Kenya ICT Action Network Competence Status Survey Assessment Report

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October 2007

Outline

Background

The Kenya ICT Action Network (KICTAnet) is a multistakeholder network made up of civil society, private and public sectors, development partners and media. KICTAnet's vision is to *"become the focal point for building multi-stakeholder consensus on ICT policy, strategy and initiatives"*. And its mission is to *"catalyse reform and development in the ICT sector by enhancing collaboration amongst the stakeholders"*.

KICTANet was formed during a period when Kenya ICT was driven by global and regional trends and pressures. It is only in 1997, that the Kenya government developed the telecommunications and postal sector policy which led to the split of KPTC into three entities. In 1998, The Kenya Communication Act of 1998 established the Communications Commission of Kenya, a policy advisory body and communications appeals tribunal.

Around the same period, the 1996 Information Society and Development Conference for ministers held in South Africa adopted Resolution 812 which recommends that an African Information Society be built right down to country level. In March 1997 the Board of Governors of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) approved Acacia whose aim was to *"empower sub-Saharan communities with the ability to apply information and communications technologies* (ICTs*) to their own social and economic development"*[1]. Acacia specifically works with rural and disadvantaged communities, particularly women and youth groups. In launching Acacia, IDRC sought to bring private enterprise, donor organizations, governments, and African communities into a partnership capable of achieving Acacia's goal.

The dynamic developments in the ICT industry and the policy development processes led many ICT related organizations to form an interdependent loose network, the Kenya Information Communication Technology (ICT) Action Network (KICTANet). KICTANet was officially formed in 2006, though its roots go back to 2004 when the Catalysing Access to ICTs in Africa (CATIA) project, a multi-stakeholder partnership process was started in Kenya. This was part of a five country programme whose aim was to address priority issues in ICTs sponsored by DFID. In llate 2004 KICTANet was invited to collaborate in the development of a desired state of the ICT landscape for ICTs in Kenya as well as sectoral roadmaps. Since then, KICTANet has been actively involved in the development of the ICT policy and subsequently the ICT Bill.

The network is made up of founding members – the Telecommunication Service Providers of Kenya (TESPOK), the Kenya WSIS Civil Society Caucus, Association for Progressive Communications (APC), Kenya Education Network (KENET),

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[1] Quoted verbatim from discussant or document.

Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), African ISP Association (AFRISPA), Media Owners Association, Media Council and Linux Chixs Africa Kenya Chapter, among others. In total, the Network is made up of over 50 local organisations/networks/groups/individuals. It has a secretariat which has three employees, a network coordinator and convenor, projects coordinator, and an administration and events coordinator. In addition, it has a governing body, a committee.

Since its formation, KICTANet has mobilized groups from the various stakeholders for workshops, seminars, electronic mailing list and round table discussions, which aimed at collecting and consolidating substantiative comments on the ICT policy. As the attempts to initiate the development of an ICT policy were on-going, KICTANet lobbied, agitated and advocated for the involvement of non-governmental actors. As a result, the network was involved in coordinating civil society, private sector, media and development partners to collectively contribute comments and to dialogue with the government during the process. The network worked with the Ministry for Information and Communications, and different government communications bodies in Kenya and the Kenya ICT donor round table to develop an finalise the ICT policy. Subsequently, the Ministry released an Information and Communication Bill (IC Bill) for comments from the public. In addition, a Media Bill and Code of Conduct for broadcasters, was also released for discussion and finalization.

Therefore, by providing mechanisms and a framework for continuing cooperation and collaboration between civil society, private sector and the government KICTANet enabled the national ICT policy process to become participatory. As a result, it helped increase the legitimacy and support needed to enhance a working relationship between the government and other key stakeholders in the sector. Moreover, KICTANet helped to increase the legitimacy and social capital of the various member organisations, particularly the founding ones, in advocacy in the ICT sector in Kenya.

KICTANET has so far largely received support from its members and development partners. The latter are the International Development and Research Centre (IDRC) which is also a founding member through its Kenya ICT Policy (KIP) project, which ended in 2005, the Embassy of Finland in Kenya, Catalysing Access to ICTs in Africa (CATIA), and the Open Society Institute of Eastern Africa.

The network's sustainability depends on effective and credible management of KICTANet and, the development of practical approaches to ensure that the objective of KICTANet of providing a platform for all stakeholders interested in ICTs for development in Kenya is realised. Therefore KICTANet needs to develop effective and efficient systems and structure. To achieve this, KICTANet needs to

first understand what systems it requires and what its current capacities are. As a result, it will be able to identify gaps in its governance, management and delivery of service and, ways of addressing them. Therefore developing effective systems and a viable legal network will ensure that the network continues to provide mechanisms for cooperation and collaboration between stakeholders and the government in support of ICT led growth and development.

Survey Methodology

For KICTANet to beneficially understand its current capacity status and then sustainably strengthen itself, a systematic survey was in order. I collected data from KICTANet's documents, and from discussions with individuals. For a rich survey, we collected both primary and secondary data. The former was largely through individual interviews/consultations and group discussions with the various stakeholders that form KICTANet. The respondents were drawn from KICTANet's members and stakeholders, namely government, KICTANet's committee, members (civil society, gender, academia, education, media, small and micro enterprises and consumer association), private sector, and TELECOM (appendix A has details). In total, I held discussion with 35 people conveniently selected by KICTANet but representing various categories of stakeholders. The discussions were guided by the questions in appendix A. These are the people in a position to know whether KICTANet is strategically positioned to successfully fulfil its mandate. Moreover, a participatory assessment was expected to enable the stakeholders to deeply think about KICTANet's role. The questions basically sought to find out the role of KICTANet and whether KICTANet's structure and systems could enable it achieve that role, as perceived by the respondent. We also collected data from KICTANet's documents.

The process of assessing KICTANet involved four broad stages namely; understanding KICTANet, scoring KICTANet's capacity by the staff and committee and by the consultant, harmonising the scores, identifying areas needing strengthening and designing how KICTANet may use its extant strengths to address the gaps. KICTANet adapted IDRC's capacity assessment tool, the *Competence Status Tool*, to score the various organization capacity attributes in order to gain an understanding of KICTANet's capacity. The tool is based on judgemental scoring of an organisation's capacity, supported by evidence from documents and those involved with the organization. The tool captured the states of issues such as an organisation's legitimacy (legal and social), core business, resources (human and non-human), leadership, and management and administration (structure and systems) and how KICTANet may cope with the external environment. It is therefore a simplified representation of the shared understanding of KICTANet's capacity to assist in decision making. The output of the tool gives a baseline of KICTANet's capacity. KICTANet will decide how frequently it may want to assess itself in future, in order to obtain evidence of

changes that may have taken effect in its capacity, after the subsequent interventions, guided by the assessment process's results.

The data collected informed the scoring of each of the attributes. A group of attributes make up a category such as 'Legal'. A combination of categories (e.g. 'legal', 'ownership', 'public' and 'participation') gives rise to an issue (e.g. 'legitimacy') in the Competence Status Tool. Each score is an average of the various positions expressed by the different respondents and those revealed by documents. Please note that whenever an attribute embodies two or more aspects, the scoring takes note of this. It breaks down the total score into equal proportions, according to the number of aspects. Each aspect of the attribute is then scored before all the aspects' scores are totalled. For example, if an attribute X is examining whether a certain feature is in place and followed, then the aspect 'in place' is scored out of 5 and the other, 'followed' out of 5. The scores of the two aspects are then totalled to give rise to the score for attribute X. Also, note that an attribute's total score is a reflection of what is vis-a-vis what is necessary for the fulfilment of that attribute, bearing in mind KICTANet's mandate, objectives and strategies. All the scored attributes under each category are then averaged. This gives rise to the score for a category. The score for an issue is an average of its categories' scores. Subsequently, I rank each issue with respect to the other issues. An issue with a first rank implies that its capacity is really wanting and thus calls for urgent attention.

A score is an indication of the state of the capacity of an attribute, category or issue. In other words, it reflects whether an attribute, category or issue needs to be strengthened and how urgent this should be done. The highest possible score available is 10 and the lowest zero. The lower the score the more urgent the need for attention.

Scoring ranges from 0 -10:
  N/A - The attribute is not applicable to the organisation in question
  0 - Needs very urgent and intense address
  1 - Needs urgent and intense address
  2 - Needs intense address
  3 - Substantial number of issues need development and enrichment
  4 - Substantial number of issues need enrichment
  5 - Several issues need enrichment
  6 - Some issues need further enrichment
  7 - Working and some issues need further enrichment
  8 - Sufficient to some extent but supportive and some issues call for enrichment
  9 - Sufficient and some issues need further enhancement
 10 - Very sufficient, at a minimum needs maintenance

As a result, the four development stages of an organisation will fall in the categories 0-2.5 for nascent, >2.5-5 for growing, >5-7.5 for consolidating and >7.5-10 for established.

Each of the staff and committee members of KICTANet was asked to score the Competence Status Tool. The aim was to understand how each person perceives the capacity of ISF. I also separately scored the attributes. Subsequently, the staff, committee and myself discussed and agreed on a common score for each attribute, supported by evidence. This process in itself helps to improve the understanding of KICTANet by those involved.

Dr. F. Omosa led the assessment exercise. The survey's major limitation was that all the respondents were from Nairobi. In addition, some of the respondents were not available at the appointment time. And, I had to rely on KICTANet to select the respondents, though within my parameters, and make the appointments for me.

KICTANet plans to serve all Kenyan citizens. These are the primary clients. How they will be served and in what way will be defined later by KICTANet members who are expected to be representatives of civil society and private sector, together with KICTANet's governing body and staff members. But, is KICTANet in a position to successfully serve these clients and its members?
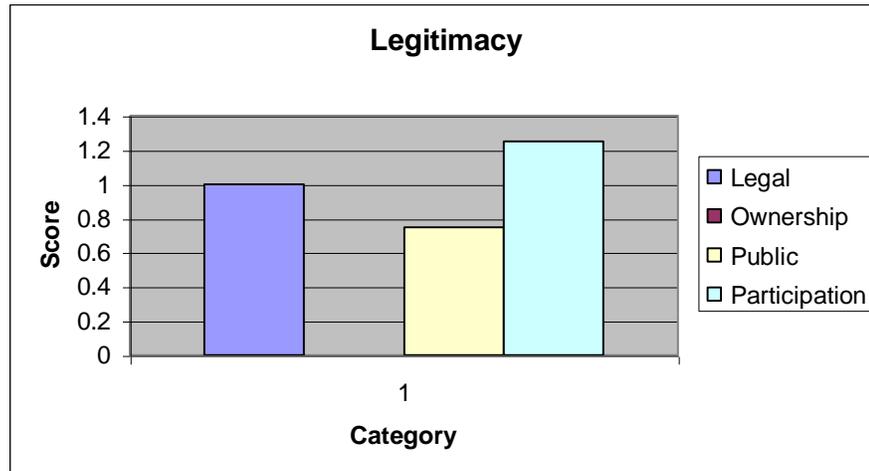
Analysis of Findings

In summary, the findings are that KICTANet is a nascent organisation. In fact it is still at its founding stage of nascency. All the discussants argued that KICTANet has a unique role to play in the ICT field in Kenya. As one discussant put it, it is *"a good engaging environment"*, meaning platform. What will determine KICTANet's success in filling in the gap is how it plays that role. First and foremost, KICTANet needs to clearly and holistically define and understand that unique role, its niche, so that as it performs the various activities, they are in tandem with the big picture. Together with this, KICTANet must of urgency be registered under an appropriate legal framework and categorically delineate its membership. Subsequently, KICTANet will need to have in place the requisite strategies, systems and structure to enable it fruitfully achieve its role.

KICTANet's overall score is 0.8 meaning that it is a very nascent organisation. All the issues (legitimacy, leadership, management & administration, core business, organisational resources, and external environment) and categories are also very nascent. Most of them have not been addressed and a few are at their formative stages. Each of them needs to be attended to urgently.

Legitimacy

Legitimacy is considered to be broader than registration of an organisation. This survey perceives it to comprise legality, ownership and social sanctioning by the affected along with those with interest and stakes in the organisation. KICTANet scored 0.75.

KICTANet is not legally registered though it is in the process of registration as a Trust. It has a lawyer advising them on the appropriate options so my assumption is that a Trust was the best possible option available to KICTANet. To fruitfully and continuously play its role, KICTANet needs to legalise and formalise its role in ICTs for development in Kenya. KICTANet has a critical role to play in the heightened debate on the role of ICTs for development, particularly as a link between the government and other actors in the field, and in achieving universal access goals. To effectively play this role, KICTANet must be a legal entity with authority and power to engage other legal entities and the different players in ICTs, including the government, so that it ceases being *"virtual"* and *"fluid"*.

KICTANet is largely a Nairobi affair with most members being those with internet access. It is therefore not socially sanctioned and owned in a broad manner. In fact a good number of respondents reasoned that KICTANET is a Nairobi outfit for a certain category of people thus statements like KICTANet *"looks like an elite affair"*, a *"closed club when it comes up to some matters"*, and *"they are more private firms focused"*. Others argued that KICTANet needs to *"come down to earth ... people discuss up there not thinking about the practical aspects such as poverty reduction and how SMEs may improve their businesses"*. The contention was that KICTANet needs to reach out to different categories of stakeholders and potential members nationally. For example, as some respondent suggested,

KICTANet may want to hold their monthly forums *"in different parts of the country"*.

In addition, KICTANet needs to encourage most of its membership to get involved in its activities and discussions such as the monthly meetings and online discussions. Some discussants felt that KICTANet may also want to come up with ways to *"capture members' interests"* and make them more interested in KICTANet such as introducing *"innovative ICT ways of communicating with all Kenyans on various important topics",* so that many have a chance to participate and hence improve the felt ownership of KICTANet.

Being legally registered is important only in having lawful permission to engage in whatever an entity wants to do. Success comes when an entity fruitfully achieves its mission. KICTANet is a network implying that its success is, to a large extent, influenced by how engaged and committed the members are first and subsequently how convinced the other stakeholders are.
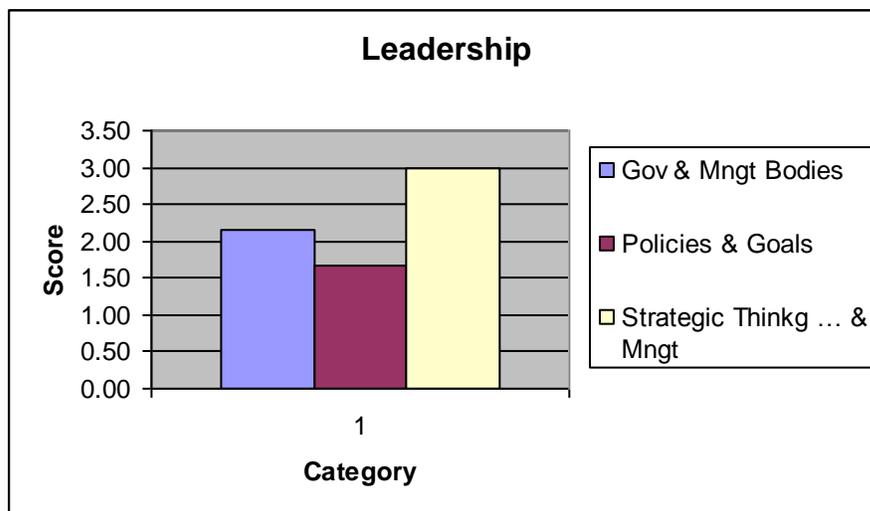
It therefore goes without saying that KICTANet needs to carefully handle the membership issue. It needs to come up with clear criteria as to who may be a member, the criteria for joining, the benefits and responsibilities of being a member and the code of conduct while one is a member. In addition, it must provide for how one may cease being a member. Guidelines on who are primary stakeholders and how they may be engaged must also be developed. It should be clear how one may tell that a certain entity is a KICTANet member. There should also be an up-to-date database on members; bearing, among others, their details on who they are and what they do. This means that KICTANet needs to have facts on who their members are and what they do and what is going on with ICTs. In other words, to quote one respondent, KICTANet should be *"strategic in handling members"*.

I believe KICTANet wishes to move away from situations where those who are considered KICTANet's members are not clear who are KICTANet's members; *"who should be KICTANet's members?"*, *"what are their expertise?",* and *"who should vote and how"?*. Some respondents wondered why members are not contributing to the KICTANet kitty in terms of ideas, money, etc. In other words, it should be a mutual relationship. For example one respondent argued that *"KICTANet has given us mileage"* and I want to recommend that KICTANet should also derive "mileage" from its membership. For instance, members can increase KICTANet's visibility so that some members don't continue to lament thus *"how can we make KICTANet's voice heard out there?"* and reach out to many. KICTANet also needs to cater for the diversity of its membership. For instance, there is a challenge on how to keep the members together. In fact, some community based organisations are - not sure they fit in and if so where and how.

Once the above are effectively sorted out, KICTANet will be legally and socially sanctioned, and broadly owned.

Leadership
Leadership is the level that steers and guides an organisation. For the guidance to be effective and successful, there is need for a blend of functioning principal organs and, systems along with a strategic plan in place. KICTANet scored 2.28 on leadership meaning that it is still very nascent.

Leadership

Score	
3.50	
3.00	☐ Gov & Mngt Bodies
2.50	
2.00	■ Policies & Goals
1.50	
1.00	☐ Strategic Thinkg … &
0.50	Mngt
0.00	

Category
1

KICTANet's governing body, the Committee, is made up of ICT experts who are well conversant with ICT issues. In addition, they understand the issues that may create a niche for KICTANet in the ICT world. However, they are the founding governing body which many a time has also played management's roles. Management, which also provides leadership in KICTANet is fairly nascent. And there are no small leaders' enclaves to develop future leaders for KICTANet. However, neither the governing body nor management have guidelines for their work. It is thus not clear to the individuals what their roles should be. As one discussant put it, KICTANet should address this in order to - *"be a sustainable player with clear structures of governance and operations … we need to move KICTANet beyond the founders"*. KICTANet has no documented organisational structure, policies, rules and regulations, and core values. Nonetheless, by the time of the assessment, drafts of various policies had started to be developed.

The committee members together with KICTANet staff came up with KICTANet's vision and mission in 2006 as *"become the focal point for building multi-stakeholder consensus on ICT policy, strategy and initiatives"*, and *"catalyse reform and development in the ICT sector by enhancing collaboration amongst the stakeholders"*, respectively. This is commendable and was important for directing KICTANet. However, as KICTANet progresses from the founding phase, it should involve a wider cross-section of stakeholders in the development of an improved strategic plan.

As a new organisation, KICTANet has not fully curved out a niche for itself. Though KICTANet has been central to the development of the national ICT policy, and currently the information and Communication bill, KICTANet is not fully, collectively and strategically clear of the kind of role it will subsequently play and how it will play it – *"what is KICTANet's muscle?"* , *"currently KICTANet is a reactive organisation"*, *"KICTANet's niche is a forum for players to air/discuss their views on projects of various departments, balance of focus on various areas so that there is a holistic approach to ICT development and success"* and *"mandate is not clear"*. Others perceive the vision and mission to be one and the same thing which is *"to create a forum where all stakeholders come together to work with government to develop a conducive policy and regulatory environment"*. These assertions indicate that KICTANet's staff and members have no common understanding of KICTANet's purpose. This is probably why KICTANet is reactive to most issues and members' expectations of KICTANet are very diverse. Many respondents felt that KICTANet should be proactive so that they move away from their current reactive behaviour *"I would like to see more proactive debate"*. Therefore, KICTANet's specific niche needs to be shaped further. What now needs to happen, is for a wider constituency to help design the mission and vision of KICTANet.

From the assessment's discussions, most respondents argued that KICTANet's should be a *"multisector forum for ICT for development"* whose objectives are:

1. Information sharing: "a forum for learning and sharing what is happening in the industry", to "enlighten the population", create awareness and publicize KICTANet "educate government on the importance of ICT on the economy" because "the importance of ICT is not yet appreciated" as indicated by the disjointed, duplicated and unstandardized ICT outfits in government, "inform participants on recent developments in the ICT sector", "exchange of ideas and get a sense of feel of the sector"; and a "platform for discussing topical issues of interest in the ICT sector". KICTANet should create awareness on all aspects, including content and "educate members on how they may generate revenue out of content" and other stakeholders on their rights;
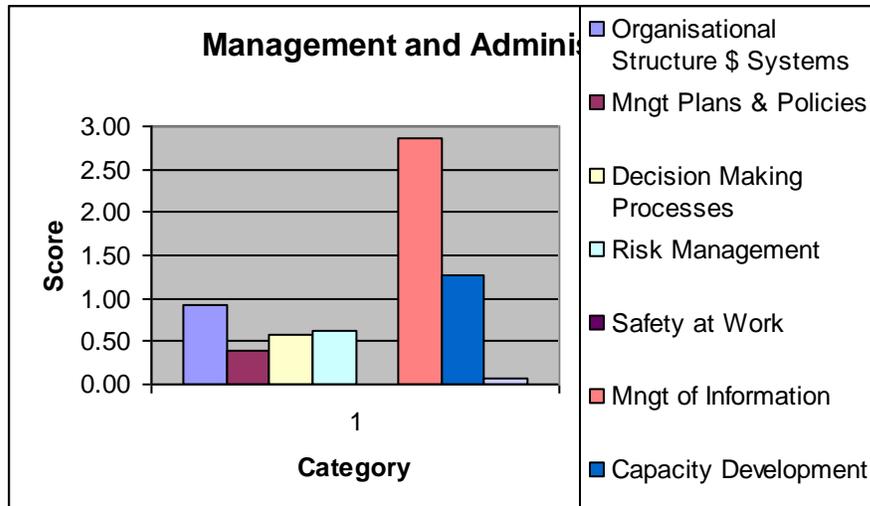
2. Advocacy: a platform for a "common voice for the industry", "common voices on matters e.g. telecommunications", and to "comment on bills". That is, a strong voice on policy, regulations, standards and practices in the ICT sector. KICTANet has done well on this aspect though largely on a reactionary basis to government policy; and
3. Development opportunities: Other respondents saw KICTANet as a platform for marketing oneself, assisting others who are less endowed e.g. through ICT clinics, and for reaching out to smaller players. This means that KICTANet needs to have facts on who their members are and what they do and what is going on with ICTs – so that they can link them up to possible opportunities and/or assistance where it is needed, coordinate and then follow-up the assistance to assess its impact

Therefore, KICTANet should decide, through a participatory process, who it wants to be, its mandate and identify a niche, mission and core values, and then strategically plan on how to achieve it. As one respondent put it, KICTANet should "have clear mandate and seek members' opinions so that KICTANet's position is truly representative of the members".

Management and Administration
This is the engine for the day to day running of an organisation. It is a product of a mixture of personnel, organisational structure hence hierarchies, management systems and general organisational administration. It is an important aspect of any organisation because, one may have the best intentions and the resources for fulfilling the intentions but not the ability to run, deal with and control (manage and administer) them in order to achieve the intentions.
KICTANet scored 0.92. It thus needs to expeditiously attend to this issue.

Management and Administration (chart)

Legend:
- Organisational Structure $ Systems
- Mngt Plans & Policies
- Decision Making Processes
- Risk Management
- Safety at Work
- Mngt of Information
- Capacity Development

Y-axis: Score (0.00 to 3.00)
X-axis: Category (1)

KICTANet has three employees, two of whom are full time, who are in charge of the day to day running of KICTANet. Additionally, some of these management duties have also being carried out by the committee. KICTANet has no organisation structure and most systems, plans, strategies and policies necessary for the management and administration of KICTANet's activities are not extant. For example, there are no guidelines for decision-making, documentation, capacity development, information management and performance assessment. For instance, who owns the decision making process has repercussions on an organisation's core business. KICTANet uses CATIA policies and plans and it plans within projects. KICTANet is currently developing its own policies for the governing bodya nd management.

There are challenges in the management of information. The first and unique is that KICTANet has no website. The website has taken one year to develop. Another challenge is inclusivity. As one respondent put it *"they make big assumptions ... that everybody is online"*. KICTANet needs to think of other avenues of communicating with members and stakeholders because not all members may access the internet. KICTANet needs to develop a system for all members to make suggestions, beyond the chat. The system should have clear rules and ways of enforcing the rules – some members had their contributions returned without an explanation – they want KICTANet to *"make members fell members"*.
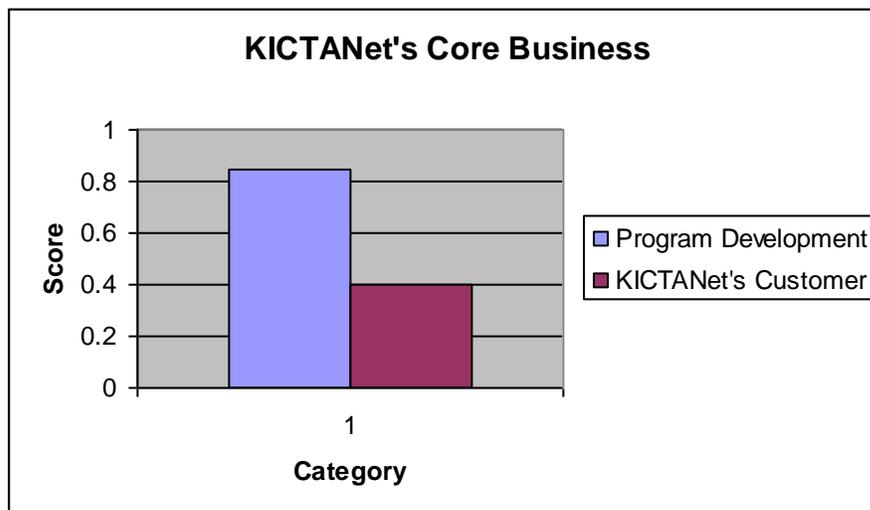
Most respondents reasoned that KICTANet needs "a lean outfit" for a secretariat and "we need the structures that ensure we get some results out of our inputs". Whichever outfit KICTANET finally settles for, its structure and supporting systems for management and administration must be clearly defined, documented and applied in order for KICTANet to fruitfully fulfil its mission.

As the process progresses, we need to always bear in mind that KICTANet's employees and a properly constituted governing body are the core primary stakeholders of KICTANet. It is they who are directly charged with the responsibility of taking care of KICTANet. Facilitating consultants may be contracted. Their role will be to facilitate the process and inject new ideas. However, the new ideas' incorporation will solely depend on the primary stakeholders' choices.

KICTANet's Core Business

KICTANet is a nascent organisation that has carried out various activities related to ICT. And as stated above, it has a vision and mission. However, KICTANet has no programmatic approach to its activities. It just carries out various ICT activities which are usually generated by the staff and in some cases the committee members. There are no documented rules and regulations that guide the development and implementation of the activities.

The discussions informed me that KICTANet's customer is the Kenyan citizenry and entities. However, this is not documented or provided for. In fact, as stated above, KICTANet's activities are largely limited to Nairobi and it is thus not clear how the rest of the customers are to be reached.

KICTANet is a product of the multisector holder partnership which is a CATIA porject. KICTANet is yet to develop its own programs. KICTANet's strategies of achieving its mission have been through monthly planning meetings, mailing lists and surveys. KICTANet has been bringing stakeholders together through monthly

meetings, electronic discussion list and support to the ICT Federation ICT Conference. The main objective has been information sharing. The mailing list discussions especially on ICT policy define what to focus on.

It is thus clear that KICTANet needs to develop core programs, through which it will holistically fulfil its mission. They also need to be proactive so that they move away from their current reactive behaviour. To quote one respondent *"I would like to see more proactive debate".*

In trying to achieve its core business, KICTANet has faced some challenges. Most respondents felt that KICTANet has turned out to be just a talking shop. They claimed that some wonderful ideas have come up during the discussions but nothing has been done about them. In other words, members would like to see the ideas giving rise to the implementation of activities. However, KICTANet should be very clear on who implements these activities so that KICTANet doesn't take up *"projects and be in competition with members".*

Some were not clear of KICTANet's core business and how it intends to achieve it *"I am not sure I know what KICTANet is trying to do … what is going to make it a multisector forum?"* For example, some argued that in rural connectivity, KICTANet should be clear of its role and members' roles. The lesson is that KICTANet needs to engage the stakeholders plus survey possible areas that people wish to focus on, and know what is happening in the market so as to improve services to its customers.

Others contended that KICTANet can do better in the management of the forums and discussions. For instance, they argued that the fibre discussions were oriented towards the commercial aspect. Some respondents felt that KICTANet should have assisted the discussions so that they could have also addressed other interests and hence catered for all groups and the full cycle e.g. what happens after the fibre has been installed, on the impact of the fibre e.g. security issues, content, etc. otherwise *"you guys will have fibre"* and find that *"nothing really changed".* Once again, the need for a holistic approach to ICT issues.
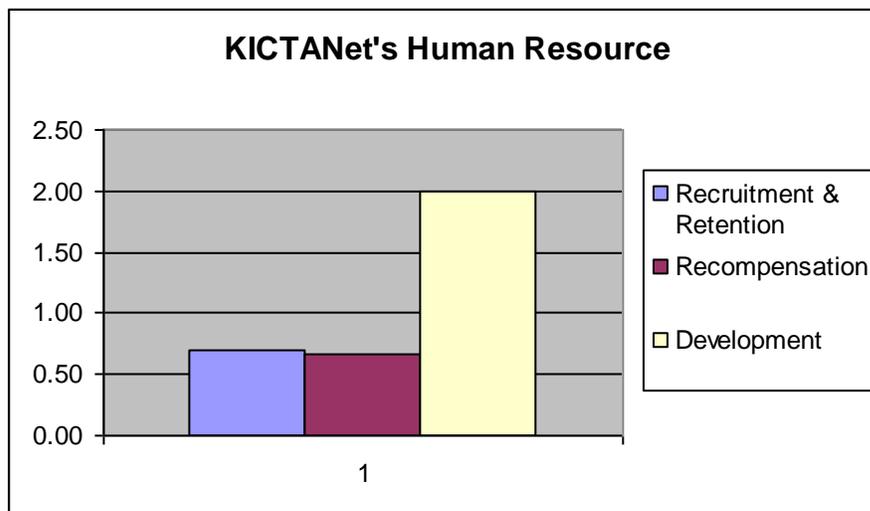
In a nutshell, KICTANet needs to develop programs that a re in line with its mission and that fulfil the needs of its stakeholders plus ensure the holistic application of relevant ICTs for development.
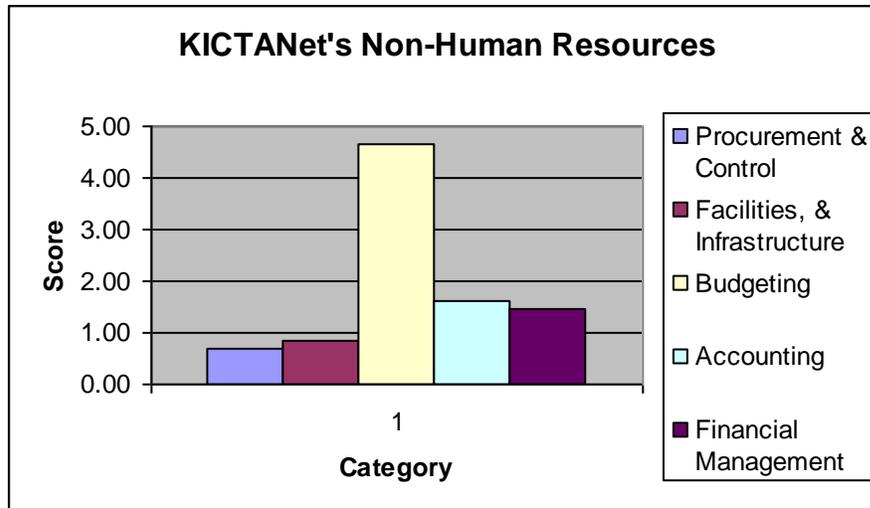

KICTANet's Resources
These are categorised into human and non-human. The human resource is critical because it is people who design and implement goals, policies, rules and regulations, and strategies in an organisation. It is therefore people's abilities,

relationships and will that influence the capability and success of the other resources in an organisation. These other resources are classified into facilities, equipment, and infrastructure. Finance and hence money is really a medium of expressing all the resources. In addition, an organisation's capacity is the food and nutrients to the lifeline of that organisation. It is the platform on which and from which other activities, including an organisation's core business are achieved.

In assessing KICTANet's current resource capacity I considered whether the different resources in place are adequate and are being utilised to the best of their abilities and for the agreed cause. Besides, we also examined whether the style and procedure of utilising the resources is institutionalised. The aim was to find out whether the existing resources are requisite for KICTANet to successfully pursue its goals and objectives into the long-term. The implication is that certain resources and the style of their use can be requisite for a certain organisation while they are not for another. This is because different organisations have different objectives and operate in different contexts.

KICTANet's Human Resource

- Recruitment & Retention
- Recompensation
- Development

KICTANet's Non-Human Resources

KICTANet's governing body, the committee, has largely been involved in management roles. In addition, KICTANet has three members of staff, two are on a full time basis and one part time. Of the three, only one was employed through a CATIA recruitment process. The National Coordinator heads management. She manages and coordinates KICTANet's activities. She is also charged with fund raising and the implementation of KICTANet's "vision and mission". The Administration Coordinator is in charge of finance, procurement and administration. She also offers secretarial services in addition to planning and coordinating meetings. The part-time employee is a Communications Coordinator. Her job is to edit a monthly online bulletin and maintain discussions on the mailing list. The bulletin has not taken off because of lack of a website. The three employees are energetic and determined.

Each employee has a letter of employment with a job description. However, the formalities for recruitment are not known, as there are no policies and procedures for recruitment, retention and development, and exiting. These need to be developed urgently and applied because they are key to influencing relationships.

The other resources of KICTANet are non-human; such as facilities, equipment, materials, etc. These too, can be expressed in financial terms. Therefore, finance and accounting become central because they are the avenues through which KICTANet expresses and communicates its resources. KICTANet's major source of finance is the Western donors. They have also obtained support from the private sector.
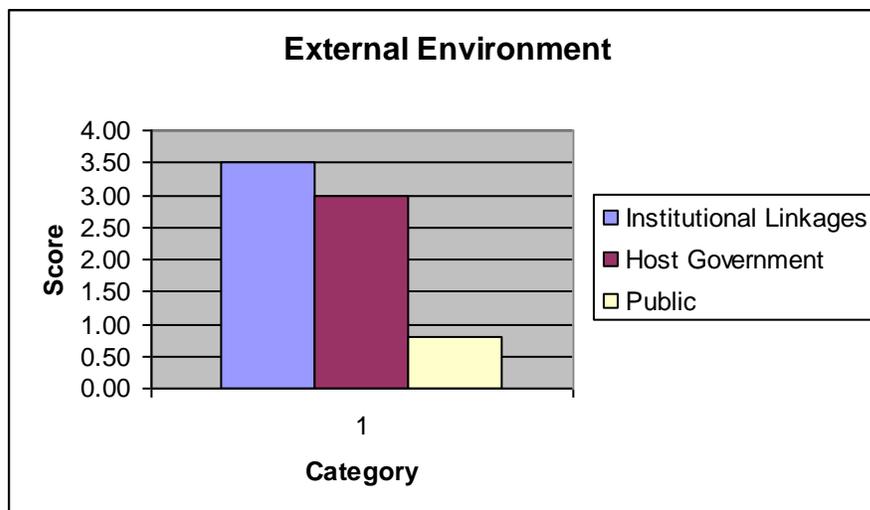
KICTANet has no financial and accounting, and personnel systems of its own. They are donor based. It doesn't also have systems for asset procurement,

management and disposal, though it has some assets. They however follow some process and services of an accounting firm. They are also developing policies.

KICTANet needs to urgently develop these. It may also want to source for office space that gives them decent room to run KICTANet's affairs. Above all, KICTANet needs to have the requisite human resource in place, for this is the platform on which all the other activities may flourish or perish. It also needs to diversify its sources of funding at both the domestic and international level.

External environment
It is important that an organisation's ability to ably and promptly respond to the external political, economic, social, cultural, ecological and technological issues and their changes be evaluated. KICTNet's relationship with the external environment has the highest score, 2.43.

Though KICTANet is a young organisation, it has developed some important linkages with other organisations as evidenced by the presence of three donors, engagement with government, and talking links with ICT organisations in other countries. Besides, KICTANet's relationship with each of these organisations is growing. For example, KICTANet's ICT ideas were incorporated intot eh government Vision 2030.

However, since KICTANet is not a legal entity, the funding is done through other organisations. As a result, KICTANet has no documented evidence to demonstrate this funding or the linkages. In other words, the linkages are

informal. So is KICTANet's relationship with government. In addition, KICTANet's limited outreach and visibility has not helped in the building of its public relations.

KICTANet needs to find ways of publicising the potential of and stimulating the demand for ICT services and goods. It may also want to define what social responsibility means to it.

Recommendations

A great idea lying on some shelf does little to improve peoples' lives. Great ideas are good ideas that are executed. KICTANet is one such idea. It is being executed. The challenge is how the execution may be improved so that the best results are achieved.

The bright side is that KICTANet has realised that it needs to do better what it is doing for its great idea to occupy its rightful space in the arena of ICTs' roles in developing Kenya. KICTANet's assessment is one such step to improving KICTANet's role. However, a diagnosis must be follow-up by a prescription and medication. Since, this assessment was participatory and inclusive, the prescriptions shall not follow a doctor-patient mode. The recommendations below are thus a product of discussions by KICTAnet's staff and committee members, facilitated by myself. Their implementation must also have the active involvement, in all stages, of all those who are or will be primarily affected by the outcome of the intervention.

In brief, the suggestions are categorised into resources, Legitimacy, governance and leadership, strategic focus and process of achieving it, relationship building and, performance evaluation and feedback. There are aspects that cut-across all these issues, the need to institutionalise

Strategic Focus

Mandate and Niche

Opportunities for KICTANet exist. KICTANet needs to identify its mandate and an appropriate and considered niche that adds value to its members and other stakeholders. The mandate should be participatorily determined so that KICTANet helps members and other stakeholders do better what they do do. A group that has a common understanding of what it wants to do, and agrees to do it as a group, is many steps ahead to sustainability.

Strategies

In fulfilling the niche, KICTANet's primary role should be systematic coordination and facilitation in order to champion and ensure that ICTs in Kenya are equitably

and inclusively accessible and affordable countrywide, so that all Kenyans have access to information, as a right. KICTANet should not pursue the doctor-patient approach but rather facilitate members and stakeholders to come up - facilitate people to come up with their own solutions on ICT issues To achieve this, KICTANet will need to keep abreast of the issues in the ICT sector through research, discussions and other forms of information gathering so that they "present a position from a basis of knowledge" in order to remain credible and to "ensure that KICTANet doesn't become irrelevant after a short while". Subsequently, the data/information must be disseminated through good avenues such as the forums, website, policy briefs and other publications. For advocacy, KICTANet should understand the whole process an issue will go through before it becomes policy and/or is implemented, through design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback. KICTANet also needs to catalyse equitable and fair ICT expansion countrywide. This means that KICTANet should understand the whole process that an issue shall go through and be ahead of things in the ICT field so that they remain a successful interface between the policy makers and the citizenry.

Additionally, clear strategies for realising the various programs and objectives should be in place. Examples are on information sharing, external relations, program implementation, resource development, etc. Additionally, common processes and procedures for managing KICTANet and its activities need to be clearly stated. As KICTANet does this, it should be careful not to become very bureaucratic.

Definitions
As part of working together successfully, KICTANet may want to have operational definitions. For example, most respondents seemed to equate ICTs with computers. In my understanding computers are just one form of communication technology.

Resources
Resources, especially people, are very important in realising an organisation's objectives. Employees and members of the governing body can make or break an entity, any entity. KICTANet is no exception. Therefore, KICTANet, must, as a priority, have the necessary personnel with the requisite competencies in place. It should be able to match peoples' competencies with the demands of their jobs. For a beginning, I suggest that KICTANet fills in the following vacancies, national coordinator, office administrator, office assistant/accounting clerk and two program officers. If possible, one program officer should also be accounting literate.

KICTANet should, as a matter of urgency, develop a resource development policy and strategy. This should take cognisance of the fact that resources can be generated in their use form. In other words, if there is a donor willing to donate a computer in the form of a computer as opposed to money, that should be catered for. First and foremost, KICTANet should first exploit resources from within the organisation and country, domestic resources. In fact, I advise that KICTANet comes up with a proportion that guides the amount of domestic resources KICTANet needs to raise vis-à-vis foreign ones. One way of doing this may be through matching funds.

This may have affected the extent to which people were willing to contribute their time, ideas and labour or other resources to local development projects.

Systems
Systems' successful development and application depends on the management and governance of an organisation. KICTANet needs to start functioning as an organisation with full time staff, with an office appropriate for its activities. Requisite decisions or the adoption of the improved decisions are matters that are also influenced by the behaviour and attitudes, and thus lifestyles, of those involved, particularly the staff and governing body members

Wonderful plans may not be of much use if an organisation does not have the right structures and systems in place to support the implementation of the plans. As Jaques (2002) has noted, an organisation's systems determine people's performance and hence the organisation's success.

Legitimacy, Governance and Leadership
The long term sustainability of any organisation is largely influenced by the clients/constituents/customers and the governance and management in place. KICTANet needs, as a matter of priority to identify its customers and design ways to sustainably have them participating. One way is to have miniKICTAnets countrywide.

The other significant organ is membership. KICTANet claims to be a membership organisation but its constitution does not provide for membership at all. KICTANet needs to decide whether it wants members. My suggestion is that this may be the right way to go. If it goes membership, KICTANet needs to have facts on who can be a member, and their roles and responsibilities. Involvement of member in the decision making process will increase membership and stakeholders' confidence and trust and hence their support and positive contribution to the success of the organisation. In addition, whether members

are able to influence policies and inspect what is happening and report back will influence credibility and sustainability.

And above all, KICTANet's leadership at both governance and management levels have a key role of determining how the future of KICTANet will look like.

Appendices

Appendix A

Competency Issues

Six issues are considered important in establishing the status of an organisation's capacity. These are the issues that need to be adequately met for an organisation to eventually fulfil its mandate. They are legitimacy, leadership, management and administration, implementation of the organisation's core business/mission, resources (both human and non-human) and adaptation to an organisation's external environment. The issues are divided into various categories. The categories are made up of different attributes. Specific attributes of the issues, as laid out in the different categories, are examined for competence and adequacy. Whether these issues are in place, adequate, sufficient, and are being implemented for an organisation to achieve its goals determine how sustainable an organisation will be.

Legitimacy

Any organisation derives authority from its government (legality), owners and customers (public/consumers). For privately owned the three categories are distinct. The same does not necessarily apply to governmental and/or civil society organisations. Care must therefore be taken when dealing with these. However, any organisation's success is influenced by the three categories of authority. The character of incorporation (legal) defines the boundaries of an organisation's activities while the social/public sanctioning determines whether an organisation's activities succeed.

For development issues, there is need to mention one dilemma. Most organisations 'registered' under the traditional African requirements and that have been successful for many years are known to be incapacitated once they acquire the English law's legal registration.

It is within this context that the following words under leadership are contextually defined and measured

- ✓ accepts and supports – in terms of their behaviour toward the organisation in question

Leadership

- ➤ This gives an organisation direction. The direction must be commonly understood and appreciated by all key players
- ➤ While structurally there are persons designated various leadership positions, it is important to note that each key player is a leader in the organisation. The role of the position holder is to nurture these small leaders for the

success of an organisation. No one leader can solely and successfully guide an organisation into the long-term. He can only do this with the support of the 'small leaders' in the organisation

➢ In assessing the capacity of an organisation's leadership one needs to analyse whether
  - Position holders have the ability to guide those under them to better achieve their objectives
  - Are they able to create and nurture 'small leaders' within their areas of jurisdiction
  - Are they able to fulfil what is required of them
  - Do they have the other resources necessary to fruitfully pursue their objectives
➢ Governing body's primary and common roles are
  - Lead and facilitate the development of an organisation's vision – pace setters, policies, strategies and core values
  - Resource mobilisation and its governance e.g. financial reporting
  - Networking and promotion of the organisation's public relations
  - Legally responsible for the organisation and its assets
  - Human resource development
  - Conflict resolution and management

It is within this context that the following words under leadership are contextually defined and measured
  ✓ Rightly and appropriately – with respect to laid down guidelines
  ✓ Well grounded – well oriented and developed to cope with changing demands
  ✓ Professionals standards – both at the technical and management levels, and according to the organisation's code of conduct

Management and Administration
One may have the best intentions and the resources for fulfilling the intentions but not the ability to run, deal with and control (manage and administer) them to achieve the intentions.

Aspects and factors are
➢ Policies
  - For all aspects, namely decision processes, project/program development and implementation, procurement, accounting, finance, human resource, travel and transport, assets, linkages and public relations, general administration and management are in place
  - Are applied accordingly
➢ Performance reviews for all departments, section and players e.g. staff, governing body, beneficiaries, systems, and other resources

- ➤ Documentation of every activity and asset in every department
  - Should leave a trail of a transaction
  - Need to be available to all employees

Core Business

This is the mission of the organisation together with the programs, projects and activities that support the fulfilment of the mission. It is the niche that an organisation has identified and endeavours to fulfil. Its fulfilment is significantly influenced by an organisation's capacity and process utilised.

It is within this context that the following words under leadership are contextually defined and measured
  - ✓ Relevant – as documented or demanded by the customer

Organisation's Resources

These are categorised into human and non-human. The human resource is critical because it is people who design and implement goals, policies, rules and regulations, and strategies in an organisation. It is therefore people's abilities and will that influence the capability and success of the other resources in an organisation. These other resources are classified into facilities, equipment, and infrastructure.
Finance and hence money is really a medium of expressing all the resources.

1. Human
2. Non-human Resources
   a. Facilities, Equipment
   b. Financial
- ➤ Budgets
  - Relevant and detailed – related to each activity
  - Participatory – all relevant staff participate in their development
- ➤ Accounting
  - Recording of transaction – every transaction is recorded and has a trail
  - Proper allocation of shared costs
  - Up-to-date financial records
  - Trail of records e.g. from originator to ledger to journal to financial statements
- ➤ Segregation of duties and controls
  - E.g. cash receipts from bank reconciliation

It is within this context that the following words under leadership are contextually defined and measured

✓ Relevant – with respect tot eh documented guidelines and the actual need

External Environment

It is important that an organisation's ability to ably and promptly respond to the external political, economic, social, cultural, ecological and technological issues and their changes be evaluated.

➢ Some of the linkages should be formal with evidence of their formalisation. Informal ones are equally important
➢ Actors – government, intergovernmental and regional organisations, organisations in the same sector and across-sectors, organisations in the same physical location, donors, media, etc

Questions that Guided the Assessment Exercise

❑ Why was KICTAnet formed?
❑ How has it served you? Is this what you expected of it?
❑ How may it serve you better?
❑ Follow up each factor in relation to the attributes of each issue.

Data Collection and Analysis Methodology

➢ Survey – to understand who the organisation is and its current competencies. Data will be collected from:
  1. Documents
     a. Constitution, policy documents plus rules and regulations that guide the organisation's activities
     b. Documentation of activities including minutes (e.g. are resolutions in minutes ever followed-up to their conclusive end?)
     c. The organisation organs and systems, and their roles
     d. Any other documents
  2. One-to-one discussions. We will need to hold discussions with individuals representing the different categories of stakeholders. These will include members, government, academia, benefiting communities, private sector, donors, the organisation (employees and governing body), etc. The discussions will be held at the respondent's environment. Each discussion is scheduled to take 30-50 minutes.
  3. Group-based assessments
     a. Depending on the output of the one-to-one discussions, we may decide to hold sector-based group discussions.
     b. One group discussion – made up of representatives of all categories of the stakeholders identified above.
➢ Scoring

This is the value judgement of each capacity issue, that is, how well each issue performs with respect to how it is supposed to perform in order for the organisation to fulfil its goals and objectives. The score is a composite average of the primary stakeholders' perceptions. A combination of attributes that addresses a branch of concerns are referred to as categories. For example, for the issue legitimacy the categories are legal, ownership, public and participation. The elements making up each of these categories are the ones called attributes. The average of the attributes in a certain category produce a category's score. Likewise, the mean of a combination of all the sub-branches (categories) of an issue produces a score for an issue. An average of all issues gives rise to a score that categorises an organisation's development. The higher the score, the better the competence of an issue's attribute, category or issue. The implication is that an organisation's capacity issue may be young or established development-wise. It could also fall anywhere else between the two ends of an organisation's development cycle. The two other spaces are classified as either emerging or growing. Therefore, an issue covers a space.

Scoring ranges from 0 to 10 with each score bearing a message.
N/A - The attribute is not applicable to the organisation in question
0 - Needs very urgent and intense address
1 - Needs urgent and intense address
2 - Needs intense address
3 - Substantial number of issues need development and enrichment
4 - Substantial number of issues need enrichment
5 - Several issues need enrichment
6 - Some issues need further enrichment
7 - Working and some issues need further enrichment
8 - Not sufficient but supportive and some issues call for enrichment
9 - Sufficient and some issues need further enhancement
10 - Very sufficient, at a minimum needs maintenance

➢ Analysis of the scores – these will largely be the computation of averages and summary statistics
➢ Ranking – this gives an indication of the urgency called for in addressing an issue or category. The lower the rank the more urgent the need to address the issue or category. For example, an issue with a "1" rank implies that its capacity is wanting and thus calls for very urgent address.
➢ Data analysis and report writing
➢ Validation of findings. The group of stakeholders will then examine and verify the scores and the areas of weaknesses
➢ Design of interventions. The aim is to address the areas of weaknesses.

Assessment Report
Components to make up the assessment report are:
▪ Background

- Methodology – data collection & analysis, limitations, etc
- Output – findings
- Capacity Issues that need to be addressed
- Recommendations

Way Forward

Once the capacities of each of the above issues have been identified, it is easy to extract each capacity's weaknesses. The capacity of an issue will establish the level of development (young, emerging, growing or established) of that capacity. These are the ones to be addressed, at a minimum. The interventions to address the weaknesses will vary from organisation to organisation. Nevertheless, the interventions will need to be systematic and the participants will need to be monitored and mentored.

It is important that each assessment be followed by an intervention to address the areas that have weaknesses.

Appendix B

Kenya ICT Action Network

Competence Status

As at October 2007