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***State of ICTs and Local Governance, Needs  
Analysis and Research Priorities in Uganda***

***By***

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## **Executive Summary**

ICTs in local governance in Uganda have been identified as a major tool for achieving socio-economic development. In order for government to implement the long term national development programmes like the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA), and others, timely and relevant information must be available at all levels of implementation. The National ICT Policy Framework (2002) is intended to stimulate more participation in the socio-economic-political and other developmental activities, so as to lead to improved standards of living for the majority of Ugandans and enhance sustainable national development. Other ICT issues currently being considered in the formulation of ICT strategies are the recommendations of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), The proceedings of the African Development Forum and ICT strategy for the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

E-governance can only be implemented effectively if the right human resource, software and systems are in place and the citizens are ICT literate and sensitized. There is need to do undertake research in appropriate technology (software) that is free or affordable, ICTs for the marginalized groups like the disabled, the illiterate, and ICTs for rural transformation. It also important to research on how ICTs can effectively transform the agricultural sector in Uganda and increase household income. This will involve implementation of large-scale projects, which calls for research in areas such as perceptions/ failures of information system projects to minimize project failures. There is also need to undertake research on how ICTs can improve health service delivery especially among the poor.

### **1.0 Introduction**

This paper was prepared mainly from document analysis and the researcher's experience with local government practices and socio-economic conditions in Uganda. Document analysis covered technical reports, seminar/workshop proceedings, legislations, policy documents, and case studies. Internet search used to obtain reports from international and multilateral organizations such as the World Summit for Information Society documents, UN Millennium Development Goals, ITU and other regional documents.

### **2.0 General Context**

The Government of Uganda has formulated a number of programmes to address the key areas of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs address specifically: eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; achievement of universal primary education; promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women; reduction of child mortality; improvement of maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and development of global partnerships for the attainment of a more peaceful, just and prosperous world. Government interventions to this effect included the formulation and implementation of the Uganda Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), which includes elements such as Universal Primary Education (UPE), and Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA),

Vision 2025 (being revised), Medium-Term Competitive Strategy for the Private Sector (2000-2005), to mention but a few. The President of Uganda launched, the Presidential Investors Roundtable (PIRT), a top-level Business Advisory Council, on 30th September 2004 at Speke Resort Munyonyo, Uganda. This Council has five working groups: Agribusiness, ICT, Education, Infrastructure and Regulatory Environment. The mandate of the Council is to advise the Government on the steps that should be taken to improve the investment climate and increase Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows to Uganda.

## **2.1 Poverty Eradication Action Plan**

According to Uganda's Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), that was prepared through a consultative process involving the Central and Local Government, Parliament, Donors and Civil Society, Uganda's overall strategy and goal is aimed at improving the welfare of all Ugandans and to eradicate poverty. It is believed that under this plan Uganda will be transformed into a modern economy where all sectors will actively participate in economic growth.

The PEAP is grouped under five 'pillars': (1) Economic management, (2) Production, competitiveness and incomes (3) Security, conflict-resolution and disaster-management (4) Good governance and (5) Human development. The four core challenges for PEAP implementation are (a) the restoration of security, dealing with the consequences of conflict and improving regional equity (b) restoring sustainable growth in the incomes of the poor (c) human development (d) using public resources transparently and efficiently to eradicate poverty.

In regard to human development, the PEAP document (2004/5 -2007/8)[7] provides that recent years have seen major improvements in the following areas:

- i. Education and literacy, through the introduction of Universal Primary Education and functional adult literacy programmes;
- ii. HIV/AIDS prevalence rates stagnated between 6% and 7%;
- iii. Child nutrition, together with infant and maternal mortality;
- iv. Health reforms and the construction of health centres in rural areas;
- v. Improved access to public services through decentralization;
- vi. Infant and Maternal Mortality strategy to address child and maternal health. The key interventions in this strategy are: Improving the quality of health care and treatment of malaria, Sanitation, Community mobilization, and Family planning;
- vii. Improved access to water supply.

## **2.2 Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture**

The expansion of production and incomes in rural areas is addressed by a large number of interventions, which are grouped under the Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture. This Plan focuses on agricultural modernisation and commercialisation by a multi-sectoral approach to addressing the constraints facing agriculture-based livelihoods. The PMA was developed to focus public intervention on those areas where a clear public sector role was identified, to avoid duplication, and to ensure that the needs of poor small-scale farmers were fully addressed.

Supply-side interventions in the PMA include research and technology development, advisory services, rural financial services, rural infrastructure and sustainable natural resource use and management. The implementation of the PMA is reviewed by an annual joint review process; the third joint review, held in August 2003, found that progress in implementing institutional reforms was good, but that the most of the PMA pillars are not yet visible on the ground. Responsibility for the direct implementation of the PMA components lies within the mandates of relevant ministries and other public agencies, while co-ordination is undertaken by the PMA Steering Committee, the PMA technical committee and the PMA Secretariat.

### **2.3 Strategic Exports Programme**

In September 2001, Government launched the Strategic Exports Programme (SEP) aimed at increasing competitiveness through stimulating value addition investments in selected sectors of the economy and removing bottlenecks that impede the private sector's ability to take advantage of emerging trade opportunities under various initiatives including African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA) of USA and Everything But Arms (EBA). The selected sectors include coffee, cotton, tea, fish, livestock, horticulture, Irish potatoes, and information and communication technology (ICT). So far, interventions under the programme have included the distribution of coffee and tea seedlings and cotton seeds to farmers; the importation of improved breeds of livestock (Boer goats and boran bulls); the supply of fish fry to farmers with fish ponds; the importation of processing equipment for the cotton and coffee sectors; and training for farmers involved in the production of tea, livestock and horticultural products.

### **3.0 National Governance Background**

Uganda, a former British colony, is a sovereign state and a republic. In January 1986, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni became the President of the Republic of Uganda after leading a successful five-year liberation struggle. He then introduced the Movement system of governance, which theoretically, was a broad-based, inclusive and non-partisan political system (Art 70, 1995 Constitution). In implementing the Movement System, political party activities were suspended, save for operating party offices at the capital city, Kampala. In July 2005 however, the people of Uganda voted in a referendum to adopt a multiparty political system. The Parliament of Uganda discussed and promulgated a new constitution in July 2005 as a basis for subsequent legal reforms. The new constitution is in the process of being ratified by District Councils as required by law.

Uganda Government comprises of the Executive (headed by the President and assisted by the Vice President, Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers), Parliament (headed by the Speaker) and the Judiciary (headed by the Chief Justice). Article 176 of the 1995 further provides that the system of local government in Uganda shall be based on district as a unit under which there shall be lower local governments and administrative units. Decentralisation system applies to all levels of local government.

### **3.1 Public Service Reform**

Public Service Reform in Uganda has been going on since early 1990s. It is spearheaded by the Ministry of Public Service. Key areas of reform include:

- i. Restructuring and downsizing
- ii. Introduction of Result Oriented Management (ROM) methodologies, to improve performance in government ministries and departments.
- iii. Promoting efficiency and cost-reduction in government services by introducing e-government systems, including integrated payroll and pension systems.
- iv. The design and implementation of public sector pension reform and the introduction of a self-financing contributory system for future pension obligations, intended to control the growth of pension commitments.

### **3.2 Legal Reform**

The Uganda Law Reform Commission is reviewing the laws of Uganda to bring them into compliance with the 1995 Constitution (and now with the Uganda Constitution 2005). Some laws are obsolete and create red tape, while others are discriminatory towards the poor. Women's access to justice, in particular, is hindered by discriminatory laws such as land legislation, where inequities in land ownership were not corrected by the Land Act. The Constitutional Court has been instrumental in amending offending legislation including the abolition of corporal punishment, and voiding the inequality of access to divorce between male and female petitioners.

### **3.3 Reform in the Justice, Law, and Order Sector**

Reforms in the Justice, Law and Order Sector (JLOS) comprising of the Judiciary, Police, Prisons, and Directorate of Public Prosecutions Include:

- i. Development of institutional targets by the Judiciary, Police, Prisons, and Directorate of Public Prosecutions for efficient disposing of matters from the point of arrest to final conviction or acquittal;
- ii. Introduction of community policing and implementation of anti-corruption measures.
- iii. Minimization of prison overcrowding and lengthy stays on remand;
- iv. Introduction of non-custodial community service as an alternative to imprisonment;
- v. Special measures and funding for reduction of case backlog;
- vi. Introduction of Family and Children's Courts to handle juvenile cases;
- vii. Drafting of Magistrate's Courts' (Amendment) Bill to increase the pecuniary and criminal jurisdiction for lower courts to reduce congestion at the High Court e.g. the Chief Magistrate's Courts will be able to adjudicate defilement cases;
- viii. Introduction and strengthening of Local Council (LC) Courts within the local Government sector. The LC courts deal with local disputes and some petty criminal matters without recourse to more formal systems, such as civil matters including land disputes and marital disputes, and some criminal matters including

- children in conflict with the law. A Local Council Courts Bill has been developed to repeal and replace the Resistance Committees (Judicial Powers) Statute of 1988. The new Bill will strengthen the administration of justice by Local Councils and introduce recording of proceedings and maintenance of records, in the local language at village level and English at the sub-county level;
- ix. The Commercial Justice Reform Programme (CJRP), that focuses on improving the regulatory and service delivery framework for businesses in Uganda. The key areas for reform in the CJRP have included Courts, Commercial Registries (that is the Company Registry and Land Registry), law reform and strengthening the legal profession. The Sector seeks to promote alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to ease access for those enterprises that face barriers due to financial and other constraints. A key initiative has been the establishment of a Centre for Arbitration and Dispute Resolution (CADER) with enabling legislation – The Arbitration and Conciliation Act - to allow disputants to seek arbitration, mediation or negotiation as an alternative to adjudication in the commercial court.

#### **4.0 Local Governance: Policy and Strategy**

Decentralisation in Uganda has been implemented for over 12 years now, guided by the Local Government Statute of 1993, the 1995 Constitution and the 1997 Local Government Act. This was based on the convictions that decentralisation comprehensively facilitates the realisation of development and political objectives for Uganda through democratisation, equitable distribution of resources among and within districts and improvements in the public sector performance. Democratic participation thus advocates for popular participation, empowerment of local residents and regular local elections. Decentralisation is intended to improve transparency and accountability in Local Governments, promote good governance and participatory democracy.

The system of Local Government in Uganda is based on the District as a Unit under which there are lower Local Governments and Administrative Unit Councils. Elected Local Government Councils which are accountable to the people are made up of persons directly elected to represent electoral areas, with special seats for persons with disabilities, the youth and women councilors. There is a legal requirement that 30% of the Parliament and Local Councils should be comprised of women representatives in addition to provision for representatives of youth and people with disabilities.

The Local Government Council is the highest political authority in its area of jurisdiction. The councils are corporate bodies having both legislative and executive powers. They have powers to make local laws and enforce implementation. On the other hand Administrative Unit Councils serve as political units to advise on planning and implementation of services. They assist in the resolution of disputes, monitor the delivery of services and assist in the maintenance of law, order and security.

There are five tiers of local government in Uganda. Most executive decisions are taken at the Local Council 5 (district LC5 ) or Local Council 3 (sub-county LC3) level, although the Local Council 1(village LC1) level has important responsibilities for instance in administering the Local Council courts.

#### **4.1 Current Status of Implementation**

Local Governments are empowered to make and approve their own budgets and development plans. They raise their own revenue from a range of local taxes and allocate expenditure on decentralized and transferred services. They also recruit and manage personnel and make bye-laws. Local Governments receive financial support from the Central Government in order to supplement their recurrent and development budgets. In this regard, they receive three types of grants namely, unconditional, conditional and equalisation grants. This financing arrangement is stipulated in the Constitution and the Local Governments Act [4].

Besides, bilateral and multilateral donors have continued to support Local Governments, through the Ministries of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and Local Government, in order to deepen the process of decentralisation and socio-economic transformation. The donors include the World Bank, African Development Bank, European Union, DFID, DANIDA, USAID, Irish Aid and the Dutch Government to mention but a few. Without this support, decentralisation would have taken a longer time to take root.

Some reported progress in improving service delivery under decentralization are as follows:

- i. decentralised primary school classroom construction has demonstrated substantially reduced unit costs and faster construction rates than previous centralised programmes.
- ii. The economic evaluation of the Local Government Development Programme (LGDP) quotes research by UNCDF, DANIDA and others showing Social Returns on Investment (SRI) for investments by local governments ranging from 12% upwards which compare well with returns on central government investment.

In the further implementation of decentralisation, Government's objective is to increase local autonomy while strengthening upwards and downwards accountability, so that the autonomy is used to meet the needs of the population. Other issues that are being addressed are the restructuring of Local Governments to make them cost effective and efficient, computerizations, establishment of standards for service delivery, improving urban planning capacities, financial management, gender mainstreaming, and legal reform including the revision of laws such as the Country and Planning Act 1964, the Public Health Act, the Trading Licensing Act, and the Markets Act need to be revised to make them consistent with the Constitution and the LG Act 1994. Review of the legislation which governs poverty reduction activities such as the Local Government Act 1997, LG Financial and Accounting Regulations 1998, the Internal Audit manual, the

Town and Country planning Act 1964, the LG Rating Decree 1979, the Trading Licensing Act 1964 and the Markets Act 1942 to bring them in line with the changing environment.

## **5.0 ICTs And E-Government/ance: Policy And Strategy**

The government of the Republic of Uganda recognises the important role information and ICT play in national development. To this end, the Uganda ICT Policy framework was finalized in 2002 and adopted by Cabinet in 2003. Its vision is “a Uganda where national development, especially human development and good governance, are sustainably enhanced, promoted and accelerated by efficient application and use of ICT, including timely access to information”[6]. The main policy objectives are:

1. To sensitize and create awareness among the general public and all stakeholders about the role of information and ICT in Uganda’s development process.
2. To increase the levels of ICT functional literacy in all sectors and build human resource capacity
3. To promote and enable the building and establishment of an appropriate infrastructure that supports ICT development and at the same time meets universal ICT access goals.
4. To promote fair competition and private investment in the ICT sector with particular emphasis on development and encouragement of local participation including specific incentives for investing in ICT.
5. To identify and establish innovative financing mechanisms that address specific needs of ICT development.
6. To promote the use of ICT in the stimulation of production, storage, and dissemination of in-country information and knowledge in both the public and private sector.
7. To facilitate the broadest possible access to public domain information, especially development information
8. To promote a conducive environment for media pluralism that will enhance cultural identity and national sovereignty
9. To promote multilingualism and the other efforts to provide access to information by the disadvantaged groups and communities.
10. To ensure gender mainstreaming in information and communication programmes and in ICT development.
11. To provide for establishment of an enabling and desirable legal and regulatory framework that among other things takes into account the convergence of technologies.
12. To encourage and support Research and Development in ICT.
13. To accord due regard, recognition and protection of intellectual assets.
14. To enhance collaboration and co-ordination in ICT development at the local, regional and international level.

The ICT Policy has led to several ICT initiatives and investments in the country as summarized in Annex I. Each sector including local governments are required to develop ICT implementation strategies in conformity with the National ICT Policy.

Further, an eReadiness Assessment Study was conducted in 2003, to pave way for the promotion of eGovernment in the Country. Currently, the eGovernment Strategy Framework is being finalized. Its main objectives are:

1. To continuously improve the efficiency of, and access to, government information and services.
2. To use the successful development of the eGovernment initiative to promote Uganda as an information technology centre in Africa.
3. To address privacy and security issues related to e-Government implementation.
4. To ensure sufficient revenue streams and funding that enable the development of core eGovernment competencies.
5. To establish leadership and partnerships that advance e-Government services.
6. To develop and maintain a seamless and comprehensive e-Government interface.
7. To manage the cost of e-Government implementation through effective use of technology.
8. To institutionalize the use of e-Government information and services through the adoption of appropriate organizational models.

## **5.1 The Legal Environment**

The Uganda Communications Act, 1997 (Cap 106 Laws of Uganda) established the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), and the rights and duties of the state, enterprises, institutions, organizations and natural persons in the use and management of means of communication, in the establishment and management of communication networks, in the rendering of communication services as well as the general responsibilities for violation of the law. Regulations made so far under the Act include the Communications (Establishment and Management of the Rural Communications Development Fund) Regulations of 2002; and the Uganda Communications (Enforcement Procedures) Regulations of 2004.

Other ICT related legislations in place include:

1. The Press and Journalist Statute 1995 (Cap 105), The Statute extended Article 29(1) (*Freedom of expression*) of the Constitution to the print media. It also created the Media Council, the National Institute of Journalists of Uganda and a Disciplinary Committee within the Media Council. The Council is responsible for regulating eligibility for media ownership and requires journalists to register with the National Institute of Journalists of Uganda.
2. The Electronic Media Statute, Cap 104, Laws of Uganda provides for the establishment of the Broadcasting Council that licenses radio, television and video rental licenses. The purchase, use and sale of television sets is also subject to licensing by the Council.
3. The Access to Information Act, 2004, that makes provision for access by individuals and/or corporations to information of interest relating to a public company.

Proposed legislations that are due for consideration include:

1. **National Information Technology Authority—Uganda (NITA-U) Bill.** The proposed Act establishes an Authority as a coordinating, monitoring and supervisory body to promote National IT development in support of the principles of modernization within the context of poverty eradication; to provide a national IT-policy framework and technical support for IT related services for Government-wide use; and for other matters incidental to the foregoing.
2. **The Electronic Transactions Bill, 2003** proposes an Act to provide for the use, security, facilitation and regulation of electronic communications and transactions; and to encourage the use of e-government services. It intended to *inter alia* promote e-government and ecommerce in Uganda.
3. **The Electronic Signatures Bill, 2003** proposes an Act to make provision for and to regulate the use of electronic signatures. It attempts to do this through provisions relating to the establishment of the Public Key Infrastructure for authenticity and security of documents.
4. **The Computer Misuse Bill, 2003** proposes an Act to make provision for the safety and security of electronic transactions and information systems; to prevent unlawful access, abuse or misuse of information systems including computers and to make provision for securing the conduct of electronic transaction in a trustworthy electronic environment.

## **6.0 Needs Analysis**

The ICT needs for the Uganda are stipulated in the National ICT Policy (2002), and the Uganda eGovernment Strategy Framework (Draft)(2005)[1]. Without prejudice to the aforesaid, the Uganda e-Readiness Assessment Study revealed the following as the main ICT needs in the country:

- i. Conducting a systems study at every central and local government office to identify information system needs
- ii. Development of ICT infrastructure
- iii. Need to reduce connectivity costs and promote universal access
- iv. Equipping every desk with a PC and every government office with email, and office productivity and collaboration software
- v. Setting up metropolitan network to connect government offices together, with gateways to connect to the Internet and the telephone networks. This network should link the central and local governments
- vi. Setting up pilot e-Government kiosks (starting with existing telecenters) to test the newly developed content and e-delivery mechanisms as well as the economic and technical sustainability of the proposed kiosks
- vii. Setting up the ICT coordinating agency for the Government
- viii. Setting up a payment gateway and public key infrastructure to enable online transactions
- ix. Development and standardizing ICT education and training.

- x. Setting up an ICT incubator for encouraging investments in the sector
- xi. General sensitization on the benefits of ICTs and eGovernment to public servants, citizens, business, civil society and other groups.
- xii. Legal and regulatory framework to promote and safeguard ICTs
- xiii. Promotion of ICTs in schools
- xiv. Development of local content
- xv. Addressing problems of multilingualism
- xvi. Development of sustainable and affordable alternative power supply to electricity, especially in rural areas to address the limitations of electricity grid
- xvii. Financing of ICT development.

To address some of the problems above, the Uganda Telecommunications Sector Policy (2005)[8] proposes to undertake the following specific policy by 2010:

- i. To ensure the ubiquitous presence of telecommunication infrastructure and services that will enable sustainable human development through ease and affordability of access to relevant, accurate, and timely information (actual content being the responsibility of the various public sectors as well as civil society and private sector initiatives).
- ii. To facilitate the delivery of the high level information and service needs to all sectors of society, especially the marginalized sections of society that comprise of rural or poor communities, women, people with disabilities, through close integration with the following: *IT sector, Broadcasting sector, Media sector, and Postal sector.*
- iii. To promote the growth of the production and service sectors related to or closely supported by the telecommunication industry in Uganda (research and development, fabrication and manufacturing, training, consultancy, outsourcing services, etc).
- iv. To ensure that all aspects of processes and operations in the sector take full account of the following cross-cutting issues: *Gender concerns, Physically disadvantaged, and Sustainable exploitation of the environment*

## **6.1 Human Resources Capacity**

Although there has not been a comprehensive survey of human resources in ICT in Uganda, it is fairly obvious that the need for some ICT skills exceed the current supply. Various levels of skills are required, and the existing training institutions are meeting some of the training needs.

There is need to assess the national requirement for ICT skills, establish how much of this is available, and then determine the best strategy of meeting the appropriate ICT skills demand. However the ICT skills that will be needed, and therefore the kind of training that will be required, depend very much on the ICT policy adopted by Uganda as a nation, and the Government in particular. For example if government should adopt a policy of information sharing using modern ICT, Local Area Networks (LAN) and Wide

Area Networks (WAN) will be introduced in government Ministries, Departments and Agencies. This would require government employees to acquire a range of ICT skills that would otherwise not be required.

ICT skills training are currently conducted in several institutions in Uganda including:

- i. Faculty of Computing and Information Technology at Makerere University.
- ii. The African Virtual University programme, Makerere University, which offers teleconferencing facilities for distance education. The Global Distance Learning Centre at the Uganda Management Institute hosts similar facilities.
- iii. Islamic University in Uganda
- iv. Mbarara University of Science and Technology
- v. Kyambogo University
- vi. Uganda Institute of Information and Communications Technology
- vii. Uganda Management Institute
- viii. Uganda Martyrs University, Nkozi

## **6.2 ICT Training in Schools**

The Ministry of Education and Sports has approved a curriculum for ICT Training for Secondary Schools, and a limited number of schools are offering ICT Training. These schools are being equipped under various programmes, including the Schoolnet and ConnectEd Projects. It should be pointed out that only a very small percentage of Secondary Schools are offering ICT Training, and in almost all cases the facilities are awfully inadequate for reasonable hands-on experience.

## **6.3 Training of Government Employees**

There is some training in ICT in the Public Service, and this mainly comes as part of donor-funded projects. This happens on project-by-project basis, and there is no coordination among these projects as far as ICT training is concerned. There is urgent need to give the Public Service ICT training in order to meet the challenges of the future.

## **6.4 Rural Communications Development**

In order to ensure equitable geographic distribution of telecommunications services in the country, UCC developed and is implementing the Rural Communications Development Policy. Having identified the challenges to the achievement of the 1996 Policy targets, the following common challenges and interventions were adopted under Uganda's Rural Communications Development Programme:

1. Awareness and literacy – support a vanguard training institution in each district to create literacy and awareness about the potential of ICT; support district websites to demonstrate some benefits and use through relevant content;

2. Access – Support an internet PoP in each district; set up a national IXP; ensure a phone in each sub-county (the smallest local administrative unit in Uganda)
3. Affordability – give outright one off grants to small start-ups and partial one off grants to bigger rural operators; permit or require asymmetrical interconnection settlements in favour of rural telecomm operators.

A 1% levy on all telecom service providers is the main funding driver for the Rural Communications Development Fund. Development partners have also come in to give additional support, including: International Development Research Centre (IDRC) which supported the policy and strategy research (Canadian \$200,000); The World Bank which has given a grant of \$5 million (under the Energy for Rural Transformation Project) towards actual implementation.

Through subsidies from the Fund to various companies, the following projects have so far been implemented:

- (a) 20 internet PoPs were established in various districts
- (b) Establishment of 26 district websites ([www.dip.go.ug](http://www.dip.go.ug))
- (c) Establishment of 4 Internet cafes
- (d) Establishment of 3 ICT training centres
- (e) Provision of 66 public payphones

The following projects are in progress with most of them nearing completion:

- (a) Establishment of 30 district websites
- (b) Provision of Internet cafes in 11 districts
- (c) Establishment of ICT training centres in 45 districts
- (d) Provision of 200 public access points

A summary of progress in infrastructure development from 1996 to 2004 as provided by the Uganda Communications Commission are provided in Annex II.

## **6.5 WSIS Needs Identification**

In the April 2005, the Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET/OWA) consultative meeting in Kampala, participants identified the following issues for Uganda with respect to the WSIS and the National ICT policy:

- i. Financing mechanisms: Rural Communications Development Fund (RCDF), National Budget from the Ministry of Finance & Economic Planning and Development, Development partners, Private sector, Financial institutions.
- ii. A centralized ICT coordinating agency needed to collect funds in one centre. This centre should coordinate other matters relating to ICTs.
- iii. On the issue of Internet governance, there should be a regulatory framework as cyber crime is becoming a concern in Uganda.

- iv. Need for capacity building in ICT use and application
- v. Need for sharing of experiences: both best practices and failures.
- vi. Need to review the ICT policy with a view to mainstreaming gender within the policy
- vii. Need to put emphasis on mainstreaming ICT in the agricultural sector
- viii. Need to mobilize the involvement of communities in ICT-related activities in their respective areas.

## **7.0 Research Priorities**

From the aforesaid, the following research priorities have been identified for Uganda:

- i. Appropriate technology (software) to improve on ICT usage in developing countries. This may involve development of e-government open source software applications.
- ii. Development of special ICT facilities for the disabled
- iii. A survey of the existing ICT human resource capacity
- iv. Integration of radio and other ICTs for rural development
- v. Survey of infrastructure availability and quality of service in rural areas
- vi. Gender and ICT
- vii. Health information dissemination mechanisms
- viii. Mainstreaming of ICT in agricultural information dissemination
- ix. Establishment of investment, trade and tourism information services in local governments
- x. Monitoring and Evaluation of ICT projects
- xi. Perceptions of information systems projects.

## **Projects' Profile**

The Uganda Local Government ICT initiatives, under the District Administrative Network Project (District Net), is funded by the International Institute for Communication Development (IICD) in collaboration with the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom, the Ministry of Local Government and the beneficiary Districts. The project aims at improving the performance of Local Governments through establishing functional data/ information management and public communication systems for effective and efficiency decentralized service delivery.

Aims to improve performance in the Local Governments by establishing functional data/ information management and public communication systems for effective and efficient service delivery in decentralized governance. The activities include:

- i. Installation of local area networks and wide area networks, email/ Internet systems.

- ii. Installation of data/voice communication links between district headquarters, the pilot sub-counties and the central government headquarters.
- iii. Setting up of computerized databanks, vote books, work plans, accounting and reporting systems; and training users in basic Information and Communication Technology (ICT) applications.
- iv. Training programme for users in basic ICT skills, and use of basic computer applications.

Enhanced monitoring information and evaluation systems are being implemented through introduction of information technology packages like Local Government Information and Communication System (LOGICS) and Local Government Financial Information Analysis System (LGFIAS).

Other ongoing and planned ICT initiatives in Uganda are as tabulated in Annex I.

## **Annexes**

Annex I: Profile of ongoing ICT projects

Annex II: Telecom Sector Performance in Uganda, 1996 – 2004.

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