OPEN AIR LABOUR MARKET EXCHANGE (OALME)

[Note: This document assumes that you have read all the findings from Cape Town and Nairobi Kenya on this matter]

The difference between self organized and intermediary organized groups seem to be dictated by the following factors:

1. Education level
2. Cost of using technology
3. Technology adoption; and in this case, to some extent, is dictated by education level and cost of technology
4. Language diversity and uniformity- we found that because all the job seekers in Nairobi could speak in Swahili (a language spoken by all Kenya majority if not all Kenyans), self organization became possible. This was also seen in South Africa but with only the English speakers where it was not noticed that those who had gone to school and could speak and write in English were independent of MSR. However this was not true for all the cases.

Open air labour market exchange (OALME) was found to follow the patterns both for self organized and intermediary organized. In fact it was seen that the same players are involved in both cases even though the degree and formality of engagement differed.

In both cases, there were three levels involved a) the worker, who is the central point the willing seller, b) the employer, who is the willing buyer, and c) Either the intermediary organization for the non-self organized and the contractors (in Kenyan terms referred to as job brokers) for the self organized job seekers.

Consequently, technology use in OALME in South Africa will mostly benefit day labour workers and employers through intermediary organization e.g. MSR.ORG.ZA, who use field officers to aid job seekers in the field. Any technology support must therefore be designed in such way that field officers are central to the system. On the other hand, system design for use by the self organized day labour job seekers will have two options when dealing with job seeker support. A job seeker can act as a field officer or can choose to delegate the field officer duties to the contractor. (NB: self organized groups have been found to possess characteristics – mobile phone adoption, high education level and no language barrier- which can allow them to act as field officers)

Therefore in system design, the three user levels must be captured and hence our overall design where workers can engage employers directly, through job contractors or intermediary organizations, through other workers and through other employers. Our design was informed by findings from many hours of field work (See http://people.cs.uct.ac.za/~cchepken/index.php for different findings and literature review.

General findings informing the design include:

1. There are still many people/passersby who aren’t aware of what the job seekers are doing: hence the need to publicize them
2. The fear by ‘new’ potential employers to pick workers. This is mainly because of criminal records that some workers have portrait.
3. Contractors sometimes fail to pay the workers
4. Congested waiting places: Hence the need to decongest by reducing the number of those who hang out at collection points
5. Mobile phone ownership in among the workers in Kenya is well above 90%
6. Theft of quotations or difficulty in quotation writing: Hence the need to develop quotations over a mobile phone application and posted to a website.