Male and 1 Female. <http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=4314390908347382146#editor/target=post;postID=2147385817193168516;onPublishedMenu=allposts;onClosedMenu=allposts;postNum=25;src=postname> Internal training for the plant Doctors was conducted on documentation held at RIC-NET office Boardroom for all the plant. This was meant to improve the recording and documentation of Plant clinic activities at local level.

Results from the Trainings:

- Improved plant Doctors ability to run the weekly market plant clinics.
- Documentation process has greatly improved.
- Capacity of Plant Doctors has improved. Plant Doctors can easily understand the signs and symptoms of diseased plants and share

easily with the farmers.

CABI too conducted a research on the operation of Plant clinic in the Uganda. Two (2) plant clinics were selected from Kasese i.e. Kisinga and Kiburara run by RIC-NET and Kinyamaseke run by local government. 3 plant doctors were involved in this research 1 female and 2 males. Researchers were sourced by CABI and were reporting to CABI directly. Results of this research shall be shared by Self help Africa (SHA) and later date. <http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=4314390908347382146#editor/target=post;postID=8875189708848184109;onPublishedMenu=allposts;onClosedMenu=allposts;postNum=12;src=postname>

EXHIBITIONS AND MARKET EVENT FUNCTIONS

Our plant Doctors participated in the Market place event held at Kagote SDA fort portal town, 1 male and 1 Female. 178 farmers [93 females and 85 males] attend to the RIC-NET plant clinic store to access information on better methods of farming. <http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=4314390908347382146#editor/target=post;postID=6426085974555851660;onPublishedMenu=allposts;onClosedMenu=allposts;postNum=24;src=postname>

This has resulted in:

1. Reduction of cases of Plant Pests and Diseases especially on the major food crops in the region like cassava, maize, bananas and beans.
2. Farmers have learnt the importance of safe storage; this has improved food security at household level.
3. More awareness on the major pests and diseases among the farm-

IMPACT TO COMMUNITY

ers has been created even to those who have never attended the plant clinic for they get the information from fellow farmers.

4. Two more plant clinics have been opened this year, one at Kin-yamaseke and another at Kiburara to reduce the distance the farmers walk to visit the plant Doctors.
5. The Number of farmers visiting clinics has increased by 37% from last year figures.
6. Awakened the Local government staff working with farmers especially NAADS and CDOs by improving their services to the community as the farmers have kept comparing plant Doctors with other extension staffs at Sub County and other levels.



- Enhanced Civic engagement and Feedback on service delivery, status improved among the political leaders, CSO and citizens. Over 73,682 users accessed information from the 25 District websites and e-libraries; 2,372 community members participated in information sharing processes through symposiums and sensitization workshops.
- Increased access to information through information centres, e-society resource centres, CPFs, plant clinics has led to informed citizens' participation in governance and creation of wealth. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOZVNz1X5Q4>
- Skilled youth able to attract employment opportunities or start in-

come generating enterprises. We have trained a total of 327 youth in computer literacy, entrepreneurship and vocational skills.

- Timely Citizens feedback mechanism with the elected leaders leading to quick action on service delivery anomalies. Radio programmes, discussion groups, community neighbor assemblies and sms based tracfm platform has enabled effective citizens engagement with their elected leaders without a putting themselves in compromising situation. Over 14,919 citizens gave their opinion through tracfm to leaders on radio program and 18,794 people shared their concerns on service delivery through discussion groups.
- Better information sharing and reduced costs because of using the e-society facilities, the District local government staff have attained better ICT skills and increased access or use of internet, secretarial services from e-society centres leading to reduced operational costs, quick response to citizens and administration issues and better service delivery. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y2wqLKvtShY>
- Established and equipped 15 information and e-society centres that enable the citizens, youth and Civil society members to use internet, access resource books /materials, attain computer literacy and ICT skills.
- Farmers have controlled Cassava mosaic, Banana Bacteria Wilt, Pineapple Wilt, on the farm using the information accessed through resource centres, video, posters, radio programmes, roundtable meetings and 'plant clinic'. The plant clinic has filled that gap left by the lack of Sub County Agricultural extension officers.
- The students, school dropouts especially girls have attain comput-

er literacy skills that have enabled them to get employed or start small secretarial bureau in their towns.

- Over 2337 students from the 6 secondary schools and two teachers colleges that benefitted from our ICT enabled English learning process project have demonstrated improvement in the use of the four skills on English language. This will not only improve their performance in exams but their use of English in their life. [Http://somaschools.blogspot.com](http://somaschools.blogspot.com)
- RIC-NET has built partnership and offered ICT training, documentation services to 57 CBOs/ NGOs, local government and educational institutions that support the youth and especially girls in and out of schools.
- http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21511:850-schools-connected-to-the-internet&catid=85:education&Itemid=106 http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21487:local-govts-need-more-money-for-computers&catid=53:interview-&Itemid=67

LESSON LEARNED

- As the E-society project expands, several services and stakeholders should be included e.g. Uganda Communication Commission (UCC), Telecom Companies, business enterprises and other NGOs.
- The sustainability of the website and e-libraries depends on how they contribute to the work of District civil servants and politician's agenda/ commitment. The capacities of the District staff in managing this platform ensure their continuous existence and use.
- Local government have little influence in increasing funds for different budget lines targeting service delivery, so purposefully advocacy should be geared to the line Ministries, Ministry of planning and Finance and the Parliament Budget Committee early enough before the budgeting process of the year is started.
- More focus should be done in activity implementation plans on how different persons with disability will be involved. A case in point was the poems and easy competition done in schools where vision-impaired children decided to recite their poems than writing them. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=979yNa4D8No>
- A deliberate partnership and direct participation of media companies in projects planning and implementation should be encouraged. Media such as radio still mobilise better the citizens for civic causes than other channels.
- Building citizens' Civic competence requires efforts and participation in their economic empowerment activities. This brings person to person and community bonding that is vital for building a social movement to demand for better service delivery.
- RIC-NET should continue being a learning organization, build allies and support her permanent staffs to sharpen their knowledge and skills in order to deliver quality services and products.

CHALLENGES

- Endemic corruption, abuse of power, ineffective public institutions, limited civic participation and inadequacies in the legal and policy frameworks increase vulnerabilities for people struggling to get out of poverty.
- The contribution of ICT to growth is still hampered by cultural reluctance to embrace change, and the unavailability of ICT infrastructures in rural areas. Many indigenous peoples lack access to the Internet or do not have the expertise to use ICTs to access global knowledge or to create their own content and resources.
- The social accountability platform (Huduma) is not fully deployed because of delays from the software developer in releasing the platform to RIC-NET.
- Kyegegwa and Ntoroko Districts offices location was not favorable for internet connectivity most of the time. This limits District staff use of some online platforms.
- Some of the centres such as Kabarole Information centre (KIC) and Village Connect Centres with affiliated CBOs closed shop due to failure to sustain the centres. Other centres were hit by natural disasters which hindered their operation for some time. http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2013/06/bundibugyo-e-society-resource-centre-to_25.html
- Planned Radio programmes for the second semester were not implemented due to funding constraints in the RWEKO consortium.
- Most neighborhood assembly issues were not formally written as petition ready for publication and citizen's mobilised to ensure the issues are resolved. Issues were presented as mere complaints

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

rose by the citizens to the political leaders.

- Inadequate facilitation to support weekly plant clinics, refresher training, reference materials to aid the entire activity and plant clinic Kits to help the plant Doctors operate fully.
- The legal and political environment that doesn't support the efforts towards empowerment of socially excluded persons. The anti homosexuality Act and the anti pornography Act infringe respect of human rights for all persons.



- Develop capacity to mobilise resources in-country to a tune of at least 15% of total income.
- Improve policy, programmatic and financial management across RIC-NET Centres and partners to improve efficiency and effectiveness
- To retain a skilled and motivated workforce that effectively and efficiently implements project and delivers to the aspirations of the beneficiaries, RIC-NET and the development partners.
- To increase visibility of our work by improving our relations with the media, engaging more with digital platforms, integrating documentation processes in programme implementation and facilitating community based communication approaches.
- To undertake and coordinate priority action research and utilize outcomes.
- Ensure community and local ownership of our projects. The local people or other partner NGO and local government being able to take on projects when donor money ceases.
- Securing a permanent office block, and developing a secure income generating enterprise for RIC-NET.
- Sharing the vision of RIC-NET with a wide community to ensure a shared vision with local communities; and developing programme areas relevant to current local context.

ABOUT RIC-NET



RIC-NET is a community based, Community initiated and community owned non Governmental organisation with Reg. No: CD/CBO/078 ; S.5914/11258 and incorporated as Company Limited by Guarantee Reg. No: 85565.

The organisation was initiated CBO /CSO's at the CSOs Open Space Forum in 2001/2 and established 2005 as regional Network. The network is owned by the community, who actively participate in the annual reflection, Regional Fairs, Regional leaders' forum and General Assembly to formulate, approve and receive key strategic documents, and elect the organisation leaders.

RIC-NET holds round table with CBOs and Local Government in plan-

ning and implementation of activities. This is documented in MOU with the other NGOs and Districts Local Government. <http://ric-net-news.blogspot.com/2012/10/kyegegwa-and-kyenjojo-districts-sign.html>

RIC-NET is always in touch the members of the community through annual reflection meetings, public sharing of the quarterly Magazines and annual reports (financial and narrative), direct participation in the activities, radio programmes and several online platforms. <http://ric-netnews.blogspot.com/2013/01/reflecting-on-progress-and-future-yields.html>

THEORY OF CHANGE

We assert that the structural causes of poverty, social exclusion and their manifestations require responses that go beyond economic and material deprivation to include a change in attitudes, behaviors, values, practices, policies and processes.

We envisage that Poverty, Social exclusion and bad governance can be eradicated when people living in poverty or those socially excluded are supported to access information, discover and use their power and knowledge individually or collectively to confront power relations that perpetuate marginalisation, injustice, vulnerability, and expand space for civic engagement in decisions that affect them.

OUR PARTNERS

Vision Informed and Active Citizens in a Democratic Society

Mission Empowering citizens to access and use information for Civic engagement and wealth creation

Strategic objectives

- To build capacity of our members; the youth, women, rural farmers and people with disability in using appropriate knowledge and skills to achieve social, economic, educational and development opportunities.
- To foster civic engagement, critical debate and dialogue on key development issues among citizens and leaders in Uganda.
- To generate innovative ways of applying ICT by socially excluded communities to demand their rights and entitlements.
- To strengthen civil society partnership with public and private sectors, in building the information society in Uganda.
- Undertaking action research, pilot projects to develop methodologies for improving processes of innovation, learning, capacity development and institutional change.
- To source, repackage, document and disseminate indigenous knowledge & skills for posterity.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Name	Designation
Rev. Mucunguzi Isaiah	Chairperson
Ms. Kabaikya Agnes	Vice Chairperson
Ms. Lillian Nkwenge	Secretary
Mr. Azoli Bahati	Treasurer
Ms Bahangule Astalhuzi	Member
Mr. Isingoma John Patrick	Member
Rev. Kalyebara Stephen	Member
Ms. Kabugho Scovia	Member
Mr. Kwesiga Enock	Member

MANAGEMENT STAFF



Mr. Murugahara John Silco
Executive Director



Ms. Kyomuhendo Joselyne
Programme Manager



Mr. Rwaheeru Geoffrey
Finance Officer

PROJECT STAFF



Biira Milly
ICT Assistant



Muhindo Geoffrey
Documentation Officer



Kaliba Charles
Community Outreach Officer



Asimwe Emily
Office administrator

Name	Designation
Mr. Asiimwe Charles	System Administrator
Mr. Mumbere Samuel	ICT Assistant
Mr. Mbusa Elijah	ICT Assistant
Mr. Ategeka Nicholas	ICT Assistant
Ms Kiiza Joy	ICT Assistant
Ms Masika Bridget	ICT Assistant
Mr. Mugume Shaban	ICT Assistant
Mr. Shabani Katusaba	Security Assistant
Ms Kabagayizi Rose	Staff Office Welfare and Cleaner

AUDITORS

B&FCC Audit firm

FINANCIAL STATUS

RWENZORI INFORMATION CENTRES NET-WORK FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2013

5.0 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

The notes on pages 16 to 30 form an integral part of these financial statements

	Notes	2013	2013	2012	2012
				EURO	UGX
ASSETS					
Property, Plant and Equipment	9.3	7,521	25,075,230	11,843	38,735,346
Cash and Cash Equivalents	9.4	14,327	47,764,632	32,682	106,899,845
Debtors and advances	9.5	4,559	15,200,000	5,369	17,560,000
TOTAL ASSETS		26,407	88,039,862	49,893	163,195,191
EQUITY					
General Reserves	9.6	22,699	75,679,862	45,741	149,612,546
Donated equity	9.7	3,407	11,360,000	3,473	11,360,000
Total equity		26,107	87,039,862	49,214	160,972,546
LIABILITIES					
Accounts Payables	9.8	300	1,000,000	680	2,222,645
Total Liabilities		300	1,000,000	679,5261207	2,222,645
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		26,407	88,039,862	49,893	163,195,191

The financial statements were approved by the Directors on 15th / 05 / 2014 and were signed on its behalf by:

Executive Director _____ Sign

Chairperson Board _____ Sign

Treasurer _____ Sign

RIC-NET/ Financial Statements/ Period Ended 31/12/2013

10 MAY 2014

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

23 APR 2014

P. O. BOX 440, FORT PORTAL

FINANCIAL STATUS

SOURCE OF FUNDS SINCE 2010 TO 2013 IN UGX

NAME OF DONOR	2010	2011	2012	2013
HIVOS	80,700,000	144,701,760	138,400,000	119,565,900
CABI-UK	9,598,500	-	-	-
IICD	150,239,325	47,186,245	-	-
EU&HIVOS -RWECO	79,434,800	-	-	-
HIVOS CEWIT	164,210,000	39,485,878	-	-
HIVOS RWECO	9,159,200	-	-	-
OXFAM -CEWIT	-	29,852,160	39,860,450	-
HIVOS -RWECO	-	83,411,926	204,748,868	236,423,798
VSO	-	1,500,000	-	-
EU&HIVOS -CEWIT	-	-	53,368,110	107,232,798
C4C-CFSU/RWECO	-	-	25,522,300	26,500,000
EIFL	-	-	35,760,000	-
DI-DRT	-	-	0	14,052,500
LOCAL COLLECTION	25,859,000	53,944,195	54,853,575	45,176,600
BANK INTREST	346,000	361,000	405,377	396,503
GRAND TOTAL INCOME	519,200,825	400,082,164	552,513,303	548,951,596



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