A report to the Kenya Rural Development Programme/ASAL DM

An Information Needs Assessment conducted by Centre for Strategic Development
P.O. Box 30839 - 00100 Nairobi. KENYA.
STRENGTHENING INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AT COMMUNITY LEVEL

A Disaster Risk Reduction and Early Warning Information Perspective
Acknowledgements

The study to establish ways and methods of disseminating drought disaster information at community level to communities living in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands of Kenya was commissioned by Kenya Rural Development Programme-ASAL Drought Management and was conducted between March and April 2012 in six regions namely; Kilifi, Kajiado, Garissa, Baringo, Kangema and Isiolo.

The consultants wish to thank all those who participated and made contributions during the field visits and final production of this report. These include those at both national and district levels that were willing to accommodate the study team in their busy schedules to share information and ideas and sometimes answer what may have seemed too inquisitive questions.

Special thanks go to KRDP/ASAL DM and NDMA staff at head office, Drought Management Officers and line Ministry officers at all locations visited, for their enthusiasm, support, information sharing and understanding during the assignment. Your input and thoughts are invaluable.

Finally, special gratitude to members of communities in the six regions visited, who created time to engage with the consultants and share their wealth of knowledge and experience, especially on early warning systems.

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Abbreviations

ALRMP  Arid Lands Resource Management Project
ASAL  Arid and Semi-Arid Lands
CAC  Centre Advisory Committee.
CBO  Community Based Organization
CCK  Communication Commission of Kenya
CDC  Community Development Committee
CDF  Constituency Development Fund
CDWs  Community Development Workers
CIC  Community Information Centre
CIV  Community Information Volunteer
CMC  Community Multimedia Centre
CMDRR  Community-Managed Disaster Risk Reduction
CSD  Centre for Strategic Development
DAO  District Agriculture Officer
DC  District Commissioner
DDO  District Development Officer
DLPO  District Livestock Production Officer
DMI  Drought Management Initiative
DMO  Drought Management Officer
DRR  Disaster Risk Reduction
DRRC  Disaster Risk Reduction Committee
DSG  District Steering Group
EC  European Commission
EU  European Union
EW  Early Warning
EWS  Early Warning Systems
FGD  Focus group discussion
GoK  Government of Kenya
KARI  Kenya Agriculture Research Institute
KFSSG  Kenya Food Security Steering Group
KMD  Kenya Meteorology Department
KRDP/ ASAL DM  Kenya Rural Development Project/ ASAL Drought Management
MET  Meteorological Department
MID P  Merti Integrated Development Programme
MP  Member of Parliament
NDMA  National Drought Management Authority
NGO  Non-Government Organization
RANET  Radio and Internet
SMS  Short Message Service
UNDP  United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO  United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization
VSAT  Very Small Aperture Terminal
Executive Summary

Providing rural communities with access to adequate, relevant and timely information is one of the documented ways of accelerating development. Accordingly, communication can make development interventions more sensible to specific local contexts. However, though promoting access to information plays a critical role in development, this information is of no use to people unless it is effectively communicated.

The third priority for disaster risk reduction under the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015) emphasizes use of knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels. The action states that “disasters can be substantially reduced if people are well informed and motivated towards a culture of disaster prevention and resilience, which in turn requires the collection, compilation and dissemination of relevant knowledge and information on hazards, vulnerabilities and capacities.” One of the key activities under the action is provision of ‘easily understandable information on disaster risks and protection options, especially to citizens in high-risk areas, to encourage and enable people to take action to reduce risks and build resilience’.

This information, the HFA states, should incorporate relevant traditional and indigenous knowledge and culture heritage and be tailored to different target audiences, taking into account cultural and social factors. It is also now widely accepted in the development discourse that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) could contribute to a great extent to poverty reduction and towards achievement of the MDGs. ICTs have the potential to enhance livelihoods, improve efficiency in delivery of services and to allow local stakeholders a voice in the development planning process. The need for information access for rural communities is also anchored on Kenya’s Vision 2030 goal of enhancing equity and wealth creation opportunities for the poor, especially in ASALs.

Access to information, therefore, enables people to participate in decision-making and make informed choices. Despite the documented arguments in favour of increased access to information, especially for the rural poor, millions of people, especially in developing countries are excluded from a wide range of information.

One of the challenges for people living in Kenya’s Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) is the availability of relevant, accurate, judicious and timely information, which forms a critical component of their livelihoods. Consequently, the communities in ASALs are exposed to the effects of disasters such as droughts and floods.
This report presents information access capacities of various communities in ASAL districts in Kenya, their information seeking habits, needs, gaps, preferred formats and channels. It also includes recommendations for more effective and efficient information dissemination and access at community level. The information contained in the report was collected between March and April 2012 within the KRDP/ASAL DM area of coverage.

This report is presented in two distinct parts; the first part focuses on the information needs assessment, and the second part whose centre of attention is the strategy for a sustainable communication model.

In the first section titled, *Information Needs Assessment in Selected Arid and Semi Arid Lands in Kenya*, the report explains the study methodology, the study sample, and the information needs as captured during the study. The section also presents the findings and analysis of communication channels and information sources that the communities use. There is also a desk review of CMCs in other parts of the world and a detailed appraisal of KRDP/ASAL DM Community Information Centres in Merti and Elwak highlighting the model, successes and shortcomings of the centres. The conclusions and recommendations of Section A of the report set the basis for Section B of the report.

In the second section titled, *Sustainable Community Multi Media Centres, A Model For Arid And Semi Arid Lands in Kenya*, the report dwells on the strategy for the implementation of sustainable CMCs in ASAL areas. Here the report elaborates on the strategy and structure of the model CMC and delves into the CMC itself describing the characteristics and principles of the set up as well as the implementation process. The critical aspect of the model’s sustainability is captured in this section of the report as it closes with recommendations on a roll-out plan.
INFORMATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN SELECTED ARID AND SEMI ARID LANDS IN KENYA
STRENGTHENING INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AT COMMUNITY LEVEL
INTRODUCTION
PART I - INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND

Kenya’s economic performance has been negatively affected by the effects of natural hazards, mainly droughts and floods. It is, therefore, important to promote initiatives that focus on effective response to drought, which could be the basis for a more comprehensive disaster preparedness strategy. One key component that is central to the success of the disaster response initiatives is efficient information generation and dissemination.

Since 1996 the Office of the President, supported by the WB has been implementing the Arid Lands Resource Management Project (ALRMP) with the objective of coordinating the formulation and implementation of policies and institutional framework for drought management, coordinating the mobilization of resources for drought management, coordinating all stakeholders in drought disaster risk reduction and management, Empowering communities to effectively manage their own development and creating an enabling environment for ASAL development Monitoring and Evaluation of the drought disaster management programme.

ALRMP activities have been supported by Development partners such as the EC through the Drought Management Initiative (DMI) Programme initiated in 2007. DMI was a four-year project implemented within the ALRMP II framework that ended in 2011 and its successor was ASAL Drought Management, a four-year project (2011-2015) funded by the European Union under the Kenya Rural Development Programme (KRDP). KRDP/ASAL DM project builds on the activities of DMI, which supported on-going efforts towards consolidation and institutionalization of drought management structures and functions in the country.

To mainstream drought response and preparedness into development planning and implementation, KRDP/ASAL DM has pledged to continue training communities in ASAL districts in the Community-Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) approach, which includes the implementation of Participatory Disaster Risk Assessment (PDRA) and the
development of local disaster risk reduction and response plans. The CMDRR approach allows local communities to analyse the impact of droughts on their livelihoods, identify possible preparedness and response activities to enhance resilience, and mainstream Disaster Risk Reduction into long-term development plans. This approach was started under the DMI project, which financed some of the more relevant Drought Risk Reduction projects identified by communities over the implementation period.

Each of the project’s 28 ASAL districts has a consolidated and reliable drought early warning system which provides relevant information related to risks associated with droughts. This information is used to prepare monthly drought early warning bulletins that are distributed to relevant stakeholders to update them on the situation and suggest possible response measures to mitigate the negative impacts of droughts. Although the information should reach the communities, this does not happen on regular basis and, moreover, the communication channels and formats are often inappropriate.

It is against this backdrop that KRDP/ASAL DM found it necessary to conduct a community information needs assessment and review the model used to implement the project’s pilot community information centres.
PART II - STUDY METHODOLOGY

1. STUDY APPROACH

To establish the information needs of the communities in the target ASAL, as well as the information tools used for accessing information, the consultants, Centre for Strategic Development (CSD) conducted a study on selected communities’ representative of KRDP areas of focus.

Although different methods of data collection were used in the different areas, interactive discussions, open interviews, focus group discussions, meetings, cultural mapping and intensive interviews were intensively used in each sample study. In particular, meetings were deemed important for informing and building community trust with the researchers and laying the groundwork for further research. Cultural mapping was seen as important because it involved making use of local experts, which made respondents feel that they were sharing information with fellow informants. Tape recorders were used to ensure accurate documentation of information and to encourage better interactivity with respondents during the interviews, without the use of questionnaires where appropriate.

CSD used data collection tools as indicated in the TOR\(^1\), to capture salient issues that are often forgotten in information dissemination, especially in the use of ICT. Such issues include language, numeracy and literacy of target audiences. For example, the consultant sought to establish the number of functions used in seeking information on a mobile phone. This would give a good indication of the community’s familiarity and understanding of ICT tools in their possession or that they have access to.

The methodology was varied based on the circumstances and information environment found during the field visits. The research plan initially included both qualitative and quantitative

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\(^1\) See appendix 1, Terms of Reference 2.1.
research methods, however, due to limited time allocated to the study, the consultant focused on a purely qualitative\textsuperscript{2} study. This included Focus Group Discussions (FGD), in-depth interviews, observation and ethnography. The strategy for collecting information included the use of diverse approaches such as interactive interviews, focused group discussions, systematic observations, and documentation from oral history, reports, research publications, mass media, articles and magazines.

A questionnaire was developed for guiding discussions during focused group discussions and supplementary questionnaires were developed to guide discussions with key informants on natural resources conservation and disaster management.

The conative\textsuperscript{3} model was adopted, since it allows for flexibility such that the questions evolved significantly as the study progressed. The responses from the respondents, together with observation were analysed to attain an understanding of the issue in the “respondents own terms and environment”. The interviews were semi-structured and explored people’s attitudes and perceptions towards drought management, the existing channels of communication, their opinions on ICT, and levels of ICT penetration among other issues. The responses were analysed using a thematic approach, structured along a set of key areas. The interviews were transcribed and quotes pulled to develop grids (coded).

\textsuperscript{2} The aim of qualitative research is to deepen understanding about something, and usually this means going beyond the numbers and the statistics. Qualitative research helps to give reasons why the numbers tell us what they do. It is often contrasted to quantitative research – and they are very often used together to get the ‘bigger picture’ of what is being sought. Qualitative research helps ‘flesh out the story’.

\textsuperscript{3} Conative research refers to a style or approach to qualitative market research that is interpretative and based on a humanistic approach. Its primary objective is to achieve understanding of a topic or issue in respondents’ own terms. In this approach, data is collected through unstructured qualitative interviews or group discussions and is treated as requiring analysis and interpretation. What participants say, along with aspects of interaction and group process, is examined for its ‘connotation’ and not just for its literal meaning or face value.
2. LIMITATIONS

2.1 The study had some limitations. One of the most obvious was pertaining to complete disclosure in the sensitive area of traditional knowledge. Some respondents in Isiolo “censored” information given to researchers on traditional early warning systems in an apparent effort to guard against appearing uncivilized or holding belief contrary to religious or modern expectations.

2.2 Other limitations came from the sampling, which was predetermined by the contracting authority since they specified the communities and locations to be assessed including information centres to be visited that have been operating under their service capacity.

2.3 Participants tended to generalize on the indigenous knowledge they possessed, without reflecting on specific disaster risk management of the locations where the interviews were conducted. This influenced data analysis, for instance, on some community interventions which may not be specifically of relevance.

2.4 Only a few communities were included in the study. The activity, therefore, did not benefit from the rich diversity of information from other communities in the vast ASAL that were not included in the study such as the Turkana, Akamba, Rendille and Kikuyu just to name a few.
3. UNFORESEEN FACTORS

3.1 The study was scheduled for a period that is considerably dry across the country preceding the long rains. During the dry spell, communities are often anxious seeking information on the predicted advent of the rains and hoping that the information will hold true and accurate.

3.2 Towards the end of the field visits, the rains arrived and this could have influenced the responses given by members of the community. Further, the high precipitation that resulted in unexpected floods especially in Kajiado impeded the team’s access to one resource centre after access roads were rendered impassable by motor vehicle.

4. STUDY FOCUS

4.1 Key information needs assessment areas were:

i. General information needs assessment
ii. Existence of ICT, usage and needs analysis
iii. General information sources
iv. Communication channels
v. Alternative communication channels
vi. Early warning information and mechanisms
a. Formal sources of information such as Government officers and non-government organizations; and
b. Informal Sources of information such as traditional knowledge holders (elders) and observation of nature.

vii. Community preparedness, disaster coping mechanisms, support structures and adaptability.

5. THE SAMPLE

The selection of the sample was done carefully to ensure diverse representation within the communities; from community members and opinion leaders to those who hold official
government positions within the community. Overall, therefore the survey used a purposive sampling approach (sampling with particular predefined groups in mind). The study targeted community members to get an overview of the social profile and ownership of existing community projects; particularly to establish the level of their participation and support or contribution, as well as ownership.

Community member interviews included interviews with village elders, women groups, youth groups, opinion and religious leaders, and household visits; these were varied in the different regions covered during the study.

The government administrative officers (executive) sample was standard for all regions and was specific to include representatives in three main categories; line ministries (such as water and irrigation, livestock, planning, and agriculture), district and community committees (such as DSG, CMDRRC, and CDC) and Provincial Administration. The table below shows the study sample:

**Table 1. Study sample clusters interviewed during field visits.**

(n=29 FGD and 37 IDIs)

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<th>Region</th>
<th>Study Interviewee cohorts</th>
<th>Key Information/ Resource Centres Visited</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merti, Isiolo</td>
<td><strong>Community Interviews</strong>&lt;br&gt;• 1 mini FGD with Merti village elders&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with Merti information centre users and students&lt;br&gt;• 2 mini FGD with 2 women groups based at Merti&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with youth at Merti shopping centre&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with women at Merti shopping centre</td>
<td>• Maarifa centre</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Executive Interviews</strong>&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with Garbatula and Merti DRR committees&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with Merti Information Centre Advisory Committee&lt;br&gt;• 1 mini FGD with Agriculture Officer And Livestock Officer&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with Merti Information Centre CKF&lt;br&gt;• 3 IDIs with 3 youth groups based at Merti&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with DO1 Merti&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with Veterinary Officer</td>
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### Table 1. Study sample clusters interviewed during field visits (cont.)

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<th>Region</th>
<th>Study Interviewee cohorts</th>
<th>Key Information/Resource Centres Visited</th>
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<tr>
<td>Maralal, Samburu</td>
<td><strong>Community Interviews</strong>&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with Moran’s&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with community members</td>
<td>• Serian radio station</td>
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<td><strong>Executive Interviews</strong>&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with DRR committee/CDCs&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with RETO women group representatives&lt;br&gt;• 1 mini FGD with DDO,DLPO,CDF representative and DWO&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with DMO&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with Serian Radio station Manager&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with Serian Radio Station Presenters&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with Serian Radio Station Technician&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with Serian Radio Station Administrator</td>
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<td>Garissa</td>
<td><strong>Community Interviews</strong>&lt;br&gt;• 1 mini FGD with 2 youth groups&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with 2 women leaders</td>
<td>• Warsen radio station</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Executive Interviews</strong>&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with Shantabak and Dertu DRRCs&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with Elwak information Centre advisory committee&lt;br&gt;• 1 mini FGD with line ministry officers&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with G-youth Executive director&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with millennium village Information Centre officer</td>
<td>• G-youth resource centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kilifi</td>
<td><strong>Executive Interviews</strong>&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with DRRC (Mariakani &amp; Bamba)&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with DEREDIMA group&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with DMO&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with the District Public Health Officer&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with District Animal Production Officer&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with Kilifi World Vision Officers&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with Kilifi Plan Kenya officers</td>
<td>• Mariakani youth resource centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kangema</td>
<td><strong>Community Interviews</strong>&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with listeners&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with women at the Gakira centre&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with “salaams” (greeting) Card Salesman</td>
<td>• Kangema Radio Station</td>
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<td><strong>Executive Interviews</strong>&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with opinion leaders&lt;br&gt;• 1 FGD with presenters&lt;br&gt;• 1 mini FGD with some of the Kangema Radio Station Advisory Committee Members&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with Station Administrator&lt;br&gt;• 1 IDI with the Kangema Radio Station Manager</td>
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Table 1. Study sample clusters interviewed during field visits (cont.)

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<th>Region</th>
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<th>Key Information/ Resource Centres Visited</th>
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<td>Baringo</td>
<td>Community Interviews</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 2 IDI with community women</td>
<td>• 2 ALIN Maarifa centres</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 1 IDI with a community member</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Executive Interviews</strong></td>
<td><strong>Livestock auction Market, Marigat</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 2 FGD with DRRC/CDCs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 1 FGD with DSG</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 1 IDI with ALIN Maarifa centre field officer</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 1 IDI with Marigat DC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 1 IDI with Salabani Location Chief</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 1 IDI with Illng’arua Maarifa centre trainer</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 1 IDI with Chief Illng’arua</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kajiado</td>
<td>Community Interviews</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 1 FGD with Kisapuk Community</td>
<td>• ALIN Isinya Maarifa centre</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 1 FGD with Isilale community</td>
<td>• Kisapuk Community Learning Centre</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Executive Interviews</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 1 FGD with DSG</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 1 IDI with ALIN field officer</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 1 IDI with 2 ALIN Maarifa centre users</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 1 IDI with an officer with Neighbours Initiative alliance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 1 IDI with Kisapuk community learning centre attendant</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 1 IDI with chief lingisho (female chief)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>• Chief Kariuki</td>
<td>• Kangema FM</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• KRDP/ASAL DM Officers at headquarters</td>
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<td>• Meteorology Department</td>
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<td>• Millennium Centre Garissa</td>
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1. SAMPLE COMMUNITIES’ SOCIAL PROFILE

1.1 Overview

Kenya has an estimated population of 38.6 million (2009), with 80% of the country categorized as ASALs. These areas are home to approximately 30% (~12 million) of Kenya’s population. The ASALs make up around two thirds of Kenya’s landmass. While ASAL populations are by no means a homogeneous or united group, they almost uniformly face the challenges of slow economic progress, adverse climate change, and natural disasters such as drought and floods.

1.2 Pastoralist Communities in ASAL

The pastoralist communities are very diverse, in terms of their locations, ecological niches and cultures, but share a common burden of underdevelopment, poverty, and very limited access to information.

The study focused on five pastoralist communities namely, the Ewaso Borana, Samburu, Somali, Maasai, Illchamus and Tugen. It emerged clearly that some of the major issues they face include:

- Conflict and insecurity
- Frequent drought and dependence on food aid
- Inadequate water and animal health services
- Inadequate livestock marketing information
• Poor transport and communications infrastructure

• Under provision of social services

This list of issues points to the importance of access to timely and accurate information in order to equip these communities to mitigate disasters.

Livestock keeping among pastoral communities is not only a strong subsistence orientation, but is economically significant, accounting for an estimated 75% of the livestock market in Kenya. However, pastoralist communities suffer the highest incidence of poverty in Kenya, and lag behind other communities in a range of development indicators.

The ASALs comprise various distinct agro-ecological zones, some with very low potential for agriculture and others with relatively high potential. In some of the latter areas agro-pastoralists combine farming with livestock keeping. Varying degrees of aridity also imply varying degrees of pastoral mobility.

In the higher potential areas of the Rift Valley, different Kalenjin groups, such as the Tugen and Illchamus practice agro-pastoralism and mobility is limited. However in the south, the Samburu and the Maasai are more pastoral since the land has less agricultural potential and the communities do not consider crop growing as an option to food aid dependency and drought intervention.

In the northern districts of Eastern Province, the Borana keep mixed herds of cattle, goats and camels and hardly engage in agriculture. The North Eastern Province is predominantly occupied by Somali pastoralists who keep cattle, goats and camels.

1.3 Agrarian Communities in ASAL

In spite of the fact that most ASALs face similar difficulties, there are significant differences in their cultures that affect their coping strategies and information needs as detailed below.

In addition to the pastoral communities sampled, the survey included the Mijikenda community at the Kenyan coast. Mijikenda is a composite tribe. Mijikenda means “the nine cities” as this tribe comprises 9 distinct ethnic groups of people: the Kauma, Chonyi, Jibana, Giriama, Kambe, Ribe, Rabai, Duruma and Digo. They all speak the same Mijikenda language, but each group has its own dialect. This tribe is also sometimes called the Nyika, though that is considered derogatory as it means “bush people” from their origins as hunter gatherers.
Each group of Mijikenda lived in a village group called a Kaya, and within the Kaya were various clans and family groups. Their main occupation is farming, with more and more land being devoted to food crops. Coconut palms are their most important crop. The Mijikenda have had a history of hunting and gathering, but are currently taking up agriculture, bee keeping and cash crop cultivation.

The leaders of the Kaya are the elders of the community and are responsible for the management of the Kaya, as well as for the bringing of rain. The leaders were sometimes removed from leadership during long droughts, as they were unable to invoke rain through rituals. Without the power to bring rain, they could not lead the Kaya.

2. STUDY COMMUNITIES’ UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES

2.1 The Borana Community

The Borana have in the past been predominantly pastoralists. However, they have gradually begun changing their nomadic ways due to lack of pasture, a situation brought about by population growth, drought and floods among other factors. The Borana community in Isiolo District is concentrated in Merti and Garba Tula and is one of the resulting groups of Oromo migrants who left the southern highlands of Ethiopia in the 1500’s. The word, though spelt ‘Borana’, is pronounced with the final vowel silent. For this reason in many English sources, mostly older sources, the word is spelled Boran. The Borana were, predominantly pastoralists, but this has since changed due to dwindling pasture, resulting from rapid population growth and frequent drought.

Due to the proximity of the Ewaso Nyiro River, the Ewaso Borana are steadily adopting farming as a source of livelihood. Nonetheless, the economy and lifestyle of this community is still organized around camels, cattle, sheep and goats. The young men do the daily herding while the women do all family nurturing and men, who are the owners of the herd, are looked upon for guidance. In years gone by, most households were fully mobile, but this has since changed, where only a few maintain a pastoral lifestyle, with the rest settling partially. In this case, the women and children are settled at the main town centres, while the young men move with the livestock. It is, therefore, a common occurrence to find a household with two dwellings, one, mobile and the other fully settled. This is as a result of availability of water and other social amenities at the town centres. The current law, which requires school enrolment of all school age children, is another factor contributing to settlement.
Certain challenges such as lack of sufficient pasture for the large herds have seen many households seek additional sources of income to the livestock rearing. This means it is normal to find a woman owning and running a small business, while her husband and sons look after livestock.

Family dwellings are also gradually changing, from the traditional grass manyatta (a sturdy modular house, consisting of interwoven branches thatched with grass all the way to the ground), to more permanent mud houses some with iron sheet roofing.

Harsh economic conditions have resulted in divorces and single mothers. The outcome has been an increase of women and youth groups whose purposes include pooling resources and establish income generating activities. These groups seek the financial and technical support of donors to accomplish their objectives. The conspicuous presence of benefactors coupled with harsh consequences of natural calamities such as drought and floods, has contributed to heavy dependence of the community on donor aid. Thus, the community has become reluctant to own community projects. The community perception is that these are “donor projects” as opposed to community projects. This has an implication on the implementation and success of these community projects.

Influence from education and exposure to other cultures and way of life of the young generation of the Borana community is quickly resulting in the abandoning of traditional practices. Interestingly, the preference for traditional beliefs, practices and way of life, is noticeable especially with the older groups, 55 years and above, as their spontaneous reaction to most issues is a traditional/cultural approach.
The younger groups’ impulse response is often modern, and in fact they seem unaware of the traditional knowledge and methods of early warning.

The community practices both Islam and Christian faiths, with no sign of conflict between the two religions. Religion has a bearing on their perception and application of traditional information on early warning.

There are strong signs of cultural marginalization of the Borana woman, with most women preferring to remain in the homestead and perform household chores as opposed to engaging in economic activities. Divorced women and single mothers are stigmatized and often treated as social outcasts. The divorced men, on the other hand, marry again and are accepted by the society. The younger generation of females remains reserved and reluctant to embrace new ideas and any technology developments at the community such as the availability of internet services. This is attributed to cultural practices which discourage the girl-child free interaction in the community and especially with the boy-child.

2.2 The Somali Community

The Somali communities in Kenya have settled in the Upper Eastern and North Eastern regions of the country. These areas are predominantly arid and suffer severe hot weather and drought much of the year.

The Somalis principally depend on camels and goats and have had a nomadic lifestyle. Like the Borana, the effects of climate change and natural disasters such as drought have led to scarcity of grazing land. The Somali are further challenged by a large influx of refugees from the neighbouring Somalia who now occupy the same land as the Kenyan Somali herdsmen. This has put further strain/pressure on an already inadequate resource – grazing land. As such, Somali clans are in constant conflict over grazing land, water and other essential basic resources. The influx of refugees further compounds the conflict situation and has resulted in a sense of consistent need and possessiveness of any resources they can secure or have access to.

This attitude was demonstrated right at the opening of the focus group discussions in Garissa, when respondents engaged the researchers in voicing their displeasure on the matter of administrative boundaries. This was in response to a question on what their pressing needs are. The group’s spontaneous response was boundaries and sharing of resources.

It was interesting to note that despite the fact that the Somali speak the same language, have similar traditional beliefs and practices, and share a religion, there was clear competition for
resources, need to be heard, and a general feeling of scarcity. From the discussions it was clear that each representative felt that his clan was more deserving of development projects /initiatives than the other.

On the flipside, this could be analysed as a positive characteristic in that the competition promotes ownership of community projects.

During the study, respondents said the community was fast adopting settlement owing to the government requirement for children enrolment in schools.

They also said that their diet had changed from meat, milk and milk products but currently includes maize meal, rice and pasta, due to reduced production and lower numbers of herds and dependence on famine relief supplies.

Respondents also highlighted the influx of agrarian communities such as the Kikuyu and Meru in some Upper Eastern and North Eastern Kenya towns namely Garissa, Wajir and Marsabit. Most Somalis are Muslims, with a touch of traditional beliefs and practices.

2.3 The Maa Community - Maasai and Samburu

The Maa community, otherwise known as the Maasai, occupies the lower plains or savannah lands of South Rift and South Eastern Kenya. They have largely retained their cultural practices and social systems. Culture and traditional teachings are captured in song and handed down from one generation to the next. The Maasai and their distant cousins the Samburu are mainly nomadic, and have resisted the challenges of limited pasture and modernization maintaining their cultural value of wealth in livestock. For the nomadic Maasai cattle are the most valuable and important possession. Their entire way of life revolves around their herds of cattle.

Morans, the Maa warrior, is perceived to be the protector of the community. They are given the responsibility to take care of the animals, search for pasture and water the livestock, as well as protect the community from any threat.

The challenge of diminishing pasture and the ever growing advances in modernization, have compelled the Maasai to slowly turn to small scale farming and find settlements. This has in turn resulted in reduced number of livestock per family.
2.4 The Illchamus and Endorois / Tugen Community

The Illchamus and Endorois/Tugen communities are mainly found in the Rift Valley, settled around Marigat and the shores of Lake Baringo. These communities have retained their cultural and social systems, and just as the Maasai, capture cultural and traditional teachings through song and dance. The communities also have the Moran, young men who are perceived to be the protectors of the community, and who are also charged with the responsibility of grazing of the family herd and search for pasture and water.

The area has potential for agriculture under irrigation along river beds. In previous years, the government set up irrigation schemes such as Perkera irrigation scheme to show the community the potential of the land they occupy. However, the community has remained largely pastoralist until recently when persistent drought has led to dwindling pasture, and forced the community to consider engaging in irrigation agriculture and rain-fed agriculture to supplement food especially at household level. This change has been very gradual and is yet to make an impact in the community. Although the community is largely Christian, they still retain a strong belief in traditional early warning methods, especially of early warning.

2.5 The Mijikenda

The Mijikenda groups are resident in the country’s coastal region and were hunters and gatherers, generally harvesting food and cash crops that grew wild, with the exception of a few living close to the Indian Ocean depending on fishing.

A striking feature of the Mijikenda groups sampled during the study was the harmony among different groups. The communities are able to live and operate like one large family whether they are rural based or live in urban/cosmopolitan centres. This characteristic not only eliminates conflict among different communities, but enhances communication while building strong community structures and communication channels. Community members exhibit potential to form and maintain a strong support system which boosts service delivery for the different stakeholders working at the community level.

The communities’ indigenous land is rich in two cash crops namely coconut and cashew nut. However, the people still believe in harvesting from the wildly grown plants as opposed to taking the initiative to plant the crops.
The Mijikenda are subsistence farmers, with the exception of a few who have benefited from irrigation projects sponsored by different donors.

The communities’ have deeply entrenched traditional practices in the “Kaya” which include early warning and prediction of events. However they are increasingly shifting from these beliefs to embrace Christianity while a minority of the population turns to Islam. Traditional practices are mainly shunned and sometimes considered to be witchcraft. Thus indigenous traditional knowledge on early warning is treated with concealment and hardly draws any attention where formal or official sources are concerned.
1. GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

Abraham Maslow, an acclaimed psychologist of our times, developed a theory on Hierarchy of Needs (Goud, 2008; Yang, 2003). He explained that an individual’s needs are arranged in a hierarchy from the low-level physiological needs that involve basic needs like food, shelter and clothing, to the highest-level Self-Actualization. In the same way, human needs are classified into two categories namely; felt needs and the unfelt needs.

Felt needs are those needs that have direct impact to the community, while unfelt needs are those deemed not to have a direct impact on an individual or community.

During the study we sought to establish the needs of respondents in a non-defined manner. We found out that the need for information was not considered a priority need across all the communities. As such we found respondents were not conscious of the importance or role of information in daily life and in mitigating disasters they face.

For the most part, respondents shared many economic and social challenges, the main one being lack of pasture due to persistent drought and floods.

Focus group discussions also revealed that there is intense inter-group competition over grazing land, water sources and other resources. Pastoralist respondents said warrior culture of “moranism” was a factor that enhances insecurity. The “morans” – young men in the warrior age-grades - are turning to cattle rustling and banditry specifically because they lack the education and skills to find employment outside pastoralism.

Inadequate livestock health and marketing services was highlighted as one principal concern which pastoral communities felt had been ignored. However pastoralists have found ways to sell their animals when need be albeit, taking considerable risks and being vulnerable to livestock merchants who exploit them.
The study established that information is an unfelt need. In fact it was clear from the responses that communities did not link access and availability of information to finding suitable solutions for their challenges. This means there is need to create awareness among communities that the beginning of solution finding is availability and access to relevant and timely information.

2. SPECIFIC STUDY FINDINGS

2.1 Information Needs and Sources Analysis

During the study, focus group discussions confirmed a number of observations that the study team had made;

a. Respondents across the sample consistently placed information on agriculture high on their priority list, among the older age-groups while younger respondents felt information on education and jobs was more important.

b. The older interviewees in the study seemed to realize that through agriculture they can mitigate some of the challenges the community faces, but felt rather helpless because they lack sufficient information on how to execute their ideas.

c. One “universal” finding that was surprising and unexpected was the admission by community members in all the study areas, that they believe and rely on traditional early warning information more than modern or scientific early warning information from formal sources such as the Meteorological Department and other Disaster Monitoring Units;

“Sometimes the meteorological department lies; they say one thing and the other happen” Garissa elders

“We are often warned by the weather people through the radio, but they are never correct, they tell us to prepare for rain and then it does not rain” Community Member, Samburu
d. Different sources of information have been tried and tested and this determined the believability of the source. Early warning information for example, was believed more from the traditional methods of early warning than information from the radio or the television and newspapers. This is due to the perception that the information from the media was rarely accurate while the traditionally collected information had been proven to be accurate.

“There were early warnings of drought, people from emergency department brought a lot of food and build food distribution centres, and yet it rained” Merti DRRC

e. Interestingly, radio was universally “believable” as a source of information across all the study groups. For most communities, any person passing information would quote the radio to add credibility to the information they were sharing.

f. The team established that communities do not have a clear understanding of the link between information and solutions to disasters or risks. But notable was the community’s receptiveness to any information made available. The Community also showed enthusiasm to seek more information once they receive the initial communication. This was made clear in the case where the community would seek information from line ministry officers after sensitization or training had been conducted or a talk during a forum or Chief’s baraza. The response was the same where community radio stations exist. In this case, radio programs focusing on issues the community is keen on, such as farming, would be followed by a trail of questions through the phone-in service.

g. Information sought among the different demographics was divergent as detailed in the table below, reflecting different concerns and preferences;
### Table 2. Information sought after by Community groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Information sought</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Older men and women</td>
<td>• Early warning information – weather information</td>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Irrigation</td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Suitable crop varieties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Disease and pest management</td>
<td>Traditional methods</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Farm inputs (seeds, fertilizer etc.)</td>
<td>Trainings</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Market information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Animal breeds resistant to drought</td>
<td>Line Ministry officers</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Planting periods – type of crop to plant</td>
<td>Television</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– 3month variety versus 6 month variety of maize</td>
<td>Chief baraza</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Women – income generating activities for women groups</td>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>• Employment</td>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>Often where available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Education</td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Television</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.2 Analysis of Information Sought by Study Communities

Although the study established that communities do not link information directly to solutions with regard to EW and DRR, it was clear that they do seek information nonetheless in the following categories.

#### 2.2.1 Early Warning

Respondents confirmed that they do seek information from both formal and informal sources on early warning especially for weather patterns, qualifying this behaviour by saying early warning information enables them to;
- Know when to prepare the land for planting
- Types of seed to plant depending on the rainfall amount expected
- When to move their livestock
- When to destock and restock
- Plan on water usage – management of strategic boreholes within the community

### 2.2.2 Information on Agriculture – farming and livestock keeping

Respondents among the Borana, Samburu, and Illchamus/Tugen were mainly pastoralists but are gradually adopting agriculture due to lack of pasture. Since they are, therefore, new to agriculture they indicated the need for information on;

- Planting seasons, when to expect rain, when to prepare the land and when to plant
- Types of seeds to plant, with regard to type of rain expected
- Where to find the right type of seed
- Types of fertilizers to use
- Types of livestock breeds available, vis-a-vis the environment they live in.

a) Currently, the communities depend mainly on agricultural officers to get the information. In most cases, logistical challenges have limited the availability of the officers in close proximity. In such cases new farmers said they revert to their own judgment on what to do on the farm, alongside counsel from neighbours and friends. This has often resulted in crop failure to the farmers’ disappointment.

b) Some communities, such as the Samburu, have had the advantage of a community radio station, where agricultural information is passed on with ease, through the radio, in a language they understand. The station does experience challenges in terms of resource people / agriculture experts and livestock officers.
2.2.3 Information on health

“We don’t have hospitals here, and those that are here are very poorly staffed and equipped. It would, therefore, be very useful to have health information passed to the community members on how to prevent and deal with health issues”

Health Officer, Kajiado

“Mostly floods and drought bring with a lot of health problems for both animals and human beings”

Merti DRRC Member

The drought and flood cycle was said to bring with it livestock and human health challenges. The problem is further compounded by lack of well-equipped hospitals and veterinary facilities in these communities. Health information was, therefore, ranked as one of the major information gaps in the communities studied. Currently, the information is mainly available through community health workers and the radio but usually comes too close to the onset for the community to take any action to avoid severe effects.

2.2.4 Market information

2.2.4.1 The study team had opportunity to witness livestock market days in Garissa and Baringo in their vibrancy. In spite of this liveliness, it was evident that most of the respondents were apprehensive about the prices their livestock fetched. They confided in the team that they felt they did not get a fair deal of the presence of livestock brokers, who take advantage of the sellers and general community ignorance to buy animals at very low prices only to sell them at much higher prices in other markets.

“I was at Isiolo Market today and I sold five goats and I know that man will go and sell each goat at three times what I sold the goats at to him, but I don’t have a choice”

Livestock Owner, Merti
2.2.4.2 For other communities, such as those in Merti, the availability of a good market and fair prices are the main challenges. Given that the district is fairly new, some facilities, such as a market place are yet to be set up. This means livestock owners travel long distances to sell their animals, only to realize on arrival at Isiolo that there was no ready market and demand is low.

2.2.4.3 The unavailability of market carries on to agriculture where communities still face the problem of lack of market for their produce. The problem extends to women and youth groups that have grouped together and initiated income generating activities.

“We harvest a lot of honey but we use it for domestic use only, and maybe sell to our neighbours because we do not know where to take it”

Community Self Help Group Member, Kilifi

2.2.5 Information on Income Generating Activities

The lack of pasture has forced communities to move from their core source of livelihood to engage in other income generating activities. There is, therefore, need for information on feasible income generating activities. This includes implementation of projects as well as the market for goods produced.

2.2.6 Information on Education

A move by the government to provide free and compulsory primary education has seen an increase in the demand for post primary and higher education in the ASAL areas for communities’ resident there. Respondents confirmed that information on education is needed by youth, who hope to further their education.

2.2.7 Information on Employment

The introduction of the value education in society and the reduced number of livestock has compelled most of the youth interviewed to search for formal employment as opposed to turning to pastoralism. This is mainly done through the internet where available and also newspapers.
2.3 Information sources

Sources of information have their advantages and disadvantages as shown in the table below and this is significant because it has an implication on what action recipients take, when they take that action and whether they will share that information with others.

Table 3. Community Sources of Information analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Source</th>
<th>Advantage of the Source</th>
<th>Disadvantage of the Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word of mouth</strong></td>
<td>• Easily available</td>
<td>• Usually not accurate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Quite believable since it is embedded in culture</td>
<td>• Carriers vetted by message receivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Often solicited for by consumers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chief’s Baraza</strong></td>
<td>• Formal Source of information</td>
<td>• Information holder disseminates at convenience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Believable Source of information</td>
<td>• Dissemination of information is at formal forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Message carrier is authoritative and trustworthy</td>
<td>• Message recipients may feel inhibited to ask questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Radio</strong></td>
<td>• Minimal miscommunication</td>
<td>• Language barrier for most stations since they broadcast in English or Kiswahili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Higher believability than word of mouth, most believed mass medium</td>
<td>• Offers interactivity through mobile phone but airtime may be limiting factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Information could be repeated</td>
<td>• Time allocated to early warning information is minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Easily accessible and user friendly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wide reach among community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Portable tool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Television</strong></td>
<td>• Visual – message permanence at audience level</td>
<td>• Not easily available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fairly believable but ranks below word of mouth</td>
<td>• Language barrier greater since it is in English and Kiswahili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Newspaper</strong></td>
<td>• Used to reference past occurrences</td>
<td>• Not easily available (circulation and price constraints)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Second most believed mass medium</td>
<td>• Literacy and language barrier is more pronounced than in radio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Information considered credible since it is documented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3.1 Word of mouth

The most common source of information in all the communities visited was the word of mouth. This is followed by the Chiefs Barazas and the radio. Most of the communities have a “seeing is believing attitude” and will, therefore, prefer to confirm whatever information they may receive.

“We have our own way of early warning systems, for example, when it is dry here, we look for any signs of lightning from the horizon, and then we send someone to investigate if indeed there is rain in the area of lightning. It could take the person will take around four to five days to return with a report and if the report is positive we move livestock there for pasture.”

Village Elders, Merti

“All these are the local greetings taken from the communities visited during the study and are the first words exchanged when two people meet. All these words are a way of asking for information. Interestingly, this was common in all the areas and this is how community members pass on information through word of mouth with a lot of ease. This mode of communication, also known as ‘information ya miguu’ meaning, information that travels on foot, seems to be the most common and most reliable way to pass information among communities.

One interesting characteristic of the word of mouth communication channel was its adoption by formal information holders as a means of publicizing information. Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs stood out as making use of this method of communication. During the study in Kajiado, respondents said that provincial administration officers visit certain community based institutions such as schools and churches, make announcements and request school children and members of congregations to relay the same information at the household level. Interviewees confirmed this as a highly effective and fairly efficient communication method.
2.3.2 Chief Barazas

The Chiefs’ barazas are, in most cases, held twice a week, and are perceived to be the official channel of communication in most communities. This is the channel utilized by most government ministries and other stakeholders operating in the ASALs visited. The community also relies on the chief barazas to receive any official communication.

2.3.3 Radio

The radio as a mass medium has its three core objectives as, to inform, educate and entertain. At community level the radio is associated with credible information by most people. Any information relayed through the radio is easily passed on because it is considered credible.

Radio has a wide reach due to its vast penetration, stated at 91% in Kenya. Respondents during the field study confirmed that most households have at least one or more radio receivers. They said those without a receiver usually has access to one in close proximity. Despite the notion that men usually possess and are in charge of the radio receiver and its usage across communities, everyone in the household is still able to listen to whatever the head of the household is listening to. The information, therefore, still reaches everyone in the household. At the same time, younger respondents said they have invested in mobile phones which have an FM function so they can listen to radio at will.

During the field study, the team found that there is a general feeling of ownership of radio stations that use vernacular languages to broadcast and more so those whose broadcast studios are located at the community, as was the case in Maralal, Samburu and Kangema. Even national radio stations that use local languages are still referred to as “our radio”.

The concept of the community radio stations is now gradually providing an easier and more accessible communication channel. In places such as Samburu where the community radio station is available, community members find it easier to contact the radio station in times of crisis as opposed to contacting village elders. This is due to the fact that through the radio station, one is able to have a wider reach. Communities are keen to receive more relevant information through radio,

1 Steadman - Synovate Research 2009, Media Consumption Habits, A Case Study of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.
“Yes, it will help in passing information, you know not everyone has access to television, but radio broadcasting in Borana would help everyone get information. For now we have a station broadcasting in our language, KBC, they try to get the time when KBC has Borana….not, it has a specific time and you will find the locals really looking for it at all times, so a local language station would really help people get information….And you will notice that people here really like the Borana broadcast on KBC, and even a young child will tell you the presenters names, even if it only comes on for one or two hours and not the whole day”

Merti Community members.

“We have Maasai language broadcasts on KBC in the evening and almost everyone is tuned in to it at that time”

Kajiado Community members.

2.3.4 Television

Television may be the most ideal source of information since it combines audio and visuals. This helps the community members understand the information better. Nevertheless it is not easily accessible owing to infrastructure limitations and financial limitations at the household. Most households do not have electricity and hardly have any extra money to spare to invest in a television set or electricity supply.

2.3.5 Newspaper

There are two main barriers to newspaper consumption, availability (circulation) and low literacy levels. Most people at community level are not able to read English or Kiswahili, and for those able to read, the newspaper is not easily available in most of the areas.

“We don’t have access to newspapers here, but we get them once in a while and often the information is out-dated. But we read it anyway—the few copies are read by almost the entire community. This means we have to wait till someone is done reading so they can pass it to
another person. So by the time you read it, it may be three to four
days past the publishing date. But there are those who have internet
on their phones and are able to read the papers on their phones.”

Samburu Community Members

2.3.6 Posters
Posters are mainly used to disseminate very specific information often to a target group
during particular period or event. Examples of this include warning of disease outbreaks, or
impending crop disease or promotion of certain farming techniques. They are mainly very
visual and are placed strategically at places where people will visit often such as the Chiefs
camp, the dispensary’s and shopping centres.

2.3.7 Internet
Despite the availability of internet facilities in most of the areas visited during the study,
the internet is perhaps the least used mode of communication. This is attributed mainly to
illiteracy, lack of interest, and misplaced perceptions especially in the older groups. The youth
in all the communities visited during the study said they do use the internet at commercial
cyber cafes, at community information centres where service is available and also on mobile
phones which have the function.

A close scrutiny of the information sought revealed that although employment is high in
their information needs, most youth have caught up with social networks and spend time
in chit-chat conversation over the internet. Some we spoke to spend time exploring general
information to satisfy their curiosity,

“When I logon to the internet I do not read the newspapers
only, I do other things, like Facebook, I browse religious
websites; look for job advertisements and reply my
email. There are a lot of things that I do online.”

Youth Maralal

The older members of the community in the areas covered during the study hardly use
the internet as a source of information. Some feel they have inadequate technology skill to
venture into such a service to seek information. Others feel excluded from internet technology because it has been dominated by youth. They have also developed a negative attitude about the internet saying they have heard that it contains pornographic material and has social sites both of which touch raw nerves of Muslim believers in addition to the impression that the internet is corrupting social morals among the youth.

“The internet is not good for our community… we hear that young people learn immoral behaviour on the computer and even meet and marry on the internet. In fact our culture does not allow boys and girls to mix especially when they are not married. These computers… internet is violating our culture”

Elder, Kilifi

“Maybe people of our age might not use the internet, they might not see the need to use it, their time might have passed to have interest in such technology, but younger people might be interested”

Elder Merti

2.3.8 Traditional Knowledge

Each community had an array of early warning indicators and well-developed structures through which the wisdom of the community was applied to deal quickly and efficiently with disasters. The structures included a council of elders which, as the team established, had at its disposal the speed and strength of

Rain Prediction

Predicting the weather is an important aspect of indigenous knowledge. Almost all the communities studied have ways and means of predicting and foreseeing impending events, calamities and disasters. In some communities, the role of predicting events is left to the elders, families or clans that specialize in that art.

The art of traditional rainfall prediction is, however, shrouded with mystery and is considered as a gift for a few. The potential person to inherit the art is identified in good time and is taken through the process of learning the art.
numerous warriors or messengers that could be used to investigate a particular phenomenon or to pass on urgent messages upon need.

Traditional early warning systems represent the whole body of knowledge developed early in the 1900s among pastoral communities to anticipate the coming of rains and thus enable them to mitigate the effect of droughts on their livestock - the backbone of their livelihoods.

The communities studied indicated that they have accumulated a wealth of experience and information regarding prediction, reaction and recovery from drought and natural disasters. However they remained guarded on this information and how it is used by the community.

“We have people, old men, who are able to tell whether it will rain or not, but they do not do it openly, they hide”

_Baringo DRRC_

The communities visited in Garissa explained that their Somali traditional culture is quite similar to that of the Borana communities that inhabit large areas of Isiolo and this means most traditional EW indicators cut across large geographical areas.

Table 4 are examples of traditional signs and indicators of predicting coming seasons among the Somali communities:

Traditional knowledge plays a key role in community disaster risk management and development of community coping mechanism. Indeed it is believed much more than modern technology generated information. The more the “scientific” forecasting deviates from traditional knowledge the less it is used for planning purposes by indigenous communities.

“The traditional ones never fail, sometimes they even slaughter a goat and from the intestines they can tell if it is going to rain or not, from the insides of the goat. They are called soothsayers. They look at intestines, they even tell you about conflict that is expected in certain areas”

_Garissa DRRC_
Table 4. Traditional Signs and Indicators of Early Warning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Animal Behaviour</th>
<th>Interpretation / prediction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sounds and behavior of Cattle</td>
<td>Cattle refuse to return to kraal and run in different directions</td>
<td>bad season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>run towards the Kraal/home around 3pm</td>
<td>imminent good season of heavy rains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cattle make throat sounds at night</td>
<td>Good rain season coming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cattle take excessive water</td>
<td>looming dry season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cattle take water and hop around jovially</td>
<td>Good rain season expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cows give birth to female calves during drought period</td>
<td>Severe drought expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grunting of camel bulls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female camels urinate while sitting</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bad season looming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudden increase in mating</td>
<td></td>
<td>Very heavy rains expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camels run away</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bad season in store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camels brush their legs together</td>
<td></td>
<td>bumper season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insects</td>
<td>Black ants making and following only one route</td>
<td>bad season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birds</td>
<td>carnivorous bird produces sharp sounds</td>
<td>good rain season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird migration</td>
<td>birds soaring very high in the sky</td>
<td>Serious drought coming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>birds migrating towards the East in large numbers</td>
<td>severe drought expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stars</td>
<td>star shoots on a Tuesday</td>
<td>sufficient rains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>two bright stars 'carry' with them a small star</td>
<td>good rains season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The color of the moon</td>
<td>brown/dark</td>
<td>bad omen or drought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>new moon rises and the crescent is directed to the North (left)</td>
<td>bad season/ sign of drought</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5

MODERN INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES
1. ICT USAGE

Access to appropriate information and knowledge contributes significantly to economic development and to ensure access to information, ICT is a key enabler. ICT provides an economical and efficient means to acquire information and knowledge.

The study team found that ICT know-how and usage is fairly high among the youth in urban areas, but very low among the older generations. This was attributed to the fact that computer education has been picked up by most schools, both secondary and primary. The decision by the Ministry of Education to computerize some of its services and operations, for example examination registration, could perhaps be one of the main contributors to the increase in interest for competence in ICT. The government has also in the recent past embarked on an initiative to computerize most public schools in the country. The communities visited have therefore benefited from the project.

Outside of education institutions, there is low penetration of computers but very high penetration of mobile phones within communities. Despite the fact that most phones can
access the internet, most of the community members are not even aware of that function, and will rarely use internet on their phones. Commercial internet providers are also very few in the area, perhaps an indication of the low usage and therefore low profits. The cost of using a cyber café in the regions is also fairly higher than the prices in urban centres such as Nairobi and as such prohibitive to would be users.

Notably, even other commercial entities such as banks have been slow to adopt ICT as a means to facilitate services. A case in point is Merti, where almost all households are said to own at least one mobile phone and members of the family know and use several functions on the mobile phone. Notable though was the absence of banking services despite them having been adapted to mobile phone functions. Marigat on its part has only one local bank, Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) while other banks such as Co-operative Bank and Equity Bank have agencies only.

In other areas such as Garissa, there seems to be an influx of community information centres, as projects, where free internet services are available to the community members. The study team had opportunity to visit two such centres within Garissa town.

The team found that there is slow response from the community members in terms of usage. Most of the community members felt that they are not best suited to use the centre citing numerous reasons;

1) They are not computer literate.
2) They do not expect any value adding activities from the centre.
3) They do not understand how the internet works.
4) They feel it is inappropriate to use the internet at their age.
5) They feel that the internet promotes immorality.

It was a noteworthy observation by the study team that women felt that the internet facilities were an inappropriate mode of communication since they seem to encourage a mixing of the genders, contrary to cultural dictates which do not allow free mingling between men and women. Interestingly though, even in areas where the facilities are clearly separated and signage posted for women and men sections, such as the G-Youth centre in Garissa, most women are still reluctant to use the internet facilities. The team observed that some of this behaviour by women and girls was driven by fear of castigation from community members.
COMMUNICATION CHANNELS FOR EARLY WARNING INFORMATION
1. INFORMAL COMMUNICATION

The communities studied explained that they basically communicate with others on issues of local interest, including information on disaster early warning through;

1) Personal contact or contact via mobile phones, including Short Message Service;

2) Messages transmitted by community leaders;

3) Messages transmitted by agricultural extension agents;

4) Meetings held by grassroots organizations;

5) Meetings in churches; and

6) Meetings in Schools

These means minimize somewhat the impact of lack of proper media coverage specifically for the ASAL districts.

2. Formal Communication

The study found it fascinating that despite their diversity, varied exposure and contrasting cultures, all the communities studied have adopted a generic information flow and communication model as shown below;
Figure 1. Information flow model between community and Provincial Administration officers at the grassroots level among communities studied.
The study found out that the main entry point for any stakeholder at the community level is at the Chief’s office. All information is promptly passed down through the above channel to the household at the community as Figure 1 above indicates. At the same time, feedback is passed from the community through the village elder, to the Assistant Chief to the Chief and onwards to the national level.

The Chief may use a variety of methods to send out information ranging from text messaging or calls on the mobile phone to convening an elders meeting or baraza to share information for onward passing to the community.

The team established that certain issues such as minor conflicts are first handled at community level by the village elders and are only passed on to the Chief where reconciliation is not reached. Matters of security are often promptly sent to the Chief’s office since they require quick response and some level of application of the law.

Some communities, such as those in Mariakani, Kilifi have gone further and established the position of an assistant to the village elders, who are in charge of a minimum of ten households, to ensure closer communication to community members.
ASSESSMENT OF MERTI AND ELWAK CICs
PART VII - ASSESSMENT OF MERTI AND ELWAK CICs

1. BACKGROUND

As provided for in our technical proposal, the Terms of Reference and as a precursor to the implementation of the Study, this Desk Review Phase of the project is designed to review all the pertinent information related to Merti and Elwak Community Information Centres. It considers all the baselines surveys, project design and modelling, implementation processes, impact reports and applicable exit strategies incidental to the two centres.

This desk review responds specifically to Activity 3.3.1 of the Terms of Reference for this project. “The consultant will be expected to review the model used in the implementation of the Elwak and Merti Maarifa Centres including review of secondary data such as baseline surveys. The consultant is expected to establish the following aspects of the model: relevance; efficiency and effectiveness; sustainability; and replicability.”

The review also expands to on other relevant studies conducted by development agencies to provide an analysis of the sector situation locally and globally and will include review of best practices in other developing countries. This activity will provide a brief global view of the need for community information centres, country-specific description of implementation of CICs and lessons learnt, and finally the situation in regard to implementation of Merti and Elwak CICs.

2. METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

A total of ten (10) Community Information and Multimedia Centres (CIMCs), all of which have fully implemented and operationalized either a Community Information Centre (CIC) or a Community Multimedia Centre (CMC) were studied in the desk review. The

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5 See appendix 1, Terms of Reference 3.3.1.
Consultants were furnished with the Arid Lands Information Network’s (ALIN) community centre newsletters which define the key characteristics of Maarifa Centres. Assessment was also conducted of the Project Proposal document for Merti CIC; Baseline surveys for Merti and Elwak CICs; Reconnaissance reports for Merti and Elwak CICs and Final project report for Elwak.

Further abroad, the Consultants reviewed CMCs in Senegal, Mali, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, India and Nepal. These provided insight into factors that promote successes or failures of community information centres.

3. The Arid Lands Information Network (ALIN) Community Knowledge Centre (CKC) model

ALIN’s model Community Knowledge Centre (CKC) is commonly called a Maarifa centre. A Maarifa centre is a room or a ‘fabricated shipping container’ where communities access information resources. The centre is equipped with computers and internet access. Maarifa centres play a catalyst role in offering appropriate information and as centres for local knowledge documentation.

A model Maarifa centre is normally equipped with appropriate ICT tools to enhance information generation, access, dissemination and skills development for the community. Key resources available at a Maarifa centre are:

a) Publications, newsletters, research reports and electronically stored information that include CD-ROMs, audio visual, compendiums and web based resources

b) Computers and/or Laptops

c) Internet Connectivity Equipment

d) Scanner

e) Digital Video Camera
4. MERTI COMMUNITY INFORMATION CENTRE

Merti Community Information Centre is located in Merti Division of Isiolo Districts. Classified as a semi-arid ecological zone, characterized by high temperatures and long dry spells during most part of the year. The centre is housed by Merti Integrated Development Programme (MID-P) and the Rangeland Users Association (RUA).

4.1 Project objectives

The Merti Community Information Centre project was developed by KRDP/ASAL DM in partnership with the Arid Lands Information Network Eastern Africa (ALIN) under the Drought Management Initiative (DMI) project. Commissioned in May 2010, the project involved the setting up of a Community Information Centre modelled along ALIN’s Maarifa Centre concept at Merti.

The Centre was expected to provide a platform for information and knowledge sharing for the community. Specifically, the centre was to be “a hub for community documentation of local knowledge focusing on disaster management, indigenous early warning systems, market information, environmental issues, capacity building on use of ICTs and much more.”

4.2 Setup and design of the Project Centre

In order to deliver to the community needs and in consonance with the project design, the key considerations for setting up the centre were:-

a) A host organization to offer space or room for the Maarifa centre activities
b) Willingness by the host organization to incorporate the ICT initiatives in their programs.
c) Ease of access to the centre by community
d) Availability of GSM network in case GPRS will be used for connectivity.
e) Willingness by the community to participate in the activities of the Centre
f) Availability of stable power source.
g) Availability and involvement of Community Development Workers CDWs to work as extension officers

4.3 Implementation Process

The implementation process involved the following key activities

a) Visit to Merti to assess the existing resources, partners and meet some communities.

b) Assessment and availability of a suitable room or space at MID-P

c) Organization of a project start-up meetings with stakeholders

d) Identification and classification of stakeholders as potential users of the centre.

e) Formation of Maarifa centre advisory committee

f) Recruitment of a Community Information Volunteer (CIV)

g) Identification and recruitment of Community Development Workers (CDWs).

h) Recruitment of CDWs as “Informediaries” and primary Maarifa centre users.

i) Equipping the Maarifa centre with ICT and information resources

j) Branding and official launch of the centre

k) Conducting information mapping to identify community information needs

l) Organization of three capacity building workshops focusing on use of ICTs, documentation skills and other development related issues. Uploading Merti development information on website

m) Facilitation of one community exchange visit. Identification of suitable community sites for information dissemination. Market information mapping

n) Organization of a workshop focusing on disaster preparedness and management to develop information materials

o) Development of key project indicators through a participatory process to be used in monitoring and evaluation of the centre.
p) Development of project indicators, this will be done during project inception meeting. Baseline data collection using questionnaires and group discussions Identification and documentation of gender issues in a pastoral community Develop appropriate M and E systems for the Merti centre

4.4 Services offered at the Centre

a) Internet access.

b) A depository of Development Information resources that include CD ROMs, publications, research reports, books, educational DVDs.

c) Photocopying and other tele-centre services.

d) Capacity building on use of ICTs and other development related issues.

e) Training services in participatory video documentaries and production.

f) Installation of a software platform for documenting and sharing local knowledge with other groups and centres.

g) Provision of e-Services including E-government.

h) Provision of a platform for Distance learning for the community.

i) Promotion of citizen journalism within the community.

4.5 Management Structures & Community Participation

a) Centre Advisory Committee.

b) Community Information Volunteer (CIV).

c) Community Development Workers (CDWs).

4.6 Effectiveness and Impact of the CICs to the Community

a) Easy access to information and knowledge resources
b) Development of a local database of local knowledge as a result of documentation

c) Engagement of youth in productive activities including trainings on IT skills.

d) Creation of new business opportunities in the community

e) Increased institutional capacity for the host organization and the community.

f) Availability of ICT resources including the internet, e-mail communications, video recording equipment and innovative info dissemination mechanisms.

g) Enhanced visibility and connectivity for the community via the website.

h) Development of online marketing portals enhancing Merti pastoral communities to trade globally especially livestock marketing.

i) Increased Community skills and exposure to other innovative community activities through exchange visits, capacity building and discussion forums.

j) Enhanced community preparedness to emerging disasters like prolonged droughts and reduced livelihoods vulnerability to other calamities.

k) Improved economic activities resulting from application of innovative information and knowledge accessed from the Maarifa centre.

4.7 Sustainability and Exit Strategy

In order to sustain the centre beyond the project period, it was anticipated that the centre would:

(i) Levy a monthly subscription for the usage of the installed VSAT.

(ii) Sharing the bandwidth with other institutions within Merti and charging a fee

(iii) Invitation of other development partners to support the Centre through MID-P

(iv) Enhancement of income generating activities at the Centre including training, typing, printing, photocopying, video & photography services.

(v) Involvement of the government to support the Centre.
5. ELWAK COMMUNITY INFORMATION CENTRE

Elwak Community Information Centre was established in a partnership between Kenya Rural Development Program (KRDP/ASAL DMI) and Northern Aid (NAID) and the implementing agency, Arid Lands Information Network (ALIN), the implementation was undertaken during the period November 2010 through June 2011. It is managed by a local fulltime Field Officer who is supported by two community knowledge facilitators (CKF) and a selected advisory committee that oversees the overall management and planning of the centre activities. The staffs at the centre were recruited by ALIN and KRDP/DMI at the set up stage of the centre and their remuneration is channelled through ALIN from KRDP/DMI. The staff has had several capacity building sessions through ALIN and as such pledge allegiance to ALIN more than KRDP/DMI. The community on its part holds the perception that the centre belongs to ALIN and Northern Aid seems not to play an active role at all. In terms of guidance on day-to-day running, the Centre’s staff rely on a focal group drawn from all the Elwak stakeholders with interest in information exchange.

5.1. Project objectives

With Elwak being the home of a predominantly pastoral community, the project’s main goal was to contribute towards the community’s livelihoods and the strengthening of their knowledge sharing capabilities. Specifically, the project set out to empower the local pastoral community with capacity to share knowledge and experiences on disaster preparedness and natural resources management using appropriate Information and communication Technologies through;

a) The establishment of a Community Maarifa Centre in Elwak
b) The provision of support for content development and exchange using ICTs.
c) The evaluation and assessment of the networking and information needs.

5.2. Setup and design of the Information Centres

Before embarking on the establishment of the CIC in ELWAK, ALIN undertook some activities aimed at laying the foundation stones for the project. Key amongst these were:-
a) Confirming that Northern Aid was willing and able to host the Maarifa centre and its activities.
b) Re-affirmed that Northern Aid, as the host organization, was willing to incorporate Maarifa Centre’s ICT initiatives in their programs.
c) That there was ease of access to the Centre by the community.
d) There was availability of GSM network in the area for ease of use with GPRS connectivity.
e) The Community was willing to participate in the activities of the Centre.
f) There was availability of a stable power source.

5.3. Implementation Process

Project implementation is a very critical item in the project cycle. As such, ALIN ensured that it undertook the necessary requisite for the successful implementation of the Maarifa Centre in Elwak.

a) Conducted a reconnaissance visit to Elwak to familiarize with ALRMP and Northern Aid activities.
b) Met and discussed the Maarifa centre idea with stakeholders at Elwak.
c) Established potential partners to work with in the Maarifa centre project.
d) Held discussions with various stakeholders about information exchange and Elwak Maarifa centre ideas.
e) Discussed and revised the Elwak Maarifa centre implementation plan with the stakeholders.
f) Agreed with the stakeholders on the process of recruiting a field officer to manage the CIC Centre.

5.4. Services offered at the Centre

a) Internet access.
b) A depository of Development Information resources that include CD ROMs, publications, research reports, books, educational DVDs.
c) Photocopying and other telecentre services.

d) Capacity building on use of ICTs and other development related issues.

e) Training services in participatory video documentaries and production.

f) Installation of a software platform for documenting and sharing local knowledge with other groups and centres.

g) Provision of E-Services including E-government.

h) Provision of a platform for Distance learning for the community.

i) Promotion of citizen journalism within the community.

5.5. Management Structures & Community Participation

a) Centre Advisory Committee.

b) Community Information Volunteer (CIV).

c) Community Development Workers (CDWs).

5.6. Effectiveness and Impact of the CICs to the Community

a) Capacity building for the host community and stakeholder organizations

b) Installation and deployment of ICT facilities at the Maarifa Centre

c) Availability of ICT resources including the internet, e-mail communications, video recording equipment and innovative info dissemination mechanisms.

d) Increased visibility and connectivity for the community via the website.

e) Availability of online marketing portals to enhance the communities around Elwak Maarifa centre

f) Access to information and knowledge resources through the Maarifa Centre

g) Youth involvement in productive activities including trainings on IT skills.
h) Increased Community skills and exposure to other innovative community activities through exchange visits, capacity building and discussion forums.

i) Provision of information on and community preparedness to emerging disasters like droughts.

5.7. Sustainability and Exit Strategy

To ensure that the sustainability of the Elwak Centre beyond the implementation period, ALIN together with the Community suggested the following measures:

a) Levy a fee for the internet services offered

b) Enhancement of income generating activities at the Centre including computer training, Mpesa services, typing services, printing, photocopying, video & photography services.

c) Involvement of the government to support the Centre

d) Business Process Outsourcing

6. Findings of Merti and Elwak CIC Model in Comparison to other CICs in Kenya

While critiquing the implementation model of the Elwak / Merti community information centres, this report also takes into consideration the implementation models of the following information centres also in ASAL districts:

- Isinya / Baringo ALIN Maarifa Centres
- G-Youth Career Resource Centre
- Mariakani Youth Centre
- Plan International Information Centres
- Kisapuk Community Learning Centre
- DIDC Centres
6.1 Usage

Merti CIC has been in existence since May 2010 while the Elwak Centre was launched in June 2011, however it appears the two centres have had perennial challenges since inception. Further, it appears that the centres do not enjoy community goodwill which would be an advantage for their image, acceptability and demand for its services.

Services offered at the Centres are;

- computer training
- internet services
- printing services
- photocopy services
- still camera
- video production

That notwithstanding, a few people do make use of its services although its efficiency and reliability often hangs in the balance.

a) Local NGOs know the value of the centre and do make use of its typing and internet services though only minimally,

“The other day we were writing a proposal and we used the centre, one of our members went there and wrote the proposal and was able to send to Isiolo very fast. One of our members was at Isiolo and we sent him email, instructing him to download it, print and submit. This way, the proposal was submitted on time. If someone was to get onto a bus to submit the report in Isiolo, it would have been time barred”.

Community Mobilizer, Merti

b) There is enrolment of students for computer applications and packages, majority of them high school leavers. The trainer is a volunteer who also runs a commercial internet service at the Merti town.
“Some members are also studying there, like the women in our group are learning how to use computers at the Maarifa centre. The member also influenced us to have interest in using the computer so they enrolled for classes there. There are others who are planning to join”

*Women Group representative, Elwak.*

c) Other than the computer and internet services, the CIC also offers library services, used mainly by primary school children. The children use the centre to read story books but felt that there was need to stock the library with more books that are relevant to the education curriculum.

### 6.2 Challenges

The CIC has had its share of challenges. For most of the community members interviewed, the location of the Merti community information centres plays a key role in determining usage. Most are of the perception that the CICs are owned by the host organization, and not the community. This has acted as a hindrance to the usage of the CIC where people feel intimidated to walk into the centres. The distance from the villages to the centre also acts a barrier to the usage of the CICs.

A majority of the community members are also computer illiterate and shy away from the centre in the fear that they might not be able to use the facilities. There are those who are competent enough to use the facilities, and are in the older age bracket, but are discouraged by the fact that there are too many young people queuing to use the facilities at all times.
Lack of interest and also not appreciating the value added by internet in the communities’ lifestyle is also a major contributor to the community members not using the centre. Most feel that the centres do not add any value in their day-to-day life, while some view the internet as a great waste of time.

“I have too much work and many things to do, I cannot go and spend time sitting at the centre looking at a computer”

Community Member, Merti.

Despite the affordable training, the users felt that they were disadvantaged by the lack of a certificate that is recognized by employers. For most, the certificate was actually more important the actual knowledge.

“More computers would help, and also separate the classes from the public area so that we students are not allocated limited for time for learning. If not, then the centre should be open through the night so that those of us who are busy can use it at night”

Computer Student, Merti.
Few respondents of the community interviewed during the study at the households and Merti market centre, were aware of other services offered at the centre such as still camera and video production service.

### 6.3 Organization Structure

#### 6.3.1 Management

Overall management of the CIC is done by an advisory committee whose membership is made up of representatives from the community and other stakeholders such as religious organizations, NGOs and the provincial administration.

Due to logistical challenges, the members rarely hold meetings and have left the management of the CICs mainly in the hands of the host organizations, MID-P at Merti and Northern Aid at Elwak. The advisory committee chairpersons in both CICs also seem to play an active role in the day to day running of the centres.

The Elwak advisory committee has a high interest in the running and the operations of the centre, but is hindered by the fact that most of them are based in Mandera. The distance means that they hold fewer meetings and are not hands on with the activities of the centre. There also seemed to exist some disconnect between the members as far as information about the centre and its running goes. Some members thought that the centre belongs to ALRMP II while others thought that it belongs to Northern AID, meaning that they have a small role, if any, to play in the centre.

The study established that Merti Maarifa Centre staff, the community and the advisory committee experience some level of confusion with regard to the specific roles of the various stakeholders. The advisory committee does not know what role they are expected to play at the centre and they do not know what to expect from the local partner MID P (the local NGO). Further they are confused about what function the DMO plays with regard to the centre and how ALIN is involved after the commissioning. This confusion arises from the nature of the set-up, that is, the centre carries ALIN branding “ALIN Maarifa Centre”, financial support for the centre from KRDP/DMI is channelled through the local partner MID P and as such the assumption is that MID P meets the bills for the centre, and the DMO sits at the advisory committee though his role is unclear. In terms of technical support when equipment is faulty, the centre staff and MID P seek out the help of ALIN. Merti Maarifa Centre has had a high turnover of staff which means the current staff did not benefit from ALIN capacity building sessions. This has led the Centre’s staff and the community at large to feel alienated from the ALIN Maarifa centres network.
One of the most notable weak points at the Merti CIC was the lack of interest and awareness in the activities of the CIC by the advisory committee, mainly attributed to the fact that most of them were computer illiterate and did not understand the operations of the centre.

Both CICs advisory committees rarely hold meetings and the team observed that they don’t feel they have a responsibility to the centres.

Both centres also operate without a strategic plan, and with no clear objective on what the CICs aim to achieve.

6.3.2 Staffing
The CICs seemed to be struggling with staff turnover since inception. A majority of those who leave are said to have found ‘greener pastures’ while others leave due to lack of permanency or employment contract at the centres. The trend at both centres has been a dependence on volunteers to deliver services with minimum or no remuneration and this leads to fatigue of the staff. This situation compromises the service delivery at the centre, and a collapse of operational systems

6.3.3 Finances
The role of fund raising has been taken up mainly by the host organizations. The host also has taken up paying most, if not all the expenses incurred by the centre, while it was not clear how the money collected by the centre, for commercial services such as computer training, is utilized. There are no clear accounting procedures and no budgetary plans for either of the centres.

Due to lack of procedures and agreements between the CIC and the implementing organization, some costs go unmet. For example, Merti’s printer has remained faulty for more than six months; as such it affects income to the centre. Further, it is not clear whose responsibility it is, to meet equipment repair costs.

6.4 Successes of the Elwak & Merti CICs

a) The CICs are accepted by and fully integrated into the communities and can in many cases be sustained beyond the project period

b) The CICs’ contribution to improving quality of life through access to information is confirmed
c) Equitable and expanded access to ICTs is promoted in many ways, such as subsidized training for special, marginalised groups, close work with schools and small businesses, or providing information to more remote communities through radio.

d) Longer term benefits are already being realized within individual communities, such as the gradual removal of barriers to social inclusion, the stimulation of poverty alleviation through access to knowledge of better health, resource management and agriculture practices, through the establishment of listeners clubs as self-help groups, and the creation of new livelihoods opportunities.

e) The role of the CICs in fostering cultural resilience – the capacity of a community to retain critical knowledge and at the same time adapt to external influences and pressures – is particularly remarkable.

6.5 Areas of Concern in Merti and Elwak CICs

From the review of the documents provided, the following inferences were made:-

a) The baseline surveys were conducted in real-time (during the implementation period of the project). As such, it was difficult for them to inform the design of the project(s).

b) The Maarifa CIC model rolled out at both Merti and Elwak was not adapted to the requirements of KRDP / ASAL (DMI) hence it fell short on meeting the expectations of the Project.

c) There is a lack of commitment on the part the volunteers working at the CICs which impacts on the quality of services being offered. For such critical services, it is normal to employ full time staff.

d) There is no clear indication as to who “owns” the CICs as ALIN (the implementers of the project) have listed them as their own yet their role was only to implement. This “grey” area has direct implications on the sustainability of the CICs. KRDP / ASAL (DMI) had a very clear exit strategy to ensure that the CICs become self-sustaining a year after completion yet the ALIN’s Maarifa Centres remain under the supervision and management of ALIN.

e) Due to the anomaly observed in “c” above, the CICs do not have sound sustainable strategies. Indeed, at Merti, some of the equipment has already broken down and the centre is not operating at full capacity.
f) The Management structures are not functional and those in charge do not understand their roles and responsibilities. This has a direct implication on the performance of the CICs.

7. OTHER COMMUNITY MULTIMEDIA CENTRES IN THE WORLD

7.1 Ngora Community Multimedia Centre – Kumi District, Uganda

The media boom in Uganda is concentrated in urban areas, elitist, and commercially driven. The rural poor and illiterate are generally excluded as they don’t influence or participate actively in the programs; the programs do not promote their cultural identity, basic developmental needs like, primary healthcare, good governance at local levels, basic public education, agriculture or trade but instead focus on popular global issues. The establishment of the first Ugandan telecentre at Nakaseke (1997) and later upgraded into a CMC, opened a ray of hope and opportunity for the poor in rural areas to access information and programs that address their immediate concerns.

The Ngora community is located in Ngora County, Kumi District, Uganda. It is an essentially a rural community. A majority of the households receive information by “word of mouth”, while a small percentage of the population has access to radio sets. The population is dependent on peasant farming and cattle keeping.

7.1.1 Project objectives

The Ngora Community Multimedia Centre Project was meant to allow the local community:-

a) Establish a community multimedia centre (CMC);

b) Access to information and knowledge;

c) Connectivity to the internet;

d) A platform for the development and presentation of radio programs that are culturally relevant to their social-economic needs; and

e) Training for community radio producers.
7.1.2 Setup and design of the Project

Although no feasibility studies specific to this project were done, its design was premised on the experiences of six (6) UNESCO supported CMCs in Uganda. Consequently, as part of the project design, the Uganda National Commission for UNESCO sent a mission to Ngora and met members of the Local County, the administrators of St. Aloysius Primary Teachers’ College, Ngora and also engaged with some opinion leaders about the feasibility of the project. The purpose of this mission was to:-

a) Confirm the community support and involvement for the CMC.
b) In order to be able to offer radio broadcasts, it was imperative for the implementing agency to ensure that a broadcast license from the Uganda Broadcasting Council.

7.1.3 Implementation Process and Model

The following activities were core to the successful implementation of the Project.

a) Identify buildings for the CMC, refurbishment and provision of furniture;
b) Building partnerships with local institutions;
c) Recruitment of core project workers/volunteers and their capacity building;
d) Hands-on attachment of CMC core staff at an existing CMC;
e) On-site training of CMC volunteers;
f) Acquisition and installation of CMC equipment; and
g) Content production and CMC.

7.1.4 Management Structures & Community Participation

There does NOT seem to be a clear management structure in place for this Centre.

7.1.5 Effectiveness and Impact of the CICs to the Community

The demonstrable indicators regarding the impact of the project to the Ngora Community were:-

a) A well-equipped FM radio station;
b) Production of local content and programs by members of the community;

c) Training of ten (10) radio presenters/producers in community radio operation and management; and

d) Community members trained in IT skills and use of computers and the Internet.

7.1.6 Exit Strategy

The project is built around public private partnerships represented by institutions i.e. Local Councils (3), schools, religious bodies and NGOs. It is imperative to note here that the implementing agency (NCDI), committed to meet the recurrent costs as well as the replacement costs for faulty equipment after the completion of the project.

However, the CMC will also generate income from:-

a) Radio announcements,

b) Video shows

c) Internet and ancillary services.

d) Periodical fundraising initiatives.

7.2 Madanpokhara Community Multimedia Centre, Nepal

The Madanpokhara CMC was established in August 2004 when telecentre facilities were added to Community Radio Madanpokhara. With a population of approximately 8000, Madanpokhara is a Village Development Committee (VDC) located in the Palpa District in Western Nepal. The main economic activities of the area include subsistence farming of rice, vegetables, coffee, bee keeping, animal husbandry, poultry, livestock and educational institutions.

7.2.1 Project objectives

The project was commissioned to offer the local community the following key services:-

a) Radio broadcasts and announcement

b) Internet Access
c) Training for computers and radio program productions

d) ICT Training

7.2.2 Setup and Design of the Project

Nepal’s first independent radio license was granted to Community Radio Sagarmatha in 1997. Prior to this, radio broadcasting in Nepal had been the exclusive domain of the state broadcaster, Radio Nepal. In 1999 and 2000, Community Radio Madanpokhara and Radio Lumbini became the country’s first community radio stations outside Kathmandu to be issued radio licenses.

The strength of Madanpokhara community centre was based in part on its ability to collect, produce, exchange and disseminates content for the development of individuals and the community. The project was aimed at supplementing the benefits of new media to communities living in rural areas. With the commissioning of the project, these communities are now able to access global information and communication technologies. In an effort to encourage poor and marginalised people to access ICTs in remote areas, Madanpokhara was considered ideal for the CMC project.

7.2.3 Management Structures & Community Participation

a) The Village Development Council

The project is owned by Madanpokhara Village Development Council (VDC). The VDC is the legal license holder of the station though the CMC is owned, controlled and managed by the local people of the District.

b) Radio Assembly

The station’s radio assembly consists of 128 members. The members are representatives from different social and governmental groups. More than a third of the members are from Madanpokhara VDC. Other members are from the lifetime members group, the women’s communication group, the marginalised and indigenous ethnic community, radio representatives, District Development Committee (DDC), federation of Palpa District VDC, local business people, local farmer groups, the District NGO federation, the listener club network and the network of mothers groups.
c) **Board of Directors**

Madanpokhara VDC has the largest number of representatives on the BOD. The members of the VDC are nominated and elected by the community of Madanpokhara. The Madanpokhara VDC chairperson is also the chairperson of Board. Members of the Radio Assembly elect the BOD. The BOD is responsible for formulating CMC policy, code of conduct and by-laws.

### 7.2.4 Effectiveness and Impact of the CICs to the Community

The CMC has witnessed poor and marginalised community people

- a) Access ICT facilities
- b) Access to internet
- c) Trained on the usage of computers and production of radio programs
- d) Access to radio programming services
- e) Access to publications and other educational materials

### 7.2.5 Sustainability and Exit Strategy

#### 7.2.5.1 Financial Sustainability

CMC has served the community on a self-sustainable basis for the last seven years. The contribution of the local people in cash and kind has benefited the station and improved sustainability. Given the comparatively new addition of the tele-centre it is important to consider the financial sustainability of the radio and tele-centre separately for income and expenditure statements).

- a) To sustain the radio, the Centre charges for services offered to the community through public service announcements, co-production and grants from the external agencies.
- b) The Tele-centre sector of the CMC earns revenue from membership fees, training course fees, telephone, fax service, internet access, and other secretarial services.

#### 7.2.5.2 Technical Sustainability

There is a range of technical challenges that impact on the sustainability of the CMC. The main factors which impact on the CMC’s technical sustainability are described below;
a) **Electricity**

Irregular electricity supply, regular power cuts, low voltage and load shedding all impede the CMC’s operations. These conditions force the CMC to procure additional equipment including a generator which increases its overheads.

b) **Internet connectivity**

The internet connection is expensive and the centre does not recover this cost from the public internet service that it provides. At the moment the high cost of connectivity means higher
operating costs for the CMC. These costs ultimately constrain the CMC reducing the funds available to run programs aimed at empowering marginalised groups in the community.

c) **Equipment / Maintenance**

The CMC has a lack of trained technical staff to take care of equipment repairs and upgrades. With the number of computers and technical equipment utilized at the centre this has a direct influence on programme production and the everyday running of the centre. While the CMC has been able to manage with its current technical configurations, concerns about costs of future equipment maintenance are now being discussed.

7.2.5.3 **Social Sustainability**

The radio sector of the CMC has enjoyed a high level of community involvement which has contributed to the station’s success. Social and community participation is used broadly to include assistance with programme production, financial support/fund raising, and volunteerism.

7.3 **The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Model**

The Community Multimedia Centre (CMC) is a model developed by UNESCO beginning in 1997, for using new information and communication technologies (ICTs) for development, and overcoming barriers to this process. These include lack of awareness of the benefits of ICTs; high cost and lack of access to computers and connectivity; special skills required for content development; and, language barriers mitigating against the use of Internet based information. Radio, the most penetrating medium is the primary interface between people and internet.

A Community Multimedia Centre (CMC) is a community-based facility offering both community radio broadcasting and tele-centre services (access to Internet and other information and communications technologies - ICTs). This hybrid approach is believed to provide significant support to community development by strengthening economic opportunities through information and training. Moreover, through access to and exchange of knowledge, views and beliefs, CMCS strengthen social inclusion, public participation, education, agriculture, health and other factors necessary for healthy and sustainable societies.
7.3.1 Project objectives
UNESCO model CMC’s main objectives are:

a) A local radio station
b) Tele-centre facilities
c) Computer training
d) Access to the Internet
e) Digital resources

7.3.2 Setup and design of the Project
The most common design element of UNESCO’s model CMC is that it combines video, print media, ICTs and radio. This model is highly cost-effective in the way it maximizes the use of resources and the potential impact of ICT within the community.

7.3.3 Implementation Process and Model
A model CMC goes through various steps before being established. This is essential in order to establish a responsive and effective CMC. However, the model emphasizes the baseline approach rather than a detailed description of the entire process. In all the undertakings, it should be noted that the more responsive you are to the community, the better the chances are of sustaining the centre, as the community and other stakeholders will be more committed to supporting it. The following steps must be undertaken before establishing a CMC.

8. ALTERNATIVE ICT OPTIONS

8.1 Twitter
Francis Kariuki, a Chief in Lanet Umoja Location, Nakuru District has used Twitter, the micro-blogging social media site in an innovative way to communicate to residents in his area of jurisdiction. Chief Kariuki, popularly known as the twitter Chief was a school teacher for 21 years, before applying for a job in the provincial administration. He had a strong desire to serve the people in his community even as a teacher and felt that he stood a chance to
serve more people, better as a chief. He joined the provincial administration in 2010 and was appointed Chief.

“You know, when you are working, there is a fulfilment that you are doing what God meant you to be, I believe in working with people, because where I was, I was teaching at kambi ya moto, I used to be the head teacher there, and I had friends from America, who were helping me in that community, feeding the school children, and I felt that I was limiting my capability, I needed to broaden my area of operation”. Chief Kariuki

He has served a cosmopolitan community, representing 28,000 people, with two sub locations, and two assistant chiefs since he started working as a chief. The government has since divided his location, where he now serves twenty thousand people. The main language spoken in the community is Kiswahili since it is a cosmopolitan area. Chief Kariuki has some 3,400 followers on his twitter page but his messages are received by almost 20,000 people directly or indirectly. Residents in his location, mostly subsistence farmers, cannot afford to buy smart phones, but can access tweets through a third-party mobile phone application, the short message service (sms).

“Twitter has helped save time and money. I no longer have to write letters or print posters which take time to distribute and are expensive.” Chief Kariuki

Being a government administrator, Chief Kariuki works with different committees, in the community, such as the community development committees, which has a membership that is representative of all the community members.

He has a passion to ensure that service delivery to his community is made easier and efficiently, e.g.

“when we do identity cards registration, all I need to do is announce to the community the date, time and place through barazas and twitter. I ensure all the officers responsible for the exercise are at the agreed location for quicker registration. The twitter messages are very effective because they are then picked up and passed on by word of mouth.” Chief Kariuki
Due to his desire to constantly communicate to his community, he was driven to seek a cheap and effective means of passing information. His exposure to different communication methods during official travel abroad heightened his curiosity to try out new technology. Though he liked the twitter technology, he still faced the challenge of penetration of both internet enabled mobile phones and computers. Despite the fact that almost all households have mobile phones, very few of the mobile phones are internet enabled. Chief Kariuki kept searching and finally a friend introduced him to a four-digit platform, hosted by an independent entity, where anyone with a sim-card could register.

During his regular barazas, Chief Kariuki constantly gets members of his community to register and follow him on twitter as a way of ensuring people receive information first hand. The process is simple and easy to follow with minimum education and knowledge of mobile phone functions:

- Go to messages – create new message – write a message, (f) space (chiefkariuki) one word – send to 8988.
- A confirmation text message is sent “You are now following @chiefkariuki” from 8988.

Members are able to follow this process practically and it takes less than five minutes.

**What does Chief Kariuki tweet?**

- Crime alerts
- General Information
- Inspirational messages

It costs the chief one shilling to send each tweet, and it is a free service to the recipient. Each message he tweets is sent to an estimated 20,000 recipients within and outside of the location. This is despite the fact that he only has 3400 followers on his twitter account. Most of the Chief Kariuki’s followers do not hold twitter accounts and it is not necessary to hold one.

To enhance his communication, Chief Kariuki has taken his two Assistant Chiefs through the process of registering and taught them how to get the community to follow their posts. The two in turn trained village elders in their area of jurisdiction on registration and how to get their village members to follow them. This has created a guaranteed efficient communication chain running from the Chief to the community’s households. One unique feature of this model is that messages can be targeted to specific clusters of recipients in the community.
The community passes information to the chief mainly through text messages, which he forwards to the four-digit code and are sent to the whole community as sms.

“If a place is being robbed, someone will send me a message and I will forward to 8988, and everyone else will get it. The only problem is, even the thieves are subscribed to the service so they get the messages.” Chief Kariuki

To respond to the chief’s tweets, the community members will either call or text the chief/village elders or sub-chief, depending on who sent the message.

On talking to the community members, the team learnt that, as much as no all of them are registered, they all ensure that they have a means of accessing information sent by the chief through the twitter, fast and effectively. Most receive the message through their neighbours’, family members and business partners. It was interesting to learn that all the community members spoken to either were following the chief, or had access to the information sent.

The chief does not actively use face book to community to the community members. He attributed this to the fact that he cannot reach as many people as he does with twitter. But he has a Facebook page created for the location.
Different stakeholders in the community, such as ministries, NGOs and churches, private institutions of higher learning and schools pass messages to the chief, and he in turn passes the same to the community.

Since the introduction of the 8988 platform, the chief no longer uses posters to communicate, but still holds barazas as required by law.
8.2 Learning from the twitter Chief

For a source of information to be successful, the following is vital;

- Trust
- Consistency
- Relevance
- Easy to access
- Understanding the different segments of the community – market segmentation

8.2.1 Trust

“It takes time to build a name and earn peoples trust… I have tried my best to distance myself from the old believe that a chief has to get bribes to offer services, I use the twitter to ensure that I inform everyone of services that are offered by the government and we select beneficiaries democratically ” Chief Kariuki

In most of the communities visited, the most common source of information was the village elders and the opinion leaders. This was mainly attributed to the fact that they are trusted by the community. As mentioned by chief Kariuki, the two groups take time and patience to build trust among the community members. This was a great learning in developing trust for the CMC at the community.

8.2.2 Consistency

“I have over time sent messages that have helped people, so the community has now come to trust me, and look at me as the communication channel that will solve their problem” Chief Kariuki
“in this work you have to have the passion to do it, have trained my neighbouring chiefs and I have never seen a single tweet from them. You need to be passionate about what you are doing, I want Kenyans to have a different image on what a chief is supposed to be, I want to change the stereotype of a chief and bribes and so on” Chief Kariuki

A communication channel needs regularity in delivery of information; this ensures that the community can depend on the channel to get information. This is a vital aspect in developing content.

Consistency also calls for a passionate work force that will not suffer from the risk of monotony and therefore leading to fatigue

8.2.3 Relevance

“I have to be very careful what I send to people, it has to be official or motivational” Chief Kariuki

The type of message conveyed to the community should be the type of information that would benefit them. This is information that will keep them interested in the CMC. It is therefore important to find the right middle ground that ensures that all the different segments of the community are well represented.

8.3 Understanding the different segments of the community - market segmentation

“you need to know who you are working with, people are not all the same, like here, I have doctors, I have army officers and at the same time I have the village people who are not educated, so I handle all of them differently and I have different meetings with each group. Because their needs are very different” Chief Kariuki

Different community members have different communication needs. It is therefore significant to clearly distinguish between the different types of community members and their information needs. This ensures that the content represents all community members.
8.4 Ease of use

Given the low literacy levels of the communities, a simple, easy to use communication channel that the community can easily access is preferred. Community members will also prefer a communication channel that gives fast and reliable solutions to their problems.

“When they lose their cattle, children or even other items that are stolen, am able to tweet, where everyone gets that message and action is taken immediately. For example, the other day a man fell in a fresh pit latrine and was able to make a call to his wife, I twitted and a few hours later, we found him” Chief Kariuki

“I have also used the tweeter to call people for various services, for example when we have kazi kwa vijana work, I tweet and everyone comes to the office and we vote as per village and choose who gets to work” Chief Kariuki

9. LESSONS FROM OTHER CICs

9.1 Kisapuk Community Learning Centre

Kisapuk Community Learning Centre in Kajiado had the highest usage among the model centres visited. This could be attributed to;

a) Community involvement from the onset – the community was involved in the setting up of the centre form the initial stages. All decisions were made with the involvement of the community.

b) Community capacity building – the implementing organization conducted community capacity building sessions on the importance of ICT.

c) Community ownership – the community fully owns and manages the community learning centre.

d) Services offered – other than computer and internet services, the centre also offers phone
charging services, entertainment through a television set at the centre and other services such as typing, printing and scanning. This has helped attract the community to the centre. By providing these services, the centre has also provided a solution to a challenge the community has had for a long time due to lack of electricity. The community members now have a place to have their mobile phones charged and also watch television.

9.2 G-Youth Career Resource Centre

G-youth Career Centre in Garissa has the kind of facilities described as ideal by most communities. It has 30 internet enabled computers in total and the facility has designated separate sections for men and women. This notwithstanding, the centres usage seemed very low, a factor attributed to lack of involvement of the community during the implementation of the project. The community is also not involved in the day to day running of the centre. During the study only a handful of young people came in to use the facility and no woman at all in 48 hours.

9.3 Isinya and Baringo ALIN Maarifa Centres

These two information centres are managed using similar guidelines developed by the implementing agency, ALIN, but have a difference in levels of usage. This perhaps could
be attributed to the location of the centres, where the Isinya-Kajiado centre is located a few kilometres from the villages while the Ilng’arua- Baringo centre is located at the Ilng’arua shopping centre. ALIN has two centres in Baringo, with the original centre established at the KARI centre close to Marigat town. Respondents to the study in the town indicated that the location was rather intimidating, formal and unfriendly to informal or casual access. This created a perception that the community was only expected to use the centre for official enquiries or with formal appointments as opposed to an information centre.
COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS
PART VIII - COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS

1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

As provided for in the ToR, the study team took time to visit some community radio stations that have, in some ways, been serving as information centres. It was clear that community ownership of the radio stations was achieved much more easily than that of the CIC. This could be attributed to the fact that any radio station broadcasting in local language was referred to as “our” radio, by the community and was perceived as beneficial to the community. This sense of ownership and belonging applied even in areas that did not have a community radio station, as the community hopes to have one set up to meet their information needs and to put them on the same platform as others who already have vernacular radio stations. One key observation made was that, the community is not keen on who the actual frequency owner is, as long as the station is based in their locality and broadcasts are in the local language, they embrace it as their own.

A universal finding regarding community radio stations was that most of them were set up with staff who had no training in broadcasting, media operations or even institution management. Majority of the pioneer staff at the stations visited were working on voluntary basis, without guidance from any professional. This volunteer team got a few weeks training at most and then were released to operate the radio station.

It was the responsibility of this semi-trained team to train any subsequent staff who join the station later on. This background presented a challenge in terms of;

a) Programming and content – the content was not guided by a professional and therefore risked going against ethics.

b) Management systems.

c) Staff turnover – the staff lacked motivation and most left, therefore interrupting consistency.
The stations management still lack expertise in, administration, finance and technical management. This was evident where the management in some of the stations were unaware of CCK rules and regulations guiding the governance of community radio stations.

The audience rates the community radio stations at the same level with the commercial radio stations, putting little consideration into the difference in management. This therefore puts the community radio stations at a disadvantage where they are expected to maintain the same standard with the commercial radio stations and yet adhere to the strict rules that do not apply to commercial radios.

2. SPECIFIC COMMUNITY STATION FINDINGS

2.1 Serian FM

2.1.1 Inception and Operations

a) Located at Maralal town in Samburu County, the radio station was part of eight licenses issued to the MAA speaking communities by the CCK in the mid-2000s but of all of them; only Serian FM was set up. The other frequencies that were intended to cover other parts of Rift Valley and Kajiado lacked a vision bearer and were repossessed by CCK for remaining latent for more than two years. The concept of the community radio station was developed by an umbrella women group, RETO women group with the aim of implementing a project at the community that would bring about unity and cohesion, as well as provide an avenue for information dissemination. The positioning of the station in a women’s group translated to immense goodwill from the community, across the genders even cutting across cultural norms, where the Maasai woman is hardly recognised. The station launched programming in 2006 much of it being done in the local Samburu language for an average of 13 hours.

b) Serian station’s success is chiefly credited to the local Member of Parliament, who has supported the women group set up, through the Constituency Development Fund. The Funds was used to meet costs of the construction of the buildings that house the station as well as buy some of the equipment. The station’s 30-metre mast was constructed with funding from ALRMP. The station still receives financial support from CDF since it has been mainstreamed as a project for the common good of the community.
c) The station has had success in terms of content provision and building a good reputation as the key source of information for the community. The community also uses the station as a platform for sharing information relevant to the community. These successes are mainly attributed to the enthusiasm of the staff, some of who are volunteers. The station staff responses indicated a strong liking for broadcasting and media work and a dedication to the community.

d) The running of the station is overseen by a board, which includes different stakeholders drawn from the community, while day-to-day running of the station is handled by a station manager. The station manager has gained a much of his skill on the job. He has multiple tasks at the doubling up as a presenter, editor and producer. Administrative duties are managed by an administrator who also doubles up as a presenter. There are five other presenters and a technician.

e) Despite the fact that the station has not conducted any formal audience information needs research yet, it is flexible to audience needs and often tailors its programming to suit the listeners’ demands. An example given by the broadcast team was the introduction of a segment to address the information needs of the morans, and a presenter was brought on board,

“We brought him because we needed someone to address the morans. He was a moran himself and as such they would listen to him as a peer. At first he came in as a guest in a talk show but he ended up becoming a regular presenter” Station Manager, Serian FM.

f) The station is mainly financed through programme sponsorship by NGOs running projects in Samburu area. The station has a working financial plan and budget which is reviewed on annually and submitted to the local CDF Committee for consideration. The station accounts are supervised and largely managed by members of the board.

g) Reto Women group have now embarked on developing the station into an information centre, and has already set in motion a project to open library and internet facilities at the station premises. This initiative will be funded by a donor but will be managed by the group.
h) Threats - The station risks political interference given the continued endorsement by the local legislator and financial assistance from the CDF. There also is the risk that the station may not be sustainable in the event that the CDF is withdrawn.

2.2 Kangema FM

2.2.1 Inception and Operations

a) The station is one of the four operational community radio stations, Suswa, Kangema, Budalangi and Kwale, under the Kenya Meteorological Departments RANET-Kenya Project. The core mandate of the RANET stations is monitoring weather, recording weather data and disseminating weather information to local communities in their own language.

b) Each of the RANET-Kenya Project stations is intended to have a weather station to monitor atmospheric changes within a locality.

c) Kangema station was established in the year 2008 by the local MP in collaboration with the Kenya Meteorology Department. It started off with a staff of five presenters, selected from different localities within the constituency, broadcasting in the local Kikuyu language. The five presenters had different professional backgrounds such as accounts, teaching and electrical engineering. The five were engaged on full voluntary basis for the first one year, and given the mandate to generate income from their own creativity to maintain the station and sustain themselves. In 2009, KMD deployed one of its officers to the station as the station manager and gave him mandate to recruit five more staff to work as stringers from the surrounding administrative locations.

d) All the staff are trained as weather observers and are assigned daily duties of collecting readings from weather instruments at the station. These readings are sent to the KMD headquarters in Nairobi via internet or mobile phone sms for interpretation and consequent generation of information for dissemination through the station broadcasts.

e) The administrator plays the role of a middleman between the station and the community in matters of the broadcasts and weather patterns. The presenters work eight hours a day - spending four hours preparing the programme and four hours on-air.
f) KMD absorbed the station’s staff as information officers and began to remunerate them in 2009 when it became apparent that the self-sustenance model of the station was not sufficient.

g) The station policy maintains non-partisanship in religion and keeps politics out of its menu of programme content. This has been adopted to guard against political interference and perceptions of religious affiliation.

h) Programme content is designed to cater for a general audience in the community and there is an audience feedback/participation facility through phone-in.

i) The station has a loyal listener base who have formed fans clubs and registered them as Community Based Organisations (CBOs). This phenomenon is an indication of the community’s sense of ownership of the station and goodwill.

j) The station manager promotes the station through community activities, DCs barazas, World Meteorology Open days and most of all word of mouth.

k) Challenges faced by the station include limited signal since the region is dominated by hills, lack of clear operational guidelines, and lack of standardized language for weather broadcasts, minimal training of staff in journalism and media practice.

l) Lack of clear cut roles of each stakeholder in terms of broadcast equipment maintenance.

m) The station manager develops regular budgets and financial plans for the stations which are often guided by the previous year’s earnings.

n) Financing – The principal financier of the station is KMD although the station has a few income generating activities such as selling of greeting cards and programme sponsorship. There has been minimum contribution from the local CDF kitty though this is irregular.

o) The station structure is not clear since there is an assistant manager seconded to the station by the CDF Committee, whose role is not defined. There also seem to be some misunderstandings between the station’s board whose representatives are drawn from the community and the KMD, in terms of meeting expenses of the station.
APPROACHES TO EARLY WARNING INFORMATION DISSEMINATION
Early warning systems help to reduce economic losses and mitigate the number of injuries or deaths from a disaster, by providing information that allows individuals and communities to protect their lives and property. Early warning information empowers people to take action when a disaster close to happening. If well integrated with risk assessment studies and communication and action plans, early warning systems can lead to substantive benefits.

Predictions and EW information is only useful when it is translated into a warning and action plan the community can understand and the information must reach the public in a timely manner. Early warnings may be disseminated to targeted users (local early warning applications) or broadly to communities, regions or to media (regional or national early warning applications).

An effective early warning system needs an effective communication system.

Early warning communication systems are made of two main components

- Communication infrastructure hardware that must be reliable and robust, especially during the disasters; and

- Appropriate and effective interactions among the main actors of the early warning process such as the community, stakeholders, decision makers, the public, and the media.

Currently in ASAL, EW information dissemination has gaps and the result is limited access of communities to vital information and hardly any feedback from communities regarding EW.
In the regions visited during the study, the team observed that DMOs have retained traditional communication tools and there is a disjointed communication cycle as shown below.

**Figure 5. Current Early Warning Information Dissemination in ASALs - Kenya**

- NDMA OFFICE
  - EW information
  - EW information

- DMO OFFICE

- Mass Media
- KRDP/NDMA website and bulletins
- Chief office
- DSG

EW messages lack continuity and there is no feedback from community.

Ministries, NGOS and other member stakeholders

COMMUNITY MEMBERS
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY MULTI MEDIA CENTRES

A Model for Arid and Semi Arid Lands
PART I

A STRATEGY AND MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY MULTIMEDIA CENTRES

1.1 Overview

Communities in Arid and Semi-Arid areas (ASALs) are regularly confronted by a combination of complex disasters. Each year, more and more people are adversely affected by natural hazards, such as drought and floods, as well as crop and livestock disease. These natural disasters often result in loss of lives, assets and livelihoods; they weaken the social support systems and substantially erode development gains.

One of the challenges for people living in ASALs is availability of relevant, accurate, judicious and timely information, which is critical towards safeguarding their livelihoods. The lack of access to this vital resource by communities is mainly attributed to the geographical terrain which limits infrastructure development, insecurity and expansiveness of the area, leading to increased vulnerability.

Premised on documented and tested findings, use of modern technologies (Information & Communication Technologies) would be imperative in addressing this gap. As has been evidenced through pilot projects in the country and other parts of the developing world, the convergence of technologies (internet, video, voice and telephony) enables communities to set up facilities that encompass these tools and leverage their capacities.

In September 2000, world leaders adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration outlines specific targets with a deadline of 2015. The targets are now widely referred to as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Goal 8 of the MDGs involves development of a global partnership for development. One of the targets under this goal calls for cooperation with private sector and making available the benefits of new technologies, especially information communications.

This strategy focuses on effectively harnessing Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as enablers of development both at the individual and community levels. ICT tools can
also be tapped into for creation of economic opportunities, contribution to poverty reduction and a medium for communication and information sharing.

1.2 Metamorphosis of Community Multimedia Centres

The first attempts to improve access to information involved establishing collections of books and printed material – *Community Libraries*.

In the early 1970s, *Community Information Centres* began to appear. Their focus was on acquiring, processing, storing and disseminating the information that was needed by the community that they served. They were, therefore, less passive than the community libraries.

During the 1980s, the nature of *community information centres* began to reflect the growing importance of *Information and Communication Technology* in creating, storing, transmitting and communicating information. Telecentres and community IT centres became the new buzz-words.

As the 1990s came to an end, a new designation began to be used – multipurpose community telecentres. It reflected the way that technological change, particularly the development of the internet, had greatly extended the range of activities that could be undertaken by telecentres.

Since 2000, a further function has been added – *community broadcasting*. A *Community Multimedia Centre* combines local radio by local people in local languages with a public tele-centre facility offering access to internet, e-mail, computer training and a range of services and activities that meet development needs.

In recent years, with the growth of the internet and the transition to information and knowledge-based societies, we have become more and more conscious of the importance of learning and knowledge as a basis for individual, community, economic and social development.

The common purpose that underlies all the CMCs is to achieve equality of access to information; or, at least, to reduce levels of inequality. The importance of information has grown in recent years with the transition to information- and knowledge-based communities.

Community-based information and technology centres have come a long way since the early community libraries of the 1960s. CMCs, as currently structured, place an even greater emphasis on learning and skills development, which is driven by the dramatic growth of
information on the internet. Furthermore, the information content is more sophisticated and interactive. Furthermore, the development of e-government and e-commerce has had a profound impact on the lives of people in remote communities.

Digital technology has also become cheaper and easier to use. People and communities are now using the technology for more than just accessing information from the internet. The question is: Will they do so collectively through the development of Community Multimedia Centres?

1.3 Radio & Information Communication Technology

The result of bringing the traditional community radio and the ICTs together in a novel manner is the genesis of Community Multimedia Centre (CMC). It combines community broadcasting with community tele-centre facilities and offers a strategy that integrates new and traditional information and communication systems at the local level, under some form of community ownership with the aim to serve as a communication and information platform for the community’s development needs. The basic idea behind this model is to make maximum use of the synergies between the radio and tele-centre components.

When community radio and new ICTs are actively combined, they offer far greater possibilities for engaging a community in its own development. The possibilities generated by the combination of the two are not confined to quantity or range; the qualitative nature of these possibilities also changes. This is because of the particularly dynamic relationship between communication and information, between contact and content. The combination of a grassroots public platform with access to information highways promotes the public debate and public accountability that are essential for strengthening democracy and good governance. The combination of local radio with a community database developed by local people, building up a store of relevant data for educational, informational and developmental requirements, provides a solid knowledge base for the community and an open learning infrastructure for all its members. It also takes into account the preference of rural communities for a collective assimilation of knowledge, in contrast to the prevailing mode of individual access to Internet.

The community harnesses radio’s great reach and its potential for enabling local people to relay local content in locally-used languages; it then links these characteristics to the provision of computer training, access to internet and other digital resources. Radio becomes a very effective bridge between people especially those with low literacy levels and in rural, remote or deprived urban areas and the services offered by the tele-centre.
Within this basic framework, CMCs can be of several different types, often determined by factors in the local, national or regional context. If, for example, national broadcasting legislation does not yet allow community radio to have access to the airwaves but allows unrestricted access to Internet or cable networks, then the radio component can be Internet or cable based. In another important area, that of community ownership, this principle which is common to all CMCs can be translated into a variety of practical arrangements.

Moreover, the radio station also functions as a public access point for internet. As in any telecentre, people can come and access information with the guidance of trained volunteers on a cost recovery basis. There are some CMCs which maintain e-mail accounts for community members and inform the recipient over the radio, to come and collect the e-mail from the station.

This differs from the telecentre approach. With telecenters you need to establish everything from the very beginning and one is not sure of the sustainability in rural areas, when depending solely on the access fee. In a way, the combination of radio and the internet subsidizes the access cost because interfacing the internet provides opportunities for the radio to increase its income. Telecenters or internet cafés provide very little or no opportunities for communities to discuss internet derived content in local language. It is of course a business model that can be used by small entrepreneurs, mostly located in urban areas where people often use them to send e-mails. Internet cafés are less used by rural people for internet access, unless access costs are underwritten through some project fund. This is why most pilot telecenter projects continue to require disproportionate funds to sustain their operations.

1.4 The CMC Concept

A CMC is a cross-cutting service delivery platform for all institutions and agencies operating in the field of local development, both reaching specific target groups and responding to the needs and demands of the whole community through its mix of technologies and people-oriented services.

The computers with Internet, e-mail and CD-ROM offer access to national and international news, educational material, advice on agriculture and health issues, weather forecasts, market prices, games and entertainment and much more. CMC volunteers and visitors can access the information directly via computer - or the information can be selected, edited, translated into local languages and broadcasted to a much wider public through the community radio.
The radio becomes a bridge between the information sources and those members of the community who will never think of using a computer - especially those with low literacy levels, the poor, or those living in remote areas. Low-cost and easy to operate, the radio both informs, educates and entertains, and empowers the community by giving a strong public voice to the voiceless, encouraging greater accountability in public affairs. Information gathered by the radio can be adapted for dissemination via Internet.

CMCs also generate income from computer training and services such as fax, telephone, printing, photocopying, production of invitations, pamphlets, business cards, radio publicity, etc.

1.5 Advantages of CMCs

Viewed against other traditional frameworks like the telecentres and community information centres, CMCs have an immense advantage:-

a) CMCs are based on a simple methodology. The idea is to use community broadcasters as intermediaries between people and internet. They can interpret the information in the local language and people can have indirect access to cyberspace, through the radio, by directing their queries to the trained broadcasters, who not only obtain relevant information but also contextualize it thereby creating new knowledge. This process is very important because information itself cannot create knowledge unless it is discussed and moulded to the local context. Community radio is an efficient tool for this contextualization process.

b) Costs are reduced considerably by having community access rather than individual access. In addition this access enables community radio stations to create a social space for interaction within and between communities.

c) By combining these facilities, it becomes possible to ensure sustainability as radio is a more sustainable operation. By simply adding the ICT component, one would have simply provided an added value and made it all the more sustainable. Although connectivity costs still remain a factor, the investment in CMCs has immediate returns because internet information enriches the broadcast programme content and radio has the possibility to provide information otherwise inaccessible without internet embedded information.

1.5 Disadvantages of CMCs

a) The medium is opaque – There is an aspect of impersonality e.g. when one makes a call to a radio station, one may not know how many people he/she is talking to.
b) CMCs are perceived to erode cultural practices in communities where they are located.

c) They are perceived by communities as being elitist – One requires special skills in ICT in order to use them

1.6 CMCs and the Community

CMCs cause the community to enjoy virtual cohesion. Although they all stay at different and distant locations, they are inter-connected via the CMC through its internet platform, mobile phone network and the radio station. Thus, farmers could form an online community, and teachers could do the same. Community web-blogs are an excellent platform to amplify the flow of ideas without the constraints of time and geography. Other groups served by CMCs include:-

a) Students

The CMC will offer services to younger populations who are likely to be more ICT savvy by providing them access to endless knowledge resources and global/local career opportunities and platform.

b) Farmers

Older members of the community will find the model CMC a useful resource as it will provide them access to modern agricultural technology and practices; market opportunities for their farm products and inputs; and greater exposure to ICTs.

c) Women

Though women play a crucial role in community, they have often been excluded from decision making processes and access to information. A key service to be offered by the model CMC is to provide a forum for rural women to get engaged in income generating activities, resulting in socio-economic advancement to families and societies at large; and to facilitate access to information that improves their family lives.

d) Traders

Greater exchange of market information is necessary for trade to flourish. A successful seller must be fully informed about domestic as well as global trends. CMCs enable sellers to learn about new products in the market, to anticipate demand; and to understand pricing strategies. They get the required information and market prices from the designated portals and websites with the help of entrepreneurs.
e) Community based institutions
The CMC will offer services to organizations and institutions working at the community level. This will include churches, mosques, schools, CBOs, NGOs, women groups and youth groups.

f) Government officials
The CMC will serve as a central source of information for the government officials based at the community. It will also provide them with a platform through which they can disseminate their information to the community.

1.7 Services Offered by CMCs

a) Website services
Through a specially developed website, the CMC provides the local community with a tailor-made site with all the necessary links and information portals, so that new users need not any other website, all their needs can be found on the site.

b) Information Services
Since the advent of the Internet, its popularity of being an unlimited source of information has grown exponentially. Nowadays, anyone can search the Internet for any kind of information. Finding any kind of information using a search engine is both popular and very easy.

c) Communication Services
In case of communication, the latest Internet based services such as email and instant messaging are now possible right from the nearest CMC. Community members can find information about websites and links to websites that guides them through the use of such communication methods as e-mail, internet browsing and instant messaging.

d) Access to Government Information
People need information in the public domain from time to time for various purposes and in this regard, they need access to government information. CMC offer access to government information and portals.

For the line ministries and other development agencies, the CMC provides a platform to gather accurate and relevant information and its subsequent dissemination conveniently and faster to target communities for necessary action.
e) Common Platform for Knowledge Sharing

CMCs provide a forum for people for various communities operating from far-flung locations to come together to exchange knowledge and information that can be of greater utility to them. This is a win-win situation for both receiver and provider of knowledge and results in greater benefit of the society at large.

f) Bridging the Digital Divide

Now people, in general, do not have to travel long distances to get information on education, health, jobs, government services etc. Since CMCs are normally located within the community, they create new possibilities for them. In addition, they have an emotional impact on the society.

g) Telecentre Services

CMCs offer people living in rural areas with e-mail address and other communication facilities. Since mobile phones are a common feature in the rural areas, it is possible for them to be accessed via chat rooms, etc.

2. THE HUB AND SPOKES MODEL

Using the hub and spokes model, CMCs have connectivity, information and a dissemination strategy. This model is designed to empower rural families with new information, knowledge and skills and should be implemented at the last-mile of the communication strategy. This model is superior in its approach since it targets the most remote vulnerable groups. In the hub and spokes model, the local population has a sense of ownership of the CMC. It is community managed and controlled, and information provided is demand-and user-driven. The local population makes an investment towards the CMC usually at its inception or establishment, and that generates a sense of ownership and pride while creating an economic stake in the operation of the centre.

In terms of information, the CMC becomes the principal source of information and the key conduit for intra-community information.
Figure 7. Hub and Spokes Model: Information is disseminated from the CMC to the Community and the community uses the CMC to share information with others.
1. OVERVIEW

The proposed model Community Multimedia Centre (CMC) will combine video, print media, ICTs and radio. This model is highly cost-effective in the way it maximizes the use of resources and the potential impact of ICT within the community. The model will provide a fusion of telecommunications, Broadcasting & computing services to the community with a view to improving its capability to meet its information needs.

The model will be a one-stop shop for the community’s communication and information needs which consists of community radio; internet accessibility, library or information resource, ICT Training and mobile telephony services.

The basic idea behind this model is to make maximum use of the synergies between the radio, computers and internet components. The model can have all units share premises, management and other structural arrangements and the potential impact of ICT within the community. It will also act as a community cultural centre so as to tap into community mobilization and ownership process. In addition, the model will benefit from the cultural approach to development, which organizes development activities around events – shows, gatherings, exhibitions and competitions while drawing on the traditional arts, crafts and creative skills of the community.

1.1 Characteristics

An ideal Community Multimedia Centre must be designed and structured to offer, at the very minimum, the following services to the community.

a) A local radio station that broadcasts to the local community in local language(s)
b) Availability of Tele-centre facilities and services

c) Provision of computer training services

d) Access to the Internet and related services

e) Provision of training for the development of radio programs

f) Provision of training in digitization and videography

g) Provision of relevant library materials and services

h) Provision of community outreach programs

i) Provision of a platform for community assembly and interaction

j) Digital resources

### 1.2 Location

The ideal location for the CMC must be identified in a secure community owned or any other such facility as shall be provided by the community or sponsoring organization.

a) The location of the site should be free from danger of flooding, seepage and dampness.

b) The location should be at a safe distance from the sources of mechanical vibrations like railway tracks.

c) The location should be convenient for delivery and movement of equipment.

d) The walls and ceiling should be painted with plastic emulsion paint of choice colour.

e) The floor of the computer room should be strong enough to support the combined load of UPS, Computers and Communication Equipment.

f) The facility should be secure enough to guard against vandalism and theft of the equipment. Iron grills should be fitted on the windows and doors for security.

g) Adequate furniture should be made available at the CIC for the staff, equipment and storage.
h) Since the atmospheric conditions in ASALs are dusty and extremely hot, the facility must provide for air-conditioning and protection against dust.

1.3 Availability of power

The proposed model requires one or preferably two links of reliable sources of electricity to avoid any break-down of services due to power interruptions. The CMC must have connection to regular electricity supply and a generator. It is possible that in some locations, an exploration of alternative sources of energy such as solar power can be considered.

1.4 Ownership and Investment

Ownership for the proposed CMC will be critical for its success and operation. However, the type of ownership may vary widely. The hosting will provide a good home for stability and support for the CMC. In order for the community to “own” the facility, it is prudent that it makes a formal investment in the CMC. This can be in the form of land on which the CMC will be located; or provide the necessary labour for free in the re-development and maintenance of the facility.

1.5 Governance

A widely accepted indicator of good governance is that the CMCs become self-owned and self-managed in the long run. There is a correlation between the success of a CMC in meeting community information needs, and its relationship with a development-oriented NGO or other locally based institution. “Where CMCs work best is where they quite clearly align with other community based organizations providing services.” UNESCO, 2010. The CMC must establish a community based steering committee to ensure the CMC is serving community interests. The composition and active involvement of the steering committee demonstrate that the CMC is embedded in the community as a strong and vital community institution.

1.6 Management

A centralized management structure is an important success factor for the CMC. It provides the CMC with overall oversight of the functions of the centre. This is usually achieved through the appointment of a single manager or a board member as the lead supervisor for operations of the entire CMC.
1.7 Staffing and training

Recruitment, management, and training of staff and volunteers is a key component that determines the success of the CMC. The centre must employ sufficient staff complement for continuity of its operations. The depth of management structure, remuneration and technical skills are key components that must be considered while recruiting. Although CMCs recruit volunteers who end up being promoted into full time staff positions, it is advisable that this be kept to a bare minimum.

In planning for the CMC, consideration needs to be given to building up a “middle management” level for the centre to take some of the day to day operations burden off centre manager so he/she can focus on strategic planning, community ownership and diversification of programming. The risk of over-burdening the manager can also be mitigated through a strong and involved local steering committee or through a management model in which the CMC is hosted/owned by a locally based NGO or other community organization.

Staff must be helped to keep up to date with new and emerging approaches to technology and management. Peer to peer education and experiential learning opportunities could be very successful. The centre must consider partnering with other CMCs to foster staff exchanges, where training and content production staffs have a chance to go to another centre to observe for a while. Usage of online training and courses should also be developed and encouraged.

1.8 Technical specifications

The installation of a new CMC should be based on careful technical design and equipment specification to ensure that facilities are suited to their purpose and achieve the best value within the available budget. Media production facilities, computer networks and communication systems all require specialist technical expertise. Installation of equipment and software must be undertaken with particular attention to any potential hazards to health and safety such as faulty electrical wiring.

2. EQUIPPING THE CMC

Since the CMC incorporates the features of community broadcasting with those of community telecentres. Radio (or TV) studios and facilities for production and broadcast
are combined with access to telephone, Internet, email, fax and printing. This is not simply a case of putting different technologies under one roof, the CMC must aim to be an integrated broadcast and communications centre.

2.1 The Community Radio Station

Together with the infrastructure, the sound studio and the mast, a community radio requires the following items at the bare minimum:

- A broadcasting console
- A production mixing desk
- A cassette players
- A minidisk recorders and players
- CD players
- Microphones with stands
- Portable minidisks
- Micro reporter kits
- Amplifier and speakers
- Headphones.
- Record turntables
- Mobile Phone Set
- A Sound balance unit
- Computers
- A red light and green light microphone live
- Back up Generator

2.2 Video recording suite

- A digital camcorder
- A tripod stand
- A microphone
- A multimedia computer with video editing cards and software
- Wide screen monitors
2.3 Computers

Computers are a major component of the CMC. They will be used for training the community on ICT skills; office administration; public access to the Internet and email; and can be used for media production including programme research, script writing and sound editing. The computers should be capable of providing access to the Internet, basic office tools such as word processing, spread sheets and databases, and appropriate multimedia applications such as digital sound editing, graphic design tools and web authoring tools. The computers must be capable of handling media production services too. The CMC should have at least a couple of computers for administration, radio programme production and management, and to provide access to users.

2.4 Computer Software

All computers require to be installed with an operating system, an antivirus and applications for word processing, email access, web-browsing, database management and training skills as a standard for every CMC. Due to the cost implications related to procurement of software,

Figure 8. Illustration of Community Radio based CMC
usage of open source software should be encouraged. However, it is possible for the CMCs to enter into a working relationship with Microsoft for the provision of such software.

### 2.5 Networking

In order to allow users to share and exchange files between computers, share resources such as printers and Internet access and simplify regular backup files, a local area network must be installed by the CMCs as a standard. There are various forms of networking that can be adapted to meet the needs of the CMCs. However, it would be advisable to mix fixed cable and wireless technologies in order to cater for mixed requirements of the centres.

### 2.6 Internet Connectivity

The Internet is the main resource for information sharing and networking. To enable the CMCs access and benefit from this immense resource, it is imperative that a scalable and more cost effective solution be installed at the centre. The proposed model is linkage of Safaricom (local mobile telephony provider in Kenya) through their foundation to offer connectivity services to the CMCs. This approach will ease the burden of connectivity costs from the centres. However, in the event that Safaricom does not avail these services under their development arm, it is still the preferred model. This approach is more reliable than the traditional models where the centre installs its own VSAT as it shifts the responsibility of maintenance to the service provider.

### 2.7 Power Backup

To ensure continuity of business for the proposed CMC, a standby generator and UPS units will be required for the radio equipment and the computers.

### 2.8 Insurance

In order to protect the community against loss of their equipment through natural disasters, thefts or any other form of loss; it is important that consideration be given to insuring the equipment. This way there is a better chance of communities recovering their equipment in the event of an accident.
3. SUCCESS FACTORS

The radio component of a CMC generates the excitement and passion for building a sustainable community and for strengthening social and cultural ties within the community. Additionally, the telecentre components add digital tools to improve radio production; enrich content and news from outside of the community through access to the internet; and diversify staffing, audiences and revenues.

Young people gather at the centres to learn new skills, to explore new worlds together, and to gain the confidence that they too are as connected and capable as young people in urban centres. Telecentre services (including in some cases simple phone services) help local people to maintain ties with relatives who have left their villages for other economic or educational opportunities.

Local administrators use CMCs to increase public awareness and participation in local decision-making. Development workers find new funding resources through the internet. Teachers get more empowered by being able to source more information to develop better curriculum materials. In particular the key factors contributing to successful community communication and information facilities:

a) Building on existing facilities, channels and social networks for communications within the community in order to foster ownership and/or long term community commitment

b) Diversification of revenues, including capacity to approach local/national governments for delivery of services and the international donor community for project funding

c) Good integration of radio and telecentre components

d) Access to tools and expertise developed by UNESCO and others

e) An orientation to development

f) The link to education: reinforcing existing programmes and introducing new opportunities to study and learn

g) Diversification of local content to meet community needs, including promotion of local culture

h) Social mobilisation through listeners clubs and self-help groups
i) Social inclusion: addressing UNESCO’s mainstreaming considerations for marginalised groups, gender, and youth

j) Environmental management as an overlooked niche

k) Library services as a new opportunity

### 4. SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH

The capacity of projects to endure after the exit of the donor organization has been cited as a major barrier to development in ASALs. Sustainability is therefore a key consideration of our model CMC. “The problem with our country today is that we have too many NGOs in the ASAL and yet no impact is felt. This is because they (donors) come in, start projects, and since they cannot be on the ground forever, when they leave, the project ends. So the community DOES NOT really benefit” District Officer 1, Merti District.

Community based projects are expected to be sustainable, i.e. they have to survive and develop after an initial three year period of donor funding. Sustainability is a complex issue and viewed from a wider perspective, it goes beyond financial autonomy, which is only one of many elements that can bring about long-term change in any given community. Sustainability cannot thrive on funds alone. Rather, sustainability depends on social, institutional and financial viability.
The model CMC will be structured as a social for-profit outfit with a high level of community involvement in its decision-making processes, through a steering committee. It should earn revenue and seek to achieve financial sustainability by balancing for-profit and not-for-profit activities. Some of its services will be offered free or at discretionary rates to students and other disadvantaged groups within the community in accordance with community needs and development priorities.

4.1 Principles for Sustainability

4.1.1 Community Participation

Community participation will be the most important element for making a multimedia centre successful and sustainable. Fostering community participation in the design, establishment and continuous improvement of a multimedia centre helps the community to develop a sense of ownership and commitment to its successful operation.

4.1.2 Instilling a social vision

Each multimedia centre will be planned and established in a way that integrates it with other spaces and communication activities that are already operating successfully within the community such as community organizations or schools. The management of a community multimedia centre will reflect a social vision of its activities and will use the technologies and tools that are most appropriate for addressing local problems.

4.1.3 Economic alternatives

A sound business plan, stressing market knowledge, economical use of resources and revenue generating capacity, will be critical for running a multimedia centre. However, the activities of a Community Multimedia centre will be regarded as a social service, so that its development mission can be sustained over time.

4.1.4 Social and cultural Context

The activities of a community Multimedia centre will take account of the social and cultural context in which it operates, and respond appropriately to that context so as to be viable. If people in the community empowered by the community multimedia centre, they will be more active in seeking ways to keep it running. Men and women have different needs when it comes to Community Multimedia centre, and different possibilities and interests with regard to its use. Similarly, youth and adults have different expectations, and running a community multimedia centre will come to terms with these differences in context.
4.1.5 Technological Availability

This is especially the case since digital technologies are changing so swiftly, which means that equipment and programs rapidly become out-dated. It is vital that the technology employed by the CMC is available sustainably at all times.

4.1.6 Staff Integration

The opportunities for training, staff exchanges and networking should be provided for staff of CMCs who have similar responsibilities (radio production, training, social mobilization). Guidelines should be developed on appropriate uses of volunteers, with sensitivity to expectations for recognition and compensation, potential family conflicts particularly with young volunteers, ensuring budget lines for incentives, and managing the cycle of new and departing volunteers. The CMC manager should be both entrepreneurial and development oriented.

4.1.7 Local content

The success of community multimedia centre is closely related to speaking the language and culture of the community they serve, building appropriate content relevant to community needs, and facilitating a permanent process of democratic participation, empowerment and appropriation of the communication process.

A strong role for the CMCs in development programming, including the preparation of appropriate local content and training materials, and social mobilization through cooperatives/self-help groups needs to be promoted. Good integration of the multimedia centre and radio functions must be achieved and monitored.

4.2 Dimension of Sustainability

4.2.2 Social and Cultural Sustainability

The CMC will take account of the social and cultural context in which it operates and will respond appropriately to that context. If people in the community will be empowered by the centre, they will be more active in seeking ways to keep it running. The centre will fully integrate all the stakeholders in the community and the specific needs of the community in its planning and operations.
4.2.3 Infrastructural and Equipment Sustainability

Infrastructure is the core of multimedia centre operations. Multimedia centre infrastructure is the nerve of its services therefore must be reliable and effective at all times. Stability of services greatly account for consumer confidence and results in a healthy revenue stream. The opposite is true; interrupted services will hurt the reputation of the multimedia centre and affect the revenue stream as well.

In establishing infrastructure there will be need to carefully choose the type of infrastructure and equipment considering the lowest cost and simplest maintenance requirements possible. Community multimedia centres also need to develop technical capacity to operate communication equipment to maintain a stable service. They need at least basic capacity for troubleshooting and risk reduction otherwise they could get stranded for hours over small machine errors and software malfunctioning that do not necessarily require an expert.

Another important element is identification of the best media for delivery of information and communication for the target community. Negligence of the locally preferred communication channels slows down the process of development and reduces the impact that would have accrued from the multimedia centre investment.

4.2.4 Services and Service Appropriateness Sustainability

Appropriate content, training and other community development support services must be carefully developed and maintained by the CMC. Creation of content or repackaging of information will be a continuous process. The Community multimedia centres have to keep reinventing themselves so as to remain at the centre of the community they serve. They have to anticipate trends in usage of ICT, create services and ‘cultivate’ customers. Technologies must be used as a facilitator in this endeavour. Relevance of services will include availing opportunities for assisted access and use of services for those who need help or have never used the service before.

4.2.5 Human Resource Sustainability

The quality of staff will be critical in maintaining the community’s loyalty to the CMC. As such, the quality of staff will be reflected in, but not limited to knowledge and skills in the use of ICTs, interest to learn new skills, marketing and creating tailor made programs, flexibility and teamwork. The staff team will be able to enlist support and cooperation from the community.

A staff team with a vision in ICTs and community development and a drive to learn is the best option. The personality, creativity and endurance of the manager will be central to total
productivity of the staff team, in addition to staff preparedness to respond to information, communication and learning demands of the community. Local capacity must be deliberately developed to that effect. This will make it easy for efforts of solving relevancy of services, marketing of services and mobilization of partnership funding among others.

### 4.2.6 Financial Sustainability

Financial sustainability is a condition when revenue of the Multimedia centre is greater than Community multimedia centre expenditures.

To achieve this highly desired state:

a) It will behave more like a private enterprise in its administration and setting of goals.

b) It will rely on demand-driven approaches by starting with basic services and increasing their service offering in response to the demand of the local market. (it will identify, develop and offer customer-oriented services)

c) There will be diversification of services and therefore development opportunities and revenue.

d) It will be guided by a sound business plan and a long term social and business strategy to ensure survival.

e) The staff of the Community multimedia centres will deal with competition in the provision of ICT services by defining a unique service profile that makes them stand out the competition.

f) The multimedia centre will balance the challenges of community development responsibility, sustainability and making enough profits to pay for the operation to ensure harmony between these competing challenges.

### 4.2.7 Institutional sustainability

The critical issues in achieving institutional sustainability are:

a) **Enabling legislation, regulation and policies**

Where licenses for community media centres exist, the critical issue is that of community ownership and voice. If community media really represent the community and become its
voice then they also become an instrument for establishing and strengthening the vision of a better future.

b) Internal democracy, training and participation

Internal democracy, training and participation in decision-making, programming, development of content, management and accountability are essential. The transparency of the management, the spirit of camaraderie and solidarity among workers, a permanent dialogue in the process of building programmes together and acquiring new skills to serve the community better are all important for sustainability.

c) Management Structures

There can be no institutional sustainability unless there is an effective board of governors, steering committee, or core user groups and unless these are representative, accountable and renewed regularly. There must be clear and appropriate division of responsibilities within the organizational structure.

d) Networking and convergence

Networks can spread the total investment and costs, pool expertise, share good and bad practices. The multimedia centre projects that are associated with community development programmes have more opportunities of success than those operating in isolation.

e) Local institutions and businesses

Local institutions and organizations can support community media if they find it is useful for development. Local Government agencies, NGOs, cooperatives, civil societies and international agencies that contribute in education, agriculture, human rights, or health related programmes may find it very useful to have an alliance with multimedia centre for creating and distributing programming content relevant to their activities. Support from local businesses is also very important to Community Multimedia Centres.
5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Special attention should be devoted to improved monitoring and evaluation systems that facilitate and document progress towards sustainability. Effective M&E of field operations supports sustainability in multiple ways.

- It identifies strengths and weaknesses in project implementation, which makes possible needed adjustments in response to changes in the operating environment.

- It can highlight potential linkages among individual project components that enhance the overall impact of programme interventions.

- It can establish reliable indicators of project sustainability, which is a critical step in gauging progress towards key benchmarks and formulating effective exit strategies.

5.1 Monitoring and evaluation model

“We should have a strengthened community monitoring and evaluation system, that is the only way we will have communities owning and sustaining projects” NDMA CEO

An effective and regular two way flow of information is vital for quality monitoring and evaluation. This will be achieved through a participatory approach, where the community is trained and empowered to conduct monitoring and evaluation of the CMC. This approach will empower the community to continually evaluate the performance of the CMC even after the exit of the implementing organization. The approach also embraces the spirit of the community-managed disaster risk reduction (CMDRR) approach, which includes the implementation of Participatory Disaster Risk Assessment (PDRA).

The proposed model relies on;

- Community capacity building

- Consistent support from the national steering committee and the county steering committee

- Continuous implementation of recommendations from the M&E
6. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

During the Baseline Survey conducted during this exercise, it was established that there is need for Disaster and Risk Reduction preparedness information. But it is worth noting that in some of the sampled communities "there was lack of awareness that information can help in the generation of local solutions". Additionally, the experience and findings of the study points to the fragility of CMCs. "Many centres have been established in the last forty years, but very few of them seem to be sustainable in the long term. Unless it becomes possible to develop a model of provision that is self-sustaining in the long term, or it becomes possible to provide long-term support from public funds, a question-mark must remain over the future prospects of community information and multimedia centres." UNESCO, 2005.
“The ASAL areas have been constantly ravaged by the spate of drought with morbid regularity. The fatalities have been both physical and financial. When drought hits the area, both humans and animals have no access to water, lives are lost and young children and women become very desperate. In such critical situations, CMCs with their modern day technologies can be a lifesaver by providing information on weather and a link to the rest of the country.” UNDP, 2007.

The proposed model seeks to promote a community led approach, i.e. project design, implementation, supervision, continuous evaluation and major lessons learned, through an approach that focuses on understanding the needs of the community, and enhancing the abilities that will allow them to achieve measurable and sustainable results.

6.1 KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR CMC IMPLEMENTATION

6.1.1 Ownership
The capacity of the CMC to be embraced by the community at household level as well as by the local County government will impact on its ability to attract resources and support for its activities.

6.1.2 Capacity Building
The first step will be building the capacity of the community through training and drawing the community’s attention to the need for information, and the need to embrace sources of information provided at the CMC. The capacity building will be done after a baseline survey to identify the unique needs in each community, which will in turn inform the training needs, and empowerment points.

“There are what we could call felt needs, such as food and water, and then we have what I would call unfelt needs such as information. Most people in my community will not realize that they need information, unless you make it a felt need.” - CDC Coordinator, Kilifi
**6.1.3 Engage Professional staff / Continuous technical training**

Recruitment of staff is a vital phase as it ensures delivery of services to meet community needs, and gives the Centre a good chance of growth. Well qualified staff will ensure that the CMC is run competently upholding professional ethics and ensuring information management acumen for the beneficiary community. It is important to ensure that the centre maintains professionalism at the level of any profit making organization. This understanding by the Centre’s management will be the first step to financial sustainability.

**6.1.4 Content**

The information needs analysis above indicates that communities in ASAL are faced with frequent natural disasters such as floods and severe drought. Communities sampled said they need to be provided with updated early warning information and information on alternative livelihoods that are sustainable and enhance coping strategies. The model proposes to meet this need through partnership with line ministries and relevant stakeholders who have information expertise and the technical support. Information content provided will therefore ensure that the community is prepared at all times, thanks to a timely, efficient and reliable information system.

**6.1.5 Income generating activities**

To promote social, institutional and financial sustainability and to also enhance ownership, the model includes income generating activities that will be run and managed by the community under the umbrella of the CMC. The IGAs are intended to attract community groups that will ordinarily shy away from technology oriented activities such as ICT, radio etc. these groups include women and elderly community members.

**6.1.6 Partnerships**

The CMC will need strategic partners both at grassroots and local County government level as well as community stakeholders to ensure supervision and continuity of the CMCs after the exit of the implementing agency or organization.

The CMC model will be accommodative at institutional level to allow for partnering arrangements to evolve over time as opportunities for collaboration with new organizations emerge and others fade. However this must be done without interference of the CMC’s objectives of serving the community’s information needs. The Model proposes that in the interest of sustainability, projects will prioritize the involvement of existing community assets and structures over the establishment of new institutions.
Some of the key partners expected to be part of the process include the ICT Board, the Meteorological Department, Microsoft, Google and Safaricom.

6.1.7 Branding

“Brand” is a term used extensively in marketing of goods and services, and rarely in social services. It is important, though, to establish a brand for the CMCs for the following reasons; a brand helps deliver the message clearly, confirms credibility, connects the target prospects emotionally, motivates the user and concretes user loyalty. A brand also contributes to sustaining the social impact, serving the mission, and staying true to the CMC values and culture. It also enhances internal identity, cohesion, and capacity. It is therefore important to not only establish the name, logo and catch phrase, but also the vision, mission, core values and objectives that the communities can identify with. It is also advised that, as much as the model maintains a uniform brand image, a window is left open, where each individual community is given an opportunity to develop their own unique vision, mission, core values and objectives, to add on to the standardized ones. It is therefore important the brand is strong enough to not only attract partnerships but also maintain the partnerships for the sake of sustainability.

6.1.8 The CMC Network (CMCN)

In line with the objective to coordinate all stakeholders in drought disaster risk reduction and management, it will be prudent to pool the centres into a Community Multimedia Centres Network (CMCN). Further a report by COMESA indicates that rural development and access to information can be enhanced through “Building community-owned Community Multimedia Centre Networks and village tele-centres run and owned by locals”

The objective of the Community Multimedia Centres Network is to provide a forum through which community radio and multi-media practitioners network in support of organizational strengthening specifically as it relates to practical and theoretic training; technical capacity building; accessing grants and financial sustainability; provision of technical support; and lobbying.

Other objectives can include but not limited to:-

a) Public Relations and Fund-raising – Identifying revenue streams and sources of funding

b) Establish a centralized secretariat and support centre to offer technical support to the members of the network
c) Training in needy areas like radio production & presentation; story-telling and drama for radio; digital editing; web-site development and maintenance; broadcast management; marketing, sales and promotions for the CMCs

d) Working with existing operators for either community radio or telecentres to introduce technology to create the hybrid CMCs

e) Development of tools to support the management of CMCs and standardization of practices and modus operandi for the CMCs.

f) Building of partnerships with bilateral and international development assistance agencies, governments, NGO’s and private enterprise to promote and support the CMCs in the Network.

6.2 Implementation Activities

A model CMC goes through various steps before being established. This is essential in order to establish a responsive and effective CMC. However, the model emphasizes the baseline approach rather than a detailed description of the entire process. In all the undertakings, it should be noted that the more responsive you are to the community, the better the chances are of sustaining the centre, as the community and other stakeholders will be more committed to supporting it. The following steps must be undertaken before establishing a CMC.

6.2.1 Needs assessment / Baseline survey

It is important to distinguish between needs and demand. Demand is closely related to affordability, which, in turn, is related to perceived benefits. Of course, there is initially hardly any demand for CMCs in poor rural villages. The vast majority of the people have little money and no idea about what benefits they could derive from access to CMCs. However, arguably, there is a need for such tools in rural areas even more so than in urban centres, considering people’s isolation and the lack of public services. It should also be recognized that the potential clients of CMCs are not just the people in the community. The needs of government and development agencies, including NGOs, to communicate with extension workers and to deliver information and other public services to the population in rural and remote areas, as well as their need to collect information from these areas, should also be considered in this context.
Needs assessments must be carried out before a project is implemented. This is one way of involving the community and sensitizing the people to the potential of CMCs. They should map existing information and learning processes, with a view to identify how these could be improved by provision of access to CMC. However, such pre-project surveys in communities, where most people are poorly educated (if at all) and have not even seen a telephone, let alone computers, are unlikely to identify needs other than those already imagined by the survey designers. Most people are unable to imagine the potential of CMCs until they see, and actually try out the tools, only then can they express their needs as they see them.

For the same reasons, pre-project surveys will not provide much information about the actual demand for CMCs in rural and remote areas. Considerable efforts of marketing, including nearly free use of the facilities, as well as of user training will be required to stimulate the demand. This cannot be effectively done before there is at least one demonstration facility and some relevant “content”, which people value more than the cost of accessing the CMC tools, has been developed.

In cases where CICs or Community Radio Stations already exist, baseline surveys must be undertaken to determine the need to enhance the facility to incorporate other newer services. This helps to deepen understanding of the community and helps promote the CMC to the community. In addition, needs assessment can help one establish the information and communication needs of the community.

### 6.2.2 Mission Statement

This sets the goals of the CMC. It is crucial that the objectives of the CMC are clearly demonstrated and how they respond to the context of the community the CMC intends to serve. This increases the chances of making the centre successful.

### 6.2.3 Organizational Structure

It is quite important to have an idea of how the CMC will work. This will help in deciding on a variety of issues – from the sort of space required, to the number and quality of staff required.

### 6.2.4 Develop a constitution for the centre

It is important that all associations involved in the running of the centre are registered and known by legal authorities. This is important is designating roles and responsibilities relating to the centre.
6.2.5 Business plan

A business plan is critical to the success of a CMC. This entails the planning, income and expenditure, linking decisions about energy supply to costs and linking those to the operationalization of the centre.

6.3 Implementation Options

One important dynamic that implementers must bear in mind about CMCs is that a “one-fits-all” solution does not always apply. It is important to build on existing communication structures, work with local partners and coordinate nationally.

Furthermore, lessons learnt from the implementation of Elwak and Merti Community Information Centres demonstrate that a uniform model for operation, management and sustainability of CICs is not possible for the diverse ASAL communities in Kenya. Instead, there can only be learning from experiences and adaption of models to the local setting, cultural context and geographic constraints to reduce community vulnerability.

The team encountered four different scenarios during the field visits with regard to capacity for implementation of CMCs. The existing information management and dissemination system is key at the inception of a CMC in the area.

In this regard it is recommended that the CMCs be implemented on a case by case. The four information centre scenarios existing in Kenya are as follows:-

6.3.1 Scenario 1 - Where a KRDP/ASAL DM supported Community Radio Station Exist

This scenario will be found in Wajir where there is a radio station. In this scenario the model to adopt is a Scale up from Radio to CMC by adding an information centre, that is, computers and a library for community use.

6.3.2 Scenario 2 - Where a KRDP/ASAL DM Community Information Centre Exists

In the ASAL visited the team found this scenario in Isiolo-Merti and Elwak- Mandera both of which have community information centres without a broadcast service. In this scenario the ideal model option would be to Upscale from Information Centre to CMC by introducing a community radio station.
6.3.3 Scenario 3 - Where No KRDP/ASAL DM Centre Exists

This scenario is common in many of the ASAL regions including Kilifi, Marsabit, Tana-River, Turkana, Kwale, and Kitui among others. In these areas, the CMC strategy would be implemented from scratch which means it is a good opportunity to do an ideal CMC.

6.3.4 Scenario 4 - Where Other Community/NGO Information Centres Exist

This scenario was found in Samburu, and Makueni where community radio stations exist, and in Kajiado, Garissa and Baringo where community information centres exist run by community based organizations. This scenario presents opportunity for collaboration and pooling of resources to upscale the information centres or radio stations to a full CMC offering a variety of services.
The development of CMCs is a national issue and needs to be institutionalized at national level. There has been an exponential increase of CICs and Community Radio Stations in the ASALs, courtesy of development organizations and the government. However, these centres are not co-ordinated and at best don’t even know what goes on next door. Consequently, there is duplicity of roles and wastage of resources. Indeed, according to UNESCO, 2010 “proposed the scale up of CMCs in Mali, Mozambique, Tanzania and Nepal from one to fifty on the grounds that scaling up will provide a critical mass of centres that can influence ICT policy issues with the government and build national partnerships across government departments, field offices of UN agencies, and the private sector.”

Indeed, both the Government and Development Agencies continue with the development of CICs and community radios across the entire country without any regard to the issue of mainstreaming of their operations. Government departments, Meteorological Department, Education, etc. are on the forefront of setting up disparate facilities, yet they can be co-ordinated and mainstreamed in order to maximize on resources and synergy.

According to Kenya’s Vision 2030, food security is one of the key aspects that it addresses in the Economic Pillar. There is a Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG) that is charged with the responsibility of overseeing the delivery of this objective. Membership to the KFSSG is by open invitation. Mainstreaming the operations of CMCs as key delivery vehicles for the attainment of this goal means the CMCs will be able to gain access to a basket of funding and other support services from stakeholder, hence benefit from full long term sustainability. The model will also make it possible for other stakeholders to operate from the same centre, where they can share information and facilities.

“In Mozambique, CMCs are integrated into the Mozambican government’s national ICT strategy, which aims to use ICT tools in the fight against poverty in line with the national anti-poverty plan (PARPA) and the Millennium Development Goals.” UNESCO.

The rationale for integrating CMCs into mainstream DRM and community development efforts is a food security argument, which can prepare communities to mitigate disasters and other risks they are exposed to and it can lead to a focus on emergency relief efforts during drought events. However, since the economic development of the country is highly
dependent on agriculture, Kenya’s approach ought to include the element of DRM in its efforts to improve agricultural productivity as a hybrid of social, economic and trade policies.

The model recommends that the mainstreaming process be anchored at three levels i.e. National, County and Community levels.

1. ENTRY POINTS

In order for CMC approaches to attain concrete and sustainable results all stakeholders must commit themselves to the implementation of the identified CMC strategies as essential components of community development agenda, rather than an add-on or one-off intervention. For example, long-term measures designed to equip communities with information would be mainstreamed in the concerned sectoral policies or within broad-based national development planning frameworks: e.g., National Development Plans, Disaster Risk Management Plans and even Food Security Strategy Papers. Short and mid-term measures may be integrated in existing programmes and projects at national or sub-national level: e.g. community-based natural resource management initiatives. Targeted grass-root measures can also be up-scaled from the community to a higher level where local interventions anchored on access to information have demonstrated good results.

Successful mainstreaming requires not only a thorough understanding of the policy, programmatic and strategic frameworks relevant to DRM in the target country, but also a clear recognition of the key phases of these frameworks, or entry points, into which the CMC options can be fed.

The potential entry points within a policy process include, for example, the stages of steering committee or taskforce formation, agenda setting, internal discussion, public debate, approval, implementation and monitoring and evaluation, amongst others.

To promote ownership of the CMCs by the ministries and other stakeholders, it is imperative to have a management structure at the national level that includes key officers from the following ministries which have been identified as critical to the success of the model.

- Vision 2030
- Ministry of Information & Communication
1.1 National Steering Committee

The National CMC Networks Steering Committee will bring together key actors in community ICTs, the Government Ministries, the ICT Board, the Meteorological Department, existing telecentres (if any), community radio stations and information centres, as well as the main international partners – currently EU, UNESCO, UNDP, Google, Microsoft and Safaricom. It is hoped that other agencies will participate in developing the initiative at various levels.

The National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) will take up the role of providing oversight and overall coordination of CMCs in Kenya. For purposes of synergy and ease of access to funding, it would be prudent for NDMA to approach the Kenya Food Security Committee to partner with it. KFSM is the main body that brings together food security actors in a forum where information is exchanged, options debated and decisions on activities formulated for referral to the Government of Kenya and other donors. It is an open forum of high level representation of a broad grouping of organizations at the National Level with interest in food security.

In order to deepen and actuate the activities of CMCs, NDMA will form a National Steering Committee, which will be the apex organ in the hierarchy of CMCs. Its main role will be to develop national policies, funding and overall co-ordination.

The key members of the National Steering Committee will be:-

- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Livestock Development
- Ministry of Special Programs
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Water and Sanitation
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Northern Kenya and Other Arid Lands
1.2 County Steering Committee

In line with the current structure of governance, the model requires to be devolved to the County level in order for it to be able to serve the interests of the CMCs located in those specific counties.
It is suggested that the committee be chaired by the Deputy Governor. Its membership will be drawn from the Government, development agencies and representatives of the CMCs Networks active in the County.

1.3 Community Steering Committee

At community level the CMCs will collaborate with the local, national and international organizations, governmental directorates, educational institutions, workers’ associations and private enterprises with activities in their areas of operation.

Due to the need for community leadership, the CMCs will require two sets of management committees.

1.3.1 The Steering Committee

The role of the steering committees will be to oversee the day to-day-running and management of the CMC. Its membership should be drawn from community members elected by the community.

1.3.2 The Advisory Committee.

The advisory committee on the other hand should play the role of technical support. The group should consist of line ministry officers and other partners on the ground or based in at the community level. The advisory committee should be selected by the County Steering Committee. It is recommended that the advisory committee gets represented at the District Steering Group (DSG) level. This will ensure that the committee members give regular reports at the DSG, and discuss issues arising at the DSG, where they will be advised on action to take.

The Advisory Committee will also be charged with the responsibility of drawing guidelines and operational procedures to be followed in the day to day management of the CMCs.
PART IV

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

The process of piloting and rolling out the CMC model is estimated to last four years.

1. **YEAR 1 - Pilot Phase**

   During this phase NDMA will identify and roll-out three CMCs in three distinctly different community environments. A useful approach would be to explore piloting along the different scenarios identified in the information needs assessment study in Section A of this report. This phase will include a baseline survey at target pilot areas, selection, setup of structures, training, equipping the CMCs, commissioning of the CMC, monitoring and evaluation of the pilot CMCs to extract lessons.

2. **YEAR 2 - 3 - Implementation Phase**

   This is the period of roll-out of county CMCs as shall have been identified, starting with most vulnerable of the 47 counties. At the end of this phase there should be a network of at least 25 CMCs in operation. Rollout the entire project and set up the institutional framework and continue with monitoring and evaluation of CMC.

3. **YEAR 4 - Exit**

   During this year the implementing partners hand over the project to the Communities. This is also an opportune time for replication of the CMC model to remaining counties under NDMA as mandated National Steering Committee.
PART V

EXIT STRATEGY

The strategy proposes the exit of the implementing agency after three years. This ensures that during this period, the community will have created a thriving centre capable of maintaining its operations. In the three years, it is also anticipated that the CMC will have cemented the relationship with different stakeholders such as the line ministries and other will have established seamless relationships.

The success of the CMC will be monitored quarterly for the first three years and annually in subsequent years. It considers the fact that it is normal for businesses to encounter challenges and sometimes even losses for the first three years, but any business that endures these challenges in the first three years is likely to be sustainable. The approach seeks to continuously evaluate the state of the CMC and make adjustments where possible to keep the CMC running with a positive cash flow. The model is therefore flexible to constant adjustments in the next three years.

It is important to note that the model maintains a community led process and therefore ensures that the community owns and drives the process. This will guarantee a smooth transition upon exit of the implementing agency.
ASSUMPTIONS AND PROJECTED CHALLENGES

There are certain technical challenges that impact sustainability, primarily in terms of loss of radio audiences and Internet users and the related loss of revenue streams.

1. Energy supply (power outages, load shedding, low voltage). To be addressed through the purchase of generators and Universal Power Supply (UPS) systems, in some cases with solar powered batteries;

2. Internet connection not reliable or alternatives, if available, are too expensive;

3. Radio transmitter not powerful enough or signal being interfered with by other commercial stations; limiting range and therefore potential audience share;

4. Lack of trained technical staff or easy access to technical support for repairs and upgrades;

5. Equipment “security”: the lack of backup transmitters and computer equipment in case of catastrophic equipment failure;

6. Quality of equipment secured: This can be addressed through the procurement of good quality professional equipment. Indeed a survey in Bangladesh confirmed that that “purchase of better quality video cameras led to better revenue streams”;

7. Maintenance of the CMC Equipment: Equipment maintenance and depreciation cannot be covered by their limited revenue streams. Electronic equipment become obsolete so fast and it is vital for the model to allow for parts sparing and replacement of such equipment. This a key role to be played by the National Steering Committee if the CMC model is to be successful;

8. Adverse weather in most ASAL which combines high temperatures, humidity and dusty conditions affect electronic equipment. This calls for high maintenance and replacement of some equipment and installation of air conditioning units to control temperatures.
PART VII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CONCLUSIONS

1.1 Information Needs Assessment

The study established that local communities seek EW information but rarely link this information to action plans for preparedness. Disaster risk reduction activities are perceived as external projects or plans that are shortlived. Unlike felt needs that have direct impact on the community hence the drive to seek solutions, community members do not link disaster solutions to information and as such, rarely seek information, which is an unfelt need.

However, it emerged that communities are receptive to information made available and showed enthusiasm to seek more information once they receive the initial communication.

Though an unfelt need, access to information is still critical in communities’ capacity to respond to drought and other disasters. As Kitui DMO Benedict Musyoka noted, “Sometimes solving unfelt needs could address felt needs”.

1.2 Information requirements

Though information sought among the different demographics is divergent, it is based on the main economic and social challenges highlighted by respondents. These include; Lack of pasture due to persistent drought and floods, competition over grazing and water sources, insecurity, livestock diseases and inadequate livestock markets. The communities, therefore, indicated need for agricultural information as more and more pastoralists turn to alternative livelihoods such as small scale agriculture along rivers. Need for early warning information, especially in view of effects of climate change was ranked high among community information requirements. Other requirements include information on health, education, employment, income generating activities and markets.
1.3 Information Sources, Channels and Formats

The study established that communities act on information based on the credibility of the source. Chiefs’ barazas and radio emerged as the most credible sources of information. Communities indicated preference for radio as a credible mass medium, especially if local vernacular language is used. Use of radio enhances understanding and contextualization of the information disseminated.

Interestingly, radio was universally “believable” as a source of information across all the study groups. Radio is easily accessible to most households and some of the family resources are allocated to ensuring the receiver is in working condition and powered (batteries). For most communities, any person passing information would quote the radio to add credibility to the information they were sharing.

Printed information is only preferred when it incorporates pictures or illustrations that capture the message. This is understandable considering that literacy levels are low at the community level.

Though widely used, word of mouth at times results in distortion of information, reducing its credibility.

1.4 Community Information Centres

Information about early warnings may be characterized as knowledge about things, activities and weather conditions. For example, environmental degradation in general and drought in particular is a context that can exacerbate competition for resources, contribute to instability and even spark conflict. The ability of CICs to disseminate this information alongside its other activities is key to the preparedness of the communities within the ASALs.

1.4.1 Implementation

The Merti and Elwak information centres were established without an information baseline survey. Community participation from the onset was smoothed over and baseline surveys were done in real time. This approach has contributed to lack of community investment in the centre and by extension lack of community ownership. In this regard, the centres do not enjoy social protection and sustainability from the community, which has contributed to their not meeting the communities’ information needs and expectations.
The approach also created perceptions among the community members that the centres are in private ownership, hence lack of social goodwill from the community.

### 1.4.2 Services

The Merti and Elwak information centres lack multiple sources of information, which means they have little information to offer to the community. Most of the information at the centres has been delivered in form of books, newsletters, DVD and cassette by groups and institutions hoping to use the centre as an alternative outlet in addition to mainstream information outlets. Hardly do the centres have display plans, especially for audio-visual content.

Dissemination of Community Based Early Warning Information to the communities that live around both Merti and Elwak was one of the primary objectives behind the setup of the two centres. Unfortunately, the centres have not been offering this service at all.

Though the centres were supposed to be platforms for local content generation, this has not been achieved. Effective management structures are not in place, which has affected the day-to-day running of the centres. Though the centres have library facilities, the books are mainly donations and may not be relevant to the community.

The two centres are deficient of the synergies between radio and ICT tools which contribute to community access and availability of information on different platforms. They can be useful information outlets if they are enhanced to fully fledged CMCs which include the capacities of radio with specifically designed programming, printed pictorial materials, and ICT applications that enrich the communities’ access to information.

### 1.4.3 Connectivity

Technological has advanced to such an extent that it is impractical and very expensive for organizations to rely on very small aperture terminal (VSAT). Due to the high cost of maintenance of the system and the expansiveness of the communities in ASALs, continued reliance of the CICs on this technology can only impair delivery of services to the community.

### 1.4.4 Computers & related equipment

The Centres are predominantly installed with laptop computers. Laptop computers are easier to use and quite portable. However, they are prone to breakdowns and mis-use. Unlike desktop computers that are scalable, easy to maintain and resistant to harsh-weather conditions.
2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The lack of access to clear and easy-to-use information could not only confuse communities but also negate the essence of early warning information. The National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) and all its supporting agencies need to package information on drought and other disasters appropriately and ensure that it is disseminated to communities promptly, in appropriate formats and languages.

2.1 Community Information Centres

There is need to develop short term measures to elevate the activities of the CICs at Merti and Elwak. As a short term measure, the following being undertaken:-

a) Repair / Replace dysfunctional equipment at the centres;

b) Re-launch the centres with the full participation of the communities;

c) Develop a business plan with the full involvement of the community;

d) Re-configure the centres’ management systems and organizational structures;

e) Provide capacity building to advisory and management committees especially in financial management and resource mobilization;

f) Deepen the management skill of officers engaged in the running and management of the Centres;

g) Introduce the “twitter chief” model as a platform for dissemination of early warning information as a major service offered by the centres to the community;

h) Develop a monitoring and evaluation schema for the centres and mainstream it in their management structures;

i) Introduction of mobile phone charging at the CIC. The activity involves minimal investment since the CIC’s already have electricity. The service should be offered at a minimum cost.
j) The television was mentioned as the most ideal communication channel. The use of television is limited due to its unavailability. It will be of value to the community for the CICs to provide the service, not just for informative purposes but also for entertainment.

k) Most stakeholders operating at the community level, at both Merti and Elwak, depend on the Chief’s barazas as a source of information. It is proposed that the CICs offer their facilities so that trainings and meetings by stakeholders are held at the CIC.

l) Develop a system through which the centres will extend its services through mobile clinics to market places, mosques, churches, schools and public barazas;

m) Develop consistent linkages with other centres for sharing of knowledge and experiences

These activities will be undertaken in progression with a view to upgrading the centres to full-fledged CMCs.

2.2 Community participation

This report calls for the deployment of participatory communication methods and strategies of information dissemination that keep the community needs at the core. The role of communication has evolved to encompass more democratic channels and co-equal knowledge sharing between the benefactors and the beneficiaries of development initiatives. This entails information needs analysis at community level to inform an appropriate communications model and involvement of communities throughout project implementation, including participatory monitoring and evaluation.

2.3 Public Awareness and understanding

Communities did not link access and availability of information to finding suitable solutions for their challenges. This means there is need to create awareness among communities that the beginning of solution finding is availability and access to relevant and timely information.

This was made clear in the case where the community would seek information from line ministry officers after sensitization or training had been conducted or a talk during a forum or Chief’s baraza. The response was the same where community radio stations exist. In this case, radio programmes focusing on issues the community is keen on, such as farming, would be followed by a trail of questions through the phone-in service.
For DRR information to be effective, it should be well understood by the target public and authorities at community level, who in turn will transmit it onward to achieve the recommended or desired action.

**2.4 Communication channels and formats**

The choice of channel could affect credibility of the message or information. Therefore, only credible channels should be used. Chiefs’ barazas were identified as credible and authoritative channels and could, therefore, be applicable in all areas. Radio was also identified as a credible and preferred channel, especially when broadcasting in local language and airing important information at appropriate times (e.g. for Muslim communities, care should be taken to avoid airing of critical information at times that conflict with prayer time).

Community road shows were also identified information dissemination channels at community level. The choice of channels should also be sensitive to local contexts such as low literacy levels and religion. For example, school children could be used for urgent relay of information to parents in places with low literacy levels.

**2.5 Proposed Early Warning Information Dissemination**

Many communication tools are currently available for warning dissemination such as Short Message Service (SMS) (cellular phone text messaging), email, radio, TV, and web service, posters and printed material. Communities that are at risk of disaster are diverse and communication systems available to them are dynamic. However, a careful consideration of each community and a multi-pronged application of communication channels can be effective.

Communities in ASAL are familiar with mobile phone communication via SMS, as is the radio, printed materials such as posters and leaflets and public announcements. Use of these multiple communication channels guarantees a wide radius reach of the information.

Further, since information and communication technology (ICT) is a key element in early warning, there is need to mainstream it in EW communication. Nowadays, an extreme decentralization of information and data through the mobile phone which is adaptable to other web based communication applications such as the social media, Twitter. This powerful communication medium is gaining popularity in Kenya and would be useful in EW information dissemination.
NDMA has the potential to expand its communication channels and use of ICT for faster effective EW information dissemination and prompt feedback from communities. The diagram below illustrates a possible model to enhance the current EW communication systems and channels applied.

**Figure 6. Proposed Early Warning Information Dissemination model**

- **NDMA OFFICE**
  - EW information and targeted proposed community action plans
  - Feedback: Community preparedness and mitigation requirements

- **DMO OFFICE**
  - Printed material with pictures and audio and video recordings in local language, radio programmes on local media
  - EW information collected from community and local DRR strategies

- **CIC**
  - Community members go to CIC to charge phone, watch TV and come out with EW information
  - Community preparedness and mitigation requirements

- **CIC VISITORS**
  - Word of mouth

- **ENTIRE COMMUNITY INCLUDING CIC VISITORS**
  - Ministries, NGOs and other member stakeholders
  - Chief office
  - DSG
  - Website and mass media
  - Twitter and SMS service information exchange between Chief, village elders, religious leaders, teachers and community opinion leaders
  - Evaluation feedback
  - M&E
2.6 Community radio

Radio is still the most accessible, affordable and flexible mass medium available today. Radio has a wide reach due to its vast penetration and currently stands at 91% in Kenya. Community radio stations that use vernacular languages have become very popular, especially because they accommodate people with different levels of education. This report recommends set up of low-cost community radio stations, where possible, and use of other stations that broadcast in vernacular for information dissemination at the local level.

2.7 Community multimedia centres

Community information centres play a critical role in facilitating access to information for rural communities. However, the community multimedia centre model that incorporates a community radio station and a telecentre is more effective (Section B of this report provides a detailed CMC model). The CMCs would also offer a platform for employment of other innovative and cost-effective ideas for information dissemination such as use of Twitter (e.g. Twitter Chief). The CMC implementation model should be adapted to the local setting instead of blanket replication and implemented with community as partners, clear business plan, and exit strategy and mainstream in the authority’s structures.

2.8 Connectivity

To enable the CICs deliver their services effectively to the community, it is imperative that they consider migration of connectivity from VSAT based to either broadband or fibre. Broadband is readily available from either Safaricom (which is the most accessible in the ASALs). Plans are underway to have a fibre connection along the Northern corridor to which the centres will be able to tap into.

2.9 Computers and ICT Equipment

Use of ICT equipment that is easy to maintain and scalable is highly recommended for the CMCs. Especially, desktop computers and other facilities that can be easily upgraded and whose spare parts are modular in nature.
2.10 The Community Multimedia Centres’ Network (CMCN)

In line with the objective to coordinate all stakeholders in drought disaster risk reduction and management, it will be prudent to pool the Community Information/Multimedia Centres into a Community Multimedia Centres’ Network (CMCN).

2.11 Partnerships

Establishment of Community Multi-media Centres or Community Information Centres requires partnerships in order to pool resources. NDMA should forge partnerships with others keen to enhance community access to information to add value to the quality, variety and potency of information available at the centres. Such partners include the ICT Board, Vision 2030 secretariat and others.

2.12 Communication Strategy

The NDMA should draw up a comprehensive communication strategy that supporting agencies could tap into. Consequently, the Authority could also adopt and incorporate the CMC model in the overall strategy as the strategic communication medium with communities across the country. The CMC would embrace multiple information dissemination platforms with a wide reach such as radio, posters, community groups, television (where possible) and community informal information channels to achieve maximum effect.

The KRDP/NDMA CMC strategy should seek to bridge information access gaps ranging from capacity to use ICTs adequately and lack skills in management, leading to poor running of existing information centres. There is need for capacity building and training in management systems of an information centre to achieve maximum service delivery and sustainability.
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