



INFORMATION SOCIETY FOR THE GRASSROOTS

We the members of grassroots caucus firmly believe that the success of an information society can be directly measured through its impact on the quality of lives at the grassroots. Grassroots communities should be recognised as one of the key stakeholders in the formation of information societies and not merely as beneficiaries. Grassroots communities should be given an active role in the planning, implementation and monitoring stages of forming Information Societies.

GRASSROOTS CAUCUS RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE WSIS PLAN OF ACTION

1. Grassroots communities should be consulted in the process of managing finances for ICT4D to prioritise areas of funding such as capacity building and content development.
2. **Ownership for management** and running of **Rural Information Centres** should lie with the grassroots communities.
3. Government/private sector to ensure that the required ICT infrastructure facilities are made available at the grassroots such that the costs for ICT services could be recovered from the grassroots.
4. **Capacity Building of grassroots communities** to own, operate and manage telecentres should be recognised as the prime need.
5. Capacity building through training, **South–South and North-South Learning exchange programmes** has to be ensured as a priority.
6. Grassroots communities should be recognised and acknowledged as **repositories of Local Knowledge**.
7. Grassroots communities should be actively engaged at all stages of **locale-specific content management** such as needs assessment, content aggregation and dissemination based on the their own needs.
8. **Value added relevant content** has to be made available at the telecentres based on grassroots needs.
9. For the grassroots communities, content should be **a judicious blend of local and global knowledge**.
10. Content flow should involve a top down and bottom up approach.
11. Content has to be provided in the **local language of the communities**.
12. Information Societies should be sensitive to the needs of women, children, youth, disabled and marginalised groups.
13. Information Societies should **respect the cultural practices** and **safeguard the traditional diversity** that exists in grassroots communities.
14. **Traditional Media** like folk, print, audio and video have to be recognised as key sources of information dissemination at the grassroots.
15. Information Societies must ensure **Equitable Access to Knowledge**, breaking the barriers of social status, religion, gender, economic status, language, literacy and age at the grassroots.

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Grassroots are:

- *Communities, many of whom are living below poverty line with minimum literacy level and a limited knowledge base.*
- *Community Based Organisations (CBOs) who are directly working with grassroots communities, enabling them to acquire more information and knowledge to improve their quality of life.*
- *CBOs stationed in the target community and comprising of members from the community.*
- *NGO who work with the CBOs and are indirectly in touch with grassroots communities.*

www.grassroots-caucus.org