

CONCEPT NOTE

1ST EASTERN AFRICA ICT CONSUMERS CONVENING

DATE: 12-13 NOVEMBER, 2009

TIME: 8AM-5PM (Both days)

VENUE: MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY (MBAGATHI)

Background:

The rapid development of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) is creating new products and services, as well as new ways of learning, entertainment and doing business. It is also true that more commercial, professional and social opportunities are being created through the opportunity provided by ICT development in the country. As a result, the country is undergoing a fundamental transformation as we embrace the information age. The economic production, social interaction and political organization will never be the same, thanks to the ICTs development.

However, there is a strong perception among many Kenyans that ICT policy regime has been skewed to benefit the capital owners and the tech-savvy sections of the population while leaving out the ordinary citizens who fall out of the fast-changing digital ecosystem. The situation is worsened further by the fact that the media, in their public watchdog role, often fail to fully grasp - or shy away from - confronting civil and other rights violations in the ICT arena. Many feel that the media, the civil society and the legislature have not been sufficiently engaged and proactive in safeguarding the rights of the citizens and consumers, while the private sector is only keen to watch the bottom-line.

These trends are likely to have adverse economic and social impact on the large population who do not benefit directly from the knowledge economy - the focus of Government and other key players in the ICTs field. It is important for all to appreciate that ensuring universal access to affordable ICT services is a necessary condition for realizing the benefits of the ICT in catalyzing economic development.

The Problem:

The novelty associated with modern communications technologies transcends all our social strata. Research has shown that a fairly large number of users are technologically- challenged and ICT consumers rarely, if ever, have someone to turn to other than their service providers for technological guidance.

In addition, where ICT-related legislation is proposed or enacted, limited information is available to the ICT consumers on the potential effects of such legislation on their socio-economic life. Whereas disparate “consumer education” initiatives are now emerging, there is a need to strengthen, broaden and deepen civil society participation in ICT development with a view to achieving inclusive development underpinned by adherence to fundamental human rights principles.

Moreover, interaction between the industry players and the consumers has been eclectic, sporadic and unstructured. Whether looking at the people as citizens or consumers, it is imperative that their voice is listened to more often and more effectively.

Intervention:

There is need for establishment of a framework under which various stakeholders interact, exchange knowledge and build collaborations that enhance greater understanding, effective policy development and implementation and a conducive environment for enjoyment of the right of consumers. The foregoing intervention will hopefully facilitate a happy balance between concern for return on investment for business interests, conducive and facilitative environment for government, and protection of consumer rights.

It is in this respect, that the present convening is proposed under the auspices of the ICT Consumers Association of Kenya with support from the Ministry of Information and Communications and Akiba Uhaki Foundation among other organisations. The convening is expected to bring together rights advocates, social movements, government agencies, industry and financial regulators, private sector, community based organisations (CBOs), professionals and non-governmental agencies.

Expectations/Objectives:

1. Synthesize and develop a harmonized civil society position on Kenya Communications (Regulations) 2009 for submission to the multi-stakeholder meeting called by Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) and the Ministry of Information and Communications.
2. Catalyse IPv6 adoption for Kenya in readiness for the expected Freedom of Information legislation, expanded online expression space and increased consumer choice on the “Next Generation Internet”-the Internet of things.

3. Initiate broad based community owned telecommunication initiatives augmenting community broadcasting.
4. Increase civil society participation in ICT policy development, legislation, regulation and other ICT initiative nationally and locally. .
5. Public launch of the ICT Consumer Association of Kenya as a vehicle to drive communication rights for all in Kenya and a collaboration framework for a wider Eastern Africa ICT consumer protection movement.

Agenda:

1. Development of a consumers position for the upcoming Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) forum on proposed regulations under the Kenya Communications Act
2. Discussion of important emerging issues concerning consumer rights and existing opportunities including but not limited to:
 - a. Community-owned and run telecommunication networks as an alternative to commercial networks
 - b. Urgent need for abundant new Internet addresses (know as "IPv6" or "Next Generation Internet") in readiness for many websites after Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation is enacted; expanded online expression space; increases in consumer choice where devices can now have Internet address("...the Internet of things").
3. Promotion and enhancement of civil society participation at ICT and Internet Governance for a such as Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and (International Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) ICANN meetings
4. Preparations for a subsequent greater Eastern Africa ICT Consumers Conference
5. Launch of ICT Consumers Association of Kenya.

Approach

For in-depth analyses and understanding of various issues in different thematic areas, panels from different stakeholder groups have been invited to give their perspectives and recommendations thus the panels and panelists as suggested below:



EASTERN AFRICA ICT CONSUMERS CONVENING TO BE HELD ON 12TH AND 13TH NOVEMBER 2009 AT MULTI MEDIA UNIVERSITY, MBAGATHI

DRAFT PROGRAMME

Day One: 12th November 2009

Session One: Official Opening

TIME			Moderator
8:00am	Introduction and Welcoming Remarks Background and Objectives of the convening Human Rights and ICT Keynote Address	Alex Gakuru Kepta Ombati Florence Jaoko Bitange Ndemo	Danny Irungu
10:00 am	Health Break		

Session Two: Panel –Communication Rights and Principles;Regulations 1

10:30am	The Networked Communications Environment Consumer Protection in ICT Rights and responsibilities Q&A Universal Access and service Consumer Protection Dispute resolution Q&A	Prof Kimani Njogu (Twaweza) Florence Jaoko (KNCHR) Muthoni Wanyeki (KHRC) ICT Board Representative Alex Gakuru (ICAK) CCK Representative	Kepta Ombati Henry Maina
1:00 pm	Lunch Break		

Session Two: Panel –IPv6; Regulations 2

2:00 pm	FOI in the electronic space IPv6 Q&A Electronic Transactions Fair Competition and Equality of Treatment Compliance Monitoring, Inspection and Enforcement Q&A	Anne Nderi (ICJ-Kenya) McTim (www.isoc.org) Esther Wanjau(IPv6 Task Force) Stanley Murage(Businessman) SN Mwaura (CBK) Zaccheus Mwatha (KEBS)	Alex Gakuru Priscilla Nyokabi
4:00 pm	Health Break		

Session Three: Panel-Environmental. Health and Related Issues in ICT

4:15 pm	Radiation emission concerns Environmental concerns in ICT infrastructure rollout	CCK Representative Odhiambo Mak'Oloo-ILEG, KARA Representative	Muthoni Wanyeki
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Day Two: 13th November 2009

Session Four: Panel- Regulations 3; Impact and Potential of Emerging Technologies

8:00 am	Recap of Day one Postal and Courier Services Interconnection and Provision of Fixed Links Access and Facilities Broadcasting; Radio communications and Frequency Spectrum Q&A Impact of emerging technologies on persons and society Emerging technologies and civil society-threats and opportunities	Danny Irungu Esther Kamweru (Media Council) Kai Wulff (KDN) Wachira Waruru (CITIZEN) Henry Maina (Article 19) James Wire (Uganda Consumers) Grace Bomu(ICAK) Rita Shako (Youth Agenda) Dennis Itumbi Mwalimu & Jane Mati (Mars Group) Duncan of SID and Prof from KU	Harun Ndubi Harun Ndubi
10:00	Health Break		

Session Five: Regulations 4

10:30am	Tariff; Licensing and Quality of Service; Numbering; Importation, Type Approval and Distribution of Communications Equipment Q&A	Nzioka Waita (Safaricom) Zain Representative Mickael Ghossein(Orange/Telkom) YU Representative Alex Gakuru (ICAK) CCK Representative PS Ndemo (Information) Anne Nderi (ICJ-Kenya)	Kimani Njogu
11:30am	Group Work		
1:00pm	Lunch Break		

Session Six: Reporting and Conclusion

2:00pm	Group Work reports Adoption of resolutions/ recommendations		
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Session Six: Official Closing

17:00:00	Closing ceremony Cocktail		
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