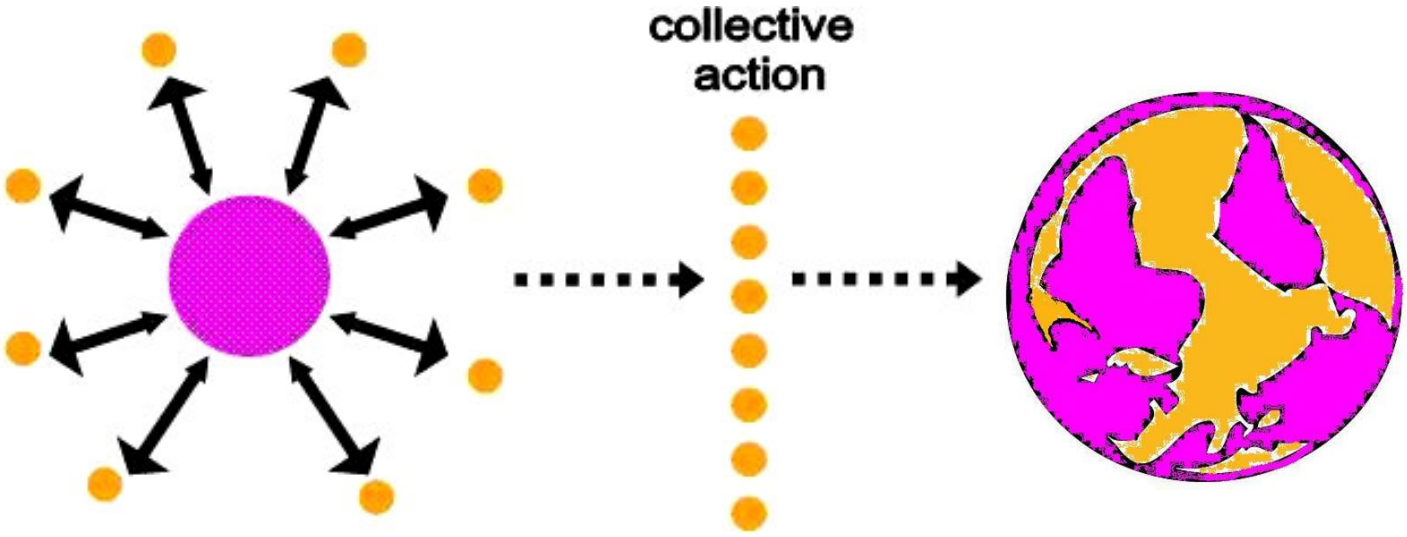
Prospects for e-Advocacy in the Global South

A Res Publica Report for the Gates Foundation



Project Director

Ricken Patel

Lead Researcher and Writer

Mary Joyce

Expert Advisors

Katrin Verclas
Alan Rosenblatt, Ph.D.

Case Study Writers

Rishi Chawla, LLB
Atieno Ndomo
Priscila Néri
Gbenga Sesan
Idris F Sulaiman, Ph.D.

Reviewers

Bev Clark, Kubatana.net
Rob Faris, OpenNet Initiative
Stephanie Hankey, Tactical Technology Collective
Janet Haven, Open Society Institute
Helen King, Shuttleworth Foundation
Paul Maassen, Hivos
Sascha Meinrath, IndyMedia
Russell Southwood, Balancing Act Africa

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Executive Summary

Social change is driven by communication, coordination, and collective action by groups of citizens who wish to change the institutions and policies that govern them. This change is vital to the progress of the global south, and it can only be led by the citizens of that region. This paper suggests that the rapid spread of information and communications technology (ICT) in the global south offers possibilities for democratic and social change unmatched since decolonization.

The internet and other communications technologies are revolutionizing the way individuals communicate, coordinate, and act across the world. Websites, SMS ("short message service", or "text messages"), and mobile phones are democratizing the production and consumption of information, and allowing the possibility of new forms of flexible, rapid citizen organizing outside existing power structures.

Despite a persistent digital divide, this communications revolution is not limited to the global north. In two years, a quarter of a billion Indians will have mobile phones. Last year, one million Indonesians voted via text message in the Indonesian Idol contest. Thirteen million Brazilians have joined Orkut, a social networking website. Moreover, penetration of these technologies can revolutionize advocacy long before they reach substantial percentages of the population. The President of the Philippines was deposed in 2001 in an SMS-organized mobilization he called a "coup de t ext" when just 15% of Filipinos had mobile phones.

However, there are formidable barriers to the realization of this opportunity. The digital divide is felt most acutely in sub-Saharan and South/Central Africa. While mobile phone penetration is growing rapidly even in this region, the promise of the internet and other ICTs is dimmed by regressive telecommunications policies and poor infrastructure. Across the global south, censorship and intimidation have shut off the internet as a source for social change in nations most in need of reform.

Despite these structural and political limitations, lack of knowledge is the greatest obstacle to the realization of the promise of ICT in the global south. In most countries, the political and technological environments necessary to begin e-advocacy efforts already exist. All that is missing is the technical training necessary to realize creative and effective campaigns.

This report provides a primer in the methods and applications of e-advocacy and surveys the current applications, constraints, and opportunities in the global south. It focuses on the problem of access, the need to nurture the knowledge and tools necessary to realize the promise of e-advocacy, and outlines a few cutting edge initiatives that could further expand the realm of possibility for ICT to drive change in the global south. Our focus is on developing concrete recommendations for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to help catalyze this social change. Our key recommendations are:

1) **Increase Access in Africa** – Fund a social enterprise model, pioneered in India, that allows entrepreneurs to use solar powered wireless access points to set up internet access and telephony in underprivileged communities.

2) **Make SMS Cheaper** – Text messages are the medium of choice for activism in the global south, but their cost limits their mass appeal. Establish a global architecture of cheap or free SMS codes that civil society organizations can apply to use in e-advocacy campaigns.

3) **Fund the Ecosystem that Grows Good e-Advocates** – Through a fellows programs, conferences, trainings, and a global network of e-advocacy centers, give citizens and activists in the global south the opportunity to learn and exchange, allowing them to fulfill the promise of ICT in their own advocacy.

4) **Pilot Test Online Organizing in Nigeria** – Support a first rate e-campaigning organization in Nigeria, to demonstrate the possibilities for e-advocacy, even in such a challenging environment as West Africa.

5) **Fund Visionary Technology** – Enable exciting new technologies to reach scale, such as a technology that allows mobile phones to communicate directly with each other, without the need for a carrier phone company.

The Gates Foundation has the unique ability to lead this new front of social change. The foundation's distinctive experience in providing access to technology and challenging inequality in the global south, combined with resources that rival many nations, make it an ideal trailblazer in the global promotion of e-advocacy. We the researchers, writers, advisors, and reviewers of this report urge the Gates Foundation to take on this historic role.

Outline of Key Concepts

Introduction

- **E-advocacy is** the strategic use of ICT by individuals or movements to press for policy change

Methodology

- The study of e-advocacy in the global south is **a new field** and as such this report is based on the synthesis of different fields of expertise rather than the summarizing of existing research.

Part I: e-Advocacy in the Global South

Access

- Despite the positive impact of shared computers at telecenters, the nations of the global south have **low internet penetration rates** that frequently drop below 10%.

- Low internet penetration is primarily due to **high costs**, lack of telecommunications **infrastructure**, and **illiteracy** (digital and traditional).

- In many countries, particularly those in sub-Saharan Africa, internet prices are kept artificially high by government-sanctioned **telecommunications monopolies**.

- Under repressive regimes, the **curtailing of freedom** of expression and information on the internet through censorship and surveillance discourages e-advocacy and promotes **self-censorship** by advocates.

- The **digital divide** closely mirrors other social divides.

- The remarkable growth of **mobile phone** use in the global south presents a great opportunity for e-advocates who want to reach a mass audience where internet communication is impractical.

- **SMS** text messaging and **IVR** automated voice over mobile phone present interesting **alternative to** computer-based **e-mail**.

- **Video**, **photography**, and even **ringtones** turn mobile phones into tools of political action.

- **Internet** access may be achieved through traditional computer or through **third generation (3G) mobile phones**. The latter option may be a more practical way to access information in the global south as mobile phone ownership is more accessible than computer ownership and more practical than shared computing as a primary means of communication.

IMPLEMENTATION

- The best way to think about e-advocacy is as the **strategic movement of information** within and among organizations, communities, and individuals, an idea pioneered by Tactical Technology Cooperative.

- **Data integration** is the form of e-advocacy whereby organizations collect and organize their information for easy retrieval, dissemination, and sharing.

- An **info-hub** is a brochure website through which organizations can push out information to supporters but usually do not pull in feedback.

- **CRM** (constituent relationship management) is a model wherein the central organization uses ICT to communicate, direct, and receive feedback from a group of activists.

- In the **network-centric activism** model, individuals communicate with each other and organization actions without a central organization guiding their movements.

- e-Advocacy suffers from a **lack of awareness and appreciation** in the global south, where most social change organizations are unaware of e-advocacy techniques or do not see how such techniques would be useful to their cause.

- Those who **are aware** of e-advocacy **don't know how** to implement or develop strategies and do not have access to the technical support necessary to implement.

- e-Advocacy in the global south can also be difficult due to **unaccountable political structures** that are openly hostile to advocacy efforts.

INNOVATION

- Rather than think of innovations as pieces of hardware or even creative ideas, it is better to think in terms of **"innovation systems,"** combinations of hardware, social structures, and economic models that solve social problems

- New forms of hardware that use **solar power and wireless** internet connections bring web surfing and VoIP calling to marginalized populations and blaze a trail for traditional telecommunications companies to begin serving these populations.

- **Diaspora** populations can use ICT to contribute funds and expertise to policy change in their home countries.

- **Regional generalizations** incorrectly label neighboring countries as being socially, economically, and politically similar.

PART II: FUNDING THE FUTURE OF SOCIAL CHANGE

- Funding e-advocacy in the global south should be guided by certain **values**, such as seeking out networks, bringing together technologists and advocates, and promoting independence

- **Fund movements** and issues areas rather than isolated projects.

ACCESS

- Trailblaze **wireless internet connectivity** to demonstrate business models for the private sector to adopt.

- Unleash the power of **SMS** by creating a low-cost architecture and subsidizing campaigns.

- Support the campaign for **fair telecommunications policy.**

- **Fight for freedom of expression** for e-advocates by supporting the dissemination of anti-censorship software.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Give **"venture capital"** for global south e-advocacy support organizations.

- Strengthen the **eRiders** (global e-advocacy consultants).

- Found a pilot **CRM organization in Nigeria**.

- Make e-advocacy **tools global** by funding localization (software translation) projects, e-advocacy websites, and how-to guides.

- Create an **in-house e-advoacy support program** at the Gates Foundation

INNOVATION

- Create a **global network of e-advocacy centers** to act as think tanks where practitioners meet to develop new e-advocacy techniques and create training materials.

- Nurture e-advocacy **leaders** through a two-tiered fellowship program.

- Develop e-advocacy **techniques tailored for the global south** by supporting creative campaigns and movements in the region.

- **Share knowledge globally** through conferences and convenings that bring together both technologists and activists from the north and south.

- Reward innovators with **awards** in fields where the Gates Foundation would like to encourage innovation.

Introduction

Problem Statement: *Information and communications technology (ICT) has enabled more effective organizing and advocacy by citizens and civil society in many countries, but its impact has been particularly limited in much of the global south. What are the prospects, challenges and key opportunities for the internet and mobile phones to further empower advocacy and organizing in the global south?*

E-Advocacy[*] is the strategic use of ICT by individuals or movements to press for policy change. Unlike traditional advocacy, "e"-advocacy is "electric" in that it uses ICT devices such as computers and mobile phones. Yet e-advocacy is more an outgrowth of traditional advocacy than an alternative to it. e-Advocacy techniques help advocates to more effectively implement their goals of monitoring the implementation of current policy, raising awareness of the need to change faulty policy, and organizing citizens to lobby policymakers directly.

The 15 Minute Version
Read the whole report in 15 minutes by focusing on the highlighted main ideas.

The key insight of e-advocacy is that ICT tools make advocates more effective by communicating their policy change message to a mass audience at low cost. This "audience" can either be the participants in a campaign for policy change, who are recruited using ICT, or the lobbying targets of a campaign, who receive the policy change message through ICT. In their recently-published guide, *Click Here for Change: Your Guide to the E-Advocacy Revolution*, the American NGO PolicyLink states that e-advocacy "expands the possibilities for framing policy problems for a wide audience: facilitating audience engagement around policy solutions... mobilizing supporters to take action on behalf of a campaign...influencing the media to help shape public opinion... in sum, increasing pressure to make change happen."

The heart of e-advocacy is not the technology itself, but the purpose for which it is used. There is always a hot new application - blogging, video calling, podcasting, to name a few - and the temptation is often to start with the tool and work backwards. However, in effective e-advocacy strategies, the movement defines its needs first and then searches for the appropriate tool to fulfill those needs. Maybe the appropriate tool is technology; maybe it isn't. The ultimate goal of e-advocacy's promoters is not that all social change organizations (SCOs) use ICT in their advocacy, but that where ICT can improve advocacy, it does.

Access: Are activists connected to ICT (internet, mobile phones)? Are their supporters connected?

Implementation: Are activists able to use ICT effectively in their campaigns for policy change?

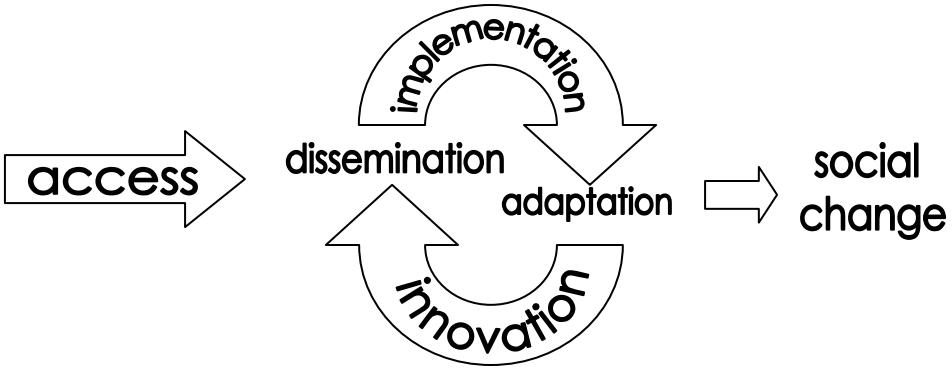
Innovation: How will new e-advocacy solutions be nurtured and disseminated in the future?

This report addresses e-advocacy within a new framework. Based partly on the "access, adoption, appropriation" framework put forth in Mark Surman's *Appropriating the Internet for Social Change,* the "access, implementation, innovation" framework looks at e-advocacy in the global south holistically. It begins by looking at access to the ICT tools necessary for e-

[*] The terminology used to describe this field is contested. While the term *e-advocacy* is used in this report, other terms such as *digital advocacy, cyber activism*, and *information activism* are also valid and reflect slightly different interpretations about how ICT is used as a tool for social change.

advocacy (the internet or a mobile phone network), considering not only physical infrastructure, but also the political, economic, and social factors that affect access. Once access is achieved, e-advocacy techniques can be disseminated to global south SCOs, and once those methods are disseminated, implementation can occur. In the implementation section, the report considers the skills and resources needed by SCOs and individuals to implement e-advocacy campaigns in the global south. When an organization implements an e-advocacy method, it often adapts the technique for its own purposes. In some cases, this adaptation results in innovation: a new and more effective e-advocacy technique. When these innovations are disseminated to other SCOs, the cycle begins again. Ideally, the cycle produces ever-improving methods for achieving social change.

Figure A: e-Advocacy Diagram



The focus of this paper is a practical, policy-oriented one. The goal is to determine the greatest potential opportunities for ICT to empower advocacy in the global south and the most effective ways those opportunities can be tapped. The report addresses the current use of e-advocacy in the global south, identifies key success factors, and proposes a funding strategy to expand and strengthen e-advocacy in the global south. The goal is to identify a few "big wins" for the Gates Foundation if it were to develop a giving strategy in this area.

Why should the Gates Foundation consider a giving strategy in e-advocacy? The needs of the global south are so acute: civil conflict, illiteracy, poverty, food and water insecurity, the ravages of disease. Why fund e-advocacy when one could buy vaccines or provide emergency food aid? Funding e-advocacy in the global south takes a long view. It asks us to take our eyes from the crises of today and ask how crises will be solved in the future. The only way that the many challenges of the global south will be solved in the long term is if the citizens of the global south are empowered to successfully push for policy change.

E-advocacy is a means for this empowerment. The mass accessibility of ICT in the global north is already changing the way we work, shop, socialize, and inform ourselves. Because ICT allows citizens to watch their governments, discuss their political views, and organize around issues that concern them, it is equally powerful as a political tool. e-Advocacy is the future of social change.

Methodology

The methodology of the study includes five components:

- Literature review
- Interviews
- Case studies
- Online Collaboration
- Analysis

The study of e-advocacy in the global south is a field that for all intents and purposes does not yet exist. For this reason the report synthesizes different fields and areas of expertise in order to develop the new field of e-advocacy in the global south. In addition, because e-advocacy has yet to be adopted in much of the global south, much of our research rests upon judging the feasibility of future e-advocacy efforts rather than evaluating current activity. In order to do this we have identified the key success factors that determine whether e-advocacy can be adopted in a particular national context.

During the research process, we first identified existing research and built from these documents to interviews with scholars and practitioners, applying the perspective gained from five country case studies. Interviews took two primary forms, both open-ended conversations and specific questions on a particular topic. It was the aim of the research process to speak with a wide range of experts, with special emphasis on experts and practitioners with in-depth experience of the global south. The report focuses on practitioners over academics in an effort to make the results of the report as practical and action-oriented as possible. Hundreds of interviews were conducted by 10 researchers in the creation of this document.

Interviews were supplemented by a rich collection of quantitative and qualitative data on the global south. Chief among these data sources are the case studies commissioned for this report. These case studies give in-depth descriptions of the prospects for e-advocacy in Brazil, India, Indonesia, Kenya, and Nigeria, and are summarized in the Back Matter section. The case study material is supplemented by data from other countries in an effort to give a truly global picture of this broad topic. There is no single e-advocacy solution for the global south and this report seeks to treat the challenge of e-advocacy in the global south in both its trends and its specificities.

This paper was created using the tools of e-advocacy. It was written collaboratively using free ICT tools which facilitate idea-sharing and broaden consultation. Key documents in the writing process were created online using Zoho Writer, an online word processing program similar to Microsoft Word which allows documents to be edited and saved on a central server. This permitted collaborators to access the report as it was being written, though access is slower and less reliable when accessing the site from outside the United States.

In addition, our principal writer blogged the research process on her personal blog. Blogging allowed all members of the research team, as well as interview subjects and interested observers, to stay up-to-date on research activities and provide feedback on the direction of the research. The blogging received positive feedback from interview subjects who appreciated the transparency that blogging brought to the research process. Blogging the research process was also aimed at increasing the amount of input from global south e-advocacy practitioners, for whom the blog, Demoblog, was a point of entry to the project. Key research questions were posted with the aim of inviting an intellectually and geographically broad range on opinions. Our aim was to write about the global south from a truly global perspective, including many voices from the global south.

Part I

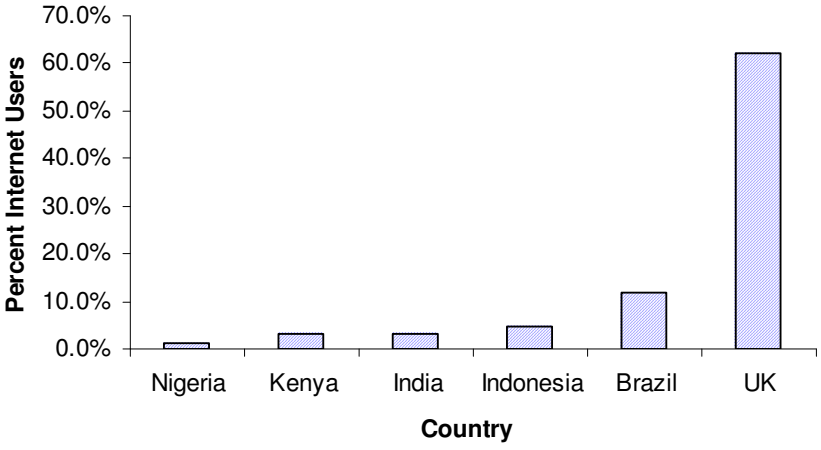
e-Advocacy in the Global South

The internet and mobile phones make many-to-many communication cheap on a mass scale and the implications for social change are profound. However, more important than any particular technology - and technologies are always changing - is the human element. As technologies become cheaper, easier to use, and more prevalent in the global south, more activists will become users and apply their creativity to those tools. As the number of users reaches a critical mass, the e-advocacy applications of any given tool will be revealed not in their circuitry, but in the meaning that e-advocacy practitioners give it. The goal of the Gates Foundation should be to promote access to and competent use of technology among activists and to create mechanisms for sharing the innovations that result from this mass use.

ACCESS

In the global south, relatively few people have access to the internet, although penetration rates and prospects for growth vary widely across different regions. In Asia and Latin America internet access is growing exponentially, while in most of Africa access remains low and of poor quality. This gap is beginning to close through the growth of telecentres (where people access the internet through shared computers), personal and office internet connections and mobile phones that are internet-capable. However, absolute rates of access remain low in many countries. Below are statistics from our five case study nations. They are contrasted with statistics from the United Kingdom as a point of comparison:

Figure 1: Internet Users as % of Population (2004)



source: International Telecommunication Union (ITU) 2006 Statistical Yearbook ; the CIA World Factbook

Different regions of the global south are dealing with the challenge of access in different ways. In South Asia, India is leading the field in low cost infrastructure and micro-finance entrepreneurship models such as GrameenPhone, e-Choupal, and N-Logue. In Latin America, traditional telecommunications companies are providing the majority of connectivity while NGOs set up shared telecenters in rural areas, although effective business models are still needed to make these rural efforts sustainable.

Even in Africa, the least connected continent, progress is being made, not through traditional dial-up but through mobile services that allow access to the internet. MTN, a South African telecommunications company with 28 million subscribers across 10 African countries, is offering data services and most new phones have GPRS* capabilities, making data access a core functionality available to mobile users. In addition, mobile software companies, like South Africa's Breakdesign, are betting that mobile phones will become Africa's principal portal to the internet. According to an oft-quoted statistic, 61% of the international users of the BBC's mobile news service are Nigerian. However, a continent of mobile internet users is still more a vision than a reality. For the vast majority of the Africa's inhabitants, the internet remains inaccessible.

The causes for low rates of access are manifold. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), an organization within the United Nations system which coordinates public and private sector telecommunication policy, has defined this constellation of factors in its Digital Access Index (DAI). The DAI measures the overall ability of individuals in a country to access and use ICT (internet, mobile phones, and landlines). This index incorporates four factors: connection quality, infrastructure, affordability, and knowledge. This figure demonstrates the stark divide in current access between Africa, the most digitally isolated region of the world, and the rest of the Global South.

Figure 2: Visual Representation of the Digital Access Index

source: World Economic Forum and Maplecroft Maps, 2005. Interactive version available at http://forum.maplecroft.com/loadmap?template=map

GETTING ONLINE

Even in the more digitally developed parts of the global south, connection speed and quality can limit the use of some e-advocacy tools, such as streaming video and high-speed broadband connections remain rare. Limited to simple e-mail applications because of slow dial-up

* Find the definitions of all abbreviations in the Glossary of Abbreviations on page 48.

connections, global south SCOs are also constrained in the types of e-advocacy techniques they are able to employ. Also, while SCOs in urban areas are likely to have an internet connection, many of the citizens they are trying to engage through e-advocacy do not.

For some countries, bandwidth is an international as well as national problem. It is not only a question of how much cable telecommunications companies lay within a country, but also how much cable runs out of that country into the rest of the world. In Africa, only fifteen countries (all in West Africa) are directly connected to submarine cables. In addition, international cables between African countries are rare and thus intra-national connectivity is limited. For this reason, much internet communication in Africa must be routed through Europe, even if an e-mail is being sent between two cities in the same country. This international routing decreases speed and increases costs. The controversial EASSy fiber optic cable, which would provide submarine connectivity to East Africa is currently being pushed as a way to decrease connection cost and increase speed.

The Politics of Access

The cost of access is a crucial factor. According to Canada's IDRC, internet access in the least connected parts of the global south can cost as much as 100 times what it does in the global north. Eric Osiakwan, Executive Secretary of the internet provider association AfrISPA, gives the example that connectivity in US universities costs roughly $0.12 per kilobit per second (kbps), while connectivity in West Africa is $8 per kbps. This price differential is amplified when adjusted for average incomes in the countries concerned.

High costs are a result of limited infrastructure, but also of government policy. According to the report *Open Access Models*, commissioned by the World Bank's InfoDev program in 2005, internet connection prices are kept artificially high by government-sanctioned telecommunication monopolies. Many such telecommunications providers are government-owned, though even after privatization the government may still protect the so-called "historic operators" from competition. In Africa, 43 of the continent's 53 nations have telecommunications monopolies.

Snapshot Access in Kenya

Unlike many African countries, mobile users in Kenya have a choice of two mobile operators, though the market is still not fully liberalized. In addition, they must contend with high taxes on telecommunications firms, which are passed down to the consumer, as well as taxes on airtime. An SMS costs 7 cents.

With regard to the internet, restrictions on licenses and competition have kept access costs high. An internet connection costs approximately $52 a month. (Average annual income in Kenya is $400). However, even this expensive service is only available in Nairobi and its environs.

African governments discourage technological innovation in other ways as well. Some charge high fees to would-be wireless providers who wish to license a particular frequency. Others place onerous import duties on electronic equipment, which is categorized as a luxury good. For example, in Malawi assembled imported computers are not taxed, but replacement parts are taxed at 55%, making repair and the creation of do-it-yourself systems difficult.

Political barriers to access differ in other parts of the world. In Brazil, for example, a fund was established in 2001 by the government in order to subsidize equal telecommunications access for all Brazilians. In order to participate in the privatization of the telecommunications sector, companies have to deposit 1% of their profits in the FUST (Fundo de Universalização dos Serviços

de Telecomunicações). Today the FUST contains $2 billion but judicial battles and lack of political resolve on the part of the government prevent the funds from meeting their intended purpose. The money is currently being used to service the Brazilian debt.

CENSORING ICT

Some governments play a role in ICT access that is more sinister than retrograde or passive public policy. By limiting freedom of expression and information on the internet and persecuting e-advocates, these governments create a menacing political culture that discourages e-advocacy. According to Rob Faris, Research Director at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University and participant in the OpenNet Initiative, countries where internet filtering is most likely are those that have both repressive governments and high internet penetration. Cost is not a critical factor, as simple filtering applications are inexpensive and internet service providers (ISPs) are often charged with the implementation of filtering.

The press freedom association Reporters Without Borders recently announced a list of thirteen "enemies of the internet," concentrated in the former Soviet Union, East Asia, and the Middle East. These countries, along with others that were not included on the official black list, limit their citizens' ability to inform themselves and communicate with one other and the outside world in an effort to maintain political control.

Methods of censorship vary from country to country. The most common method is blocking access to subversive websites. This can be accomplished in several different ways, such as manually selecting sites to block or centrally installing filtering software that scans sites for subversive words and phrases and then blocks accordingly. China, which has the most highly developed internet censorship system in the world, filters blog posts using this keyword filtering method. In addition, China demands that vendors who operate in the country, like Google and Skype, create special censored versions of their programs. Smaller countries, like Burma, simply block communication devices, such as Google's GTalk instant messenger and voice over internet protocol (VoIP) service.

Other countries, such as Cuba and North Korea, try to block internet use altogether. Cuba forbids private internet connections and as a result only 2% of its citizens are internet users. North Korea is the world's least connected country, with only a few internet connections available to members of the government and no websites hosted within the country.

These limits to access and communication are coupled with strict punishments. According to Reporters Without Borders, China is currently holding 52 of its citizens in jail for views expressed online. In Cuba, a would-be internet user faces penalties of 20 years for writing counter-revolutionary articles for foreign websites and 5 years for connecting to the Internet illegally.

The consequences of internet censorship on e-advocacy are profound. Internet censorship and surveillance limit the ability of activists to inform themselves about their advocacy issue, publish their views to raise awareness of injustices, and communicate with supporters and other SCOs to organize campaigns.

The limiting effect on e-advocacy is not only a result of individual blogs filtered or dissidents arrested. Self-censorship is a powerful factor. Where the dangers of taking part in e-advocacy are great, activists may choose not to act out of fear of reprisal. In this way, creating an environment of digital fear is as effective for repressive governments as silencing individual dissidents. For each dissident who is punished, a hundred more will choose not to act for fear that they may be next.

In dozens of countries in the global south, the lack of connectivity of serves as de facto censorship of internet content. Where connectivity improves, this issue is likely to grow in importance as repressive governments will seek to limit their citizens access and use of this powerful new medium.

There are also security concerns with using mobile phones for advocacy, especially in restrictive environments. *The Washington Post* recently reported that a Chinese small-town bureaucrat was arrested and imprisoned for writing and passing on a joke about a corrupt official. While he was released eventually, the instance indicates that mobile phones are monitored in China as in other countries. In Ethiopia in 2005, the government temporarily cut off all SMS services when students began using text messages to organize protests against a controversial election process. In short, while censorship and filtering of SMS and voice communications is more difficult than controlling the internet, mobile phones are by no means a secure medium for transmitting information or communicating with others.

MobileActive has published a Security Guide for NGO Activists using mobile phones, outlining ways to use mobile phones more securely. Tactics range from not storing any contact information, including call logs, on the phone in case is confiscated, to taking out batteries when not in use since mobile phones implanted with malicious code can be used as listening devices, used to spy on the activists that carry them. Taking this a step further, there are a new generation of phones and services available, that while still very expensive, are equipped with encryption devices that allow phone-to-phone encryption of all voice and text data, not readable by even the carriers.

Mobile phones can be used anonymously. Pre-paid mobile phones are widely available in many countries, without being associated with a name or address, and because pre-paid cards are used there is no billing information. However, once the user has been identified as using a certain phone, he/she can be tracked with the unique built-in International Mobile Equipment Identification (IMEI) encoded into each mobile phone. The IMEI emitted by the phone does not change, regardless of the SIM in the phone. It is even transmitted when no SIM at all is present in the phone. If longer-term anonymity is required, it is necessary to replace the phone and SIM every few days. Over the last year however, many more countries are requiring registration complete with ID for pre-paid SIM cards and phones, making this anonymity a lot less anonymous.

THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN CONTEXT

The term "digital divide" first entered the lexicon in the mid-nineties and refers to the gap between those with access to ICT and those without. In recent years, the term has been criticized for its implication that ICT is separate from access to other social goods. Statistical analysis shows that those with the lowest access to ICT also have the lowest access to other resources like education, healthcare, nutritious food, and employment. There is a 90% correlation between the Low Access countries in the ITU's Digital Access Index and the bottom of the United Nations Human Development Index, a comparative measure of life expectancy, literacy, education, and standards of living for countries worldwide. According to the website VirtualActivism.org, "the digital divide is where new information and communications technologies meet existing socio-economic inequalities."

The digital divide is important to a discussion of e-advocacy because it speaks to audience. Most e-advocacy campaigns are launched by SCOs and most urban SCOs, even in the global south, have a computer and some form of internet access. But who is the intended audience of their e-advocacy campaign? In the global south, internet access is often limited to the urban elite. In this way, e-advocacy can reinforce rather than break down social divides as only the wealthy and middle class have access to the internet and can easily take part in the campaign.

Figure 3: The Digital Divide in a Development Context

Comparison of the lowest 10 countries of the:

UN Human Development Index	Digital Access Index
1. [Mozambique]	1. Burundi
2. Burundi	2. [Guinea]
3. Ethiopia	3. Sierra Leone
4. Central African Republic	4. Central African Republic
5. Guinea Bissau	5. Ethiopia
6. Chad	6. Guinea Bissau
7. Mali	7. Chad
8. Burkina Faso	8. Mali
9. Sierra Leone	9. Burkina Faso
10. Niger	10. Niger

source: ITU Digital Access Index online; UN Human Development Report

The nature of this e-advocacy divide is different in each country. In many countries, there is a geographic divide. In India, for example, while 40% of citizens in cities such as Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai, have a mobile phone, there are entire provinces in eastern and central India, such as Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Assam, in which mobile phone penetration is less than 2%. These differences indicate not only that certain regions of the country have low connectivity, but also point to significant urban/rural divides.

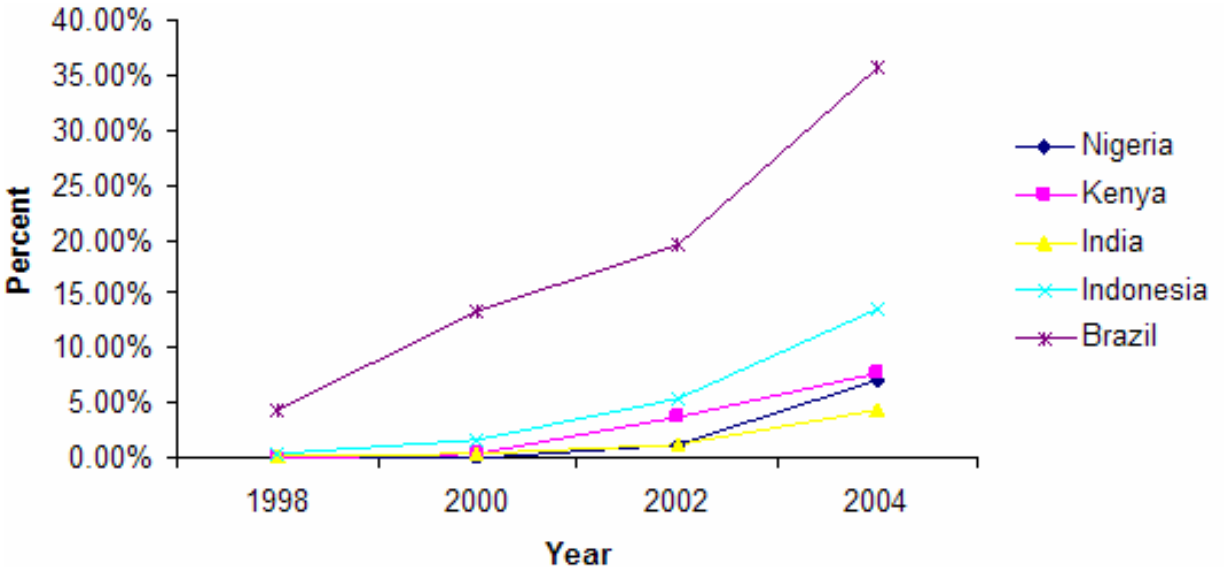
In other countries, the digital divide's effect on e-advocacy is sociopolitical rather than geographic. In Brazil, for example, the most politically active segment of the population is also the least connected to ICT. While Brazil's poor are strongly engaged in political issues, they lack access to the internet, whicle Brazil's internet-savvy elite is less interested in political change.

While communicating using SMS in place of e-mail greatly increases the number of citizens that can participate in an advocacy campaign, mobile phone ownership rates rarely rise about 40% in the global south (see Figure 4.) Great care must be taken to find technologies that engage the majority of society. In some cases, more traditional forms of communication, like radio may be the most useful as the have the broadest reach.

THE CELLULAR SAVIOR

The mobile phone is changing the way the global south communicates. Even as the number of landlines grows slowly, the growth of mobile phones is sky-rocketing, changing the connectivity potential for the planet.

Figure 4: Mobile Subscriber Growth (% of population)



source: International Telecommunication Union (ITU) 2006 Statistical Yearbook

While poorer nations continue to have lower penetration rates than richer ones, poorer nations also exhibit vastly higher growth rates, indicating that they may go far in closing the gap with richer nations. For example, while the UK's mobile phone use grew by a healthy 23% between 2002 and 2004, Nigeria grew by 537%. Additionally, in the global south mobile phone penetration is universally higher than internet penetration because of the vastly lower cost of hardware and usage fees.

Figure 5: Comparison of Internet and Mobile Penetration (2004)

COUNTRY	INTERNET PENETRATION	MOBILE PENETRATION
Nigeria	1.3%	7.20%
Kenya	3%	7.76%
India	3.2%	4.37%
Indonesia	4.6%	13.63%
Brazil	11.7%	35.67%
UK	62%	102.16%*

source: International Telecommunication Union (ITU) 2006 Statistical Yearbook
*percentage over 100 indicate average of more than one mobile phone per person

In all cases, even in the global north, mobile phone penetration surpasses internet penetration, sometimes by one order of magnitude or more. Statistics for 2005 and 2006, though not yet

available in standardized form, indicate that growth has greatly surpassed even 2004 figures. In India, for example, mobile penetration currently nears 7%.

What these figures indicate is that mobile phones are a great opportunity for e-advocates who want to reach a mass audience, and the applications are endless. Among the most intriguing are short message service (SMS or text messaging), automated interactive voice response (IVR), and visual media like photography and video.

SMS / Text Messaging

The popularity of SMS (text messaging) allows the mobile phone to replace computer-based e-mail in sending and receiving text. Although mobile internet is far off on the horizon for much of the global south, this innovation too will allow e-advocates to communicate with more would-be supporters. In addition, the global south stands in the unique position of being able to innovate in the field of SMS activism. In 2006, the American SCO dotOrganize released a report entitled *Online Technology for Social Change: From Struggle to Strategy*. According to the report, only a small minority of SCOs in the US and Canada use SMS in their activism. Global south SCOs could turn the opportunity of mobile phones and SMS into e-advocacy innovations for the whole world.

In many countries of the global south, use of SMS by the public and private sector exceeds the global north in terms of creativity. In India, for example, SMS is being used by schools, colleges, consulates, banks, temples, railways, airlines, and hotels. According to India case study writer Rishi Chawla, schools and colleges use SMS to send information about exam results and people can send an SMS to their favorite temple in order to request a prayer. This SMS saturation has created a positive technology environment in which Indians see SMS as a flexible and multifaceted tool and are likely to absorb new e-advocacy applications quickly.

Snapshot SMS in Argentina

Greenpeace Argentina recently won the 2006 Mobile Messaging Award for their Zero Waste Campaign. Greenpeace used SMS to recruit participants, engage legislators, and organize rallies in support of a campaign to decrease the waste created by Buenos Aires. The campaign followed the legislative process as the anti-waste bill moved through the Parliament of Buenos Aires and participants were asks to send SMS messages to key decision-makers at crucial moments in the process. The campaign was successful. The government of Buenos Aires will reduce urban waste sent to landfills by 50% by 2010, 75% by 2015 and 100% by 2020.

More importantly, Indians are beginning to use SMS for advocacy. In 1999, Jessica Lall, a well-known model, was shot in New Delhi by the son of a powerful politician. After seven years of trial, the alleged murderer was acquitted. Outraged by the seemingly rigged verdict, friends of the victim used SMS to organize candlelight vigils in protest. Television stations also ran SMS polls asking people to text in whether or not they supported the verdict. Strong public condemnation resulted in a re-trial in which the alleged murderer was convicted.

SMS polling on public issues has occurred in other countries of the global south and marks an important mid-point between for-profit uses of SMS and political uses. In Kenya, both national television stations include polls at the end of their nightly news programs in which viewers are asked to respond by SMS. The cost of the SMS is slightly elevated, indicating that the news channel is probably making a profit from the polls. In Nigeria, a newspaper and radio station recently partnered to ask citizens to choose their favorite presidential candidate and responses were sent by SMS. Over 100,000 Nigerians responded to the poll. SMS polling is important in creating an awareness of the mobile phone as a tool for expressing one's opinion on public issues and thus also heightens the likelihood that e-advocacy campaigns will be adopted by the public.

For organizations who wish to use SMS in advocacy, FrontlineSMS, developed by Ken Banks of Kiwanja.net, is an important stand-alone solution that gives SCOs the ability to send, receive, and organize mass SMS messages. FrontlineSMS is relatively easy to use. A mobile phone is connected to the computer on which Frontline is installed and then messages sent to and from the mobile phone are displayed and organized using Frontline's software.

However, SMS is not a silver bullet for the digital divide. As noted by David Lehr, former Stanford Digital Vision Fellow and current Fellow at the Acumen Fund, there is only so much you can say in a 160-character text message. Also, SMS is not a solution for people who are illiterate. In addition, SMS use in some countries lags because of cost. SMS is not a widely popular means of communication in Brazil because the cost of sending a message - 20 cents - is considered prohibitively high for frequent casual use.

High costs also affect SCOs. Most SCOs in the global south do not have the budget to send out thousands of text messages. For these reasons, some global south SCOs communicate by e-mail because it is free, even though using SMS would allow them to reach a wider audience. In Nigeria for example, a coalition of SCOs created a campaign in which citizens were asked to text their opposition to a bill which would have increased presidential term limits. Even though the campaign asked citizens to lobby using SMS, the call to action was sent over e-mail since the organizations could not afford to send out large amounts of text messages. Technologies to lower the cost of sending SMS messages, such as software that would allow mass SMS mailings over the internet, would be a great help to e-advocates in the global south. At the moment, most mobile service providers would oppose the use of such software, so while applications like Frontline SMS can be used by SCOs with hundreds of members, it cannot be easily scaled to a larger size because mobile service providers are likely to notice the activity and block the sender. We discuss further ideas for lowering the cost of SMS activism in Part II.

INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR)

Even low cost text messages will not be effective in communicating with the illiterate. It is in engaging the illiterate that interactive voice response (IVR) is most useful. Developed for the private sector, IVR refers to a system where an automated message is played to a caller and the caller's response is recognized by the automated system. Most people is the global north have already come in contact with an IVR system, such as the automated greeting and routing one receives when calling a consumer help line.

IVR can also be used in an e-advocacy setting. One of the trailblazers in this field is Voxiva, a for-profit social enterprise that strengthens health care systems, enhances safety, and improves government service delivery to marginalized populations by using available technology, most often mobile phones. In Peru, Voxiva set up Alerta, a rural health project that tracked health trends by asking village clinics to make weekly reports by phone using an automated IVR system. Voxiva is also active in Africa, helping people and governments track AIDS trends and manage treatment. For organizations who want to create their own IVR strategy, Dialogue Palette, developed by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) using the open source Asterisk VoIP platform, allows users to devise their own IVR menu.

IVR is not only useful in communicating with the illiterate, but also in running campaigns in countries with multiple spoken languages. India, for example, has 15 official languages and hundreds of unofficial spoken languages and dialects. According to India case study writer Rishi Chawla, a national e-advocacy campaign would necessitate using at least six languages to contact potential participants. An IVR system would work very well in this scenario. A phone call could be made to potential participants and then the person could choose their preferred language from an automated menu.

PHOTO, VIDEO, RINGTONES, AND MOBLOGGING

But the mobile phone is not only oral and textual, it is also visual. Phones that capture video and photographs are becoming ever more popular in the global south and are already showing their applications for e-advocacy. One project that demonstrates this possibility is a project hosted by Global Voices, an international blogging site, and Witness, an American SCO that helps human rights activists use video to document abuses. Part of a forthcoming Human Rights Video Hub, the project shows video, some captured by mobile phone, that give concrete evidence of human rights abuses that can be used as the basis for future advocacy and lobbying.

Although SMS, IVR, and photo/video are currently the significant mobile phone technologies for e-advocacy, many others exist as well. In the Philippines, a scandal erupted in June of 2005 when a recording of a conversation between President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and an elections official was made public. In the conservation, the speakers were planning to rig to the 2004 election. Soon a group of activists had edited the conversation into a series of ringtones and the group TXTpower decided to host the ringtones for download on their website. An estimated 1 million Filipinos downloaded the so-called "Hello Garci" ringtones, raising awareness of the election improprieties.

SNAPSHOT Mobile Video in Malaysia

In November of 2005 two girls were forced to strip and perform squats in a Malaysian jail. One of the police officers at the scene recorded the abuse in a cell phone video and sent it to his friends by MMS (SMS for media). The video was eventually sent in CD form to an opposition MP who publicly denounced the abuse, raising awareness of the mistreatment of police detainees. In December, the former Chief Justice of Malaysia was named head of an official commission to investigate the case.

Moblogging (submitting posts to a blog using a mobile phone) can also by used for e-advocacy. InTheFieldOnline.net, created by Stanford Digital Vision fellow Erik Sundelof, allows people to act as citizen journalists, sending their reports from "the field" to a live blog. This tactic was used this summer to create a blog about Israel's attack on Lebanon aimed at collecting live comments from people in the conflict zone.

Anecdotes about creative mobile phone use in the developing world are endless. The lesson they teach is that any aspect of a mobile phone's functionality - even its ringtone - can be used for advocacy. The key to making mobile e-advocacy a reality is to share the details of strategies that work and give SCOs that want to launch such campaigns the technical and financial support they need to design and realize campaigns.

IMPLEMENTATION

ICT access is the foundation of e-advocacy, not e-advocacy itself. We have provisionally defined e-advocacy as strategic ICT use for policy change but a more developed definition is needed. How should practitioners, donors, and scholars conceptualize e-advocacy? Answering this question will allow for a common frame of reference for e-advocacy implementation in the global south.

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR E-ADVOCACY

Perhaps the easiest way of thinking about e-advocacy is on the basis of physical hardware, to define what one can do with a mobile phone, computer, or PDA. This is a false start. As convergence progresses, the applications of different tools grow ever more similar. Laptops and smart phones have made computing mobile. With VoIP (voice over internet protocol), computers as well as phones can be used for calling. Through fixed mobile convergence, a single phone can be used for VoIP or mobile network called. As memory and storage capacity of mobile devices increases, one can word process on a phone or PDA as one used to do only on a computer.

Much of this convergence is led by the convergence of the infrastructure networks through which these devices operate. According to Katrin Verclas, Executive Director of Nonprofit Technology Enterprise Network (NTEN), "What we are seeing here is convergence where fixed, broadband, and mobile/wifi infrastructures are no longer separate." Converging infrastructures, of phones, computers, and PDAs are fast removing the differences among communication and information-processing machines. As such, their distinctions between these tools are not a stable basis for e-advocacy analysis.

If the tool itself is not a suitable basis for a conceptual framework, perhaps the applications used on these tools are. What is the value of e-mail, wikis, blogging, VoIP, or desktop publishing to e-advocacy? However, applications evolve even more rapidly than hardware. Not only are software developers constantly creating new applications, the ingenuity of e-advocates is constantly redefining how these applications can be used. Who would have thought that SMS, a mobile phone social perk, would become a method for quickly organizing political protests? Mass production, mass dissemination and mass use of mobile phone and computer applications has vastly increased the pace of user-led innovation. Using applications as a framework for e-advocacy is unstable because their number and uses are constantly expanding and changing, presenting nightmares of obsolescence for those attempting to create definitive studies.

Another step up the conceptual ladder moves from applications to the activist techniques for which these applications are used: lobbying, mobilization, fundraising, information gathering, and information dissemination. One reason why it might make sense to define e-advocacy techniques in terms of traditional advocacy methods is that traditional advocacy strategies, such as defining a clear and achievable goal and a plan of action, serve as the foundation of e-advocacy.

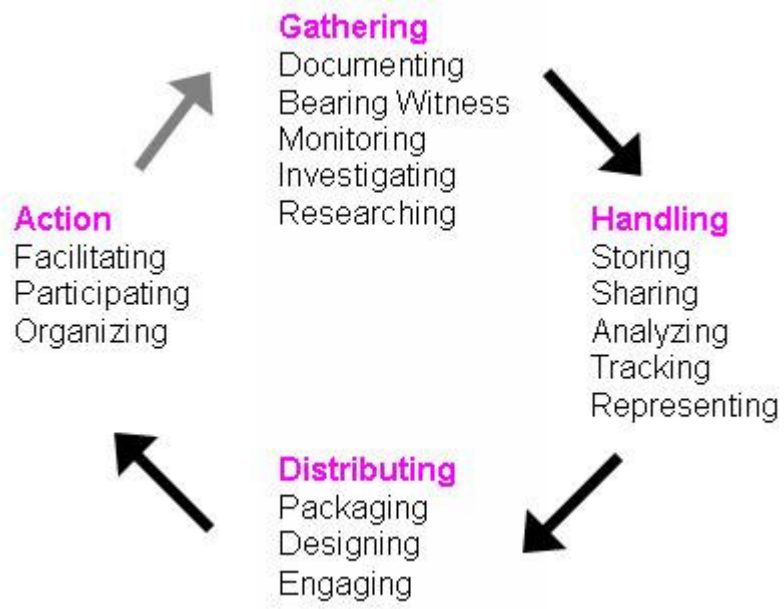
However, despite their importance, using traditional advocacy techniques as the basis for an e-advocacy framework risks removing technology entirely, for technology is necessary neither for mobilization nor fundraising, information gathering nor dissemination. Our goal is to find a framework specific to *electronic* advocacy. Such a framework would necessarily include non-technical advocacy methods as their foundation, however, all methods must in some way use ICT. Without the ICT component, they cannot be defined as e-advocacy.

To determine a specific framework for e-advocacy, it is necessary to determine the common theme of advocacy that runs through different hardware, applications, and techniques. The common theme is information. Tactical Technology Collective (also known as Tactical Tech) is a non-profit technology assistance provider (NTAP) based in Amsterdam that trains SCOs in developing and

transitional countries in e-advocacy. They define e-advocacy as a cycle of information gathering, handling, and distribution, followed by action. As a result, they do not use the term "e-advocacy" but rather "information activism."

It is important to note that according to this framework, shown in the diagram below, information is portrayed as mobile and dynamic. E-advocacy occurs not when information is stationary but when it moves, being transferred, analyzed, decoded, and processed among individuals. Although e-advocacy is not necessary to the movement of information, it can greatly facilitate that movement in many situations.

Figure 6: The information Life-Cycle Within an NGO

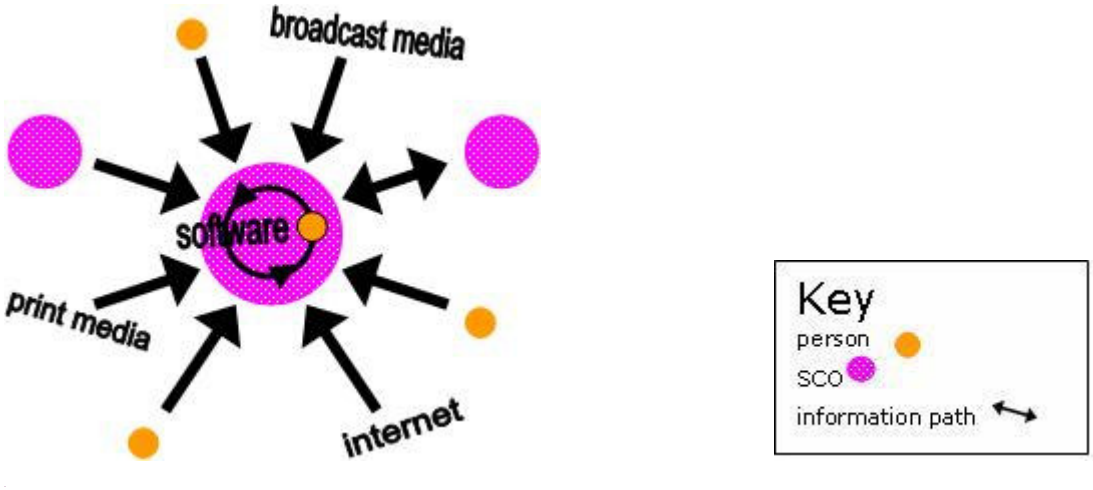


source: Tactical Tech strategy paper 2007-2010

The following four information structures: data integration, info-hub, CRM, and network-centric activism encompass the majority of tools, applications, and techniques of e-advocacy. Each model has its particular use, though no model is appropriate for all campaigns. As Janet Haven, Program Manager of the Information Program at the Open Society Institute, notes, e-advocacy techniques "need to always be grounded within the advocacy campaigns of real movements on the ground, and how they think about their approach to social change." Every movement has a different policy change goal and as such there application of e-advocacy will be unique.

DATA INTEGRATION: COLLECTING INFORMATION & MAKING IT WORK

Figure 6: Data Integration Model



The figure above shows a foundational component of e-advocacy: collecting information and managing it effectively within an organization. People are represented as orange circles, SCOs as purple spotted circles, and the information flowing among them as directional black lines. In some instance, information flows bi-directionally, as information is shared interactively between players. In the diagram above, the central SCO receives information from multiple sources: people, the internet, the media, and other SCOs. Once within the organization, the information is fed into a software program (such as a database) where it is easily accessed, altered, and retrieved by staff in a cyclical interaction.

SNAPSHOT Data Integration in Nigeria

In the spring of 2006, a coalition of Nigerian SCOs and opposition parties launched an SMS campaign to lobby against a term elongation amendment that would have allowed President Obasanjo to seek a third term. The NGOs had successfully collected the cell phone numbers of members of the National Assembly and sent a mass e-mail out to their member lists asking them to send their representative an SMS asking them to oppose the amendment. Many representatives reportedly changed their phone numbers to escape the cascade of text messages, indicating that a large number of SMS messages were sent. The campaign may well have had an effect on the bill's eventual defeat. Without researching the bill's legislative schedule, creating an mass e-mail list, and collecting the representative's phone numbers, the campaign would not have been possible.

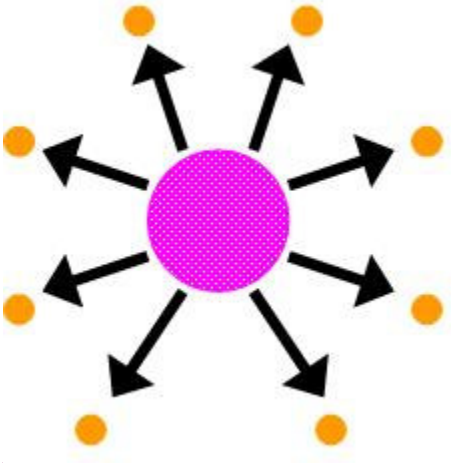
Although data integration is not the most glamorous form of e-advocacy, it is crucial. Information gathering and analysis form the basis of many e-advocacy campaigns. According to Bev Clark, founder of Zimbabwe's Kubatana.net, "A core success of any e-advocacy [campaign] is the development of databases: email address lists, postal addresses, mobile phone numbers and names of media professionals."

In addition, data integration does not only refer to information gathering and storage, but also to decoding: drawing out the information's importance for a particular movement. In some cases, a group may already have gathered the necessary information but has not performed the analysis which makes it useful.

Very few organizations, even in the global north, integrate data effectively. According to the dotOrganize report, only 7.5% of American and Canadian SCOs reported that data integration was easy for them and many respondents were frustrated with their inability to effectively manage data within their organization.

INFO-HUB: AN ONLINE BROCHURE

Figure 7: Info-Hub Model



An info-hub is one of the least expensive ways for an organization to display information to a mass audience. In most cases, an info-hub is simply an online brochure that describes an SCO's activities, its mission, and gives contact information. After e-mail, this is the simplest way to use the internet for activism. As the diagram indicates, an info-hub website pushes information out to people who visit the site, but as a rule does not solicit feedback or information from them. (A website that pulls in information from site visitors is most likely part of a CRM system, discussed later.)

In the global south, info-hub websites are quite common among urban SCOs. However, simply having a website does not mean an SCO is engaged in e-advocacy. E-advocacy is defined as the strategic use of ICT to press for policy change, and organizations often build a website without a clear policy change purpose.

In the global south, some SCOs build websites because they believe it will help them attract foreign donors. Aware that few people within their country use the internet, they consciously create the site for a foreign audience. The hallmark of this kind of site is that it has page versions in foreign languages, most likely in English. In countries with significant internet penetration, SCOs target a national internet audience, but their website may still not be strategic. They may start the website with a vague goal of raising awareness, recruiting members, or raising money, but they do not take concrete steps to realize these goals.

SNAPSHOT Info-Hub in Zimbabwe

Kubatana is an SCO dedicated to harnessing the democratic potential of e-mail and the internet in Zimbabwe. The group's portal, Kubatana.net, is an excellent example of an info-hub. The site is frequently updated, uncluttered, and easy to navigate. The site goes above and beyond the call of a traditional info-hub site. Not only does it clearly inform visitors about Kubatana's mission and activities, it also includes a detailed directory of other Zimbabwean SCOs. The site receives 3,500 hits a day.

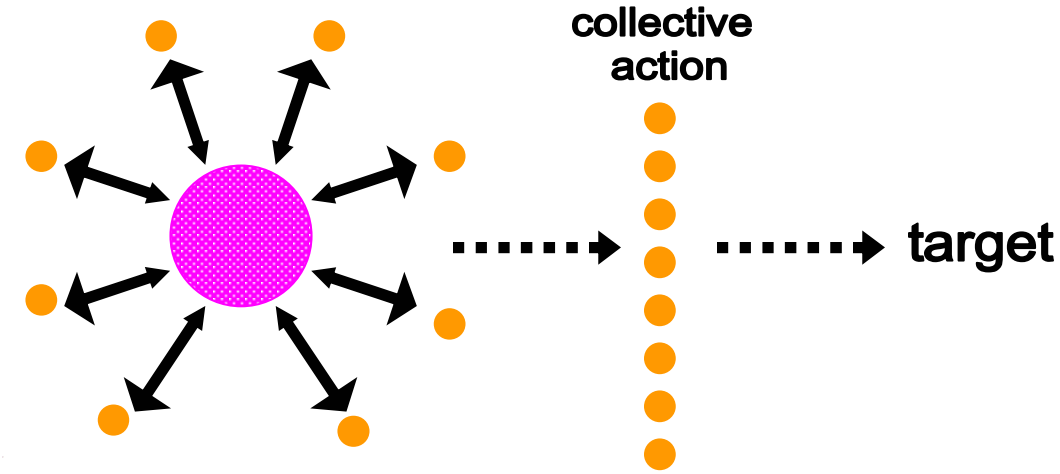
Website maintenance is also a serious problem. Most SCO websites, in the global north and global south, are rarely updated, thus defeating the site's purpose of communicating pertinent

information to supporters. This is due to a lack of time, money, and expertise. The vast majority of SCOs in the global south - and many in the global north - do not have a staff person with the expertise necessary to update the website, a fact that also accounts for the lack of strategy in building the site in the first place. While they were able to scrape together enough money to pay a consultant to build the site, they do not have enough money to pay an expert to maintain the site. As such, site maintenance falls to staff members whose principle focus lies elsewhere and they do not have the time to maintain a good website. In some cases, a poorly maintained website may actually damage the organization's reputation, since a sloppy website speaks poorly of the organization behind it.

SCOs in the global south need to ask themselves if a website is really the best way to accomplish their advocacy goals. In much of the global south, low internet penetration, illiteracy, or literacy in a minority language means that supporters are often not able to interact with the site. Rather than succumbing to the website trend, global south SCOs need the skills to create e-advocacy strategies that work for them within the specific needs of their movement.

CRM: A Dynamic Hub and Spokes

Figure 8: Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) Model



CRM, or constituent relationship management, was born in the private sector as a means for businesses to track their relationships with clients and solicit feedback. CRM can be understood as a dynamic hub and spokes that operates over an extended period of time. In the model above, the central SCO (hub) communicates directly with its members/constituents (spokes), usually through e-mail. Unlike the info-hub, communication is bi-directional. The SCO both pushes out information to members and pulls in their feedback. In the context of e-advocacy, CRM assists an organization in coordinating members' actions as part of a campaign of other political action. The organization uses CRM to direct the actions of its members toward an external target. The target may be a center of power, in the case of direct lobbying, or a secondary action, such as fundraising.

One example of a SCO that uses CRM is the American organization MoveOn.org, which records member information, such as geographic location, in a database and then uses that information to recruit members for campaigns and events in their area. MoveOn also solicits feedback from its members through e-mail surveys in an effort to keep the actions of the organization in line with the interests of its members.

CRM is most appropriate for an organization which has the budget to pay one or more developers

to create content for their system and plans to launch multiple campaigns. Although there are open-source CRM platforms available, like CiviCRM, building an effective system requires personalization, usually by a professional. Once configured, a CRM system allows an SCO to communicate clearly and on a regular basis with a specific constituency, maintain or increase their network of supporters, and make sophisticated use of a database.

In many countries, a CRM system may find sufficient email penetration only in urban areas or among an internet-savvy elite. In addition, even where people do have internet access, it is usually not through a computer that they access every day, but through a shared computer in a telecenter or at work. If members check their e-mail little at most once a week, the internet may not be the best way to communicate with them, since information is most often time-sensitive.

SNAPSHOT CRM in India

CRY (Child Relief and You) is a child rights SCO with eight offices across India. However, it is the organization's CRM strategy has built its committed supporter base. Through its website, www.cry.org, CRY collects funds through donations, selling gifts items online, and a virtual bizarre. It also recruits supporters and advocates, to whom it periodically sends e-mail updates about the organization's activities and events. CRY also engages supporters creatively, which strengthens commitment to the organization. For its 25th anniversary, the organization decided its new symbol would be a pinwheel, "Free a Child Chakri." Supporters could design their own pinwheel on the website to print out.

The greatest opportunity for a CRM is mobile phone penetration. In most countries, penetration is sufficiently high for this type of model to work. If a mobile phone is used in place of a computer, two modes of communication are possible: SMS and voice. IVR automated calling may also be used to communicate with an illiterate audience, or an audience which is multilingual. However, it should be noted that at present SMS and IVR campaigns are often too expensive for local SCOs and may only be practical for organizations with ample resources.

Implementers of CRM may also face difficulty in authoritarian political environments. CRM necessitates that a person give their contact information to a SCO so that organization may contact them on an ongoing basis to solicit their participation in the organization's campaigns. In countries where political activism is discouraged, individuals may be unwilling to give their contact information to a SCO for fear that the database may become public and will get them in trouble with the authorities. For this reason, CRM implementers is such environments must create iron-clad security systems, most likely involving encryption and overseas servers, in order to guarantee the confidentiality of their members' personal information.

Another challenge to CRM in the developing world is fundraising. Fundraising online is one of the chief strengths of organizations that use CRM, like MoveOn.org. However, most online fundraising schemes depend on the digital transfer of funds through a credit or debit card. Few people in the global south have a bank account, let alone a cash-free financial instrument. Paypal is an appealing alternative to credit and debit cards. However, in order for Paypal to be optimally accessible in a given country, PayPal must have an agreement with the banks in that country, which is not always the case. Technology culture may also play a role in online fundraising. Indonesia, for example, has the highest rate of credit card fraud in the world and for this reason people are wary of giving their credit or debit card information online, even to an SCO.

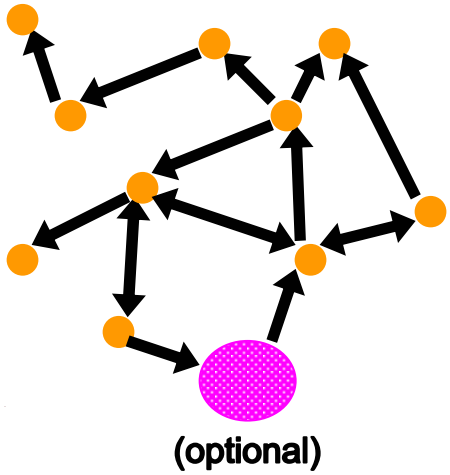
M-payments - applications that allows a person to send and receive money over their mobile phone - change this fundraising paradigm. For example, M-Pesa is a mobile phone application that allows customers to borrow money, transfer money to individuals and businesses, and repay loans using SMS text messaging. The application is currently being tested in Kenya by Safaricom and

Vodafone is planning to roll out similar services in South Africa, Tanzania, Egypt, Albania, and Fiji, among other countries. In addition, Nokia and Visa are partnering to provide a global mobile payment platform. It is remarkably simple: users can pay for purchases by swiping a phone over a reader that electronically communicates with a microchip on the phone. Phone owners confirm the purchase with the push of a button and the deal is complete.

These innovations have an important implication for SCO fundraising. One of the benefits of online advocacy, as demonstrated by America's MoveOn.org, is that an organization can raise funds through a mass of small donations from ordinary citizens, rather than collecting larger gifts from a smaller number of donors. This model seems ideal for the global south, where people have less disposable income and organizations will have to rely on small donations. However, low internet penetration had made this micro-gift fundraising model seem impossible, since previously digital giving was limited to the internet. With the arrival of m-payments, a mobile-based micro-gift fundraising model for the global south in now possible and could increase the fundraising ability of both small and large SCOs significantly.

NETWORK-CENTRIC ACTIVISM: A COMMUNICATION SPIDER WEB

Figure 9: Network-Centric Activism Model



According to Howard Rheingold's book *Smart Mobs*, network-centric techniques allow people to act in concert even if they do not know each other. Unlike the CRM wheel, where all communication is initiated by the central SCO hub, network-centric models connect the spokes to one another, allowing information to flow freely without any central arbitration necessary. In the diagram above, an organization has begun the networked flow of information, although initiation could also be accomplished by an individual activist. The communication arrows are both mono-directional and bi-directional, indicating that sometimes members of a network exchange data in a dialogue while at other times a message is simply transferred from one person to the other.

MOBILE PHONE NETWORKS

Although computers can be used to communicate within a network, mobile phones offer exciting new possibilities for the model. The value of a network increases as the number of its members increases, making mobile phones a more valuable networking tool than the computer in the global south due to their higher penetration. The transportability of the mobile phone increases its value as well, enabling mobile networked action. The result of high penetration and mobility is light-speed mobilization, the political application of "flash mobbing."

An excellent example of this technique was the mass protest that led to the downfall of Filipino President Joseph Estrada in 2001. Using text messages such as "Other students are already marching. Where are you?" and "wear red, bring banners" Filipino students organized a mass march that successfully demonstrated the unpopularity of the regime. President Estrada himself called it a "coup de text." Kifaya, a pro-democracy movement in Egypt, also uses texting to organize protests as did students in Chile the summer of 2006 who were striking for improvements to the education system.

Network-centric mobile activism is seductively simple. Massive events can be created with little or no effort or cost. It will all happen "virally." However, in the context-free world of the SMS message this is not the case. Network-centric mobile activism is merely a digital representation of the *zeitgeist*. Participants must have the same frame of reference in order for mobile network-centric activism to work. If the recipient of the message "wear red, bring banners" did not already know that a rally to force the ouster of President Estrada was in the works for that day, the message would have been meaningless. For this reason, while e-mail-based networks can engage in more detailed organization and negotiation, SMS-based network-centric activism works best within pre-existing communities. Once again, it is less a question of technology than the human power behind it.

Another drawback to mobile network activism in that governments can be surprisingly creative in preventing such actions. Before the Belarusian elections earlier this year, the government simply shut down the nation's mobile phone carriers before and during the vote. Although it is a radical measure, authoritarian governments have ultimate control over communications infrastructure and can make drastic changes in service.

VIDEO NETWORKS

Video has further internationalized network-centric activism. While SMS and mobile phones allow large groups of people in a city or country to organize, video sharing sites allow information to spread internationally. The unprecedented popularity of the video site YouTube has been particularly important, since its upload procedure makes video sharing easy for people who are not technically skilled and each video page includes an automatically-generated html code that allows bloggers to easily post the video in their blogs, sharing the video with new audiences.

When a group of union demonstrators were beaten and arrested in Zimbabwe in September, the victims had no recourse until a video of the event, which included interviews with the survivors, was smuggled out of the country on video. The footage eventually ended up on YouTube and numerous blogs and the abuse was denounced by the Trades Union Congress.

SOCIAL NETWORKS

Video sharing sites are not the only means of dissemination in a network-centric campaign. For example, 13 million Brazilians and approximately 10 million Indians use the social networking site Orkut. Like MySpace in the United States, Orkut poses a great potential for e-advocacy because a social network, like any other network, facilitates the spread of information through its members. One possible e-advocacy application of social networking sites is creating a banner promoting a campaign which members can add to their personal webpages. In addition, it is possible to create a webpage for the campaign itself and then send out periodic alerts to people who ask to be listed as "friends" of the campaign. Orkut is a particularly appropriate social networking site to launch an e-advocacy strategy. Approximately 500,000 Brazilian Orkut members are already members of a social change oriented group on the site.

BLOG NETWORKS AND CITIZEN JOURNALISM

Citizen media/journalism is an important undercurrent in network activism. Often activism is set off by a citizen spreading news which was ignored by the mainstream media, as was the case in both the Zimbabwe union and Free Alaa cases. Blogs are a particularly important tool of citizen journalism because they can quickly and inexpensively disseminate detailed information (which a video clip cannot) and most bloggers are connected to one another in powerful networks that facilitate the dissemination of information from one blog to another.

There are several projects around the world that use blogs to collect and disseminate news items from citizens. These include New Eurasia and Transitions Online, which have a regional focus, and Global Voices, which covers the blogospheres of the entire global south. However, citizen media need not take a blog form. The Kenyan website Mzalendo.org tracks the actions of the Kenyan Parliament, offering greater transparency than the mainstream media or the Kenyan government itself.

SNAPSHOT Global Network Campaign

In May of 2006 Egyptian blogger Alaa Abd El Fattah was arrested for taking part in a peaceful protest. In response, a group of bloggers created a Free Alaa blog and asked other bloggers to write about Alaa's case and link to the blog. Bloggers from Denmark to Kenya responded to the request as the call to action spread through blogger networks. The original call to action was transformed as participants began creating their own tactics, like an e-petition and Alaa video. The campaign drew the attention of international radio, newspapers, and magazines, leading to Alaa's release in June.

TECHNOLOGY CULTURE

Chances are, if you are a citizen of the global north your reaction to the above discussion was positive, even excited. Ninety-five percent of US and Canadian SCOs who responded to the dotOrganize survey felt that "technology is important or essential" to achieving their mission. The same is not true in the global south, and this difference in the perception of technology represents one of the greatest cleavages between SCOs in the two regions, second only to access. In the global south, SCO leaders are less likely to see the value of using ICT in their work.

There are several reasons for this viewpoint. First, most SCOs in the global south are not familiar with e-advocacy techniques. Without communities of practice and intermediary support organizations, SCOs in the global south may have only a vague awareness of how technology can be used in their work. They are most likely aware of ICT used by the general public - websites, word processing programs, e-mail, and web browsers - yet they are most likely unaware of how to use these applications for advocacy in the four models discussed above.

However, even global south SCOs who have some awareness of e-advocacy may not adopt such a strategy due to limited resources. A staff technology expert - the factor identified by dotOrganize as being the most important in determining the success of an SCO's e-advocacy - is far too expensive for the majority of global south SCO's.

Lack of technology staff is often as much a part of an overall lack of resources as it is due to a lack of interest in technology. In Brazil in 2002, for example, 77% of the country's 276,000 NGOs had no paid staff and only 7% had a staff of 10 or more people.

The problem of not seeing the value of ICTs is compounded by the hierarchical nature of most global south SCOs, where younger staff who are familiar with ICTs and see them as valuable are not involved in strategic decision-making, which is usually limited to an entrenched leadership. SCO leaders tend to be older and more likely to resist new technology. According Brazil case study

writer Priscila Neri, recent news of illegal wire-tapping in the US added to the fear by some leaders of the "Old Left" that e-advocacy technologies are part of a conspiracy whereby richer and more informed countries sabotage poorer countries, an idea unlikely to be shared by younger staff who have a more positive view of technology. In much of the global south, the challenges of working around a hierarchical political structure are compounded by the hierarchical nature of civil society organizations themselves.

POLITICAL CULTURE

Even functional civil society organizations must contend with political cultures that are quite different from those in the global north. In North America and Europe, most governments are democracies where representatives are held accountable for their actions through an independent judiciary and regular elections. In the global south, this is rarely the case. Illiberal democracies, monarchies, and oligarchies dominate, fundamentally changing the character of advocacy. In the global north, lobbying often consists of demonstrating to an elected representative that a majority of her constituents oppose a current policy or support a new one. The representative's reliance on the votes of her constituents makes the representative vulnerable to such lobbying.

In an undemocratic state, merely demonstrating the preference of citizens is rarely sufficient. Because many leaders in the global south maintain power by corruption, military might, and intimidation of opponents, citizens are often seen as potential threat to power rather than the necessary means of obtaining it. Advocacy groups must often threaten the stability of the government as a whole in order for the leader to change his policy, motivated by self-preservation. Such radical actions have a serious risk of back-firing on activists, inciting the leader to attack the activists in an effort to prevent the destabilization they are trying to bring about.

Even where a government is unlikely to react with violence, lack of transparency makes it difficult to identify who the target of lobbying should be. In much of the global south, any request for information may be viewed with suspicion by the bureaucracy. Attempts to identify who in the government is responsible for a particular policy are often met with stonewalling and hostility. In these cases, a citizen has little recourse, as unaccountable bureaucrats have little incentive to anger other members of the government in order to help a citizen.

It is for these reasons that many global south SCOs aim at changing social practices rather than public policy. By lobbying citizens rather than the government, SCOs hope to change their societies without taking on a hostile political system. Examples of this type of citizen-focused action include campaigns to encourage safe sex habits in countries plagued by AIDS/HIV, creating anti-corruption clubs for school children, and putting up billboard opposing domestic violence. ICT can assist SCOs in spreading a message to citizens as well as lobbying the government.

Another effect of a hostile or unaccountable government is political apathy on the part of citizens. This feeling of cynicism is a completely logical reaction to poor government performance. However, when apathy causes people to think change is impossible it makes political activism of any kind - including e-advocacy - extremely difficult because citizens have come to see activism as a lost cause. It is only when small groups of citizens prove that change is possible that the majority of citizens re-engage in the political process.

This complicated political calculus must be appreciated when considering e-advocacy implementation in the global south, for advocacy implies not only speaking on behalf of an aggrieved group but also to a person with the ability to remedy that situation. Who that person might be and whether or not he will listen is often far from clear.

INNOVATION

This report has outlined many challenges for e-advocacy in the global south, among them low internet penetration, government hostility, and limited civil society resources. Recent innovations are addressing many of these challenges and are forging a new path for e-advocacy in the global south. However, while innovations facilitate social change, they are not a magic bullet. For an innovation to be used successfully in e-advocacy it must work technically, but also economically, socially, and politically. Rather than think of innovations as pieces of hardware or even creative ideas, it is better to think in terms of "innovation systems," combinations of hardware, social structures, and economic models that make the new idea or technology sustainable over the long term.

EXPANDING ACCESS: NO TECHNOLOGY SUCCEEDS IN ISOLATION

For e-advocacy to reach its potential in the global south, internet penetration must rise to the level where it is an effective tool for mass communication. In Latin America, South Asia, and the Middle East, traditional telecommunications companies and micro-entrepreneurship programs are gradually increasing internet connectivity. It is only in Africa that regulatory inefficiency and low forecast ARPU have prevented internet access from increasing at a healthy rate. Non-profit organizations are stepping in to create hardware solutions that make rural connectivity cost-effective. Hopefully their efforts will demonstrate how new technology can radically reduce the cost of providing internet and phone services, breaking a path where the private sector will follow.

Several African NGOs have taken up the access challenge. The Fantsuam Foundation of Nigeria is dedicated to using ICTs and microfinance to empower women and youth in rural areas. Their multi-faceted program addresses access from a technical and human point of view, providing refurbished computers with after-sale support, wireless connectivity services, and an ICT entrepreneurship program.

In Namibia, SchoolNet has pioneered a model for sustainable internet connectivity in schools, using open source software to keep operating costs down, solar powered computer labs to decrease reliance on traditional power grids, and an agreement with a local telecommunications operator for low-cost wireless internet service.

In Uganda, WOUGNET (Women of Uganda Network) has been supporting women's use of ICTs since 2000. What makes WOUGNET notable is that it combines support for ICT education with e-advocacy on women's issues. Its website contains tips for computer use and website design, as well as describing a recent SMS advocacy campaign run by two women's organizations. The combination of women's ICT empowerment and e-advocacy is a very natural fit for WOUGNET.

One of the reasons these ICT access efforts are successful is that they are part of existing movements. Fantsuam is dedicated to the economic empowerment of women and youth and makes explicit reference the Millennium Development Goals on its website. SchoolNet is concerned with improving the quality of education in Namibia. WOUGNET is concerned with women's rights. By answering the question of why ICTs are important (development, education, empowerment), these organizations make themselves more accessible to the population, more closely connected to non-technical SCOs in their area of concern, and thus more powerful.

Western ICT innovators can act as important partners to these movement-integrated ICT organizations. Inveneo, a non-profit social enterprise from California, has 19 projects completed or underway installing ICT systems that serve remote and rural areas in 6 African countries. In 2005 they worked with ActionAid to introduce phone and internet service to five villages in Uganda

using a wireless connection, specially designed hardware, and solar power at relatively low cost ($2,000 for the system). In addition to hardware innovation, Inveneo made the important discovery that it was necessary to provide post-installation technical support. Although Inveneo is a technology company it has added an entrepreneur training module to its services to ensure that there is someone on-site to service the machines. Working with existing movements and an organization like WOUGNET would have provided a local solution to this support problem and would have freed Inveneo from heavy post-installation commitments.

In addition, California's Green Wi-Fi has developed a $500 solar-powered wi-fi hotspot that can connect computers to the internet where landlines are not available. This hardware would be extremely useful to organizations like Fantsuam, who have the support network to maintain the technology in the long term.

In addition, the much-harolded One Laptop Per Chile, developed by Nicholas Negroponte and MIT's Media Lab, promises a durable, cheap, and easy-to-use computing solution for children in the global south. Intense research and development has gone into the creation of the laptop, which features a new form of energy-saving screen, rugged design, and a specially-developed operating system. However, the project is not without its critics, due in part to questions of its value (is this how global south governments should be spending their education budgets?) and also because it is not clear that it will be placed within a supportive environment (will teachers actually use the computer in their lessons? are there safeguards against machines moving onto the black market?). As in the case of Inveneo, a technology's support environment is critical to its success. The most brilliant piece of hardware can become useless if it does not exist within a community of users and supporters that are committed to making it work not only for the photo-op but also for the future.

HYBRIDIZATION: MAKING OLD TECHNOLOGIES NEW

Solar power, cheap laptops, and wi-fi make the front pages in the global north, but in places like Africa these technologies are not daily realities. Ethan Zuckerman, co-founder of the blogging site Global Voices and fellow at Harvard's Berkman Center for Internet and Society, proposes a solution that works with pre-existing infrastructure rather than depending on new hardware that is not yet in place. According to Zuckerman, "dropping satellite dishes and inexpensive PCs in every village isn't the answer - figuring out what infrastructure already exists and how to leverage it probably is." One important way to leverage existing infrastructure is through "hybridization," mixing old media, like radio, with new media, like podcasts and television, to create powerful new methods of communicating with the marginalized.

As a base infrastructure, radio is particularly appealing. Because it is inexpensive and makes locally-pertinent information available to illiterate people, the radio is perhaps the most accessible form of media in the global south. (Benin, for example, has only 30,000 computers but 2 million radios.) Radio does not appeal much to the global north, where radio has not been considered an innovation since the 1930's. However, in the global south radio is a practical way for SCOs to spread their message. New innovations in old radio are proving that the medium still has value, even in the 21st century.

The first innovation involves marrying radio and podcasting. At first blush it would seem that the digital audio podcast format would be of little use in the global south, where computer access is low and iPod access practically non-existent. However, if you think of a podcast as a digitally transferable audio file instead of an application for a particular kind of hardware, its utility increases. Podcasts can be sent by e-mail to community radio stations and then be broadcast over the airwaves, reaching a much higher audience than if they remained confined to cyberspace. In South Africa, the human rights group Fahamu has used this method, recording podcasts about human rights in Africa that are then re-broadcast by community radio stations.

The second hybrid innovation ignores radio's intended purpose and sees it instead for its raw capacity to transmit a signal. This is what Geek Corps Mali did when they invented CanTV, using metal cans to create low-cost TV receptors tuned to radio frequencies. While some people in rural Mali have a TV, there is no programming available to them and TVs are used to watch videos. Geek Corps figured out that community radio stations could broadcast a television signal which could be received by a television set with a re-worked antenna. The low-cost can antenna and CanTV were born. Community radio television, which has value for both literate and illiterate people, could be another means for SCOs to disseminate a message, and might be particularly useful in the field of public health.

Peer-to-Peer Mobile Networks

Equally intriguing for developing countries is new technology allowing mobile phone users to relay their own cellular signal, which creates a "mesh network" of that could develop a life of its own, reducing the number of required base stations. This technology leapfrogs traditional GSM mobile phone networks by allowing antennae in each phone to route calls, cutting out the need for mobile phone operators and cellular base stations. In this way, peer-to-peer technology offers mobile phone service to those not covered by a traditional mobile network.

TerraNet, a start-up in Sweden, is developing a peer-to-peer technology where people as far as 20 km away from each other can use their mobile phones as walkie-talkies, communicating without using wireless internet networks instead of traditional mobile relay stations owned by the mobile operator. TerraNet gives users free local wireless calls, free text messaging, and long distance VoIP calls at zero or low cost. Conversely, traditional telecommunications operators charge for landline and mobile phone calls like a taxi cab - by the minute and the distance. This kind of technology has enormous potential in resource-poor environments. The company is piloting the phones, which cost about $30, in a refugee camp in Kenya, and on a university of campus in the UK.

Of course, a network of this nature is only as good as its size; there need to be a lot of phones in circulation for a functioning network. One way to scale this sort of technology would be to insert this software into more widely available low-end mobile phones instead of selling $30 handsets. According to TerraNet CEO Anders Carlius, the technology itself would be a $1 add-on to any Motorola or Nokia phone. However, phone manufacturers sell 60-80% of their wares to carriers. Carriers have, for obvious reasons, absolutely no interest in making voice or SMS communication free, and hence the value proposition is a hard sell for any of the large manufacturers ubiquitous in these emerging markets.

Leap-Frogging Borders: Thinking Outside the Geographic Box

Lack of money and expertise are among the greatest limitations to e-advocacy in the global south. However, this ignores the fact that much of the global south lives in the global north. Diasporas and mass emigration have shaped history since time immemorial and the trend still holds true today, although the dynamics have changed. As ICT makes a person's geographic location less and less important, members of the diaspora are able to share their resources with their home countries as never before. Members of diasporas are using ICTs to stay engaged in politics and their home countries and even take part in activism. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where only 1% of the population has internet access, political bloggers write for a diaspora population, who get involved in local politics by donating money to political causes.

SNAPSHOT Bangladeshi Diaspora

The Bangladeshi diaspora website Drishtipat.org uses PayPal to collect money for aid projects from members through its chapters in the US, UK, Australia, and Canada, and then funnels the money to SCOs in Bangladesh who implement Drishtipat's project. By thinking outside the geographic box and helping diaspora members share their financial resources and skills, ICTs can engage new actors in solving the global south's many challenges.

It is important to think outside the regional box as well as the geographic one. Thinking regionally can be dangerously inaccurate. While it is tempting to think in terms of regions like Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, countries often have more in common with countries in different regions than with their own neighbors. According to Stephanie Hankey, Executive Director of Tactical Tech, regional identity is a poor basis for categorization. Tactical Tech itself categorizes countries according to three characteristics - the state of infrastructure, the political openness of the country, and the sophistication and maturity of the NGO sector. "For example," notes Hankey, "South Africa has more in common with Thailand (from an NGO/tech point of view) than... neighboring Zimbabwe, and Zimbabwe in turn more in common with Burma."

Physical technology is just the front-end of innovation. Far more important are the ideas behind it and the human environment that surrounds and promotes it. While gadgetry is one of humanity's abiding obsessions, new hardware should never replace human capital at the center of any e-advocacy promotion strategy. Placing humanity at the center of an e-advocacy strategy creates a stable basis of value more durable than physical technology, which changes beyond our wildest imaginings and faster than we ever dreamed.

Part II

Funding the Future of Social Change

The challenge of promoting and supporting e-advocacy in the global south demands a holistic approach, addressing multiple success factors. However, as important as the individual proposals are the values that guide and support them. In that spirit, we begin this section not with the individual recommendations but with the values behind them.

Values for Funding e-Advocacy in the Global South

Work within Movements: Tools created within the specific contexts of a movement are more likely to yield useful results and be adopted by other advocates than tools created by an individual organization. Movements are resource-rich networks of experts and activists. Working within a movement means that all the talent of the various members can be brought to bear in creating solutions and the lines of communications within the network can be used to quickly disseminate new methods.

Worship the Power of the Network: Technologists love to talk about the power of networks. They allow us to communication instantaneously with one anyone who is connected. Through networks we aggregate our knowledge, amassing insight that is greater than the sum of its parts. Networks are necessary for disseminating expertise, collecting financial resources, and creating durable constituencies for change.

Bring Technologists and Advocates Together: Technologists know how to tweak software and what applications are available to solve a given problem but are probably unfamiliar with how advocacy works. Advocates know how to press for social and political change but do not know how to personalize technology tools. Funding solutions that do not involve both of these groups in some way are unlikely to succeed. Innovative solutions emerge when technologists collaborate with advocates, working on a specific campaign problem or network goal. Gates funding in this area should bring together these two populations with an eye towards creating innovative solutions appropriate to the global south.

Build Innovation Systems: No piece of technological innovation should ever be funded or implemented without complementary plans for how it will fit into the social and economic structure of a society. Ideally, the plan for how the tool will be used and serviced, how the tool will become financially self-sustainable, and how the tool will work on a technical level should be given equal weight in making grant decisions.

Promote Independence not Dependence: All the proposals in this report seek to empower the recipients of aid to become more effective and efficient advocates, not to lure them into a cycle of dependence on external aid. With this in mind, each proposal explicitly addresses sustainability. If a proposal would have required Gates funding indefinitely, it was dropped from the recommendations.

Engage with Youth: In almost all societies, young people are most likely to adopt new ICT methods. They are more familiar with ICT because it has been present for most of their lives. They appreciate its value. They think it is fun. Engaging youth in e-advocacy can be helpful in dealing

with the persistent problem of low uptake, which is due to resistance or apathy towards new methods of advocacy. Aim at a market where demand and interest in ICT is already high and uptake will increase accordingly. If youth are involved in larger political movements, their adoption of e-advocacy can have a positive "trickle-up" effect, encouraging adoption by members of the organization leadership who were previously resistant or uninterested in ICT.

Cultivate the Fringe: The boldest new e-advocacy ideas often come from far outside the mainstream. In fact, the commonly accepted practice of intensive technology trainings grew out of the civil disobedience camps run by an American anarchist organization called the Ruckus Society. IndyMedia, which grew out of the anti-globalization protests of 1999 pioneered group-blogging, open publishing, and Drupal development. In fact, e-advocacy itself began on the fringe. The Zapatista rebels in Chiapas were arguably the first group to use the internet to support an activist cause in 1994. If possible, fund the fringe, but if this is perceived as too high a risk then invite them to the table by including them in conferences and convenings.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are organized according to the report framework of "access, implementation, innovation." Within each section, multiple solutions are provided, arranged in order of importance. Solutions with the greatest likelihood of success and the greatest positive outcome are listed above subsidiary recommendations.

ACCESS: END-USER SOLUTIONS AND POLICY CHANGE

E-advocacy strategy rests on the assumption that the internet is an inexpensive tool for mass communication. However, internet penetration in much of the global south is currently too low and too expensive for most e-advocacy strategies to be effectively implemented. Until the internet is a truly mass media, e-advocacy will be unable to reach its potential. While relatively high mobile phone access presents interesting opportunities for mass communication, increased internet access in still needed. The problem of access must be addressed both for the end user and also at a policy level. These problems are particularly acute in sub-Saharan Africa, and the region thus receives special emphasis in the following recommendations.

TRAILBLAZE WIRELESS INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

As discussed in the innovation section, wireless energy-efficient connectivity solutions that use alternative infrastructres like satellite and mobile phone networks have drastically reduced the cost of connectivity in rural areas, yet the private sector has yet to adopt this new hardware. The Gates Foundation should take on the challenge of funding the development and field-testing of these tools to incentivize the market. (Where 3G technology is available, such development should include the use of mobile internet, which is key in increasing internet access for people without computers.) The goal of such a program would be to demonstrate to for-profit operators that providing connectivity to the poorest and most isolated can be profitable because there is less up-front cost to be amortized, thus encouraging companies to take on the challenge of connecting the world's entire population to phone and internet services. Pilot programs could begin in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, which have regulatory environments favorable to this type of strategy.

An important question for the Gates Foundation is which innovation system could support this new hardware. Several options are available, including the entrepreneur model and franchise model. The entrepreneur model, pioneered by N-Logue of India, is three-tiered. At the top is N-Logue, which takes care of regulatory and macro connectivity issues. Below is the Local Service Provider (LSP), who finds subscribers, provides support services, and collects payments within a geographic area. At the village level is the local entrepreneur, who actually runs the internet kiosk/telecenter. The benefit of the N-Logue entrepreneur model is that it places economic sustainability at the forefront, using individual financial incentives to support the public good of internet and phone connectivity.

The franchise model was pioneered in Bangladesh, by Grameen Phone. The inspiring mobile-telephony success story shows how entrepreneurial villagers can be recruited to adopt a technology that provides them greater connectivity and therefore economic opportunity. Formed through a consortium with Grameen Bank and Telenor, a Norwegian mobile operator, GrameenPhone has built one of the largest cellular network in the country over the last ten years with 6 million subscribers. Around 200,000 of GrameenPhone's subscribers are "telephone ladies" who provide access to telephony in more than 50,000 rural villages through the companies Village Phone initiative.

A program called Village Phone Direct has created a franchise out of the Village Phone model. Now any micro-finance institution can purchase a Village Phone Equipment Kit, designed in cooperation

with Nokia, that includes all the necessities for setting up a telecenter. The benefit of the franchise model is that is allows any funder to step in and start a telecenter without needing to develop their own hardware solution or support structure. The Village Phone approach is now being replicated in Uganda and Rwanda, indicating that that model has value beyond the Bangladeshi environment in which it was created.

An internet-focused (rather than phone-focused) franchise model does not yet exist, but the Gates Foundation might help in developing and promoting it. Tactical Tech has been successful in creating "NGO-in-a-Box" toolkits that include the most useful software for NGOs. In a recent meeting of APC in December, a WISP-in-a-box product was proposed. A WISP is a wireless internet service provider, and a WISP-in-a-Box would include the computer software and hardware necessary to set up a wireless internet connection, along with software for billing and other necessities of running a telecenter. A training and support structure would also need to accompany each kit. The creation of WISP-in-a-Box could significantly increase the speed with which new internet access points are created.

Experts in this Field:

Ian Howard, (ihoward@adaptedconsulting.com)
APC Wireless Coordinator (formerly Geekcorps Mali)
expertise in this field: wireless internet in the global south

Russell Southwood (editorial@balancingact-africa.com)
Editor of Balancing Act Africa
expertise in this field: telecommunications policy in Africa

Mark Surman (msurman@idrc.ca)
Managing Director of Telecentre.org
expertise in this field: global south telecenters for social good

UNLEASH THE POWER OF SMS

This report has spoken in-depth about the value of SMS (text messaging) as a tool for e-advocacy in the global south. Exploiting high rates of mobile phone penetration, SMS allows a much wider reach than e-mail. However, mass SMS campaigning is not a feasible option for many SCOs in the global south because of cost, both to the SCO itself and to potential campaign participants. Sending an e-mail message (or a thousand) entails no excess cost for the SCO above the cost of the internet connection. However, if a SCO sends an SMS, it must pay per message, making a thousand-message mass mailing prohibitively expensive. In addition, SMS in some countries is still too expensive for citizens, making it unlikely that they would send an SMS message on behalf of an advocacy campaign.

An architecture is needed which reduces the cost of SMS for social causes, making mass e-advocacy via SMS a reality. In addition to peer-to-peer technology such as TerraNet, reducing costs for individuals could be achieved by creating toll-free "1-800" numbers for SMS. With a toll-free SMS number, the sender would not have to pay to send the SMS to a particular number. Simply put, in order to create such a system, the Gates Foundation or its intermediary would make an agreement creating a toll free phone number or short code (a four to six-digit number that is often referred to as the mobile URL) with all telephone operator in the country (or countries) in which the service is to be offered.

The Gates Foundation could take on the task of creating toll-free short codes in various countries in the global south and subsidize SMS campaigns in these countries. The grants would cover the cost

of the toll free calls, which would be absorbed by the SMS receiver (the SCO). In creating toll-free short codes, the Gates Foundation could expect to pay approximately $2,000 to $5,000 per country, assuming that the Gates Foundation would sign a single short code agreement with a single operator in each country.

To roll out the SMS campaign subsidies, the Gates Foundation would need to consider the joint factors of unit cost and anticipated participation rate. Unit cost can be calculated as the cost of an SMS call in a given country. Participation rate is dependent on SCO capacity in the country and public use of SMS.

To illustrate this method of cost analysis, let us take Nigeria as an example. The most important factor in a successful e-advocacy campaign is SCO capacity, the desire and ability of the local partner to realize an SMS e-advocacy campaign. In order to find such a partner, it might be useful to work through an intermediary organization like Tactical Tech, OSI, or Hivos, which have contacts with global south social movements interested in using new technology in e-advocacy. In addition, in most cases it is preferable to work with a movement rather than a single SCO, as movements are able to pool resources to take on more ambitious projects and e-advocacy expertise can flow from one organization to another through the pre-existing personal relationships of the coalition. In Nigeria, the Gates Foundation might choose work with the Freedom of Information Coalition or ActionAid.

After a partner organization is identified, it would be necessary to determine the cost of subsidizing SMS messages. In order to determine a budget for a Nigerian SMS grants program, the Gates Foundation should look at the scale of previous advocacy campaigns or activities using SMS. In a recent poll, over 100,000 Nigerians responded to an SMS poll of presidential candidates. This large response rate indicates the pool of potential participants in an SMS campaign. After determining the number of participants, one needs only the unit cost to determine a budget. The cost of sending an SMS message in Nigeria is 12 cents. Thus, a pilot campaign might include a budget for 900,000 SMS messages, at a total cost of $108,000. (Additional funds would be needed for training, travel, campaign marketing, and other subsidiary costs). Assuming several such project, increasing incrementally in size and frequency over a three year period, an SMS subsidy program might cost $3-4 million.

The process of dispensing grants for SMS campaigns could be accomplished by a sub-contractor, like Hivos or Tactical Tech, which already have an idea of the SCO environment in the pilot country. The granting intermediary should not only have a general idea of the reputation of various SCOs but have trusted contacts within the country whom it can consult with regarding grant applicants.

An alternative way to implement grants would be for the Gates Foundation to grant to SCO coalitions it already has a working relationships with. According to Janet Haven of OSI, "Gates might just want to look at their own work, and start there: for instance, in the HIV/AIDs work that they are supporting. There are networks that could benefit tremendously from [e-advocacy techniques] : sex worker advocacy groups, public health budget monitors, etc."

The sustainability plan for this program is that the success of an SMS campaign would demonstrate the value of the technique, which would encourage local SCOs to pool resources to mount campaigns. Funding SMS campaigns would also demonstrate the soundness of the technique to other foreign donors, including bilateral and multilateral development agencies, which would step in with their own resources. The successful adoption of SMS campaigning by local SCOs is also dependent on the increasing affordability of SMS.

While it is recommended that SMS grants programs begin at a national level, there are some interesting trends that make exploring the potential of a global toll-free SMS Hub for Advocacy at least technically possible. The GSM Association (GSMA) recently developed a new hub-based

structure to support international SMS traffic. The extraordinary volume and growth of text messages (over a trillion messages were sent globally in 2005 alone) has placed pressures on operators to streamline the sending of SMS messages internationally. According to the GSMA, this agreement would mean that "every network in the world to be able to exchange text messages with every other, each of the 680 operator members of the GSMA would have to create 679 bilateral connections and agreements," making it much easier for consumers to exchange text messages via every mobile operator in the world.

After the successful implementation of SMS campaigns at the national level, the Gates Foundation might decide to fund an international SMS campaign. Unlike to the local SCO partners of the pilot programs, an international campaign would partner with international advocacy oragnization with strong technology programs like Greenpeace, Oxfam, and the new international e-advocacy organization Avaaz.

Experts in this Field

Katrin Verclas (katrin@nten.org)
Executive Director, Non-Profit Technology Enterprise Network,
expertise in this field: mobile phones and e-advocacy

Carsten Boers
President, Flytxt
Carsten.boers@flytxt.com
Expertise in this field: mobile marketing, coordinated global SMS campaigns

SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN FOR FAIR TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY

As mentioned in the access section of this report, the high cost of internet access in much of Africa is largely due to a brutally unjust regulatory environment that protects a small number of entrenched telecommunications companies to the detriment of the vast majority of society. A campaign, led by the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) with support from the Open Society Institute (OSI) and International Development Research Centre (IDRC) has begun to change these retrograde policies. However, this campaign has been piecemeal. An ambitious long-term funding commitment is needed to give the campaign the momentum and to expand it into other countries in the global south.

A lobbying campaign cannot successfully fight entrenched monopolies and retrograde policy without support from society at large. A successful lobbying effort would engage not only governments but also journalists, civil society, citizens, and the private sector in order to create durable constituencies for change. Governments should be shown how acting as consumers of low-cost high-speed internet and providers of infrastructure is preferable to being providers of high-cost inefficient service. Journalists should be given the background necessary to report effectively on the telecommunications sector. Civil society must be made aware of how lower internet costs can increase their ability to realize their missions through e-advocacy techniques. The private sector must be educated about how an open telecommunications market can provide great opportunities for profit, thus encouraging business to take on its traditional role of spearheading pro-market lobbying.

Eric Osiakwan of AfrISPA has argued that that the missing element in this area is a strong consumer movement demanding low-cost access. For this reason, private citizens should be informed as to how government-protected monopoly policy benefits a few wealthy individuals while robbing them of affordable internet access.

Experts in this Field:

Eric Osiakwan (eric@afrispa.org)
Executive Secretary of the Africa Internet Service Providers' Association (AfrISPA)
Expertise in this field: lowering the cost of internet access in Africa

Anriette Esterhuysen (anriette@apc.org)
Executive Director of APC
expertise in this field: lobbying for just telecommunications policy in Africa

Russell Southwood (editorial@balancingact-africa.com)
Editor of Balancing Act Africa
expertise in this field: telecommunications policy in Africa

Fight for Freedom of Expression for e-Advocates

Physical access is not the only factor preventing e-advocacy implementation. Political limitations on access limit e-advocacy in many countries of the global south. Ten years ago, the internet was heralded as a powerful democratizing force that would lay to waste authoritarian governments around the world. This prediction has so far proven false. In response to the internet, governments across the world have responded with a combination of technical and (il)legal maneuvers that have successfully shut off the internet as a source for social change in nations most in need of reform.

Entering this field might put the Gates Foundation in a difficult position with regards to the illiberal governments it works with in non-sensitive fields like public health. However, a concerted effort should be made to find solutions to this positioning problem. Promoting e-advocacy only in countries where there is little political opposition is like medicating patients with minor illnesses while allowing the gravely ill to languish. The Gates Foundation has forthrightly rejected this mode of operation in choosing to fight the world's most terrible diseases. It would be consistent to take a similar line its advocacy work.

This is not to say that the Gates Foundation should openly challenge authoritarian governments. Such a policy would unnecessarily damage the Gates Foundation's ability to carry on its critical humanitarian work in politically illiberal countries. However, the Gates Foundation can assist in the effort to protect activists that use ICT.

Creating new secure software applications need not be the priority. Many great tools that allow citizens around the world to surf the web and send e-mail while avoiding surveillance and censorship - such as Psiphon, Tor, NGO-in-a-Box Secure Edition, and HushMail - already exist. However, few citizens in countries where the internet is censored are aware of these tools or know how to use them. According to OSI's Janet Haven, "Tools are generally not the problem in this area.... The problem is uptake of existing tools... understanding by advocates of how the internet works and the security issues inherent in using it." The Gates Foundation's resources could be best put to use in aiding the dissemination of existing tools and practices.

Some of the world's most powerful governments and corporations stand in opposition to freedom of expression and information on the internet. No equally powerful organization has yet taken on the challenge of opposing them. The Gates Foundation should take up the challenge of creating a truly free internet for all the world's citizens.

Experts in this Field:

Ethan Zuckerman (ezuckerman@cyber.law.harvard.edu)
Fellow at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University
expertise in this field: internet security for political activists in the global south

Ron Deibert (r.deibert@utoronto.ca)
Director of Citizen Lab at the University of Toronto
expertise in this field: the effect of internet censorship on civil society

Stephanie Hankey (stephanie@tacticaltech.org)
Executive Director of Tactical Tech
expertise in this field: creator if NGO-in-a-Box Security Edition and its trainer network

IMPLEMENTATION: BUILDING E-ADVOCACY CAPACITY

In order to expand usage of e-advocacy techniques in the global south, political activists must be trained and supported on a massive scale. The task is daunting because the targets of this capacity-building are so diverse. They are spread across different nations, cultures, language groups and issue areas. They are both organizations and individuals. They have vastly different skill levels, from professional technology consultants to untrained SCO staff that have fallen into the role of technology implementer.

A successful strategy must address the challenge at multiple levels. First, the Gates Foundation should fund at a "meta" level, strengthening non-profit technology assistance providers (NTAPs) and consultant networks, which will allow the Gates Foundation the scale it needs to promote e-advocacy techniques at multiple SCOs. Second, the Gates Foundation should support social entrepreneurship, investing in the e-advocacy entrepreneurs that will lead the movement in the global south. Finally, the Gates Foundation should offer small grants for increasing usability and awareness. All these strategies are extremely "hands-on" and require extensive oversight and in-house expertise. The lists of experts in this section include representatives of organizations which could serve as intermediaries for these programs.

"VENTURE CAPITAL" FOR GLOBAL SOUTH NTAPS

The Gates Foundation should fund the expansion of non-profit technology providers (NTAPs) in the global south. NTAPS like Ungana-Afrika and SANGONeT in South Africa, WANGONeT and DevNet in Nigeria, and Rede de Informações do Terceiro Setor (RITS) and Socid in Brazil should be supported and ICT organizations like Fantsuam in Nigeria should be given the option of expanding into the NTAP field.

While certain western NTAPs like Democracy in Action and Compumentor are also moving into the global south, preference in funding should be given to local organizations, who are likely to have better understanding of the local environment and stronger SCO networks from which to draw clients. Compumentor, for instance, has chosen to work through SANGONeT rather than setting up an independent organization in South Africa. If non-local NTAPs are funded, Gates grants should make knowledge sharing and training of trainers a condition of aid, ensuring that local entrepreneurs gain NTAP expertise.

Funding should enable the expansion of NTAP activities to new geographic areas and populations, with an eye to developing long-term sustainability strategies. The Gates Foundation should view these funds as venture capital, helping the grantee organization reach a new level of productivity without creating an increased dependence on external aid.

For this strategy, an understanding of the "market" into which the NTAP will expand is crucial. For example, while African SCOs have a relatively low demand for NTAP services due to lack of awareness of e-advocacy, demand is higher in South East Asia. One way to address the demand challenge is to fund SCOs' purchase of NTAP services, rather than funding the NTAP. This reverse strategy, however, would only solve the sustainability problem if initial funding acting as a demonstration case and increased awareness and demand among other SCOs.

Experts in this Field:

David Barnard (dbarnard@sangonet.org.za)
Executive Director of SANGONet
expertise in this field: runs a successful NTAP in South Africa

Toni Eliasz (toni@ungana-afrika.org)
Executive Director of Ungana-Afrika
expertise in this field: runs a successful NTAP in South Africa

STRENGTHEN THE eRIDER e-ADVOCACY SUPPORT NETWORK

In addition to building the capacity of existing NTAPs, the Gates Foundation should build the capacity of existing e-advocacy consultant networks. One network which presents interesting opportunities for spreading e-advocacy in the global south is that of eRiders. eRiding, or circuit riding, began in the United States as a way for grassroots SCOs to share tech resources. Organizations with a common issue area share a single technology consultant - the eRider - who travels a circuit from organization to organization. eRiding allows a coalition of grassroots SCOs to benefit from a technology expert- the single greatest factor in determining e-advocacy success -by pooling resources and sharing a single staff person.

Another strength of the eRider model is that it has already proven effective in the global south. There are already eRiders operating in India, South Africa, and Indonesia. The South African eRider program, Ungana-Afrika, has also trained future eRiders in Mozambique, Senegal, and Zambia in an effort to expand the model in Africa.

The eRider movement is currently a loosely connected group of practitioners united by a model of e-advocacy capacity-building. Although eRiders have the potential to be a robust global network of e-advocacy trailblazers, currently most eRider work is limited to basic hardware set-up and software trouble-shooting. In order for eRiders to break out of their tech support role and lead their client organizations in initiating e-advocacy campaigns, ongoing training is needed.

An excellent training partner for global eRiders would be Tactical Tech, which organizes highly popular Source event which bring technologists, eRiders, and political activists together for technology training and knowledge sharing. The Source events could be transformed into a kind of "flying circus" that would travel the globe conducting trainings and strengthening the incipient global eRider network. An alternative training model could involve identifying and funding regional eRider hubs who could then re-grant within their region.

A strong eRider network could be very useful for sharing e-advocacy best-practices globally, however, global eRiders are currently connected only by a basic listerv. Improved networking, as well as access to training resources, could be accomplished through the eRider website, eRiders.net. Building the capacity of eRiding would have pronounced effect on the global south, empowering an existing group of practitioners to become a global network for e-advocacy promotion.

It is essential that this strategy focus on specific campaigns and that eRiders be brought into existing social movements. One of the challenges of eRiding is that eRiders tend to lack experience in activism. Connecting eRiders to social movements will give them the e-advocacy context in which to make sense of the technical skills they are learning. eRiders should be considered part of a larger ecology of activists, NTAPS, and SCOs, all of which must gain skills and work together in order to create effective e-advocacy strategies

Experts in this Field

Teresa Crawford (teresa@speakeasy.net)
Site Administrator of eRiders.net
expertise in this field: global eRiding environment

Toni Eliasz (toni@ungana-afrika.org)
Executive Director of Ungana-Afrika
expertise in this field: eRiding in Africa

Dirk Slater (dirk@tacticaltech.org)
Leader of Hands-On Projects for Tactical Tech
expertise in this field: long personal experience in eRider practice and training

NURTURE E-ADVOCACY LEADERS

While promoting e-advocacy at the meta level is necessary to realize global results, the individual level is also essential. As Gates strengthens global south e-advocacy networks and NTAPs, it should also concern itself with the people who make up these groups. A fellows program would be invaluable in developing e-advocacy leadership in the global south.

The fellows program should target two levels of emerging leaders. The first level should consist of global south social entrepreneurs without technology expertise who have evinced outstanding achievement in leading policy change campaigns and are eager to learn e-advocacy techniques to apply to their issue areas. Through a standard application process, fellows would be selected for a period of 3 to 6 months of training, networking, and travel aimed at increasing their e-advocacy skills and positioning them firmly within a global network of fellow practitioners who could provide on-going support.

The second level of the fellows program should target e-advocacy experts, giving them the opportunity to take 6-12 months off from work to train, write, and educate in the global south. In the process they would improve their knowledge of e-advocacy needs in the global south and build their networks. Both groups could be based out of the e-advocacy regional centers (see next section). The fellows program could be administered by the APC, which encompasses a network of global south e-advocacy organizations.

Experts in the Field

Anriette Esterhuysen (anriette@apc.org)
Executive Director of APC
expertise in this field: the use of technology for global south NGO empowerment

MAKE TOOLS GLOBAL

Finally, the Gates Foundation might interest itself in smaller "last mile" projects necessary to the internationalization of e-advocacy tools. Through a grants program, the Gates Foundation would be performing a great service in funding the effort to localize software into world languages, thus making key software tools accessible to users who do not speak English, the dominant language of software. Lack of local language software is a *bête noire* of the global south, yet the problem draws little funding. The Gates Foundation would be doing a great service in joining this effort.

The second tool project the Gates Foundation might like to fund is a website which centralizes information about NGO technology, acting as a "one stop shop" for tools explanations and suggestions. Social Source Commons, created by the American NTAP Aspiration, is being developed for a US audience yet plans to internationalize, contingent on funding. The beauty of such websites is that they can move beyond their informative role to act as sites of knowledge exchange between e-advocacy players. For organizations which would not have contact with any other e-advocacy promotion program, a website might serve as the only source of information on e-

advocacy techniques.

Experts in the Field

Dwayne Bailey (Dwayne@translate.org.za)
Managing Director of Translate.org.za
expertise in this field: software localization in the global south

Allen "Gunner" Gunn (gunner@aspirationtech.org)
Executive Director of Aspiration
expertise in this field: centralized website for NGO tech tools and expertise (Social Source Commons)

AN IN-HOUSE E-ADVOCACY PROGRAM AT THE GATES FOUNDATION

One simple way for the Gates Foundation to support e-advocacy would be to create an e-advocacy program within the Gates Foundation. This program would work with groups that are already receiving Gates funding to ensure that they are making the best use of ICT in fulfilling their social change objectives. The goals of the program would be to advise Gates grantees and program officers in their technology use, help them design e-advocacy projects by personalizing existing applications, and generally educate Gates grantees about e-advocacy techniques. The in-house model of e-advocacy promotion is perhaps the most popular in the field. It is the model used by such international SCOs as the Open Society Institute, Hivos, and the National Democratic Institute to promote effective ICT use among their grantees. Creating an in-house program would be a simple and effective way to promote e-advocacy throughout the Gates grantee network.

Experts in the Field

Janet Haven (jhaven@osieurope.org)
Program Manager of the Information Program at the Open Society Institute
expertise in this field: in-house ICT programs at social change organizations

Paul Maassen (p.maassen@hivos.nl)
Program Manager of the ICT, Media & Knowledge Sharing at Hivos
expertise in this field: in-house ICT programs at social change organizations

INNOVATION: SHAPING THE FUTURE

A funding structure that stops at the implementation phase is incomplete. The field of e-advocacy in the global south is still in its infancy and the greatest innovations are yet to come. Innovations need not only to be created but also shared so that others may benefit from them. The final step of this e-advocacy strategy is a group of programs to nurture innovation in this field.

A GLOBAL NETWORK OF E-ADVOCACY CENTERS

The first proposal is the most ambitious: the creation of a network of regional e-advocacy centers in the global south. There is currently no institution that is recognized as leading e-advocacy innovation. The e-advocacy centers would fill this void, bringing together expert practitioners to work in residence on e-advocacy challenges and create training materials to bring those insights to a global audience. In this way the centers would act as the think-tanks of e-advocacy, developing and promoting new techniques.

In addition to technique development and disseminations, the centers would serve as permanent training hubs, hosting workshops and then providing follow-up, and building networks of regional e-advocates. The centers would act as contact points for both technologists and advocates, connecting these two groups with each other and with new e-advocacy techniques.

The goal would be to create a worldwide network of centers across the global south, however the project could easily begin with a single pilot, perhaps in South Africa, to test the model. Tactical Tech, which developed with idea, is currently ready to take on the project and has a clear vision for how the centers would operate and a unique experience in working in the field of e-advocacy capacity-building in the global south.

Experts in this Field:

Stephanie Hankey (stephanie@tacticaltech.org)
Co-Founders of Tactical Tech
expertise in this field: creating a global network of e-advocacy centers

Janet Haven (jhaven@osieurope.org)
Program Manager of the Information Program at the Open Society Institute
expertise in this field: funding e-advocacy capacity-building in the global south

DEVELOP E-ADVOCACY TECHNIQUES TAILORED TO THE GLOBAL SOUTH

While the global north has a number of successful e-advocacy strategies, the global south still has very few. Resources are needed to fund innovative e-advocacy campaigns tailored to global south realities. Such a grants program would judge applications based on the campaign's ingenuity and usefulness to other e-advocates in the global south. Money would be granted to the SCO running the campaign, which would then use the money to pay developers to create a personalized technology solution for the campaign and also to cover the cost of the campaign, such as SMS fees.

Disseminating the new e-advocacy techniques would be a key goal of the grants program and creating how-to materials after the campaigns' completion in order to facilitate replication by other organizations would be included in the statement of work for grantees. In addition to explicitly writing instructions for replication, techniques would be fed into the multiple e-advocacy networks proposed in this report, raising awareness of the new techniques by SCOs in other parts of the

global south.

The grants should be both open and targeted. Open grants would call for applications in all fields and targeted grants would call for applications based to particular technology seen as being of importance to e-advocacy in the global south, such as mobile phones and SMS. It is recommended that both granting strategies be used in order to respond to innovative campaign proposals in new fields as well as encouraging campaigns in pre-determined fields of demonstrated importance to the global south.

The Dutch development organization Hivos has expressed enthusiasm in acting as an intermediary for this grants program. Hivos already runs an ICT, Media, and Knowledge Sharing program in the global south that aims to empower citizens in development countries to express themselves. The ICT program at Hivos has created a network of 64 global south SCOs that are already family with the concepts of SCO technology use.

Experts in this Field

Paul Maassen (p.maassen@hivos.nl)
Program Manager of the ICT, Media & Knowledge Sharing at Hivos
expertise in this field: promote SCO technology in the global south

SHARE KNOWLEDGE GLOBALLY

As useful as the internet is for facilitating international communication, the closest partnerships and most interesting ideas still arise from in-person encounters. The Gates Foundation should provide grants for conferences and convenings that bring the world's greatest minds together on chosen global south e-advocacy topics to learn from one another. According to dotOrganize Director Leda Dederich,"It's a new field. It's emerging. There needs to be a space for sharing best practices, encouraging, learning. Cultural exchange is so important. The more that we can learn and share the better."

Following recent changes in practice, the Gates Foundation should find an intermediary who will seek out meetings that bring together multiple actors from the public and private sector, as well as civil society, in order to challenge the conventional wisdom of all participants while developing new ideas collaboratively. This decentralized and heterogeneous method of meeting is called "convening," and differs from the more hierarchical and less participative conference model.

These meetings should target a worldwide audience, not just the global south, the goal being to promote growth in the global south's e-advocacy sector, not isolate the region from global north e-advocates. In order to focus on the needs of the global south, the meetings should be held in the global south in close partnership with global south NTAPs and SCOs. The regional e-advocacy centers would serve as ideal sites for such meetings. If the meeting is held in the global north, a substantial amount of money should be set aside for scholarships so that practitioners from the global south could attend.

The goal of this grants program is not only to create fertile environments for new ideas, but also to create global e-advocacy partnerships, whereby SCOs and NTAPs from the global south and north share expertise and resources to work on campaigns of mutual interest. Finding an intermediary to administer these grants will be a challenge, as the administrator will need to know the latest innovations in conference techniques and structure as well as knowing the needs of global south e-advocacy.

Tactical Tech is well-placed to take on this initiative and has been leading trainings of this kind for

the past four years, in cooperation with Aspiration, in countries such as Croatia, Namibia, India, Tajikistan and Uganda. They are now developing a series of training based on e-advocacy techniques and have created a sample agenda of the convening.

Experts in the Field

Allen "Gunner" Gunn (gunner@aspirationtech.org)
Executive Director of Aspiration Tech
expertise in this field: social change tech training and event creation (in a US and global south context)

Stephanie Hankey (stephanie@tacticaltech.org)
Co-Founders of Tactical Tech
expertise in this field: creating a global network of e-advocacy centers

Zack Exley (zackexley@gmail.com)
Founder of the New Organizing Insitute
expertise in this field: social change tech training and event creation (in a US context)

CREATE A PILOT E-ADVOCACY PROGRAM IN NIGERIA

One way to promote e-advocacy in the global south would be to found an e-advocacy organization. Nigeria is a very fertile field for e-advocacy due to its technological, political, and NGO environment.

Technologically, Nigeria is experiencing some of the fastest growth in mobile phone ownership of any country in the world, jumping from 30,000 to 9,000,000 mobiel subscribers between 2000 and 2004. Moreover, SMS has been used for such innovative applications as lobbying the government, spreading information about AIDS, and conducting political polls, which has engendered an openness to new uses of media.

Politically, while challenged by continuing problems of apathy, Nigeria is experiencing a new period of freedom and growing democracy following years of dictatorship and military rule. The recent rejection of presidential term extensions marked an important democratic turning point for the country. Moreover, a common sentiment among youth that a change in the political ruling class is needed could be used to rally support for an e-advocacy program.

While the NGO sector is still very young and limited in its advocacy ability, foreign SCOs like ActionAid are taking up the slack and Nigerian SCOs like LEAP Africa show great promise. Issues of importance to Nigerians which could be taken up by an e-advocacy organization include corruption, access to HIV/AIDS medication, and fair distribution of oil wealth. Most importantly, Nigeria has a group of savvy and committed activists who want to use technology to bring about social change in their country. Further research would be necessary to identify partner organizations, but the potential for a pathbreaking global south e-advocacy organization is great.

Experts in the Field

'Gbenga Sesan (me@gbengasesan.com)
Nigeria Case Study Writer
expertise in this field: Nigeria's e-advocacy environment

Hakeem Ajijola (ajijola@gmail.com)
Special Adviser to the National Security Adviser on ICTs
expertise in this field: running an SMS campaign in Nigeria

Ricken Patel (Ricken@gmail.com)
Executive Director of Avaaz
expertise in this field: running e-advocacy campaigns in the global south

REWARD INNOVATORS

The final recommendation of this report is the simplest to implement yet could also have the greatest impact in raising the profile of e-advocacy in the global south. An award, or series of awards for innovation in global south advocacy would encourage innovators in the field, draw attention to the most successful entrepreneurs, NTAPs, and CSOs, and - through monetary grants connected to the awards - fund the work of the best in the field.

Awards could be administers be a single intermediary or distributed through to multiple intermediaries who would each award in their area of expertise. This decentralized method is in fact preferable, because giving a prize would also raise the profile and the awarding institution. Award areas might include individual e-advocacy campaigns, e-advocacy entrepreneurs, socially-conscious software developers/institutions, e-advocacy hardware invention, and written publications.

Experts in this Field

Anriette Esterhuysen (anriette@apc.org)
Executive Director of APC
expertise in this field: awards currently awarded in the global south e-advocacy field

CONCLUSION

The goal of this funding strategy is to create a structure in which access to ICTs leads to a cyclical process of innovation and dissemination in e-advocacy which leads to social change. The final result of the implementation of ever improving e-advocacy methods is social change, achieved bit by bit through thousands of e-advocacy campaigns worldwide. E-advocacy is a powerful means for social change in the global south and the Gates Foundations has the unique ability to make that potential a reality.

Part III

Back Matter

Glossary of Abbreviations

3G: (third generation) This type of mobile phone technology allows for simultaneous fast transmission of voice and data. It is the backbone of the mobile internet, allowing not only for sending e-mail by phone but also high bandwidth requirements like video and music file downloads and video calling.

ARPU: (average revenue per user) used by telephone operators, the term refers to the amount of average revenue billed to each phone subscriber during a given period.

CBO: (community based organization) a grassroots non-profit organization that works at a local rather than national or international level

DAI : (Digital Access Index) an index developed by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) to assess the level of connectivity to ICT of different countries in the world. The index incorporates four factors: connection quality, infrastructure, affordability, and knowledge (literacy).

DIA: (Democracy in Action) an American non-profit technology assistance provider (NTAP) based in Washington, DC

EASSy: (the Eastern Africa Submarine Cable System) a *planned* fiber optic cable that would run from Mtunzini in South Africa to Port Sudan in Sudan, with landing points in six countries, and connected to at least five landlocked countries

GSM: (global system for mobile communications) is the most popular mobile phone communication standard in the world. The system incorporates the chip used to connect phones to the cellular network (called a SIM card) and the physical infrastructure of substations that make up the cellular network.

GPRS: (general packet radio service) a mobile data service using the GSM standard

ICT: (information and communications technology) machines, such as computers and mobile phones, which aid in the storage and transmission of information. Unlike information technology (IT), ICT stressed the importance of inter-personal communication in technology use.

IDRC: (International Democracy Research Center)a Canadian crown corporation that supports researchers from the developing world in their search for the means to build healthier, more equitable, and more prosperous societies. IDRC also supports networking and knowledge sharing between scientific, academic, and development communities in Canada and developing countries.

ITU: (Internanational Telecommunications Union)an organization within the United Nations system which coordinates public and private sector telecommunication policy

MTN: a South African multinational mobile telecommunications company which operates in many

African and Middle Eastern countries.

NGO: (non-governmental organization) any formal group of people outside of the government.

NTAP: (non-profit assistant provide) an organization (either for-profit or non-profit) which provides technology support to non-profit organizations. The best NTAPS also assist their clients in creating ICT strategies and implementing new techniques. NTAPS are crucial in increasing the e-advocacy capacity of social change organizations (SCOs) in the global south.

kbps: (kilobits per second) a unit of measure in recording the speed of digital data transfer equalling 1,000 bits (0s or 1s) per second, common unit for discussing internet speed

OSI: (Open Society Institute) a private charitable foundation established by George Soros to promote open societies around the world

PDA: (personal digital assistant) a handheld computer originally designed as a personal organizer but whose application has greatly expanded over the years

SCO: (social change organization) a non-profit, non-government organization which aims to change some aspect of the behaviors, structure, or institutions of a society. This paper uses the term SCO in place of the more popular NGO because SCO identifies organizations that wish to change society in some way, while NGOs comprise a whole range of fraternal and service-based organizations that do not wish to change society, but rather to provide alternative or additional resources for citizens. This report is concerned with how ICTs can be used as tools for social change and is thus interested in organizations whose goal is social change.

SMS: (short message service) a text message sent to or from a mobile phone containing up to 160 characters

VoIP: (voice over internet protocol) a method of routing voice calls over the internet. Internet telephony is usually much cheaper than calling over traditional telephone landlines.

WAP: (wireless application protocol) an open international wireless standard used to create applications that allow PDAs and mobile phones to access the internet.

Note: Wikipedia was a key reference in creating these definitions

Actor Map

This actor map focuses on individuals as sources of expertise and also as gateways into intermediary organizations. For the purposes of this report, we define an intermediary ICT organization as having the following functions:

- Serves as a clearinghouse for research, news, information, resources, ICT training and application
- An umbrella organization that usually may engage in on-the-ground civil society projects and supports constituent members (organizations or individuals) in doing so
- Focuses on broadening the application and use of ICT by civil society and non-profits
- Build and sustain information networks in developing country civil societies
- Note: funding intermediaries are highlighted in blue

Sunil Abraham, Co-Founder of Mahiti
Abraham is an expert in technology that engages the marginalized. His organization, Mahiti, is a Bangalore based organisation that aims to reduce the cost and complexity of Information Technology for civil society.
contact: sunil@mahiti.org

Hakeem Ajijola, Special Adviser to the National Security Adviser on ICTs
Created an SMS campaign in Nigeria wherein an SMS was sent to all members of a party delegation in order to sway their vote in favor of one candidate in a presidential primary
contact: (ajijola@gmail.com)
expertise in this field: running an SMS campaign in Nigeria

Syahril Amin, Co-Founder of PAKTA
PAKTA is an Indonesian connectivity and content solution provider specializing in supporting NGOs particularly
in the urban, remote and rural areas.
contact: syahril_a2003@yahoo.com

Ken Banks, Managing Director of Kiwanja.net
Banks is the developer of FrontlineSMS, a computer-based client for mass SMS campaigns. He has carried out e-advocacy strategies in support of the environmental sector in Africa and is currently a Digital Vision Fellow at Stanford.
contact: ken.banks@kiwanja.net

David Barnard, Executive Director of SANGONeT
SANGONeT is a South African NTAPdedicated to helping civil society in southern Africa to use ICTs in their work.
contact: dbarnard@sangonet.org.za

Kamla Bhatt, Blogger at The Kamla Bhatt Show
Bhatt blogs and creates podcasts about the Indian diaspora.
contact: kamla@kamlabhattshow.com

Paul Bladin, Vice President, Director of Technology Center at the Grameen Foundation
The Grameen Foundation is a global 501(c)3 non-profit organization based in Washington DC that works to replicate the Grameen Bank microfinance model around the world through a global network of partner microfinance institutions.

contact: +1 206-325-6690

Stephane Boyera, Director of the Mobile Web Initiative at the World Wide Web Consortium
The Mobile Web Initiative aims at making mobile phone based internet connectivity a global reality.
contact: boyera@w3.org

Arnold L. Chandler, Program Associate at Policy Link
Chandler analyzes and researches information technology and community building issues for the Community Building in the Digital Age initiative at PolicyLink.
contact: arnold@policylink.org

Bev Clark, Founder of Kubatana.net
Kubatana is a Zimababwean civil society hub that promotes ICTs in activism.
contact: admin@kubatana.org.zw

Steven Clift, Host of Democracies Online and Chair, E-Democracy.Org
Clift is a long-time aggregator of e-democracy practices, in U.S. and overseas. Commissioned by the UK government to do a global survey of the best e-democracy practices (February 2005). He is also an Ashoka Fellow. His DoWire.Org site includes online communities of practice.
contact: clift@publicus.net

Teresa Crawford, Administrator of eRiders.net
Crawford is a strategic technology consultant who works closer with global eRiding
contact:teresa@speakeasy.net

Martin Crow, Co-Founder of KampungCyber
KampungCyber is an Indonesian connectivity and content solution provider specializing in supporting NGOs, education and other institutions by providing a second- and third-tier towns and rural districts in Indonesia
contact: mcrow@kampungcyber.com

John Daly, Independent Researcher
Daly is a writer and consultant working on issues of technology and science for developing countries, specifically ICT. Worked on related projects in Africa, Brazil, Mexico.
contact: John.Daly@gmail.com

Carol C. Darr, Director of the Institute for Politics, Democracy and the Internet
Darr is associate research professor at the Graduate School of Political Management of The George Washington University; Board Member of the E-Volve Foundation.
contact: darr@gwu.edu

Leda Dederich, Director of dotOrganize
dotOrganize is an American NTAP that helps SCOs use online tools in their activism. Their report *Online Technology for Social Change: From Struggle to Strategy* is among the first statistic studies of e-advocacy.
contact: leda@scoutseven.com

Ron Deibert, Director of Citizen Lab at the University of Toronto
The Citizen Lab researches the intersection of technology, civic networks, and human rights.
contact: r.deibert@utoronto.ca

Jorge Dominguez, Executive Vice President of Atina Chile
Atina Chile is a Chilean e-advocacy organization that uses blogs to create a community of members.

contact: jdominguez@atinachile.cl

Toni Eliasz, Executive Director of Ungana-Afrika
Ungana-Afrika is an ISO based in South Africa that uses the eRider model to consult for SCOs in southern Africa. Toni has good insights on exapanding the eRiding model in Africa.
contact: toni@ungana-afrika.org

Richard English, Campaign Director, Big Noise Fair Trade Campaign, Oxfam
The Big Noise Fair Trade Campaign collected 17 million signatures on a free trade petition through a combined online and offline effort.
contact: renglish@Oxfam.org.uk

Anriette Esterhuysen, Executive Director of the Association for Progressive Communication (APC)
The APC is a global network focused on using ICTs for social justice and sustainable development, based on the principle that the internet is a global public good, to be developed and governed in the public interest.
contact: anriette@apc.org

Zack Exley, Founder of the New Organizing Institute
The NOI is an American NGO which focuses on how ICT can be used in political campaigns.
contact: zackexley@gmail.com

Rob Faris, research director at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society and member of the OpenNet Iniative. The ONI is an in-depth research project on internet content filtering.
contact: rfaris@cyber.law.harvard.edu

Davis Geilhufe, Managing Partner of CivicSpace
CivicSpace delivers CivicSpace On Demand to deliver powerful civic and NGO-focused open source to small groups. Together with the CivicSpace Foundation and CiviCRM, it is part of a tripartite group of interconnected organizations that develop e-CRM tools for SCOs
contact: dgeilhufe@civicspacelabs.org

Allen "Gunner" Gunn, Executive Director of Aspiration Tech
Aspiration Tech is an American NTAP. It's project include Social Source Commons, Mobile Active, and Penguin Days open source events. Gunner is also atrainer who has worked for Tactical Tech.
contact: gunner@aspirationtech.org

Nancy Hafkin,pioneer promoter of ICTs in Africa (various posts within UN system)
Hafkin is an innovator in the area of networking, development information, and electronic communications in Africa, over the course of a twenty-three year career, mostly working with the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in Addis Ababa.
contact: nhafkin@hotmail.com

Stephanie Hankey, Co-Founder and Director of Tactical Technology Collective
Tactical Tech helps SCOs in transitional and developing countries implement e-advocacy techniques. The group also originated the idea of "information activism." Before founding Tactical Tech, Stephanie helped establish and developed the ICT Support for Civil Society project for the Open Society Institute.
contact: stephanie@tacticaltech.org

Janet Haven, Program Manager at the Information Program at the Open Society Institute
Haven is a respected practitioner in how ICTs can be used to promote social change in developing and transitional countries, she also write a popular eponymous blog about development and civil

society technology.
contact: jhaven@osieurope.org

Marty Kearns, Co-Founder & Executive Director Green Media Toolshed
GMT is a non-profit dedicated to helping the environmental movement communicate more effectively through technology. Kearns has been instrumental in promoting network-centric theory.
contact: martykearns@gmail.com

Helen King, International Relations Manager for the Shuttleworth Foundation
The Shuttleworth Foundation, based in South Africa, invests in innovations that improve education in the developing world. King has interesting ideas about how to promote e-advocacy in the global south.
contact:helen@shuttleworthfoundation.org

David Lehr, Fellow at the Acumen Fund
Lehr is interested in how business entrepreneurship can help to alleviate poverty in the developing world. He has a background in technology in the for-profit sector and was a Digital Vision Fellow at Stanford University.
contact: dlehr@earthlink.net

Carolyn Lukensmeyer, Founder and President of AmericaSpeaks
Dr Lukensmeyer is a pioneer in large-scale public deliberations that engage decision-makers and citizens in decision-making. AmericaSpeaks has most recently used its 21st Century Town Meeting™ process to support recovery efforts in New Orleans, a three-year regional economic revitalization effort in Northeast Ohio, and the redevelopment of the World Trade Center site.
contact: cjl@americaspeaks.org

Paul Maassen, Program Manager of the ICT, Media & Knowledge Sharing at Hivos
Hivos is an innovative Dutch development organization motivated by humanist values. Paul has innovative ideas about using ICTs for social change. He is particularly interested in the use of networks to support e-advocacy.
contact: p.maassen@hivos.nl

Jody Mahoney, Senior Director of International Development at Compumentor
CompuMentor (www.compumentor.org) is the home of the popular nonprofit web portal TechSoup (www.techsoup.org), based in San Francisco. She develops international partnerships for TechSoup's content, community, and commerce programs, and is a frequent speaker on issues related to social enterprises and capitalization strategies for nonprofit organizations.
contact: jody@techsoup.org

Firoze Manji, Director of Fahamu
Fahamu is an organization based in South Africa and the UK that promotes human rights in Africa. Manji is one of the most active and innovative practioners of e-advocacy in Africa.
contact:firoze@fahamu.org

Dina Mehta, Co-Founder of The South East Asia Earthquake and Tsunami Blog
Indian blogger Mehta and her fellow bloggers pioneered new uses of collaborative technology for social change, inspired by the Southeast Asian tsunami in 2004.
contact:dina.mehta@gmail.com

Sascha Meinrath, Treasurer Emeritus, Indymedia; Executive Director, CUWiN Foundation
Sascha is in charge or disbursing the resources of the global citizen journalism organization IndyMedia. He is well-aquainted with radical e-advocacy groups and creating inexpensive ICT

solutions.
contact:sascha@aya.yale.edu

Jed Miller, Director of Internet Programs at the ACLU
Miller was formerly Director at the New York nonprofit Web Lab (www.weblab.org), overseeing online dialogue projects. Prior that he was Interactive Editor in charge of online community at NYTimes.com. He is interested in network-centric advocacy, civic engagement and media.
contact: jed@jedmiller.com

Vikas Nath, Founder of DigitalGovernance.org and DevNetJobs.org
He is Special Advisor to the Executive Director, South Centre (an Inter-Governmental organisation), Geneva, and an ICT consultant and trainer specializing in e-governance, ICT4D, and sustainable network development, as well as ICT issues in India.
contact: Vikas.Nath@gmail.com

Heru Nugroho, Co-Founder of AirPutih Foundation
AirPutih is an Indonesian "wireless relief" connectivity and content solution provider specializing in supporting victims and the NGOs particularly associated with natural/made disaster.
contact: syahril_a2003@yahoo.com

Michelle Odayan, Director of Agenda
Agenda is a South African SCO which uses internet tools and media to support women's rights.
contact : director@agenda.org.za

Ory Okolloh, Co-Founder of Mzalendo.org
Mzalendo, a Kenyan parliamentary watchdog website, is the first of its kind in Africa. Ms. Okolloh has become a passionate and eloquent spokesperson for the challenges and opportunites presented by e-advocacy in Africa.
contact: ookolloh@gmail.com

Eric Osiakwan, Executive Secretary of the Africa Internet Service Providers' Association (AfrISPA).
Osiakwan travels tirelessly promoting low-cost internet access across Africa.
contact: eric@afrispa.org

Angelica Ospina, Program Officer of PAN Americas and the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas (ICA)
Her working experience includes various research positions in Colombia and Canada, all connected with her strong interest on developmental and economic issues in Latin America.
contact: aospina@idrc.ca

Julien Pain, Head of the Internet Freedom Desk at Reporters Without Borders
Julien runs advocacy campaigns to protect bloggers and citizens journalists who express themselves online
contact: internet@rsf.org

Kristen Peterson, Co-Founder of Inveneo
Peterson is closely involved in the creation, implementation, and promotion of Inveneo's innovative technology solutions for marginalized communities.
contact: kristin.peterson@inveneo.org

Onno W. Purbo, Indonesian ICT adovocate
Purbo is a well-know advocate of ICT and has been behind the wireless initiatives to empower students and people at large in the neighborhood level in Indonesia. He has showcased his

affordable grass-roots solutions, VoIP and other ICT tools in Indonesia and abroad such as the Laos, Nepal, Sudan, Canada and others supported by the IDRC and the Asean Foundation.
contact: Onno@indo.net.id,

Katherine Reilly, Researcher
Ph.D. candidate and consultant Reilly has written in the use of ICTs by civil society, particularly in Latin America for such organizations as the IDTC, APC, and Social Sciences Research Council.
contact: katherine@reilly.net

Gideon Rosenblatt, Executive Director of ONE/Northwest,
ONE/Northwest is a Seattle-based non-profit which links environmental organizations in the Pacific Northwest with technology tools and know-how.
contact: gideon@onenw.org

Peter Rosenblum, Vice-President of Virtual Activism
Associate Clinical Professor in Human Rights at Columbia University; Associate Director of the Human Rights Program at the Harvard Law School since 1996.
contact: not available

Partha Sarker, Co-Founder of Bytes for All
Bytesforall.org is a source of information about technology serving the public good in South Asia.
contact: partha@bytesforall.org

Tarik Sayeed, Drishtipat.org
Drishtipat is a diaspora organization that uses the internet to raise money and send it to Bangladeshi SCOs who implement social change projects.
contact: tsayeed@gmail.com

Ian Schuler, ICT Program Manager for the National Democratic Institute
Schuler runs technology programs for NDI global democracy promotion projects.
contact: Ischuler@ndi.org

Parulian Simanjuntak, Executive Director of KuIS (Coalition for Healthy Indonesia)
KuIS is an information and communication network to provide support for health related advocacy activities, community education and capacity building.
contact: parulian@koalisi.org

Dirk Slater, Hands-on Projects Leader for Tactical Technology Collective
One of the first and most successful eRiders, Dirk now designs trainings for SCO technologists from th global south and transitional countries.
contact: dirk@tacticaltech.org

Phillip Smith, Founder of Community Bandwidth
Smith is a consultant who has studied e-advocacy best practices in a variety of global north environments.
contact: phillip@communitybandwidth.ca

Oreoluwa Solomu, Coordinator of the Blogs for African Women Project
Ore manages a project which seeks to tech young African women to blog. She is based in Nigeria.
contact: oresomolu@yahoo.com

Russell Southwood, Editor of Balancing Act Africa
Southwood is the foremost authority on telecommunications policy and infrastructure in Africa.
contact: editor@balancingact-africa.com

Mark Surman, Managing Director of the Telecenter Support Network of the International Development Research Centre
Surman is an expert is telecenters in the global south and has very interesting ideas on many aspects of e-advocacy. He is one of the foremost writers about ICT use by SCOs
contact: msurman@idrc.ca

Tom Steinberg, Founder of My Society
Steinberg has created innovative websites like WriteToThem.com and TheyWorkForYou.com that use the internet to help British citizens engage with their government. He has also worked with activists in transitional countries.
contact: tom@mysociety.org

Erik Sundelof, Digital Vision Fellow, consultant social media and mobilephone interaction
Erik has created a mobile blogging tool called inthefieldONLINE.net which is meant to be used by citizen journalists to post on any website using their mobile phone.
contact: erik@sundelof.net

Marilyn Tadros, Founding President and Executive Director of Virtual Activism
An Egyptian human rights activist, Marlyn Tadros teaches Computer and Internet Technologies at the Arts Institute of New England in Boston.
contact: mrt413@fac.aii.edu

Marek Tuszynski, Co-Founder and Deputy Director of Tactical Technology Colelctive
Tuszynski runs multiple Tactical Tech trainings around the world. Before founding Tactical Tech he directed the Internet Program for the Stefan Batory Foundation, a civil-society foundation based in Warsaw.
contact: marek@tacticaltech.org

Katrin Verclas, Executive Director of NTEN
NTEN is a non-profit technology network which serves the United States. Before coming to NTEN, Katrin was Co-Director of Aspiration.
contact: katrin@nten.org

Neha Viswanathan, South Asia Editor for Global Voices
Viswanathan is closely in the Indian blogger community and is also a consultant.
contact: nehavish@gmail.com

Rudi Von Staden, Project Coordinator and eRider for Ungana-Afrika
Ungana-Afrika is an NTAP based in South Africa that uses the eRider model to consult for SCOs in southern Africa. Rudi has good insights on being an eRider in Africa.
contact: rudi@ungana-afrika.org

Hannelore Wallner, Project Manager Civil Society Index at Civicus
Civicus is an NGO based in South Africa they studies civil society. Wallner is managing their comprehensive study of global civil society.
contact: hannelore.wallner@civicus.org

Ethan Zuckerman, Fellow at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society
Ethan is a multi-faceted activist, trainer, and blogger interested in ICT and development (particularly in Africa), internet censorshipand journalism. He is the co-founder of Global Voices and Geek Corps.
contact: ezuckerman@cyber.law.harvard.edu

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e-Advocacy Case Study Summaries

BRAZIL: Social Networking and a Disconnected Political Class

by Priscila Neri

While Brazil has embraced network technology more than most nations in the global south, its digital divide issues may be more of an obstacle than in most countries. The high correlation between those who are poorest and in most need of grassroots political organizing and those who do not have access to internet and mobile technologies is very high. The segments of Brazilian society with access are the least interested in social and political activism. Thus, the impressive numbers detailed in the case study below overstate the potential for e-advocacy in Brazil.

That said, Brazil's commitment to e-government and the growing public use of those services suggest that in time things may change. But with more than 50 percent of the population having no computer experience and no resources to change that situation, it will take much time and either economic growth or external intervention from NGO's or other entities to change the patterns of access among the poor of Brazil.

Overview of Country

Brazil is the world's fifth-largest country and accounts for half of the territory, population and gross national product (GNP) of South America. The republic is divided into 26 states and one federal district, home to the capital city of Brasília. Brazil's population of roughly 186 million inhabitants is predominantly urban (81 percent) and young (the average age is 28 and only 6 percent of Brazilians are over 65). A land of sharp contrasts, Brazil boasts the 11th largest economy in the world but is home to the second worst wealth distribution on the planet (after South Africa): The richest 20 percent retain 63 percent of the country's wealth while the poorest 20 percent are left with just 2.4 percent of the country's wealth and live on less than US$ 2 a day. Unemployment afflicts 10 percent of the population according to government statistics, which consider informal jobs and sub occupations (street vendors, for example) as "employment". Poor quality education is another challenge: Over 60 percent of the population has only been in school for up to seven years, and experts estimate that "functional illiteracy" (those who can only write their names or read but not comprehend) encompasses up to 40 percent of the population.

What began as a social divide has evolved into a deep digital divide and 67.8 percent of Brazil's population of 186 million people has never accessed the Internet. Another 55 percent have never used a computer. The main challenges facing the dissemination of ICTs are the same ones that defy the enormous gap between rich and poor: low quality education and economic exclusion.

Nonetheless, Brazilians who have access to the Internet (32 million in total; 14.10 million of whom access it from home) are considered "early adopters" and rapidly adhere to new technologies. Though only 12 percent of Brazilian households have an Internet connection, in 2005 Brazil was the second-highest country in the world to use MSN (seven out of 10 online Brazilians used Messenger). It is the No. 1 country on the social networking community Orkut (that has roughly 13 million Brazilians) and the country that registered the second highest growth, after Spain, visiting YouTube.com, reaching 1.2 million users in April 2006.

ICT Impact on Brazilian Life

In 2005, PC sales grew 36 percent thanks to the devaluation of the US dollar and to tax incentives offered by Brazilian government. In all, 83 percent of the computers purchased in 2005 cost less

than US$1,000, according to IT Data. For 2006, analysts predict a 15 percent increase in PC sales in Brazil. In total (considering both businesses and homes), there are currently 32 million computers in operation in Brazil.

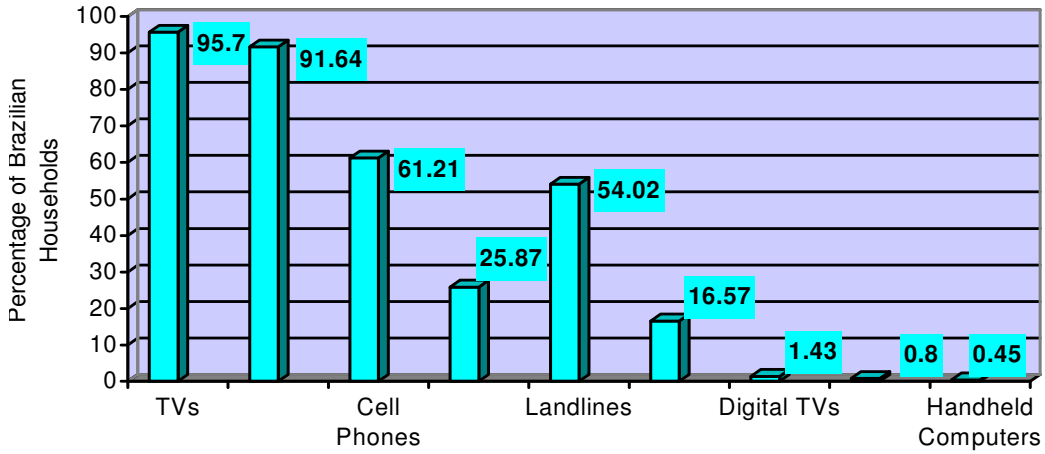
The personal computer is still out of reach for the majority of Brazilians. More than half of the population (54.8 percent) has never used a computer. Of those who do use PCs, 14 percent use them daily and 11 percent use them once a week. Numbers of usage/access usually follow the same pattern: the higher the income and years of education, the higher the chances the family will own ICT equipments.

In an effort to popularize the PC, the Brazilian government launched a program called "Computador para Todos" (Computers for All) in the end of 2005, an initiative that allocated US$ 150 million to subsidize/finance the purchase of PCs that cost up to US$ 700. The retailers obtain tax exemptions from the government and, in turn, offer low-income consumers below-market interest rates as well as the option to pay for their computers in up to 24 monthly installments of US$ 35. One popular retailer joined the program and bought a stock of 15,000 PCs to sell in a period of three months. They were sold out in two weeks and are currently seeking further government subsidies to extend the program.

Still, Brazil is considered a model of successful e-governance practices for the rest of the world. Through its transparency website, www.portaldatransparencia.gov.br, it is possible to access the national budget, research federal contracts and monitor what tax money is being spent on. The official congress websites (www.camara.gov.br and www.senado.gov.br) are user-friendly and clear. An average 13 percent of Brazilians access the e-government websites. Furthermore, elections are conducted via secure electronic voting machines – 100 percent of votes are cast through computerized systems developed with local technology – and 98 percent of all income tax forms are submitted online.

Mobile and Internet Penetration

The Brazilian telecom sector was privatized in 1998. Since then, the number of conventional landlines has nearly doubled and mobile phones have skyrocketed. Total mobile phones went from 5.6 million in 1998 to 30.9 million in 2002 and 90.6 million at the end of April 2006. Between January and April of this year, there were 4.4 million new mobile phone users in Brazil. The teledensity index for mobile phone has grown 80.05 percent in the last two years, from 26.22 in January 2004 to 48.72 in April 2006. According to studies by São-Paulo-based consulting firm Teleco, there will be 107 million mobile phones in Brazil by the end of this year and 170 million by 2010. Unlike the Internet and personal computers, which still maintain high level of exclusion among the poor, mobile phones beat landlines across all social and economic classes in Brazil.



Source: *TIC Domicílios 2005*, a study conducted in August/September of 2005 by the Comitê Gestor da Internet no Brasil (Brazilian Committee for Internet Management)

Today, 47 percent of all mobile phones in use in Brazil are in the southeast of the country, a region that concentrates the richest states of the Federation (among them São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro). In São Paulo, for example, there is a teledensity index of 43.98. In the nation's capital, Brasília, that numbers rises to 118.5. But in poor capitals the index can be as low as 19.48 (Maranhão) and 32.31 (Northeast).

Telecom costs are still relatively high for Brazilian standards and 80.5 percent of all mobile phones are pre-paid (in many cases, the phone is used solely to receive calls). A call within Brazil can cost anywhere from US$0.07/minute (from fixed lines to local destinations) to US$ 1.00/minute (from mobile to mobile or long distance). Average monthly subscription fees start at US$ 25 in big cities. Taxes on the telecom sector, especially on mobile services, are the highest in all of Latin America and account for 30 percent of telecom companies' revenues, as opposed to an average 20 percent in most emerging economies (Pyramaid Research/GSM Brasil).

In Brazil, 26 percent of all mobile phones can be connected to the internet although only 7 percent of Brazilians use their phones for that purpose.

The predominant technology on mobile phones in Brazil is GSM (55 percent), followed by CDMA (27 percent) and TDMA (18 percent). The five largest mobile phone operators by market share in Brazil are: Vivo (33.71 percent), Tim (23.58 percent), Claro (22.02 percent), Oi (12.55 percent) and Telemig/Amazônia (5.18 percent).

Despite the improvements in access, year after year telecom companies have received the most complaints made to consumer defense organizations in Brazil. Even in a year marked by serious corruption scandals involving top-scale authorities, nearly half of all calls made to National Congress in 2005 were citizens calling for the approval of a new law that reduces telecom costs.

Another consequence of the high telecom costs is the use of VoIP, which is slowly starting to grow among the rich in Brazil. VoIP calls can be up to 80 percent cheaper and cost between US$ 0.04 and US$ 0.30. Monthly subscriptions average only US$ 6. Some 70,000 businesses have adopted the technology. Many companies have started eyeing the residential consumers, a potential market of over 3.5 million consumers, and the total number of Brazilians that have fast Internet connections in their homes. There are currently over 30 companies in the Brazilian VoIP market. To date, Skype is the most popular program of this kind in Brazil, having been downloaded almost 2 million times in 2005. Brazil is Skype's 5th market in the world. Consulting firm Frost & Sullivan predicts that VoIP lines will grow 87.5 percent in Latin America by 2011.

The necessary technology for text messaging is present in 90 percent of all mobile phones in Brazil. However, SMS numbers are still extremely low in comparison with other countries. In 2005, a total of 4.8 billion SMSs were sent in Brazil – an average of 5 text messages/per user/per month (Bites Consulting). The main reason for this is the high cost of text messaging in Brazil – an average SMS costs US$ 0.20 to send – and also a lack of cultural habit.

Brazilians seem to prefer MSN Messenger, used by seven out of 10 Brazilian Internet users. More than 600 million messages are exchanged everyday in Brazil via MSN Messenger; by comparison, about 400 million SMSs are sent per month in Brazil.

Twelve percent of Brazilians have an Internet connection. Most Brazilians that access the Internet from home have dial-up connections (62 percent) and use the Internet to search for information/services and for communication. About 40 percent of Brazilian Internet users said they use the web to interact with public officials/organizations. Among those who don't have access to internet from their homes, 46.4 percent don't because they lack a computer, 26 percent because the equipment is too expensive, 16.2 percent say the cost of having access to the internet is too high, 8.9 percent say they're not interested in the internet, 8.7 percent don't how to use a computer.

Digital Divide in Brazil

To fight the digital divide, the Brazilian government and civil society organizations have invested greatly in "digital inclusion" training programs for the poor as well as in efforts aimed at making PCs cheaper and more accessible to Brazilians. Despite important progress, these initiatives don't come close to meeting the demand.

What could meet the demand and have an almost instant impact on the country is the untangling of the legal and political mess surrounding the FUST (Fundo de Universalização dos Serviços de Telecomunicações). The FUST was a fund established in 2001 by Brazilian government as a pre-requisite for companies that wished to participate in the privatization of the telecom sector. According to the contractual condition, all companies awarded deals would have to deposit 1 percent of their total revenues into the FUST, which would be used to promote the universalization of telecom services in Brazil. Today the FUST totals around US$ 2 billion but remains virtually untouched due to endless judicial battles and incomprehensible lack of political resolve. Lying in the safes of the Brazilian Treasury, the money has been used to service Brazil's economic deficit and help meet the fiscal surplus determined in deals with the IMF.

In December of 2005, the non-profit CDI (Committee for Democracy in Information Technology) launched the campaign FUST Já! (FUST now!), a website http://sig.cdi.org.br/FUST/site/saiba_mais.php that allows whoever supports the campaign to send an e-mail directly to the minister of Communications demanding the liberation of the funds. Until mid-April, 2,826 people had participated.

According to renowned Judge Fernando Botelho, expert on FUST and author of "Telecommunications and FUST", 13 priority investment areas have already been defined for the application of FUST money if and when it is ever released. They are programs ranging from telecom to health that could have an immediate and historic impact on the fight to reverse the Digital Divide. Botelho points out two of these 13 projects: a) Project Schools, for an estimated US$ 235 million, will install computers and fast Internet connections in all 7,000 public secondary schools in Brazil. Almost overnight, 14 million young students would start to have permanent access to the Web; b) Project Telemedicina, for US$ 50 million, will interconnect all community health centers in the country, dramatically improving patient care and treatment and public health.

ICT in Civil Society and Advocacy

Brazil is a young democracy and ended a 20-year period of military rule in 1984. Since the return of democracy, civil society has become increasingly more politically involved and the number of non-profit organizations has risen continuously. However, due to the incipient nature of the democratic state, society, including the civil society sector, has not yet learned how to fully appropriate the instruments and mechanisms of democracy. Government transparency, for example, is relatively advanced – one can access the national budget or obtain any senator or congressman's contact information online – but not very widespread.

Furthermore, most Brazilian Internet users come from privileged economic classes that have not been known to be very politically or socially active. The politically active portion of Brazilian society – which has fueled the rapid expansion of the third sector since the 1990s – is precisely the population left out of the ICT revolution. For this reason, non-profits in Brazil have not yet exploited the potential of ICTs for e-advocacy and organizing.

Between 1996 and 2002, the number of non-profit organizations in the country nearly doubled from 105,000 to 276,000. Experts believe the current total surpasses 400,000. The third sector in Brazil is a US$ 6 billion a year industry and employs about three percent (1.5 million people) of the total Brazilian workforce. There are an estimated 20 million volunteers who dedicate their time to these organizations in Brazil – 60 percent volunteer in religion-related programs.

Despite the rapid expansion in the past decade, the Brazilian third sector is still characterized by an incipient nature that struggles with basic needs. One of the biggest difficulties is funding – 77 percent of the 276,000 non-profits operating in 2002 had no staff at all and only 7 percent relied on a staff of 10 people or more.

The laws that regulate contributions to the third sector are considered restrictive – only about seven percent of Brazilian corporations qualify for tax exemptions/deductions upon donating money to non-profits. The legislation that is most favorable to corporate contributions relate to programs dedicated to child well-being and cultural productions. The good news is that increasingly more Brazilians have been making personal donations to non-profit organizations. (To date, there is no news of significant online financial contributing in Brazil). According to research by non-profit Comunidade Solidária, the number of Brazilians making personal contributions tripled between 1995 and 1998 to more than 44 million people. Corporations have also upped their contributions year after year despite the legal and fiscal setbacks. According to the survey Pesquisa Ação Social dasEmpresas (Corporate Social Action/2002), conducted by Ipea, the government institute of economic research, 59 percent of all Brazilian companies are involved in social responsibility actions.

Based on interviews with activists, non-profit leaders, scholars and industry representatives, here are some of the challenges facing third sector organizations:

- Lack of proper funding and infrastructure – Most organizations cannot even afford to hire professional staff, let alone invest in technology.
- Inexperience – Most organizations still use the Internet solely as an informative tool, not an interactive means of communicating with their base. The websites of major Brazilian non-profits are designed as e-pamphlets of their mission and activities.
- Lack of training and technical support – Most organizations say they would be willing to partake in training courses and workshops to better utilize new technologies within their actions;

- Offline base – Computers have not yet penetrated into inner-city neighborhoods and slums, where social movements are the strongest. For the most part, union members, students and grassroots activists are offline or have very restricted access to the Internet.
- Vertical organizational culture – Many organizations are built upon vertical internal structures in which a centralized board of directors approves the goals and actions. Participative online forums and interactive discussions with members are not very widespread.
- Remnants of "Old Left" Mentality – A few organizations are still wary and suspicious of new technologies, seen as foreign instruments of domination and subversion. News of illegal wire-tapping in the US, for example, only adds to the idea that these technologies can potentially be used by the richer and more informed countries to sabotage the poorer countries.

In addition to nonprofits, other important groups have used ICTs in advocating for a civil society. One would be labor unions and student groups, who represent great masses in Brazil with enormous mobilization capability. Their bases are largely offline but their members do generally own pre-paid mobile phones. To date, Internet and SMS-advocacy have not yet been significantly used for mobilization purposes by these groups. Conventional organizing methods such as regional and local grassroots meetings remain the most popular form of communication. However, there have been isolated incidents such as marches and protests that did rely on communication via SMS and MSN Messenger. These demonstrations were spontaneously organized by middle school students from public schools in the cities of Salvador (Bahia state) and Florianópolis

(Santa Catarina state) to protest against the government's plan to cancel student discounts on public transportation. There is very little record of how this mobilization came about since it wasn't backed or coordinated by any organization. But experts consider the example an indication of how younger generations have already begun utilizing these new technologies for advocacy purposes. Alternative and independent media organizations have also used new technologies for advocacy purposes, a few examples of which appear below.

Initiatives to broaden Nonprofits' use of the Internet and other new technologies for advocacy

Movimentos em Rede is a nonprofit that seeks to interconnect community grassroots organizations from poor areas of the city of Rio de Janeiro and teach them how to join forces and use new forms of mobilization to influence public policy. The initiative is coordinated by a team of highly qualified professionals with backgrounds in technology and education and has the support of University research departments and select corporations. A pilot version the project kicked off in early 2006 but the organization needed to raise US$15,000 to begin full implementation. Em Rede aims to reach all non-profits in Rio within the next three years. Among the goals of the project are:

- Creating a Technological Support Fund for non-profits in Rio;
- Developing software to connect these organizations via network
- systems;
- Creating technology that could interconnect activists from these
- organizations via SMS and allow bulk text-messaging.

http://emrede.org - 55 (21) 2240-2111 Contact: Ricardo Schneider, director; ricardo@emrede.org

Socid (Sociedade Digital) is a nonprofit whose main mission is to help civil society organizations take part in the Digital Revolution. Their projects range from capacity building to software and website development. http://www.socid.org.br - 55 (21) 3473-0311 Contact: Alexandre Rangel, executive coordinator; arangel@socid.org.br

Instituto de Inteligência Coletiva is a nonprofit that is developing a FOSS software program aimed at fostering the interactive aspect of the Internet among third sector organizations by encouraging online discussion groups and other Web 2.0-type applications – www.ico.org.br - 55

(21) 2246-1323 Contact: Carlos Nepomuceno, coordinator; nepomuceno@mandic.com.br

Rede de Informações do Terceiro Setor (RITS) is a third-sector umbrella organization that has a specific program geared towards ICT training and encouraging nonprofits to effectively use the Internet to improve their networks and foster interconnectivity. Membership-based activism and SMS-advocacy have not yet been introduced. Ação Digital Nordeste (ADN), is an interesting initiative coordinated by RITS which promotes ICT training and capacity building in 40 nonprofits throughout states of the Northeast, the poorest region in Brazil. RITS is a member of the Brazilian arm of the global CRIS – Communication Rights in the Information Society – movement (www.crisbrasil.org.br) - www.rits.org.br - 55 (21) 2527-5494 Contact: Paulo Lima, director; plima@rits.org.br

Examples of Technology in Advocacy

Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem-Terra (MTS) is Brazil's Landless Worker's Movement, one of Latin America's largest social movements with an estimated 2 million landless members organized in 23 Brazilian states. The organization advocates land reform and carries out peaceful occupations of unproductive lands. In Brazil, three percent of the population owns more than 60 percent of all arable lands. In 1993, MST received 2,300 donated computers and launched the Frente Digital (Digital Front), a program of "digital training centers" in landless workers' temporary settlements – in 120 camps. Another partnership granted a pilot installation of 10 satellite internet connections in these centers. MST hopes to expand internet access to the remaining 110 schools. www.mst.org - 55 (11) 3361 3866

UNE - União Nacional dos Estudantes is an organization that represents all college and university students in Brazil. Although their main areas of focus are education-related issues (affirmative action in public institutions and educational reforms, for example), they also debate global themes. E-mails and online discussion groups are widely used for debates and mobilizations. Text-messaging for advocacy has not been attempted. www.une.org.br - 55 (11) 5574 7145

E-indignacao.com.br, an independent media site, initiated an online march to the nation's capital, Brasília, to protest corruption scandals involving top government officials. Each person that clicks has to enter their e-mail to make the virtual march advance 2 more meters. From August 2005 to June 2006, 165,548 people had participated – 340,000 more would be necessary to meet the goal. The marketing agency that launched the initiative is now considering e-marketing actions. Contact: Denilson Fedozzi denilson@fabraquinteiro.com.br http://www.E-indignacao.com.br

Comitê para a Democratização da Informática (Committee for Democracy in Information Technology, CDI) was founded by social entrepreneur Rodrigo Baggio in the city of Rio de Janeiro in 1993. The organization builds ICT schools in slums and low-income neighborhoods and aims at capacity building and fostering civic participation by teaching the poor how to use ICTs. To date, CDI has built 792 schools in Brazil, installed 5,851 computers and consolidated a network of 1,768 educators and 1,154 volunteers. Approximately 70,000 people are trained in ICTs by CDI each year in Brazil. The project has also started expanding internationally and has built 173 overseas schools in countries such as Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico, Chile and Colombia. Despite having its work be internationally recognized in the past years, CDI still faces a greater demand than it has conditions to meet. Contact: Rodrigo Baggio, founder; rodrigo@cdi.org.br www.cdi.org.br - 55 (21) 3235-9450

Sampa was founded in 2000 with 10 community telecenters in the poor inner-city neighborhoods of São Paulo (Brazil's largest urban center). Sampa now runs over 130 telecenters. The organization maintains partnerships with corporations, community grassroots groups and schools and hopes to

empower civilians to influence public policies with the use of ICTs. www.sampa.org - 55 (11) 3231-1712 Contact: Maurício Lavigna, executive-director, falavigna@sampa.org

Coletivo Digital was founded in 2004, and focuses on a) digital inclusion; b) FOSS; c) internet for citizen empowerment; d) capacity building; e) e-governance. http://www.coletivodigital.org.br - 55 (11) 3083-5134 Contact: Beá Tibiriçá, president; bea@coletivodigital.org.br

The Brazilian arm of Transparency International (Transparência Brasil), provides online applications that allow internet users to monitor federal contracts and government purchases, including a tool that lets user compare the contracts with their respective legislation. http://www.transparencia.org.br - 55 (11) 3062-3436 Contact: Claudio Weber Abramo, executive-director

The Viva Favela (slum, in Portuguese) is an innovative virtual communication experience – the first Internet portal in Brazil designed exclusively for the needs and interests of low-income communities. Viva Favela, maintained by the non-profit Viva Rio, has a team of journalists and "community correspondents" – favela residents qualified to act as reporters and photographers – that expose all of the human, historical, cultural, economic, and social dimensions of these areas. Founded in July of 2001, Viva Favela aims to broaden the digital inclusion of these communities and reduce social inequality. Roughly 1.2 million of Rio de Janeiro's city population resides in favelas. www.vivafavela.com.br - 55 (21) 2555-3764 Contact: Chris Magnavita, press adviser; chrismagnavita@vivario.org.br

Clique Fome & Clique Semi-Árido are two sites sponsored by companies that make financial contributions to specific programs every time someone enters the site and clicks on the page. Clique Fome (Click for Hunger), which raises money for anti-hunger projects, raised more than US$ 200,000 in five years and was accessed by more than 15 million people. This project has now been converted to Clique Fome de Emprego (Hunger for Jobs). Clique Semi-Árido (Click for the Semi-Arid) works the same way but for a different purpose: every time someone clicks on the site, sponsoring companies make contributions that are used to build rain-water retaining tanks in the inlands of the Brazilian Northeast, the poorest and driest region of the country that suffers with recurrent droughts. Over 1 million donations have been made since 2001. www.cliquefome.com.br www.cliquesemiarido.org.br

Contas Abertas (Open Accounts) is a non-profit founded early this year to monitor government budget and track public spending. In four months, they reached 1 million accesses. http://contasabertas.uol.com.br

Cidade do Conhecimento (City of Knowledge) is a research project created in 2001 by economist, sociologist and journalist Gilson Schwartz, PhD, professor at the Institute of Advanced Studies of the University of São Paulo. It serves as a "digital city" built by "communities of practice" that develop new space-time frameworks for the production of cultural identities and collective intelligence. The project is based on the belief that the democratization of knowledge creating networks could be the foundation for a leap in development, especially through the improvement of human development indicators. Among the City of Knowledge's activities is the Social Design Studio, a network of professionals and organizations in governmental and non-governmental sectors as well as in private companies that are committed to the development of a knowledge economy in Brazil (priority to information society-related development projects designed and managed by underserved communities). http://www.cidade.usp.br - 55 (11) 3091-4305 Contact: Gilson Schwartz, founder; gschwartz@folhasp.com.br

Greenpeace Brasil's membership has been rising and reached 23,000 in 2006, from 15,000 one year earlier. They also have a database of 70,000 e-mails belonging to activists from around the country. GB already promotes some forms of online advocacy by conducting petitions and

elaborating campaigns in online forums with their members. They have considered SMS-advocacy but don't have any concrete plans yet. Greenpeace Brasil - www.greenpeace.org.br - 55 (11) 3035-1155 Contact: Marília Ávila, press officer; marilia.avila@br.greenpeace.org

An online networking site (similar to MySpace), **Orkut** experienced unparalleled success in Brazil. Today, 70 percent of the roughly 18 million global Orkut users are Brazilians. 60 percent of all users are under the age of 25. Although almost all the communities in Orkut are geared towards entertainment, futilities and finding old friends, there are a few groups on Orkut more dedicated to political issues.

- What's going on with the world? (talks about environment, racism, poverty): 344,110 members
- I want to change the world: 91,060 members
- Human Rights: 18,660 members
- Groups defending the Amazon as a part of Brazilian territory (a popular rumor in Brazil is that the US is planning to devise a plan to make the Amazon a global territory): over 50,000 members
- Amnesty International: 6,159 members
- Kyoto Protocol: 5,734 members
- Political Awareness: 3,402 members
- Peace between Israelis and Palestinians: 2,962 members
- Global Warming: 2,452 members
- Nelson Mandela: 970 members
- For an end to social inequality: 855 members
- Support for Denmark (after the cartoons controversy): 417 members
- UN-related groups: over 5,000 members
- Globalization-related groups: about 1,000 members
- Against the genocide in Sudan: 250 members

Challenges and Opportunities

Building E-Advocacy in Brazil – Challenges:

- Low level of education and income makes technology inaccessible to
- most Brazilians;
- The bases of social grassroots movements are largely offline;
- Telecom costs are still relatively high for local standards;
- Non-profit and civil society organizations lack proper funding;
- Lack of training for new technologies;

Building E-Advocacy in Brazil – Opportunities:

- Internet access costs, as well as the prices of PCs, have consistently fallen in the past years;
- The number of online Brazilians has risen consistently;
- E-commerce has grown year after year;
- E-government makes it easy for civil society to track and measure accountability;
- Good telecom infrastructure in most major cities;
- Politically active civil society;
- New projects that plan ICT training for non-profits have emerged;

INDIA: The Struggle to Bring High Tech to the Masses

by Rishi Chawla

India is the world's largest democracy, embracing not only countless cultures, languages and religions but also a population exceeding one billion. Despite taking great strides in addressing poverty, there remains a distinct rural-urban economic divide and India's emerging image as a global economic force sits uncomfortably with the harsh reality of its human development statistics. India accounts for approximately 3.4% of the world's landmass but is home to about 16% of the global population. As a nuclear power, India will remain critical to global politics as long as the tinderbox dispute with Pakistan over Kashmir remains unresolved.

This is the backdrop for India's nascent internet and mobile advocacy efforts. Though we typically hear about how its growing Information & Communications Technologies (ICT) industry is a rising force in global markets, the truth is internet and mobile phone penetration is still small and the use of these technologies for advocacy has only just begun.

This case study provides an overview of the potential for internet and mobile advocacy in India.

ICT Impact on Indian Life

Information & Communications technologies have heralded an entirely new era in India. Though India is a well known in the international software market, it has taken a while to adopt ICT in day to day life. ICT is creating new ethos, perceptions, cultures, and behavior patterns wherever its use has grown in a significant way and its use is growing at breakneck speeds. ICT is central to the gradual overhaul of even government systems and practices, considered otherwise resistant to change. The National e-Governance Plan is on its way and the country is witnessing a transition toward paperless government with hopes of shortly getting essential services to be home delivered, which were often hard to get done after days and months of running around.

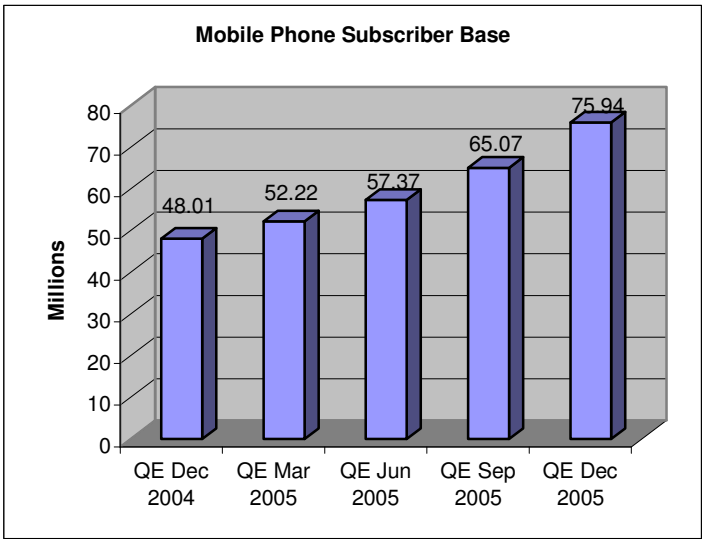
Hardware manufacturers have been able to surmount the challenges of offering low-cost PCs workable in environment where dust, lack of air-conditioning, and irregular power haunt India's common people, who also have very low purchasing power. While entry level computers are available for as low as Rs.10,000, laptop sales are also growing at an impressive rate.

India's teledensity grew from 0.2 percent in 1948 to 1.94 percent in 1998, but it has shown significantly faster growth since, reaching 7.17 percent in 2003, 9.2 percent in 2004 and 11.43 percent in 2006. The growth rate is phenomenal and is considered as the outcome of liberalization of the Telecom Policies in the last decade.

Such statistics have a larger implication on India's populace when it comes to assessing the impact of these technologies. The internet has expanded from websites to emails, web-groups, blogs, mass-mailers, and so on. Mobile phones offer SMS, multimedia content, m-blogs, and P2C (person to company) platforms that help create the platform for digital advocacy. Numerous groups, citizen forums, media outfits, and civil society organizations have utilized one or a mix of these technology tools and tasted huge success. This success has been translated in the form of sensitization, mobilization, and revenues – whatever aimed for – for the owners of the campaigns.

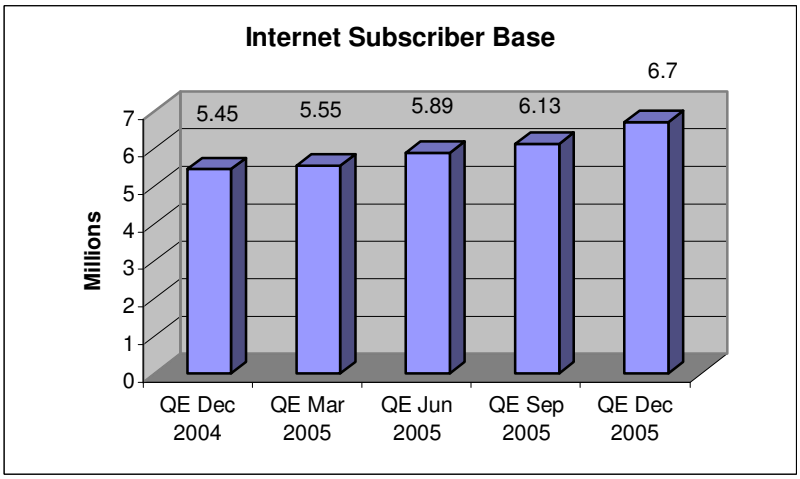
Mobile and Internet Penetration

The Mobile (GSM and CDMA) Industry reached 75.94 million subscribers (GSM 58.49 million & CDMA 17.45 million) as of the end of 2005. It grew around 10.87 million subscribers in the last quarter of 2005, alone, a rate of 16.72% (15.03% in GSM and 22.79% in CDMA) as against 13.42% (13.16% in GSM and 14.37% in CDMA) for the previous quarter ending September 2005.



M/s Bharti, M/s Reliance and BSNL/MTNL have licenses to offer mobile services in all 23 service areas. The largest operator, M/s Bharti is offering services in all the 23 service areas. M/s Reliance is presently offering services in all service areas except J&K circle. BSNL is also offering services in 21 circles. M/s Tata Teleservices is offering services in all its licensed 20 service areas.

By the end of 2005, the number of Internet subscribers stood at 6.7 Million as compared to 6.1 Million during the preceding quarter, registering an increase of 9.44% during the quarter. The annual growth rate was 23%. According to IAMAI (Internet & Mobile Association of India) the number of Internet users in India reached 38.5 million at the end of 2005 (up 54% since the previous year) and could reach 100 million by 2007.



The number of Broadband subscribers as reported by ISPs was 903,000 at the end December, 2005 as compared to 610,000 at the end of September, 2005, thus registering a growth of 48% over the previous quarter.

IAMAI findings show the most popular online activities undertaken by Internet users in India in 2005 (as a % of respondents):

- E-mail and IM: 98%
- Job search: 51%
- Banking: 32%
- Bill payment: 18%
- Stock trading: 15%
- Matrimonial search: 15%

According to figures from IAMAI, while male users increased in absolute numbers, they fell from 72% of the online population in 2004-05 to 68% in 2005-06. This means that the proportion of women users grew from 28% in 2004-05 to 32% in 2005-06; reaching 12.3 million.

IAMAI estimates that the male/female ratio in the next two years will be closer to 60:40, but in absolute numbers men will still exceed women online. Nevertheless, the increase in the number of women online in India is still impressive. Looking at a profile of Indian women online, IAMAI reports that:

- 57% of them log on from home
- 46% are unmarried
- 38% are married women with kids
- 78% have gone online in the last three years

Also, IAMAI notes that Indian women are cautious online shoppers, preferring to window shop rather than buy online.

Digital Divide in India and Attempts to Alleviate It

India is often characterized as a country of contradictions, which is exemplified by the fact that it entered the new millennium with nearly one-third of the world's computer software engineers and a quarter of the world's undernourished. While there are 12 phones and 10 TV sets for every 100 Indians, the total number of people with personal computers in the country is less than 2% in a population of over a billion.

According to one estimate, the size of the IT sector, which currently accounts for 1% of India's gross domestic product, could rise to 10% of GDP by 2008. At the same time, the benefits of IT have reached only a minuscule portion of the country's population, which has resulted in a yawning digital divide. Although the number of Internet users is growing by 40-50% a year, the total number of Indians who have accessed the Internet is less than 5% of the total population.

The number of mobile telephones in India has doubled over the last two years, crossing the 100 million mark in July 2006, and the government believes 250 million mobiles will be in use within two years. Although cellular and long-distance calls in India were among the most expensive in the world until as recently as 1994, current rates are the lowest in the world.

But the digital divide is still evident. Against more than four phones for every 10 citizens in cities such as Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai, there are entire provinces in eastern and central India - Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Assam - where there are fewer than two phones for every 100 residents.

India remains a nation of amazing contrasts and inequalities. One small section lives in air-conditioned comfort and shop in glitzy malls where products from all over the world are available. Major Indian companies such as the Tatas and Birlas now pay their top employees salaries that average US$1 million per year.

However, at least one out of four Indians live below the internationally defined poverty line, spending less than $1 a day and one out of three cannot read or write their own names. Bridging the digital divide in such a polarized society is going to be a daunting task.

IIT Professor turned entrepreneur Dr. Ashok Jhunjhunwala strongly advocates a new approach that seeks to bridge this gap with a national network of owner-operated computer centers with Internet access, that earn income from a broad range of small transactions. It takes advantage of low-cost wireless technology that eliminates the need for telephone lines. He predicts that there will be thousands of information kiosks across this nation of more than a billion people someday, providing poorly educated villagers—who until now have reaped few benefits from the country's booming trade in information technology—with direct access to government officials and records

as well as to online services such as banking and medical consultations.

Dr. Jhunjhunwala and his colleagues created an independent company, n-Logue Communications, which identifies promising kiosk owners, trains them and provides equipment—computer, printer, battery backup and wireless Internet antenna—for about $1,000. n-Logue helps the owners arrange financing, which is then paid off with revenue from the kiosks. The company makes its money from hourly connection fees.

Central to the efforts of n-logue is the Wireless Local Loop technology, which provides cheap, relatively fast Internet connections to fiber-optic cables as far as 18 miles away. According to Dr. Jhunjhunwala, although many villages in India still lack phone service, India's fiber-optic network is sufficiently well developed to provide wireless coverage for up to 85 percent of the country.

Other Initiatives. In order to achieve "Total Digital Empowerment" for rural Indian folks, many other initiatives have been also been taken up by the Indian Government, academic institutions, private sector, and entrepreneurs. Examples of these efforts are:

GyanDoot: The project is located in central Indian state of MP, and was initiated by local administrative authorities with consultation with gram panchayats/village councils. The project was a role model for other local government bodies to bring governance and rural information kiosks to the doorsteps of the beneficiaries in the tribal India.

SARI (Sustainable Access in Rural India): SARI is a collaboration between India's best technology institutes, like IIT-Chennai and MIT's Media Lab-Asia and Harvard University, the project's aim is to provide access to 1000+ villages in Mudurai. The objectives of the project were to provide easy and affordable access to rural entrepreneurs to empower and include them with connectivity.

E-Chaupal: E-Chaupal is successfully bridging the gap between rural community and buyer and increasing the income level of farmers by removing the role of middlemen. This model has generated various employment opportunities in central and northern India for rural educated youths.

TaraHaat-Rural Connectivity in Punjab and MP: This project is a private sector initiative to provide online services to large number of rural communities in north India. One of the most innovative aspects of the project is its highly interactive and graphics –interface systems, which allow semi-literate and neo-literate users enhanced access to products and services.

Village Knowledge Center by MSSR Foundation, Pondichery: One of the oldest ICT4D models, it was initiated in 1997 with support from IDRC, as well as other funding agencies. The project is currently operational in 8-10 villages, although it originally began with 11 centers. Most successful among them is a center based in fishing village downloading weather information from a decommissioned US navy satellite, which was then interpreted for local use and narrowcast over loudspeakers on the banks of the backwater lagoon from which fishermen head out into high seas

MLA (Media Lab Asia): MLA is a Joint Venture to bridge the "Digital Divide" that was initiated by Indian government and MIT. The project is focused on research and implementation involving various academic and research institutes like IITs and IIS (Indian Institute of Science) of India. MLA is now owned by the Indian government and is running its own research with leading technology institutes for ICT4D.

Simputer: Developed with the aim to offer low cost computing for rural community, the Simputer is the most innovative model in the recent past by Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. The aim of the innovation is to keep the hardware cost very low, so that rural consumer can also buy one

and can have access to free information and knowledge.

Drishtee.Com: Drishtee is a private sector company seeking to bring networked information and services to rural citizen–consumer. One such initiative is going on in Harayana state of north India and Punjab. The company is also starting its centers in newly born mountain state of Uttranchal. They employ rural entrepreneurs those who sell government forms, like birth, death and domicile certificates charge nominal amount to villagers, making the model sustainable on its own.

ICT Use by Non-Profits for Civil Society and Advocacy

India has a vigorous nonprofit sector playing a pivotal role in accelerating the process of social and economic development. There has been a rapid expansion in the number of non-profit organizations in India. The sector has also matured in terms of outreach, sophistication of approach, diversity in types of organizational forms, the amounts invested in the sector and the employment it offers to people at all skill levels.

There are no official figures available as to the number of Non Government Organizations (NGOs) present in India. However, according to experts this number is somewhere between 1.5 million to 2 million. According to a study done by the Society for Participatory Research in Asia half of these organizations may not be registered. Most of these organizations are small and rural in nature. Around 21 % of these organizations are of religious nature, like those managing the temples, churches, mosques *etc.* and thus are involved in the work of spreading religion. Around 21 % of such organizations are in community/social service like those working for the uplifting of poor and backward classes, those working for the handicapped, removal of social vices, *etc.* and around 20 % of these organizations work for the cause of education, running educational institutions, minority education institutions, research organizations *etc.*

Use of Internet by the Indian Civil Society. The internet is increasingly being used by the Indian civil society sector, primarily for research, communication, dissemination of Information, fundraising, promotion activities, creating knowledge base. In accordance with the general trends of the digital divide in India, even within the civil society sector, the organizations that are located in the urban areas and those who are already affluent are the ones who are mostly using the internet. When compared to the huge size of the civil society in India, the current usage of Internet seems to be miniscule and concentrated only among the urban areas and affluent civil society organizations.

Barriers Towards Usage of the Internet. Many reasons can be cited for the lack of usage of Internet, primary among them are:

Lack of access to internet – In the rural areas and small towns of India the infrastructure is so poor that internet access is not available to the poor. According to most of the respondents, in most of the Indian villages and small towns the electricity is not available for more than half of the day, so using Internet is a distant dream.

Internet access is still costly – Until very recently only dial-up connections were available in India. Accessing internet used to cost almost $2 for an hour if accessed by phone. However with the change in government policy and the competition within in the telecom sector, broadband connections are available for $20 a month. But broadband connections are not available everywhere. In the smaller towns and villages people still have to depend on dial-up connections, which remain very costly and discourage the civil society sector to use the Internet.

Using internet tools like websites and e-newsletters is expensive – Website creation is still considered to be a costly affair by many civil society organizations. It may cost $1000 for an average website. This is fairly a large sum of money and thus deters many civil society

organizations, even if they want a website of their own. Moreover maintaining the website requires properly trained people in the organization.

Lack of technical capacity – People working in most of the Indian civil society organizations are not trained well enough to use the internet. Even in those organizations using the internet, there is a lack of capacity to use the full potential of the internet tools such as blogging, LISTSERVs, discussion groups, podcasting, *etc.* Most civil society organizations use the internet for communication and promotional purposes and thus are aware of email and chatting as communicational tools and websites as advertisements of the work they are doing. But they are still not aware of the e-advocacy and e-activism benefits of the internet tools.

E-advocacy in India is primarily focused on information dissemination rather than action facilitation. E-activism, though known to this country and being used by some, is not yet a revolution. Blogging and LISTSERVs are very popular among individual activists in India; however, most of blogs and LISTSERVs revolve around the discussions of technology. Blogs, discussion groups, and podcasting are not known to the majority of the civil society organizations, let alone being used for purposes of pushing forward their objectives.

Blogging scene in India. A bit like the Indian population, the blogosphere substantially multiplies in size with each passing day. In India, in particular, a recent and interim ban on blogs meant that bloggers were able to garner more attention than the ban itself and were thus able to get their virtual voices heard in the real world of newspapers and television.

According to the author of the blog Labnol.blogspot.com, ex-IITian Amit Agarwal, there are not enough people blogging from India and, more importantly, there are not enough people reading blogs. Further, the majority of Indian blogs are personal diaries that would only be interesting to the family and friends of the blog's author.

Another popular Indian blogger Amit Varma, whose blog IndiaUncut.blogspot.com won the Best Indiblog award in 2005, believes that Indian blogging and bloggers have a long way to go. According to Varma, in the US there are many political blogs which are influential and help mobilize election campaigns. But India is very different because blogs do not have as large an audience in India and internet access is not high enough to influence voting patterns. However he also believes that the advent of vernacular blogging might change this status quo, as it would make blogs more ubiquitous and, eventually, politically influential.

Blogs in India can provide immense benefit to civil society in advocacy and activism. They can be used for mobilizing volunteers during a disaster and also for garnering support during an advocacy campaign. We saw the benefits of blogging as a tool to mobilize people during the Tsunami disaster. The Tsunami Help Blog (The South-East Asia Earthquake and Tsunamis Blog) helped mobilize hundreds of volunteers around the world in mere hours, and provided a single point of information for Tsunami aid, relief and volunteers.

Other Indian blogs are involved in activism, including Indiarti.blogspot.com, a very popular blog on the Indian Rights to Information Act. It not only gives the resources concerning the Rights to Information Act but it also has people discussing their experiences with the new Act.

Use of SMS technology. Mobile phones, while a sign of upward mobility, have never featured as an e-advocacy device in India. But, mobile phone usage has skyrocketed over the last six years, with a significant SMS market opening up as well. By 2007, the mobile market is targeted to grow to 200 million subscribers. Every mobile phone in India is able to send and receive text messages. Today, Indian SMS traffic is roughly 900 million a month and growing. India, as is often repeated, has the fastest growing mobile phone market in the world. India is also an interesting lab of sorts to observe and learn how people are using their mobile phones in innovative ways. Mobile phones

and SMS have influenced the way people communicate in India, unleashing a communication revolution.

SMS is being used by schools, colleges, consulates, banks, temples, telco operators, railways, airlines, hotels, and the list goes on and on. Schools and Colleges are using SMS to send information about results. Students can get their results sent via SMS or call a special hotline to get their results. Consulates like the UK consulate in India encourage you to send SMS to get an update on your application status. It is quite amazing to see how swift and efficient the result is when you SMS the consulate. Within a few seconds you get a ping back with the current status of your application.

Temples have harnessed the power of SMS to help their devotees get that elusive *darshan* and blessings. For instance, Siddhivinayak temple in Bombay and Tirupathi temple in Andhra Pradesh have live webcasts and you can also send SMS prayer requests. In the Siddhivinayak temple, every Wednesday, two attendants at the temple print out text messages sent to the god—some 70,000 per week—from mobile phone users across India. Each message is then neatly folded and placed in a box by the temple's gold and vermilion idol.

There are so many other creative ways in which SMS is used in India. Getting cricket scores, checking appointments, booking train and plane tickets, confirming hotel reservations are increasingly common. Using SMS for surveys, feedback, and to create awareness is a growing trend among Indian mobile phone users. Virtual India appears to be a great place to hang out and see interesting trends unfold. Physical and other barriers have been transcended in India with the help of mobile phones.

Though there are no known instances of SMS being used for organized lobbying, activism or advocacy, there are signs of its adoption by some communities for mobilization in an unorganized way. A trend involving the use of SMS technology for polling has emerged in India. Almost all TV channels across genres solicit public participation in opinion polls through SMS entries. While the scope of the opinion is limited to two to three options, it offers a mechanism to aggregate public opinion. While these surveys are statistically inaccurate, they could be used as a model for gathering public opinion through SMS to engage in advocacy. NDTV, a fairly new broadcasting service has made a move ahead by integrating these mediums with the RTI Act (Right to Information) and leading a mass movement in the country.

Challenges & Opportunities

There is a wide disconnect between advocacy and grassroots work in India that has not yet been bridged. While a strong civil society exists, this sector is largely offline. The key challenges are manifold. Literacy barriers among the population pose a serious problem in the use of text-based technology. Lack of technological infrastructure—electricity, hardware, and networking capacities—poses a key challenge. The government's role in promoting electronic communications as a tool for democratic processes runs counter to a general suspicion of technology as an elitist tool. In addition, technology is often cost-prohibitive in India and has not yet been able to demonstrate its role in building advocacy movements.

The key opportunities for the use of technology in e-advocacy is to couple strong offline civil society organizations with technology that fits the unique needs of individual organizations and constituents. Given that research, testimonial building and networking are emerging as important processes in advocacy related work in India, e-advocacy can become a tool and a process through which development groups, NGOs, and activists share information and ideas, build constituent affinities, and involve citizens who may have not traditionally been engaged in advocacy, policy input, and political organizing.

Further, given the deeper penetration of mobile phones than the internet and given the growing trends in using mobile phones for data-based communications, a key to the development of digital advocacy in India hinges on enhancing the integration of internet and mobile advocacy capabilities.

Advocacy Case Studies

A Candle in the Wind: CNN-IBN TV – Use of ICTs to help the victims of the Mumbai bomb blasts

A series of 8 blasts within 11 minutes on the ill-fated evening of July 11, 2006 devastated the Indian commercial capital – Mumbai. The blasts took its toll on nearly 200 lives and left injured around 700 people as it rocked 7 local trains, also called the lifeline of Mumbai, during the peak hours. As people were returning homes, some of them could never meet their families and dear ones.

Several people and organizations performed actions as a tribute to the lives lost, of solidarity with the people hurt and, resilience toward the architects of the terrorist attacks. Most of these efforts were driven by information and communication technologies. It is to the credit of the age of convergence that the whole world witnessed an unprecedented wave.

One such campaign was launched by CNN-IBN, a satellite news broadcaster, and its Hindi counterpart Channel-7. The channel appealed to the people to "light a candle" online on its portal www.ibnlive.com. The candle lighting is very much akin to signing an online petition and reflects the sentiments of candle in the wind, i.e. hope in troubled times. In addition to an appeal on TV, thousands of SMS were sent appealing people to show their empathy for the victims by lighting one candle. These SMS were subsequently shared by millions of mobile users who shared the appeal with their contacts. The author of this article received 15-16 such SMS to light the candle.

The appeal and sentiments had a high impact, as the broadcaster donated one rupee for each virtual candle lit. The campaign is still ongoing and the number of lit candles is more than 2,000,000. The fact that only a handful of Indians have easy access to internet makes the success of this campaign all the more impressive.

Contact:
Global Broadcast News
Express Trade Tower, Plot No. 15-16, Sector 16A
Noida (UP), India – 201301
Ph: 91-120-4341818, 3987777 Fax: 91-120-4324106
Email: editor@ibnlive.com SMS: 2622

S. K. Dubey Anti-Corruption Campaign

One of the most serious challenges India faces is corruption, not only in government, but across all aspects of Indian society. There seems to be a nexus and consortium working between the government authorities and vendors. This tale of corruption and money-spilling over blood wears the murkiest face in the construction and infrastructure sector. An IIT-ian engineer, Satyendra Dubey, working on the Golden Quadrilateral Highway Project decided to take on the construction mafia (crime nexus) and wrote to the Prime Minister urging action. Requesting confidentiality, he detailed the loot of public money and poor implementation. The letter was forwarded down the bureaucratic chain and this whistleblower received numerous threats, ultimately leading to his murder on November 27, 2003 in Gaya (Bihar). The supporters subsequently formed a non-profit organization – S.K. Dubey Foundation that operates out of Florida for fighting corruption in India.

While the Foundation organizes campaigns, events, and demonstrations as regular tools for fighting corruption, most of its support, lobbying and fundraising is mobilized online. Its website,

www.skdubeyfoundation.org, is a good resource for material, knowledge and activism against corruption. It has received support in all terms—time, energy, ideas, leads and resources—both financial and human. Its online petition has received support of nearly sixty thousand signatures. The foundation comprises several teams for PR, fundraising, whistleblower, web, and legal, and it encourages people to join one or more of the groups in varying capacities according to their competencies.

Contact:
S.K. Dubey Foundation Inc.
334 Paterson Plank Road, Jersey City, NJ 07307, USA
Email: foundation@skdubeyfoundation.org
Web: www.skdubeyfoundation.org
Fax: +1 509-272-0064

Internet & SMS helps CRY

CRY's efforts are focused on getting people to care enough for the situation of children and to do what they can to bring about change. While advocacy takes on various forms at CRY, much of CRY's on-ground advocacy efforts are reinforced through the internet which serves as an important tool in this regard. Here are few of the examples from its use of ICT for advocacy. During the XIV Lok Sabha Elections in 2004 , CRY drafted a Children's Manifesto that stated basic demands for the rights of children. This was posted on the CRY website so that people could download a copy of it along with a copy of the appeal letter to party leaders standing for Elections. People were urged to sign the appeal letter and send it along with the Manifesto to the candidate of their choice demanding that he/she make child rights an integral part of their political agenda.

CRY's focus on making children priority is also reflected in the fact that a special website called CRY Buddies has been created for young people. It is an Indian one-stop premier space in the virtual world available for children to visit, to read about and understand, enjoy the experience in a fun yet informative way, ask questions, comment and much more on the issue of Child Rights. Greater experimentation and innovation in the use of all these mediums will continue to be priority for CRY in the efforts to continue to build the movement for the rights of children.

Contact:
Child Rights and You, 189-A, Anand Estate, Sane Guruji Marg, Mumbai 400011
Phone: 022-23063651 / 23096845
Fax: 022-23080726
Website: www.cry.org
Sangeeta Kapila,
Sr. Manager-Communications,
E-mail: sangeeta.kapila@crymail.org

INDONESIA: The Challenge of Low ICT Access & Limited Civil Society

By Idris Feltkamp Sulaiman

Indonesia is a vast archipelago that is full of contrast, regional differences and diverse people. With more than 230 million people and 250 ethnic groups spread over 13,000 islands, it is the world's fourth most populated country characterized by widespread poverty. According to a recent World Bank study, the number of people living on less than US$2 a day would reach 113.8 million people (49.6% of the total population) in 2006. It is also a secular state with the largest Muslim-majority population in the world.

No doubt, information communications technologies (ICT) have tremendous potential for accelerating social and economic development as well as potential to integrate the vast archipelago. But realization of this potential has not been easy, particularly with a government which has been rocked by political turbulence for more than a decade now, which has not been able to forcefully promote ICT. There have also been various economic, natural and man-made disasters including the Asian economic meltdown (1997-1998), terror and bombing acts (1999-2005) , the 2004 tsunami and other disasters since then. Notwithstanding such challenges, many civil society organizations (CSOs) – some with increasing use of ICT tools - continue to push for improvements in socio-economic and cultural aspects of life as part of the foundations that would secure Indonesia's future.

ICT Landscape

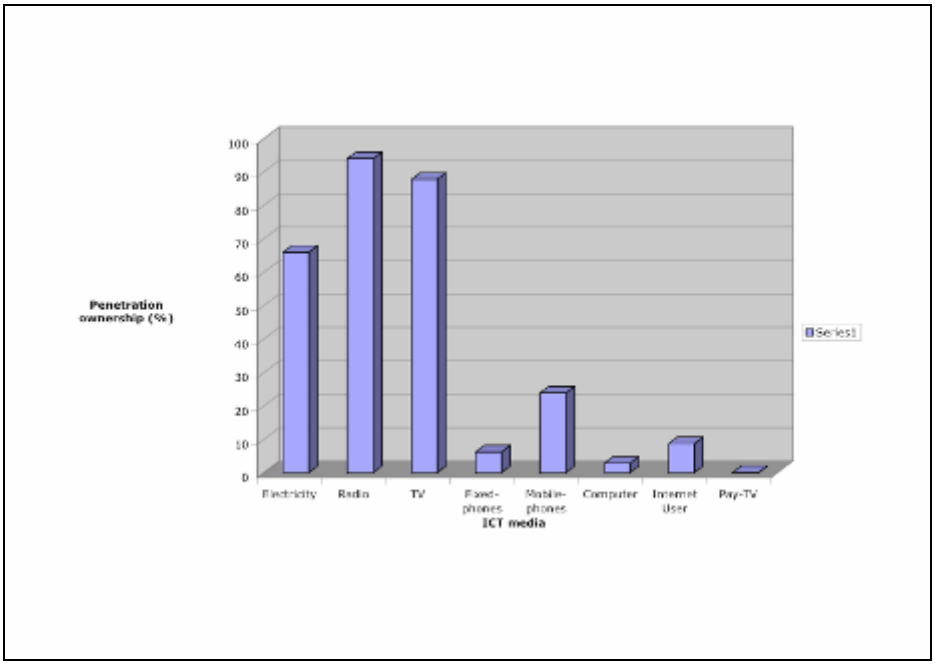
Indonesia's telecommunications sector is growing in line with global trends, but it is starting from a low baseline. The unmet needs of un- or under-served consumers range from the absence of basic telephony at the village level in rural and remote areas (to limited and poor quality high-speed Internet access for the majority in urban areas.

The "digital map of exclusion" for Indonesia has yet to be systematically studied and drawn, but given the available data for 2006, here are some approximate indicators:

- There are 1.8 million Internet subscribers, which means 227.7 million (99%) who are not.
- 20.7 million Indonesians have access to the Internet, which means 208.0 million (91%) do not.
- 6.5 million own computers, which means 223.0 million (91%) do not.
- 9.0 million have access to fixed line telephones, which means 220.5 million Indonesians (96%) do not.
- 164.1 million Indonesians (71.5%) do not have access to cellular/mobile telephones.
- There are 125,000 phone kiosks (or wartel/warung-telpon), which is one for every 1,836 people, located in first-tier down to third-tier cities and towns.
- There are 3,000 Internet cafes or kiosks (or warnet/warung-internet), which is one for every 76,500 people.

In short, ICT has had limited impact on Indonesian daily life, and few benefits for citizens or civil society organizations.

Figure 4.15: A summary of ICT resource penetration in Indonesia



Source: Department of Communications and Informatics (http://www.depkominfo.go.id).

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, at the "ICT for Indonesia" national conference at the Institute of Technology, Bandung in May 9, 2005, clearly stated "Indonesia needs an efficient system for communications" and "his government aims to fully deploy ICTs for development since ICTs can improve nation's competitiveness". Despite the strong government rhetoric, there is not much progress yet in creating a greater role of ICTs, with some exceptions.

In 2003, the government took steps to address the uneven distribution of telecommunications (not necessarily focusing the digital exclusion) by implementing a Universal Service Obligation (USO) program. The objective of the USO is for all villages to have access to basic telephony ("Ringing Village" – Desa Berdering Program) 2010, and for half of all villages to have access to the Internet ("Smart Village" – Desa Pintar Program) by 2015. The program was based on a turnkey approach, with infrastructure and equipment financed directly from the national budget and remaining under government ownership. The first phase involved expensive satellite technology, which did not anticipate the parallel rollout of wireless networks to many of the target areas that made the use of satellite phones unattractive to consumers. The current plan is to deploy mainly CDMA, or digital-cellular technology and WiMAX[1] (the long-range broadband wireless standard for access/backbone)

In general, the Government of Indonesia is facing increasingly complex regulatory challenges related to rapid technological change with the convergence of voice, data and media and their impact on market structure. The critical test of the GoI's performance is if it can create an enabling and competitive environment for meeting the growing needs of the population. In particular, given the large investment requirements for rural telecommunications infrastructure, the challenge is to attract private capital to provide access in areas that are less commercially attractive.

[1] WiMAX is defined as Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access by the WiMAX Forum formed in June 2001 to promote interoperability of the IEEE 802.16 standard (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wimax).

The two opportunities that have been identified for private-public sector collaboration are:

1) High-speed communications "backbone" infrastructure through out the archipelago: It would allow a large-scale rollout of voice communications, Internet and broadcasting services on a very large scale and have substantial socio-economic impacts. While critics claimed that the "Palapa Ring" backbone (to be tendered in October 2007) might be too late and too expensive, it would provide fast"last mile" access networks particularly to reach regional centers and rural areas.

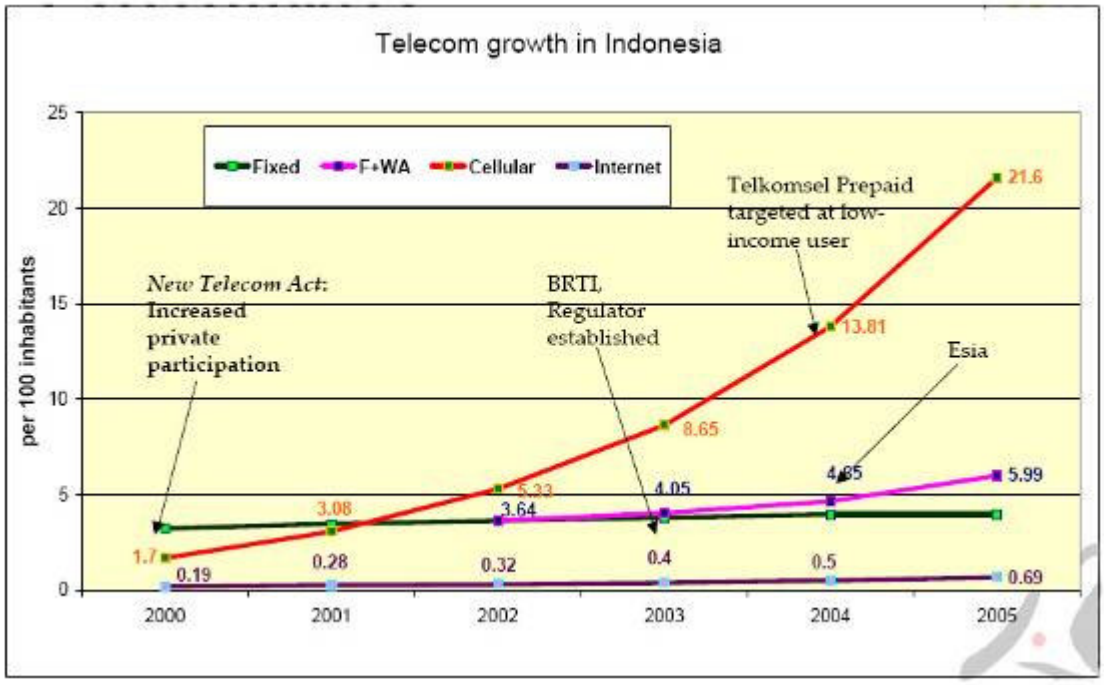
2) Broadband-Wireless Access (BWA): This involves tendering one frequency block (15MHz) for 17 WiMAX zones across Indonesia. However, the non-standard equipment specification (at 2.3GHz) made by the Government to those set by the WiMAX Forum made the move controversial as only Korean manufacturers are currently ready with equipment using this standard, while the promised domestic equipment manufacturer is not yet ready.

3) The launching of DSL service in many cities which is now only offered by the incumbent telecom operator and is still seen by majority of NGOs and people as too expensive.

4) Similarly, the third-generation (3G) wireless services (which has still very limited take-up due to its high costs) might increase diffusion of Internet services if lower prices are offered.

Some of the mobile market expansion has been preceeded by policy reforms which led to increased private (and foreign) participation, larger number of mobile operators. These factors, which, in turn, further led to the increased rollout of networks, availability of pre-paid services (over 95% of subscriptions) and falling costs of calls and fuelled further by increasingly cheaper handsets.

Figure 4.1: Telecom Growth in Indonesia



Source: LIRNEasia.net (Rohan Samarajiva and Divankar Govindar)

Barriers to Internet Usage

Beyond the basic lack of ICT infrastructure and equipment, other barriers include:

(i) The relatively very high (monopolistic) cost of lease lines and international bandwidth: With regard to leased lines for local connectivity, the wholesale price of a 2 Mbps 2 km local lease line was US$4,000 per month in mid-2006, about four times the EU benchmark price and 48 times the Indian benchmark (see Table 4.3).

(ii) The paucity of fixed-lines (and particularly those that are DSL ready): Indonesia's fixed line density, or percentage of people with access to plain old telephony system (POTS) lags behind that of its neighbors (see Figure 2 above and Table 1 below).

Table 1: Comparative Teledensity, 2005*

	Malaysia	Thailand	Philippines	China	Indonesia	Vietnam	India
Fixed %	16.79	10.95	*4.16*	26.63	5.73	18.81	4.51
Mobile %	75.17	*42.98*	39.50	29.90	21.06	11.39	80.16
Internet %	42.37	11.03	5.32	8.44	7.18	12.72	5.44

Source: International Telecommunications Union (www.itu.int). Note: Data in italics are from a previous year, * Percentage of inhabitants with access to telecommunications.

(iii) Limited and insufficient capacity of bandwidth of terrestrial backbone infrastructure particularly in Eastern Indonesia: The existing Indonesian "backbone" is limited in reaching the whole country as it consist of multiple networks owned by different operators and is made up of various technologies (a combination of limited fiber optic, microwave and satellite networks). While operators are beginning to expand into high-speed fiber optic networks, there is relatively little backbone outside Java and Sumatra. Eastern Indonesia relies largely on high-cost satellite communications. WiMAX currently has been tried but with a limited trial license.

(iv) Number of Internet users is growing rapidly but the number of public access facilities is not: 30-45 percent of Indonesian Internet users access the Internet through Internet cafes, or Warnets. The main impediment to the growth of both Wartels (phone kiosks) and Warnets are corruption in the form of unofficial fees extracted by local government officials who regularly inspect them for any evidence of unlicensed propriety software and use of unlicensed bandwidth from satellites that have no licence for their ("footprint") services in Indonesia.

(v) Number of mobile users is growing rapidly but service quality is not: There has been phenomenal growth in demand for mobile voice and data services, including the basic text messaging (SMS). Network coverage of the 3G service of three operators is patchy even in big cities and its services limited but include high-speed wireless data. Of the 2 G data services CDMA provides the cheapest data service compared to GPRS and 3G. The national market of cellular telecommunications has expanded at a rate of around 27% per annum and the total subscriber number (which is the number of mobile SIMM card issued) is estimated to reach 155 million by

2010 (see Table 2 below), however, critics cautioned that there is likely a high "churn-rate" of around 10% and that in larger cities, many mobile users have several SIMM cards from different operators and registration is based on easily obtained civic identity cards.

Table 2 Estimated Projection of Mobile Telephone Users in Indonesia, 2005-10

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Subscribers	47.0	59.7	75.8	96.3	122.3	155.1

Source: Nokia Networks as reported in Bisnis Indonesia (Nov. 22, 2006, T2)

But critics suspect mobile operators of price gouging; data indicates that earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) average around 55 percent for 2005, with some CDMA operators achieving EBITDA over 70 percent (far higher than the ASEAN region of 20-30%).

Digital Divide in Indonesia

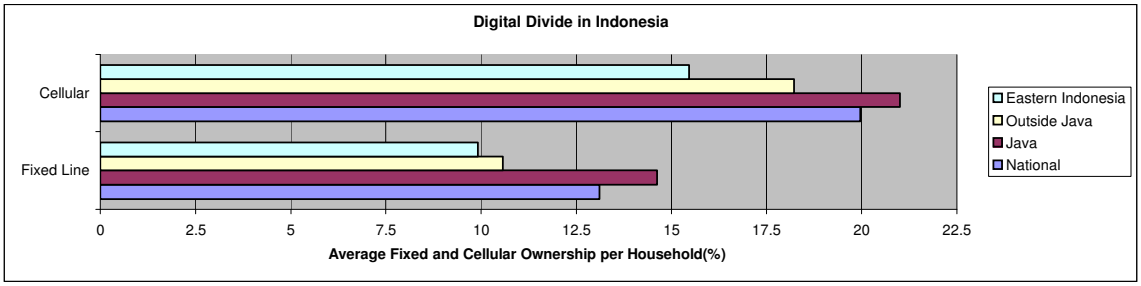
Based on the Global Digital Divide 2005 comparison (see Figure 2 in page 11 above) using ITU's standard Digital Opportunity Index (DOI), Indonesia ranked in the category of 0.2-0.3 DOI range (similarly to China) and which is somewhat below the global average but not uncommon amongst developing countries (for example India and northern African countries).

As a result of regulatory and bandwidth constraints despites greater competition among ISPs in terms of price, quality of service and network coverage and growth in WiFi segment, Indonesia's Internet access is definitely has lagged. The relative estimates of users put Indonesia at the lowest ranking in the ASEAN and in East Asian region with the exceptions of Cambodia, Laos and East Timor (see Table 2) with Indonesia's estimates of users at around 8.1% in September of 2006.

Internet access in Indonesia is primarily through dial-up, and, limited by access to fixed lines because broadband (DSL or cable) is still extremely limited. An estimated 3% of businesses and less than 0.5% of households have broadband connections. However, wireless broadband access appears greater than is actually recorded because there are currently 20 licensed broadband wireless ISPs using the 2.5, 3.5, 5 and 10 GHz bands but there are many other unlicensed broadband WISPs.

Within Indonesia, the internal Digital Divide has three dimensions: 1) Between Java and non-Java islands (particularly Eastern Indonesia with about 43,000 out of 75,000 villages or 57.4 percent of the total villages that do not have any access to a public phone); 2) between urban and rural areas; and 3) between the affluent and the less well-off in the urban areas.

Figure 3: Digital Divide in Indonesia



Leading Public Access Initiatives to Bridge the Divide

While most of these public access initiatives are funded by the government, donor organizations or large corporation, many involve local NGOs actively diffusing ICTs.

Telecenter Program (ICT Centers) and Technical Vocational Education Network and Training (TVET) Program

Funded by annual "block grants" from the Department of National Education, Directorate Vocational Training Directorate (Dikmenjur), the program is designed to provide create ICT Centers (http://www.wan-dki.net)which provide computer training labs and public access facilities within vocational high schools (SMK) and they function as learning resource, educational data and HR development centers, with such functionalities as:

- Internet Development Program (Jarnet): IT/computer training labs for Vocational High School (SMK) to train teachers of computer and information management skills.
- School Information Network (JIS): Develop an educational information system application for all schools in a community with an SMK host/coordinator. Status (end 2006: 137 city/districts)
- City/District-wide Area Network (WAN-kota): Establish community wireless networks for cluster of SMKs (an SMK-based Network Operation Centers and Base Terminal Servers for their surrounding schools and other educational institutions, WAN-kota). Status (end 2006: 137 city/districts)
- Community Radio (Broadcasting): Provide training for secondary students in radio/TV production, broadcasting and network administration as well as in community radio/television.

Initially the program started in 2003 with ambitious plans that by 2009 (the end of program), one of ICT Centre in an SMK at each district (kabupaten) will be build throughout Indonesia and in urban areas (numbering around approximately 450 locations). It was hoped that each ICT Center could have at least 6 to 10 fee-paying clients. However, the plan for such sustainability did not materialize. Most of the ICT Centers built in 2003-4 do not have Internet connection since the SMKs could no longer afford the connectivity fees after the subsidized period ended. It remains to be seen if most of the current 50 ICT Centres (each of which have equipment, subsidized bandwidth and two operators) can find sufficient paying clients to maintain their Internet connections by the time their project funds dries up by the end of March 2007.

Technology Information Kiosks (WARINTEK Plus)

Funded by the State Ministry of Research and Technology, the project began as a PPP intended to

create content and establish Internet kiosks throughout Indonesia, but was speculatively funded and ultimately the private sector partner folded. The project's most notable output was 2 CD-ROMs containing information on agriculture, fisheries, animal husbandries, food technologies / recipes, and traditional medicine, reportedly distributed to libraries in all districts and sub-districts, public facilities (national parks, botanical gardens and zoos) as well as schools and universities, in Indonesia (only some of the 84 Warintek Plus Centers that were established by this program are reportedly in operation).

Partnership for e-Prosperity for the Poor (PePP)

This on-going project is sponsored by the UN Development Program and the National Development Planning Agency. It focuses on poverty reduction using ICT thus contributing to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It targets poor farming communities and is seeking collaboration with partners who provided training/activities (ICT Agency, East Java Provincial Government) and resources (district/sub-provincial government).

Community Technology Learning Centers (CTLC)

In 1998, Microsoft Corportation launched a program that evolved over the years to the current "Unlimited Potential" program with various national NGOs to operate "Community Training and Learning Centers (CTLC)" in regional cities.

Rural Community Wireless IP Network

In contrast to the public access/telecenter cases -- all initiated by the central government, foreign donors or corporate initiatives -- a telecenter in Sumedang, West Java, has been initiated by a local SME ICT solutions provider. Utilizing VSAT and Wi-Fi infrastructure procured by the district government, PT KampungCyber provides the professional management, operational costs and business relationships necessary to deliver low-cos wireless data and voice services to schools, SME, Internet cafes and other clients throughout the community. The local government's investment was less than $50,000, and the government is not required to commit any additional resources to the project. Launched in January 2005, the business was breaking after only four months of operation.

Qaryah Tayibah Farmers and Schools Network

Founded by the Farmers Federation of Salatiga, this is a local initiative in Central Java providing public access, training and agricultural content for local farmers. In addition, the network also serves four alternative schools that operate under the open school program of the government. Most of the students are children of farmers. A unique feature is that all are equipped with computers with Internet access, provided free by a company called Indonet Salatiga. The remarkable feature of the schools is that all students have refurbished Pentium2 PCs in their homes as they have been made available on three-year loans to the students. Payments of 1,000 rupiah for PCs are included in daily expenses for each students (monthly Rp. 30,000/US$3.29).

ICT Use by Non-Profits for Civil Society and Advocacy

The most successful example e-advocacy campaign in Indonesia has been the central role the Internet played in the mass-mobilization by civil society activists that led to the demise of the "New Order" government of former President Suharto in May 1998. In Suharto's Indonesia, the public sphere or "political space" was highly restricted for 32 years. The regime strictly censored print and audio-visual media that was increasingly in the hands of a few powerful commercial interests. The

strict censorship of anti-government propaganda at the time left only the Internet for information dissemination. The anti-Suharto e-advocacy 'worked' because activists used the material obtained Internet by printing, photocopying and distributing them in a variety of creative ways through social and political circles, including universities, warnets (internet kiosk) and other notice-boards, and distributed beyond internet users. Some leaflets were tossed into crowds of demonstrations from passing motorbikes, left in public places and even sold because they were so popular.

Since the fall of Suharto, however, the use of e-advocacy (particularly the Internet) for mass-mobilization has apparently diminished. Despite the new political openness, the country had to suffer through several major crises. In addition to the regional economic meltdown in 1997-98, Indonesians were impacted by regime changes (4 presidents during 1998-2004), andvarious economic, natural and man-made disasters, including the forest fires in Borneo and Sumatra (1997-now), terror and bombing acts (1999-2005) , the 2004 tsunami and other disasters since then including earthquakes and on-going mudflows.

Like the research about the Internet or public use of ICT Indonesia, research about the use of ICTs for advocacy purposes by civil society is still in its infancy. The term e-advocacy is used here in the sense of ICT use as *part of a project with a specific public policy end-goal*. The current level of ICT access and use in society at large Indonesia is one the lowest of the ASEAN countries and in the Asia Pacific.

There were as many as 18,000 NGOs in Indonesia before the fall of the Suharto government in May 1998 but many of these were little more than formal vehicles for corruption. The numbers have actually fallen dramatically to about 6,000-7,000 since then, as the government has attempted to enforce a law requiring NGOs to be more transparent and accountable.

While those NGOs continued to use ICTs and some went on to try to further consolidate their ICT activities such as conducted for example by the PAKTA Foundation with some limited success, the large portions of Indonesian society who were mobilized during the anti-Suharto mobilization have not been able to become ICT users largely because affordable and ubiquitous access have yet to be made available. As a consequence, political organizations and NGOs in Indonesia since then have not been able to rely on the use of ICTs to mobilizing support, and, if they did so, ICTs did only have marginal impact in compared to the early mass-mobilization experience.

Advocacy Case Studies

Yayasan PAKTA Indonesia

Founded in 1996, PAKTA Foundation (http://www.paktafoundation.org/) is one of the longest surviving NGOs with a strong ICT empowerment agenda and focus on institutional development and capacity building of other Indonesian NGOs, specializing in the application of ICT to carry out this mission. More recently PAKTA has also been involved in various post-Tsunami reconstruction activities as well as in building public access to information in a remote region of Indonesia.

At the peak of its activities between 1999 and 2004, PAKTA received various grants from Australia's AusAID, United Nations, USAID's CSSP (Civil Society Support Program), CIDA (Canada Fund), several UN agencies (UNAIDS, WHO, UNICEF and UNHCR) and the World Bank's InfoDev Program. The Foundation maintained the largest Indonesian NGOs Electronic Network (http://www.ngo.or.id and its Indonesian version http://www.lsm.or.id) that assisted approximately 120 smaller NGOs (involved in AIDS, children, women, environment, community capacity building, news distribution and other activities) with web space, technical support and IT training. While other NGOs have since taken on the kinds of activities that PAKTA pioneered, none

have reached PAKTA's earlier scale of operations.

PAKTA started supporting NGOs in Jakarta but quickly turned to regional Java then other provincial areas and then started supporting NGOs particularly in remote Eastern Indonesia regions of Nusa Tengara Barat and Nusa Tengara Timor (NTB & NTT). More recently, it has directly been involved in setting up a telecenter or community access point in the North Sulawesi island of Sangehi and in the Aceh province. PAKTA has also been involved in developing databases for various NGOs such as the Indonesian Planned Parenthood Foundation that is still in use today.

While some of PAKTA's former pilot projects such as the NGO web portal did not continue, others appear to be sustainable since their capacity building activities have produced sufficient number of qualified ICT-empowered activists to carry on. For example, for a project in Waikabuba, the Eastern Indonesian area of West Sumba in NTB project, PAKTA previously collaborated with about 20 local NGOs which are set up by former local students who returned from their studies in Java to run various community development programs. As a result of a similar activities in Sulawesi island, YASCITA, one of the above NGOs even "surpassed its parent organization" by establishing a local television station based in Kendari in Southeast Sulawesi.

ICT emergency relief support for CSOs - Airputih (Clearwater) Foundation

The AirPutih Foundation (APF, airputih.or.id) began as a disaster response "wireless relief" team established by the IT community in three days after the disaster struck in late 2004 in response to the tsunami that affected Aceh and the northern part of Sumatra island, Indonesia. In four months, the team evolved to become a foundation and in 2006, became active as a ICT Emergency Response Team in several other locations in response to the recent earthquakes in Yogyakarta (Central Java), the post-tsunami disaster in South Java as well as to the recent man-made on-going mudflow ecological disaster in East Java.

APF provides "wireless relief" in the form of a network of free Internet wireless access points, as well as a web portal for the benefit of the victims, the media that might be covering the event and any NGOs or government organizations involved in the relief effort who are using the Internet and other ICT tools. The initial bi-lingual website (acehmediacenter.or.id) received more than 100,000 hits in less than a month of operations and was a means to obtain donations in terms of equipment, funding and volunteers from local as well as international sources.

At the height of its activities in Aceh and the island of Nias, APF were serving more than 100 organizations including NGO and government offices, schools, media and radio stations that were connected either directly or indirectly to the wireless network set up in Banda Aceh and else where in the province.

By collecting the donated bandwidth, equipment, funds worth over an estimated $1.5 million for Aceh/Nias and by organizing volunteers drawn from both local and foreign technicians and college/university students, APF was able to provide access to information for NGOs and government organizations by providing free Internet access with some through Wi-Fi points, emergency hard/software support and volunteer personnel to various organizational clients. In early emergency periods, some APF volunteers also often served in teams who collected victims/corpses and its access points served as aid distribution points.

More recently since APF has been involved with the East Java mudflow disaster, APF has also provided a nation-wide SMS (cell/mobile text messaging) service which is directly linked to a "mediacenter.or.id" portal to obtain direct reporting from victims, the media and others involved in

providing an effective response to any disasters. In addition, APF also has worked with the relevant authorities and to provide an early warning service through seventeen TV stations.

eHeath NGO: "Coalition for Healthy Indonesia (KuIS),"

Indonesia reported its first avian influenza (AI) deaths in July 2005. Since then it has seen a steady rise in its toll to become the world's worst country hit with its 61th human fatality out of the world's total of 161 confirmed human H5N1 fatalities.[2] International experts say, as the country has failed to carry out the widespread culls seen in other countries hard-hit by the deadly H5N1 virus and more must be done to halt infection among hundreds of millions of backyard poultry. The world's first lab-confirmed human-to-human transmission of bird flu occurred in Indonesia in last June in a cluster of seven deaths, but the slight mutation was determined to be "insignificant."

Since 1971, *Koalisi untuk Indonesia Sehat* (KuIS, Coalition for Healthy Indonesia) has been running as an information and communication network to provide support for health related advocacy activities, community education and capacity building. Now its presence has been extended in 22 of 33 Indonesia's provinces, tackling new epidemics as well as "older" health issues such as TB, malnutrition and malaria.

Since its establishment, KuIS together with its network and dozens of partners in Indonesia and abroad has played an active role in the advocacy for better public health policy, better communication and social mobilization in health related areas to increase the commitment of various level of governments as well as improve society's knowledge and awareness for healthy living.

KuIS uses ICT effectively to disseminate various statistics, official documents and public information through its website (http://www.koalisi.org) and train various partners in the use of ICTs for communication and public health education. On its website, there are relevant government laws, publications, public opinion and lessons learned from its public health campaigns.

KuIS has obtained support from Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and Malaria (GF-ATM) through the TB Subdirectorate of the Health Ministry as well as other donor organizations such as WHO, UNICEF, USAID, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Together with greater private sector focus on corporate social responsibility, KuIS has entered partnership with Unilever, Exxon-Mobil and Shell in human capacity development projects as well as health status improvement activities.

Challenges - Building E-Advocacy in Indonesia:

- Low level of access and income makes technology inaccessible to the majority of people and the constituency who are mostly not Internet literate
- The constituency bases for social grassroots movements are in the young middle class population who not the super rich elite nor are they living in poverty.
- Connectivity (particularly broadband) costs are still relatively high for ASEAN standards;

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[2] "Diagnostic kits for faster detection of bird flu only ready in March," as at January 15, 2007.

http://www.indonesia-relief.org/mod.php?mod=publisher&op=viewarticle&cid=39&artid=1716

- Content development and particularly meta-content is limited but search engines, webmail, news and online media are popular
- Online community building and capacity building of non-profit and civil society organizations are major challenges
- Culture of openness of government is hamstrung by the lack of access to critical public information (while e-government brochureware websites are growing, civil society need to track and measure its accountability).
- Cooperation between government agencies and, less so, between NGOs are challenges
- Lack proper funding and business model (as well as cyberlaw that supports e-commerce) that would make many e-advocacy projects discontinued particularly if they are donor driven.
- The government makes it hard to access public information and there is a growing frustration at the lack of central/regional government's accountability and competence;

Opportunities - Building E-Advocacy in Indonesia:

- Mobile ownership is growing among the urban middle class and even among a small but significant percentage of the poor. Text messaging and broadcasting particularly in combination with web and 'older' radio/TV campaigns can be powerful e-advocacy combinations. Print-media dictates the agenda of electronic media but the latter is the more favorite medium of the young constituency.
- Internet access costs, as well as the prices of PCs, have consistently fallen in the past years but not yet affordable for the majority so personal PC ownership is still very small
- The number of Internet users particularly through Internet public access has risen consistently;
- Availability of telecom infrastructure in most major cities but broadband is too expensive;
- The constituency bases for social grassroots movements are in the young middle class population are part of the majority who most likely in the majority (over 75%) to be under 25.
- Some critical national political issues that could be of interest to this large cohort of the populations and be taken up by e-advocacy work:
    - Job creation and the maintenance of a "stable" living wage
    - Anti-Corruption and the restoration of "trust" in the government (partly through gaining access to public information by media, journalists and the public),
    - Religious/cultural tolerance, particularly that Islam can have a modern "face", backlash against anti-pornography draf law and violent activities of fundamentalist group (including their terror acts against 'sinful' places and bombing campaigns)
    - Women's empowerment such as growing opposition of polygamy by the majority of women, women's rights at workplace, etc.
    - Better disaster management by the government (for example not just airlines, shipping and rail disasters but also natural/biological such as avian influenza virus)

KENYA: Poverty, Inequality and Unfavorable Policies Undermine Access

By Atieno Ndomo

Sustained clamour for governance and leadership reforms in Kenya, a nation of more than 28 million people, has resulted in notable growth in the country's democratic culture. Kenya adopted multiparty democracy in 1991 with the repeal of the controversial section 2A of the constitution following years of agitation and resistance by various civil society groups in the country. This transition ushered in pluralism in politics and since then, three general elections have taken place in 1992, 1997 and 2002. The latter marking a monumental regime change. For the first time in forty years, the country is not governed by KANU, the political party that ruled the country since independence from the British colonialists in 1963.

While the change of government has not yielded all the immense outcomes envisioned, and the country continues to struggle with issues of public resources management and fundamental constitutional and legislative transformation ,some progress towards generating economic growth and improving access to basic education has been made. Indeed most analysts contend that the country has made significant strides in its governance framework and acknowledge the wider democratic space and an emerging democratic culture, one that is allowing space for a vigilant citizenry that demands government accountability and is clamoring for civil freedoms. Nevertheless, these efforts are still undermined by some oppressive legislation, such as The Official Secrets Act of 1968 which undermines the constitutional right to freedom of information.

Kenya has made some progress in the ICT sector, as well, as demonstrated by the number of telephone lines, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), the number of Internet users and growth in mobile telephony. However the country is along way from realizing universal access to these services and the key impediments are prohibitive costs, lack of an enabling policy and legislative framework, poor infrastructure and the high levels of poverty and inequality in the country. Compared to countries in the East Africa region with similar socio economic realities, Kenya is worse off in terms of the telecommunication sector.

Civil society organizations have a nascent experience with ICTs but realize the huge potential that these technologies portend to their advocacy work in terms of widening the reach of their work, saving costs and widening their networks. They still face limitations of costs and skills to effectively take full advantage of these technologies. Their experience confirms the reality of inequitable access to technology that is interlinked to the poverty and inequality that exists in the country.

ICT Impact on Kenyan Life

ICT use is predominant among elite groups and even here the use is still limited by costs. Surfing generally costs at least Kshs. 30 (nearly half a dollar) for half an hour. Not many Kenyans can afford this. Further, given relatively slow speeds, longer usage is constrained by such cost considerations. Yet even with these serious limitations subjects interviewed for this report concur that ICT are a priority for Kenya. However, there was a call to address the existing inequalities in access through policy intervention. Acknowledging the serious poverty problem, many respondents felt there is need to view ICT as part and parcel of the development agenda in an integrated approach arguing it is critical that the inequality gaps that exist are not further widened through ICT.

The levels of poverty and inequity in Kenya mean that not many people can afford mobile phone

handsets let alone the requisite airtime. Yet given the context of low teledensity, specifically the under developed landline infrastructure (especially for rural parts of the country), the mobile phone presents itself as a useful alternative. Consequently, people aim to maximize the benefits of owning a mobile phone to enhance communication, interaction, and the conduct of business. While the practice of mobile phone sharing is manifest across the country, it is significant in rural Kenya.

A common scenario in the village is for those who own mobile phones to share it with the rest of the village. One mobile phone will likely service a whole village as a common point for sending messages (SMS), receiving messages, receiving phone calls and passing on requests to be called back, the latter is commonly referred to as "flashing/beeping". Given the constraints of airtime costs, the practice of "flashing/beeping" (meaning dialing a mobile phone number of a third party to alert them to call you back, without actually making a call; *i.e.* they would bear the cost of the communication) is very common. People would typically borrow your phone to "flash/beep" others as a gesture indicating a request to be called back. Perhaps in acknowledgement of this trend and recognizing customer needs, one of the cellular phone companies introduced a free SMS service where one can send a cost free SMS message, "Please call me back. Thank you."

Mobile phones are often handed down and only discarded when absolutely obsolete and incapable of being used. Typically, those able to afford to replace their handsets either to acquire newer ones with more functionality or for style considerations will hand down their old sets to their friends or relatives. Others hand down problematic handsets to their friends or relatives. Common problems include phones with charging difficulties, poor audio ability and so on. In such cases, those who inherit these handsets may invest some minimal amounts in having them repaired—there is a growing mobile phone repair industry within Kenya's innovative "Jua Kali" (informal) sector. These artisans are also able to offer services including SIM unlocking which is very popular with phones inherited from friends and relatives who reside abroad or for switching networks locally.

It is also common to purchase a mobile phone for sharing within a community based organisation. NGOs will often purchase mobile phones for their partner organizations in rural areas of the country to enhance communication and save cost and time for conducting business. This is a practice that was acknowledged during interviews with most of the NGO representatives as a practical solution and a way around the poor telecommunication infrastructure. In such contexts, the option of Internet access is either non-existent or unsustainable.

Mobile and Internet Penetration

Kenya's ICT sector is growing, as can be seen in the number of telephone lines, internet service providers (ISPs), the number of Internet users, broadcasting stations, and market share of each one of them. The government recently liberalized the mobile cellular market and currently, there are two mobile cellular operators, still in essence a duopoly.

Though growing, Kenya's telecommunication infrastructure is not efficient. More needs to be done to promote competition so as to increase customer choice and ensure accelerated investment through liberalization of the sector and the licensing of new telecommunications players. Kenya lacks a technology-neutral licensing framework that enhances innovation in service delivery within the sector. Other limitations are the result of the high taxes telecommunication companies face on infrastructure development and duty imposed on airtime. As a result, the country is far from realizing universal/wider access, equitable and efficient telecommunication services.

Table 1. Summary of Access to ICT in Kenya

Landline /fixed line telephone subscribers (June 2004)	260,000
ISPs[3]	73 registered (16 are active)
Cellular phone subscribers	3 million
Television and radio stations	16 TV stations and 24 radio stations
Public pay phones	11,500
Fixed teledensity[4]	0.75/100 inhabitants for fixed lines (world average is 19 9.75/100 inhabitants for mobile (world average is 21)
Radio stations	24FM (90% have access to radio services
TV stations	16 (60% of the population have access to television)
Internet users[5]	1,030,000
Cyber cafes and telephone	Over 1000

These factors result in high consumer costs and effectively inhibit usage. Attempts to collaborate with other countries to support regional telecommunications infrastructure projects, such as the Eastern Africa Submarine System (EASSY), project is mired in controversy. This undermines the potential for development of regional ICT projects through collaboration with both public and private sector stakeholders towards development of telecommunication infrastructure.

Most multimedia services (*e.g.* Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP)) remain restricted and inaccessible to most consumers. Access to broadband technologies remains restricted given high costs and inadequate competition due to licensing restrictions.

In early July, 2006 the government announced that they will give the two cellular phone providers an international gateway license, something they have been lobbying for quite a while. The hope is that this will enable them to provide cheaper tariffs for international calls made from cellular phones, given they will no longer have to pay a premium fee to Telkom Kenya to route international calls. This would bring Kenya close to neighboring countries of Uganda and Tanzania where due to stiff competition among service providers the consumers enjoy relatively low international call rates.

ICT Use by Non-Profits for Civil Society and Advocacy

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[3] The ICT policy outlines the intent to expand the current international Internet bandwidth from the current 69 Mbps to 1 Gbps by the year 2015.

[4]The Kenya government intends to improve the rural teledensity from the current 0.33 lines to 5 lines per 100 inhabitants by the year 2015; and the fixed-line teledensity in urban areas from the current 1.97 lines to 20 lines per 100 inhabitants by the year 2015

[5] Government intends to provide all primary schools with affordable internet access by the year 2015; and all secondary schools and tertiary institutions to have affordable internet access by the year 2010; and Establish internet access nodes at all district headquarters by 2010

Kenya has experienced rapid growth in the number and types of local non-governmental organizations over the past decade. With the emergence of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) as key players in the governance of most African countries including Kenya in the early 1990s, the perspective of good governance dictated that there was need for a strong and vibrant civil society that would ensure accountability by the state. Consequently the dominant understanding of civil society is those organizational forms, which mirror western tradition.

Given the limitations of the neo-liberal state, civil society is seen as a good complement to deliver on the gaps left by the state in terms of service delivery except for the fact that unlike the state, they have no strict obligations to be accountable to citizens. Civil society in Kenya comprises development non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community based organizations (CBOs), professional and business associations, labor unions, cooperatives and credit unions, farmers associations, women's and youth groups, human rights advocacy groups and socio cultural groups. These groups operate at either local or national levels.

Challenges & Opportunities

Advocacy and civil society groups working in remote parts of the country point out that target groups of their advocacy actions could not respond to email messages with file attachments due to high internet browsing costs and slow speeds. Access is worse in rural areas. In that sense they contend ICT can reinforce existing inequalities. For example the groups who come for actions mobilized via ICT are the ones who are advantaged. Ironically, the disadvantaged are the ones excluded and therefore their voices are also excluded, preventing them from exerting influence on decisions made. High costs limit the use of internet advocacy to the minority elite.

Inequality in Kenya results in exclusion of a majority of the population from decision-making in the country. According to a report on inequality in Kenya, wealthier groups in Kenya have better access to most social services such as education, health care and water than the poorer ones. The incidence of absolute poverty is estimated at close to 60% of the population. Thus, the lack of access to ICT by the poorest citizens limits their ability to engage in internet advocacy.

As for mobile advocacy, SMS costs are too expensive for the average Kenyan. The cost of sending a text message via SMS is Kshs. 5, which is equivalent to the cost of sukuma wiki (kale is a local vegetable variety, a staple food in Kenya) which constitutes a family meal. Given the high poverty levels, even this seemingly minimal cost is beyond the ability of the majority of the poor to afford. One person interviewed for this report adds that like many other Kenyans in her position, she bought her mother a mobile phone. But her mother cannot afford to buy minutes. And if the phone breaks, there is no place to get it serviced or replaced in the village.

This suggests that the assertions of nationwide coverage by mobile phone companies may be inaccurate. Statistics on mobile phone subscriptions may be exaggerated. One of our respondents pointed out that it is common practice for one individual to have four different mobile phone lines, especially since there is a premium cost for calling from one mobile network to another. One therefore needs to be careful of statistics, which hype the expansion of mobile phones reach and ask the question "who actually owns what?"

Advocacy Case Studies

Fahamu

Fahamu's pioneering work in online advocacy is testimony to the fact that the internet can enable people in Africa to organize and can give voice to reflect the power that people have. In this respect advocacy is not just about demanding from those in power, but is about people determining outcomes. Technologies can be used to organize on a mass scale to realize rights. It is possible to use technology to organize as evidenced with the campaign on the protocol on the rights of women in Africa.

Fahamu is enabling women and people, generally, to use new technologies to give voice and ensure governments act in a manner that considers the power of women. Fahamu's experience demonstrates that ICT can be used powerfully as a tool for advocacy in Africa. The power of ICT in this regard is demonstrated at different levels:

Trainings. Baseline research into web access problems/issues for human rights organizations and looking at their training needs and how to build strong organizations revealed that it is not feasible to do web-based courses in Africa. Consequently Fahamu developed training materials distributed on CD-ROMs. Noting that Email is widely available, they facilitated LISTSERV discussions.

Pambazuka News. This e-newsletter has developed in the space of five years from 300 people to about 100,000 readers per week. It receives more than 250,000 hits on the website per month suggesting that it is an extremely popular newsletter which has effectively become the forum for debate on social justice in Africa. It is widely used by campaigns—campaigns on freedom of expression, against torture, and supporting the women's movement.

Protocol on Women's Rights in Africa Campaign. Fahamu started this initiative in March 2004. At the time only one country had ratified protocol and knowledge about it was almost non-existent in the region. Fahamu provided *Pambazuka News* as a platform to disseminate the information and enable organizations nationally and regionally to campaign on this. This was well taken up and as a result lots of articles were published in *Pambazuka News*.

Also to show the degree of public support for the initiative, Fahamu developed technology for an online petition and for an SMS petition over mobile phones. They developed the SMS petition because there are an estimated 18 million mobile phone users, as contrasted to 12 million email users in Africa. The tool became very popular, despite only being a pilot project.

This generated a lot of publicity for the campaign and ensured the protocol got into effect. Additionally, the material generated was used at Africa Union summits and to support other advocacy tools. For example they developed colored cards which were used on the website to indicate whether countries had signed the protocol or not. *Pambazuka News* played a significant role in the victory of the protocol with the 15th country ratifying. This happened in less than 18 months (moving from 1 country to 15 countries). Presently, over 20 countries havratified the protocol.

NIGERIA: An Emerging e-Advocacy Culture

by 'Gbenga Sesan

Nigeria's is ripe for e-advocacy success. Its political and technology culture are marked by a readiness for political change and a comfort with e-advocacy practices. The driving force behind Nigeria's potential lies in its 14% mobile communications penetration rate. This relatively high penetration rate means that e-advocacy campaigns have the potential to reach large portions of the population, especially when considering the word-of-mouth reach of those people on the mobile network.

Nigerians are already aware that their mobile phones can be tools for political and social change as the Committee on HIV/AIDS Awareness already sends messages to all the subscribers of one of Nigeria's mobile phone company on the first Sunday of every month. The messages encourage Nigerians to show compassion to those who are HIV positive and give practical and discreet advice about how to avoid infection.

One of the reasons this program is so effective is that it did not require people to send their contact information to the organization: the agreement was made directly between the phone company and the HIV/AIDS Committee. The program also demonstrates the willingness of the telecommunications sector to work with the NGO sector on social projects. In addition, it is not necessary for recipients to send a response message, which might have discouraged participation. The cost of a text message - approximately 12 cents - is prohibitive for many Nigerians.

That said, programs that require an SMS response have also been successful. In December, the country's principal television station and news media corporation partnered to create an SMS-based poll of Nigerian presidential candidates. In print advertisements, people were asked to text the name of their favorite presidential candidate to a given number. Even though the cost of voting in the poll was 40 cents - higher than a traditional text message - more than 100,000 Nigerians participated in the poll. The higher price indicates that the enterprises that launched the poll made a profit, again indicating that the private sector understands that mass SMS campaigns make good business sense, too.

Nigeria is ready for an organization that would devote itself specifically to e-advocacy activities. In addition to the high participation rates of previous e-advocacy efforts, the political and technology culture of the country favor it. Despite high levels of cyber crime, Nigerians are very willing to give their mobile number and email address to an organization, a data set necessary to run a CRM system. New data collection could be supplemented by existing NGO e-mail lists held by such organizations as WANGONet and the Development Information Network.

In addition, Nigerian young people are eager to have more political power. They believe that the revolutionary class which brought the country independence has grown corrupt and is now too old to govern effectively. This politically dissatisfied class is also the same young demographic most likely to use ICTs, implying that e-advocacy campaigns would have a receptive audience among young Nigerians.

According to 'Gbenga Sesan, Program Manager of Lagos Digital Village and the researcher for this case study, Nigerians are currently in an "indecision" phase of political participation. They believe change is possible, but they do not know in what way to take action. E-advocacy could be instrumental in filling this void and channeling Nigerians' enthusiasm for political change.

Overview of Country

Nigeria is home to about 140 million people, the largest national population in Africa and comprising some 250 pure ethnic groups. With a landmass of 923,768 sq. km, the country is located in the West African sub-region, bordered to the north by the Republics of Niger and Chad and to the west by the Republic of Benin. Its eastern border with the Republic of Cameroon extends south to the shores of the Atlantic where it ends in 800 km. of coastline. The northern part of the country sits in the semi-arid Sahel region on the fringes of the Sahara Desert. Moving south, the climate becomes tropical and sub-tropical. Nigeria is endowed with rich marine, forest and mineral resources – including oil and gas – and arable land is in abundance. Though there are three main indigenous languages spoken by the three predominant ethic groups, English is the official language.

Decades of misrule by a series of military dictatorships ended in 1999 with the establishment of a federal democracy lead by a democratically elected president. The new civilian government developed an economic recovery and development strategy, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), which has given the economy a great boost. In 2005, GDP grew by 6.2 percent, but this achievement is diminished by a 13.5 percent inflation rate. The country reports a 2.9 percent unemployment rate, yet a significant portion of the population lives below the line (60 percent in 2000).

Civil society organizations in Nigeria have come to regard themselves as "watchdogs" for the nation's young democracy. They see themselves as middlemen who ensure that government and the people benefit from healthy and mutual co-existence, as advocates of the rights of the populace, and as implementers of development projects that seek to empower the average citizen. As an almost parallel effort to needs, the civil society took on the challenge of connecting the average citizen with development opportunities – which has come to be known as "dividends of democracy." That many grant-seeded pilot projects did not go beyond the pilot stage opened the eyes of many to the need for advocacy and continuing engagement with government policy processes and legislations. Many civil society actors, however, have yet to establish a connection between the everyday ICT tools that they now have access to (e.g. mobile phones, Internet access) and the various efforts that they are involved with – including advocacy. As national efforts continue towards increased ICT access, literacy and possible ownership, civil society will no doubt be able to improve its capacity as a major user of these technologies.

ICT Impact on Nigerian Life

About 70 percent of Nigerians live in the countryside (National Population Commission, 2003). The Information Technology Policy and Telecommunication Act mentions deliberate strategies to extend access to rural areas – through the Universal Service Provision Fund, for example. Existing infrastructure is far from adequate, but people in rural areas seem to have found a way around this problem because there is ample evidence of sharing of Internet and mobile access.

Sharing Mobile Access

Mobile access sharing is not exclusive to rural areas, but where it achieves its greatest popularity. In what is referred to as "*umbrella businesses*," young men and women set up makeshift offices with an overhanging umbrella, a few chairs for themselves and their clients, and a small table on which they place either fixed wireless or digital mobile handsets. Two specific rural locations were examined for the purpose of this study, Idi Ayunre (located in Oluyole Local Government Area of Oyo State in the South-Western region of Nigeria) and Agbor (located in Delta State in the South-Southern region of Nigeria).

In Agbor, an interview with a mobile phone operator revealed that he services about 60 people a day, most customers making calls taking two to three minutes (each minute costs ₦ 20, which is

about $0.16). In Idi Ayunre, the situation is not dissimilar; the operator services fewer than 50 people a day, with their cumulative usage time about 52 minutes per day. An interesting discovery with respect to rural mobile access sharing is an award-winning project by one of Nigeria's telecommunications operators. The Rural Telephone Project – Phone Lady Initiative equips women, "phone ladies," with the equipment and training needed to start a call center. The total cost of the equipment is converted into a loan given to the women through a micro-finance institution. Repayments are used to extend the project to other rural women. Launched as a pilot in 2002, the project now covers over 30 communities in Enugu, Akwa Ibom, Edo and Kwara states of Nigeria[6]."

Sharing Internet Access

Internet access is one of the most popular shared public utilities in the country. The spread of Nigerian cyber cafés are still very much limited to urban communities. Bandwidth and general quality of service (including the facility ambience and back-up power supply) influence the pricing system, which on average charges about $1 per hour (with some cyber cafés also providing half-hour and by-the-minute options). In additions to expected equipment and staffing costs, a steady power supply is a major component of potential proprietors' calculation towards starting these Internet ventures. The Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) is presently undergoing reforms in order to be able to meet Nigeria's power consumption needs. Presently, while service providers abound, it is difficult to find reliable ones whose related costs are then far too high for small business owners.

In contrast, in the rural areas where such public access points exist, the number of customers is very much related to the number of hours of operation and the number of computer systems available for use. Demand is very high demand. Cyber cafés have customers all day long, and some keep evening hours (between 10pm and 6am), a phenomenon known as "overnight browsing." Most of the access points in rural areas are run by civil society organizations, but due to such reasons as the high cost of bandwidth and power supply, they often must close down operations.

Sharing Mobile Internet Access

Most mobile operators in Nigeria offer Internet access through GPRS or CDMA technologies, assumed to be confined to urban areas. However, review of a digital mobile license operator's report of GPRS daily usage at the end of July 2006 reveals that even though usage is higher in urban centers (with the highest GPRS usage of 327,230 MB from the academic community surrounding the University of Lagos), some rural areas recorded moderate usage levels, ranging from 6MB to almost 651MB for the month. For Saki, a rural community in Oyo state, a record 2,020MB was recorded for a one-week period.

Figure 8.4: Mobile Internet (GPRS) Usage Statistics from July 23 – 30, 2006

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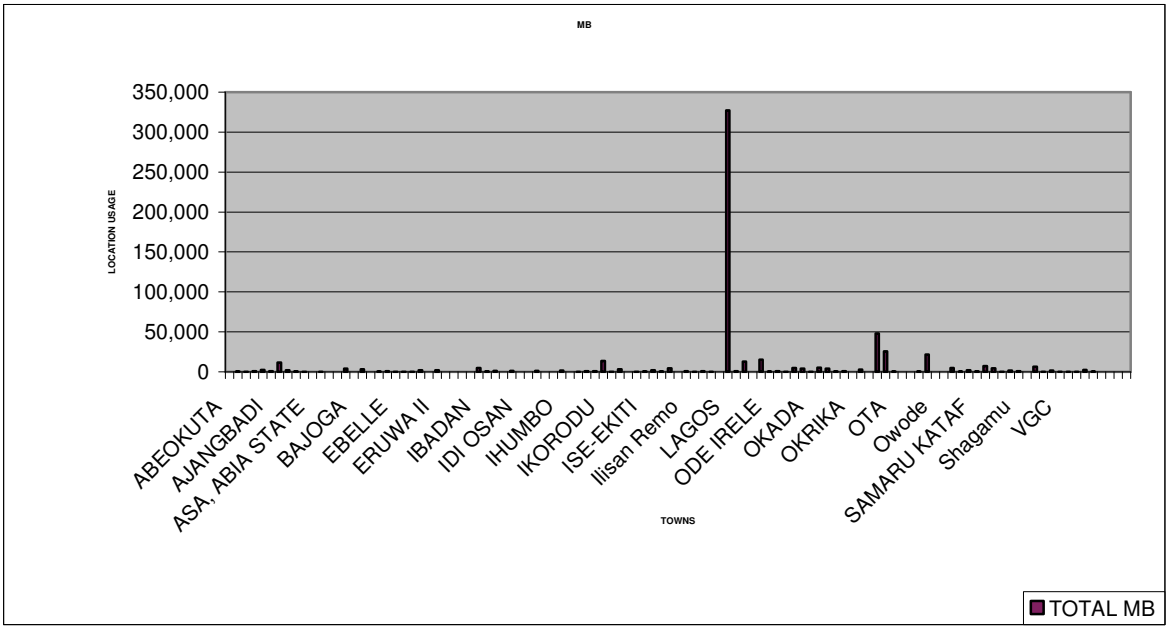
[6] *News: GSM Association Awards 2006 – The Winners*. Retrieved from the World Wide Web at http://www.160characters.org/news.php?action=view&nid=1939, last visited on September 19, 2006



Source: Vee Networks Technology Group

Mobile and Internet Penetration

In Nigeria, the ICT space is bifurcated, with a fast-tracked telecommunications sector and a slow-growing information technology sector. The Nigerian telecommunications industry is over 100-years old, but was boosted by the 1999 launch of the National Policy on Telecommunications. Though the National Policy on Information Technology was proposed in 2001, it has yet to receive legislative approval.

Nigeria's telecommunications sector leads the nation's overall ICT growth. In December 2000, Nigeria had 450,000 connected fixed lines, no connected digital mobile lines, one national carrier, 18 Internet service providers, nine active licensed fixed-line operators, one licensed mobile-line operator (Ndukwe, 2005)[7], and some 200,000 Internet users (Internet World Statistics, 2005)[8], though many experts disagree with the last figure because of widespread but unquantifiable multiple-use in Internet cafés and other public access points. In March 2004, the figures grew to 888,854 connected fixed lines, 3.8 million connected digital mobile lines, two national carriers, 35 Internet service providers, 30 active licensed fixed-line operators, and four licensed mobile line operators. In December 2004, Nigeria reported 1.5 million Internet users, a penetration rate of 1.3 percent and accounting for about 5.6 percent of total Internet users in the entire continent of Africa. Private investment in ICTs also rose from an almost zero value to about $4 billion between 1999 and 2003 (Ndukwe, 2005; Internet World Statistics, 2005).

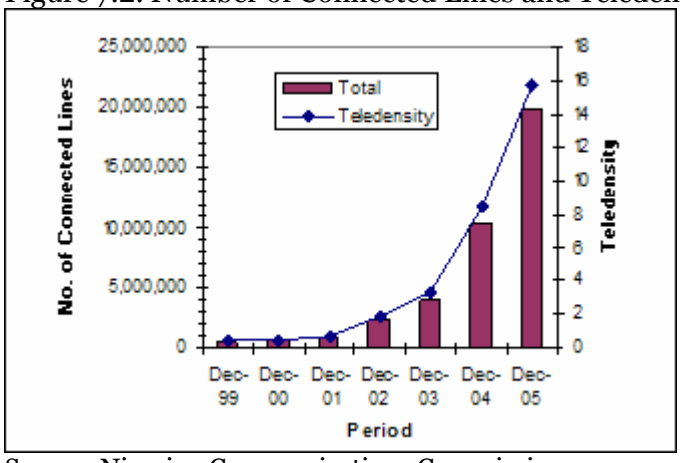
Nigeria's ICT space has improved significantly due to independent regulation through the Nigerian Communications Commission, private sector participation, and broadened competition.

[7] Ndukwe, E. (2005), "ICT Infrastructure: An Essential Foundation for Implementing the WSIS Process in Nigeria", *eNigeria Annual National Conference*, 28-30 June, Abuja, Nigeria.

[8] Internet World Statistics (2005), *Internet Usage Statistics for Africa,* retrieved October 12, 2005, from the World Wide Web: http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm.

Teledensity improved from 0.4 percent in 1996 to 3.92 percent in March 2004, providing access to an estimated 48 percent of the population, covering about 18 percent of the Nigerian landmass and exceeding the minimum ITU recommended teledensity of 1 percent.

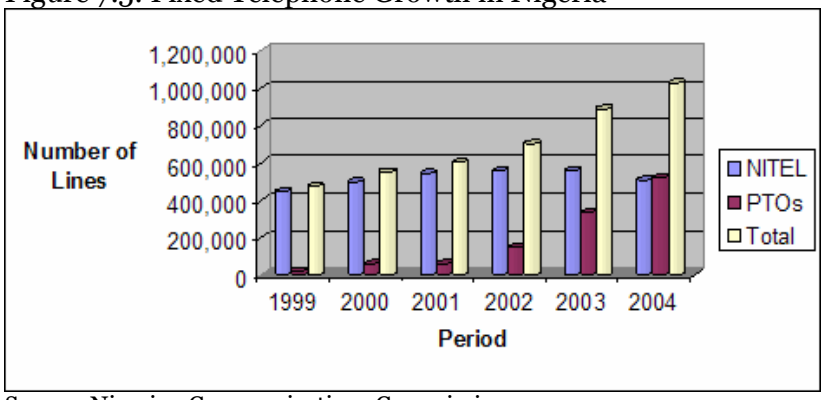
Figure 7.2: Number of Connected Lines and Teledensity (1999 – 2005)



Source: Nigerian Communications Commission

Information technology has also shown some improvement with the number of personal computers rising from 4.8 to 6.8 per 1,000 inhabitants from 1999 to 2001 (World Bank, 2003)[9], cost of Internet access driven below $1 per hour and software development given tremendous a policy and infrastructural support. But it is commonly felt that until the National Policy on Information Technology is given legal strength, the information technology sector may never enjoy as much energy as is evident in the telecommunications sector.

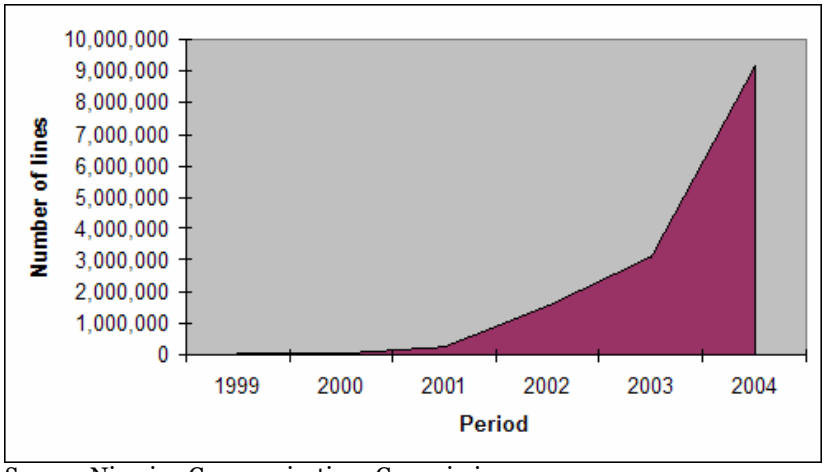
Figure 7.5: Fixed Telephone Growth in Nigeria



Source: Nigerian Communications Commission

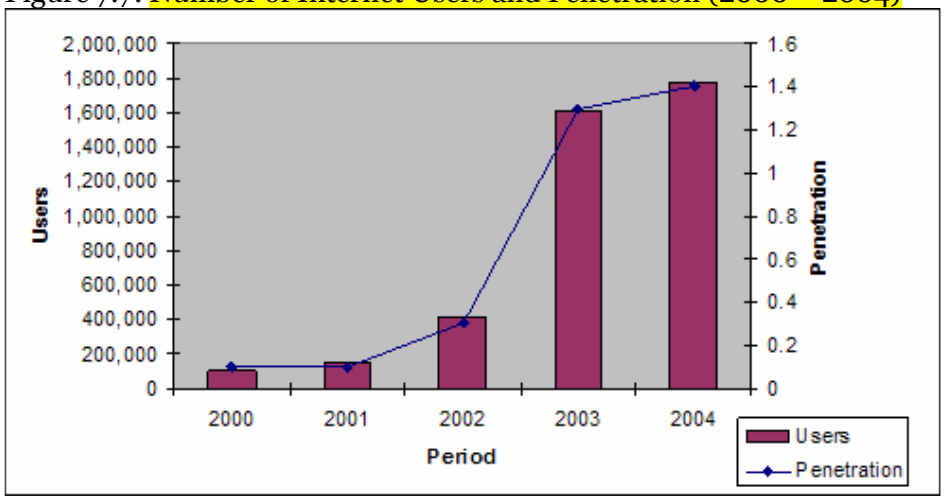
Figure 7.6: Growth of Mobile Telephony in Nigeria

[9] World Bank (2003), *ICT at a glance: Nigeria*. Retrieved October 13, 2005, from the World Wide Web: http://www.com.washington.edu/ict4d.



Source: Nigerian Communications Commission

Figure 7.7: Number of Internet Users and Penetration (2000 – 2004)



Source: Nigerian Communications Commission

Digital Divide in Nigeria and Attempts to Alleviate It

The civil sector plays a major role in the nation's ICT growth and advocates for the need to strengthen the Information Technology policy platforms. ICTs enjoy immense support from other groups as well, such as civil society organizations and the rising generation of young Nigerians. There is a dynamic youth movement for expanding online opportunities, with students giving up evenings and weekends to be able to access the Internet through campus resources. The Government of Nigeria has publicly expressed interest in accelerating the growth of the overall ICT sector. Through the Nigerian Communications Commission and the National Information Technology Development Agency, the government has announced numerous national projects: the State Accelerated Broadband Initiative (SABI) seeks to provide broadband access in all Nigerian states beginning from the state capitals; the Computer for All Nigerians Initiative (CANI) is a deliberate attempt to involve local computer manufacturers and financial institutions to allow Nigerians to acquire computers at affordable rates by paying over a 2-year period; and the Universal Service Provision Fund (USPF), supported by license fees from telecommunications operators, will help support the government-inspired efforts to extend ICT access to rural areas.

Furthermore, three institutions have also been established by the government – but expected to run as private enterprises – to help drive the process of ICT growth: the Digital Bridge Institute (DBI), a telecommunications training facility that combines world-class curriculum, environment,

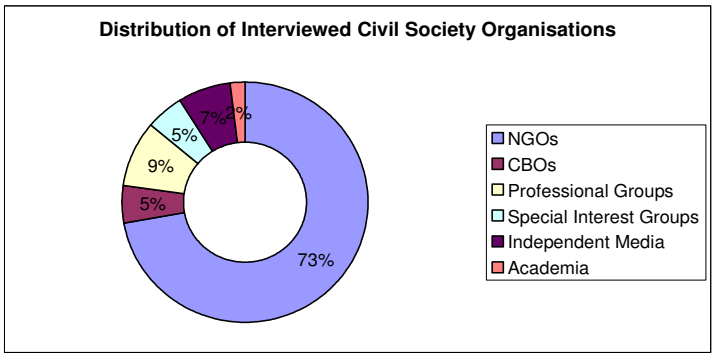
delivery mode and tutors to bridge the manpower gap the in the telecommunications industry; Galaxy Backbone, to maximize infrastructure opportunities; and the Nigerian e-government Strategies Limited (NeGST), a company that seeks to provide leadership for the nation's e-government strategy. At state level, three states stand out in their efforts towards the popularization and effective use of ICTs: In Akwa Ibom State, a science and technology park is now open for business; Lagos State's Computers in Schools Initiative is gradually helping the state acquire an ICT leadership status; and Jigawa State's Informatics Institute has become a popular expression of ICT potential in a part of Nigeria in times past often referred to as "backward."

Nigeria has benefited from support from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in the area of National Information and Communication Infrastructure (NICI) policy, but the discussion on the need to harmonize the various aspects of the nation's ICT space has met with skepticism and is only now being discussed at the level of a national consultative group expected to deliver Nigeria's strategic document on ICT for Development (ICT4D). In a bid to establish its seriousness about ICT harmonization, the federal government in 2006 created 26-man Presidential Task Force to focus on this issue. The Task Force was expected, at the end of its assignment in December 2006, to "recommend to government measures to be out in place for an institutional and structural framework that will result in a more effective, efficient and harmonized performance of ministries and organizations that are involved in policy making, regulation and implementation of government policies in the telecommunications and ICT sector of the country10."

Status of Technology Use by Civil Society in Nigeria

Some civil society organizations in Nigeria are taking advantage of the opportunities provided by information and communication technologies (ICTs). ICTs have enhanced productivity and increased efficiency. Fifty-one civil society organizations responded to the questionnaire comprising the research exercise for this case study, which may be a limited number but the results still reveal certain interesting trends. All respondents, including those who are situated in very remote areas of the country, reported using mobile phones in their day-to-day operations. Ninety percent of the organizations are involved in advocacy work and 91 percent of the people who responded to the questionnaires on behalf of their organizations are very senior managers in those organizations. The responding organizations are located in 11 states (out of 36) and the Federal Capital Territory.

Figure 8.1: Distribution of Interviewed Civil Society Organisations



[10] Culled from the letter sent from the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation

Ninety-eight percent of respondents have email addresses but only 88 percent use email in their work; 58 percent of the organizations have websites but only 47 percent use the feedback gathered through the websites in their work. The websites are used for various functions, including publicity, information sharing on advocacy issues, research, online interaction, and dissemination of information about organizational activities. Though 70 percent of the responding organizations use mailing lists, only 40 percent have Internet access in their offices. Thirty-nine percent maintain blogs, 40 percent use mobile applications (such as short message service) for advocacy, and 40 percent of the organisations have dedicated IT staff. IT expenses varied: 56 percent of the organizations conduct their IT operations for under 50,000 naira ($391), 33 percent have budget provisions between ₦ 50,000 and ₦ 1 million ($7,812.50), and one percent dedicate ₦ 1 million of their annual budget to IT.

During the research exercise, key scholars, activists, and organizations working in the e-advocacy field in Nigeria were identified – through feedback from online questionnaires and primary source interviews with intermediary organizations, scholars, activists, and leading figures in the ICT field, as well as through their online activities and advocacy efforts.

Table 8.1: Key scholars and activists working in the e-advocacy field in Nigeria

Name	Institution/Organisation	eMail Contact
Prof. Manny Aniebonam	Nigerian Information Technology Professionals in the Americas	profmanny@aniebonam.com
Prof. Charles Uwadia	University of Lagos	couwadia@unilag.edu
Dr. Thomas Yesufu	Obafemi Awolowo University	tyesufu@oauife.edu.ng
Hakeem Ajijola	Office of the National Security Adviser	ajijola@gmail.com
Edward Popoola	Nigerian ICT4D Youth Network	me@edwardpopoola.com
Tunji Lardner	West African NGO Network	tlardner@wangonet.org
Biyi Fashoyin	Joint Action Committee on ICT Awareness and Development	infocom_world@yahoo.com
John Dada	Fantsuam Foundation	johndada@fantsuam.com
Bankole Olubamise	Development Information Network	Bankole.o@devnetnigeria.org
Shina Badaru	Technology Times Newspapers	Shina.badaru@gmail.com
Sunday Folayan	Skannet	sfolayan@skannet.com.ng
Ndukwe Kalu	Nigerian Internet Exchange Project	ndukwekalu@amscotelecoms.com

Organizations involved in e-advocacy efforts were also easy to identify, as they all have active online presence through websites or online information available on their efforts. All of them have also been recommended by the various respondents as the key organizations that could serve as one-stop centers on the issue of e-advocacy in Nigeria.

Table 8.2: Key organisations working in the e-advocacy field in Nigeria

Organisation Name	Contact Details
Center for Information Technology and Development	www.citad.interconnection.org
Development Information	www.devnetnigeria.org

Network	
Nigeria Internet Group	www.nig.org.ng
Media Rights Agenda	www.mediarightsagenda.org
Publish What You Pay Campaign	www.pwyp-nigeria.org
Zero Corruption Coalition	www.yahoogroups.com/group/zerocorruption
Nigerian Youth ICT4D Network	www.nyinetwork.org
Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Center	www.cislac.org

Advocacy Case Studies

Center for Information Technology and Development (CITAD)11
Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) is a non-governmental and non-profit organization that is committed to the use of information and communication technologies for development and the promotion of good governance. It was established first as the Computer Literacy Project in 1996 but expanded in 2000 to include other projects. Its specific objectives include raising awareness about the use of ICTs in development, campaigning for an appropriate national policy on ICTs, conducting research on ICTs in development, propagating best practices in ICT applications in development, using ICTs as tools for the promotion of democracy and good governance, running community computer resource centers, advocating the integration of ICT training in the country's education system, monitoring the application of ICTs in Nigerian society, and providing ICT training to disadvantaged groups such as women and children.

Development Information Network (DevNet)[12]
Development Information Network (DevNet) is a coalition of over 100 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other civil society organizations that utilize development information. It was formed in 1994, under the auspices of the British Council following a series of consultations with development information workers, librarians and NGO practitioners in the West African sub-region. DevNet membership is open to those who have responsibility for information and documentation in the private sector, government agencies, parastatals, non-governmental organizations and international organizations whose activities focus on issues of development. The organisation hopes to be "[a] dependable and valuable development information resource center, serving the development needs of CSO community in Nigeria and the West African Sub region." DevNet's mission is to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of Nigerians through efficient management of information and capacity building, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the development process.

With the slogan, "…sharing information for development," DevNet promotes access to information on development, NGO capacity-building and training, transparency and professionalism in civil society work, inclusion of African voices in international discourse, sustainable human development, gender equality and human rights, and good governance. Services provided by DevNet include NGO start-up support, and in partnership with the Nigerian Information Technology Development Agency and the Civil Society Coalition on ICTs the organization, it is a

[11] Profile is developed from materials obtained from the organisation's website and primary source interview with the Executive Director

[12] Profile is developed from materials obtained from the organisation's website and primary source interview with the Executive Director

leading advocate for ICT Policy for Nigeria. DevNet played a major role in the United Nations' World Summit on the Information Society process.

Nigeria Internet Group (NIG)[13]
The Nigeria Internet Group (NIG) is a non-governmental organisation dedicated to the promotion and growth of the Internet in Nigeria. The NIG was formed in March1995. Its membership includes academia, non-governmental organizations, government parastatals, Internet service providers, private organizations and individuals. The NIG conducts conferences, exhibitions, workshops, and seminars. The organization's advocacy work centers on its Web portal, through which it conducts outreach to its members, the Internet community and relevant policy-making institutions.

The NIG was involved in championing the establishment of a national gateway to register the .ng (top level) domain for Nigeria. The organization's objectives include promoting access to the Internet in Nigeria, promoting national awareness of the Internet, promoting an intra-Nigerian network, promoting the development of national archives and databases, advocating for rural Internet penetration, advocating for Internet infrastructure development, supporting Internet content development, and advocating for effective e-governance.

Media Rights Agenda (MRA)[14]
Media Rights Agenda (MRA) was established in 1993 as an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization for the purpose of, among other things, promoting and protecting media freedom and freedom of expression in Nigeria. MRA is registered in Nigeria and holds observer status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. The specific mandate of the organization is to promote respect and recognition for media freedom and freedom of expression in Nigeria; to provide protection and support for journalists and writers engaged in the lawful pursuit of their professional duties; to promote the highest standards of professional ethics, integrity, training and conduct in the journalism profession; and to bring about a conducive social and legal atmosphere for the practice of journalism, and in particular, ensuring the protection of the journalist's right to not be compelled to work against his or her convictions or to disclose sources of information.

MRA's members are drawn from among professional journalists and lawyers. The organization leads the advocacy effort tagged the "Freedom of Information (FOI) Coalition," which uses the FOI website (www.mediarightsagenda.org/foi.html), text messaging (SMS) and mailing lists to campaign for the passage of the FOI Bill into law. It is one of the most popular, effective and engaging initiatives in Nigeria's e-advocacy space.

Publish What You Pay Campaign (PWYPC)[15]
The Publish What You Pay campaign aims to help citizens of resource-rich developing countries to hold their governments accountable for the management of revenues from the oil, gas and mining industries. Natural resource revenues are an important source of income for more than 50

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[13] Profile is developed from materials obtained from the organisation's website, http://www.jidaw.com/comm.html#nig, and primary source interview with the Executive Director

[14] Profile is developed from materials obtained from the organisation's website and primary source (online) interview with the Executive Director

[15] Profile is developed from materials obtained from the organisation's parent website (www.publishwhatyoupay.org). The country website (www.pwyp-nigeria.org) was temporarily down as at the time of compiling this profile

developing countries, including Angola, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Nigeria and Venezuela. The PWYP Campaign believes that "[w]hen properly managed, these revenues should serve as a basis for poverty reduction, economic growth and development rather than exacerbating corruption, conflict and social divisiveness".

The Publish What You Pay global coalition of over 300 NGOs calls for the mandatory disclosure of payments made by oil, gas and mining companies' to all governments, and also for those resource-rich developing country governments to publish full details on revenues. Global Witness, CAFOD, Oxfam, Save the Children UK, Transparency International UK and George Soros of the Open Society Institute founded the campaign. In Nigeria, the campaign has forty-six members, operating from various geo-political zones of the country.

Zero Corruption Coalition (ZCC)[16]

The Zero-Corruption Coalition is an association formed in 2001 to campaign against corruption. The ZCC currently has a membership of over seventy civil society organizations spread across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. The coalition believes pervasive corruption contributes to increased unemployment, increased economic crises and reduction of foreign investments, decreased potential for local industries, increased poverty, psychic despair and loss of patriotism among Nigerians, brain drain and (more recently) the loss of foreign aid and greater international reluctance to grant debt relief.

The ZZC's strategic action plan includes creating awareness of the prevalence and consequences of corruption (which includes circulatory advocacy with feedback between the people and government, with the coalition as a bridge between the two); campaigning to improve processes (which involves monitoring and evaluation); creating an anti-corruption database; and ensuring compliance through public interest litigation. In a bid to combat corruption and ensure good governance, ZCC advocates (along with other civil society organisations) for the passage of the Freedom of Information Bill into law.

Nigerian Youth ICT4D Network (NYIN)[17]

All across Nigeria, there are youth-led efforts aimed at raising awareness of the effective use of the ICTs for socio-economic development. In order to support this new dynamic and to harmonize these local efforts into a platform for resource sharing and best practice appraisal, the Nigerian Youth ICT for Development (ICT4D) Network (NYIN) was formed.

NYIN envisions a networked generation of young Nigerians empowering themselves and contributing to the country's active participation in the Information Society. NYIN is not another new organisation, but, rather, an online network of youth-led ICT4D initiatives. Through its online platform, NYIN seeks to support, inspire, empower, educate, assist and inform youth-led initiatives around the country, help them reach their full potential, and achieve their goals and objectives. NYIN also works with youth efforts directed at Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The network is the country-level arm of the African Youth ICT4D Network (AYIN).

Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Center (CISLAC)[18]

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[16] Profile is developed from materials obtained from the Media Rights Agenda website, at www.mediarightsagenda.org/sphzcc.html

[17] Profile is developed from materials obtained from the organisation's website, and primary source (online) interviews with two of the network's founding members

Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) is a nongovernmental, nonprofit organization for legislative advocacy, lobbying, information sharing and research. It was formed out of the perceived need to address defects in the legislative advocacy work of civil society and open a window between legislators and civil society groups. CISLAC believes that civil society groups made critical contributions to Nigeria's democratization process by insisting on popular issues such as, among other things, the rule of law and respect for human rights at the height of military authoritarianism. Since the new civilian regime was inaugurated in May 1999, civil society groups have been very active on a vast array of issues pertinent to democratic governance, such as constitutionalism, gender equality, conflict transformation, transparency and accountability, popular empowerment, poverty eradication, and more.

CISLAC argues that an absence of focus has made it difficult for civil society groups to understand how the legislature works and therefore cannot connect effectively with its appropriate channels of communication. Therefore, their follow-up programs are weak despite great resources poured into organizing seminars/workshops where various recommendations were generated. CISLAC works to help the legislature enhance its capacity, strengthen its roots and buy into existing civil society advances in research, policy engagement, advocacy and networking.

Challenges and Opportunities

There is a **major opportunity for growth in terms of e-advocacy and the efficient use of technology by the civil society in Nigeria**. Visible examples from the Nigerian democratic experience include the ease with which individuals or communities are now able to reach their representatives at various levels of governance, and the increasing rate at which government institutions are making use of ICT tools to reach out to the public.

The research process ultimately identified three major needs:

Capacity Building for Civil Society Organizations

Many civil society organizations in Nigeria have not come to terms with the opportunities that ICTs provide. There is an urgent need to enlighten these players (especially those who work in the rural areas) on the merits of technology use for their daily tasks.

Infrastructure Support

While capacity building is important, the need to own (or at least have access to) the technology tools and platforms that support e-advocacy cannot be underestimated.

Improved Policy Environment

Civil society organizations would no doubt benefit from a generally improved policy environment, but there must be a focus on the particular policy situation hindering e-advocacy and the general work of civil society organizations in Nigeria. For example, 91 percent of Nigerians have access to radios and 64.9% actually own radios, but community radios are not known to exist because of the policy environment that surrounding their establishment. At the moment, civil society organizations lack access to community radio licensees because of cost and other factors. There is

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[18] Profile is developed from materials obtained from the organisation's website, and primary source (online) interview with the Editor/Media Officer

an urgent need to address this issue in order to avail citizens and the civil society the opportunity to take advantage of the most popular ICT tool in Nigeria for the propagation of information and enhancement of ongoing efforts in their respective communities.

While it is important for all stakeholders to ensure that technology use focuses on people and development rather than on the technology itself, it is up to civil society to defend the best interests of the masses. In Nigeria, all that is required to strengthen the role of civil society in its use of technology to help address the people's needs is to give it the support it deserves.