iicd
People - ICT - Development

Annual Report 2008
Executive Summary

Understanding ICT for Development

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

Together with its local partners, IICD creates practical and sustainable solutions using both modern media (computers, internet, email and multimedia) and traditional media (bulletin boards, radio and television) to connect people in developing countries so they too can benefit from ICT. In so doing, IICD and its partners also contribute to the Millennium Development Goals.

IICD puts knowledge, innovation and finance to work, together with its partners from the public, private and non-profit sector. It is currently active in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Ghana, Jamaica, Mali, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia in the fields of education, health, governance and democratisation, the environment, and enhancing livelihood opportunities (especially in agriculture).

Results from our work on the ground

In 2008, IICD continued to focus on increasing the impact and outreach of its programmes in each of the nine countries in which it operates. This is in line with its strategic framework for 2006–2010, *Making the Most of Our Experience in ICT for Development*. By the end of 2008, IICD's project portfolio counted 120 projects. This is a decrease compared to last year (136 projects). The reduction is the result of a strategic refocus on embedding the current project portfolio in the partner organisations, rather than starting new projects. As a result, 52 projects are now operating independently, a 30% increase compared to last year (40). The projects in independent continuation continue their work as part of their core activities, but do not receive any IICD funding. Not all partner organisations manage to continue their ICT activities independently; finding the resources to carry on remains a

'Thanks to the digital material prepared by the projects working in the area of education, students have become aware of the situation of indigenous peoples and this has instilled respect in the students.' *Teachers about the APCOB project, Bolivia*

challenge. Sixteen projects stopped completely out of the total number (136) of projects at the beginning of the year.

Among the 2008 projects:
- 26 were linked to improving access and quality of education
- 17 focused on improving transparency and efficiency in governance and helped to improve citizen participation
- 17 aimed to improve the quality and access of health care
- 60 helped farmers and small-scale entrepreneurs to improve their livelihoods or sustain their production and produce organically.

Through the projects and programmes carried out by partner organisations, IICD managed to reach around 618,000 active users who directly benefited from the ICT facilities and information provided. Most users were already computer literate or gained basic ICT skills through the projects. The programmes also reached nearly 5,5 million beneficiaries, generally the passive users of information.

The majority of those who benefited from the projects belonged to IICD's target group: underprivileged people with little or no education, people with a below-average income, and people living in areas where basic public services like health and education are scarce. Women constitute a substantial part of the target group. To ensure that the projects supported are not contributing to gender inequality, a focus on gender is an intrinsic part of each project, from inception to implementation. To help increase the participation of women in specific IICD-supported projects in Bolivia, Ecuador and Zambia, IICD collaborates with PSO, a Dutch organisation for capacity building in developing countries.

The active users and beneficiaries receive information that relates to their relevant sector, including agricultural market information, health information or educational materials. In this way, IICD contributes to the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in particular:
- MDG 1, focusing on increasing the income levels of the poorest
- MDG 2, focusing on universal education
- MDGs 4, 5 and 6, relating to health issues
- MDG 8, focusing on international partnerships and networking, including access to ICT.

Information was made accessible through one of the 330 community-based information centres and other access points set up by programmes in the various countries. The centres provide both printed materials and digital information through the internet using either fixed, wireless or satellite-based connections. In places where the internet is either not yet available or financially not feasible, access to information is provided via printed bulletins, mobile radio, rural radio, television or voice-radio systems.

To build the partners' and end-users' organisational and technical capacities, IICD and local training partners offered various capacity-building activities including train-the-trainer sessions, technical update seminars and on-the-job training. In the year under review, 1,400 people were trained, including both project partner members and end-users.

The capacity of partner organisations was further strengthened through monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities. In 2008, 5,500 questionnaires - the same as in 2007 - were completed with the help of IICD's online M&E system. The total number of questionnaires collected since the system's inception is 21,000. The M&E system provides both IICD and its partners with regular feedback on their activities. Input from the questionnaires is fed back into discussions on how to improve both the impact of the projects and user satisfaction in the long term. These discussions are held at Focus Group level within the project teams (16 in 2008).

To strengthen its impact and reach a wider audience, IICD and its partners have increased their participation in large-scale leveraging programmes and policy formulation processes. By the end of 2008, IICD was involved in 10 leveraging programmes and 9 policy processes.

The National ICT for Development (ICT4D) Networks in each of IICD's focal countries also greatly contributed to the sustainability of ICT for Development by working on awareness-raising, advocacy and the facilitation of national knowledge-sharing activities. In 2008, each network continued to strengthen its position as the representative consultative platform for ICT policy development to the national government. They also further strengthened their activities with regard to lobbying and participation in policy formulation. This clearly supports the embedding of projects and, in more general terms, the embedding of ICT.

Knowledge sharing was also greatly improved within the national networks thanks to an increase in both the number of member organisations and public events organised. In 2008, the nine networks together included over 260 member organisations and 950 individual members, thus facilitating learning between IICD-supported and other experienced ICT practitioners in the countries.
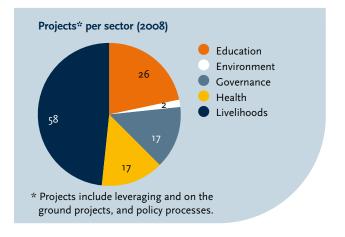
Impact of our work on the ground

IICD is continuously trying to improve its effectiveness and development impact. Monitoring and evaluation helps uncover what is and is not functioning in a project. IICD's M&E System measures development impact by capturing users' opinion of the project using the following dimensions:

- Awareness: are users more aware of the possibilities of ICT?
- Empowerment: do the users feel empowered through the project?
- Economic impact: did users gain or expect to gain economic benefits (such as income and employment)?
- Organisational / Sector impact: do the users experience any changes in their organisation or sector?

Projects* per sector (2008)

- Education — 26
- Environment — 2
- Governance — 17
- Health — 17
- Livelihoods — 58

* Projects include leveraging and on the ground projects, and policy processes.

The impact of the projects in the *education* sector rose in 2008, according to both teachers and students, with a score of 63% in 2008, compared to 55% in 2007. However, a decrease was recorded in most of the other areas. For example, the number of people who felt they had achieved their goals dropped to 73%, compared to 84% in 2007. The same applied to levels of satisfaction and awareness, which also dropped in 2008. The reasons for this are unclear, although one explanation could be growing expectations among teachers as their projects gradually mature. Another relevant factor was poor connectivity: in 2008, only 29% of respondents said they were 'strongly or partially satisfied' with their access to the internet. Gender impact, which was measured for the first time in 2008, also had a relatively low score of 49%. The good news is that there was a healthy 50-50 balance between the number of men and women taking part in the education projects in 2008.

In the *governance* sector, satisfaction, awareness, empowerment and economic impact all increased in 2008. Impact on governance decreased slightly, which might reflect respondents' concerns about the sustainability of projects in the 'Independent Continuation' phase. Differences between the two types of governance projects – e-society and e-government – were noticeable. The impact on governance was perceived to be higher in e-society projects (Bolivia and Ecuador) than in e-government projects (Tanzania and Zambia). Awareness and empowerment also tended to be slightly higher for e-society projects. Also, e-society project participants perceived a higher gender impact than e-government project participants. Overall, women (66%) tended to see more gender impact than the men (32%).

In the sector *health* a difference could be noted between the impact of health management projects and the impact of health sensitisation projects. Health sensitisation projects tended to have a higher overall impact, while the management projects scored better on empowerment. Gender impact in the health sector is extremely high compared to other sectors (e.g. education, livelihoods).

In the sector *livelihoods* impact figures rose across all indicators. The most significant increase was in economic impact at 63% (51% in 2007), continuing the trend of rising economic impact since 2005. Despite 2008 being a year of skyrocketing commodity prices, an increasing number of end-users of the ICT-enabled services stated that they had gained economic benefits (such as income and employment). Overall, differences in impact for men and women were not large, except for economic impact and sector impact. In both these categories, women claimed to see significantly more impact than men. This is a big difference when compared to 2007, when women and men rated these impact indicators equally, both lower than in 2008.
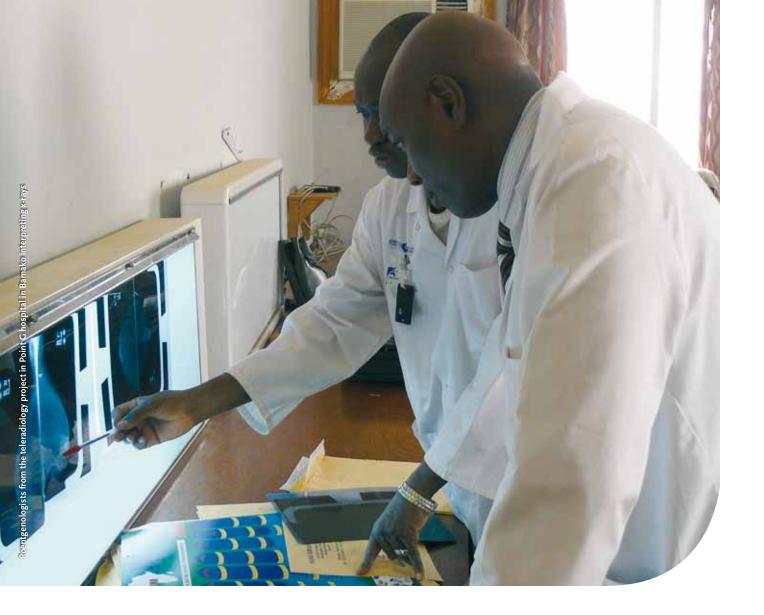
Harvesting and Learning

In 2008, IICD launched a new, more structured approach to harvesting experiences and disseminating evidence-based learning from its Country Programmes so that this could be re-invested in new and existing activities. It established Thematic Learning Communities which functioned as both face-to-face gatherings and online spaces using intranet-based tools. Close collaboration with each of the nine National ICT4D Networks also yielded results. This contributed to a more thematic approach for many of the networks in-country, and facilitated partner involvement in Cross-Country Learning Events. It also helped channel

project experiences and content for publication and dissemination. In 2008, harvesting focused on education, livelihood opportunities in agriculture (including connectivity in the rural areas and the options and challenges relating to this theme), health, capacity development and innovation.

To facilitate online knowledge sharing IICD uses various platforms, such as iConnect, iTrain Online and Dgroups. In 2008, a new platform was initiated for iConnect based on Web 2.0 tools to further enhance online knowledge sharing and collaboration. The platform for Dgroups was also renewed to meet future demands for this social networking platform for a steadily growing number of users.

To facilitate face-to-face knowledge sharing IICD organised two Cross-Country Learning Events (CCLE). The first CCLE for the education sector brought 18 professionals from 8 countries together in Accra, Ghana in May 2008; the second CCLE for the livelihoods sector brought together 28 project partners from 8 countries in Sikasso, Mali. Both events were trilingual (Spanish, English and French).

To further expand the knowledge on ICT4D and strengthen its ties with other experts on ICTs in the international development sector, IICD also participated in the third annual eLearning Africa Conference (eLA08) in Accra, Ghana

at the end of May. It also helped to organize an iTrainers meeting in Burkina Faso – which led to the launch of the francophone iTrainers online community – and co-organised the third round of the Gender, Agriculture and Rural development in the Information Society (GenARDIS) Small Grant Fund competition together with Hivos, IDRC and CTA.
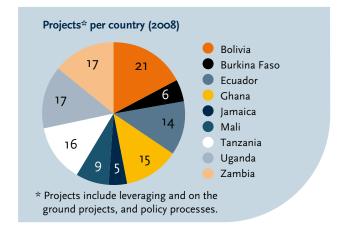
Partnering

Like any other development activity, the success of our work can be adversely affected by factors beyond our control, such as the management capacity of a local partner or unreliable power supplies. Consequently, IICD collaborates with a variety of local and international partners from the private, public and non-profit sector. Their combined strengths are critical to achieving sustainable solutions.

In 2008, IICD's attention was mainly directed towards finding new enabling partners – partners who can help IICD do its job on the ground and create, share and disseminate information about the use of ICT for development – and developing existing ones. New opportunities were explored in Europe and the United States, while initiatives where taken to strengthen IICD's position in the Dutch market.

The Dutch Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) continued to be IICD's main enabling partner. Other important partners in the Netherlands were Cordaid, Hivos and PSO and Dutch private sector companies Altran, Atos Origin, Inter Access, Ordina and KPN. In 2008, IICD's partnership with PSO was further deepened with the allocation of funds for the Learn-Work Trajectory. New partnerships were signed with the foundation Close the Gap; and as part of a consortium of TNO, Act Now! Alliance and Avanti Communications, with the European Space Agency (ESA).

In the international field of development IICD continued to work with the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC). Despite its efforts, IICD did not identify a new international enabling

Projects* per country (2008)

21 — Bolivia
6 — Burkina Faso
14 — Ecuador
15 — Ghana
5 — Jamaica
9 — Mali
16 — Tanzania
17 — Uganda
17 — Zambia

- Bolivia
- Burkina Faso
- Ecuador
- Ghana
- Jamaica
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- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Zambia

* Projects include leveraging and on the ground projects, and policy processes.

'As a doctor I really like the system of sending medical files through the internet, the opportunity to talk to each other and comment through a special program. Before the use of this system [...] a general practitioner had very few possibilities to ask medical specialists any follow up questions.' *Dr Mahamoudane Niang, Mali*

partner to replace the support from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) which came to an end in 2007.

There was little change in the composition of IICD's established knowledge-sharing partnerships. The Communication Initiative, APC, GeSCI, OneWorld International, PSO, Bellanet, ItrainOnline, BCO, Dgroups, Search4Dev, KM4Dev and the Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP) remained the most valuable knowledge-sharing partners.

Organisational developments

The year under review started with new leadership at IICD with the appointment of a new Managing Director, Mrs Caroline Figuères. She succeeded Jac Stienen who retired after seven years of service.

In 2008, IICD had 33 employees (21 female and 12 male; 30.5 FTE). Ten employees worked part time and 23 on a full time basis; the average contract counted 0.95 FTE. Staff turnover was under 12% (4 employees), which is similar to the two previous years. Absence as a result of illness showed a slight decrease in 2008. In 2007, absenteeism due to illness was still 2.98 compared to 2.51 in 2008.

Staff development was high on the agenda in 2008 for many reasons. Firstly, a number of new staff members joined the organisation and needed to be prepared for their function. Secondly, as IICD aims to be an expertise organisation, longer-term staff members have the opportunity to further develop their competences. This is also in line with IICD's aim to focus more on leveraging opportunities. In 2008, the first experiments took place with sending staff members with specific areas of expertise to IICD focal countries other than their own, to share their expertise with people on the ground. This proved to be highly beneficial for both the local partners and the IICD staff members involved.

IICD also wants to transform itself into a learning organisation and is therefore participating in PSO's Learn-Work Trajectory. In 2008, IICD also received a quality bonus on the basis of what was achieved in the last two years to further improve learning within the organisation.
To further improve the quality of the organisation IICD worked hard to implement the changes recommended by an external auditor which resulted in an extension of its ISO 9001:2000 Quality Certification. Furthermore, IICD's Management Information System (MIS), an internal reporting system introduced in 2007, was further improved in 2008.

Finance

The total income for the year under review amounted to 5,580,555 euros. The largest share of this income was provided by the Dutch Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGIS). The subsidy of DGIS began in 2006 and will run through until 31 December 2010. The total income in 2008 provided by other donors such as the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), private sector partners and Dutch not-for-profit organisations such as Cordaid, Hivos and PSO, amounted to 19%.

Forecast

In 2009, work in the current group of countries will continue, with a focus on establishing a high quality ICT4D network, facilitating the presence of a strong group of technical advisers, and achieving a high percentage of independent projects. IICD's overall focus is to expand its experience and reach out to end-users in the key social sectors of agriculture, education and health resulting in a minimum of a five-fold multiplication of end-users and beneficiaries. These sectors are key to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and are therefore a priority for many governments and their main development partners in Africa and Latin America.

Within the current sectors, projects and networks, IICD will increasingly work on activities by and for female end-user groups. More attention will also be paid to technical innovation; affordable and reliable connectivity and sustainable energy; and innovation at the level of ICT applications.

In addition, IICD will continue its efforts to document the experiences and lessons learned from its work on the ground. The thematic focus for IICD in 2009 will be on health, innovation and gender.

With regard to organisational strategy, IICD will continue to focus on increasing its visibility, strengthening the organisation, becoming a true learning organisation and working on the acquisition of funds and expertise. IICD will identify knowledge partners in 2009 that are relevant to our work. And IICD will continue looking for additional enabling partners, allowing IICD to obtain a minimum of 25% of its funding from non-DGIS sources. The organisation will also reinforce its collaboration with Dutch NGOs.

On behalf of the Management Team
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IICD Profile

With the right tools, people in developing countries can considerably improve their livelihoods and quality of life. Better access to information and communication technology (ICT) is particularly vital in enabling them to achieve their goals. This is why the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) creates practical and sustainable solutions that connect people and enable them to benefit from ICT. As an independent not-for-profit foundation, we put knowledge, innovation and finance to work with partners from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. Together, we can make a world of difference.

IICD is active in Africa, Latin-America and the Caribbean, where we create and enhance development opportunities in education, good governance, livelihoods, health and the environment. Our approach includes linking local, national and international organisations as well as formulating and implementing ICT-supported development policies and projects.

IICD was established by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1996. Our core funders include the Dutch Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGIS), and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). We also work closely together with the Dutch not-for-profit organisations Cordaid, Hivos and PSO.

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Cover: Project partner from the Community Information Center in Bolgatanga, Ghana.