

The International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) assists developing countries to realise locally owned sustainable development by harnessing the potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs). IICD works with its partner organisations in selected countries, helping local stakeholders to assess the potential uses of ICTs in development. It also strengthens the capacities of local partners to formulate, implement and manage development policies and projects that make use of ICTs.

Strategy

IICD's strategy is built on:

- empowering local organisations and stakeholders to make effective use of ICTs on their own terms, and
- to catalyse lessons learning and knowledge sharing on ICTs by local organisations and the international community.

To ensure that the results are sustainable and address local development needs, IICD follows six guiding principles – ownership, demand responsiveness, multi-stakeholder involvement, capacity development, partnerships and learning by doing.

How do we realise our mission and goals?

IICD has adopted two strategic approaches. First, Country Programmes bring local organisations together in a Round-table Process. Within this process local institutional capacities are strengthened to formulate and execute ICT-supported development policies and projects. Second, Thematic Networks link local and international partners working in similar areas, connecting local and global knowledge, and promoting South–South and South–North exchanges.

Country Programmes

Each Country Programme has several components – the development of networks, policies, projects and capacities, and knowledge sharing. The local partners that participate in a Country Programme, form a 'network' that determines priorities, shares responsibilities and tasks, mobilises resources, and monitors and evaluates planned results. The Country Programmes represent long-term investments over a 5–7 year period. However, the nature and intensity of our support changes over time, as the local partners develop their skills in policy formulation, project identification, fundraising, and capacity development. Knowledge sharing is maintained as part of our joint commitment to share the lessons learned and information about ICTs for development.

Where do we work?

Country Programmes are currently being implemented in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Jamaica, Mali, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

Thematic Networks

Thematic Networks are intended to meet the increasing requests from our local partners on the uses of ICTs in specific sectors. As the number of projects in the Country Programmes has grown so has the need to share experiences and lessons learned, both within and across countries. Alongside the requests for assistance from local partners, other parties are increasingly turning to IICD to deepen their knowledge of ICTs for development in specific sectors.

In which sectors do we work?

Thematic Networks focus on several sectors: education, health, and livelihood opportunities (especially agriculture). Their priority is based on local partners' needs; they are often also the focus of sector wide approaches (SWAp). So far, the environment sector has been low on the list of local priorities, but the demand for knowledge of e-governance – improved governance using ICTs – is increasing.

IICD is an independent non-profit foundation, established in 1997 by the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGIS). Its main institutional resources are provided by DGIS, DFID and SDC. This profile is based on IICD's Strategy 2002 – 2007.

This publication is based on IICD's Annual Report 2001. For more information or the full report (in English), please contact:

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INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT





Management Report

MR. JAC STIENEN – MANAGING DIRECTOR



Ghanaian farmers harvesting yams



Global Teenagers from the Khalanyoni Highschool in Zimbabwe



Presentation at the FIAB workshop in Burkina Faso



Network launch event in Bolivia



Inhabitants of Segou Koro in Mali



Fruit market in Jamaica

At the end of 2001, Ms. Eveline Herfkens, the Netherlands Minister for Development Cooperation, approved IICD's new five-year strategy, 'Deepening Local Ownership through Partnerships'. The strategy follows the positive recommendations of an external evaluation in early 2001, and builds on the work of the past years. In this respect, 2001 was a memorable year in which the fruits of our work were acknowledged, paving the way for the Institute to continue in the years to come.

Strategy 2002-2007

The development of the new strategy involved considerable effort, commitment and teamwork on the part of not only the staff of IICD, but also our partners and advisers in developing countries. The key element in this strategy is the strengthening of our relations with different types of local partners. Together with these partners, we develop and implement Country Programmes in which local partners are in the driver's seat. In at least eight developing countries, we will assist local stakeholders to assess the potential uses of ICTs for development. As a second key element in the strategy, IICD aims to build the capacities of local partners to develop and manage the Country Programmes. Within these programmes, they formulate and implement locally owned development policies and projects that make use of ICTs.

A number of elements of our strategy stem from the Institute's evaluation, which provided several learning points. For example, activities should not happen in isolation. The experience gained by our partners from activities on the ground should be disseminated to policy makers and practitioners at national and international levels. It is also necessary to balance our existing demand-driven approach with more guidance and inputs based on the lessons learned by partners elsewhere. In particular, with respect to the sharing of knowledge and experience at the sectoral level, a more proactive role is needed.

In response to the evaluation, and as an integral part of our new strategy, we will increase our efforts to build and strengthen 'ICT for development' networks. Here, local partners take full ownership of a range of activities within the Country Programmes. Further, knowledge sharing networks will focus on the applications of ICTs in sectors such as education, agriculture and health. Within these networks, knowledge exchange and learning across projects and countries are key objectives.

Thematic Networks

In order to assist our partners in identifying their needs for sector-specific knowledge and to help them find answers to meet those needs, Thematic Networks have become one of the pillars of our new strategy. These networks will link local and international partners working on similar themes, connecting local with global knowledge, and promoting South-South and South-North exchanges.

Our existing partnership with Cap Gemini Ernst & Young (CGEY), which was reconfirmed in December 2001, is an illustrative example of how we furnish our partner networks with expertise on request. Within the framework of the partnership agreement with CGEY, in February 2001 we jointly organised a workshop for all our local e-business partners. This resulted in a genuine 'win-win' situation for all participants. Our partners acquired state-of-the art knowledge and were personally assisted in applying that knowledge to local situations. For CGEY, our collaboration supports their corporate responsibility programme and has proven to be highly valued by their employees.

Local knowledge sharing

With the reaching of a critical mass of projects in the Country Programmes – 47 at the end of 2001 – the need to share experiences within and among countries has become ever more striking.

At a consultation meeting in June 2001, local organisations from IICD's focal countries proposed that an ICT for development 'community of practice' be created in each country, with the aim of strengthening the sharing of knowledge and lessons learned. Since that meeting, building local knowledge networks has been given high priority and significant steps have been made to establish such networks in a number of countries, such as Bolivia.

International partnerships

Our international partners – public, private and not-for-profit – provide resources and expertise that are not available locally or within IICD. These partners help to disseminate the experiences of IICD and its local partners, and enable them to implement their missions more effectively. During 2001 the existing partnerships were strengthened, and some critical new alliances were formed.

At the close of 2001 we signed a three-year strategic partnership agreement with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) – called the 'Building Digital Opportunities' (BDO – IICD/SDC partnership) – the primary aim of which is to learn from practical experiences in ICTs for development. A unique aspect of this partnership is that SDC will join our existing strategic BDO alliance with the Netherlands Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGIS) and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). The partnership with DFID – officially signed at the start of 2001 – is already showing promising results.

Increasing requests from our partners for more in-depth knowledge on e-governance led to the signing of a strategic partnership with Clockwork Inc., a Netherlands-based international consultancy firm, in late 2001. Since e-governance is one of the core themes of our Thematic Networks, the partnership represents an important milestone in giving substance to this element of our strategy.

Organisation

Just as IICD has broadened its external base in response to the increasing demand, internally, the Institute's staff also grew in number and changed its overall composition to become more international. In this respect, there is a new focus on international appointments. At the end of 2001, five staff members were foreign nationals, and this number is expected to grow.

Preview

Following the significant events in the year 2001, we confidently look forward to implementing the first phase of our new strategy in 2002. The extension of our mandate by Minister Herfkens to 2007 will enable us to keep up the existing momentum in providing effective support to our local partners in achieving sustainable development. By the end of 2007, we envisage that IICD will have evolved from a Europe-based institute to a multi-actor North-South network, in which local partnerships and empowerment are crucial.