

The media and ICT in Nigeria: *Devcoms Network experience*

akin JIMOH

*Development Communications Network,
Media Resource and Advocacy Centre,
Nigeria*

2003 HIPnet Conference, Washington DC

BACKGROUND

The Internet, ICT

- changing everything for those who use it...?
- in Nigeria...limited (or lack) of access and skills to use ICT

Digital Divide -- is very real

BACKGROUND (contd)

2002:

60,000 dial up subscribers **15,000 kbps**

Internet outgoing bandwidth

Access by small groups -- constitute the professional class (...rural population, urban poor? etc)

No knowledge caste system!

OUR EXPERIENCE

- 1994...distribution of a news bulletin on health related issues
- Subsequently – dial-up e-mail access, but few had access
- Commercial Internet access – Cyber cafes

CHALLENGES

Problem: sustainability of IT infrastructure
the essential hardware, software, telephone,
radio, or satellite connections, electricity
supplies, cost

Examples – Cost of Mast and regulatory fee, Internet
Radio

Patrikios H: Global health research. Internet access is not yet universal [letter] BMJ. British Medical Journal.
2001 Jan 20;322(7279):173.

CHALLENGES

Telephone installation	\$800 to \$1,500
One year dial-up Internet access	\$780
e-mail only	\$180
Pay as you use -- initial deposit	\$20
subsequently	\$10
Internet browsing/e-mail access	
<i>urban centers</i>	\$0.03-0.05/min
<i>outside urban centers</i>	\$0.10- 0.15/min
E-mail registration -- <i>send mail</i>	\$2.00 and
<i>-- to receive</i>	\$0.70

CHALLENGES

- Internet bandwidths – phone 9.6kpbs or lower
Wireless access - 2.4GHz radio to be phased out in Dec. 2003
- Upgrade to V-Sat access unaffordable to most organizations (Option – sharing)

LESSONS LEARNED

Three-pronged approach to ICT

Clubhouse, MRAC, PSC...CD-ROMs etc

Popularize facilities, grand opening

LESSONS LEARNED

Working
Environment



SUCCESS STORIES

- The number of our clientele is growing
- regular patronage from young people from the community. In 12 months trained 100 journalists and 60 NGO personnel -- Popline sites.
- HIV/AIDS Reporter of the Year Award to Science Correspondent of Guardian Newspapers
- Nestle Nutrition Reporter of the Year Award to Health Editor Vanguard Newspapers.

SUCCESS STORIES

- new program -- collaboration with the University of Lagos, Mass Communication Students Association.
- Mass Communication Department -- journalism students internship for training in health journalism/computer-assisted reporting. Other schools to be involved...

CONCLUSION

Where do we go from here?

- to open up new communication channels and information flow to and from rural communities
- to enhance the capacity of grassroots organizations for their voices to be heard

CONCLUSION

- to meet information needs of elected officials, decision-makers, interest groups and grass roots advocacy organizations
- to enhance partnership between development organizations and the media

CONCLUSION

We have a lot of stories to tell and we are open to your suggestions on how we can do it better



**THANK YOU ALL
FOR LISTENING!**