



MINUTES

of

**BUILDING COMMUNICATIONS
OPPORTUNITIES (BCO)
ALLIANCE MEETING**

Hosted by Panos South Asia

Hotel Himalaya, Kathmandu
26-28 January, 2006

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Background

The BCO is made up of a dynamic and creative relationship between three bilateral donor agencies and six NGOs. The former include DFID, DGIS, and SDC. NGO partners are the Association for Progressive Communication (APC), Bellanet, HIVOS, International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD), OneWorld and Panos. The purpose of the BCO Alliance is to investigate, mobilize and support key ICT4D opportunities that impact on poverty.

The BCO Alliance meets every six months to learn and share knowledge on how information and communication technologies (ICTs) can be used as a strategic tool for sustainable development and poverty alleviation. The Kathmandu meeting was allotted as BCO Business Day on the first day and took place at The Meeting Room, Hotel Himalaya. The second day, allotted as Impact Study Session, took place at Media Center, Panos South Asia Kathmandu office. The final day was allotted as Learning Day Session and took place at The Chavlet, Hotel Himalaya.

A three-day Building Communications Opportunities (BCO) Alliance Meeting was held in Kathmandu from 26-28 January, 2006.

The main objectives of BCO Alliance Kathmandu meeting were: for BCO partners to report and share progress on key activities undertaken within the BCO programme based on the agreed template; pinpoint activities and mechanisms to deepen learning and strengthen collaboration between the partners; discuss and agree next steps in taking forward the BCO programme; create a base for BCO partners to agree on the broad outlines of the impact study (purpose and audience, research question, methodology and timeframe, partner contributions and responsibilities); and consolidate the process and plan for the BCO Impact Study. The other objectives were also to see how ICTs/Media has been mainstreamed in MDGs in Nepal from various multi-stakeholder sectors, facilitate networking and information exchange with government and regional partners on programmes and initiatives related to the learning issue, and map existing and potential MDG and ICT/Media relevant interventions of BCO partners including identifying needs and opportunities for advocacy and support.

Around 20 participants representing all the BCO Alliance partners attended the Kathmandu meeting. Representatives of other NGOs as well as media organizations were invited for the Learning Day.

Panos South Asia Kathmandu/Nepal Office hosted the meeting for two days at Hotel Himalaya and for one day at its Media Center.

(See Programme Schedule on Appendix 1)

Day One: 26 January, 2006 (Thursday), Hotel Himalaya

Session 1: Introductions

Present: Steve Buckley (AMARC), Anriette Esterhysen (APC), Chat Ramilo (APC), Lauren Fok (BCO), David Woolnough (DFID), Loe Schout (HIVOS), Jac Stienen (IICD), Neeltje Blommestein (IICD), Basheerhamed Shadrach (One World South Asia), Mamata Pradhan (One World South Asia), Geeta Malhotra (One World South Asia), Kitty Warnock (Panos London), Murali Shanmugavelan (Panos London), Kishor Pradhan (Panos South Asia), A. S. Paneerselvan (Panos South Asia), Satish Jung Shahi (Panos South Asia), Gerolf Weigel (SDC), Patrick Kalas (SDC), Lauren Fok (BCO).

Apologies: Henk Molenaar, Fiona Power, Marcello Solervicens, Michael Roberts.

Lauren Fok, Coordinator for Building Communications Opportunities welcomed all the participants and handed over the chair to A.S. Paneerselvan, Executive Director of Panos South Asia (PSA).

Paneerselvan welcomed all the participants and started the session with a brief overview of PSA. He described PSA as working on five thematic areas, namely, public health, media pluralism, environment, conflict and globalization. Panos South Asia works in all print, radio, online and the television media moving itself away from a trump branch model to a rhizome. It has an autonomous country office in Kathmandu (Nepal), Colombo (Sri Lanka), Dhaka (Bangladesh), Karachi (Pakistan) and New Delhi (India) with country representatives appointed in each country. It is also one of the few organizations working in northeast India with a separate project office in Guwahati (India). Paneerselvan said that PSA is currently on the lookout for a person to sit in Karachi and look after public health as well as another one to sit in Colombo and look after globalization.

Kisor Pradhan, Country Representative of Panos Kathmandu Office welcomed all the participants despite challenging times in Nepal and hoped the BCO meeting will be successful and productive.

Lauren gave an overview of the next three days of the BCO Alliance Meeting. The meeting days has been allotted as BCO Reporting and Business Day on January 26, Impact Assessment on January 27, and Learning Day on January 28. She then asked participants to introduce themselves highlighting an event that has changed personally, professionally and politically (PPP) in the past six months or after the last BCO Alliance Meeting in Lusaka, Zambia.

Loe Schout described his organization (HIVOS) as one of the Dutch organizations working on development since many years. The restructuring procedure at HIVOS was major change last year. A political development remarkable to him was the major change in co-financing programme of his organization that will be liberalized and has to present a new business plan as almost all European agencies.

Patrick Kalas of SDC said he is a new entrant to the world of ICT in the development work and added he is participating at the BCO Alliance meeting to learn and get inspired. Professionally he was working on Internet governance with the UN last year as a special advisor to the Secretary General on how to achieve the MDGs.

Steve Buckley, president of AMARC, mentioned AMARC was initially a partner of BCO and that the global network of his organization extends up to 116 countries. Professionally, he is now a volunteer at AMARC and used to be a full-time executive in the UK. He now works part time running a consultant agency. He said he would like to spend less time spending money and spending time, advocating on political issues around the world.

Suman Basnet of AMARC Asia Pacific Region said he was happy to be in the BCO Alliance Meeting and has been with AMARC in Kathmandu since 2003. Politically, he has been working with the grassroots that is engaging him a lot as things are changing quickly in Nepal. During the AMARC Asia Pacific Conference in Jakarta meeting last November a new board for AMARC Asia Pacific was elected and now he has a new board to work with professionally. Personally, he has a wife and a daughter.

Raghu Mainali, vice-president of AMARC South Asia, said he has turned himself into an activist after February 1 (When King Gyanendra of Nepal took over executive powers and clamped down on the media).

David Woolnough said he has moved to Scotland with three children. Politically, he mentioned the general review of all civil servants and that his organization (DFID) is also trying to cut staff as per the UK government decision. He mentioned he will not be in the same post he is in now starting April next year.

Gerolf Weigel said he is happy to see the main WSIS has ended and has shifted into integration of ICT4D. In India, the programme is generating lots of interest and has resulted change in focus as they wanted to do much on ICT. The second half of this year, he is going to be busy with GK3. He said there is also increasing pressure in Switzerland to spend less on people that is working on development projects much tougher but such a move has also been helpful to describe development priorities to people. On a personal note, he wants to put more emphasis on family and it has been turning too heavy to balance his leave from the office.

Satish Jung Shahi said he has been a print, online and a television journalist and the reason he is with Panos Radio South Asia is because it has given him a chance to work with radio. He said despite the conflict situation in Nepal, there has never been such an interesting time in history for journalists to be working here. However, he hoped people like him are starting to loose their patience over the tug-o-war between Maoists, political parties and King Gyanendra. He also wants to give more time to his family.

Kisor Pradhan noted that the thing that moved him politically was that Nepal went into the post February 1 phase after the last BCO Alliance Meeting in Zambia. Since then, regulations are getting more difficult to work in and daily lives have been marred by protests, bandhs (shutdown), and demonstrations. He was recently designated as Country Representative for Panos South Asia Kathmandu Office at such a challenging time and has been facing difficulty doing radio projects. That is why Panos South Asia prefers to keep a low profile and not be on the driving seat to avoid being targeted by current government regulations. Personally, he mentioned his daughter was not talking during the last BCO Alliance Meeting but now has started talking and asks him, "Where are you going?" when he comes to work.

Geeta Malhotra, Programme Officer in One World South Asia, said she was expecting more challenges working in the grassroots level as well as gain knowledge while getting to know more people. Professionally, she was working more in MDG rather than ICT and hoped she could link the two areas for better development.

Paneerselvan said initially he was a journalist covering nuclear issues on proliferation but now is into raising money for works that is new to him. He was born in Madras and lived there. It was for the first time that he got to understand the notion of uprootedness. Otherwise, he has been a wandering vagabond on a personal note. Politically, what he thought isn't possible is happening exactly all over South Asia. Never was he so confident on India-Pakistan starting bus links that has already started and now starting to feel that what we assume this year might not be true next year. However, the good thing about South Asia is that if one thing is going bad, then another thing good is occurring in another country.

On a personal note, Lauren Fok said her daughter started going to school since last Monday. Professionally, it has now been a year working for BCO. Politically, she now also has a job with Women's Net in mainstreaming gender in South Africa. They are organizing a feminist convention and hope to come out with new paradigms.

On a personal note, Jac Stienen, said his son got married. Politically, funding of NGOs is changing. In Dutch funding, for example, ICT4D has been recognized. Professionally, he hoped to make use of seven years of experience and upscale his activities and continue what they are doing as well as go into a new direction.

Neeltje Blommestein said she has been with ICT for four and a half years. Personally, she hasn't changed much but the team has changed. She also started doing meditation course since last September. She hoped Netherlands would be more open on ICT and labor migration policies.

Murali Shanmugavelan said this is the first BCO Alliance meeting he is attending. Politically, he said there is a challenge on MDGs as there is very little mention on ICTs and to convince and present strong evidences. He added more and more are getting aware of caste related discrimination. After the BCO Alliance Meeting, he is going home to Madras.

Basheerhamed Shadrach, said there exists a paradigm shift on government willing to listen and not willing to listen. Professionally, he said he now has more grassroots friends with Ek Duniya initiative in South Asia. However, he resigned from One World only yesterday citing the main reason as difficulties in negotiating with his three sets of bosses. He said it is difficult to keep everyone happy. Shadrach added he is satisfied that he was able to interact with prominent people last year. He did enjoy his stay at One World and the next two months would involve him to make a lot of decisions and shift to next phase.

Chat Ramilo said she has been doing this work since the last five years at APC. Professionally, this is a new thing but she had been working for womens' programmes. She added the Beijing agreement on feminist movement ended last year and she is looking into technologies be more relevant. Professionally, she is trying to activate membership and make community more active in different parts. Politically, the government of Philippines keeps changing and hasn't been quite straightforward there. The two things that are relevant are that the Phillipino

diaspora could play a major role in ICT. Personally, she took a leave for a month and asked all to excuse herself if she is a little rusty.

Kitty Warnock said she has been trying to focus more on monitoring and evaluation and working with everyone in Panos but she is also going to have more time for outside Panos thing as the BCO. On a political side, she has more time to practice what we learn at Panos. The UK government has a new energy policy coming up, and as someone who has campaigned against nuclear energy, one will have to rethink again. She was in Palestine last year. However nothing much has changed. So far, she is the longest serving Panos staff.

Mamta Pradhan said she has been a journalist and hopes Shadrach keeps on working for the development sector. She said around 20-30 percent staff is resigning if Shadrach's resignation is approved. She is also a classical Indian dancer. Politically, she said India is rocking.

Anriette said, professionally, it was good to see the APC network coming along and was very difficult as well as interesting to build. Politically, she has stood out on what it means to have human rights and link it to development. She mentioned about the torture in prisons, particularly in Islamic organizations. She added there is certain intolerance in the development sector so she raises human rights issues in the African government. There is a divide between developed countries and the developing ones with the latter saying don't tell us what to do. She got a shock last year when she ended up in hospital and realized the need to work in a more restful way. It was painful to see HIV related people in hospitals and also realized the need to be conscious about one's health.

Session 2: Partner Reporting

Chat Ramilo chaired the session. She said the detailed reports are available in the distributed kit and it was not possible to share everything. One of the ideas of this session was to be able to share the concept of 'speed dating' during the tea break by sharing one activity the participants have reported on the report for the outcome. The next session involves discussing the outcome and talking about the activities.

Basheerhamed Shadrach said the discussion involved mainstreaming ICTs and one of the lessons is to mainstream IT to remove the hype to a more real situation and take closer partnership to align with governments and understand their roadmap. There is lot of tension and push for ICT solutions but as responsible organization, stratifying ICT is a good challenge. Second, there is a lot of confusion among change makers and supposedly those behind the policy makers of the government. They do not know how to involve though they know ICTs have been doing much good. He notes that we need to engage ourselves more with the decision-makers.

Neeltje Bloommestein said there were lessons learnt but not written. On the evaluation of project in health in Mali it was found that 50 percent of the end users receive the power of empowerment. She said such issues have been measured through questionnaires. One aspect is skills, self-confidence to help other people, or even influence on decision-making. When analyzing, they found the power of empowerment was low whereas others were quite high. She added they did discuss in focus group meeting and they realized the project wasn't exposing them and the people actually there weren't getting recognized.

Jac Stienen said the information networks in different countries and the government also ask the issues raised by Bloommestein in assisting and developing national policy. He said they do support the network and has quite a neutral stand for the government on ICT national network. Information networks are very helpful in this way. Sometimes, the organization is asked to be in the steering committee and is declined as it wants to be advisors and not strategic partners.

Anriette Esterhysen said they have been working on changing ICT policy and this is also necessary apart from mainstreaming. If your ICT policy makes it virtually impossible, you have to change it. The lesson is you can have more impact at national level if you work in a global arena. This has worked in Kenya and we have supported the network that is putting pressure on the government. At global level, we've put Kenya in one of the boards of ICANN or in the board of WSIS. By creating an environment that the government feels it is being watched, it does work. But local networks need a lot of support and the required external support needed to fill the gaps need to come in just at the right moment. The continuity is to have a locally capable network. However, if you have sudden change in government or policy or a global process, such an effort could make a difference in such particular point of time.

Steve Buckley said the process was enlightening. AMARC has changed its own process to make policy change within the governments by trying to persuade. This kind of idea to persuade the governments which we see is able to achieve by enlightening their self interest saying this can help you achieve this. However, the other tool is also those international treaties, governments have signed to insist their change. This was used in Tunisia and the focus was placed quite differently. In many ways, we set an agenda. Many, he said, are still not sure which strategy is the best to make the governments change but AMARC is interested to team up to help that come out and make things move. Sometimes using human rights instruments does help but in one case there was huge resistance from commercial broadcasters. In Mexico, for example, both the strategies were working.

Loe Schout said HIVOS is going for capacity building and improving people's skills and network in Indonesia and about 35 development NGOs in Jakarta. Lessons learnt are difficult to find international investments in this as well as create local ownership. BCO partners in Indonesia could help us in networking, funding and so on. It is a HIVOS and One World joint initiative.

Chat Ramilo noted that there is also an existing AMARC network in Indonesia and can be used to add value to the project.

Kitty Warnock said one of the lessons learnt was from where Panos London is engaged in international development communities. The global forum for media development from around the world is used to support the media. One lesson was that there is still a huge gap between most media support organizations and donors. As soon as you try to shift the focus from being free to supporting journalists and enhancing their capabilities and so on, the role of media within that society is particularly quite confusing. Most media organizations work on media freedom side and focus least on media development or what the media would be. We have to try to bring these two things together. Another small practical lesson is there is a huge problem finding skills in doing evaluations on managing focus groups and so on. It is

very difficult if you want to do participatory benefits, they don't see the benefits though you see it has indeed empowered.

Murali Shanmugavelan said nine journalists were commissioned in WSIS to promote voices as when we talk about big policy issues we also need to listen to the people's voice. An example was for the \$ 100 laptop story. Around 12-13 stories have been commissioned and when involving mainstream media, they ask, civil societies talk about transparency but where is the access. Other issues like right to information, the media is great custodians but they have to be incorporated in the ICT policies. Radio is still an unregulated sector despite the right to information. You can advocate more practically in promoting regulating radio. The role of media in governance is baffled with an addition of technology and needs more thinking.

Shadrach, in the context of freedom of speech, said a resolution passed was how to combat oppression by the media. A film actress in southern India said it was foolish to be virgins before marriage and is fighting a court case as people took it otherwise. The editor of the Hindu paper was also issued an arrest warrant by the chief-minister as he didn't like the thing printed in the paper. There is no ability to hire lawyers or even support the grassroots as in the case of the actress and the editor. As much as we encourage people to speak, is there freedom for you especially in places like Pakistan. Hence, many are terrified not to speak.

Gerolf Weigel said they have been part of a process to compile lessons but on mainstreaming he said one lesson was the increasing demand for ICTs within countries and offices that are getting more involved with ICTs. WSIS preparation process in the region was very helpful to create awareness. They are the basis to increase demand from the partner side. The momentum needs to continue. We are so much used to speed that we tend to ignore the patience. We have to be realistic of the speed. The integration of non-ICT related units has been useful as many others are inviting us to get into humanitarian and other areas. The most recent experience was a retreat of the senior management and the topic for next year is youth and development and we had several proposals concerning the youth and ICT programs. The world electronic media forum showed, on one hand, one has to find good partners whereas one also needs to have patience. It is important that one should try and continue.

If the demand comes unusually, the office tries to see how it can integrate. The ICT has been added as an instrument and the decision was taken in December as to what it means to us. It is a good signal, it has been accepted. We are interested to find where ICT has been used as an instrument.

Kisor Pradhan said his experience is with getting the media involved. Panos South Asia has been working on PRSP with the radio in Nepal. It is good to get the radio themselves involved as sometimes the media feels they are just being used as a disseminator of what the INGOs have already done. One has to involve them in the process itself. In Nepal, for example, the media and civil society were invited only after everything was done on PRSP and it was of not much use. It lacked ownership and media and donor agency love-hate relationship is enforced.

Shadrach said the policies are usually framed by government with the private sector but asked how the MSP approach has been used in implementation of ICT.

Weigel replied, in general, the SDC has some first hand experience but there is need to have clear check and balance in private sector as private sector may come in quickly but they also move out quickly. That also is some factor for youth and development. Youth have less preconceived mind.

Esterhysen asked how the SDC would weigh the importance of those processes especially now that SDC is adopting more interactive approach to impose ICT.

Weigel replied that the proposal was to implement a strategy though it wasn't expensive in terms of meeting. Then we had additional round to find that and added some more people to get towards implementation after it was planned to have much faster process.

Kishor asked if there was a focal point looking after ICT4D since the last meeting at SDC Nepal Office.

Weigel replied that there was discussion in SDC Kathmandu office to look at who is going to be the focal point and receive a system in each country or organizational unit and they will have stronger network and we will also work on that. We want to reactivate such focal point just like in gender or environment. Aman Jhochan has been appointed in SDC Nepal Office.

David Woolnough of DFID said the work in the last three years within his office is to build internal and external communications. DFID now has a communications strategy. In fact, corporate communications is becoming a foot-in-the-door approach. The downside is that you get into that agenda in the whole process and there is always different dynamics. There is a completely different thing and communication is really embedded within DFID. However, the impact of DFID has been negative in implementing ICT. The dynamics within UK is that it has been consuming more time and has been used only as damage control. The impact is that a lot of what we talk about what we need more is that dissemination is more important and that has more impact. We need to find what worked to clearly articulate that and communicate with really good media people. On influencing policy, that is going to be really messy.

Esterhysen asked if DFID had been less negative and more proactive to use that space to be different. On spinning of the stories, the stories have greater impact but also isn't that part of the programme as it is like flavour of the month. However, she asked if such a move exactly does interest the non-ICT people.

David agreed we could have been more constructive on the first part. However, I don't think we, or very few donors have the time to do that. Secondly, he added, we need to move away from being idealists and change ourselves in helping do that.

Schout said the role of media isn't sometimes necessary to attract attention on issues such as ICT and human rights. It wasn't quite difficult too as there was a lot of attention in those two issues. One of the HIVOS seminars was focused on empowering human rights activists and involves countries like India or China. It is also a matter of making small steps at a time.

Shadrach mentioned the way Transparency International (TI) applies on anti-corruption when they used numbers such as corruption index that helped. Probably,

the ICTs haven't used numbers to our advantage. I value a lot to TI's role in making them come out and defend themselves. Probably, we haven't learnt that.

Posted on emerging issues:

1. National ownership
2. Using instruments
3. Using national networks
4. Using media as a partner rather than the tool
5. Mainstreaming ICDs
6. Lessons (Mainstreaming) to incorporate ICDs

Session 3: Group Work

The participants were divided into two groups and were asked to discuss one question each from those raised as emerging issues earlier.

Question for Group 1: Mainstreaming ICD as an instrument within development institutes.

Shadrach said everyone in the group agreed it was important to focus on local groups. The organizations gathered here ranges from demands driven to peer networking or bringing in multi-stakeholder partnership to push models of ideas and issues. He said if there is no radio existing in local communities then BCO Alliance members can enable them to negotiate the development discourse and can be an effective actor in developmental work.

Question for Group 2: How do we use media as a development partner?

Following points were noted by the group.

1. Multiple roles of media
2. What can we do for the media?
3. Media survey
4. Media policy survey
5. Capacity building
6. Innovation

Kitty said they started up by identifying role of media and be aware of different sorts if you are working with the media. It was identified every country has different media playing different roles for different audience. One needs to do a data survey to identify audience. It was thought what NGOs can do for the media. Some issues were training and capacity building and working with editors and even technological issues such as implementing ICTs. We can also create neutral spaces between media and policy-makers to rectify the distrust that exists between them. The media should not be realized that they are only being used as a media, so there is need to develop confidence and understanding. In cases of media monitoring in civil society, one needs to work with civil societies and NGOs on even identifying stories or differentiate public broadcaster from commercial and so on. BCO members can work and advocate media regulations. Capacity building is also possible in terms of being innovative and creating new spaces.

Shadrach proposed to form media as a shadow cabinet and bringing all activists together. For example, the chief minister in Chattisgarh (a state in India) logs into www.cgnet.in to look at citizen's grievances.

Session 4: BCO Coordination 2006

Kishor Pradhan, Country Representative of Panos Kathmandu Office chaired the session.

Jac Stienen of IICD presented the report on "Lessons Learnt from the Transition Period". (Full Report on Annexure Two: IICD Presentation BCO)

Gerolf Weigel asked clarification on donor BCO communication facilitation.

Loe Schout said signs of donors will come back in the BCO network.

Lauren Fok presented a report on "BCO Coordination/Facilitation 2005-2006". (Report on Annexure Three: Doc 11 BCO Coordination Report Plan 2006)

Anriette Esterhysen said APC has not been able to give a budget on how much money is available on coordination and that a financial report will be presented in BCO meetings in future.

Basheerhamed Shadrach asked if all BCO partners have already paid for the WSIS stall to IICD. IICD could not confirm whether all partners has paid or not.

Weigel recommended that we go ahead based on last year's budget and see whatever is left over.

Esterhysen said if the donor, basically DFID, is open to that then we could go ahead with that. She also suggested that the BCO Alliance could have a glossier brochure of BCO that could be distributed.

Weigel said a short summary of BCO Alliance be prepared that could be always available even online.

Kitty suggested we add additional links organizations have among themselves.

Weigel reported that his understanding reported on membership was that organizations would still be on the mailing list if they formally didn't stay for more than three meetings. He said we need to take decisions regarding sleeping members. Now that there are interested members, including both Swedish and Canadian SIDA and CIDA, who wanted to do things and that needs to be followed-up. The strength of BCO is always that it is a mix of donor agencies.

The expectation in the donor groups is that we need to adapt to the number and devise a formal procedure on mass of exchange. Regarding learning day, BCO should make a quality product for big publications then we need preparation and follow-up. We could also be increasing participation from people in the frontline and is in the action on policies and perspectives. The communications strategy should be simple. Local donor offices will adapt to situations in the particular country.

Kitty asked what would BCO need from the donors, who are sleeping partners?

There are different donors on the table and come with similar views and donors can facilitate more resources. The BCO includes majority people who come from the ICT organizations or media and not so much from the core development organizations. It helps to have non-ICT or non-media. It is usually the donors who have more access to policy dialogue.

Schout said BCO is unique as there are not many as such a networking. We try to do little of it on harmonization field but it all is an attempt to do something and could be a good selling point to the outside world.

David Woolnough reported that DFID entered the BCO Alliance in the beginning optimistically and naively. He was forced into the hands of management style at DFID and it was quite a hard year and was frustrating on several areas. He said he had four happy, one medium and one sad memory. He is sad at what we as a BCO is supposed to deliver. BCO, he said, has become quite different from what BCO has been described on DFID desks especially regarding the knowledge, learning and communications strategies. However, he is a lot happier on what we as a BCO are doing together. The critical thing is the map. The map is very influential and is being used as a way to show other donors how we are delivering. The DFID desk, however, is one of the grumpy desks. We decide the number of countries to know where we are going to work in cooperation with NGOs. The most active BCO partner could give that letter to the desk. Regarding point four, he said, he and Fiona have both struggled for all these and disappear as a team. We haven't forced to give detailed accounts which are quite difficult on his administration side. He added he is happier with the way we have been reporting. The summary lesson is a good method. The speed dating is good to learn the reports. You all have on your contract regarding that brief format that is being submitted. However, we have not done it on annual basis, the detail progress on success criteria, except Panos. He mentioned he would like to have bilateral annual summary of what is bring done with the money. Five, the knowledge and learning is good. Six, the communications strategy is quite scary so not so depressed that first time we have written it down. Seven, on donors, he said he grouped in three to four areas. There is skepticism on high profile events and BCO hasn't been so high profile. Most donors are practicing just that. Swedish SIDA and Canadian CIDA needs to be grasped right now as if we don't get them, it is going to be very difficult to get them again. DANIDA was very instrumental in the beginning.

Regarding, transition in facilitating this meeting and forcing us to talk to each other, learning management is another aspect of BCO alliance. I like the fact to have a distributed role. There is no way you can force cooperation. He also added he needed some analysis on geographical analysis.

Esterhysen questioned the map was a valuable tool and asked if it should be developed into more detail. Also the parameters we want to place on that map needs to be clarified. Right now, it is like a geographical output but maybe we should put in target community or so on.

Gerolf saw the map like a marketplace and can be filled with more details. The second round would be to put that on the wall and get members in one country and see what additional information is required and provide at a larger basis.

Lauren Fok said the map took three to four months to devise and could be a motivation to keep it updated for donors. She also asked what other information is required.

Gerolf said maybe prepare some links as a database.

Fok asked if there was also a need for a thematic background.

Jac Stienen said that all depends upon the things you want to do and is important accordingly.

Loe Schout said it already makes it difficult given the diversity of the activities.

Chat Ramilo asked details on the communications strategy we haven't cracked but needed to go as simple as possible. What we need to communicate and to whom needs to be identified.

Esterhysen suggested that we bring together everything online.

Steve Buckley asked if there is a renewed process on BCO. He would like to know the strategy of donors as AMARC has already been funded by Swedish and Canadians. We do have relationship with donors we would like to bring around the table.

Stienen asked AMARC's motivation to come back into the BCO Alliance.

Buckley said AMARC never wanted to be out and it was mostly Panos and One World's growing partnership with BCO that interested them.

Esterhysen said that the question is not about bringing more donors but also partners as there are broader ways of implementing BCO objectives. We should flag that discussion in the next meeting. There is a time frame that in April 2007, the BCO phase will come to an end.

Kitty Warnock said, we need to brainstorm on this meeting about a larger strategic alliance and a clearer framework.

Stienen said the donors should have a clear view on criteria to have new partners and networks. We also need to prepare something on that.

The following decisions were agreed upon on Day 1 of the BCO Alliance Meeting:

Learning day topics:

1. Topic to support/related to impact assessment
2. Mainstreaming ICD progress and change
3. Role of Communications in Development
4. Role of knowledge in development
5. Knowledge that is cutting edge – trends, future scenarios and opportunities
6. Role of ICD in building democracy
7. Bilateral agencies policies and relationships
8. ICT policy advocacy (regionally and nationally)
9. HIV AIDS Communications

HIVOS and IICD are jointly hosting the next BCO Alliance Meeting jointly at The Hague in September.

Panos South Asia and One World Colombo office will be hosting a meeting on impact assessment on the sidelines of GKP 3 on the second week of May. Details to be discussed during tomorrow's sessions.

Session 5: Marketplace

The project proposals of all the BCO Alliance partners had been pasted and participants were asked to identify the project ideas they were interested to work together with. Details to be discussed during tomorrow's session.

Day Two: 27 January 2006 (Friday), PSA Media Center

Session 6: Reflections

Present: Anriette Esterhysen (APC), Chat Ramilo (APC), Lauren Fok (BCO), David Woolnough (DFID), Loe Schout (HIVOS), Jac Stienen (IICD), Neeltje Blommestein (IICD), Basheerhamed Shadrach (One World), Mamata Pradhan (One World South Asia), Geeta Malhotra (One World South Asia), Kitty Warnock (Panos London), Murali Shanmugavelan (Panos London), Kisor Pradhan (Panos South Asia), A. S. Paneerselvan (Panos South Asia), Satish Jung Shahi (Panos South Asia), Gerolf Weigel (SDC), Patrick Kalas (SDC).

Kishor Pradhan gave a quick briefing on the security situation in Nepal.

Lauren gave a round-up of events that took place yesterday. Following points were collected.

- Useful, clarifying, well coordinated space
- See an overview of all activities and overlaps
- Assess coordination and participation
- Focus on 4-5 key issues
- Cooperation and synergies

She then gave an overview of second day's schedule.

Session 7: Impact Assessment

Chat Ramilo chaired the session. She said the result of Document 4 and 10 (in the BCO Kathmandu Meeting Kit) is the result of the third outcome in Lusaka. In that meeting, four questions were looked at to answer in the impact study on Document 10. The focus was on looking at how our work contributes to poverty alleviation. This is a reflection of outcome 2. The four questions are on document 10. She added that the September meeting in London had discussions in detail. The Lusaka questions were a follow-up to the Zambia questions.

Gerolf Weigel said more emphasis was put on direct day-to-day dealings for better impact. There are certain measures you can take to make your impact more fruitfully if you realize your impact isn't working.

Leo Schout asked what the audiences were identified as.

Shikha Shrestha said that we need to have a study of framework to identify the audience. Someone from outside the scenario could do the impact study better.

Jac Stienen said one has to also evaluate what the outside world evaluates your impact to ICT apart from the internal dealings.

Kitty Warnock said we need to study the good and the bad aspect and identify what works and what doesn't. We might produce something that is too large and cumbersome and still that would fail.

Basheerhamed Shadrach said there were three sets of interpretations and that the audience is clear regarding BCO Impact Study. Equally important is the set of projects individual organizations are carrying out. The success also depends upon the success of other organizations. This is internal and we could spend a small part of money to get this learning. The project evaluation, however, has to happen. The second set is the donors and skepticism thinking that development aid is more dangerous. Within the donor community, apart from ICT champions, there is also other division. The final output would say everyone is audience but we need to prioritize.

Kishor Pradhan said the study should try to convince the donors saying a certain percentage of money allotted for other mainstream development sectors should be allocated for ICT4D.

Stienen said it is essential for internal evaluation apart from external that could take a lot of extra work.

Schout said the evaluations at the end of the four years programme should have, in some way, the ICT evaluation. One thing is who is going to select the projects as one could select one's favorite projects. The second is who is going to investigate.

Neeltje Blommestein said their entire system was designed for internal learning and suggested it could be duplicated not for promotion but for learning.

Weigel said some substance can be taken from a decision-maker and corrected measures be taken immediately for good sound learning than putting it as a publicity propaganda. This could save time and energy.

David Woolnough said it is not mutually exclusive to what Gerolf said but the best evaluation is to identify what doesn't work for ICT evaluation. The second point is that he wants to know that DFID is one partner here apart from other partners. We would like a picture of this DFID funded issue for what decision takers think. So the use of DFID input was emphasized.

Warnock said a completely external evaluation can help come with better results and help select successful projects and understand how they work.

Murali said Shadrach was mentioning it was successful PR propaganda as we've moved on from that. There is a gap to find what is going to happen after that and is very evident. There is a greater need to address this to external audiences.

Anriette Esterhysen said because we have more money than we can spend, we do not have multiple partners and we need to recognize someone who's trying to do different. It is going to be a composite project with elements that need to be decided today. There is space on what is innovative on this impact process. We need to apply some of the learning such as how external audience will evaluate the impact. The third element is the potential for innovation. A lot of GKP was about dissemination and if we don't plan on this we are going to do the same mistake.

Warnock said Panos history of having external evaluators have learnt to be more involved in partly selecting project and how to do evaluation as it can be so difficult to see and measure. It would be very hard if we stayed aloof. It is a composite thing.

Shadrach said probably we're not having an external evaluator to do what we are doing but assistance to make methodology much better. We need external assistance but it looks apparent that the people or outside world termed benefactors should also be involved. But one has to identify who is the evaluator. We need to discuss all this in detail. There are many ICT4D players and I would not rate them a very successful. We need to speak to the audience and get our things right. Not only the donors but also the traditional NGOs need convincing as we want them also to come into the forum.

Shika said civil society should also be involved in ICT4d to increase their capacity and has been hard to convince rural based civil society.

Woolnough said there was communications taking place between the BCO partners but not the outside world. Therefore, an outside economist would not choose anyone of us.

Chat Ramilo said we do not exactly know what works. I would like to learn from impact assessment what works better. It is not only matter of good arguments for others to talk of ICTs but also to convince that certain environment is required for ICTs to work. If there is no environment to use what we have, it would not work.

Geeta said it was necessary to learn from success stories and then devise our revamp process.

Kishor Pradhan said it was necessary to put together whatever has been working. If it is documented and researched objectively, it would preach what we are doing.

Annriette Esterhysen said it is important we don't only look at success stories. As a sector in development, it is challenging but also other sectors as primary health care who have some practice that have worked. In our sector, that hasn't happened yet in convincing others the value of our work. It is important to link internal linking audience.

Lauren Fok said we are now clear we are addressing both internal and external.

Session 8: Discussion on Research Questions

Kitty Warnock chaired the session and said evaluation is difficult and we have been pushing back evaluation to make it more successful. It was necessary to not only see how the project was going but also to see the impact it had on benefactors. We asked what were the answers to what the benefactors would like to know about or get. The term is amplifying the voice of the poor. The role is to go beyond articulating or explaining hypothesis in the research questions. We were also recognizing not to look at answers to every problem and one project's evaluation could be different from others. We need to check if the questions will come up as relevant to major chunk of your project.

The focus was drawn to the proposed research questions on Page 2 of Document 10 in the BCO Kathmandu Kit. The levels mentioned on Page 5 of Document 10 were also briefed in detail.

Patrick Kalas said the levels from government to global looks messy the higher you go up.

Shadrach said there is slight shift in his report as most poor are stated by public service providers so the study was at that level to study how ICTs has helped in service delivery. There is a difference on emphasis.

Neeltje said Kitty had mentioned yesterday as networks and are included at second level and proposed so. Secondly, she proposed to include the word mainstreaming to cover all this.

Shadrach said his paper defines four terms of ICTs that includes electronic to traditional broadcasts. It also defines voice as it means different to different people. Shadrach emphasized on the aspect of voice and providing feedback on public services mainly and also initiate measures to lobby, advocate and take action against service provider. The third aspect was to focus on defining governance. It is not only promoting rule of law but also promoting the social aspects such as human elements such as health for all, education for all and so on. Finally, the aspect of participation also means differently to different people.

Shikha emphasized the accountability of civil society should also be included in the intermediary to make it more accountable. She hoped ICT would bring more opportunities to good governance. She said we are leaving our traditional form of good governance and relying mostly on donors. The community should also be given the opportunity to review. Communications can also help record traditional means and also form a resource to identify local needs.

Steve Buckley said it seems the questions seemed to be reasonably open. First, missing from this is the theory of development and theory of voice. We need to focus on voice to bring governance. For us working in community media advocacy, the narrow focus on voice is conflicting as governments don't want to give us broadcasting licenses. Why should one look for voice in governance rather than communications development. Communications is contributing to intangible things as happiness. Second point is the voice contributing to harm and danger. Third involves giving them a voice. Lastly, it involves to value consensus and value building.

Warnock said the team wanted to improve and too much has been extended.

Shadrach added he agreed with the definition of voice but when it comes to this particular study, it becomes easier to comprehend to aspect of voice in terms of social mobilization and bringing people together, voice for behavioral change and also voice for advocacy and lobbying. I am trying to understand how to digest this voice as it looks easier to understand in this fashion.

Chat said there are many different theories we can draw from as there are many theories of change or development. To bring both together, we are looking at this aspect of development and these are the ways it is manifested. It is similar to our experience in gender evaluation like we have definition of gender and gender equality, etc.

Anriette said if one reads this, it would be assumed that the theory of development is very stated. But one should be conscious that one does not come across as being fixed to one particular theory. Just for clarification, she asked how could the original Lusaka Question 1 be fitting into the current question.

Kitty said we could still select this question and say it speaks to most development organizations. We could say we have more focus on community level that answers most of Steve's question.

Neeltje said the mapping showed we were overlapping in a lot of things. We should address on issues that are focused on our work.

Jac said one usually excludes economic development and private sector when working for development for poor people. You have to have one special aspect.

Gerolf said in the context of voices, it is also important on aspect of alliance building and communications building. It is also linked and should not loose that focus. If you want to keep it simple, we should open up as the suggestion on Page 2. I would be rather focused on raising the voices of poor people rather than supporting NGOs. We should not exclude that but the focus should be the poor people. In my experience from Pakistan and Afghanistan, you should differentiate.

Murali said this table is useful to open this discussion. He asked on methodology. One of the things is the non-linear aspect of linear and this table linear. He asked if this pyramid model is useful and how about voices in support of voices. He added what about the possibilities that linearity can be further exploited.

Jac said it is important to be clear about it. Why not separate these two essential elements on increasing voices of the poor and then voices of the people. If you want to aggregate to one question, it can be very vague.

Warnock said one of the reasons was that her impression of a BCO partner project was not much direct focus on economic growth as Jac said.

Anriette said is it what we do or what we think should be done. We also need to ask if there is a research task to what we are specifically directing.

Shadrach said the focus was on Arun projects that could be back again. He drew the attention as to how to use members after taking a decision. Income poverty, human

poverty, information poverty, and voice poverty on where ICT could be used can also be looked into.

Weigel suggested addition of the right to security in cases such as Pakistan.

The participants as a working group proposed a consensus.

Following list of terms was prepared for reformulation of the questions after reaching a consensus.

Scope:

- Focus only looking at our projects
- Open to include projects outside of partners

Audience:

(Focus: Non-ICT related Development community)

- Decision-makers related to donors, national governments, and government policy makers
- Donors
- Implementers

It was agreed upon that BCO Alliance will consider placing primary focus on non-ICT related development community in the dissemination strategy.

Elements:

- Not only governance and policy-making and implementation but also empowerment
- Mainstreaming ICTs for economic growth as well as voice dimension
- Voice

Session 9: Project Map

Neeltje chaired the session. She asked the participants to present a proposal of the project map.

Basheerhamed proposed using voice: Radio, TV, newspapers and telephone medium to promote MDGs. The target is 3,000 but right now One World already has 1000 listeners in Africa and Asia. We would like to bring this project into the table to bring their voice to the table. Geeta added the grassroots are provided a platform to present with the policy-makers. The project was started nine months ago.

Gerolf said there are many grassroots communities who have support without ICT. There is a need to identify those who have already.

Shadrach noted that the control groups have been identified.

Chat said they are conducting evaluation of ICT and the evaluation question is how to search impact of grassroots participation with policy-makers in their country. Anriette said the evaluation will be over by mid March. The impact assessment is done internally by an external group in Africa and Latin America but can be used as a good learning experience for others. Chat added that one related to this is the post

WSIS and includes case study of the evaluation of WSIS in Kenya, Latin America and Bangladesh.

Kitty said the project relevant is the Radio Women's Club in Zambia to discuss development issue of their choice. As part of broadcasting the programme, the editor takes the responsibility that the answers are sought from policy-makers. This project is chosen as it is one of the Panos flagship projects in Zambia. It is nearing completion and the evaluation already exists.

Anriette asked how to define community as ICT would look at community level projects. However, this wouldn't be so as the real benefactors are others. Those are ISPs and parliamentarians. It is extremely helpful to have an idea to define what community is.

Neeltje said it is on level two at the aggregation level and in some countries they are active in policy making process and as part of learning dominology, questionnaires have been devised asking questions like are you influencing policies and so on. We could use that for the BCO report out of that analysis.

Kisor said few projects were sent to be evaluated. There are two projects. One is Grassroots Options multimedia local content development project in Shilong in northeast India under BCO-SDC support. This is using ICT to uplift the grassroot voices. Trainings have been held to support it voluntarily. The second project is local content development support called Jeebika. The idea is bridging the gap of PRSP with ground realities. There are 15 radio stations in the network. The input is from the grassroots after the feature are reported, followed by commentary, analysis and panel discussion. The features as reports come from districts and is packaged here in Kathmandu. The comment is also taken in Kathmandu. The programme will be ending in February. A pre-project survey was done before starting and a post-project survey will be also conducted. The second project is DFID-BCO supported.

Shikha added she wants to add D-Groups (Discussion Groups). It is going to be an open source project. It wants to evaluate such as how much of a platform it has been in raising the voices of the targeted groups. We had one study in the Latin American context and would be satisfactory if a global analysis could be held.

Murali Shanmugavelan asked where the voices are located? But is confused about where ICT is located.

Neeltje answered it means tackling these two terms while using ICTs.

Anriette asked how I-networks become sort of a marketplace to make deals as well as also as telecenters for youth or even entrepreneurs. It also becomes a political space or even canvasses that provide different dimensions. From BCO point-of-view it would be interesting to see the aspects of I-networks.

Steve said AMARC isn't planning on BCO context but is willing to find a short concept note on its evaluation note. It includes a review in its own practice to find impact on development goals of community radio stations itself. We are also seeking to understand what we are doing. There are around 6-7 projects in Latin America with or without legal AMARC partnering. This concept note has been floating around donor agencies and not prepared for BCO. The synergies could be at a community level and select examples of community radios and report back on that. If we are able to do

that with community education level with more credible donors, it could add value despite the cost. AMARC only would be pushed off as AMARC propaganda. We want to do more work on what is working, what is not and so on. Part of the review will be more intense internal as well as thematic such as women's environment.

Shadrach said it is interesting to see AMARC wanting to collaborate with others. He asked if grassroots community radio also include under AMARC collaboration.

Yes, replied Steve Buckley.

Chat said they did an evaluation in Uganda on women and they used Video, TV and radio as well.

Loe said the activities fit well in enabling NGOs through ICT and prefer calling strategic use of ICTs. It means creating platforms and so on. You could bring on to this project different examples of platforms of CAGOs, NGOs and connect with international audience. Another example is in Zimbabwe that includes not only radio but also print outs. Under this framework, it is important to use projects that have certain years of experience as we need to identify impact.

Shadrach said as partner of BCO, it might be difficult for One World unless we roll out how many years of experiences are required for its existence.

Anriette said the priority was also on improving what was being done and not only projects which are new. Maybe have someone with independent eye to check what the balance is on the projects. It would be a pity to exclude such projects.

Loe said they loom for evidence and it is quite impossible to look for projects which has worked for less than a year.

Session 10: Finalizing Question

Chat Ramilo chaired the session.

Steve said AMARC would be interested to get a sense of which other partners would be interested to put such things forward. It wouldn't be a complicated project. There is going to be lively discussion in a while to find evaluated methodologies to put in bigger ways.

Anriette was thinking in terms of projects and milestones that come with a certain timeframe to set a milestone before the end of this year to bring in external expertise and commission some preparation to look at our evaluation reports.

Chat said we need a standard evaluation rather than individual and have a big research done in the next three years. These are the ideas put in the table so far.

Kisor said it needs to be clear if it is post project impact study or mid project impact study. There are projects which will show impact only after it is over.

Kitty said we will have preference to not exclude projects that are that far such as One World's.

Neeltje said she is drawn to the idea that we could find a marketplace and probably investigate.

Following notes were taken in course of the course of impact study discussions.

Flipchart 1:

1. Comparative study in giving voice in three countries: Andean, East Africa and South Asia
2. Thematic studies. e.g.: a) Livelihood – Economic impact; b) Investigation into information networks, country level communications
3. Pull all evaluations together and draw out conclusions (critical mass): Collating – unpacking – development communications strategy and dissemination strategy (repackaging)
4. Commission someone to do it: Communications
 - Doesn't have to be collective
 - Develop brief together and/or contact one person to do exercise across all partners

Flipchart 2:

1. Panos South Asia and AMARC: Voice-governance (community radio) in South Asia
2. a) HIVOS and IICD on networking
 - Extract of extending voice to the poor
 - Difference IICD: Compare ICT 4D networks and non-ICT 4D networks
 - Possibly CAOW Portalsb) Using OWSA (Bellanet – Southern Voices Online) as a case study at international and national level
c) Evaluation on ICT Policy Monitor = HIVOS + APC + IDRC
3. One World: Health – Livelihood – Economic Impact
 - Comparative study of 10 states in India, radio content, online and print
5. IICD: Economic impact in livelihoods – mainstreaming ICTs, decision makers
 - IICD + APC: Networks + policy – health
 - IICD + HIVOS: How ICTs can?
6. Panos: Country communications TOG + AMARC + OW
7. Bellanet: mapping in dgroups raising voices

Flipchart 3:

1. Common Impact: Develop proposals further and present
2. Thematic: partners to move on own proposals for collaboration
3. Partners to define communications strategy for target audience on proposals made

Decisions:

1. BCO Coordination for impact assessment and draft TOR
2. Consultant for communications strategy and draft TOR
3. Impact assessment meeting day in May or September
4. Impact WG to develop proposals in No 1
5. Partners to fill in template by February end for all 3
6. Partners to nominate delegations into WG

Flipchart 4:

Round-up:

Useful: Clarifying, coordinated space

See an overview of activities + overlaps

Assess coordination of © participation

Focus on 4-5 key ©

Cooperation and synergies?

Decisions taken on Day 2:

1. Learning Day topics chosen:

SN	Topic	Votes
1	HIV/AIDS Communication	1
2	Multi stakeholder partnership (MSP) approach to most effective advocacy strategies, policy change in favour of voice	7
3	Role of ICD in building democracy	5
4	Role of communications and media in development	4
5	ICT policy advocacy, regional + national	2
6	Mainstreaming ICD, progress + change	0
7	Topic to support impact study	0
8	Role of knowledge in development	0
9	Role of ICT in disaster preparedness	4
10	Bilateral agencies, policies + relationships	0

2. The coordination office will submit a proposal to the "BCO List" regarding proposal for next BCO Alliance Meeting.

3. Lauren and Kitty will make a proposal on "Impact Assessment Process" and next meeting.

(Full Report of Shikha (Bellanet) presentation on Annexure 4: BCO We Connect)

Day Three: 28 January 2006 (Saturday). Hotel Himalaya

Session 11: BCO Learning Day

Present: Patrick Kalas (SDC), Jac Stienen (IICD), Kitty Warnock (Panos London), Murali Shanmugavelan (Panos London), Shama Shrestha (Care International), Anriette Esterhysen (APC), Chat Ramilo (APC), Loe Schout (HIVOS), Dr. Zbigniew Mikolajuk (ICIMOD), Sudip Pokharel (GTZ), Amar Gurung (Madan Puraskar Pustakalaya), Astaman Maharjan (Environment Cycle Radio/ ECR), Gopal Guragain (Communication Corner), Mohan Bista (Radio Sagarmatha), Sujata Pradhan (CIDA), Tara Gurung (Australian Aid), Steve Buckley (AMARC), Suman Basnet (AMARC), Raghu Mainali (AMARC), Satish Jung Shahi (Panos South Asia), Gerolf Weigel (SDC), Kisor Pradhan (Panos South Asia), Basheerhamed Sharach (One World South Asia),

Geeta Malhotra (One World South Asia), Mamta Pradhan (One World South Asia), Allen Ballochan Tuladhar (FIT Nepal), and Kunda Dixit (Nepali Times).

Kishor Pradhan welcomed all the participants. He apologized for a slight change in today's presentations as mentioned in the original programme schedule due to unavoidable circumstances.

The participants introduced themselves.

Gerolf gave an overview of the BCO Alliance. He said the ICT society currently is still a closed society and the presence of people from different backgrounds at the learning session indeed shows the impact is increasing and the useful use of ICT is increasing. He said many efforts have been technology focused and supply driven and that the ambitious Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) cannot be achieved by ignoring ICT. The BCO first started as BDO (Building Digital Opportunities) and has ventured out to reach more and more in the development community. The current bilateral partners are SDC and DFID including APC, HIVOS, Panos, Oneworld, IICD, and Bellanet. The Canadian CIDA will be present at the next BCO meeting.

The floor was open for any questions or additions regarding BCO.

Anriette (APC) added that any society is to do with power and resources and that it has a huge impact on the society. Part of the philosophy of BCO is that an event is prepared like this (Learning Day) to learn from each other on environmental change. As our role as actors, we have achieved just that but it is also important that we hear from you during today's session.

Sudip (GTZ) asked clarification on the goals of the BCO Alliance mentioned in number one among the objectives and the need to subsidize the cost of ICT implementation among the development community. He also asked what activities have been undertaken in sensitizing development community regarding just that.

Weigel answered that one aspect that is working is to demonstrate more clearly the impact ICTs have on development. As members, we do it regionally in our own fields of expertise. In SDC, we are happy with the mainstreaming process and partner offices asked for more and more work in their respective countries. Each partner has some ICT enhanced component. It is the bottom-up movement. However, it needs a lot of information as a lot of people have different ideas on mainstreaming. Just having computer in villages is not mainstreaming as it also have to reach the people and not just technology.

Esterhysen said there are some donors that are receptive to the idea and usually may realize the importance of media and communications who made transition earlier but another generation jumped into ICT leapfrogging bandwagon. This has generated a sound transition on gender, development and so on. The key is not to locate out information and communications but what it involves to create this magical bandwagon.

Jac said one of the first things is to create awareness. As BCO we compliment each other as we have organizations who are better on communications side and that it has been a learning process.

Basheerhamed said NGOs play a small role in ICT depending upon countries and it has been helpful to implement experiences of one country to the other.

Presentation 1:

Presentation by Raghu Mainali (AMARC) on Independent Radio Movement and Development in Nepal.

(Full Presentation (PPT) on Appendix 5 Independent Radio Movement and Development in Nepal)

Floor Discussion

Sudip Pokharel asked from the earlier days of perception of radio movement, the conflict has heightened and how the community radios have been perceived in terms of the conflict.

Mainali replied that from the community prospective, the listeners have supported the movement for press freedom. This has made it easier for us to legitimize our movement.

Chat asked given the situation, how much freedom does the local developmental radio stations have and how much pressure the Maoists and the government are giving?

Raghu replied the Maoists have captured radio stations. Threats also came when the radio stations were forcefully asked to broadcast the news glorifying the 100 days of the royal government in Nepal.

Murali asked what the situation in the print media is and if enough support is being coming for developmental writing.

Kunda said the relative freedom TV and print media have has been used by journalists to come to the rescue of radio. We have protested. Print has been especially very useful as Kathmandu based print media has relatively more freedom. Community radio stations have started broadcasting news but they have been more careful of what they are to broadcast. Important news have been buried in the second or third less important slots. All along, the independent radio movement has been saying it is only not radio freedom but also freedom to the right to information. He recalled an incident that happened two days walk away from Jumla when a Maoist commander told them to tell a brand new FM station in Jumla to play less music and more news.

Jac asked how radios have been building their contact with NGOs and how giving information can be used to increase the security.

Raghu said we jointly establish contacts and have been producing programmes for farmers, gender and so on. Programmes are even co-produced or even free airtime is provided for NGOs to broadcast their own programmes.

Aniriette asked what the licensing procedure is and if there has been any silencing of community radio to be used for pro-government propaganda.

Raghu replied that the licensing criteria always depend upon the mood of the communications minister.

Gopal replied that many radio stations received pressure or manipulation to use it as propaganda by both the government as well as the Maoists.

Patrick asked if radio stations have any experience of listeners club and if the listeners are involved in content creation.

Mohan replied it all depends upon the station and some radios have been using listener clubs to identify their needs. Different models are being used and Radio Sagarmatha is run by a group of journalists who go to the community to ask their needs. He said, for example, farmers come to radio station in Palung and talk about their work. In Radio Madan Pokhara, similar techniques have been used for woman's groups as well as students to share their schooling experience. However, this is not taking place in the city area.

Gopal added a study conducted by him last year for MS Nepal showed that in Radio Lumbini and Radio Madan Pokhara, both have a participation of listeners in their board that has some influence in the radio stations.

Sudip commented that one of the strategies to keep the community radio alive is for the donor communities to support in programme production to keep the finances coming in. It is, however, tough for donors to keep a neutral side in the times of conflict. He said it is necessary for even community radio to be seen as impartial side so that the business of the donors isn't going to get jeopardized. For example in Jumla (Kunda Dixit's earlier example), the Maoists may have demanded more news but more news could be impartial that could hamper the support of the donors.

Raghu replied community radio stations have a clear mission to uplift the communities and empower the disadvantaged. That is why community radios are not impartial. Their sole mission is to empower the common people and raise their voices. That is why we aren't impartial as we are the media to raise their issues to the so-called core-centered people. We must be judicious, yes as we are already impartial.

Sudip asked impartial in his sense meant not supporting any side of the conflicting parties.

Raghu replied, on conflicting side, we always address the third party – the people. We never produce or broadcast any programmes saying Maoists or army killed so many people but the main area to involve will be the issues such as food security after the conflict. We cater to the people who want to stay alive. We have even devised our own more neutral words in newscasts. For example, when we call "Maoists looted banks" we get calls from Maoists saying they only captured people's property. That is why we have started using "Maoists went off with a certain amount of money".

Shama asked how could development agencies and the media work together on development.

Raghu replied that such support is taking place mostly in the mainstream media and not community media. The government media bureaucratize their programmes and

the commercial media commercialize the media. The community media is to fill the gap in between to create an environment to help the society. There are over 90 languages in Nepal and the government imposed Nepali as national language. We are trying to provide an outlet to diffuse such conflict and create social harmony in between. We are not independent but inter-dependant and we need to create a good society for journalists. We are in the same boat as people as we are not mainstream media to cater elite interest.

Anriette asked if it is being approached in a multi-platform way to collaborate the media and donor communities.

Kisor Pradhan replied Panos South Asia is collaborating with Communications Corner and details could be discussed when we discuss MDGs and the media.

Chat said people are between the conflict and peace building is an important issue. She asked how many radio stations are actually in the conflict area.

Kunda answered the whole country is in the conflict area and has spread very rapidly. It is everywhere and peace-building role is nationwide. But in specific areas where the conflict started, there are radio stations broadcasting in the Maoist base areas. The listeners include army, Maoists and local people. The raw facts aren't coming from the state media and they are important for the people. Community radio has been giving that information.

Gopal added there are some organizations working in peace building such as the ones trying to convince peace zone areas in educational institutions and most radio stations are supporting that movement. A programme is being produced with Child Workers in Nepal (CWIN) to promote just that move that will be broadcasted all over Nepal.

Kitty asked how could donors work together with radio station despite their own agendas.

Steve commented AMARC and its members in the region and worldwide have been promoting radios that speak out for the poorest people. Our colleagues in Nepal have been working in difficult situation. Democracy has disappeared but media is still there. We are working with 13 other monitoring groups here in Nepal. It is important to express our solidarity.

Presentation 2:

Presentation by Kunda Dixit (Nepali Times) on "MDGs and Media in Nepal".

Dixit said it is appropriate we are talking about media freedom this week as it is going to be a year of the Royal takeover. The first week after February 1 marked army soldiers looking over our shoulders and censorship taking place that was not even experienced in Soviet Union. TV was shut down. Colleagues in radio suffered much with no news for over three months. The directive was only music over radio as nowhere over the world news was broadcasted. Hence, radio broadcasters started singing the news and took the newsroom to their village squares. Local and international pressure forced the government to give in but again the government still kept on jamming BBC news broadcasts. So far, it has been a story of defiance.

The role of media in a country like Nepal is that it used to be more worried about peace and development but now the priority is to survive.

Regarding MDGs, the word is now more often used in development and media circles. The media is now happy with the acronym. Even in Nepal, the trend is to go by the flavour of the month. Unless there is a booster dose to the media, it is not going to get covered much and new tricks are required. First, the media needs to know what the problem is. Even in his media teaching experience, Dixit said he asks questions such as what is Nepal's mortality rate, female literacy rate and the students go blank. Even when such issues aren't addressed to the basics, nothing much can happen. We might be overestimating the power of the media but we have to make a distinction between mass media and journalism. Even if the jingles are sending the wrong message there is not much journalism can even do to help. Even if journalism is gotten right, what type should be clear as it has op-ed pages, sports and entertainment pages looking after different issues on the papers. The channel might be different as there are certain people who read only certain pages. It is difficult to identify impartiality in the world's second oldest profession that is media. We do not aim more for objectivity as fairness. We do not squander our image by waving a flag but the key issue is to be fair. That debate continues in Nepal as the basic needs are being challenged. It is a huge debate how much active should media become. There are some who are on the streets and others are in the newsrooms doing their own jobs.

The critical issue is how to cover politics when the entire model of democracy is being threatened. There are ways you can be more effective without going on the streets, except in some exceptional cases. The criteria are to not squander with your credibility. We are not only speaking to people who agree with you. If you want to convince people who do not agree with you, you have to use a different style. It is a trick used by editorials and commentaries around the world and in Nepal too.

At the moment, radio journalists in Nepal are facing intolerant sides on both sides. At the moment, it feels more threatened from the army side. Here in Nepal, development is democracy. One has to cover decentralization to have development. There are theories saying we need dictatorship as democracy hasn't worked. We've had dictatorship for three decades and it didn't work. At least for democracy, there are answers. For autocracy, they need violence to stay in power and outside of power.

The euphoria quickly evaporated in Nepal as it happens in most democracy. But probably, the media promoted cynicism. We need to do some soul searching as it is also the reason why people aren't on the streets when the political parties are protesting. However, in Nepal, the part of democracy that was working best was the democracy at the grassroots. The process was working and we were seeing it moving. After 1996, the spread of Maoist insurgencies, many elected representatives were chased out though they may have been good. Not only have they chased out local elected representatives but also physically destroyed the infrastructure. The ruling side on the other side is also intolerant.

It is necessary to get the journalists interested in their own countries to get the real stuff.

Community radio stations can run by themselves. The best thing about radio is that there is no paper. All you need is the capital cost which can be funded by local businessmen and so on.

Floor Discussion

Murali asked we just got the impression that democracy is important. He asked if there is an assumption that development isn't political. He added that the civil society is also apolitical but what is the situation here in the media.

Dixit replied that media sees vaccination, water as apolitical but it will not stay on unless you treat it as a political question. There was a time when media gave the benefit of the doubt to the one-man, even King, but most here, including me, feel it is not working at all.

Jac Stienen asked how are things moving on in government journalism schools.

Dixit replied there is a structural problem in our education system in the country. We have government and non-government journalism schools and even those that are now working as factories. But the priority is to bring media training at the top. The Katmandu University is starting a four-year bachelors Mass Communications course. Danish support is also there for Nepal Press Institute. However, there is also more need for radio training and maybe even develop a trainer in their own radio stations who can train their own staff.

Gerolf asked where the voices of the poor is being raised in media apart from community media. He asked if the media is being more market driven.

Dixit replied that we have to keep the space open for community radios as they have done a lot. There is a need to keep a network to keep them working. There is a role also for state media despite being under government control as they have more powerful transmitters and despite the boom in FM they are still being listened too. At least till the next five years we should use the Short Wave time on Radio Nepal to promote development. For print media, it has gone much better in covering poor and the marginalized. One impact of training journalists is of having a threshold of different journalists covering development. A lot of lives have been saved by media coverage. But TV is going to get more and more importance. The first electrical equipment people buy after having electricity is an electric bulb and then a TV set.

Zbigniew Mikolajuk of ICIMOD said he liked the comment on importance of knowledge. He added people in the democratic society should not be guided by elites but how can the media bring such improvement or increase the knowledge about democracy or development.

Dixit said education takes too long and our problems are just too urgent. The best thing is to bring mass media into schools. There are examples of edutainment to promote values. In Pakistan, TV dramas are the most advanced and are spreading issues such as child marriage, dowry and so on. In Nepal, the programmes with top two viewership includes news and the third is a satire with politics.

Sujata Pradhan said the Canadian support also went along with the Danish to Nepal Press Institute. The purpose was to do team reporting but at the end of the project, the outcome was that there was still team reporting lacking. The donors have been

very keen on working closely with the journalists and it is the media that we rely on to get the best interest of information and social issues. There is also a challenge that when it comes to security issues, everything is said to be all right. But there is also a given fact that if you bring in too many problems, donors are going to back out. But donors still rely on media for real news. CIDA has always been in support of community radio and the donors have been interested on it too.

Anriette asked if there is an assumption that development is not democracy or an integral part of it. As someone working in Africa, we talk about models of democracy which is not at the local level and how western world perceives it to be.

Raghu said the approach taken to achieve MDGs is to share complexity. For example, Kathmandu's average age is 55 then Mugu's is 35. We try to pinpoint who is responsible for killing Mugu's people then. That is why the government feels threatened.

Allen asked now that most popular operating systems are open sources and the big media houses are romanticizing this. He asked if the media views that the Internet has a cue not only for the diaspora but also for local people to use them in the community level.

Sudip commented that the "Letter to the Editor" has a whole new meaning due to the Internet. He asked how effective is it going to be to use telecenters by the local media.

Murali asked intervention at journalist level is just not enough and how do you see that kind of level of interventions that could be helpful.

Gopal said that Internet, mobile and digital cameras are being used and most content are being created can be controlled by people who are not professional media person. He asked what impact it can have on the Nepali society.

Dixit said skills and crafts training are extremely important. Journalists come out of factories just with the use of words and looks like they should be actually writing poetry or a thick novel. Communicating development is actually difficult than crime or any other as it involves raising interest. We need to reinvent perhaps on the job as we have editors who are not trainers. The scaling programmes such as KU will probably give an immersion crash course. On using digital, the issue Raghu mentioned about health divide, mortality divide, and structural divide is important before you leapfrog to technology. It is an irony that Internet was shut down for a while and there are a few sites still blocked that are not necessarily Maoist related sites. They are constricting the news that are reaching to the people such as the news broadcast through the radio. Telecenters is a good idea and we have to think about marrying telecenters with radio centers so that they can also generate money.

Presentation 3:

Presentation by Anil Pant, Team Leader, Actionaid Nepal on "Action Aid's MDGs and Media/ICT Activities".

(Full Report on Appendix 6 Action Aids's MDGs & Media/ICT Activities)

Floor Discussion

Sudip Pokharel said there has been an issue of sustainability when Anil said Action Aid builds capacity of partners to have access to e-informations as his office also evolved in the same role. He said GTZ's partners are government health workers and we have provided them Internet. However, after two to three years, we find they call up and say these computers are outdated. When he did tell them that it was their job to upgrade them, they instead insist on taking it back.

Basheerhamed said Action Aid in India is organizing successful campaigns including citizen's report. He asked if there were such movements in Nepal.

Shama asked she would be more interested to know about ICT for street children.

Pant replied that in Kanchanpur, the locals can produce high quality DVD films which will be much cheaper – up to 20 percent less than in Kathmandu. He suggested that they create a basket fund with locals that can help in sustainability. He said the locals they trained in Kanchanpur even came to Kathmandu and talked on their own to start up broadband Internet with ISPs in Kathmandu. Though not sustainable, at least it generated much interest as people talked to themselves.

He added that a similar concept of Wada Nadodo in India also exists in Nepal and is called Reflect Circle supported by Action Aid among Kamaiya, bonded labourers in Nepal. There are several others, Action Aid has also supported. On citizen's report, he said Action Aid produced global MDG report and are on the way to produce national report in Nepali. We are questioning who are getting the benefits of the MDGs. We can produce an average facility. There could be that it is not helping the rural people. Couple of reports say there needs to be more coherence, progress has to go to the people. In Nepal, for example, we have made tremendous progress after 1990 but most only in the cities have benefited. He said he could send more details via e-mail.

David said Pant mentioned of Reflect Circles in India. In India, a study was conducted to find the impact of ICT. He asked if similar studies have been held in Nepal.

Pant replied that all have reflect circles and the study on street children in Nepal was part of all that.

Anriette asked about the amount of interest generated nationally. There was so much focus on MDGs internationally but regionally in South Africa, all of that attention has disappeared.

Pant agreed and added there is a certain sectoral reporting specialization in mainstream but that is quite difficult among local media as they do not have much resources and MDG is not getting much.

Dibya Gurung of SDC said the reason in Nepal why it is not grasping enough attention is difficulty in establishing contact in the conflict areas. We probably need to devise innovative ways. Find space for development in current conflict situation in Nepal There is even no access to delivery from the district headquarters to villages. Even if the MDG report comes, it might not happen in Nepal.

Pant said maybe it is probably also the process such as of PRSP which is interlinked with MDG. In the places he has visited, he saw some level of ownership as it was more inclusive to what is happening here. There were community discussions, and a bottom-up approach.

Shama Shrestha wanted to know the Read Initiative with Ford International and would be happy to see it replicated in other areas. She asked if there were any constraints.

Pant replied that there have been 700 radios and the Maoists have taken away only 1 due to political constraints. He said Action Aid has limited itself to less controversial issues. He noted that the radio presenters are as good as FM presenters in Kathmandu and most of them have hardly even gone to college. It is also listened to as far as Mumbai.

Gopal said Communication Corner in Kathmandu coordinates packaging stories from Nepal and half hour programme is placed by Equal Access on satellite radio free of cost. The programme on HIV/AIDS is supported by Equal Access.

Pant said he is not claiming to have started everything but Action Aid is indeed part of a coalition.

Gopal asked if any impact study has been done in the assessment of the project?

Pant said it all means going to the people and asking them directly and it still stands as a huge challenge.

Shama Shrestha asked the cost of the satellite radio.

Pant replied it costs around Rs. 5,000 and can be carried around in a pocket and it is made in China. Gopal added the one made in India by BPL costs only \$ 70 and is distributed under the company World Space Satellite.

Anriette asked if any initiative have been taken as in Africa with World Space Foundation.

Kisor Pradhan replied it is called DBI (Digital Broadcasting Initiative) here and Panos was initially part of devising programme package on HIV/AIDS.

Basheerhamed added it is available for \$ 45 in India and earned 40,000 subscribers with one-year free subscription. It has developed very good business model.

Chat noted Kunda saying V-SAT is vulnerable in terms of shutdown.

Kisor Pradhan added it is so far the safest.

Gopal said Kunda was focused more on Communications Corner which was taking V-SAT from Mercantile Communication. He said his office (Communications Corner) was the first victims after February 1 as they were sending out six newscasts a day. His office lobbied and gave news again after seven days. However, the government took a different move by threatening Mercantile Communications, their V-SAT service provider. That is why it has been stopped.

Sudip Pokharel said if a deal is made with international service provider, it is difficult for government to shut down. GTZ has done the same thing.

Kisor Pradhan noted Panos Kathmandu Office had to go to EU office which had its own V-SAT. UN even offered to open a cybercafe on top of Kunda's office.

Suman Basnet of AMARC offered to organize a visit to Radio Sagarmatha at 6 p.m. in the evening.

Kisor Pradhan thanked everyone on behalf of BCO Alliance and brought the proceeding of the BCO Alliance Kathmandu Meeting to an end.



APPENDICES

Report of the

BUILDING COMMUNICATIONS OPPORTUNITIES (BCO) ALLIANCE MEETING

Hosted by Panos South Asia

Hotel Himalaya, Kathmandu
26-28 January 2006

APPENDIX 1: Program Schedule



BCO Meeting Programme 26-28 January, 2006, Kathmandu, Nepal

Day One: 26 January 2006, THURSDAY

BCO Business Day

Venue: Panos Media Centre

09:00 – 17:00 : BCO Business Day

Day Two: 27 January 2006, FRIDAY

Impact study session

Venue: Panos Media Centre

09:00 – 17:00 : Impact study session

Day Three: 28 January 2006. SATURDAY

Learning Day Session: MDG and ICT/Media in Nepal

Venue: Hotel Himalaya

09:00 – 09:20 : Welcome/Introduction by participants

09:20 – 09:30 : Overview of BCO Alliance by Gerolf Weigel, SDC/Anriette Esterhuysen, APC.

09:30 – 10:00 : Independent Radio movement and Development in Nepal by Raghu Mainali, AMARC.

10:00 – 10:30 : Discussion

10:30 – 11:00 : Tea Break

11:00 – 11:30 : Presentation/Sharing by Kunda Dixit, Editor, Nepali Times Weekly, on 'MDGs and Media in Nepal'.

11:30 – 12:00 : Discussion

12:00 – 13:30 : Lunch Break

13:30 – 14:00 : Presentation/Sharing by Anil Pant, Team Leader, Action Aid Nepal, on 'Action Aid's MDGs and Media/ICT Activities'.

14:00 – 14:30 : Discussion

14:30 – 15:00 : Wrap-up and Tea/Interaction.

APPENDIX 2: IICD Presentation BCO

(Attached as separate PowerPoint document)

APPENDIX 3: Doc 11 BCO Coordination Report Plan 2006

Document 11
BCO Coordination/Facilitation Report & Plan: 2005-2006

This report covers the period January - December 2005.
Four areas identified for the coordination role: learning, reporting, impact and communication

Three focus areas of coordination and facilitation

1. The 2nd BDO, or BCO Alliance, will have a stronger learning focus, and learning will be both input and output of our work.
2. Stronger marketing function – publishing of Learning Day output
3. Facilitating networking and information exchange with other global and regional programmes and initiatives

A more ambitious coordination function that implements programmes designed to promote involvement by BCO Alliance partners, maximise learning and the ability to identify collaborative opportunities.

1) Learning Programme

- Building on a comparative advantage.
- Participation in a learning session
- BCO Alliance partner “signed up” to facilitate the content, organising the content agenda and outside speakers.

Output

2 Learning Day events have taken place in 2005 with alliance partners facilitating the sessions Mapping BCO Impact (DfID, London) and PRSPs (Panos, Lusaka). Local partners have been invited to input and participate. The Zambian Prsps day led to a positive and concrete intervention with the Zambian government approaching OW Africa to draft the ICT policy as part of governments PRSP Programme.

2) Reporting Programme

The BCO Alliance coordination function will place a stronger emphasis on learning versus reporting for accountability.

- *Common reporting framework* for all donors and NGO partners. Financial reporting is the separate responsibility of each organisation to their donor partner. It is the content reporting only that has a streamlined place here.
- *Transparent environment* in which to identify and follow-up on collaboration opportunities.

Output

Meetings:

BCO Bi-Annual meeting in London, January 2005
GKP Meeting in Cairo, May 2005
Ad-Hoc BCO meeting in Cairo, May 2005
BCO Bi-Annual meeting in Lusaka - One World Africa, July 2005
Impact Assessment Working Group meeting in London, September 2005
WSIS in Tunis, November 2005
Numerous online/instant messaging and landline meetings

Knowledge products:

1. Partner reports, Minutes and Learning day proceedings

2. Contact database of BCO partners
3. Mapping of BCO partner activities, projects and networks
4. Calendar of organisational events

3) Impact Programme

- *Social change hypothesis*: The diversity of views on social change within the BCO Alliance is one richness of the grouping, and one that would be interesting to discuss, capture and learn from. As such, the impact programme proposes to hold a learning event (in the context mentioned above) to look at social change theories in ICT for development.
- *Impact methodologies*. Impact methodology is a part of evaluation methodology, and should not be confused with it: evaluation is much broader, while impact looks at impact on livelihoods.
- *Country-based results*

Output

- Facilitated, together with PANOS, the beginning phase of and implementation processes for the Impact Assessment Study
- Impact Study discussion commenced in Lusaka, August 2005
- Impact Assessment Working Group meeting in London, September 2005
- Country based and project map of potential projects to be evaluated against the research questions identified has been compiled and will be presented to this meeting
- Consolidated Map of BCO activities and projects broken into country, region, partners and networks

4) Communications Programme (internal and external)

Envisaged as a marketing function based on analytical materials, rather than purely PR tools comprising three relatively low-key components:

- *Publication of learning products*. The learning and shared experience harvested from the Learning Programme and the Impact Programme, including the country studies (as part of Impact), will be published as BCO products. The BCO coordinator will look to set-up a volunteer editorial committee to work on such items.
- *Marketing products*. Seen as a low-grade investment targeting local BCO Alliance donor offices of what BCO is. This, together with head offices, is an important target group of the Communications Programme. A *BCO brochure* will be designed according to the BCO "house style" and the content written by a sub-contracted communications person.
- *Media plan*. Annually, a sub-contracted communication person will write two *articles to be released to the media* for possible publication. Both on- and off-line media will be targeted and should vary across the spectrum of ICT4D to development oriented publications.

Output

- BCO Brochure developed for WSIS
- Agreement made and a call to BCO partners were made to publish material in Communication Initiative (Warren Feek) and ICT4D (Ravi Gupta)
- Working together with One World South Asia to build the BCO website/online presence, and eventually to include a communication strategy

- Facilitated the involvement of and communication between BCO partners and partner staff in the work of BCO through the setting up of online working groups using the Dgroups list – WSIS Working Group, Impact Study Working Group
- A dgroups list has been set up in the name of BCO – transferring subscribers to take place
- Presence - Involvement and participation - of BCO at WSIS Exhibition

Other BCO Coordination Outputs

BCO Partnership building – knowledge & information sharing, building ownership and identity

1. Followed up with processes leading to the re involvement of AMARC in BCO Alliance
2. Networked and made contact with Richard Fuchs and Mark Surman of IDRC, Bengt Oberger of SIDA (Sweden), Sandra Charles of CIDA (Canada), Ilari Lindy of Finnish Embassy (S Africa), Donor Network on Women (South Africa), Soneni and Andrew of HIVOS (Zimbabwe)
3. BCO exhibition stand at WSIS played an important and constructive role & presence.

Strengths and achievements

- I celebrate one year in my tenure as the BCO Facilitator
- Continuity of BCO representatives attending BCO meetings facilitating decision making, a climate of trust, open mutual exchange between the participants in the meeting allowing a learning process to be nurtured on general ICT4D and other topics.
- Through the exchange of each other's activities there is greater potential for synergising and innovation (this could be further maximised and used to the full..)
- The sharing of partner plans, intentions, ideas, upcoming key events, collaborative action amongst BCO members, strategic alliances and processes, perspectives and analysis constitutes the value add of that BCO aims to offer its partners and donors (and thus the basis for coordination)
- BCO Partners have “signed-on” to facilitate content for the Learning Day.
- BCO Partners have agreed to support the implementation of at least one aspect of the BCO programme, playing a more strategic role and creating distributed ownership for BCO
- BCO Learning events drawing on expertise and synergies with other networks or institutions has been of great value, and having concrete impact on national policy making at a government level e.g. PRSPs and Zambia

Weaknesses and challenges

- Single Reporting format that meets divergent legal and policy – an area that has room for improvement.
- Donor meeting and reports
- Linkages with local offices of Donor Agencies are a potential target group within the BCO
- Communications strategy for BCO
- What is our comparative advantage as a group of IC4D actors?
- Is the time frame for completing the impact assessment realistic? Can we think about extending the current phase of BCO to 2008?

WSIS Report on Exhibition stand

The stand was built by SYMA, with the assistance of a local provider in Tunis. A open wireless and wired network was set up for use by all members and people who visited the stand.

It could be said that the BCO stand constantly had a flow of people going through our space and often staying. In marketing language, the BCO stand withstood the test of not only attracting people to visit our stand but then to return everyday. Even if the reasons were opportunistic because they wanted to use our wireless connection, it created a vibe and busyness that few other WSIS spaces conveyed. In the evaluation form the following comments were made:

"The BCO space was nominated as the 'coolest space' by IDS"

"It was the good karma epicenter of the whole WSIS...it demonstrated appropriate decorating values which put other stands' excesses to shame...oh and the wireless. It totally rocked and communicated your values beautifully!" (Aspiration)

"It was the place to which many people came for refuge-great. Good atmosphere. Excellent meeting point, good place for networking and good venue for micro events, well organized sound and video, opportunity to display materials." (APC member)

"Free-form meeting place of like-minded people"

"it was a home for many many people. It was 'alive' at a crossroads. It was collaborative and had great energy, great wireless connectivity." (Independent)

PANOS said:

"The sense of community and camaraderie, felt like an island of knowledge sharing and enjoyment of technology. The open space for meeting people.. buzzing and busy and the wireless connection. Space for working was very useful. Really appreciated the support with the web connection to PANOS and food. Thanks" "

Bellanet said:

"The energy, fantastic idea, grateful to be part of it...was a happening place. Not located amidst corporate. Great chance to learn more about partners' work and put names to faces."

IICD said:

"Each organization could present in its own way and culture. We were together as a group without losing identity...the stand was just fine, also the location."

APC said:

"Excellent location of the stand. Good spirit of cooperation amongst partners."
-Good spirit of cooperation amongst partners.

HIVOS said:

"-The atmosphere: relaxed
-The number of visitors at our stand. There were always a lot of people in our pavilion. That's also a way to measure the success of our pavilion
-Good spot in the exhibition hall!
-Modern design of the pavilion
-An excellent BCO-coordinator who worked very hard and was always there to solve problems and answer questions"

- The dynamics. It was buzzing the whole time. Tight organised, all smooth by Lauren

What did not work?

Missed opportunity to DO something with BCO partners

There were some start-up problems with the whole WSIS/BCO, especially in communication. The stand itself was a bit noisy for presentations

It seemed that a lot of people in the communal area of the pavilion were just sitting there for hours and making use of the BCO wireless network. They did not seem to be part of any of the organisations of the BCO-pavillion (neither direct or indirect). If we received interesting prospects/partners in our stand, it sometimes was impossible to sit in the communal area.

What would you do differently?

Open Space events.....

Open space wasn't conducive to holding panel discussions, too much noise

Not organize continuous events in the open space

"Laptop campers" - Too many people just using the space to work in - prevented networking

Cut off wireless during presentations

Have representatives of SDC and Dfid to meet people

Get partners to lend more support to each other when presenting

Overall space and design.....

Needed different space for editors to work

Larger space, space was too crowded

Special space for presentations but same set up

Organize time for deeper connection of BCO partners, Create more of a BCO feeling

Capitalize more on street facing areas

Have all partners face each other

Seats were bulky...but comfortable, furniture in the shared space was too big and this restricted movement through the centre space.(tables and chairs)

Experiment with noise absorption materials

Due to the design of the pavilion, some of the organisations (especially IICD) did not have a direct link with the rest of the pavilion. It felt like IICD was really a separate identity/booth.

General comments....

Have an official opening launch of the stand with everyone present (coordinator, stand supervisors, other staff etc.)

Don't forsake community benefits for the sake of a "neater" space

Next time have volunteers to invite and speak to visitors, advertise events, redirect visitors to partner stands

More food and coffee

More involvement from DGIS/DFID/SPC

Plan a BCO meeting as well, or/and official side event.

Have a guestbook and a name card kit for future networking

1. The BCO Stand at WSIS Tunis showcased HIVOS, APC, PANOS, IICD, OW, Bellanet. SDC and Dfid had a presence in the form of signage, and materials in the case of SDC.

2. At WSIS Tunis the BCO hosted 25 open space events that fell broadly within the following themes:
 - Training and capacity building – ICT governance
 - BCO collaboration projects eg ITrainOnline
 - Showcasing a variety of BCO Partner projects be they radio, websites, projects eg OKN
 - Research Projects/Tools eg southern participation in global for a, GEM,
 - ICTs and the environment
 - Knowledge networking
 - Introducing partners and members
 - FOSS
 - PANOS used the space to have journalist briefings on a daily basis
 - HIVOS hosted a reception to which the Dutch Minister of Economic Affairs attended
 - Computer AID, APC also ran a competition where 2 laptops were won
 - Launch of publications: GEM tool - book and CD (APC WNSP), Mainstreaming ICTs: Handbook for Development Practitioners (Women'sNet, APC), Incommunicado (HIVOS)
3. BCO hosted 2 lunches with all BCO partners and members that were present. This allowed people to meet one another and network in a relaxed environment.
4. On the content...BCO partners have included this in their partner reports.

BCO Coordination Plan: 2006

1. Communications Strategy

- 1.1 Publications as they emerge from meeting recommendations
- 1.2 Promotions - brochure, website, exhibitions and events
- 1.3 Develop a BCO Briefing Pack for donors
- 1.4 Respond to partners communications requests and needs
- 1.5 Create and facilitate online presence: managing the dgroups listservs, design and conceptualise BCO website, reporting template is formatted for a tiki wiki
- 1.6 Facilitate the promotion of BCO and its partners in other publications
- 1.7 Develop a strategy that incorporates the Impact Assessment dissemination
- 1.8 Facilitating donor communication??
- 1.9 One off round of contacting local donors offices, send brochure, liaison between BCO partners and local donors
- 1.10 Together with PSA, develop a video on BCO as well as sound bytes

2. Reporting and learning programme

- 2.1 Facilitating the gathering and collation of implementing partner and donor reports, ensuring the harmonisation of reporting. (Donors to meet to discuss harmonising accountability reporting requirements – recommendation from Lusaka)
- 2.2 Coordinate and ensure reporting from learning events and other BCO related meetings
- 2.3 Work together with relevant BCO partner on Learning Day maximising the sharing of experiences

- 2.4 Three meetings a year of which one will be devoted to learning.
- 2.5 Learning Day Proposed Themes. In Lusaka we said the following – “BCO needs to provide space to ask the Big critical questions about ICD, trends etc in the future”:
- Discussion focussed on topic related to impact assessment
 - Social change theories in ICT for development
 - Bilateral agencies policies and relationships
 - Reflections and ideas concerning the role of communications in development and the role of knowledge in development
 - GKP annual meeting will be in Sri Lanka in May 2006-- explore the possibility of a learning event or maybe around the impact assessment
 - ICT policy advocacy regionally and nationally – (how can poor farmers be supported to influence and make changes in policy)
 - Post WSIS scenarios and opportunities
 - Trends opportunities and future scenarios - knowledge that is cutting edge
 - Pick up topic of mainstreaming ICD and reflect on progress and change
 - (Delhi meeting in January with ICT organisations looking at post WSIS and MDGs)
 - Role of ICD in building democracy - share our experiences, including partners on the ground, of different types of communication and their impact on in-country democratic processes.
- 2.6 Mapping of activities and projects (country and regional geographic and thematic scope)
- 2.7 Learning days and learning studies - policy briefs/ briefing reports emerging out of learning days - learning reports/outputs - optional as agreed on by partners
- 2.8 Map BCO: levels; competencies (e.g. media, gender access, technology); geographical

3. Impact

Coordination of Impact Assessment processes and other products/processes that emerge.

4. Internal general coordination

4.1 Internal online tools and resources spaces

- * dgroup platform
- * discussion space
- * document repository
- * im (yahoo and skype)
- * VOIP
- * wiki's - use during ftf meetings
- * networking with BCO partners

4.2 Financial accountability - to redo budget once financial report is received from IICD

4.3 Meetings

- * ad hoc meetings
- * online meetings - when necessary
- * BCO and local partner networking
- * Learning programme
- * Financial reporting to partners on coordination
- * Donor meetings

Biannual face-to-face partner meetings x 2

- * BCO coordination report and plan
- * Partner Reporting
- * Impact study
- * Learning Day
- * Social function at BCO meetings should be hosted by local donors

4.3 Liaison with networks and institutions outside of BCO partners

4.4 Respond to requests from partners and others

Propose a change in the month that BCO meetings take place.
Propose that we set those dates and venues now for 2006

5. Roles

- 5.1 APC will take on general coordination role
- 5.2 Reporting and learning - do collaboratively with partners (taking turns)
- 5.3 Impact - collaboration with partners and particularly with Panos and IICD
- 5.4 Communications – One World South Asia and Panos South Asia

APPENDIX 4: BCO We Connect

(Attached as separate PowerPoint document)

APPENDIX 5: Independent Radio Movement & Development in Nepal

(Attached as separate PowerPoint document)

APPENDIX 6: Action Aid's MDGs & Media/ICT Activities

(Attached as separate PowerPoint document)