

Making ICT Work for the Poor

Uganda Country Study

by

WOUGNET

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Overview of Presentation

Introduction

- *Summary of methodology*
- *What ICT can do in a local context*
- *How ICT can do it*
- *The community's potential to establish & run a local enterprise.*
- *Capital requirement & revenue generation potential.*
- *Key Policy initiative to support new ICT4RD model.*

Introduction

Aims:

- To contribute to identification & documentation of evidence-based ICT4D policy options.
- To strengthen advocacy & capacity for policy change to leverage such options.

Themes:

- Pro-poor infrastructure options
- Community driven networks and services:
(assessment of the case for and the potential of)
- Assessment of development linkages and impact of increased ICT provision

Main output:

- An action-oriented research report on the above themes

Summary of Methodology

- 1. Quick review of 3 districts ICT activities to determine the district best suited for in-depth study.**
- 2. Selection of district for in-depth study.**
- 3. Needs assessment.**
- 4. Proposing a community-driven, community-owned open access business model for local ICT4D delivery**

What ICT can do in a local context.

- 1. Improvement of the quality of Universal primary education through content, acquisition, sharing and school to school mentoring.**
- 2. Better delivery of social services by enhancing information flow, transparency and accountability of the various levels of delivery agencies (including local governments).**
- 3. Enhancement of operational efficiency and reach of micro credit and village bank institutions in rural areas.**
- 4. Improvement of operational efficiency and coverage of rural-based development NGO and CBO.**
- 4. Improvement & growth of people to people voice communications thru greater access & lower prices.**
- 4. Better dissemination of information about development activities, gaps, business opportunities (tourism, trade, produce etc).**
- 7. Re-emergence of stronger cooperative movement as a vehicle for development ^{5.1} through ICT enabled minimization of weaknesses.**

How Can ICT Bring About Such Change?

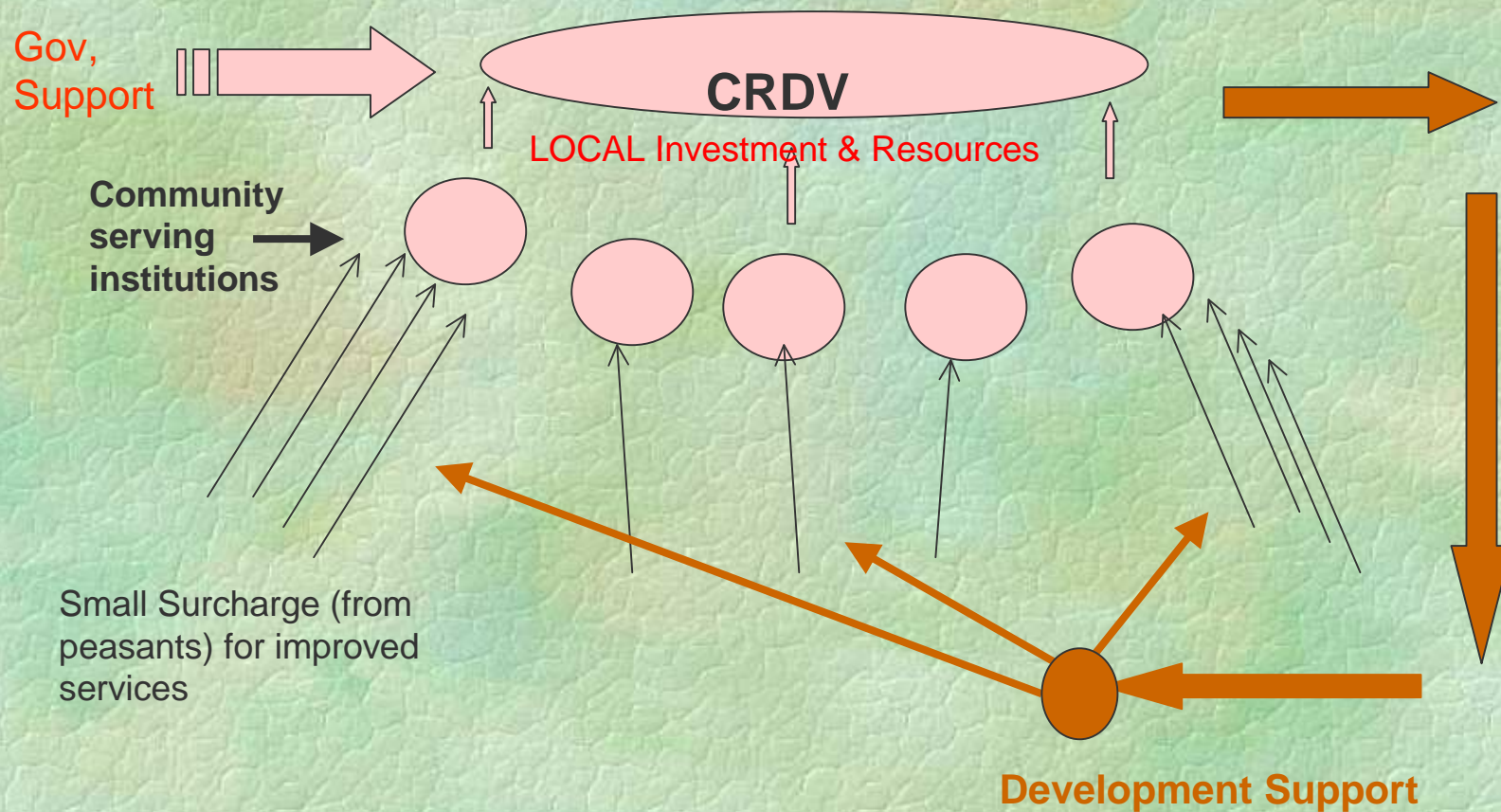
- 1. Quality of UPE & Secondary Education:** A big performance disparity exists between schools in rural and urban affluent schools. This gap can be mitigated by sharing of content & school to school partnerships. Greater reach of ICT in rural areas would make this possible & affordable. It would also make peer review & support possible.
- 2. Health service delivery:** Enabling easy exchange of information would make expert support for rural health workers, supervision, accountability and collaboration with teaching centers possible.
- 3. As ICT enables data exchange** and effective supervision of rural field workers, it would dramatically increase the coverage of **village banks & rural MFIs.**

How ICT can bring about change2

4. Currently **NGO & CBO** institutions are **spearheading rural development**. Providing them easier & ubiquitous access to information would greatly enhance their performance and provide them the required visibility for better support & coordination.
5. **Cooperative revival**: The potential of cooperatives as a vehicle for development cannot be over emphasized. Its principles are geared toward empowering people anywhere to take charge of their destiny as communities (through cooperative actions). ICT will help address previous weaknesses as well as ensure linkages between cooperators, their markets and their development partners.

Communities Potential to Establish Local Enterprise

The potential is great (as illustrated below) if communities can be supported to organize themselves into strong cooperatives, mobilize resources (financial & in-kind) and train them in technology & management.



Required capital & cash flow potential

- ✓ In Mbale district, it was resolved to start with a 5-cluster local network where one cluster would be mostly a wired cluster but the other 4 would be fully wireless
- ✓ Each cluster would be serving a population of say 3000.
- ✓ A network centred on delivery of services to community institutions would require at least US\$ 70,000 (network, power, training & initial operational costs).
- ✓ If each user spends 1\$ per month, then the enterprise generates 15,000\$ per month in revenues.
- ✓ The enterprise would need to have an operating budget not exceeding US\$ 10,000 per month for sustainability to be achieved by the second year of operation.

Key Policy Initiatives to Support such a Pro-poor Access Model

- **Uniquely tailored rural licensing regulations.**
- **Need for a national support unit**
- **Open access regime of regulations**
- **CDCNet model be a requirement of rural communications enterprises**
- **Prevent major operators to provide services in rural areas where CDCNet exist.**
- **Well managed & supervised access to RCDF support.**

Concluding Remarks

- The approach reviewed is a departure from the conventional telecentre in that this is a spread service that operates as a business.
- Rural communication enterprises in neighbouring locations should be able to inter-connect to link communities.
- Ideally, the model should be piloted in several underserved sub-districts so that lessons are learnt, model adjusted for at least 3 years before roll out.

Thank you for listening