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*Time to Get Online:
Simple Steps to Success on the Internet*

Preface

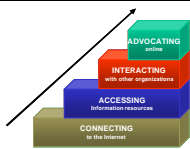


Overview

In today's networked world, civil society organizations are coming to recognize the power of the Internet for their advocacy work. While non profits in the North have already embraced this technology, many organizations in the South have not yet been able to access the wealth of resources available through the Internet. Southern organizations are often unaware of the benefits of the Internet for the non profit community or lack the necessary skills to exploit these resources.

You are reading a set of learning materials created by Kabissa to help West African civil society activists and organizers to get online and to integrate the Internet into their organizations. Specifically, we have designed these materials for organizations that focus on human rights, freedom of information, responsive government, and democratization. However, these materials will be useful to any non profit organization seeking to make more effective use of the Internet.

The first two chapters are geared towards creating Internet-savvy activists. The second half will help to empower these activists to be effective Internet champions capable of leading their organizations through the sometimes-challenging process of integrating the Internet into their organizations. Additional resources for continued learning can be found in the Appendices and on the accompanying CD-ROM.

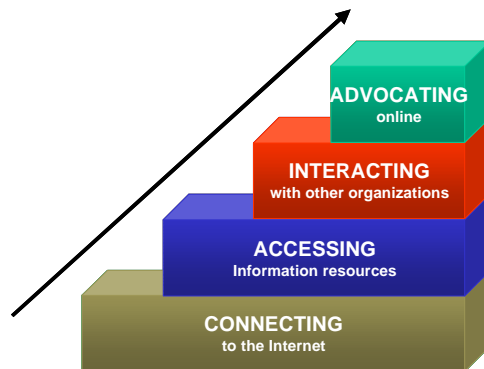


Steps to Success

Organizations must move through four major steps of Internet usage – at a pace appropriate to their own organizational development.

I. Connecting

The first step involves physically connecting people in the organization to the Internet and building awareness of how the Internet can be used.



Preface (continued)

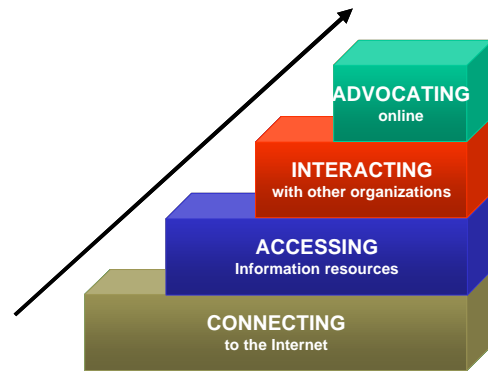


II. Accessing

Once a physical connection has been established and one understands the importance of the Internet, the next step is to begin accessing information resources. Especially in Africa, where traditional information sources are often government controlled, inaccurate, or out-of-date, the Internet offers an inexpensive alternative to access timely and unbiased information from around the globe.

III. Interacting

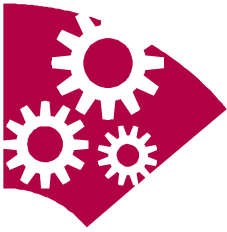
The interactive features of the Internet are especially helpful in places where telecommunications costs are high and postal service is unreliable. These barriers tend to prevent organizations from reaching out to people outside of their immediate area, potentially limiting the effectiveness of their work. While many organizations have taken the first step by obtaining e-mail accounts, they must continue to exploit the potential of the communication tools available by finding and contacting other like-minded organizations online, receiving and utilizing informative weekly newsletters by e-mail, and participating in online discussions and networks.



IV. Advocating

The most advanced organizations are able to take the ambitious fourth step of using the Internet as a tool to actively advocate for their communities. At this point, organizations have established their identity on the Web and successfully integrated the Internet into their activities. Through increased access to resources, improved relationships, and the potential to mobilize international resources, organizations can more effectively reach their goals and improve people's lives.

Preface (continued)



How to Use This Guide

These materials have been designed to be used as either a self-taught curriculum or as a reference guide. Depending on your level of comfort and expertise with the Internet, you may choose to begin at the chapter most appropriate for you.

Important Internet-related terms are highlighted in the text (i.e. **Internet**) and are defined in the Glossary in Appendix 1.

Throughout the text, we have used the following icons that will serve as a roadmap and help you quickly identify the purpose of the text you are reading:



Overview

Brief summary of the chapter or section



Learning Objectives

Summary of what you will be learning in each chapter



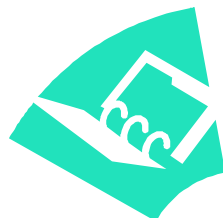
Key Information

Important background information and explanations of key concepts



How do I do it?

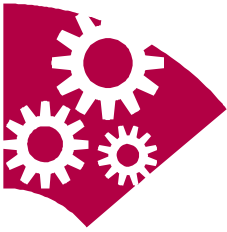
Step-by-step instructions on how to do something on the Internet



Definition

Brief definition of a word or concept that may be unfamiliar to you

Preface (continued)

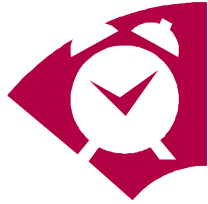


**How to Use
This Guide
(cont.)**



Case Study

Practical example of how an organization is effectively using the Internet



Important

Important tips on using the Internet



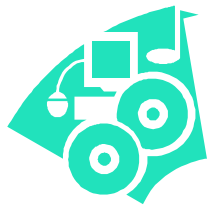
Web Resources

Directs you to relevant resources on the Internet that can be useful to you and your organization



Mailing Lists

Directs you to e-mails newsletters or networks that may be particularly relevant to your organization



On the CD-ROM

More resources that are available to you on the accompanying CD-ROM



Kabissa

Alerts you to ways Kabissa can help you and your organization use the Internet more effectively

Preface (continued)

Thank you! The *TIME TO GET ONLINE* project is made possible through the generous support of the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit – GTZ).

Our advisors provided invaluable feedback – thank you!

- Innocent Chukwuma
Centre for Law Enforcement Education
<http://www.cleen.kabissa.org>
 - John Dada
Fantsuam Foundation
<http://www.fantsuam.com>
 - Firoze Manji
Fahamu
<http://www.fahamu.org>
 - Dorothy Okello
Women of Uganda Network
<http://www.wougnet.org>
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