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**Evaluation of the
Community Information Network for Southern Africa
(CINSA)**

Final Report

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Executive summary

This report is an evaluation of the pilot project, the Community Information Network of Southern Africa (CINSA). The pilot phase has been completed and a review is contained in this report with particular focus on lessons learnt and recommendations for the future of CINSA as an independent organisation.

There is unanimous consensus, amongst all the individuals and organisations interviewed, that there is a need for an organisation such as CINSA. However, there is a strong diversity of opinions as to exactly what CINSA's objectives should be and how it should achieve these objectives. In defining its role as a network, there are two potential directions for CINSA: firstly, as a gateway that

- consolidates the needs of Community ICT (CICT) organisations and facilitates, or channels, these needs to individuals and/or organisations that are in a position to provide solutions
- documents successful ICT projects and disseminates this information amongst its members

Secondly, as an advocacy body that represents its member organisations to fora such as the E-Africa Commission, UNECA, NEPAD and WSIS. Regardless of which route it takes (or if it take both routes), CINSA's role is dependent upon having strong links into community organisations and being able to disseminate as well as represent these organisations. At present, CINSA is a synthesiser of information from a variety of generally online sources. In its role as a synthesiser, CINSA risks becoming marginalised from the community-based organisations that it is intended to serve. This marginalisation has several causes: the lack of clarity in its objectives and measurable outputs, the reduction in CINSA's operating budget and the lack of an appropriate governance framework. This has meant that the creation of an effective network by CINSA has been severely impacted by circumstances to some extent outside of its control. A series of recommendations is provided at the end of the report that could see CINSA achieving its original aims. The primary recommendation is that an appropriate governance framework should be created. As a network, CINSA plays a facilitative role between diverse parties in many different countries. However, if it plays a "top-down" role, rather than one that originates in community based organisations ("bottom-up"), it risks compromising its ability to represent CICT's. Simply, it cannot represent organisations unless these organisations feel ownership in CINSA.

This report is broken down into six sections. Section one provides a very brief history of CINSA. It will not quote the usual dire statistics of the lack of ICT penetration in Southern Africa since it is assumed that readers of this report will be fully aware of the nature and extent of the problem.

Section two begins by listing the objectives during each phase of CINSA's development. It then provides an analysis of the appropriateness of these objectives. For example, were the objectives realistic? Were they clearly stated and attainable? Could the objectives be stated in language that would not lead to confusion amongst diverse (both geographically

and conceptually) organisations? Did the objectives provide a common goal that all associated organizations could aim at? Most importantly, *this* section (Section two) does *not* attempt to evaluate CINSA against these objectives. Instead, it asks whether these objectives *were feasible*, and what it would take to realise them, *regardless of CINSA's subsequent actions*.

Section three focuses on each of the main objectives and evaluates how CINSA implemented them.

Section four looks at each of the major stakeholders in CINSA and their strategies behind supporting CINSA. These stakeholders are broken down into three major categories:

1. Donors (OSISA and IDRC)
2. Partners (the regional nodes, TANGO and e-Brain Forum)
3. Member organisations

In addition, it focuses on the current institutional arrangements surrounding CINSA.

Section five catalogues a series of lessons learnt that arise during both the course of the project as well as the analysis provided in this report.

Section six is broken into two parts: firstly, a series of recommendations and secondly, the conclusion.

Section one - Context and history of CINSA

CINSA was formally established in February 2003. It is funded jointly by the International Development Research Centre of Canada (IDRC) and the Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa (OSISA). The premise of CINSA is

the fact that community ICT projects often occur in isolation. Many projects begin their work without comprehensive knowledge of similar or related projects and the pitfalls of those projects are often repeated. In addition, without proper information and research, it is difficult for development practitioners to make difficult decisions relating to technology, techniques, and best practices – and how those interact with the actual skills levels and needs of communities¹.

CINSA's primary objective is to

support community ICT projects in the SADC region through research, networking, training, service brokerage, technical support, lobbying, creating a resource base and assisting with project monitoring and evaluation².

So, the primary aim of CINSA is to bring *community ICT practitioners* together in a *network* where their expertise and knowledge can be *linked regionally*. This can take the form, for example, of connecting CICT's to training institutions (or individuals),

¹ Proposal to funders, September 2002 pp. 3

² Sangonet Report, September 2002 pp. 8

equipment suppliers or of supplying appropriate information on which technologies are best suited to a project. These high-level aims were focused into several categories, such as: access to information and expertise, sustainability, research and training. On the basis of providing these kinds of services, CINSA obtained funding from both OSISA and IDRC.

In March 2003, soon after its launch in February, the CINSA outputs were more specifically laid out in the Revised Roll-out Plan. The Revised Roll-out Plan took into account the smaller operating budget of CINSA due to the strengthening of the Rand against the funding currency (US and Canadian Dollars).

Section two - CINSA Objectives

Objectives from February 2003 to July 2004³

Initial Objective: Establishment of a network⁴ - To establish regional nodes to build regional support capacity

Outputs - Phase 1:

- 1.1. Solicit, compile and send weekly and quarterly report to the CINSA secretariat on all projects, individuals, institutions and networks involved or working with ICT's in their respective and nearby countries.
- 1.2. Compile a comprehensive list of at least ten community ICT projects in their country, and in neighbouring countries.
- 1.3. Participate in the needs assessment survey

Outputs - Phase 2:

- 1.4. Determine the key ICT service providers in the host country, and in neighbouring countries
- 1.5. Determine the key experts in the field of ICT's who can offer services of assisting community ICT projects

Outputs - Phase 3:

- 1.6. Collect information on at most two relevant case studies in the host country, and in neighbouring countries
- 1.7. Fill in the missing gaps in the previous research, and verify data

Once this initial objective had been achieved, CINSA had four objectives:

First Objective: Develop an online information resource that will assist community ICT projects with issues such as sustainability, best practices, and technological options

Outputs

- 1.1. The CINSA database and website
- 1.2. The "Voice of community ICT" component of the project involves an open publishing and networking space on the portal, including the integrated use of thematic (yahoo) mailing lists.

Second Objective: Sustainability and training - To train regional organisations / CICT projects in the regional ICT policy environment and sustainability

Outputs

³ The list of objectives are based upon the Revised Roll-out Plan, March 2003 and discussions held with CINSA where it was agreed that these are CINSA's objectives.

⁴ CINSA Progress Report submitted to OSISA, November 2003. pp. 3.

- 1.3. Hold a sustainability workshop (August 2003)
- 1.4. Develop a module on the financial sustainability of CICT projects
- 1.5. Facilitate training of network members, provide “help desk” support and develop guides or toolkits

Third Objective: Develop CINSA into a regional ‘brokerage service’ for CICT projects that offers support and advice for CICT projects at a regional level

Outputs

- 1.1. Source and/or develop content (such as case studies) relevant to CICT’s
- 1.2. Use of the mailing lists (established as part of objective one)

Fourth Objective: Develop the network so that it is able to interact with other regional networks internationally

Assessment of the appropriateness of the objectives

The purpose of this section is to evaluate the appropriateness of CINSA’s objectives *as though CINSA had not yet been set up*. In other words, are these objectives achievable? The purpose of *Section three* is to evaluate CINSA’s achievement of these objectives.

The preliminary objective, as stated in the proposal to funders, was the creation of regional nodes. Once this had been achieved, there were four objectives:

1. Develop an online information portal
2. Training
3. Develop CINSA into a regional brokerage service
4. Interact with regional networks internationally

A crucial step towards the realization of a support network was the establishment of regional nodes⁵. It was envisaged that there would be a three phase implementation plan for the regional nodes⁶.

A summarized version of the outputs for each of the nodal points in the regional network is given below for the purposes of clarity:

- Solicit, compile and send weekly and quarterly reports
- Compile a comprehensive list of at least ten community ICT projects in their country, and in neighbouring countries.
- Participate in the needs assessment survey
- Determine the key ICT service providers in the host country, and in neighbouring countries
- Determine the key experts in the field of ICT’s who can offer services of assisting community ICT projects
- Collect information on at most two relevant case studies in the host country, and in neighbouring countries
- Fill in the missing gaps in the previous research, and verify data

With the exception of the needs assessment survey, all the outputs above require the information officers to create lists rather than develop relationships. The stated outputs do

⁵ Proposal to Donors. September 2002. pp. 11.

⁶ CINSA Revised Roll-out Plan, March 2003

not require much analysis of the information that is being provided. Lists of suppliers, community projects and key experts have two features in common:

1. They quickly go out of date and consequently require continual updating
2. They are useful as a starting point for community projects and others wanting to find out how many fish there are in the pond

The regional node outputs represent a starting point. The intention in the formulation of the outputs that these lists would be used to, for example, facilitate training between suppliers and CICT's. There is a clear assumption behind this intention, namely that there is a strong link between CINSA and CICT's and between CINSA and ICT experts (amongst others). After the initial contact has been made, the next step in developing relationships (for example, between ICT experts and CINSA) is to determine the benefits of the relationship for both parties. If either party cannot determine the benefit of the relationship, then it tends to fade away and the work of the initial contact has been lost. The problem in the list of outputs as initially laid out was that there was no indication that relationships would be developed *once the initial contact had been made*. In addition, the collection of information on two relevant case studies presupposes that the information officers are able to travel to the appropriate locations to collect the information and have the requisite skills to determine what is relevant and what is not. If there is no travel budget then it would be difficult to deliver on this output.

Once the initial objective of creating regional nodal points had been created, CINSA had four objectives, the first of which was the development of an online information portal. The purpose of establishing the portal, as stated in the original proposal to funders, was to provide an easy accessible *regional* resource to community ICT projects and ICT practitioners.

The second objective was to provide training to CICT's, specifically in policy issues and sustainability. The major output was the convening of a sustainability workshop. A workshop is dependent upon three factors:

1. Appropriate people have been invited who can clearly contribute to the outcome of the workshop (producing a sustainability module)
2. Information is easily available and has been disseminated amongst participants that will enable a useful conclusion to be reached
3. There is general consensus on the aim of the workshop

The results of the workshop should then be disseminated amongst the target market and feedback given on the usefulness of the information. Of course, the assumption behind having a sustainability workshop is that the benefits of ICT's have been proven amongst the intended audience. Otherwise, the sustainability of something whose benefits have yet to be proven is a moot point. In terms of training, the facilitation of the training of network members presupposes

- strong links into CICT's in order to determine what the training needs of various organizations are, and
- developed relationships with trainers or training institutions who can provide the appropriate training.

If training is provided without either of these conditions in place, CINSA runs the risk of facilitating training that either does not meet the needs of the target audience or does not

take advantage of existent relationships with trainers or training institutions within the network.

With regard to training on policy issues, the purpose would be to provide CICT's with an understanding of their policy environment. In particular, it would be a precursor to articulating CICT's responses to policy initiatives of government. This feature is heavily dependent upon a strong link between CICT's and CINSA since CINSA will in essence be representing and/or fusing many different CICT's responses to policy developments.

The third objective was to develop CINSA into a regional 'brokerage service' for CICT projects that offers support and advice for CICT projects at a regional level. The assumptions behind providing a forum for information dissemination and discussion are that all affected parties have access to this information; that sufficient content can be provided given the resources of the project and that there will be participation by CICT's, funders and others in the mailing lists. In short, does the website and mailing lists provide a clear set of benefits to all participating parties?

The fourth objective was to develop the network so that it is able to interact with other regional networks internationally. As with the other categories, this objective assumes that CINSA is representative of CICT's within the Southern African region.

The primary form of feedback on CINSA activities is through the online portal (Objective one). The assumption is that this will be utilized by members and partners. If this does not occur, it seems that no backup plan was envisaged. In addition, there are several specific problems in the outputs. The way that the outputs have been stated for the activities of the regional nodes incentivises the creation of lists. While a useful starting point, these could quickly become dated unless relationships are established between all participating parties. Other objectives (such as the development of a portal and mailing lists) have a number of unstated assumptions. Using the creation of mailing lists as an example, the assumptions that would need to be tested are:

- Is there sufficient understanding of how to use mailing lists amongst CICT's?
- Is there demand for mailing lists amongst the broader ICT community that would ensure the participation of donors, CICT's and ICT experts?

The intention behind every objective is admirable. However, none of the objectives are informed by clear and concise outputs and many objectives depend upon unstated assumptions.

Furthermore, all of the objectives assume a particular governance framework is already in place: CINSA is driven by the needs of its constituency. It then matches those demands with suppliers. Thus a method of funneling or representing the demands of its constituency must be created, otherwise it is difficult to play either a facilitative or representative role. CINSA's objectives and outputs assume that this framework is already in place, rather than having to first create the framework. ***The conclusion of this section is that there was insufficient understanding by the founders of CINSA of what precisely was needed in the establishment of a regional network. Most specifically, if mechanisms to provide feedback to CINSA (such as mailing lists) do not work there is***

no fall back plan. The seeds of CINSA's marginalization from CICT's can be found here.

Section three - Analysis of project activities

Initial Objective: Establishment of a regional network

As of February 2003 the regional nodes in Zambia and Tanzania were operational. The regional nodes were run in partnership with TANGO in Tanzania and e-Brain Forum in Zambia. The purpose of establishing regional nodes was that it created links into established national networks, preventing duplication of resources and ensuring capacity building at a national level instead of only at a regional level.

Information officers were employed in both nodes and supplied with a computer and a printer. Costs that were budgeted for on a monthly basis were: salary, telephone costs, stationery, Internet subscription and office rental. The monthly budget for the Information Officers was R9,750.

The most noticeable omission from the budget⁷ was traveling expenses. The assumption (though not explicitly mentioned in any documentation) is that Information Officers would be subsidized from their nodal points in Zambia and Tanzania when collecting information. Even if this were not the case, the omission of a vital budget item such as traveling expenses in countries where infrastructure is deficient is one of the major causes of the inability of the Information Officers to submit information. If documentation of successful implementations of ICT initiatives is a primary objective, then the ability to do on-site visits would seem to be essential.

The lack of any formalized work plan for the Information Officers is a barrier to the development of relationships between CINSA and CICT's (this was highlighted in Section two as a crucial component in the realization of CINSA as a network). While the list of outputs states that weekly and quarterly reports must be submitted to CINSA, nowhere does it state precisely what these weekly and quarterly reports should consist of. What does exist is a weekly report template which provides space for listing the week's activities and the issues addressed. However, this does not address the problem: a workplan is informed by a series of objectives and associated outputs. The weekly report template is dependent upon the initiative of the Information Officers and is not informed by a common understanding, *in advance*, between CINSA and each nodal point as to what the Information Officer is meant to do (apart from create lists). An example is appropriate here: a network is dependent upon relationships. So, the workplan could consist of:

Monday – Phone CICT's and see if they have used the website. If not, why not? If so, which information was valuable?

Tuesday – went to an ICT for development meeting and met X, Y and Z. Discussed future collaboration on training.

⁷ As detailed in the Revised Roll-out Plan, March 2003 and also based upon the Transaction Detail by Account report, April 2003 to March 2004.

This is merely an example, but the point is that a weekly report template does not address the primary aim, which is the development of a *network of relationships*. The result is a series of lists (such as the research into Southern African ISP's) and generalizations that have been derived from Internet searches and are not intended to provide practical information of direct use to CICT's. The unintended consequence of the lack of clarity in the objectives and outputs and the ineffective management of Information Officers is a deepening divide between CICT's, the regional nodes and CINSA.

In Zambia, CINSA has no identity of its own apart from e-Brain Forum and there is confusion amongst associated NGO's as to what precisely CINSA is meant to be doing. This is not necessarily a bad thing if the regional node has links into the CICT network. However, e-Brain Forum was not formed with direct links into rural ICT's but rather to provide a forum for discussion on issues surrounding ICT's, some of which would be rural access to ICT's. The choice of partner, given CINSA's objectives of creating CICT information networks that depend on grassroots support, seems to be an odd one. What e-Brain Forum does bring the partnership is managerial experience. Out of frustration with the lack of clarity in CINSA's objectives, e-Brain has transferred focus from CINSA to its normal operational objectives. One of these objectives is the organizing of monthly discussion forums, where subjects such as rural access to ICT's is discussed. While not intended by CINSA, the result has been a development of capacity in Zambia and the establishment of e-Brain Forum as a body that can potentially synthesise information about ICT's in Zambia and disseminate it around Southern Africa.

In Tanzania, a different version of the problem has occurred. TANGO has precisely the direct links into the NGO network that is missing in e-Brain Forum. What TANGO lacks is the managerial expertise that e-Brain Forum displays. The lack of management experience has meant that the resources that CINSA has put in place have not been effectively utilised. Data that has been gathered on ISP's and ICT experts, for example, is now out of date. Displaying great willingness, but a lack of focus, TANGO has written reports on the status of ICT's in Tanzania from policy perspective. This is useful for a newcomer, but unlikely to find much support amongst CICT's in rural areas of Tanzania.

There is great commitment to the concept of CINSA amongst the regional nodes. Both nodes have gone to great effort to deliver on what they believe the objectives of CINSA to be. The lack of managerial experience in Tanzania and supply of it in Zambia would never have been identified unless CINSA was able to visit the regional nodes on a regular basis. While some travelling has been budgeted for in South Africa, none has been budgeted for between regional nodes. The ability of the Project Manager to effectively manage the relationship between nodes is quashed by the lack of funds to travel to any of the locations. For example, the total amount spent on travel between April 2003 and March 2004 was R5,323. The reason for the ineffective management of the regional nodes is twofold: firstly, the reduction in the budget due to currency fluctuations. Secondly, the lack of formal managerial experience – for example, the weekly report template discussed earlier.

The problems created by lack of clear objectives and outputs and the lack of planning (particularly financial) needed to run a complex network of relationships has meant that development of national capacity under the guidance of regional nodes has never occurred. CINSA has become a network of three countries rather than a supranational network consisting of all countries in Southern Africa. This is reflected in the usage of the web portal which shows low participation amongst Southern African countries outside of the nodes.

Objective 1: Development of an online information resource (www.cinsa.info)

The outputs listed here were to develop an online portal and mailing lists. This has been delivered. The purpose of the web portal (www.cinsa.info) was to provide information such as case studies, learning materials, news, contact details and mailing lists to members. Members would be able to access information speedily and cheaply. More importantly, the portal provided interaction between members and with CINSA itself via the forum of mailing lists.

Objective 2: - Train regional organizations/community ICT projects in, amongst other things, the regional ICT policy environment and sustainability

The primary output of the second objective was the convening of a conference in August 2003. This has been delivered. The purpose of the conference was to develop a sustainability module that could then be disseminated through the CINSA web portal. The module has since been created and has been posted on the CINSA website. It should be noted that a significant number of interviewees stated that were not aware that there was a sustainability module and that consideration should be given to posting it directly to members. Nevertheless, there is some controversy over the purpose of the workshop. Some of the interviewees have drawn attention to the primary objective of CINSA which is to create an information sharing network. To ensure that CINSA provides relevant information to CICT's, a governance framework needs to be set up that ensures that the needs of CICT's are funnelled to CINSA. From this base, CINSA can then find a solution – such as ICT literacy training or open source training etc. The argument is that without appropriate governance structures CINSA risks becoming marginal to CICT's.

The subject of governance structures was discussed during the conference. It was agreed to continue the discussions online via a yahoo mailing group. Since no alternative governance structures have been put in place it is assumed that there has been no substantive progress on this issue. The issue of governance is important because having the appropriate governance mechanisms in place would ensure that CINSA responds to the needs of CICT's appropriately as well as providing it with credibility amongst the potential pool of suppliers and experts.

Highlighted in the research report completed during 2003 is the need for training. CINSA has organised training for Community Education Computer Society, Boksburg Resource Centre, Ungana Afrika, MWENGO, TANGO, e-Brain Forum and Bokamoso Women & Youth in Agriculture Group. The challenge to CINSA, in the next stage of its development, must be to be more systematic in its approach to training. This would mean that train-the-trainer courses (such as the ones that the Information Officers have gone

on) would be conducted amongst member organizations. Given the change in the funding situation (less funding through the increased strength of the Rand) this training has not been conducted. One of the options that can be explored further would be to coordinate more closely with other networks. This could substantially reduce the funding requirements needed to provide training. For example, by running training in conjunction with other initiatives from other organizations (such as conferences) the costs of hiring a venue would be nullified.

Objective 3: Develop CINSA into a regional ‘brokerage service’ for CICT projects that offers support and advice for CICT projects at a regional level

This objective speaks to the use of the online portal by CICT’s, ICT practitioners – in fact, all members of the CINSA network as well as services CINSA’s staff can provide to CICT’s. There are three mechanisms through which CINSA acts as a brokerage service:

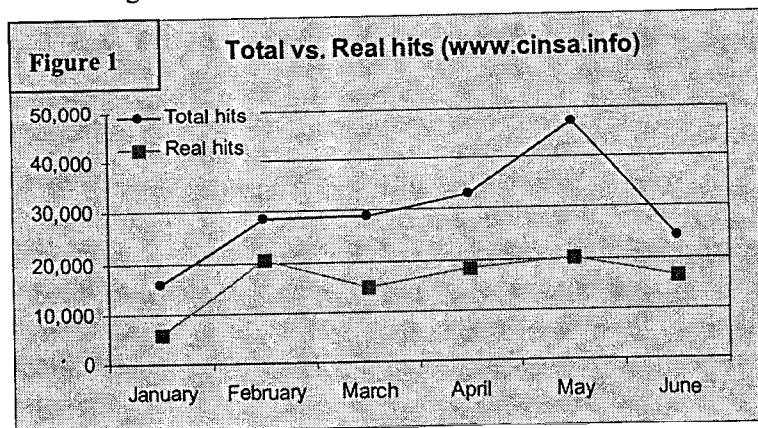
- interaction with members through mailing lists and dissemination to members through the web portal; and
- providing project management skills to projects
- training

Mailing lists

From the archived mailings lists (accessed on the 14th of June and the 20th of June) it is clear that the mailing lists are not being utilised. In May (the month that recorded the highest number of portal visits) there were two messages posted, both by CINSA itself. The reasons why the mailing lists are not being used are not clear. One potential explanation is that there is little knowledge of how to use mailings lists amongst CINSA’s target audience. A second potential explanation could be that there is not sufficient awareness in the market place of CICT’s that this type of resource exists. A third potential explanation could be that there is no clear benefit associated with the mailing list and consequently they are not used. These are the concerns raised in Section two and the conclusion reached is that the benefits to CICT’s are difficult to determine and the consequence is that the mailing lists are not used.

Web portal

The website has seen some erratic growth since January 2004. It is a relatively new site and saw dramatic growth in February compared to January. One factor to take into account is that the steady growth represented in the official hit rate (see Figure 1) disguises the true growth rate. This is because the official hit rate counts ‘hits’ from within CINSA or

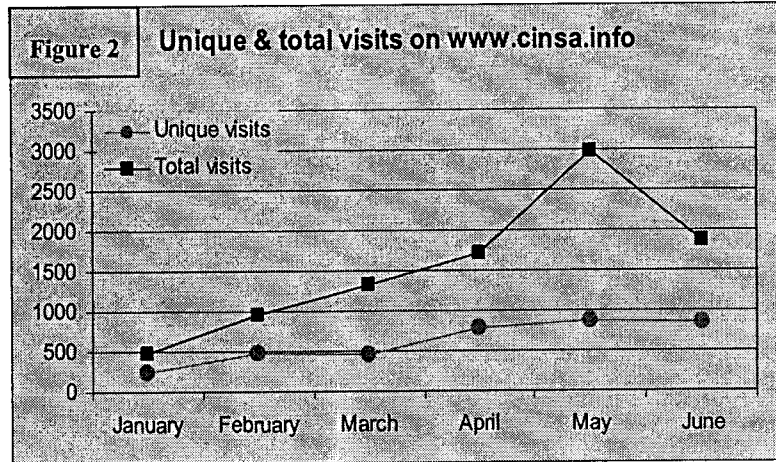


SANGONET and web crawlers such as MSN, Google and Fastsearch.

These ‘hits’ should be excluded for obvious reasons. ‘Hit’ rate, however, is no longer a useful measurement of website activity. The primary reason is that the hit rate doesn’t tell users anything useful and can be easily distorted. For example, by only looking at hit rate it is difficult to determine if only one person (or group of people) has been particularly active on the website or if there are many different users on the site.

For this reason (and others) hit rate has been discarded and unique visits are now used. This measure ignores the number of times one person might be accessing web pages on the site in a visit (this is precisely what the hit rate measures) and only counts this person’s visit as one

visit, regardless of how long or short they might spend on the site. Looking at this measure, a different picture of the CINSA web portal emerges. At the web portals highest point in May 2004, there was a total of 878 unique visitors, who visited 3.4 times per month (i.e. Total visits).



The primary purpose of the CINSA web portal is to be an information broker between different national and regional nodes. Thus, those countries that are visiting the web portal become an important indicator. Of course, this indicator is also up to interpretation but it can provide an indication of who is visiting the site. The majority of people visiting the site are from non-profit organizations which makes sense given the target market. A concern to be raised is that the representation from Southern Africa seems to be very small, representing just over 10% of total visits.

Content and training

The content of the website (as of the 20th of June) reflects the same tensions as mentioned in earlier parts of the report. What precisely is CINSA? Does it synthesise information from different sources or does it facilitate the resolution of problems faced by CICT’s by channelling people and information to the appropriate place? The low usage statistics would seem to indicate that greater awareness needs to be developed amongst CINSA’s client base that this type of resource exists. It is also still relatively early in the development of the CINSA web portal, so this could develop over time.

Highlighting CINSA’s role in synthesising information, the front page is a series of high level news articles and practical toolkits. For example, one article focuses on whether

restrictions on VoIP or WiFi will be harmful to South Africa. The news articles are sourced from ITWeb, Bridges.org, private consultants and CINSA's own staff. On the right hand side of the page is a window explaining that CIVICUS has developed a tool for writing funding proposals and providing a link for downloading the tool.

On the left is a toolbar with the main menu categories listed. Under the resources tab are categories some of which are open source software, telecentre management and sustainability. These sections contain substantive information on how to deal with some of the issues that might be relevant to CICT's. *These articles are very useful in providing an overview of the issues, but they need to be linked to action-learning methodologies in order to make the information practically useful. The emphasis in the objectives on training makes sense, but it is the critical connection between training and information that has not been adequately conceptualised.* In terms of training (Objective two), this must be a fundamental challenge in the future for CINSA to deliver on its mandate of delivering training to its constituents.

Project management:

In 2003 CINSA worked with the Lubombo Community Radio Forum (LCRF) develop new ideas and jointly drafted a proposal for establishing a Community Multimedia Centre (CMC) in the Lubombo region in Swaziland⁸. Primarily, CINSA helped the LCRF to re-write its funding proposal. It will also be part of the project implementation committee and will conduct the evaluation of the project at the end of 2004. The provision of project management skills is perceived to be the new direction that CINSA will take in the future. However, concerns must be raised about the ability of CICT's to be able to fund this type of work and how CINSA can achieve a sustainable income from it. Nevertheless, the success of the engagement with the LCRF is indicative of the type work that CINSA can do in the future.

Objective 4: Develop the network so that it is able to interact with other regional networks internationally

There have been two initiatives by CINSA: firstly, contact has been established with Community Technology Centres' Network (CTCNet) in the United States. Secondly, participation in the establishment of Telecentre HelpNet Africa.

CTCNet is a network that seeks to bring together resources and projects and thus increase capacity within each community project. While contact has been established, there are currently no projects or discussions underway with CTCNet.

CINSA has been actively participating in the process for establishing an African telecentres HelpNet. It sent a representative to Mozambique to attend a workshop organised by the IDRC in September 2003. The purpose of the HelpNet is "to facilitate and catalyze the sharing and exchange of knowledge by telecentre practitioners, from the

⁸ CINSA achievements. 2003.

public, private and non-profit sectors”⁹. The HelpNet has not yet been launched, and CINSA has offered to be the executing agency for the network prior to its launch.

The most active task has been the participation in the African Telecentre HelpNet. However, it would seem that Objective four is a long term objective and as such might not be suited towards the pilot phase of the project.

Section four - Major stakeholders

Donors

The donors are the IDRC and OSISA. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to get an interview with OSISA and this is a limitation of the report. From the donor interviewed, the primary purpose of CINSA is to establish a network of CICT organisations and projects in Southern Africa. Funding networks is a relatively new initiative in Southern Africa. The successful implementation of networks has mostly occurred in Latin and South America and it is hoped that similar initiatives can occur in Africa. The aim of supporting CINSA is to provide linkages into CICT’s that will provide information on both their needs as well as their responses to ICT policy initiatives.

Partners

The major partners of the CINSA project are TANGO and e-Brain Forum. CINSA has played a large role in creating capacity within each of these organisations. Both organisations survive primarily through donor funding. The addition of resources, both in terms of human capacity and in equipment, has been welcomed. Both organisations confess to a level of frustration due to the lack of clarity on objectives and outputs. However, there is no doubt that resources have been spent on creating human capacity in each organisation and that each organisation has benefited.

Members

The common refrain amongst member organisations is that there is a lack of quality information that provides answers to their problems. Even a database that just lists the providers of certain services is welcome. To this end, CINSA has been welcome. Several organisations that had heard of CINSA emphasised the synergies that could be achieved if the organisations worked together. For example, AITEC is willing to subsidise training facilities (specifically, conference facilities). Virtually all organisations interviewed mentioned that research into the benefits that ICT can bring to organisations in rural areas is needed and that CINSA can play a role here.

Institutional arrangements

As part of the initial agreement with donors, CINSA is housed in the SANGONET building. SANGONET is also the project’s secretariat, providing services such as

⁹ Cyranek, G. Africa Telecentre HelpNet Meeting. 18 November 2003. <http://cinsa.info/portal>. Accessed on the 8th of June 2003.

financial management to CINSA. SANGONET is the parent body that CINSA reports to for issues such as financial disbursements and final agreement on projects. It is the relationship with SANGONET that could potentially lead to conflicts of interest. CINSA was originally organised with a particular governance model in mind. It was to be governed by the same organisations that it was meant to serve and would derive its direction from these organisations. By being part of SANGONET, CINSA is one step removed from community organisations. Instead of reporting to a collection of NGO's and other stakeholders, CINSA reports to the SANGONET secretariat. The SANGONET secretariat does not necessarily have the same objectives as the broader NGO community. For example, which brand is uppermost when creating a platform for the promotion of ICT's? SANGONET or CINSA? Should CINSA be a project within SANGONET or should it be representative of CICT's in general? These are questions that need to be resolved in preparation for the next phase of CINSA's development.

Section five - Lessons learnt

The development of a network is a difficult task from a number of perspectives. It is difficult to clearly establish what the benefits are for members. It is difficult to measure progress towards the goals of the network. What is remarkable about the CINSA project is that it provides a number of clear lessons that need to be clearly investigated, both for the future of the project and for future networks.

1. ***Have a clear understanding of the steps in building a network:***
The foundation for the development of CINSA was clearly laid out in the proposal to funders. The nodal points were established and ICT projects and practitioners were identified. But the steps after that were never identified, particularly the need to develop relationships with members, suppliers, practitioners and trainers. The steps needed to build a network need to be clearly understood and identified. A related point is the need to have outputs clearly associated with objectives – specifically, what are the concrete steps needed to realise the objectives? These need to be clearly stated and not assumed.
2. ***Decide on who owns the network:***
An analogy can be drawn with a publicly listed company. In a listed company, the shareholders own the company. The shareholders meet once a year to decide on who is going to run the network, to decide on how much power the executing officers will have and to appoint a board to oversee the running of the company. A public interest network also needs to represent its 'shareholders' in a similar fashion.
3. ***Build closer ties with your client base:***
A network that intends to both represent and articulate the needs of CICT's needs to have strong links to CICT's. This must be more substantive than just contact with the organisation – it needs to be meaningful interaction.
4. ***Managerial experience:***
The most difficult aspect of management is the people. While a truism, the importance of the skill of people management cannot be underestimated. This is even

more important in a network that is underfunded and poorly planned. If the managerial experience doesn't exist, then this should be recognised and the skill developed.

5. ***Better planning:***

The most fundamental characteristic of a network are the relationships. Relationships are very difficult to establish online (there is a large amount of research to back this assertion up. One practical African example is PICTA – the Partnership for ICT's in Africa – where it was recognised that only relying on mailing lists is not effective and regular physical meetings are necessary). Effective relationships require physical meetings and this has a dramatic impact on expenses and needs to be carefully planned for.

6. ***Establish whether CICT's see a clear benefit in your offering through continuous and regular meetings, focus groups, emails, phone calls etc.:***

A strong feedback loop must be established between the network core and the network members. The direction of communication must be two-way. Communication from the periphery (i.e. members) is difficult and time-consuming yet this has to be developed if the network is not to risk marginalisation.

7. ***Have alternative mechanisms for feedback if the primary mechanism is not successful:***

In CINSA's case, the online portal and mailing lists were not effective conduits of communication. The Internet is but one tool of communication and a network must utilise several methods to achieve its goal of two-way communication. This point also relates to the issue of better planning.

8. ***Source and develop mutually beneficial partnerships with like-minded organisations so that resources can be pooled:***

The network must be driven by a relentless need to find synergies between organisations. This can reduce costs (for example, by piggy-backing on another organisation's conference facilities and using the rooms for training) substantially.

9. ***Flexibility:***

If one thing doesn't work, try another. The most relevant example here is communication. Once it was discovered that the mailing lists were not working another alternative could have been found.

Section six - Recommendations and conclusion

Recommendations:

The creation of a support network in Southern Africa was always going to be a difficult task. The CINSA project over the last 18 months certainly highlights these difficulties. The fact that a network is fundamentally about relationships was not taken into account in the formation of the objectives and the outputs associated with them. The continued development of relationships is dependent upon the ability of the Information Officers and Project Manager to maintain regular contact with members, donors and partners. This

has been difficult in light of budget constraints, though some of the difficulty in establishing relationships could be due to management inexperience.

There seem to be two potential avenues for the future:

i) Re-create CINSA by firstly forming a governing council or board made up of various stakeholders. The stakeholders to be included would be those with direct links into CICT's. Through these stakeholders, a series of broad objectives can be determined. Over a period of time (probably around three months) these objectives can be refined and a series of specific outputs assigned to each objective. Once the outputs have been assigned, a planning budget can be drawn up that assesses what is possible and what is impossible. The objectives, outputs and budgets need to take into account the complexity of setting up a network. Issues that should be resolved in the three month consultation period are:

- The role of the secretariat
- The role of the governing council
- What would be considered by all participants to be a successful implementation?
- Regular monitoring and evaluation sessions to ensure that the objectives are being met and outputs have been achieved in time

With the financial and human resources expended on the project so far as well as the general consensus that there is a role for an organisation with the ability to create networks to channel resources to CICT's, this would seem to be the most viable option and is the one supported in this report.

ii) Dissolve CINSA. The advantage of this option is that the financial commitment of donors (and SANGONET) is mitigated (in comparison to option i). However, the disadvantages are:

- None of the lessons learnt by participants in the process can be utilised
- The investment in the web site and human capacity in Tanzania and Zambia is lost
- The opportunity to create a national and regional network between CICT's is lost

Conclusion:

For CINSA to realise its original objective of becoming a network the starting point must be to clarify its objectives. The questions that must be resolved are:

- What precisely does CINSA want to achieve?
- Who is its audience?
- How is it going to achieve its aims?

These questions are unlikely to be resolved in isolation from the CICT's that are CINSA's target audience. If the aim is to build a network, then a governance structure (along the lines of the shareholders analogy mentioned earlier) must be designed to ensure that strong links into CICT's are created and maintained and that CINSA's direction is provided by these organisations. Under this model, CINSA's legitimacy, credibility and direction are provided by its target audience. The key point is that a network is about building relationships. This is difficult without regular face-to-face

meetings. This has been curtailed by the lack of funding and the lack of informed planning.

People and organisations consulted

	Name	Organisation & Address
1	Alexander Musheshyo	e-Brain Forum Kenneth Kaunde House, Cairo Road, Lusaka
2	Ambrose Zwane	Lubombo Community Radio Forum Swaziland
3	Anriette Esterhuysen	Association for Progressive Communication Melville
4	Arnold Petersen	Community Education Computer Society 41 Fox Street, Braamfontein
5	Chris Hartzenberg	Africa Community Projects & Michellene Kiddy's College
6	Daniel Walter	CMFD 5 Jupiter Street, Johannesburg
7	Eric Muragana	CIVICUS World Assembly 24 Pim Street, Newtown
8	Gordon Nachibinga	NGOCC Cnr Chisango & Nchoncho Road, Villa, Lusaka
9	Harry Hare	AITEC Life House, Ohio Street, Dar es Salaam
10	Heloise Emdon	IDRC Midrand
11	Leonie Vlachos	Bridges.org
12	Magree Chilwesa	e-Brain Forum Kenneth Kaunde House, Cairo Road, Lusaka
13	Mary Mwingira	TANGO Bagamoyo Rd, Victoria area, Dar es Salaam
14	Ngunga Tepani	CINSA 76 Juta Street, Johannesburg
15	Patricia Lumba	OneWorld Africa Plot 6499 Kasangula Street, Roma, Lusaka
16	Peter Benjamin	Open Knowledge Network
17	Sandra Roberts	CINSA 76 Juta Street, Johannesburg
18	Tracey Naughton	Consultant 201 Somerset Hall, Johannesburg
19	Zaa Twalangeti	TANGO Bagamoyo Rd, Victoria area, Dar es Salaam

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3. CINSA ICT Research Report, August 2003
4. CINSA Sustainability Module (draft), June 2004
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6. CINSA Progress Report, December 2003
7. www.cinsa.info
8. www.sangonet.org



ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN ON COMMUNITY ICTs

Background information

For the past decade, civil society communities in the Southern African Development Community have experimented with ways of using Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) as tools for development, whether it is for advocacy, service delivery to the poor, or for communication between development practitioners themselves.

However, there is yet to be a forum where the region as a whole can share experiences, learn from each other, generate new ideas collectively, and lobby for more effective access to ICTs based on specific country conditions.

The Community Information Network for Southern Africa (CINSA) is a project designed to support community ICT initiatives in the SADC region. It is currently in its pilot phase, which runs for 18-months until the end of July 2004, and includes an extensive evaluation period that will inform a long term funding strategy.

The Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, and the International Development Research Centre have funded the pilot phase. The project is being implemented by SANGONeT.

What are Community ICT initiatives (CICTs)?

“A CICT project is any community initiative that uses the tools of ICTs for developmental purposes, needs-driven and has a direct social benefit to the community it seeks to serve”. This definition, might exclude Vodacom-type phone shops and cyber-café’s as they are deemed to be purely business-oriented, have very little (if any) input sought from the beneficiaries prior to their establishment. (Question: *What in your opinion would be the appropriate definition for CICTs?*)

CINSA focuses on digital ICTs (internet, computer); and the linkage with electrical ones (community radio, video projects).

It should be noted that CINSA is currently run as a pilot project; hence its scope reflects the budgetary and time constraints inherent therein. Please let us share your views, both on the definition and the scope of CICTs that CINSA as a network can support especially in the long-run (after the pilot phase ends). What is your opinion on this?

Issues / Problem statement

Generally speaking, the existing policies and legislation in most SADC countries are not conducive to the sustainability of CICTs, which among other things are important development vehicles for universal access. There are a host of advocacy issues that the network can deal with: licensing, interconnection fees between service providers (e.g. mobile phone networks that charge customers notoriously in some SADC countries), infrastructure such as provision for country IXPs and fibre-optic backbones (for communities / towns / locations that could lower transfer / routing time and cost and are easily manageable), issues of regulations around ICANN (ccTLDs, why for profit only?), issues of cyber security / liberty / crimes, and Open Source Knowledge / Skills. Again, while these issues will vary from one country to another, CINSA would therefore provide the required back up in terms of information, advocacy skills support and linkage to expert advice from activists.



Research

The following could be the areas or activities we could focus on CINSA's pre-advocacy campaign research, so as to be armed with facts during the actual lobbying to the relevant authorities / campaign targets:

- Baseline survey / Needs Assessment / Feasibility study for proposed and existing CICT initiatives / projects
- Infrastructure – sources of power, telephony, appropriate technology, etc.
- Existing policies / legislation / regulations regarding the issues we raise in our problem statement and generally looking at strategies in place to meet country-specific universal access targets.
- Community or country's relevant socio-economic status through up-to-date reports / data
- Identify community stakeholders for 'ownership' purpose – look for local government officials, businesses, various social groups (*women, youths, the elderly, disabled, etc.*)
- Draw on experience from similar networks locally and elsewhere

VISION

Developed communities with universal access through own ICT initiatives

MISSION

Contributing to poverty reduction in SADC countries through the use of ICTs

Long-term goals

Placing an organized view of community informatics in the regional public policy agenda

Short-term goals

These goals are once again as with any other point raised in this draft strategy, debatable and not conclusive. Short-term goals may vary from one SADC country to another and from various communities within the same country. We hope to get as much input as possible to enable CINSA offer 'close-to-reality' advocacy objectives:

- 10% - 30% increase in national / provincial / community development budget spending into provision of ICT infrastructure – especially in underserved and rural areas
- 90% - 100% liberation of airwaves to allow for greater participation by the citizenry on matters of importance to their own development whilst promoting transparency and democracy
- Reduced access costs for end-users of ICTs (beneficiaries of / targets for CICTs) e.g. through the presence of universal access facilities such as IXPs, fibre-optic backbones and satellite connections
- Transfer of internet regulations to respective countries and considerations for a not-for-profit regulatory body
- Increased 'Open Source' knowledge / skills base through training and resource sharing among technology peers
- Our rights to communicate and information as a regional collective on issues of cyber security and liberties, stated and secured.

Content change

- Enacting new or changing existing policies / legislation / regulations in order to facilitate universal & sustainable access. We believe that, although ICTs are not ends in themselves, they wield one of the greatest potential as a means for bringing about community development

- More frequency / bandwidth allocated for CICTs

Capacity development

- Promoting and technically supporting the work of CICTs in the sub-region.

NEGOTIABLE	NON – NEGOTIABLE
We will need to discuss / input according to country or community preference which are the negotiable demands in our advocacy campaign <i>(What are your suggestions?)</i>	We will need to discuss / input according to country or community preference which are the non-negotiable demands in our advocacy campaign <i>(What should be our non-negotiable demands?)</i>

The Players

- Central and local governments (and / or relevant ministry officials)
- Members of Parliament (*MPs*) and local councilors
- Regulatory bodies / agencies – both local and international
- Community groupings – associations and networks of ICT practitioners such as IT service providers, telecentre and community radios; women; youths; the elderly and disabled associations / cooperatives
- Trade unions
- Leaders of political parties nationally or in the relevant community
- Academicians conversant with the issue at hand & professionals
- The existing conventional media
- Service providers
- Donors
- *Any other (or please take out the irrelevant)?*

Target

The primary targets for the campaign are decision makers in central governments and in some countries independent regulators. Next on the list are members of parliament (MPs) and councilors. Lastly, but not least are the political party leaders including the leaders of the opposition parties.

The media and donors can have an influential-type of power to both the decision-makers and the community as a whole.

Our allies might include the media (*who could easily turn out to be one of our opponents as we look to challenge their existence / relevance*); trade unions; other community groupings apart from trade unions; academicians & professionals; leaders of religious institutions & political parties; MPs and local councilors; and the donors.

Our opponents could be the regulatory authorities; service providers; media; and local government and ministry officials.

Campaign arguments to people in power (*decision makers*)

Once again our collective argument could be narrow and country-specific strategies could be developed around our points of contention:

- Fact that Article 19 of the UN Charter on Human Rights provides for the right of freedom of expression & communication – most of the SADC countries are signatory to the charter?
- SADC governments have endorsed the UN ICT Task Force goals that there shall be universal access to every village by 2005. Existing legislation slow down achieving or even surpassing the set targets?
- What the government misses out on the licensing as a social gesture towards communities can be recouped through taxation and the income tax levied on the personnel that shall be employed at the community ICTs
- CICTs offer employment for a cross-section of the community residents on top of providing access to information on community grouping such as agricultural supplies and markets for crops & products for the community's women and disabled weaving-society
- Governments and / or regulators should allow CICTs to operate in a conducive environment to enhance awareness and programming around women, youth issues in the communities
- Own voice – through ensured local content and discussion forums, thus empowering them to make informed decisions
- CICTs can be viewed as special fund or re-investment models that are aimed at training young men, men, the elderly and disadvantaged to acquire some useful skills
- CICTs could be valuable partners in building ICT infrastructure and / or replicating similar development initiatives in neighbouring communities

Campaign Strategy

- Try to win over other potential competitors e.g. private-run radio, TV station to our side – articles, adverts, opinion letters, phone-ins (*in the case of radio and television programs*)
- Confront/engage with decision makers e.g. ministers of Information & Broadcasting, Communications and Transport; Finance; and Education as the case may be.
- Make sure we meet with the MPs that sit on the parliamentary committee on Information and Broadcasting and political parties
- Written one-page position / appeal
- Seek audience with regulator(s)
- Wage a strong and spirited media campaign mainly through radio, TV, community newspapers / newsletters
- Produce, disseminate / distribute posters and flyers to strategic people (*MPs, Ministers, editors / producers*) and locations (*bus stops, main shopping center or market, schools, etc*)
- A series of workshops with media, MPs, local councilors, religious institutions, cultural leaders and trade unions, women, youth and other community groupings other than those and service providers (*electricity, telephone, internet provision*)
- Solicit petitions (*signature campaign*) from within and outside
- Protest marches (*where applicable – note: the Public Order Act may be called into force jeopardizing or even derailing the campaign momentum / gains already made*)
- Document the whole process for future or similar campaigns elsewhere

Notes: *we need to choose or decide who are going to be our spokespersons / experts / voices of the affected / who should be the most credible to confront the decision-makers / do we have alternative views on where best practices obtain presented to whom?*

Depending on who we want to face / lobby / influence we may need to change or have alternative strategies / tactics for the same person or group of persons. And before we can even do that we need to study mostly our opponents and know – their favorite tactics; their resources; strengths and weaknesses; the key decision-makers (individuals rather than collective); what are their points of contention for opposing us & how much power they wield.

For every issue we choose to campaign for / against the following guideline / plan of action might be useful, acting as a checklist for achieving successful results.

POLICY SYSTEM: OVERVIEW MAP

Issue / policy:

PLAYERS	INSTITUTION	INDIVIDUAL	THEIR INTERESTS / STAKES	THEIR POSITIONS / ASPIRATIONS
AGENDA SETTING				
FORMULATION & ENACTMENT				
IMPLEMENTATION / EMPOWERMENT				
MONITORING & EVALUATION				

STUDY ON EXISTING INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS IN SADC COUNTRIES

1.0 Overview of policy for ICT in SADC¹

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Southern Africa (TRASA) has taken a lead in developing ICT policy frameworks for the region. Many other countries are now following or adapting this model within the framework of National Information and Communication Infrastructure (NICI) that are promoted by the UN Economic Commission for Africa.

Throughout SADC, there is a process of liberalizing the telecommunications sector with formerly state-owned monopoly telecommunications companies being privatized and more entrants coming into the market. However, the pace of these changes clearly differs between the different countries. Another clear trend is explosive growth in the cellular / mobile industry, with most SADC countries now having more cellular phones than fixed lines. Overall, there is an increasingly an environment supportive of ICT growth in SADC, even though few countries have policies such as no import duty on ICT equipment.

Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe are among the countries with national associations of ISPs that form a regional body called African ISP Association (AfrISPAs).

2.0 Country by country status

2.1 Angola

2.1.1 Policy

The Ministry of Postal and Telecommunications (MPT) is in charge of coordinating the policy and regulatory environment of telecommunications sector in Angola. Within the MPT there are two bodies that are entrusted with the development of Internet infrastructure. They are the Institute Comunicação da Licença (ICL) and TELEMATICA. ICL is an autonomous, licensing authority for all telecommunications including the Internet set-up under the council of ministers while TELEMATICA is an inter-ministerial committee, consultative organ playing the regulatory and strategic role in the development of the Internet. TELEMATICA discuss the regulatory aspects of the Internet and provides suggestions to MPT. It also acts as the screening body for the issuance of licences to ISPs, on the basis of which decision ICL acts.

2.1.2 Internet Connectivity

Angola Telecom has established a 128Kbps international Internet Link. It also has another 128 Kbps link via Globe-One in the United States.

Currently four commercial Internet Service Providers operate in Angola. They are EBONET, NET ANGOLA, S-NET and Kwanza Net. EBONET has two points of presence (POPs) in Luanda and one each in Cabinda and Benguela. EBONET started its operations in late 1996, and was the first ISP in the country. A second ISP, Net Angola, started its operation in Luanda at the end of 1997. The third ISP, S-NET is a division of NCR / Angola Informatica.

2.2 Botswana

2.2.1 Policy

There has been tremendous development in the provision of Internet services since licensing of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in 1999. These service providers have been allowed to use Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) to provide national and international data services. There has been improved Internet connections and usage both at Government, non-government organisations as well

¹ Extracts from 'CINSA SADC ICT survey, August 2003'

as private companies. The national ICT policy that is being developed is aimed at, inter-alia, addressing the Internet access and awareness issues.

The Internet has not reached most parts of the country. The Universal Service and Access strategy, which is currently being developed by Botswana Telecommunications Authority aims at bridging the gap that exist in the provision of information and communication services between cities and rural areas, as well as between the poor and the rich in Botswana. The Authority reportedly plans to plough substantial funds into the implementation of the strategy from its surplus funds accumulated over the last five years.

2.2.2 Internet Connectivity

Currently there are more than eight Internet Service Providers. In addition to these, there are five (5) licensed private network telecommunications service providers and six data service providers.

Info Botswana Internet Services, Botsnet and UUNET Botswana are among the leading ISPs providing mainly dial-up, leased line and ISDN Internet connections. Some of the service providers do web hosting & design, networking and training to their customers. Other ISPs include Mega, 4sites and InterTswana (newly established).

BOTSNET is 100% owned by Botswana Telecommunications Corporation and this has caused a lot of agitation among the local ISPs. Logically this seems to bring about an unlevelled ground for competition. BTC is also the overall owner of Botsgate, the Internet backbone. This means that BTC is expected to service all ISPs including BOTSNET in a fair and equitable manner. Some people have reservations about this arrangement. Internet Dial up combined with telephone charges are still making Internet access beyond reach of an average Motswana (Botswana citizen).

Botsnet charges ²P99.00/month, P500.00 for six months prepaid or P900.00 for 12 months prepaid Dial up unrestricted Internet browsing and an email address with a 5MB email box accessible. Local Calls Cost P0.23 for 6 minutes or P0.15 during off peak periods (8pm-7am and Saturday afternoons, Sundays and holidays)

IBIS charges are: Dialup: Unlimited Use - P150 per month, payable quarterly or P100 per month payable annually. Email only: P80 per month, payable quarterly or P53 per month payable annually

GIA Botswana/Abacus Computing charges are: Dialup: Setup - P140, Unlimited use - P80/month / P470/year

2.3 Democratic Republic of Congo

2.3.1 Policy

Office Congolais des Postes et des Télécommunications (OCPT) has been the public telecommunications and postal operator in the Democratic Republic of Congo since 1968 and is the only national fixed line operator in the country. It is responsible to the Ministère des Postes et Télécommunications. Growth of Internet services is stunted because of low PC penetration and no availability of fixed lines from the incumbent operator. Many connections are achieved through wireless access to ISPs or using cellular lines. A total of 6,000 Internet subscribers and an estimated 12,000 to 15,000 users exist in the DRC.

After taking over the administration of the country in 1997, the Kinshasa government analysed the status of the telecommunications networks as a basis for preparing a long-term development plan.

² P stands for the local currency the 'Pula'. 1.00 Pula is approximately R1.40 (SA)

The envisaged role of the government is to provide the enabling environment as well as regulation of the market.

2.3.2 Internet Connectivity

InterConnect³ is one of the Internet Service Provider (ISP) in the Democratic Republic of Congo. A Belgian group runs the ISP that operates two points of presence (POPs), one in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi. It has 500 Internet subscribers / users (1999) and on a 64Kbps bandwidth.

The Réseau de Gestion par l'Informatique et la Télématicque ZedNet (Network of Management by Data processing and Telematics) is also collaborating⁴ with UNDP toward the development of Internet in the country. It assists also students in the use of the network. There is a HealthNet node in Democratic Republic of Congo, which uses the low earth-orbiting satellite to exchange messages.

2.4 Lesotho

2.4.1 Policy

The government of Lesotho, with financial assistance from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is embarking on a major effort to develop a national Information and Communications Technology (ICT) policy. The policy will establish the appropriate enabling environment for the development of ICT in Lesotho. A team of consultants, experts and researchers is currently working on the draft national ICT policy⁵.

2.4.2 Internet Connectivity

Although Lesotho has a relatively adequate voice telephony capacity (both fixed and mobile) and reforms have been put in place to improve the situation further, it has one of Africa's lowest Internet connectivity with merely three Internet service providers and approximately twenty one thousand Internet users out of a population of 2.2 million.

LEO Internet Services is one of the three Internet service providers currently operating in Lesotho. They have points of presence in Bloemfontein, Maseru, Johannesburg, plus a roaming agreement with Telkom South Africa. They provide a connection bandwidth of 384Kbps within Maseru, which makes them the fastest ISP in Lesotho. LEO's annual Internet subscription costs R 1100.

2.5 Malawi

2.5.1 Policy

The Malawi Government, through the Ministry of Information issued a Communications Sector Policy Statement on the 1st of August 1998. Central to this policy was the growing contribution of communications to the social and economic development of Malawi and to the reduction of disparities between urban and rural areas. The main aim of the policy is to ensure that a full range of modern services is accessible by all the population of Malawi at affordable prices.

The Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA) is responsible for regulating the whole communications sector, which includes telecommunications, radio frequency spectrum, postal services and broadcasting. To compliment the efforts of MACRA, the government deliberately adopted strategies like liberalization and, as already indicated, restructuring of the existing institutions in the sector. Malawi has made modest progress in ICT. Currently the government is in the process of developing an ICT Policy that will, when approved, consolidate all the efforts that are being put in the communications sector.

³ Source: http://www.uneca.org/aisi/nici/country_profiles/default.htm last updated in 2001.

⁴ This information is extracted from CINSAs SADC ICT survey; data to be updated

⁵ Source: Press release by Lesotho's Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology 18 July 2003

2.5.2 Internet Connectivity

List of Internet Service Providers in Malawi:

- Africa Online PO Box 2461 Blantyre Tel: + 265 1642255 Fax: +265 1621066 E-mail: customerservice@Africa-online.net
- Epsilon & Omega Ltd. Adl House P.O. Box 31125LILONGWE Tel: + 265 1 774 444 Fax: +265 1 771 231 E-mail: epsilonomega@eomw.net
- Malawi Net Galaxy House P.O. Box 1698BLANTYRE Tel: +265 1 622 436 Fax: +265 1 624 447 E-mail: malawinettld@malawi.net Dial-up full Internet / 3months MK 10886.38
- NCRP.O. Box 5164 LIMBE Tel: + 265 1 671 433 Fax: +265 1 671 887 E-mail: ncr@malawidirect.com
- Malawi SDNPC/O Malawi Polytechnic Private Bag 303ChichiriBlantyre 3 Tel: +265 1 675 872 Fax: +265 1 673 944 E-mail: coordinator@sdpn.org.mw
- Globe Internet P.O Box 5095LIMBE Tel: + 265 1 641 044 Fax: +265 1 641 854 E-mail: info@globemw.net Dial up charges single user (Unlimited access 1 Internet Connection and 1 e-mail address) Per year - ⁶MK 20,000 Per quarter - MK 6,000
- CLCOM.net Computerland Limited, Private Bag 281, Blantyre. Tel: (265) 1 623 274 / 623 258 Fax: (265) 1 623 084 Email: computerland@clcom.net Dial-In Internet Service Rates Internet (Individual) MK 2000.00/Month
- Celtel Malawi Ltd. Celtel House P.O. Box 1235 Blantyre Tel: +265 1 644 022 Fax: 265 1 644 745 E-mail: bahrani.t@mw.celtel.com

2.6 Mauritius

2.6.1 Policy

The Mauritius Telecommunication Authority (MTA) was established to regulate the telecommunications sector. MTA is responsible for considering applications and issuing operating licenses. MTA also has the right to revoke licenses and to allocate spectrum including frequencies for broadcasting. Telecommunication Advisory Council that falls directly under the Ministry of Telecommunication and Information Technology also exists and advises the minister on all matters relating to telecommunications.

2.6.2 Internet Connectivity

It is estimated that Mauritius has 158 000 Internet users and currently two ISPs operate on the Indian Ocean state. They are CellPlus and Emtel.

On average the Internet basic access fees: Rs 100/month (with 1 free e-mail) Tariff (via normal telephone line): Rs 1.00/minute between 7 am and midnight Rs 0.5/minute between midnight and 7 am Special packages are also offered to residential users. Tariff (via ISDN line): Rs 4/minute

2.7 Mozambique

2.7.1 Policy

The Telecommunications Act passed by the Mozambican parliament in 1999 includes granting TDM monopoly on basic telecommunications to remain in place until 2004 – the monopoly covers both fixed line and international access. The Act also designated INCM, the Instituto Nacional das Comunicações de Moçambique, as the regulatory authority in Mozambique, reporting to the Ministry of Transport and Communications. The INCM was established in 1992 as the independent regulatory body of the telecommunications sector.

Voice over IP (VOIP) does not appear to be addressed in the Act and there are no mechanisms as yet in place to make the Act operational. The Act also prohibits the use of wireless technologies - this

⁶ MK stands for 'Malawi Kwacha' the country's local currency whereby 1.0 US\$ = MK 108.99

creates uncertainty in the telecommunications market and is unlikely to be conducive to stimulating private investment in these areas.

2.7.2 Internet Connectivity

Internet access is available since 1993. An estimated 60,000 Internet users exist in Mozambique. Currently there are more than 10 ISPs in the country. However, most of them do not have PoPs outside Maputo.

The ISPs include Teledata, Emilnet Lda, Garp, TropicalWeb, Sistema Informatica Auditorius and Virtual Connection.

2.8 Namibia

2.8.1 Policy

In general the telecommunications infrastructure in Namibia is better developed than in most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Namibian Telecom is able to provide 64kbit lines from Windhoek to four large towns in the northern region, and dedicated leased lines to three other towns.

Commercial Internet Services were established in Namibia in late 1995/early 1996. Since then Namibia has seen the introduction of several ISPs into the market. All ISPs operate on top of the Telecom communications backbone established for the whole country. Connection out of the country is provided to the ISP's via Telecom. Recently Telecom established Infinitem, a wholly owned subsidiary "wholesaler" of bandwidth. Infinitem has aggressively entered the corporate leased line and virtual private network market as well as providing access to ISPs. What is more noticeable, however, is the emergence of Internet cafes. There are several in Windhoek and other towns in Namibia, including one in central Windhoek that has forty five seats and is billed as the largest in Africa. The Corporate (leased-line and VPN) market includes multinational companies with local presence, most of government and many medium to large Namibian organisations.

Namibia does not have a chapter of the Internet Providers Society or Association that could push for the development of the Internet. However, the Namibian Internet Development Foundation (NAMIDEF) is a local Non-Governmental Organisation, made up of individuals who are interested in seeing that the Internet gets its root in the country. In fact NAMIDEF was the first ISP to operate in the country, and later teamed up with UUNet of South Africa to provide the service.

2.8.2 Internet Connectivity

There are about six Internet Service Providers offering dial-up connectivity via modem at speeds up to 33.6k on standard dial-up lines or 64kb dial-up via the Telecom ISDN network. Connectivity to the Internet is presently via South Africa supported by Telecom pricing for leased lines, which remain quite competitive compared to the South African industry.

There are four dominant ISPs including:

- UUNet Africa Online Namibia
- M-Web
- NamibNet
- Cyberhost

2.9 South Africa

2.9.1 Policy

The telecommunications sector is organized according to the Telecommunications Act (1996 – amended in 2001). The Department of Communications sets policy and the regulator is ICASA. The 'Media Development and Diversity Agency' has recently been established to support community and alternative media (print, radio, TV).

There have been many laws passed around electronic communications, broadcasting, interception of communication – and in 2003 a Convergence Bill has been drafted and sent before the Parliament.

2.9.2 Internet Connectivity

Internet access in South Africa continues to grow, but more slowly than ever before, according to a six-month research project led by Arthur Goldstuck⁷. 2,89-million South Africans had access to the Internet at the end of 2001. This number was expected to grow to around 3,1-million by the end of 2002.

The slow growth is largely due to Telkom's uncompromising attitude towards Internet Service providers, and market ignorance about the continued value of the Internet in the wake of the technology market crash of 2000 and 2001. Only a small handful of ISPs are profitable, but there is no specific business model that guarantees profitability. Neither size (small or large), nor target market (corporate or consumer) is an indicator of success.

Internet Solution is the most profitable ISP, while in the dial-up space World Online is the only major ISP operating profitably. An increasing number of ISPs are profitable on an EBITDA basis (earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation). In short, it is no longer uncommon for ISPs to be operating profitably, but they still have a legacy of debt. A virtual ISP service by Internet Solution and the continued heavy use of the equivalent service from SAIX has made possible the number of ISPs into the market.

2.10 Swaziland

2.10.1 Policy

The government has formulated a new Telecommunications Policy aimed at liberalizing the sector through the passage of a new Telecommunications Act. This will eliminate the SPTC and separate posts and telecommunications into two separate corporations. The telecommunications business will be incorporated as a telecommunications company under the Companies Act. A new regulatory body, the Swaziland Communications Commission (SCC), will be set up. A period of exclusivity for the new Telco will be determined at the date of commencement of the Act and competition will be opened for private networks, internet services, value added services and customer premises equipment within 90 days after the effective date of SCC's operating authority.

Current developments plans include the modernization of telephone systems in rural areas by the replacement of copper wire with optic fibre systems; and the subsequent installation of ISDN systems, data circuits, and high-speed Internet connections. The Internet was introduced in Swaziland in 1995 and a year later, a local Internet portal Swazi.net was set up 2000. SPTC also offers subsidized rates to schools to assist in connecting them to the Internet.

2.10.2 Internet Connectivity

Internet Service Providers in Swaziland include:

- Posix R120/3months R360/6months R660 annual
- Lisango R60/month R165/3months R330/6months R600 annual

⁷ "The Goldstuck Report: Internet Access in South Africa, 2002", June 2002

- Real Image R165/month R450/3months R900/6months R1800 annual
- S.P.T.C R95/month

2.11 Tanzania

2.11.1 Policy

Following the Tanzanian Communications Act of 1993 the Tanzania Telecommunication Company Limited (TTCL), the Tanzanian Postal Corporation (TPC) and the Tanzanian Communication Commission (TCC) were established from the defunct parastatal Tanzania Postal & Telecommunications Corporation (TPTC). However, TCC has been responsible for the regulation of postal and telecommunication services for quite some time now. There are efforts currently to merge TCC with the Broadcasting Commission into one regulatory body.

Two operators are licensed to provide basic telecommunications services – TTCL (nationwide) and Zantel (Zanzibar islands only). The telecommunications industry has been liberalized to some extent in that TCC has issued licences to provide Public Data Communication services in Tanzania to six companies, although not all appear to be active. The licence essentially allows these companies to provide infrastructure for use by other service providers (e.g. internet service providers) or companies.

2.11.2 Internet Connectivity

There are thirteen licensed Internet Service Providers in Tanzania serving more than 300 000 Internet users in the country. Some of the ISPs are members of the Tanzania Association of Internet Service Providers (TISPA).

Due to lack of a national IXP, much of Tanzania's local Internet traffic is being routed via international gateways. Currently all points-of-presence to the global Internet backbone are isolated on small capacity links, which is not cost effective in terms of bandwidth availability, access and cost. The Tanzania Online Gateway project in association with the Tanzania Association of ISPs (TISPA) have recently acquired and started trials of the first Tanzanian IXP. TCC has given permission to all ISPs in the country to start connecting to the facility and exchange traffic amongst them locally. Until very recently, only two ISPs were hooked to TIXP and these were Raha.com and Africa Online.

Other service providers include Cyber Twiga, SimbaNet, Afsat, SimuNet, CatsNet, Intafrica, COSTECH and the University of Dar es Salaam. The average monthly dial-up fee in Tanzania is US\$ 40 per single user on a 64Kbps bandwidth. ISPs provide mainly dial-up and VSAT-assisted wireless network connections. A few ISPs provide leased line connection services as well.

2.12 Zambia

2.12.1 Policy

The Telecommunications Act was promulgated in May 1994 and immediately positioned Zambia to become a leading African country in the use of ICT. The Act was progressive in that it established the Communications Authority of Zambia (CAZ) with a good deal of autonomy. CAZ was a body corporate with its powers and functions exercised by a Board of Regulators appointed by the Minister of Transport and Communications. Amongst the duties of the CAZ were the issuing of both service licences and supplier licences in Telecommunications, and the general promotion of the well being of the industry. Although there are potential conflicts of interest that could be foreseen, the Telecommunications Act nevertheless promotes a liberal view of the market that should have fostered the growth of the industry in Zambia.

However, the development of the industry and the formulation of ICT Policy in Zambia is still in progress.

2.12.2 Internet Connectivity

There are four ISPs operating in Zambia with a total number of slightly over 8 000 Internet users.

The four ISPs are:

- Zamnet ralph@zamnet.zm or majorie@zamnet.zm P.O.Box 382999 Lusaka They offer Dial-up Accounts, Dedicated Leased Line and Wireless connections. The latter is in much demand and achieved through Breeze Access solution that addresses the demand for high speed Internet access by providing a scalable, cost effective solution that is quickly deployed using wireless technology (www.zamnet.zm/).
- CopperNET Solutions info@coppernet.zm PO Box 38671, Lusaka They specialize in the provision of both dial-up and broadband via wireless and DSL. Being the largest operator of the only commercial digital data network, Coppernet Solutions have expertise in the provision of virtual private networks (VPN) to connect remote offices to the HQ (www.coppernet.zm).
- Microlink Technologies Ltd is Zambia's newest Internet Service Provider. Microlink's vision is to bring new ideas that make the Internet more relevant to businesses. The company intends to provide Internet solutions that address business communication processes, ranging from Wireless to Broadband Leased Line connections through business-to-business web applications. Currently offers dial-up over 56Kbps that is only available in Lusaka for US\$25 per month (www.microlink.zm/).
- UUNET ZAMBIA, a WorldCom and African Lakes joint venture company, is a leading corporate network service provider (NSP) in Zambia. We aim to provide our customers with the most reliable, best supported and most cost-effective network service possible, both nationally and internationally. (www.uunet.co.zm/).

The dial-up connection fees for the Zamnet, UUNET and Coppernet range from US\$ 20 – US\$ 40 per month over 32Kbps networks and above.

2.13 Zimbabwe

2.13.1 Policy⁸

In 1996 ZPTC, contracted Global-One to establish a national and international Internet backbone with a link to the US and points of presence in the four major cities. The service is operated as a wholesale facility for resale by the private ISPs. Accounts on the system are sold in blocks of 20 to each ISP, which then resells them to the end user. Since the start of the service, the link was upgraded to 1Mbps and a further upgrade to 2Mbps took place in mid '98 with the addition of a 1MB link to Teleglobe in Canada. ZPTC has also established a special tariff for calls to the Internet backbone which are charged at the cost of a local call plus 20% for calls made from anywhere within the country.

Data Control was the first dialup Internet provider in Zimbabwe and is still the largest. Two other ISPs, Samara and InterData, started services shortly afterwards. Since then a number of other ISPs established services, in particular UK owned AfricaOnline, which has since bought out Samara and PCI. Mweb Zimbabwe and PrimeNet Communications are the other major new entrants. The smaller ISPs are Icon Internet, Telco Internet Services and Zimsurf.

The University of Zimbabwe operates a 64Kbps link and is the ISP for academic institutions. A total of 470 domains have been registered under the commercial Zimbabwe TLD (.co.zw).

2.13.2 Internet Connectivity

There are five main players in the ISP market⁹:

⁸ Information as old as 1999

⁹ Figures as at November 2002

- Mweb with over 12 000 subscribers Unlimited Access per annum ZIM\$144 000 (www.mweb.co.zw/)
- Zimbabwe Online with over 5000 subscribers Un-metered Internet and email costs ZIM\$75,000/month (www.zol.co.zw/)
- Africa Online with 4000 subscribers (www.africaonline.com/site/zw)
- ComOne with 2000 subscribers
- Ecoweb Zimbabwe 800 subscribers, a wholly owned subsidiary of Econet Wireless Zimbabwe (Pvt) Ltd, is one of the fastest growing Internet companies in Zimbabwe, serving both dial-up and corporate markets (www.ecoweb.co.zw/)

In addition there are a number of smaller players including Utande and Mango (not-for-profit, e-mail only with 2,000 users). Africa Online, Zimbabwe Online and Mweb all have three POPs (Harare, Bulawayo and Mutare) and Ecoweb only two with no presence in Mutare. ComOne has ten POPs, with a presence in places like Gweru, Victoria Falls, Bindura and Kariba. The total paid account market is probably somewhere between 20-35,000 with total users estimated at 200,000, according to a recent survey.

SOUTHERN AFRICAN NGO NETWORK (SANGONET)
 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE PERIOD
 01 JANUARY 2003 TO JULY 2004
 PROJECT: COMMUNITY INFORMATION NETWORK
 FOR SOUTH AFRICA (CINSA)

FUNDER: INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
 RESEARCH CENTRE (IDRC)

BUDGET CAD Year 1	ACTUAL		BUDGET FOR		TOTAL		ACTUAL		BALANCE
	CAD	SA Rands	Year 1	Year 2	Budget	CAD	SA Rands		

Exchange Rate Used 5.24

Total Received	114,371.00	112,900.00	591,133.58		1,471.00				
Received - 08/01/2003	56,500.00	300,673.58							
- 03/09/2003	56,400.00	290,460.00							
Personnel	29,970.00	18,836.15	98,624.28		11,083.85	9,706.00	20,789.85	108,938.81	0.00
Project Leader	12,000.00	11,571.07	60,585.01		428.93	4,105.00	4,533.93	57,016.07	-6,347.00
Researcher	8,960.00	7,265.08	38,039.27		1,694.92	1,867.00	3,561.92	51,922.74	-6,347.00
Information Co-ordinator	4,480.00				4,480.00	1,867.00	6,347.00	0.00	6,347.00
Helpline Support Services	4,480.00				4,480.00	1,867.00	6,347.00	0.00	6,347.00
Consultants	29,860.00	32,086.03	167,999.37		-2,226.03	8,957.00	6,730.97	35,270.29	0.00
Development of Regional Nodal Points	29,860.00	32,086.03	167,999.37		-2,226.03	8,957.00	6,730.97	35,270.29	0.00
Equipments	5,222.00	5,124.94	26,833.70		97.06	0.00	97.06	0.00	97.06
Computer	0.00	5,124.94	26,833.70		97.06			0.00	97.06
Printer	0.00								
Software	0.00								
Travel/Staff	3,000.00	3,048.50	15,961.64		-48.50	0.00	-48.50	0.00	-48.50
Meeting with regional Partners	3,000.00	3,048.50	15,961.64		-48.50		-48.50	0.00	-48.50
Training	11,940.00	9,387.75	49,153.38		2,552.25	0.00	2,552.25	514.54	2,037.71
Regional CINSA Meeting	11,940.00	9,387.75	49,153.38		2,552.25		2,552.25	514.54	2,037.71
Research Expenses	34,429.00	25,176.46	131,821.51		9,282.54	10,012.00	19,294.54	25,601.94	134,154.14
Technical Programming/ Web design	15,000.00	15,181.89	79,490.94		-181.89	3,954.00	3,772.11	10,759.49	56,379.71
Project email accounts	748.00	570.16	2,985.28		177.84	598.00	775.84	2,088.03	10,941.28
Mailing lists/portal Hosting	6,720.00	0.00	0.00		6,720.00	1,492.00	8,212.00	8,125.66	42,578.48
Domain registration	746.00	222.53	1,165.12		523.47	2,314.00	2,837.47	1,261.83	6,612.00
Marketing Materials	4,500.00	1,900.34	9,950.00		2,599.66	380.00	2,979.66	420.08	2,201.24
Stationery	1,120.00	930.72	4,873.15		189.28	360.00	549.28	351.68	1,842.82
Communication Costs	3,359.00	5,964.52	31,229.66		-2,605.52	374.00	-2,231.52	0.00	-2,231.52
Office Rental	2,236.00	406.30	2,127.36		1,829.70	900.00	2,729.70	2,595.15	13,598.61
Indirect Costs @ 13.0%	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURE
 114,371.00

20,711.17 28,675.00 49,386.17 53,637.29 281,059.41 -4,251.12

PREPARED BY: Lucy More
 - Finance Manager

DATE: 31 August 2004

→ CAD

AUTHORISED BY: Ngunga Tepani
 - Cinsa Project Manager

DATE: 31 August 2004

[Handwritten signature]

Handwritten note:
 1497 rec that we used a budget of 1430000 CAD total budget of 1430000 CAD in 2004

Handwritten note:
 147,297.12 CAD
 707,170,502

SOUTHERN AFRICAN NGO NETWORK (SANGONeT)

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE PERIOD
01 JANUARY 2003 TO 31 JULY 2004**

**PROJECT: COMMUNITY INFORMATION NETWORK
FOR SOUTH AFRICA (CINSA)**

**FUNDER: INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
RESEARCH CENTRE (IDRC)**

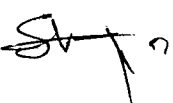
BUDGET LINE ITEMS	BUDGET Year 1 & 2	ACTUAL Year 1 & 2
<u>Personnel</u>	39,626.00	39,626.00
Project Leader	16,105.00	22,452.00
Researcher	10,827.00	17,174.00
Information Co-ordinator	6,347.00	0.00
Helpline Supprt Services	6,347.00	0.00
<u>Consultants</u>	38,817.00	38,817.00
Development of Regional Nodal Points	38,817.00	38,817.00
<u>Equipments</u>	5,222.00	5,124.94
Computer	5,222.00	5,124.94
Printer	0.00	
Software	0.00	
<u>Travel(Staff)</u>	3,000.00	3,048.50
Meeting with regional Prtners	3,000.00	3,048.50
<u>Training</u>	11,940.00	9,902.29
Regional CINSA Meeting	11,940.00	9,902.29
<u>Research Expenses</u>	44,441.00	50,778.39
Technical Programming/ Web design	18,954.00	25,941.38
Project email accounts	1,346.00	2,658.19
Mailing lists/protal Hosting	8,212.00	8,125.66
Domain registration	3,060.00	1,484.36
Marketing Materails	4,500.00	2,320.42
Stationery	1,500.00	1,282.40
Communication Costs	3,733.00	5,964.52
Office Rental	3,136.00	3,001.46
Indirect Costs @ 13.0%	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	143,046.00	147,297.12

PREPARED BY: Lucy More
- Finance Manager



DATE: 31 August 2004

AUTHORISED BY: Ngunga Tepani
- Cinsa Project Manager



DATE: 31 AUGUST 2004

