RuralScope: An Repository for Tracking Rural Disbursements

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Problem: Development Aid

- Trace
  - Increasing reporting requirement
  - Quantifying the loss
  - Evidencing the loss
- Dissemination
  - Public activism in development
  - Much research on Internet and activism: maplight.org
  - Some interest in spatial analysis and development studies: gapminder.org, globalis.org

NREG Description

- 2005 Nationwide Act in India
- Designed for seasonal unemployment
- 31 Million households
  - Households need to register with panchayat
  - $1.50 per day minimum wage
- Wide data collection, poor aggregation

NREG Problems

- Allocation
  - Non-issuance of cards
  - Misrepresentation of payments
- Monitoring
  - Social Audits (tens of millions recovered yearly)
    - Door to door, time consuming
    - Murders/intimidation of
  - Public interest (Rural news)
- Data Storage
  - No systematic storage of data

NREG Data in various states

RuralScope

- Create a structured, browsable interface for NREG data

  FOR MONITORS

  - Allow easy record access for social audits
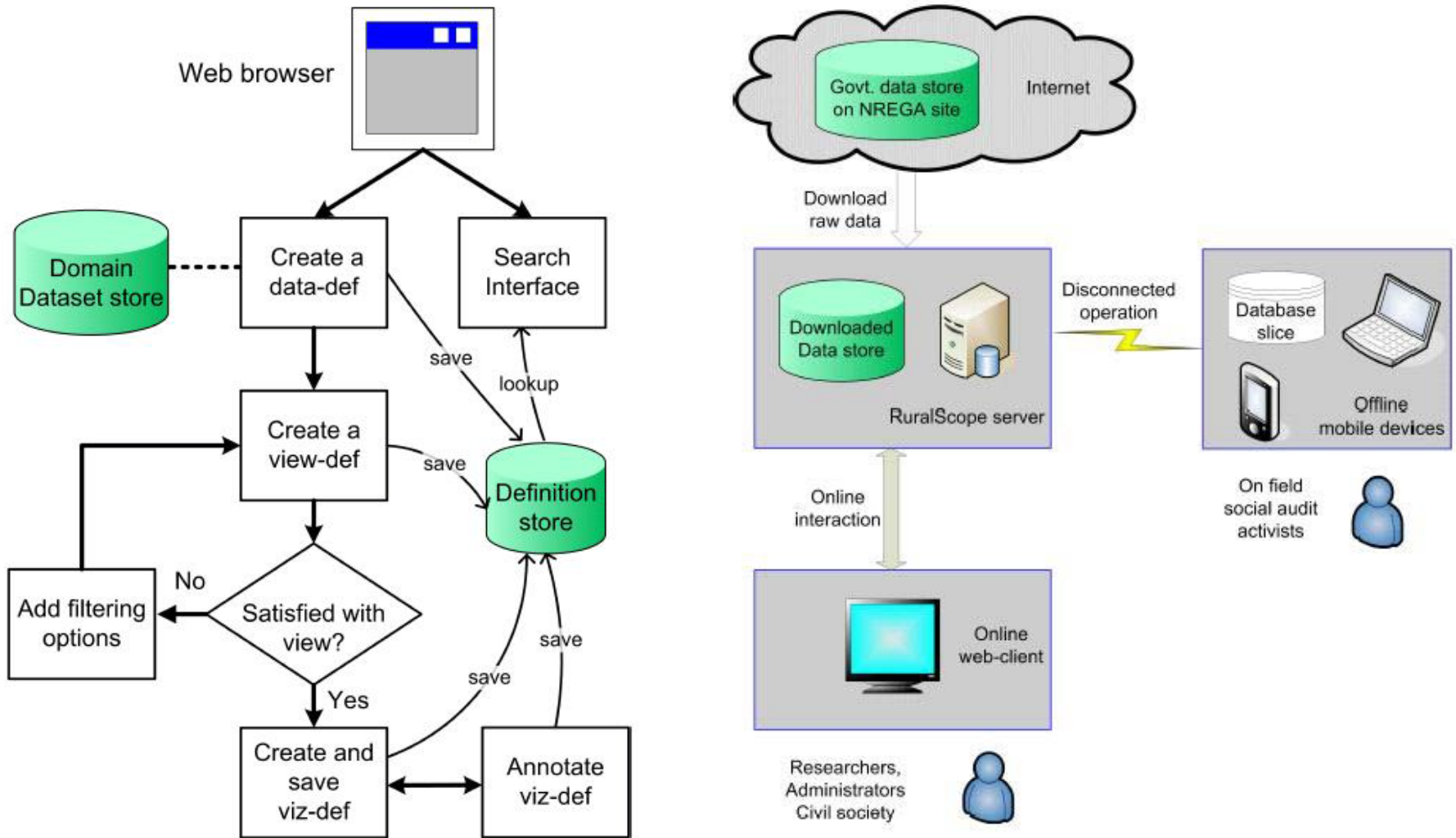 - Create point of access for aggregating audit reports

  FOR CASUAL USERS

  - Allow users to create and store visualizations of data
  - Annotate and classify visualizations

- Current Status
  - Initial prototype ready
  - Round 1 of testing with Govt. of Andhra Pradesh
  - Demo at ICTD2009

Data Flow and System Components

Visualization Output
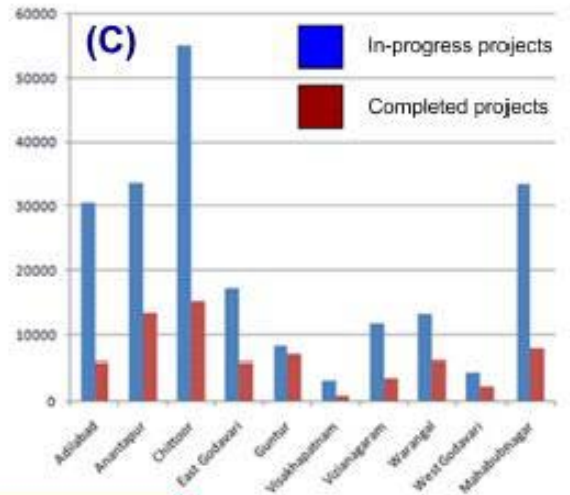
Annotation Output (construction)
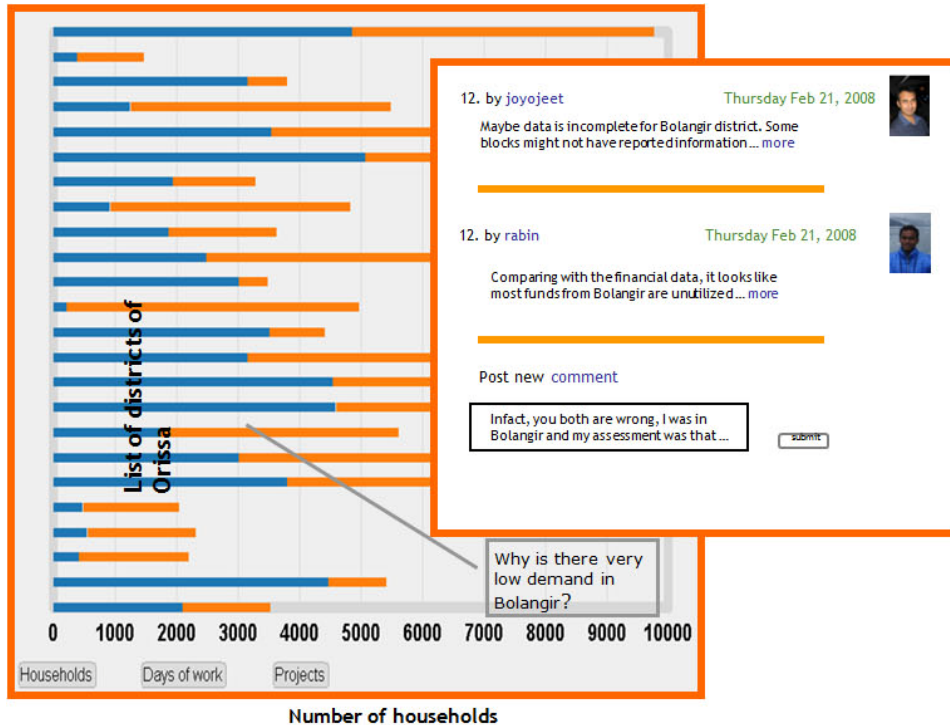
COMPLEX ANNOTATION

SIMPLE ANNOTATION

Challenges

- Technical
  - Technical agenda limited in basic system redesign
  - Annotations most interesting, difficult with dynamic sample
- Socio-economic
  - Popular use of online economic information still anecdotal
  - Privacy / ethical issues
  - Comparable cases with same levels of data rare