

Sensitization Workshop on the use of different forms of ICT's

Held on 25 August 2005

Glen Norah Hall, Glen Norah, Harare

By Rumbidzai Musasa

Welcome and Introductions

The EKOWISA team arrived at the Glen Norah Hall at 14:30hrs and found the participants patiently waiting to hear the purpose of the workshop and more information on the project initiated by EKOWISA. We apologized to all participants as we were thirty minutes late and this delay was made when collecting the hired LCD projector from the organization. We quickly set up the equipment and began our introductions. Mr. Chiutsi (Chairman of the committee in Highfield) gave brief introductions of the EKOWISA team which was represented by Mr. Unganai Taruvinga, Mr. Muroro Dziruni and Ms Rumbidzai Musasa. Mrs. Rose Murota from SAFIRE was introduced too and community members followed.

Dramatization done by the Performance Artists

There was dramatization on the different forms of ICTs which include TVs, radios, cellphones and computers presented by local artists from Highfield. In the dramatization, a scene is highlighted where community members are seen at a workshop and not concentrating on the activities taking place there. Men and women are busy chatting and after a while the facilitator begins to explain what ICTs are, their usefulness to the community in enhancing their livelihoods and this draws attention to the participants. We then see the facilitator demonstrating how the EKOWISA-OKN site operates indicating that individuals can obtain information on health issues, vacancies for jobs, prices of basic commodities in their vernacular languages.

The short sketch brought out the advantages of using OKN site as it is educative, informative and assists self-employed individuals to market their products in the site. The audience present showed great interest in participating in the project as they could clearly see that the main objectives are to create networks to exchange experiences and to develop the capacities of their communities in documentation and use of ICTs.

Presentations on what OKN site is and its advantages

Ms R Musasa began by briefly explaining that EKOWISA is an organization whose aim is to generate, analyse, translate, repackage and disseminate locally relevant information and knowledge for the enhancement of better livelihoods by promoting the effective and efficient use of ICTs. She also spoke of the goal of the OKN site, which is to empower rural and urban communities to make more informed choices in enhancing their livelihoods. OKN specifically promotes documentation of local content, access to ICTs and exchange of experiences amongst the rural and urban communities. Mr. U Taruvinga also informed the community members of the advantages of writing short stories which will be published on the OKN website. These stories will be of the various activities taking place in the community and information on health, agriculture, education and the prices of basic commodities on sale such as vegetables, candles and shoes.

Mrs. R Murota explained to the participants that SAFIRE as a hub receives all stories generated from the various access points, edits the articles, for example Shona has many dialects but as an organization they have come up with a standard way of presenting the stories and the contents remains original and acknowledged to the author. She explained that factual stories will be researched into detail so that accurate information is published on the site. Mrs. Murota mentioned that the OKN program currently has the following countries involved: Senegal, India, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Countries such as South Africa, Kenya and Mozambique are soon to join the network which will see options for access to information by local communities diversified and access improved.

In conclusion, the workshop was a success and EKOWISA team left one of the computers at High/Glen Resource Centre and the community was informed that more equipment which includes the printers and digital cameras were on their way. The Glen Norah community members suggested that they would wish to have their computer in Glen Norah, though as project team members, we highlighted the issue of security which we require for the equipment which will have been purchased. We closed the discussion by telling the community members that until we get a place where there is security, only then can we bring in a computer to the Glen Norah community.

PARTICIPANTS' LIST

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