

## **Meeting with Dr. Bitange Ndemo on the Digital Villages Initiative held at Telposta towers 9<sup>th</sup> Floor on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

### **Present**

- 1) Dr Bitange Ndemo – PS MOIC
- 2) Dr Katherine Getao – e-government Directorate
- 3) Hital Muraj – Cisco Systems
- 4) Elizabeth Gondi - KRA
- 5) Wadzanai Chiota Madziva . KICTB
- 6) Kwame Shiroya - KICTB
- 7) Robert Yawe – Kay Systems
- 8) Jose Ngunjiri – Kimathi Information Centre
- 9) Barrack Otieno - Afriregister

### **Agenda**

#### **Presentation on the Digital Village Project**

#### **Update from Kenya ICT Board**

#### **Reactions from industry players.**

The meeting started at 7 am and was chaired by Dr. Ndemo. He mentioned that there are four different initiatives of digital villages

**Pasha Centers** – A Ministry of Information and Communication initiative through the ICT board and funded by the World Bank with administration being handled by Family Bank

**CISCO Digital Community Centers** – A generic product offered by Cisco and other partners they have 8 locations operational and 2 soon to be commissioned, in different parts of the country.

Using the Cisco Model:

- Locals provide the building
- CISCO provides computers, routers and other resources.

**Digital Divide Data** - The first initiative was launched on 5/4/2011 on impact outsourcing where they will initially source local engagements.

**Operators** - This is an initiative based on the Universal Access Fund, Safaricom is active, Airtel is working on a revamped model, the others are yet to take action.

[http://www.cck.go.ke/services/universal\\_access/how\\_usf\\_works.html](http://www.cck.go.ke/services/universal_access/how_usf_works.html)

[http://www.cck.go.ke/services/universal\\_access/projects.html](http://www.cck.go.ke/services/universal_access/projects.html)

It was however reported that most of the digital village initiatives were facing challenges with the last mile.

It was reported that Safaricom did 500 digital villages. Safaricom has understood proper value proposition for digital villages. They have publicly stated that they will do 10,000 digital villages without the Universal service fund.

DDD has employed 50 people in Kibera, discussions are underway on initiatives like CISCO and DDD that are independent of Operators.

The discussions are centered around not being over reliant on jobs coming from outside, the Focus is on creating local jobs.

Through the digital Villages, the government has already established value proposition.

The permanent secretary admitted that there was a problem with the advert used in reaching out to entrepreneurs.

During training there was disparity, in some regions, when people realized that there was no pay they left.

According to Dr Ndemo, the following are some of the achievements of the Pasha initiative

- Family bank has been contracted to disburse loans.
- 4 million USD going towards the digital Village initiative.
- Advert was made 689 applicants sent in proposals.













Bankable proposals are 30, they are looking at 17 marginal proposals to make them 47

Not all counties sent in applications. Some sent in at least one application.


500 applications were sent in on the last day.

The application format can be found on the KICT Board web site

<http://www.ict.go.ke/index.php/sport/pasha/football/downloads> to give you a better appreciation of the requirements.

-  Key challenge: Lack of reliable last mile connectivity
-  Lack of funding for entrepreneurs to manage and commercialize the businesses
-  Absence of a consolidated system.
-  According to Dr. Getao data business is big, but there is still a challenge with freedom of information.
-  She alluded to the fact that data is collected but not shared but was quick to add that efforts to ensure that data is handled within the frameworks of the new constitution are underway.
-  Dr. Ndemo on the other hand confirmed that resources are now available to implement various projects that had been in the pipeline.
-  He also mentioned the fact that by December we are likely to have 4G countrywide through a public private partnership model. This might result in lowering of costs since the government will have a stake in it. The government plans to roll out LTE. Possibilities of leveraging on existing infrastructure in companies where the government has a stake e.g. Safaricom or Telkom are being explored since the greatest challenge is last mile.
-  It was also reported that fiber to the districts is already underway; details can be found on the CCK website.
-  Dr. Getao also mentioned the fact that the government was working on integrated infrastructure.
-  In the e-government strategy, a catalogue of government services is likely to be found on this infrastructure once the project is complete. She also mentioned the fact that the government would roll out e-procurement soon. Dr Ndemo emphasized on the need to explore strategies that will popularize local content.
-  Robert Yawe enquired on whether there was any chance of harmonizing the four different projects?
-  In response to the question Dr. Getao mentioned the fact that the strategy is to move most government's services to the private sector to give the consumer a choice and to eliminate

corruption. She indicated her preference to work with Postal Corporation to reach out to the public due to their wide presence around the government.

 Mr. Yawe asked the government to consider reducing the Channels of advertising and instead focus on channels that would ensure wider reach of information since not everyone has a chance to read newspapers, he proposed the following channels in addition to reaching out :

- Using Face book,
- Using Google,
- Using twitter.
- Advertising on Facebook.

He mentioned the fact that most of the targeted recipients did not know how to write proposals and that there was need to work with University groups such as **SIFE and AISEC**.

Hital Muraj gave a brief talk on CISCO digital village initiatives and emphasized that the keys to running centres are managers the managers need to be able to map community needs.

In conclusion it was unanimously agreed that there was a need for a knowledge base of best practices if the Digital Village initiative is to succeed. Members present emphasized on the need for closer cooperation between all stake holders in the sector.