

COMMONWEALTH PEOPLES' ASSOCIATION OF UGANDA (CPAUG)

Activity Report 2012

WORLD TELECOMMUNICATIONS/INFORMATION SOCIETY DAY 2012 1ST GIRLS IN ICT DAY IN UGANDA

**NATIONAL THEME: "SOCIAL NETWORKS 4 CHANGE IN THE WOMEN AND
GIRLS MOVEMENT IN UGANDA"**

HELD AT NABISUNSA GIRLS SECONDARY SCHOOL-KAMPALA

17TH APRIL 2012

"Women and Girls in ICT"

Prepared By:

Commonwealth Association- Uganda (CPAUG) Secretariat

C/o P. O. Box 10358 Kampala, Uganda

Tel: 256-414-577 017

Email: info@civilsocietyug.org, royalcsocietyuganda@gmail.com

Web site: www.civilsocietyug.org

May 12



Table of Contents:	Page
Acronyms	3
Executive Summary	4
Introduction	5
The Aim of the Girls in ICT Day 2012	6
• Programmes & Activities:	7
a) Girls ICT Forum (Sessions and Presentations)	
1 st Presentation: Overview of the Information Society in Uganda	8
2 nd Presentation: Policy Framework: Financing ICTs that empower women & girls	9
The Speech by the Chief Guest	12
b) ICT Exhibition	13
Challenges	13
Way Forward	14
Conclusion	14
Pictorial	15



Mr. Ambrose Ruyooka presenting the winner of the raffle draw with her prize

Acronyms:

CPAUG	Commonwealth Peoples' Association of Uganda
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EAC	East African Community
FOCU	Friends of the Commonwealth –Uganda Chapter
GAID	Global Alliance on ICT & Development
ICT4D	Information & Communication Technology for Development
IT	Information Technology
NDP	National Development Plan (Uganda)
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoFA	Ministry of Information Communication and Technologies
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UN	United Nations
WOUGENT	Women of Uganda Network



Registration Desk at the Girls in ICT Day 2012

Executive Summary:

The Commonwealth Association –Uganda (CPAUG) would like to extend its gratitude to the dedicated volunteers, staff and / or interns; and the entire membership for the support towards the 1st ever Girls in ICT Day 2012.

CPAUG registers its special thanks to the Government of Uganda represented by the ICT ministry, The National Information Technology Authority (NITA-U), WOUGNET for having honored our invitation to the event as guests and presenters respectively.

We do acknowledge the support of the hosting school, Nabisunsa Girls Secondary School in form of hosting the event, the media houses (the New Vision), the exhibitors, PMM Girls School in Jinja and Networks and Information Exchange (NETINFEX).

The WSIS Team in Geneva for the technical assistance in the planning process of the event in Uganda.

The event was graced by the Ag. Commissioner for Information Technology Mr. Ambrose Ruyooka representing the Hon. Minister of ICT of the Republic of Uganda Hon. Dr. Rukhuna Rugunda

Commonwealth Peoples' Association-Uganda & Friends of the Commonwealth Secretariat-Kampala

Email: info@civilsocietyug.org/ friendsofthecommonwealthuganda@gmail.com

Introduction:

The Commonwealth Peoples Association of Uganda (CPAUG) an affiliate of the Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS)-UK, founded in 1868 as an educational charity and international organization working to promote knowledge and appreciation of the modern Commonwealth, and support for its fundamental values and purposes with societies in around 70 countries. www.thercs.org

Founded in June 2005, the Commonwealth Peoples' Association of Uganda (CPAUG) was duly registered as an NGO in December 2005 as a peoples' organization, non-partisan, charitable organization based in Kampala and a Company Limited by Guarantee in April 2008. The mission of the Association is **“To facilitate the effective participation of the Ugandan population in the Commonwealth in order to have a fair and just society for all.”**

CPAUG is the Global Coordinator of the UN Global Alliance on ICT & Development Community of Expertise on Youth Social Technopreneurship (GAID-CoE) of thirteen (13) countries that focuses on the promotion of the use ICTs for youth empowerment, community development and poverty reduction. www.un-gaid.org; since Aug. 2007, 260 people have been empowered with IT skills and this event was organized in line with the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Action Plan (Geneva 2003) and Tunis (2005) Action Lines.

a. Aims and Objectives of CPAUG:

1. To create public awareness about the Commonwealth to the Ugandan population.
2. To create a link between the Commonwealth Secretariat, other Commonwealth Societies/ branches, member states, the UN System, civil society and the people of Uganda.
3. To network with other stakeholders like CSOs, schools, Commonwealth Clubs / branches by establishing exchanges programmes, at the national, regional and international level; between the different commonwealth organs and the Association.
4. To strengthen the linkage between the UN System, the Commonwealth and the civil society in Uganda in order to promote the principle of co-existence between the peoples of Uganda at the national, regional and international level.
5. To promote the programmes of the Commonwealth in Uganda through information

dissemination to different stakeholders like CSOs, government, schools, etc...

6. To promote the principle of good governance, democracy and human rights and freedoms.
7. To lobby and advocacy on issues such as Human rights, democracy, leadership, good governance, HIV/Aids, employment, environment, sustainable development, peace and conflict management, etc...
8. To set up a Trust and Fellowship Fund to reward all those who have served and promoted the Commonwealth in Uganda.

II. The Aim of the Girls in ICT Day 2012:

- a. The objectives this event was to highlight the use of ICT4D by women and girls in Uganda;
- b. To draw the attention of policy makers to put in place favorable conditions for the women and girls to access and use ICTs; and
- c. To showcase the use of ICTs in promoting the women and girls development through an exhibition.

All the above will be leading to the participants being introduced to new ICT4D tools and innovations; share the benefits of ICTs to women and girls at the end of the event; and information on how ICTs can enhance women and girls agenda.



Programmes & Activities:

CPAUG managed to undertake two activities to celebrate the Girls in ICT Day in Uganda on 17th April 2012 with an ICT Girls Forum and an ICT Exhibition and these helped the participants get ICT knowledge and its benefits.

1) An ICT Girls Forum:

Several papers were presented by renowned ICT experts from NITA-U and WOUGNET to the participants.

Opening the event as the host, the Head Teacher of Nabisunsa Girls Secondary School, Hajjat Aisha M. Lubega (Mrs.) thanked CPAUG for having chosen her school to host the event and welcomed the entire guests to the Nabisunsa and the Chief Guest representing the Hon. Minister of ICT.



Student's from PMM Girls Sch. Jinja registering

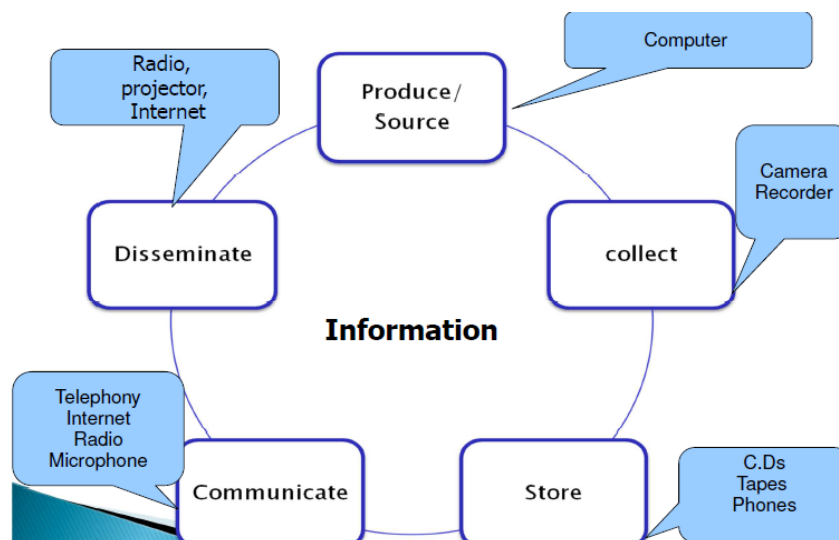


Hajjat Aisha M. Lubega (Mrs.) welcoming the participants

The Sessions:

Chairing the sessions, the Dean of the School of Gender Studies at Makerere University, Dr. Consolata Kabonesa shared with the participants how Uganda has emerged as one of the leading countries promoting the women's agenda giving examples of prominent women in some high profile positions of leadership which the participants could look at as their role models in their path to career development. A clear example she shared was that of the Dean of the School of Computing and Information Technology at Makerere University, Kampala.

Giving an “**Overview of the Information Society in Uganda**” Ms. Margaret Balamu representing the National Coordinator of Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET) stated that ICTs have helped to shape the women and girls agenda in Uganda over the past years stating the different ways of its usage in Uganda as below:



WOUGNET gave an analysis of the importance of ICTs different social media tools used by so many people around the world explaining that these have made information flow so easy and made women and girls not to be left out. Participants were given some statistical data on the following social media networks:

1. **Facebook:** its penetration in Uganda is about **1.13%** compared to the country's population and **11.79%** in relation to number of Internet users and its reaching **377,180** and having grown by more than **45,180** in the last 6 month hence, accounting for its usages among the age group of 18 – 24 years in the country.

Giving an account about the organization's (WOUGNET) work, the participants got to know that over the years it has not only empowered women and youths but also girls have been beneficiaries in many ways like through youth camps, ICT youth programmes, etc...



WOUGNET'S ICT youth works in Uganda (Courtesy of WOUGNET)

Representing the Executive Director of the National IT Authority (NITA-U) the Planning Manager Mr. John Bosco K. Kavuma gave the participants an insight on **“Policy Framework: Financing ICTs that empower women & girls”** saying that the Authority has made several strides since its inception 3 years ago in helping government in formulating policies that have spurred the ICT sector in the country making it one of the fastest growing sector. The participants were told that all these policies have not only benefited the country but also women in terms of empowerment in line with the UN MDGs (Goal 2) “to promote gender equality and to empower women.”

He continued to say that Uganda through its ICT policy framework would address questions on financing and its allocation. He implored the disparities in ICTs targeting women and girls at the country level vis-à-vis there being no equal right to access, use and shape ICTs by gender and women hence showing little or limited benefits accrual from ICTs for them.

An aspect he shared with the participants is the challenge of how to use ICTs as tools for social transformation and gender equality in Uganda.

However, all the above can be addressed through good ICT policies and initiatives mainly targeting women like government putting ICT among the key growth drivers in the NDP in addition to the ruling party’s manifesto outlining as ICT as a key strategy for improving efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Others include the National Telecommunication Policy and the Rural Communications Development Program (RCDP) aims at ensuring universal access; The National E-Government Policy framework that promotes electronic transactions in service delivery and also on capacity building and HR development; and the BPO strategy and model for Uganda aiming at job creation and empowerment of youth including women.

Needless to say, there remains many impediments to women empowerment through the existing ICT policies such as;-

- a. Gender information needs;
- b. increasing women’s access to information mostly in the rural settings;
- c. Use non-discriminative gender sensitive language in information and communication programmes and
- d. Ensuring equal participation in ICT4D...

The student’s learnt that there also some challenges that hinder sector growth in Uganda like the following below;

- a. Resistance to change from manual to electronic enabled systems
- b. Limited number of ICT specialists – tech savvy;

- c. Inadequate policy framework;
- d. Slow implementation of approved policies due to inadequate financing;
- e. Low ICT network coverage especially for IT;
- f. High cost internet bandwidth;and
- g. Underdeveloped complementary infrastructure such as power.

Henceforth, there are barriers that make it very difficult for women to fully access ICTs like;-

- ✓ Low literacy levels e.g. 85 for females compared 89 for males (UNESCO 2008);
- ✓ Women do not know English yet most content is in English language;
- ✓ Little ownership of and influence on the decision-making processes, being underrepresented in the private sector and government bodies which control this arena;
- ✓ Lack opportunities for training in computer skills;
- ✓ Domestic responsibilities;
- ✓ Cultural restrictions on mobility;
- ✓ Lesser economic power; and
- ✓ Lack of relevance of content to their lives.

Finally, he recommended that financing ICTs that empower women the following must be addressed;

- ✓ Providing content relevant to women;
- ✓ Promote women social net works;
- ✓ Regulating violence against women;
- ✓ Protection of children connected to pornography on the Internet;
- ✓ Promote E-governance programmes - using ICTs to make government services more accessible to citizens including women;
- ✓ There is a need to finance development projects using traditional communication tools like radio, theatre, and film alongside new ICTs;
- ✓ ISIS (2004) research findings clearly show that traditional communication tools are still very much needed in the present and future;
- ✓ Awareness creation- go beyond issues of access and infrastructure to consider the larger social context and power relations; and
- ✓ There is a need to equip women and girls with the information, skills, and technology needed to ensure their full participation in the “information society.”

In conclusion, participants were told that for ICTs to have effect on women and girls the following needs have to be catered for in the Uganda;-

- ▶ Engendering ICTs is not merely about greater use of ICTs by women;
- ▶ integrating gender perspectives in national ICT policies and strategies;
- ▶ Clear gender strategies being deployed through design, in the implementation and evaluation of ICT projects and programmes;
- ▶ Collecting information with sex-disaggregated statistics and gender indicators on access to, use of and content of ICTs, on employment and on education;
- ▶ Representation in telecommunications/ICT decision-making; and the differential impact of telecommunications/ICTs on men and women; and
- ▶ The Aid Agenda and other financing mechanisms for ICT need to listen to Women on the Ground.



Women's ICT empowerment (Courtesy by NITA-U 2012)



SPEECH BY THE CHIEF GUEST: HON. DR. RUKUHANA RUGUNDA, MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES, THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

Representing the Hon. Minister of ICT of the Republic of Uganda, Mr. Ambrose Ruyooka the Acting Commissioner of IT within the ministry read the Minister's speech stating that the purpose of the WTISD is to help raise awareness of the possibilities that the use of the internet and other information and communication technologies can bring societies and economies, as well as of ways to bridge the digital divide. He did thank the Commonwealth Peoples' Association of Uganda (CPAUG) for having been able to keep the momentum in promoting the WSIS **Declaration of Principles** to which the Government of Uganda is committed in achieving ICTs for all by 2015.

He continued to say that gender equality is basic human rights enshrined in the UN Charter and its one of the main objectives of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) hence ICTs therefore are tools that can help accelerate progress towards achieving this target and its for this reason that we join ITU to focus our efforts this year on women and girls, using the power of ICTs to provide new digital opportunities to end discrimination and empower the female half of the world's population to achieve their rightful place as equals in the world.

The Minister emphasized that the GoU through the ministry has identified ICT as ne of the top priority areas on the country's development agenda as spelt out in the National Development Plan (NDP) with clear sector interventions in making sure that the benefits of ICTs are visible.

Mentioning that the country is making strides in bettering the women's agenda through empowerment and they have taken up key role and positions in the social, economic and political spheres.

The Minister finally said that a key guiding principle is to ensure that aspects of gender mainstreaming are well articulated in the country's policy development process and there is recognition that ICTs are important tools in promoting gender equality and empowerment.

2) An ICT Exhibition:

The exhibition showcased some of the test cases where ICTs can play a role in ensuring that women and girls can benefit and use the same for their wellbeing. During the ICT exhibition Networks and Information Exchange ran a raffle that was by the student from Nabisunsa Girls SS –Kampala.

Showing casing how ICTs have transformed young girls in the Eastern part of the country, the representatives of PMM Girls School, Jinja shared some experiences how they have benefited from ICTs.



Participants at the ICT Exhibition during a demonstration

V. Challenges:

- a) As this was the first event in Uganda there was a challenge of convincing the different stakeholder working the ICT sector to come on board and support the event in terms of resources (human and financial)
- b) Lack of interest from key WSIS Action Lines facilitators (the UN System) in Uganda is still a big challenge in supporting local activities that promote the Geneva 2003 Action Plan and the Declaration of Principles.

VI. Way Forward:

- CPAUG will share the outcomes of the event with other key ICT sector players to garner support for the future Girls in ICT days in the country;
- The report will be used as a benchmark in encouraging other stakeholders come on board to support this initiative in Uganda;
- CPAUG will continue holding Girls in ICT days around the country with the 2nd event proposed for the Eastern region in the district of Jinja in April 2013;
- Lessons learnt will be used in planning for the next event in 2013;
- On 24th May 2012 CPAUG will be joining the rest of the world in commemorating the 2012 World Telecommunications/Information Society Day in Uganda with another Students ICT Lecture in a girl's secondary school in Kampala where leading women activists in ICT will be invited to share information with the student's.

VII. Conclusion:

CPAUG would like to extend its appreciation to the Government of Uganda through the ICT ministry in providing an enabling environment for the civil society in complimenting its programmes especially those targeting the youth. It's hooped that the 2013 event in Jinja will bring on board other ICT sector players as both participants and facilitators especially the UN System, private sector ICT players and the country's sector regulator.



PICTORIAL-GIRLS IN ICT DAY 2012



The participants at the event



Question Session



Mr. Ambrose Ruyooka ® & the Dean of Gender Studies, MUK (I) witnessing the raffle draw

