

BCO impact study

Draft Proposal Question 1

How does “giving voice to the poor” (including through local media) change their lives towards development objectives

By OW – Basheerhamad Shadrach
09 December 2005

Introduction

At the BCO Impact planning meeting, it was agreed that OW will take the lead in proposing a research around the question, “if and how giving ‘voice’ to the poor change their lives towards development objectives”. All BCO partners have already been engaged in giving voice to the poor, and have expressed interest to pursue the research in their work.

Concept Question A

Both in Lusaka as well as in London, there was a consensus to explore the aspects of empowering communities through building communication opportunities among them, so that the Poor can better inform the policy directly, and assist the intermediaries to amplify areas of concerns that are underpinning the achievement of the development goals.

It was agreed that the centric force in this research would be the ‘people’ at the grassroots, especially those marginalised and poor household and individuals who are unable to realise their ‘right’ to survive. The persistence of poverty is linked to a web of recurring factors ranging from a life with hunger to psychological dimensions, such as powerlessness, voicelessness, dependency, shame and humiliation; and lack of access to basic infrastructure, such as roads, transportation and clean water. They also lack access to quality education and the economic environment at large while absorbing disparity in affording health care costs and not being able to work. Finally, the poor rarely speak of income but instead focus on managing assets physical, human, social, and environmental as a way to cope with their vulnerability.

It is therefore essential to understand that the concept of ‘voicelessness’ is directly related to the above factors. Hence, giving a ‘voice’ to the poor literally does not mean providing ICTs or communication channels, but enabling them to access the above rights they are entitled to. This research will therefore explore if and how ICTs enable the poor to access services and participate in decisions that are determining their opportunity to survive.

In the context of this research, poverty can be classified into four categories, but all contributing to the plight of the Poor:

1. Income Poverty
2. Human Poverty
3. Information Poverty
4. Voice Poverty

It is recognised that the “voice’ dimension of Poverty can be measured only if the other three dimensions of Poverty are explored as well.

Indicators

While examining this question, we could look at four broad areas where ICTs could play a key role:

1. Access to public services offered to the Poor
2. Opportunity to feedback for improving the efficiency in public services
3. Participation in public decision-making processes
4. Exploring the impact and alternative approaches to mitigating poverty

Within the above, there will four further indicators with which this research will explore the questions and the role of ICTs.

Access to public services

- Accessibility
- Quality
- Reliability
- Affordability
- Sustainability

Opportunity to feedback to improving services

- Access
- Process
- Response
- Satisfaction
- Sustainability

Participation in decision-making

- Access to decision-making
- Social mobilisation
- Continuous engagement with institutions
- Engagement in monitoring local decisions

Direct impact of ICTs in mitigating poverty

- Knowledge sharing
- Right to information
- Local level accountability
- Access to alternative livelihoods and markets

Implementation

The research will be designed with the help of local communities using the Pondicherry Framework which combines the top-down research skills and the bottom-up citizen's engagement from the beginning. The grassroots community knowledge workers together with academic researchers will design, implement and analyse the research; and produce the outcomes and outputs.

Timeframe

| When | What | Who |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Q4 2005 | Research Design | OW and Grassroots |
| Q1-3 2006 | Research study | Grassroots |
| Q4 2006 | Analytical reports | OW |
| Q4 2006 | Research Outputs | OW |

Draft Proposal Question B – ICT and participation in governance

By Panos – Kitty Warnock
13 -12 -2005

Introduction

During the London meeting it was agreed that the lead organisation for the several evaluation questions would elaborate more on their topic. For Panos this topic was question 2 – ICT and participation in governance. Hereby we would like to make a first attempt to work on the rationale and structure for this question.

Hypothesis:

ICTs enable greater participation of civil society, including the poor, in democratic governance and decisionmaking.

Note: I'm losing my confidence about this Question. It is an interesting one, but I'm not sure how many BCO partners are doing projects that relate to it. Panos should be able to produce something, anyway, as "participation" is one of our key principles.

Concept, Question B

Definition of Governance: There are many definitions. Some focus mainly on activities of Government (eg the World Bank), some focus more on the activities and powers of citizens (eg UNDP). This one from the EU, 2003, includes both:

Governance concerns the state's ability to serve the citizens. It refers to the rules, processes, and behaviours by which interests are articulated, resources are managed, and power is exercised in society. The way public functions are carried out, public resources are managed and public regulatory powers are exercised is the major issue to be addressed in this context. In spite of its open and broad character, governance is a meaningful and practical concept relating to the very basic aspects of the functioning of any society and political and social systems. It can be described as a basic measure of stability and performance of a society. As the concepts of human rights, democratisation and democracy, the rule of law, civil society, decentralised power sharing, and sound public administration, gain importance and relevance as a society develops into a more sophisticated political system, governance evolves into good governance.
—Communication on Governance and Development,

(The term "Governance" is often used when "Government" or "Public administration" might be more accurate...)

What is the relationship between Governance and development?

Accountability, transparency, reducing corruption: People should know where money goes, be able to monitor budgets and spending; people should be able to demand change when the government doesn't deliver, when services are bad etc; people's ultimate sanction must be to be able vote the government out of power, based on its performance.

Government/public administration moving closer to the people: Decentralisation;
Government/administration should be able to be more responsive to people's needs;
People should be able to easily know their entitlements, make claims, get their permits etc;
People should be able to feed in to policy and priority-setting etc

Good governance is currently seen as an essential factor for development:
vide Africa Commission, PRSPs, the Sachs report on the MDGs, other world bank stuff.....

It is part of preventing conflict, and post-conflict reconstruction
It will become even more important if donors move further towards “budget support” aid.

Good governance consists of:

- o Government/public administration efficiency, transparency, ability to respond
- o The governed able to access services and information; possibly able to participate in setting policy and priorities; and have power to demand changes. The governed acting as individuals, and also through institutions and civil society organisations
- o And the relationships between these two sides

In all this, we are talking about information and communication.

Indicators

1. Do people (=media audiences?) have more awareness of the possibilities for “participation” e.g in PRSPs (e.g, what feedback opportunities there are).
2. Has ICT/media access enabled people to feed back directly to government/local authorities?
3. Has media coverage increased government’s commitment to creating participation possibilities (eg transparency, access to information, service users’ feedback mechanisms)
4. Have ICT/media been used by CSOs to a) mobilise people; and b) strengthen their advocacy activities?
5. Have governments/authorities responded to feedback or advocacy received through ICTs?

Implementation

The main question for the moment is: What projects are BCO partners doing for which this topic is relevant?

Panos has some projects aiming to build participation and ownership of PRSPs:

- o Nepal community radio project on livelihoods and poverty
- o Media coverage of PRSPs in Uganda, Zambia, Pakistan etc

Participation in governance of GMOs

Participation in policy responses to Climate Change

Participation in policy responses to HIV/AIDS.....

CSOs online newsletter, Benin

(I need to have more discussions with Panos programme staff, to see whether these projects will have reached an “evaluatable” point by say Q3 of 2006).

Perhaps IICD “ICTs and local government” projects – but it’s not clear whether they were addressing the provision of information by local government to people....

APC: women’s networking?

Has any BCO partner done any telecentre projects with “access to government information and services” as one of their objectives?

Timeframe

| When | What | Who |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Q4 2005 and Q1 2006 | Develop methodology and indicators and list of relevant projects for which this question should be part of the evaluation; as well as projects to be specifically evaluated for this question | Panos London, in discussion with BCO partners and other Panos institutes |
| Q2 2006 | Commission evaluation studies | |
| Q3 2006 | etc | |
| Q4 2006 | | |

BCO impact study

Draft Proposal Question 3 – Policy processes

By APC – Chat Garcia Ramilo and IICD – Neeltje Blommestein
09-10-2005

Introduction

During the London meeting it was agreed that the lead organisation for the several evaluation questions would elaborate more on their topic. For APC and IICD this topic was question C – policy processes. Hereby we would like to make a first attempt to work on the rationale and structure for this question.

Concept Question C

During earlier BCO meetings this question was formulated as ‘How does the implementation of ICD policy improve people’s lives?’. During the London meeting APC proposed a different angle to this question, whereby we would look more into multistakeholder participation. Our proposal is now to remove the original question, since it will limit our research tremendously and results are expected to be limited. We would to pose the final question like this:

“Does multistakeholder participation in the policy-making process make any difference to poverty alleviation?”

In this question it is possible to look at different stakeholders, like civil society participation, decision makers, civil servants. This will allow us to get a wide picture of the effects of policy processes. The focus will lie on the policy process, not so much on appropriate technologies itself.

Indicators

While examining this question, we could look at four broad indicators:

- 1 – examine the actual stakeholders (is it really multistakeholderism, how many, who are they)
- 2 – effective participation (how are they participating, do they rate their own level of participation as effective, are they lobbying?)
- 3 – relevance to poverty alleviation (is the ICT policy pro-poor? Is it linked to PRSP's, SWOP's, national policies etc?)
- 4 – Awareness and empowerment (Are the stakeholder more aware and empowered? Measure effects of training efforts at individual level.)

Implementation

We would like to propose to involve external experts to conduct the research for this evaluation question. Currently IICD is in negotiation with ECDPM to examine the above questions for IICD policy development projects. This is a coincidence, but could work to our advantage. It would be an opportunity to include this wider BCO perspective into their assignment.

We think we will need until March 2005 to work on the methodology and indicators for this question. Then we propose to do two pilot case studies, one of APC and one of IICD. This could be followed by examining the policy processes in OWI and Panos by taking one case study per organisation. The result will be a good picture of all our different efforts and angles to this topic.

Timeframe

| When | What | Who |
|---------------------|--|--------------------|
| Q4 2005 and Q1 2006 | Develop methodology and indicators | IICD and APC |
| Q2 2006 | Start evaluation of two pilot case studies IICD, APC | External evaluator |
| Q3 2006 | Case studies OWI, Panos | External evaluator |
| Q4 2006 | Compilation of results | ... |

BCO Impact Study Proposal for Policy

Prepared by Chat Garcia Ramilo
APC
13 December 2005

Hypothesis

ICT policy and practice empowers local actors from civil society organisations, the private sector and the media, through increasing their understanding of ICTs and of ICT policy and regulation. It impacts on their local and regional contexts through advancing their advocacy for policies that:

- **contribute to cheaper and more widespread access to ICTs,**
- **give them the freedom to make use of ICTs to express their opinions and engage in social change and development activities**
- **integrate ICTs with broader development planning and policy and implementation**
- **enhances the realisation of human rights, public participation and more transparent and effective governance in areas beyond ICTs.**

Since 1998, APC has been monitoring ICT policy developments to advocate on behalf of civil society interests. Through our policy programs and projects we have been working in Latin America, Europe, Africa and Asia to build a knowledge base and networks to increase awareness of key issues and broaden civil society participation in policy debates.

The overall goal of APC's policy work is to ensure that the needs of civil society are addressed in ICT policy and are supported in ICT practice. We believe this is best achieved by civil society organisations being empowered to speak and act themselves. The long-term aim is that the Information Society is inclusive of all and supports social justice, with access to information and the tools to use it being recognised as a basic human right. The integration of a gender perspective to ICT policy processes is central to this vision.

This relates to BCO's emphasis on the role of voice, information and communication in achieving development goals. It also directly responds to the strategic outcomes of creating informed and inclusive policy dialogue on ICD in development agendas, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the ICD sector and building networks and capacities of civil society in developing countries through ICD.

APC projects to be evaluated and/or drawn on:

A. APC's Communications and Information Policy Programme

• Brief description of the project

APC's Communications and Information Policy Programme works through the following 3 objectives:

5. monitoring and analysis of ICT policy and regulation
6. building knowledge and expertise to enable civil society to take part in policy discussions and debate. As part of this the demystification of the technical jargon and the 'alphabet soup' of governance bodies is essential.
7. mobilising participation of civil society organisations throughout the world to build information society policy and practice that supports social justice and human rights.

Population group involved - Civil society organisations, government/ official policy people at national and international level in areas where APC has been active (includes the international and regional bodies), development workers, national and regional media, and local private sector organisations.

Type of ICT involved – as tools Website, mailing lists, newsletters, briefing papers, regional meetings, ICT policy framework and other products.

Specific activities that will be covered include APC's support for local policy advocacy in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

• Indicators and evaluation methodologies

- Evaluation of the utility and relevance of the materials produced and processes undertaken – reviewing the website, mailing lists, newsletters, briefing papers, regional meetings, ICT policy framework and other products for the result they had on the people and organizations that used them. A selection of the various project partners (people on the mailing list, collaborating organisations, those who attend the regional meetings) will be contacted for their impression of the relevance, quality and utility

of the APC process and products. The nature and degree of participation on the lists will be explored, and all evaluation forms at ICT policy monitor events analysed.

Assessing the impact of APC's advocacy and networking activities and the ICT Policy monitor projects – The overall aim of the programme is to enable civil society organisations to engage in ICT policy development to promote an information society based on social justice and human rights. The evaluators should be able to look into the following questions: Have the civil society organisations that came in contact with the ICT policy monitor project been able to participate actively in ICT policy developments? Is there any evidence of ICT policy at national, regional or global level being effected by this process, and how?

Quantitative: The nature of the information service makes some aspects of it directly measurable:

- site usage statistics can be measured daily and reported monthly – tracking number and variety of site users
- types of searches and most used information resources can be recorded
- volume and diversity of material in the Policy Monitor databases can be monitored
- number of subscribers to alerts and new material bulletins can be measured
- sources of information posted to the database can be monitored
- numbers of non-APC contributors to the website content can be tracked

Qualitative: other tools will be employed to learn how and why people are using the service:

- continual collating and monitoring of anecdotal comments, reports and feedback
- media coverage will be tracked
- a feedback option will be included on the project site where users can post their suggestions and opinions
- the life cycle of actual policy developments and the responses enabled by this project will be documented and assessed
- the regional mailing lists can be used to survey regular users of the service to find out what they are using it for, which features they find most useful, how the service is contributing to their work and how it could be improved
- stories that document how the service is contributing to improving access and communication conditions will be solicited.

- **Identify and map what stage projects are at, what evaluation would need to be done when**

The APC Communications and Information Policy Programme evaluation is now ongoing. An external evaluator has been appointed, the evaluation plan and instruments have been finalised and currently, interviews through questionnaires (sent via email) are being done. The results will be written up in the first quarter of 2006.

B. APC's Women's Networking Support Programme

Evaluating effective strategies in integrating a gender perspective in ICT policy processes national ICT processes.

- **Brief description of the project**

APC is supporting the Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET) in implementing a one year advocacy project on Engendering the Uganda National ICT Policy Processes. The three main goals of the project are:

- Build capacity of policy makers and the media to articulate gender issues in the on-going policymaking process.
- Assess the implementation of the Rural Communication Development Fund from a gender perspective.
- Advocating for gender sensitive ICT policy processes.

The activities of the project includes training policy makers, ICT experts and ICT journalists, in gender analysis, undertake a gender analysis of ICT policy ongoing processes, assess the implementation of the Rural Communications Development fund from a gender perspective, undertake advocacy meetings and dialogues with policy makers, journalists, donors and legislators.

- **Indicators and evaluation methodologies**

- Policy makers, ICT Experts, and 20 media practitioners able to articulate and integrate gender issues in ICT policy making processes. This will be monitored through their participation in training activities and subsequent involvement in ICT policy processes.
- ICT policies are developed with a gender perspective. This can be measured through content of policy documents, implementation strategies.
- Gender issues identified in the implementation of the Rural Communication Development Fund and the benefit to both men and women identified Assessment Report

- **Identify and map what stage projects are at, what evaluation would need to be done when**

The project is ongoing and will be monitored and evaluated twice in the course of its implementation. APC will document the process focusing on effective strategies in the project and will draw on previous experiences in other countries that can help inform this project and as a comparative experience.
