

# Overview of Stakeholder Involvement in ICT Processes in Uganda

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# Presentation Outline

- Background to ICT Processes in Uganda
- Major stake holders in the Uganda's ICT Sector
- Roles of respective stakeholders
- Case Studies/Successful ICT Projects
- Activities of gender institutions such as WOUGNET, Department of Women and Gender Studies.
- Challenges
- Major supporting development partners
- Way Forward /Recommendations on how Parliamentarians can develop equitable gender sensitive and pro-poor ICT Policies.

# Background to ICT Processes in Uganda

- ICT Processes are two fold; the ICT Policy process and the ICT4D processes.
- The ICT4D begun way back in 1997, when IDRC introduced ICT Projects in Uganda to assess the impact ICTs have on poverty reduction. IDRC set up the 1<sup>st</sup> ICT projects in Uganda ie Buwama, Nabweru and Nakeseke.
- The Policy Processes begun in 1998, after the GOU recognizing the need for deliberate policy and strategies to enhance the role of ICT in poverty eradication. The Government of Uganda through UNCST initiated a Consultative and Participatory process to formulate the National ICT Policy. This was done through multi-stakeholder process.

# Major Stakeholders

- Government and Government Agencies e.g Parliamentarians, UIA, UCC, UNCST
- Private Sector ie MTN, UTL, CELTEL
- Civil Society ie NGOs, Telecentres
- Academia, ie Institutions of higher learning- Makerere University, Nkozi University UICT , Schoolnet Uganda.

# Roles of Respective Stakeholders

- Government: To lead the policy formulation process, review, approve and harmonize ICT sector issues.
- Private sector: Service providers and used in leveraging costs
- Civil Society: Advocacy and sharing experience/best practices
- Academia: To provide technical knowledge and expertise required
- Research Institutions: To provide data /statistics to feed into the ICT processes.

# Case studies/Successful ICT Projects

- SchoolNet Uganda – established school telecentres
- WOUGNET – promotes use of ICTs through information sharing, Networking and Advocacy
- CISCO Projects – Department of Women and Gender Studies – trains students in ICTs and Networking
- I-Network- knowledge sharing
- CEEWA ICT Project – empowers women entrepreneurs to apply ICT in their enterprises
- BROSDI- promotes Open Source software use and disseminates relevant agricultural information
- EACOSS – trains students in Open Source Software tools

# Activities of Gender Institutions

## **WOUGNET:**

Through its activities has been involved in;

- Advocating for gender sensitive ICT policy processes
- Facilitating access to relevant information using the mailing lists, website, hosting online and face to face forums, production of e- newsletter etc
- Providing technical support in accessing and applying ICTs
- Providing women in rural areas access to ICTs through establishment of rural information centres

# Activities of Gender Institutions (cont..)

- Department of Women and Gender Studies, Makerere University: Cisco Project - provides ICT training to students with a special bias to female students.
- CEEWA–Uganda – builds capacity of women entrepreneurs in use and application of ICTs in enterprise development.
- Isis–WICCE – documents experiences of women in armed conflict through use of ICTs



# Challenges

- General lack of ICT skills and awareness
- Limited appreciation of ICTs as a development factor
- Limited ICT infrastructure and high cost of accessing
- Lack of gender knowledge and gender analytical skills by policy makers and ICT experts
- Limited finances for mass sensitization

# Major Supporting Development Partners

- Hivos
- IDRC
- USAID
- APC
- SIDA
- Global Fund for Women

# Way Forward /Recommendations

- Work hand in hand with civil society organizations to promote use of ICTs in development
- Mobilize resources for ICT development projects
- Train in ICT and gender skills
- Take keen interest in incorporating gender issues in ICT policies and programs
- Encourage your constituencies to embrace ICT4D
- Consultation with various ICT stakeholders

# Conclusion

- ICTs are important tools in promoting development, gender equality and empowerment. If development is to be achieved there is need to raise awareness, builds skills in ICTs, provide access, mainstream gender and involve various stakeholders, including women. For ICT policies and programs to be successful there is need for government and development partners support. This will ultimately lead to equitable development, gender sensitive and pro-poor policies and programs/projects.

# END

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