**INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM (IGF) 2011 NAIROBI**

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**TAKING POINTS FOR AUB DELEGATE - MR. SOLOMON E. LUVAI**

**HOW CAN WE REACH THE MEDIA HAVE NOTS OF THE DEVELOPING WORLD-(AFRICA)**

1. **First of all, who are the Media Have Nots in Africa?**
* According to Peter Olaf Looms, Chairman of ITV-Television Focus Group on Audiovisual Media Accessibility, “at least one in six persons in the World has some kind of problem watching TV.” In Africa this number is far much greater because for majority of people, it is not the question of not only having problems watching TV but rather not watching TV at all. Radio is still the most ubiquitous medium.”
1. **Who are the persons we can classify as the Media Have Nots in Africa?**
* Persons who are extremely economically deprived and therefore cannot afford receivers.
* Persons who do not have access to electricity, especially the urban poor and peasant rural communities.
* Persons who are blind or deaf and cannot follow TV programmes on screen or listen to radio
* Persons who cannot read so as to follow TV programmes produced in foreign languages with sub-tiles in the languages they understand. This is due to the number of people in Africa who are illiterate.
* Persons with special needs. The failure by broadcasters in Africa especially public broadcasters to cater for persons with disabilities, or the disadvantaged due to language, ethnic minorities, etc.
* Persons who are illiterate and speak only one language (their mother tongue), which is not used for broadcasting find it difficult to follow television and radio broadcasts.
* Persons who find it difficult to read sub-titles on television screens.

**HOW CAN WE REACH THESE MEDIA HAVE NOTS:**

1. In Africa, the common denominator to all these solutions is to alleviate poverty by creating more jobs.
2. Persuade Governments to remove all forms of taxes on radios and television receivers, will make many more deprived persons afford to purchase and own TV and Radio Receivers.
3. The switch from analogue to digital broadcast, internet and mobile phones provide new opportunities to make media accessible to many.
4. Encourage African Governments, and populations to eradicate illiteracy in their respective countries.
5. The use of sub-titles to make programmes produced in local, national and other languages accessible to many television viewers. For radio some of these programmes can undergo over-lay dubbing, but this is subject to financial resources and expertise.
6. The use of same language sub-titles for the sake of viewers with hearing impairments.
7. The use of sign language to help persons who were born deaf to follow the programmes.
8. Governments need to fund at least in part public broadcasters so that they can carry out their public broadcasting mandate i.e. broadcasting to minorities, person with all forms of impairments and other special needs. Right now most public broadcasters are left on their own to generate own revenue to sustain their outfits. As a result, they tend to broadcast entertaining programmes which attract advertisement and sponsorship as opposed to educational or programmes meant for persons with special needs.

In some cases it hard to differentiate public broadcasting stations from commercial television or radio.

1. There is need for legislation and regulation to force media practitioners to bring about the desired change.
2. The need to develop alternative sources of energy i.e solar, wind and geothermal energy to enable the majority of rural folks and urban poor access television radio. In Africa radio is the most widely used medium since it can run on batteries.