

Executive summary

# Annual Report 2009





IICD Cross Country Learning Event | Mali

## ICT: a catalyst for change

The International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) is a non-profit foundation that specialises in information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool and catalyst for change in developing countries.

Together with its local partners in Africa and Latin America, IICD creates practical and sustainable solutions to persistent problems in the sectors (agricultural) livelihoods, education, health and governance. Problems such as the urgent need for immediate expert medical advice in rural areas or the chronic shortage of trained teachers and suitable text books in schools. By exploiting the potential of both modern media (computers, internet, email and multimedia) and traditional media (bulletin boards, radio and television) IICD has shown that ICT can be a powerful catalyst for development.

IICD helps local people improve their overall standard of living and quality of life. Using ICT in simple, cost-effective ways empowers teachers, farmers, health workers, local government officials and civil servants. However, none of

this can be achieved in a vacuum: our partners from the public, private and non-profit sectors play a vital role at every step of the way. Together, we strive to bring about technical and social innovation.

IICD's long-term vision is to connect millions of people in Africa and Latin America to improve their access to information, thereby helping them shape their own future and that of society around them. In this way, IICD strives to use ICT to bring us closer to realising the Millennium Development Goals. By the end of 2009, activities supported by IICD had helped to reach 813.000 people in ten countries: Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Ghana, Jamaica, Malawi, Mali, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia and had benefited 5.9 million people indirectly.

‘Our projects and policies helped reach **813,000 people** who actively use the information or facilities of the project and **5.9 million people** who benefited indirectly.’



ECAMIC Project | Kalende Community, Ghana

## Results of our work on the ground

### Working towards independence

By the end of 2009, 24 policy and leveraging programmes were being supported by IICD and 108 projects were in place. Over 40% of IICD's projects and programmes are financially independent. This suggests that there is a strong institutional embedding of ICT within IICD's partner organisations, which is the first step towards complete independence. Although the number of self-sustaining projects is steadily rising, it still falls short of the 50% aimed for. This is due to local partners' difficulties in securing sufficient competencies among their project staff and end-users, and their limited success in finding alternative funding sources to continue using ICT as part of their core development programmes.

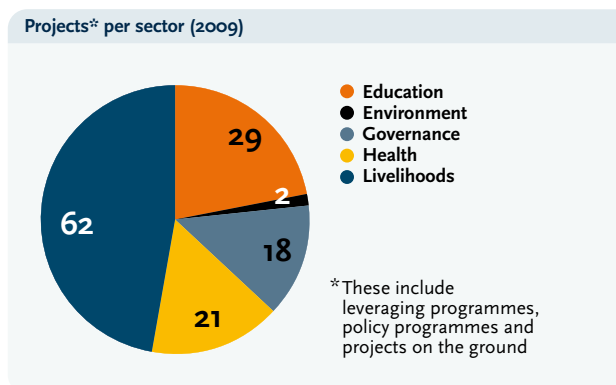
The services provided through the different projects can be accessed mainly from information centres run by farmers' cooperatives, schools, hospitals or local government offices as well as from one of the community information centres supported by IICD. Most end-users and beneficiaries live in rural areas and tend to belong to the group of households that have a lower income and a lower education level. This reflects IICD's deliberate policy of reaching out to lower-income households in the different countries, with a particular focus on women and youth.

### Leveraging: up-scaling through new partnerships

In 2009 most IICD country programmes were actively seeking out ways to leverage project experiences by expanding and facilitating informed replication on a large scale to reach more people and significantly increase impact. In the health sector, IICD has cooperated successfully with Cordaid and ICCO in Tanzania and Malawi in setting up large-scale programmes, and in Mali a new programme that plans to use ICT to help rural community health centres make diagnoses got underway.

In livelihoods, successful programmes were set up with SNV in Uganda to expand an information system that helps rural farmers access relevant markets and marketing information. In Bolivia, the local government office in Santa Cruz fully adopted a price information system, which it subsequently rolled out to 15 provinces, thereby reaching more than one million listeners daily via a national radio station. Meanwhile, in education, in collaboration with Ayuda en Accion, the Spanish government was petitioned for funding to support a proposal for a national ICT programme for secondary schools in Bolivia, and the Motorola Foundation donated funds and equipment to upscale telecentres run by the Youth Resource Centre project and other education projects in Zambia.

**'In 2009, over 40% of our projects and programmes continued independently without financial support from IICD.'**



Sahel Solidarité | Bokin, Burkina Faso

### Innovative ICT solutions

Most developing countries struggle with limited IT infrastructure, connectivity and/or electricity. IICD is therefore continuously looking for innovative ways to connect people and create new opportunities. In 2009, significant progress was made using thin client systems (NComputing) and smart server solutions (Synology boxes). These systems result in lower electricity, maintenance and investment costs for partners. In addition, PDAs and notebooks linked to mobile services are now being used to collect agricultural information in both Zambia and Bolivia. Mobile services using SMS are also being used to send health information to end-users in Uganda and to inform citizens about local government issues in Ecuador.

### Responding to our partners' training needs

Many of our partners explicitly expressed the need for more capacity building. Therefore, to enhance partners' and end-users' organisational and technical capacities, IICD and local training partners offered 20 technical update seminars, 51 on-the-job trainings, sessions in change management and other capacity development activities throughout the year. A total of 1630 people were trained in 2009; far more than the original target of 1200.

The capacity of partner organisations was further strengthened through their participation in ICT for Development (ICT4D) networks and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities. By the end of the year, 29,000 questionnaires were filled out with the help of IICD's online M&E system. The system provides both the partners and IICD with regular feedback on their activities. Input from the questionnaires is fed back into discussions on how to improve both the impact of the projects and user satisfaction in the long term. These discussions were held at 11 focus group meetings with project teams and 17 focus group meetings with the users of the projects.

### The recognised role of the national ICT4D networks

The national ICT4D network in each one of IICD's focal countries also contributed greatly to the sustainability of ICT for Development by working on awareness-raising, advocacy and the facilitation of national knowledge-sharing activities. In 2009, a total of 140 such events were organised for their members. These networks continue to expand slowly but steadily with 263 organisational members and almost 1000 individual members in 2009.



Educational Telecentres | Manabí Province, Ecuador



Agrecol Project | Bolivia



Rural Women's Information Network Pag La Yiri | Zabré, Burkina Faso

## From knowledge sharing to learning

### Capturing lessons learned

An important part of IICD's approach towards knowledge sharing and learning involves capturing lessons learned on how to apply ICTs for development within specific sectors based on empirical evidence collected from the field. This is then shared internationally, locally and internally. Lessons learned in the countries are analysed and used to improve current and future ICT4D practices for the wider development community, our partners and ourselves.

### International knowledge sharing

International knowledge sharing took place through the publication of articles in journals for the international ICT4D community, by presenting papers, and by participating in workshops and panel discussions at (inter)national events such as the annual eLearning Africa Conference in Dakar, Senegal. IICD staff also moderated online discussions of 7127 participants in 113 IICD communities within the Dgroups platform.

In 2009, progress was also made with the upgrade of IICD's online interactive platform, iConnect, using the latest Web 2.0 tools. The revamped iConnect will be launched in 2010.

### Knowledge sharing in the countries

IICD published eight Learning Briefs in 2009. These are reports based on one or more projects within one country and sector describing the outcomes and lessons learned on how ICT can be used to overcome a specific obstacle. These publications use data collected through IICD's M&E system. The Learning Briefs are disseminated among local partners in the countries and through various online platforms used by the ICT4D community. Further in 2009, IICD organised three trilingual Cross-Country Learning Events (CCLEs) on the themes health, livelihoods and gender. A CCLE brings partners from different countries together who all work with ICTs on the same topics, or within the same sector, to share lessons learned.

### Internal knowledge sharing

The Thematic Learning Circles, which were set up internally to enable IICD staff members to exchange experiences and ideas, continued to be popular in 2009. They consist of quarterly face-to-face gatherings and an online space on the IICD intranet. Further, internal seminars were organised to help staff hone their technical skills.



Educational Telecentres | Manabí Province, Ecuador

## Strong partnerships: a key to success

### New partnerships in 2009

As Henry Ford put it: 'Coming together is a beginning. Staying together is progress, and working together is success.' For IICD, nurturing existing partnerships and building new partnerships was high on the agenda in 2009 and these were subsequently developed with Agriterra, Text to Change and others. The support provided through all these partnerships helped to address a number of persistent challenges faced by our project partners, such as poor connectivity and a chronic shortage of computers. For example, through a new partnership with NComputing, IICD's partners in Burkina Faso, Bolivia and Zambia received support with low-cost, low-energy hardware in 2009. Support also came from private foundations in the shape of funding for Youth Resource Centres and schools in Zambia provided by the Motorola Foundation.

At the same time, initiatives were taken in 2009 to increase IICD's visibility on the domestic front. One such initiative involved co-ordinating the annual Fill the Gap event in Amsterdam. Further, IICD took part in Afrikadag (Africa Day) and Ontwikkelingssamenwerking.nu (Development Cooperation Now). These events provided excellent opportunities to meet the general public and others interested in the field of international development.

On the ground IICD collaborated with various ICT and media training institutions, companies and consultants that provide an array of services to the project partners such as technical support, training and advice.

### Creating the Connect4Change consortium

The Dutch Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to be IICD's main funder in 2009. IICD was also supported by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC). In addition, IICD continued working closely with several prominent Dutch non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in 2009 such as HIVOS, Cordaid and PSO with whom IICD co-funds a number of long-term ICT initiatives. Other important partners from the private sector are Altran, Atos Origin, Inter Access, Capgemini and KPN.

To obtain funding from DGIS for the period 2011-2015, IICD together with AKVO, Cordaid, Edukans and ICCO created the Connect4Change consortium. With IICD in the lead, they jointly submitted a proposal for funding Connect4Change whereby they will look for innovative ICT solutions to improve education, health and sustainable economic development in twelve countries: Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Malawi, Peru, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

‘Eighty-five percent of IICD’s budget was spent on project implementation, monitoring and evaluation, capacity development and knowledge exchange.’



Health Management Information System | Tanzania



Community Information Centres project | Ghana



e-Brain National ICT4D Network | Lusaka, Zambia

## Organisation

In 2009, IICD had a total of 33 employees: 20 female and 13 male (30.26 FTE) from 12 countries and three continents. Of these, 10 worked part time and 23 on a full time basis; the average contract counted 0.92 FTE. The staff members were divided over three teams: Country Programmes, International Programmes, and Personnel, Finance & Central Services.

To further improve the quality of the organisation IICD worked hard on recommendations from an external auditor, which resulted in an upgrade of the Quality Certification from ISO 9001:2000 to ISO 9001:2008. IICD was one of the first organisations in The Netherlands to be awarded this new certificate.

In 2009 IICD also underwent an external evaluation as part of its DGIS grant application, with very positive results. IICD was recognised not only for the work done but also for the way it works with its local partners and its learning capacity.

## Finance

In 2009, IICD received a total of 6.036.073 euros in funding. Due to the global economic crisis IICD received less income than expected from public and private organisations and non-Dutch NGOs. Incomes were contributions in kind (staff time) as well as computers and other hardware or software donated by private foundations and private sector companies Motorola Foundation, Inter Access, Altran, TNO, Atos

Origin, Capgemini and KPN, and the non-Dutch NGOs Close the Gap and SPIDER. In 2009 IICD has shown a great efficiency in achieving more results and impact for the received funds.

## Plans for 2010

In 2010, IICD aims to strengthen local people and organisations, and particular attention will be given to the increased need for local capacity development during the process of supporting large-scale programmes in the countries. Another major focus is the finalisation of IICD’s new strategy for 2011-2015. IICD will also focus on increasing its financial sustainability through the application for funding for the Connect4Change consortium with the Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and by securing this funding. Lastly, IICD will continue increasing its visibility among various stakeholders (World Bank, European Union, UN organisations) by demonstrating the catalyst role of ICT to bring about positive and lasting change.

On behalf of the Management Team  
*Mrs Caroline Figuères*

## IICD at a glance



Integrating ICT for Quality Assurance and Marketing | Zambia



ENEDCO Project | Copperbelt Region, Zambia

- IICD works in **10 countries**: Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Ghana, Jamaica, Malawi, Mali, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.
- Our activities focus on **4 sectors**: agricultural livelihoods, education, health and governance.
- By the end of 2009, we supported **108 projects** on the ground, **12 leveraging programmes** and **12 policy processes**. Over **40% of these projects and programmes** now continue independently without financial support from IICD.
- Our projects and policies helped to reach **813.000 people** who actively use the information or facilities of the project and **5.9 million people** who benefited indirectly.
- At the end of 2009, IICD's account balance amounted to **€6.036.073**.

International Institute for Communication and Development

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