

BUILDING COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES

**Bi-Annual Meeting
Wednesday 28th, Thursday 29th and Friday 30th July 2005
InterContinental Hotel
Lusaka, Zambia**

Objectives

Wednesday 27th July: BCO Business Day

1. BCO partners to report and share progress on key activities undertaken within the BCO programme, based on the agreed template
2. Explore ways to energise and strengthen the BCO Alliance
3. Pinpoint activities and mechanisms to deepen and strengthen collaboration between the partners
4. Discuss and agree next steps in taking forward the BCO programme

Present:

Gerolf Weigel - SDC
Anriette Esterhuysen – APC
Chat Garcia Ramilo - APC
Styn van der Krogt – IICD
B. Shadrach – OneWorld Asia
Priscilla Jere – OneWorld Africa
Kishor Pradhan – Panos South Asia
Lauren Fok – BCO
Kitty Warnock-Panos

Welcome

The BCO meeting formally opened at 10h15.
Lauren Fok welcomed everybody present and presented the agenda over the three days and the objectives for the meeting.

Introductions

Everybody present introduced themselves and shared one new work, personal and political aspect that has changed or developed in their lives since we last met in London in January 2005.

BCO Business

Using Open Space Methodology the meeting identified issues, challenges, ideas & opportunities for the BCO partnership against the theme “Energising and strengthening the BCO Alliance to enhance collaboration and learning between partners and between donors”. BCO members were asked to identify issues, challenges and opportunities that relate to the theme. Every issue that is raised can be discussed by others who share the same concern/interest. The following represents the minutes of the finalised issues and actions plans:

1. BCO Collaboration and Donor Positioning in BCO

The following issues were raised in relation to this topic:

- How does the collaboration work at activity level e.g. between implementers?
- What actually is donor and implementer collaboration?
- What are the areas of possible opportunities/collaboration between implementers?
- How do members effectively collaborate on specific actions/activities or on similar issues in same areas?
- Donor Positioning in BCO
- Increase and revive the donor agencies involvement in BCO (Beyond funding)
- BCO at WSIS - Working towards monitoring the WSIS plan of action in a collaborative manner?
- BCO Facilitation – what do we need?
- Lack of incentive for collaboration at high level of BCO partners - includes lack of specific issues for collaboration. General networking is no longer enough
- BCO needs to provide space to ask the Big critical questions about ICD, trends etc in the future.
- Natural tensions of having donors and implementing agencies in the partnership eg implementer wanting to be independent while donors want to influence things

Solutions:

1. Need to create space at meetings for critical discussions/analysis of big issues
Organisational vision, mission, latest trends, opportunities, future scenarios
From these discussions we would identify joint activities – research, lobbying etc.
2. At each meeting, create a calendar of upcoming events and activities to catalyse collaboration among partners; include this in the meeting reports; at following meeting, report on collaboration activities.
3. Design meetings for a mix of efficient core sessions and more open-ended in-depth creative sessions to make it easier for busy people to decide to attend.
4. Implementing (NGO) partners must make more intensive and creative use of the potential of donors as partners beyond funding (expertise, experience, relations, influence, political knowledge).
5. Donors must always distinguish between partnership and consultancy relationships with implementers.

2. BCO - Value added, processes and results

Key points:

- Levels (policy and action) – linking grassroots to national, regional and global levels
- Learning across levels
- Access to policy dialogue and formulation

BCO Value(s)

- Linking grassroots experience, learning + voices to relevant policies + resources + organisations.
- What do we mean by 'grassroots' - excluded from mainstream, need to recognize that you need to link those with power and those without to make change
- BCO community contains diverse + complementary profiles with regard to

ICD/ICTs

- Question: BCO membership, is it appropriate to realise the added value?
- Brokering partnerships: bi-lateral collaboration from BCO
- Learning
- Joint reporting: efficiency
- Relationship building between different agencies
- Forms a support group/critical mass when lobbying for ICD to be taken seriously (peer supports)
- Relevance: we can lose it if we lose critical mass and diversity
- BCO outcomes: do they match purpose and value

Solutions:

1. Map BCO: levels; competencies (e.g. media, gender access, technology); geographical
2. Calendar of priorities of each member for next period - should facilitate collaborations
3. More frequent meetings but with at least two compulsory for all and thematic, regional, inclusive
4. Membership: do strategic review to see if there are gaps (Ref. AMARC's withdrawal in BCO from BDO)
5. Reporting: needs to be done more efficiently; use electronic leads to link summary reports to in-depth reports and existing docs
6. Early and proactive information flow - early lobbying with local donor offices and relevant donor desks-possible inclusion in BCO meetings
7. List of local donor offices related to BCO

3. BCO Coordination

Key points:

- Learning and experience sharing: who, for what purpose, when? BCO should be primary target
- Local donors: how do we involve them?
- Protocol needs to be clarified – always needs lots of notice – donors need to be more efficient. Who can innovate or initiate contact, the international office or partners?
- Representative to BCO needs continuity and consistency to build relationships
- BCO membership should be strategic. Reporting should be learning oriented, not accountability. All partners are EQUALLY (including donors) responsible for reporting. Need to report on every activity that is relevant to BCO no matter who the funder is.
- IICD is opening the position of coordination to another organisation. They have asked APC to consider taking this on. APC is willing to take this on but we need to know if other partners are interested in taking this on, if there are different ways of responding to this ; the work can be shared, or done by rotation. DFID has also asked Panos to coordinate the impact assessment.

Solutions:

1. Role of coordination
- In order to involve/engage local donors:

- have to have meetings in the local countries and where partners are involved
- donors to participate in learning days
- Coordination platform and tools:
 - internal newsletter,
 - brochure targeting donors,
 - BCO meetings,
 - learning days, minutes,
 - composite reports/summary,
 - recommendations for learning events and collaboration,
 - doing a newsletter for internal consumption in between reporting periods for update purposes,
 - calendar,
- Mapping partner activity geographically and thematically
- One off round of contacting local donors offices, send brochure, liaison between BCO partners and local donors
- Social functions at BCO meetings should be hosted by donors.
- Reporting should be interactive and hyperlinked – BCO consolidate key lessons and hyperlinks to individual partners – develop a composite report after each BCO meeting
- Bring together lessons learnt and topics for learning days – engage in analysis and make recommendations.
- Get workplans from each partner, study partner workplans and extract synergies
- BCO Facilitator to facilitate above process

4. BCO Asia Strategy

1. Relations between partners: many partners have relationships at different levels – at project offices in local countries, among members. How can we harmonise these levels of relationships into one whole vision, strategy and practice.
2. Define the “value added” of BCO (clear and focused) and design concrete and pro-active process and results for 1 to 2 years
3. Coordination BCO – INGOs or local level and IDonors or IICD

Key points:

- Mapping current BCO activities in Asia – Who, where, what, how
- Priority South Asia and Southeast Asia
- Mapping ICT4D issues in Asia
- Identifying the strengths of BCO partners in Asia
- APC is looking for more collaboration and complementarity among BCO partners in South Asia and Southeast Asia
- Common partners for BCO partners (Bytes for All, BFES, IT for Change)
- Cross check activity plans in Asia within BCO partners
- We talk about collaboration but nothing concrete is happening

Solutions:

1. Three types of mapping
2. Identifying opportunities for actual collaboration
3. Collaboration between BCO partners should be more well defined

4. Trying out something concrete on collaboration in the next six months

Asia Action plan

1. BCO meeting in Kathmandu, dates will be decided later; OWSA mainstreaming ICD meeting will also take place around this time
2. Gender/ICT for poverty reduction briefing paper - coordinated with PANOS
3. WSIS gender caucus south Asia
4. Policy advocacy training to be held back to back to the BCO meeting
5. GKP annual meeting will be in Sri Lanka in May 2006-- explore the possibility of a learning event or maybe around the impact assessment

5. Africa Action Plan

1. Uganda - members are working with the same partners therefore we would encourage them to work together
2. Senegal - APC to work or help in building capacity of radio partners of Panos in policy advocacy
3. Learning exchanges
 - a) in policy advocacy - in a CATIA meeting that will be in Durban, October and in
 - b) last mile solutions
4. Workshop in Zambia in Gender and ICTs next year - APC can be resource person

6. Creating Grassroots ICT movement such as Mission 2007 in Africa

Key points:

1. Mission 2007 in India has been a very successful – a process for Africa and other developing nations to take note of.
2. There have been a strong interest in Africa in Mission 2007, especially from grassroots organisations
3. Mission 2007 is a multistakeholder partnership which might be relevant to Africa and other countries in South Asia.
4. After the BICA, there has not been a continent wide ICT movement yet ; NEPAD provides an opportunity
5. ICT work within NEPAD needs to leapfrog and be ambitious
6. Mission 2007 is possible in Africa at least by 2010
7. Africa is far behind other parts of the World, and also South Africa in ICT4D initiatives
8. We need a movement to mobilise a number of organisations to participate in such a continent wide movement
9. We need to integrate the grassroots and their organisations into the ICT4D process
10. It is time to act now! If not, 2007, Africa can achieve this mission by 2010.

Solutions:

1. Decision to initiate Mission 2010 movement with support from BCO partners
2. Develop the vision and agree upon some SMART objectives for Mission 2010.
3. Look at the regional bodies such as PICTA, NEPAD, COMESA, UNECA, ECOWAS and others and invite them to participate and mobilise support
4. Look at the Mission 2007 model and see how the model could be contextualised in Africa through a process that takes on board the champion countries who

- would be supportive of the idea
5. Create a NEPAD ICT and Grassroots ICT caucus
 6. Use the September PICTA meeting as the launching pad
 7. Mapping stakeholders and resources for approaching Mission 2010 in a strategic manner.
 8. Identify champions, movers and shakers for this movement
 9. Identify a Secretariat to act on behalf of founding organisations of Mission 2010.
 10. Begin small, but with a big vision, we will get there!

7. Mapping competencies and activities, both thematic and geographic

Who: Lauren

What: Current activities and competencies in all our areas of activity

Future activities, e.g. new geographic or thematic areas that partners will take on

Coordination platforms and tools

- BCO map
- Newsletter: not a priority
- Calendar of events:

What do we want the calendar to contain?

- activities
- programmes
- electronic version that can be printed out for face to face meetings
- integrate with mapping template

- Basic BCO website

- Brochure
- Map + calendar
- Presentation on BCO that partners can use

Who? Lauren supported by IICD, APC, SDC, One World

- **BCO meetings**

Have two 'compulsory' meetings and 1 or 2 thematic, learning meetings. Should have AT LEAST 3 meetings in total a year.

Structure meetings in such a way that there are blocks of time so that participants can attend the core part of the meeting but opt out of the entire part of the meeting.

Do not repeat discussions from one meeting to another.

Keep BCO process discussion to a minimum.

Do not discuss reporting formats again.

Learning days proposed themes:

- a. ICT policy advocacy regionally and nationally
- b. Post WSIS scenarios and opportunities
- c. Trends opportunities and future scenarios - knowledge that is cutting edge
- d. 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

Proposal on reporting:

- delink accountability reporting to donors by partners from 'learning on BCO outcomes' reporting
- ALL partners are accountable for reporting
- keep reports short and lesson focussed
- 2 levels: quick glance level and deeper level
- continue to use current template but modify it to some extent to make linkages easy

- short summary report that compiles the partners' reports drawing out key lessons learned and that then links to more in-depth reports (hyperlinking)

Conclusion:

- donors to meet to discuss harmonising accountability reporting requirements
 - Working with local donors

- One off round of contacting local donors offices, send brochure, liaison between BCO partners and local donors
- Social functions at BCO meetings should be hosted by donors.

- **Other members**

Reassess the membership of AMARC

8. Impact assessment/Rationale of ICD**Issues:**

- Study to understand the unknown phenomenon brought about by the universalisation of information and knowledge, transparency, accountability and participation
- Real Big Picture – Could BCO partners share ideas and experiences to develop thinking and studies about how ICD/ICT is transforming political processes globally? How will states (and corporations) deal with “empowered citizens”
- Effective impact assessment approach/mechanism that can be better integrated in on-going programmes.
- Learning studies and impact of national ICT policy, its link with PRSPs, MDGs and IICP

Key points:

Topic 1: ICD and Democracy

Solution and action point:

Interest was expressed in the possibility of working towards a seminar or online discussion or something about the role of ICD in building democracy i.e. participation in political processes, and government's capacity to make information available etc and engage in dialogue with people.

BCO partners have many projects and experiences:

Kitty undertakes to explore further

- scoping and develop a proposal for some BCO activity:
- to share our experiences, including partners on the ground, of different types of communication and their impact on in-country democratic processes.

Topic 2: Gender, ICD and Development

What are our thoughts about development and gender as a starting point for impact? We need to define how we define development?

Include:

- gender and ICT (integration of gender and development indicators in impact assessment; sharing among partners about their lessons/experience in integrating gender concerns
- democracy and ICT
- economic development and ICT

Solution and action point:

1. Include gender and development vision in our impact assessment plans for BCO
2. Share our experiences and knowledge on gender, ICD and development – eg share APC Issues papers.

Topic 3: Learning and sharing on national ICT policy processes and impact indicators

Governments have fragmented policies i.e. in telecoms, media, IT, etc. Advocacy is needed on the value of ICT4D and the value of integrated national policy for this.

Solution and action point:

On the country level, there are many opportunities for collaboration among BCO partners for advocacy for national policies and sharing learning around evaluation such as:

- strategic planning at country level
- partners convening-power on the ground
- creating multistakeholder platforms for discussion
- providing advocacy arguments i.e evidence and experience from other countries
- advocacy materials
- finding champions in governments
- getting public attention, media coverage
- understanding decision making processes including mainstreaming ICD advocacy in other development countries

- | moving up to regional level

Day Three: Friday 29 July 2005
Partner Reports and Coordination of BCO

1. BCO Report: Highlights and Emerging Issues

Each BCO partner and SDC highlighted key learning points from their reports which they wanted to share with others. The following minute represents comments and questions that were discussed.

Comments:

Panos

Strengthening the media in the work of commercialization with regard to voice through broadcast, how is it being used? What is critical is to learn new content aggregation.

IICD

Stijn spoke to the report which he submitted

OW

- Grassroot consultation on ICT – traditional issues still the same – there is a struggle between knowledge focus and technology
- Major contrast between urban and rural policy
- Useful old vs new IT – rural radio is 90% - valuable to combine all ICTS
- Voice of grass root – 90% of the issues of grassroot concern their lives and through ICTs were able to access information
- Amplification the voices of the poor - South Asian government has identified entrepreneurship and information. Clear understanding that its not enough to concentrate on infrastructure issues. Need a combination of both traditional and modern tools.
- Financing those who want to learn how technologies are used i.e. tariffs are high – still paying too much for telecom tariffs.

APC

- new technology on broadcasting training lined up – port casting
- Gender research done in Zambia – would want to learn how best to make interventions from a policy perspective
- Mobile phone sharing concept – a club shares one phone and share costs
- Community wireless – came out of people tired of waiting for government to regulate communications policy and infrastructure. They clandestinely build own infrastructure even without license – APC is tapping into this technology and sharing it with community based organisations who are trained to tap into the technology
- Shaddy sighted similar technologies in the Indonesian context

OW Africa

- held 3 stakeholder meetings – Congo
- held a multi-meeting with HugNet – National ICT process oriented
- Zambia – Chipata Market Access

- Trying to use radio – building on Catia by involving women – audio is shared on web

Comments:

- Anriette (APC) would like to collaborate with Stijn (IICD) in Uganda on Gender and ICT policy to achieve complementarity and also to share their work on Gender on ICTs in general. Possibility of asking partners to have gender as a BCO outcome
- Stijn to share IICD/DGIS research results on impact of ICD on development for wider sharing onto the BCO website (in the making)
- It was asked how poor farmers can be supported to influence and make changes in policy. It was recommended to make this a topic for a Learning Day discussion in the next meeting where success stories can be shared to prove what works. It was suggested that BCO link with Catia. The issue is big and is to be fed back into the Impact discussion.
- Large scale multistakeholder processes – Stijn to assist on that
- Stijn would want to learn why some countries do not use radio?
- Radio concept – most people don't regard radio as ICTs and yet it's the most common used ICT
- I train online has materials targeting development issues, audio, policy issues in several languages

SDC

- GSK is competing with IICD and there is need for collaboration/clarification – Gerolf to take it up
- Focus on world congress – BCO is also planning for the world congress so there is need for clarification
- Task force for WSIS – Panos, OWSouth Asia involved in preparatory meeting – more open approach in terms of range of media – full flexibility in terms of how to arrange the World Summit and the theme is not yet agreed upon
- Focus on national and regional work – vacuum at global level but can be filled up by BCO – working on a paper of PRSP, ICD mainstreaming to produce 3 to 4 short concept papers that are evidence based.
- Concern on WSIS – after Tunis, who monitors beyond
- STS budget – are there any chances to increase the 2006 budget – hoping to have more funds – partners should focus on regional work until situation improves
- Draft paper to be sent as soon as possible by Gerolf

Note:

- Prepare a table that partners can share their information
- Note – start off with report back in future as it is fruitful.
- Take the reporting more seriously in order to find opportunities
- Reporting – partners including donors should do separate accounting/reporting – reporting mechanism should be put in place including SDC/DFID

2. BCO Coordination

- IICD has been coordinating IICD for four years and it is time to change. Trying to do it from both north and south has not been simple, there has been difficulties
- APC has volunteered to take on facilitation for the next 2 years. Panos and OW does not have a problem with this. However Shaddy expressed surprise that it has come very suddenly. He emphasised that the coordinator needed to be neutral

- There is a need to discuss the terms of reference for the coordination and also how this will be done
- There is a suggestion that the coordination should rotate in the next 2 years -- perhaps it can move to Asia
- The job of coordination should be managed by a member

NEXT STEPS:

1. We need the opinion of HIVOS to confirm the coordination
2. We need to have recommendation of APC's appointment as coordinator to be sent to all members for endorsement
3. We need a report of coordination from IICD – an exit/lesson sharing report to maintain continuity
4. We need to have the coordination budget transparent -- very important for hosting expenses
5. Transparency is the key

3. WSIS BCO Village Feedback

Lauren presented two options of the BCO stand for Tunisia

On costs: Option presented were too expensive as partners are expected to pay for their costs. APC is prepared to pay about USD5000 – 8000, OW - USD6 000 00, Panos willing to pay 7 – 8 thousand pounds (13 000 USD). Uncertain as to what Hivos and Bellanet are willing to contribute

On design and use of space: Partners to provide own material but would want partitioning, ceiling to be open – no tables required. APC would want a concept – built and designed. Individual stands of members to have name, logos within each booth. BCO area to have basic info about partnership. Central area that is friendly with data projector with pull down plasma screen. Computers – consider 1 pc per booth, consider using one monitor 20" linked to laptops. Suggestion was made to buy a plasma - do a raffle to be given away at the end of the show to recover costs. SDC requires smaller space - otherwise other partners require equal space.

On participation: Consider inviting Catia to be part of the BCO exhibition to share costs. DFID will not have a stand as part of the BCO souk.

On stand builder: Need to consider other cheaper option eg Phillipines and India. Engage in a comparative analysis of costs i.e. Chat, Nepal (Kishor), Shaddy (India) to send contacts to Lauren. Swiss company to be considered to cut costs

4. Evaluation of BCO meeting

Two questions posed:

1. What did you like?
2. What would you do differently?

Closing Remarks

- Facilitation was great
- Well researched presentations, meeting today

- Hosting team was – great
- Room was too big and chairs not too comfortable
- Need to sharing facilitation role
- Learning day was great
- Expected much more depth around learning and lessons
- Facilitation – good to have a mix – could have spent less time
- Kishor – did better than last time

Useful, better than last meeting, well organised, very good

- Facilitation skills good, different techniques used, used of cards to gather ideas was helpful, talk less and act upon
- Learning day interesting, Kitty presented a well researched presentation of PRSP. Impact Day – we have consensus of what we are trying to explore. OWSA were wonderful hosts, all could share our feelings and disagree with one another. Down side – room ok but other room was too big – move around, chairs uncomfortable. Need more time for sharing reports
- Learning day – combination of experiences and reflect on own, hosting and cultural night was great. I expected a lot more sharing that is substantive and depth around learning and activities. Facilitation – good to have mix, times it was slow, spent more time making decisions. Lots of discussion around collaboration but reluctance to identify points of collaboration and building and identifying main areas of collaboration so that can identify big areas.
- Good meeting, even with slow points, overall it was good, thanks to Priscilla for hosting, talk to people actively participating in work. Value listening to experiences. Facilitation and time keeping could have been tighter. Cairo meeting – started with why we here – Lusaka meeting to re envision BCO. Maybe too much time spent on re envisioning and more time spending on sharing work. OST for in depth discussion around lessons in common area of work. Reason why not much talk on collaboration. These projects need to start from bottom up – partnership based on donor proposals but BCO is finding collaboration now. Impact – doing research evaluation collectively. SDC shoulders and labours with us. Feel observed and respected. Have learnt from donors because they have an overview perspective. Want to hear more their perspectives and analysis.
- Disasters – SAA strike but it turned out well, concerned with David's absence, we did well, good meeting. London was a difficult meeting, not partners but competitive feeling. This meeting different, more people sharing what they doing and identifying collaboration, room for improvement but good base. OST was good to relax and warm up to each other, were some slow and uncomfortable moments but have done a lot more than in London. Down sides – could have invited a few more partners to get other perspectives. Didn't know how open to be. Being in hotel too much – need to get out into reality. Thanks to Kitty for presentation.
- Good to keep on doing this and find areas of collaboration. Difficult to take decisions as other staff need to be involved, can't make false promises. Learning day was interesting than today. Impact again just us. Want to participate not just as a funder. Joint responsibility, help each other with time keeping, circulate chair and to give feedback – help each other and give each other chance to do it. Facilitator – too many people taking lead. Not clear who was formally responsible – all partners need chance to do it – all improve upon it. Beginning to really

sharing some knowledge, better understand each other. Still processing, thank you.

- Productive meeting, made decisions, plans, ghost of plans, spirit of recognition that we can learn from each other. Highlighted difficulty with working with people. Never came with knowledge with who other people were and also of info about internal organisation. Challenge to make sure that I am much better prepared. Never dedicated time before meeting to prepare. Something to be gained from being part of BCO, will come back again.
- Answered a lot of questions about how the partnership works. Meeting went very well. Enjoyed working with Kitty and Priscilla, the collegiality in the meetings and the fact that people showed commitment in the partnership.

The meeting ended at 17h30