

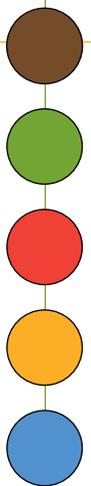
A Digital Shift: Youth and ICT for Development Best Practices



A Digital Shift: Youth and ICT for Development Best Practices

A publication of the GAID Committee of
eLeaders for Youth and ICT

In collaboration with TakingITGlobal and
the Youth Unit of Organisation Internationale
de la Francophonie



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United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is a vital interface between global policies in the economic, social and environmental spheres and national action. The Department works in three main interlinked areas: (i) it compiles, generates and analyses a wide range of economic, social and environmental data and information on which States Members of the United Nations draw to review common problems and to take stock of policy options; (ii) it facilitates the negotiations of Member States in many intergovernmental bodies on joint courses of action to address ongoing or emerging global challenges; and (iii) it advises interested Governments on the ways and means of translating policy frameworks developed in United Nations conferences and summits into programmes at the country level and, through technical assistance, helps build national capabilities.

Global Alliance for ICT and Development

The Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies and Development (GAID), an initiative approved by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2006, was launched after comprehensive worldwide consultations with governments, the private sector, civil society, the technical and Internet communities and academia.

While the 2005 United Nations Summit and the WSIS Summit emphasized the importance of ICT in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), there was a need for a truly global forum that would comprehensively address cross-cutting issues related to ICT in development. Recognizing that no single actor is capable of achieving the MDGs in isolation, the creation of an open and inclusive platform that can broaden the dialogue on innovative ways of harnessing ICT for advancing development is crucial.

The Global Alliance is a direct response to this need. With its multi-stakeholder approach, the Alliance reaffirms the belief that a people-centered and knowledge-based information society is essential for achieving better life for all.



TakingITGlobal

Based in Toronto, Canada, TakingITGlobal is a charitable organization, primarily consisting of its online social network, TakingITGlobal.org. Since its inception and launch in 1999, TakingITGlobal has provided opportunities for learning, capacity-building, cross-cultural awareness, and self-development through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Web 2.0 tools and initiatives feature predominantly in the TakingITGlobal's work, and are in turn offered to its 200,000 members. The organization provides the following resources to its online community— global online social network and hub for civic participation, content & tools for educators to facilitate rich, interactive learning experiences, outreach and collaboration tools for events, networks, campaigns, and causes, research, development, and sharing of best practices on youth engagement and facilitated learning experiences through workshops, webinars, and e-courses.

By engaging audiences in 12 different languages, across continents and communities, TakingITGlobal's belief in the crucial role of ICT in youth empowerment, education and awareness is echoed by its mission statement, which emphasises the 'harnessing internet technologies to cultivate youth leadership and engagement in social issues, bridging the continuity gap that causes fragmentation between and within generations of youth movements and championing the role of young people as key stakeholders in all aspects of society.'

Acknowledgements

We would like to express the deep appreciation and thanks of the Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Development (UNDESA-GAID), to the members of the UNDESA-GAID Committee of eLeaders for Youth and ICT for their tireless dedication to seeing this project to fruition.

We would like to particularly acknowledge the leadership of Ms. Jennifer Corriero, who masterfully led this project from its inception, and the commitment of Ms. Rasmata Compaore, Mr. Rajiv Ramakrishnan, Ms. Natasha Ghent-Rodriguez and Mr. Armen Orujyan for their commitment and invaluable contribution to this book.

We acknowledge with gratitude the outstanding assistance and support given by the staff of TakingIT-Global— Ms. Mekhala Chaubal, the staff of UNDESA-GAID— Ms Enrica Murmura and Mr. Serge Kpto; and the volunteers of UNDESA-GAID— Ms. Marian Haji-Mohammed, Ms. Jennifer Jhin, Ms. Laura Thies and Mr. Brian Gutterman.

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Foreword

In 2008, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Global Alliance for ICT and Development (UNDESA-GAID) commissioned a team of twelve young professionals from around the world to promote youth development projects with technology, resulting in the creation of the United Nations Committee of e-Leaders for Youth and ICT. The committee is comprised of young people from the academic, business, social and public spheres, all pioneers in media and technology. The team members work both on individual projects in their regions of focus (Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East) and on collaborative projects with global reach such as this one. This distinguished group was established as an outcome of the GAID Global Forum on Youth and ICT which took place on 24-26 September 2007 in Geneva and was hosted by the international Telecommunication Union (ITU). The Global Youth Forum recognized youth as agents of change and recommended the creation of a global platform to collaborate and network on youth-related issues.

In October of 2008, the committee partnered with ATHGO International, Intel Corp., Ericsson AG, and several others to host the first ever Global Innovation Forum for Education and Development, in Yerevan, Armenia. The forum provided a tremendous opportunity for young people from around the world to meet and work with leaders of international institutions, multi-national corporations, civil society and governments to both discuss the development challenges they face in their respective countries and come up with innovative ways to overcome them. Many youth led ICT for development projects were highlighted at this forum, and this publication was the natural next-step.

Showcasing the best practices of community transformations through ICT is extremely important and is a key aspect of UNDESA-GAID's mandate. The development sector must continue advocating these projects to ensure their survival and future growth. Furthermore, much can be learned from these initiatives and they can serve as models for subsequent endeavors. This publication is the result of the hard work and dedication of the e-Leaders led by Jennifer Corriero, and for this I am deeply grateful.

Sarbuland Khan
Executive Coordinator of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development



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Introduction

With the advent of the World Wide Web, mass communication was transformed right down to its defining principles. Here was a tool that was both powered and propelled by individuals, creating an exchange of ideas in multiple directions. The World Wide Web became a connector of thoughts, ideas and motivations.

The effect of this outburst of human thought exchange, followed by its organization into online communities, has created a second-generation of web development and users who actively collaborate in sharing information. In addition to the Internet, and all that it encompasses, these users also tap in to the potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to increase and strengthen their social network. This second generation, Web 2.0, is converting digital connectivity and solution building through online social networks like TakingITGlobal.org into the power to implement social change through ICT. By using the collective store of knowledge available online, young people, especially, have drafted innovative methods to deal with some of the world's most pressing issues including poverty, women's rights and global climate change, examples of which can be seen in this publication.

This book is important in its goal to highlight these successes while demonstrating how the diverse and vast potential of ICT can empower and simplify the launch of a global project on a local level. As the projects featured in this publication will show, the basic infrastructure needed to launch a successful project is often meagre, and it is often hard to come by. What is bountiful in every case, however, is the idealistic energy of youth combined with solutions harnessed by ICT to create a slew of practical community initiatives designed to better the lives of real people, the world over. In the case of this book, these initiatives include creating a source of expression for youth in conflict areas through weblogs, using mobile phone technology to promote better farming

practices, and developing software to promote cultural literacy among youth.

The book's title calls attention to this very special link between youth, innovation, social change, and technology. Once online tools began to be adapted and developed for the specific needs of 'Generation 2.0,' this sparked a shift in the purpose and value of ICT that is quite obviously associated with the change that young people have created as peers, mentors and leaders. The 'digital shift' has indeed been youth motivated and youth-powered, but not youth-centric. If anything, the increased social responsibility that young people have exhibited through ICT only shows just how closely connected the youth of today are—a natural response to a globalised world.

This publication was created with two purposes in mind. The first is to showcase the efforts of individuals and groups who are inspiring a transformation of attitudes and actions to renew communities the world over. The second is to pay tribute to the millions of young people serving as 'change makers' for their societies by implementing the ideas of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals in a myriad of ways. The handful of projects described in this publication are only an example of the work being done globally. In addition to this publication, you can find other examples of Youth and ICT best practices through initiatives such as the World Summit Youth Award (<http://www.youthaward.org/>). While some of the ideas were initially developed for maximum local impact, their potential for growth cannot be denied. Similarly, projects that have been created for global connectivity and reach may have very locally rooted effects in the future. What is undeniable in every case, is the sheer dedication and effort that has made every project a prime example of action and motivation through youth-leadership.

The division of the publication into six clusters—Education, Advocacy, Entrepreneurship, Healthcare,



Digital Citizenship and Youth Media—highlights how the featured projects cover the major social media-related topics of today, while emphasizing the most popular approaches to social action within ICT and development.

The United Nations' Global Alliance for Information and Communications Technologies and Development (UN-GAID) is the backbone of the UN-GAID eLeaders Committee, which is responsible for the development of this publication. Through innovative and creative input, every step along the way, the Committee's expertise has ensured this publication fulfils the mission of the UN-GAID.

TakingITGlobal is pleased to be a key partner in the conception, compilation and publication of the eLeaders' initiative. We were excited to engage so many of our community members in submitting their initiatives to this book. As a social network focused on providing the tools of development and change to the world's youth, the UN-GAID publication is very close to our organization's mission and vision, a fact

that has enabled us to contribute our understanding of ICT and youth-related development to this publication. At the same time, it has also provided us with an insight into the profound developments that have taken place by leveraging the power of technology with youth.

I would like to express my gratitude to those who have supported the project at TakingITGlobal, with special thanks to Mekhala Chaubal, who has played an instrumental role in the development of this publication and supporting our outreach, writing and editorial process.

On behalf of the UN-GAID eLeaders committee, I also wish to extend my thanks to all the contributors of Best Practices submissions. It is because of their innovative, pragmatic and determined efforts at creating change that the true potential of ICT and development can be seen. Visit <http://bestpractices.tigweb.org> to learn more about the best practices featured in this publication along with additional submissions.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Corriero
Executive Director, TakingITGlobal

Perspectives francophones

PAR MME RASMATA COMPAORE, COMITE DES ELEADERS POUR LA JEUNESSE ET LES TICS

Plusieurs projets de différentes catégories ont été enregistrés en français. Il s'agit entre autre des domaines de la santé, de l'éducation, de la culture et la paix, de la plaidoirie, de la formation des formateurs, de la citoyenneté numérique, du média des jeunes.

Santé

La santé est une composante essentielle au bien-être socio-économique et un élément clé de la croissance et du développement de toute société. La qualité des systèmes de santé et l'égalité d'accès aux services essentiels sont des questions cruciales dans les pays en voie de développement. Ce sont les pays les plus pauvres qui souffrent en effet le plus des retards de développement dans le domaine de la santé, comme l'insuffisance des infrastructures sanitaires, le taux élevé de maladies liées à la pauvreté, la défaillance de la santé maternelle et des conditions environnementales peu satisfaisantes.

Pour pallier ces problèmes de santé dans un contexte économique difficile, il est nécessaire de veiller au financement des services de santé et de leur assurer pérennité et efficacité.

L'une des solutions est de recourir à l'utilisation des TIC pour faciliter certaines prestations. La formation médicale à distance, la télémédecine, la télé-radiologie sont entre autres des solutions liées au TIC dont la mise en place permet de:

- Rendre accessible des services de santé de qualité aux populations démunies,
- Améliorer la prise en charge des malades en leur offrant un diagnostic radiologique clé et indispensable à l'exercice de la médecine moderne,

- Réduire notablement les erreurs de diagnostics dans les hôpitaux régionaux en donnant aux médecins la possibilité de concerter un radiologiste pour leurs prises de décision
- éviter les évacuations/références inutiles des malades vers les Hôpitaux nationaux;
- réduire le coût des dépenses de santé des populations compte tenu de leur faible revenu et de la presque inexistence d'une prise en charge sociale

Ces initiatives sont d'une importance vitale pour la population en zone rurale en ce sens qu'elles permettent de résoudre le problème crucial de manque des spécialistes qui sont concentrés à plus de 80% dans les capitales; d'où l'intérêt de développer l'accès aux soins de qualité à distance grâce aux outils TIC.

Deux projets pilotes dans ces domaines sont en expérimentation au Mali et les résultats sont positivement appréciés par le corps médical et la population. Ces initiatives sont à encouragées et à reproduire dans d'autres pays.

Education et Formation des Formateurs

L'éducation constitue un maillon essentiel dans le développement d'un pays. Les pays en voie de développement accusent un retard dans l'alphabétisation de leurs populations. Ce qui est à l'origine même de la fracture numérique entre pays pauvres et pays développés.

L'utilisation efficace des TIC dans l'éducation est un facteur clé de développement. Elle brise le cycle de la pauvreté et constitue une des clés du développement économique et social.



Les propositions faites dans cette catégorie visent à la vulgarisation des TIC, à l'appropriation des TIC par les jeunes à travers les formations et aussi au renforcement des capacités, et ceci dans le but de valoriser le savoir des jeunes et de leur permettre leur insertion dans la vie socioprofessionnelle.

Avec l'avènement des TIC, il n'est plus suffisant de savoir lire ou écrire mais le plus important est d'accéder aux outils performants des TIC afin d'améliorer au mieux sa capacité de production. Cette accessibilité permet la vulgarisation des services (e-commerce, e-banque, e-gouvernement,...).

L'accessibilité des contenus de recherche et de formation sur Internet permet de briser la barrière entre le Nord et le Sud, un affranchissement qui autrefois nécessitait beaucoup de moyens financiers.

Les TIC sont une solution d'ouverture à la formation à distance. Elles permettent à plusieurs jeunes de bénéficier des enseignements "de qualité" des grandes universités occidentales.

Plaidoirie

Les TIC, dont l'utilité n'est plus à démontrer, sont perçus comme un facteur de développement, d'innovation et de création de nouvelles richesses. Cependant, la problématique reste à couvrir les zones rurales généralement non desservies par le réseau Internet en vue d'étendre l'accessibilité des TIC et donner l'opportunité aux jeunes de ces zones, la chance d'apprendre les TIC et de développer leur capacité.

Les moyens cités pour déporter ces technologies dans les milieux ruraux sont:

- Cybercar (Outils technologiques mobilisés dans un car);
- Cyberbarque (Outils technologiques mobilisés dans une barque).

Ces initiatives permettront de:

- mobiliser des organisations de jeunesse au niveau national pour créer une société de l'information dynamique ;
- maintenir les jeunes dans leur milieu afin de réduire les risques d'infection des maladies sexuellement transmissibles et le VIH SIDA dans les villes ;
- Accroître le taux de succès aux examens scolaires;
- Développer les capacités technologiques chez les jeunes;
- Transformer les moments des loisirs sexuels chez les jeunes filles à des cours de formation nouvelle;
- Animer une plate forme interactive qui fera la promotion des oeuvres des jeunes entrepreneurs ruraux par la diffusion des informations, du savoir faire et des expériences novatrices des jeunes;
- Sensibiliser et orienter les jeunes sur les sites Internet porteurs afin d'éviter les sites à caractère malsain (pédophilie, pornographie, xénophobie,...)
- Initier les jeunes sur les critères de recherche sur Internet.

Les ressources financières et la disponibilité des compétences techniques pour la mise en oeuvre de telles initiatives demeurent un défi majeur à relever.

Le genre est pris en compte dans ces initiatives. Cependant, des efforts supplémentaires restent à faire en vue d'encourager les filles et les femmes à mieux s'y impliquer.

Avec l'avènement des réseaux sans fil, les milieux ruraux sont de plus en plus desservis, par des réseaux régionaux qui toutefois nécessitent des ressources pour les réaliser sont les plus appropriés;



quitte à trouver les ressources nécessaires pour les réaliser.

Média et jeunesse

Les jeunes constituent une force de développement dans un pays. Ils sont capables d'initier un réel changement. D'où la nécessité de leur donner la parole afin qu'ils s'expriment librement. Avec l'évolution des TIC, les jeunes ont accès à différents types de médias utiles pour leur éducation et leur insertion socioprofessionnelle.

Internet constitue une révolution à la fois technologique et médiatique dans la mesure où il rassemble sur un même support tous les médias traditionnels. Ce faisant, Internet concurrence

l'ensemble des médias en rendant les informations accessibles rapidement, gratuitement et sans intermédiaire (vendeur, distributeur...). Spécificité majeure en outre, ses usagers interagissent avec les contenus diffusés, voire produisent directement de l'information.

Les propositions de cette catégorie concernent les jeunes et visent à les aider ou à les inciter à prendre la parole et faire des analyses ou des critiques à travers des écrits sur Internet. Les blogs, les commentaires et les sites web sont des espaces d'échange énumérés.

Les commentaires de certains peuvent être un apport positif pour d'autres et ceci contribue à élargir les champs de vision.

CHAPTER 1

Digital Citizenship and Youth Media

With the advent of network technology such as the Internet and the World Wide Web, the face of human interaction has changed. In some cases, it has become bigger and more expansive, where the potential for knowledge exchange is tremendous. Where previously, two young people from around the world would never have met, Internet and Communications Technologies (ICT), such as social networks (Facebook, Twitter), social media networks (Idealist, TakingITGlobal), and digital media platforms (YouTube, MySpace and the Youth Media Exchange Project), have aided an unprecedented level of interaction between individuals, communities and entire regions across the world. The potential for empowerment in such interactions is vast, especially where youth is concerned.

The creativity, energy and enthusiasm of youth, if channeled correctly, can initiate progress at all levels, with young people themselves becoming catalysts of the very changes they attempt to manifest. In this regard, digital citizenship and youth media has become a crucial tool in youth empowerment, serving as a means of connectivity, expression, peer exchange and education, and most importantly, of youth action. This section attempts to highlight some exceptional advancements made by some outstanding young people, and also serves to examine the far-reaching changes made in the communities they have impacted.

The submission to the GAID e-leaders best practices publication saw some very specific trends within the broad categories of submissions. With respect to the Digital Citizenship and Youth Media section, these were as follows:

Issues addressed were in keeping with contemporary ones: Youth media is often focused on the 'now,' with there being a necessity to capture the attention span of the targeted youth audience through relevancy. To harness the most prompt action of digital citizenship, media, and therefore, the best practices in this section, have shown a pertinence to 21st century issues— global warming, genocide,

economic depression, and corruption to name a few. What the projects did though was to move one step further to utilize the information available on such matters to address the root concerns in each case. With some projects, this meant examining the local and national government legislation

with an aim to initiate reform, while some others focused on educating youth about illegal practices such as financial mismanagement, cyber crime and corruption. Globalization was the core issue behind a majority of the projects, but it was through a unique take on a globalized world-- whether through radio programs, blogs, magazines, social awareness networks, dramas and documentaries— that each practice became a best one.





Issues were oriented towards those of the developing world: A majority of the best practices were either generated in the developing world, or created to aid the most pressing issues of the developing world, or both. Not only did this empower youth in many affected communities to initiate and be a part of change, it also served to deliver the original message the projects created—that localized youth action, connected to the world through the latest media tools, can create a networked society that uses a mass of common information to solve some of the bigger problems of the world.

Focus was brought on overcoming the connectivity issues of the developing world: Given that most projects involved nations and youth from the developing world, the issue of lack of online and offline infrastructure to put theory into practice was one that could not be ignored. Youth illiteracy, lack of know-how of software and hardware, as well as the need for funds for much-needed courses in education and computer know-how were some of the biggest challenges that projects faced. A few projects combated these issues by reviewing their methodologies, and reassigning their goals to include acquisition of the necessary infrastructure.

The overall tone of the projects was to transform existing conditions: Understanding that ICT served to change the ways of peer connectivity and communication on issues of global importance is supported by the fact that ICT are changing whole methods of human interaction. Thus, when the best practices considered problems faced in developing communities, their methodologies dealt with finding ways to first empower youth through knowledge, and then taught them to utilize this information to make the project a reality. The practices incorporated sustainability into their mechanisms by educating the communities they aimed to change, by initiating change from within.

Reach/Scalability

Digital citizenship is a relatively new concept, especially in areas where the Internet access is unreli-

able if it exists. However, the best practices show that online citizenship does not need to be an extraneous advancement of information technology. In fact, some of the projects mentioned in this section focus solely on preventing cyber crime, and understanding the funding needs of technology-based projects through online financial management.

Diversity/Gender

While a majority of the submissions came from developing regions, the representation of women's issues were certainly not sidelined. A few projects targeted women's issues, such as a higher unemployment rates, discrimination and illiteracy. However, it is perhaps the nature of digital media, as well as its quality as a novel and approachable medium of mass appeal that does not show any sizeable imbalance of gender in terms of interest, ability and capability. The only exception to this may be the rates of literacy and accessibility within various communities. If this has been the case, then it might be an issue of creating more gender-specific outreach programs. At the same time, stirring up an interest with participants did not seem to be a concern among the best practices.

Concluding Thoughts

Digital Citizenship has the potential of being the next important way to effectively communicate the needs and necessities of a developing world, especially one in which there is such a wide disparity in economic and social conditions, particularly where the exchange of information is concerned. Youth media has already begun to bridge the vast gap between the developing regions, while creating a new society that relies on the constant connection between cultures, communities and regions. The question is not about how the world could tap into this web of change, but rather, when. The answer could lie in the region that these best practices submissions have covered: digital citizenship has no traditional boundaries, and neither should its reach, impact, or expression, especially where youth involvement is concerned.

ICT AND DEVELOPMENT FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

STUDIES CENTRE FOR HANDICAPPED RESEARCH, SYRIA [[HTTP://WWW.CAIHAND.ORG/](http://www.caihand.org/)]

A lesser-known aspect of digital development has been its usefulness for youth with disabilities, and the overall benefit Internet and Communication Technologies (ICT) pose for these youth, especially where poverty is a major factor of marginalization. Nabil Eid's conceptualization of the Studies Centre for Handicapped Research began when a student enrolled in a computer literacy class, on being asked why he was studying the subject he replied, 'I want to show the world that though I am disabled, I am not disqualified.'

'Two-thirds of the world's disabled live in developing countries,' says Nabil, and further states that his main interest in the issue focuses on promoting and developing the lives of persons with disabilities through the use of ICT, because 'ICT can open new vistas for disabled people and make it a different world.' With rehabilitation and capacity building being some of the more important goals he wishes to accomplish, Nabil stresses the need for greater special needs education under the umbrella of ICT-related education. Given the flexible nature of technology, Nabil also thinks that an increase in computer literacy among youth with disabilities will lead to greater employment opportunities, thereby creating a cycle of poverty alleviation for youth.



Beginning in 1993 with keyboards adapted with symbols for greater usability, to the 2000s, where the Centre began focusing on adaptabilities for the visually and intellectually impaired, Nabil says the Centre aims to 'support individual child and adult needs by providing access to online software resources with special training. This can assist their integration into mainstream education curricula, he says, and also creates awareness about the various facets of ICT usage.

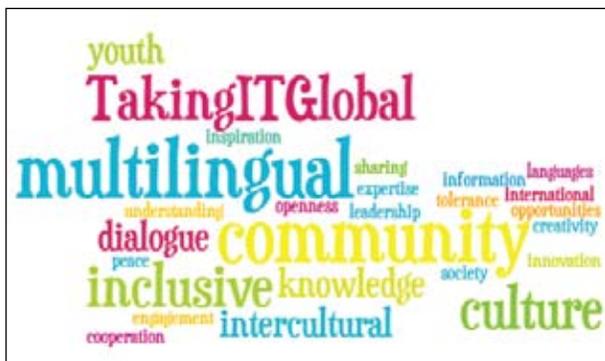
The initial response was favourable, recalls Nabil, though the issues the Centre faced had to do with the lack of cooperation mechanisms between various disability groups in the region, as well as the severe need for a well-trained and qualified staff. 'And of course, funding, which is a major problem even now. We didn't, and still don't have enough to effectively train staff for the needs of our projects.'

In spite of this, Nabil remains highly optimistic about the Centre's future accomplishments, based on past ones. 'ICT for the disabled have come to signify new digital and employment opportunities, and of course, new hope. It's up to those of us who can help to create this sense of empowerment for them.'

MULTILINGUAL PLATFORM FOR TIG USERS

TAKINGITGLOBAL, CANADA [HTTP://MULTILINGUAL.TIGWEB.ORG/]

The creation of the online social-media network TakingITGlobal over a decade ago also called for the formation of an easily accessible platform of global connectivity that would not only underline the impact TakingITGlobal could make, but would also provide a multicultural context. The TakingITGlobal Multilingual Platform, developed for its international audience, was this connector that was introduced to the organization’s online community.

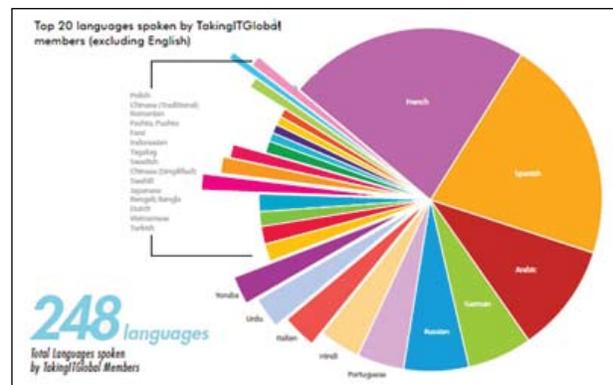


A decade later, the platform’s coordinator, Chiara Camponeschi, attributes the tool’s success to a number of factors. ‘Mostly, I think it had to do with recognizing the potential that lies in the global community, especially when brought together. Also understanding that words, in any language, have a very powerful impact.’ Discussing her personal notion that ‘language is inseparable from culture,’ Chiara stresses the platform’s functionalities, which includes a membership of over 200,000 people worldwide. TakingITGlobal has now been launched in 12 languages, which is a sure testimony to its popularity, says Chiara.

While the majority of the platform’s work is done through the support of TIG’s vast virtual volunteer network, Chiara’s major task of coordinating between languages and people plays a significant part in the platform’s success. ‘I begin to realize just how much of an impact this project has had, especially when I

put myself in someone else’s shoes, across the globe. It must be an exhilarating experience for someone to log on to TakingITGlobal and see all this information laid out for them in a language they can understand, and a culture they can relate to.’ Keeping the various languages relevant to the diasporas of cultures they represent is crucial, says Chiara, something that has been successful because most of the translation is done by members themselves, who take on the responsibility for setting up a multicultural TakingITGlobal. ‘We wanted to be very certain that information available in another language was not just a direct translation of English,’ Chiara points out. ‘I know from my own experience as an ESL speaker, that the role language plays in communities is so entrenched with values, and perspectives, that preserving this diversity was one of our main aims.’

The experience itself is ‘humbling because of the sheer magnitude of what we do.’ Future ideas for expansion of the platform include adding more languages to it, especially those that represent a majority of TIG’s users. The concept of ‘true multilingualism’ means there needs to be a two-way interaction between members and translators of as many cultures as possible, says Chiara. ‘Most of the time, I feel a deep admiration for how amazing it is that technology has enabled all of this. I am truly in awe of what it can do.’





THE YOUTH MEDIA EXCHANGE REPORT

TAKINGITGLOBAL, A PROJECT SUPPORTED BY MACARTHUR FOUNDATION, CANADA [HTTP://WWW.YMEX.ORG]

The Youth Media Exchange Project (YMEX) was formed as a process to liaise first and third party media, and to develop youth-oriented mass communication resources. The purpose of the YMEX project was to provide a platform for self-expression, with the aim of collecting and promoting youth-generated digital media from around the world. The project's two coordinators, Mariel Garcia and Natalie Rodic, were both a part of the conception and initial stages of the project, and agree that a number of factors were instrumental in the successful launch of the project.

For Mariel, the design of the website, which was made to appeal to a targeted youth niche, played a major factor in the development of member interest in the site. According to her, it was also necessary to use the available resources of already established social media networks.

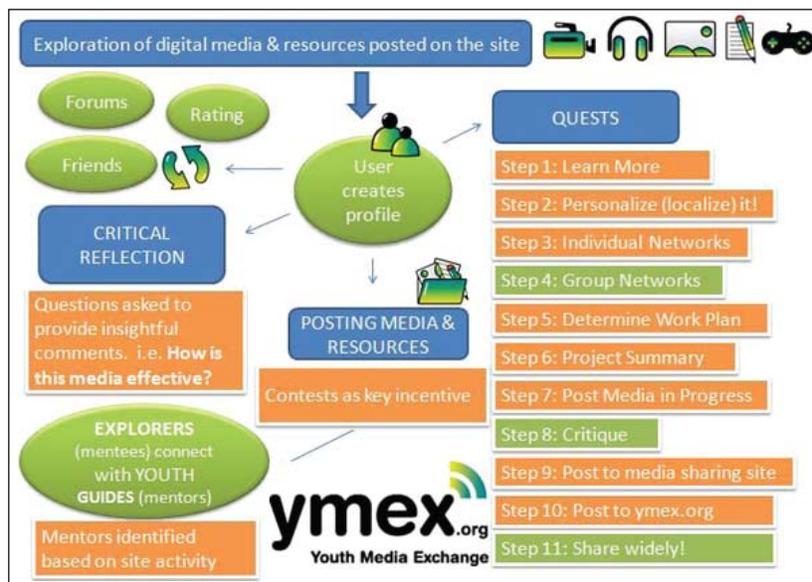
Natalie, who was responsible for publicity and outreach, also attributes the project's success to youth being given such a crucial role in it. 'The concepts of peer expression, learning and review all contributed to its popularity', she says, adding that the contests held and prizes awarded within the YMEX project itself greatly help momentum within it.

Since the project's platform was entirely virtual, the challenges of coordination amongst an office staff were always to be overcome, says Natalie. 'Challenges came in having a large team spread over multiple offices in different cities with little face time, particularly at critical moments in the development process.' The project was also innovative

to its coordinators, who were faced with the tasks of generating user interest, and also tailoring vast numbers of entries towards youth. '[Even though] it was a media-sharing site that dealt with the problem of global issues and where youth could share their own content, many members posted unrelated content or classified media wrongly.' Recalls Mariel, while Natalie says that language barriers, and 'trying to do too much sometimes' were also challenges to learn from.

Natalie and Mariel both reflect on the YMEX experience as one they have learnt much from. 'Interacting with many very smart and motivated young people who were passionate about media and social issues was so fulfilling.' Says Natalie.

'I have learned that community building is in fact [almost] a miracle that generally goes unappreciated when we live in actual functional communities. It is something we need to put collective effort into everyday if we want to build strong and sustainable globalised online communities', adds Mariel.



Additional Best Practices, Digital Media and Global Citizenship:

FORGOTTEN DIARIES

YOUTH ACTION FOR CHANGE, ITALY [[HTTP://WWW.FORGOTTENDIARIES.ORG](http://www.forgottendiaries.org)]

Humanitarian Issues are Selene Biffi's forte. Not only is she working towards a Master's Degree in the subject, the organization founded by her works deals with the same issues. Simply put, the Forgotten Diaries Project is a collection of online blog 'diaries' that showcase the issues faced by youth around the world, especially from regions of conflict, where there is not much coverage from the international media. The Forgotten Diaries is a platform for youth expression, and aims to promote ongoing dialogues between young people from all sides of the identified conflicts.

'We wanted to give young people a chance to speak. These digital diaries are their stories, in their own words. We believe that these conflicts should be online.' Selene also says it is 'kind of surprising that no one gave these young people a chance to speak before us.'

The biggest issue the project faced involved providing access to youth in conflict zones, as well as the infrastructure needed. 'The impacts of conflict in areas where they have often gone unnoticed have been harsh, says Selene. 'It's hard to read about someone wanting to go to school, but cannot because of a war, or of somebody else who went grocery shopping but saw the market

had been bombed instead.' All the same, Selene chalks down these experiences as having two-way effects, with the expressive entries providing an eye-opening and much-needed insight into the world's conflicts.'

The Forgotten Diaries Project has won numerous awards nationally and internationally, and is now the subject of a documentary film scheduled to be released in late 2009. The most fulfilling part, says Selene, 'is making journalists and reporters out of young people. We give them a chance to speak for themselves.' The Forgotten Diaries Project aims to create real-time activists as well, and provides free online training sessions for members. 'We want to reach out to youth shunned by the global media.' Says Selene. 'That is where our inspiration lies.'



WIRELESS GHANA

RURAL COMMUNITIES EMPOWERMENT CENTER, GHANA [HTTP://WWW.WIRELESSGHANA.COM]



Created as a means to provide Ghana's rural communities with much-needed connectivity, the Wireless Ghana project focuses on the improvement and development of these areas through the Internet, as well as through web-based communication and education tools. Its founder, Boateng Ebenezer, explains that the project was formed by request, after inhabitants of villages in Ghana's Akwapim North district called for forms of communication to connect them with the rest of the country and the world.

In a region where travelling considerable distances to use a computer is not uncommon, Boateng says that many did not have the facilities or the time to travel. 'In fact, it was the women and the youth who wanted to learn to use the Internet, to understand how to interact with one another, and the world at large.' The project's initiation and maintenance costs being low, it was possible to ensure that computers reached the areas where few other

forms of networking had before. The biggest challenges, says Ebenezer, had little to do with the actual connectivity. 'Most people found it difficult to actually use the computers; they just didn't know how to.'

However, the nature of the project, as well as the relative ease with which it was possible to enable networking among Ghana's rural areas, has made the project a success, especially among its target group—women and youth. Wireless Ghana's staff of fifteen has provided education and training programs during the start-up stages of the project, a move that has helped its spread across the seventeen villages of the Akwapim district.

Boateng's future plans consist of expansion and literacy. 'We would like to see this project being promoted in other villages and districts.' He says. 'That, and perhaps starting a form of e-government through networking.'



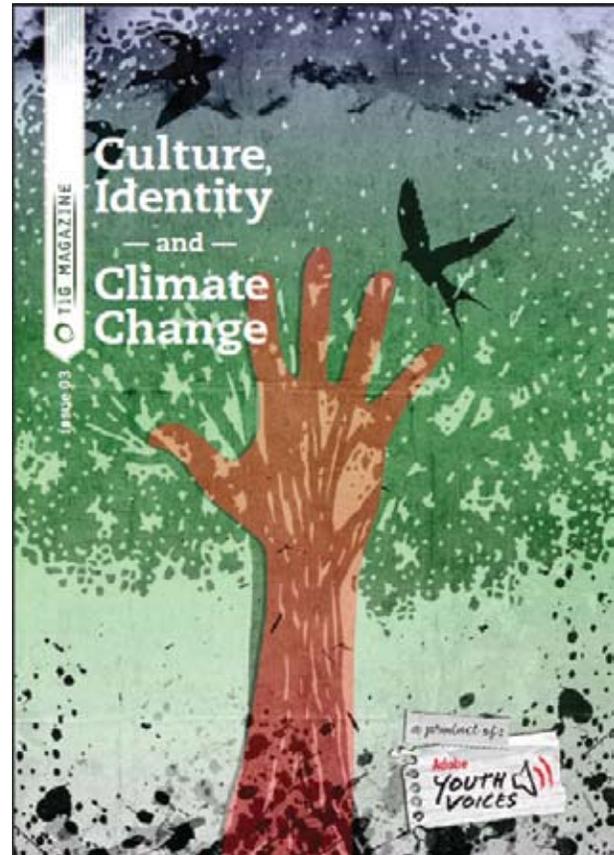
ADOBE YOUTH VOICES

TAKINGITGLOBAL, CANADA [[HTTP://WWW.TIGWEB.ORG/CONTEST/YOUTHVOICES/](http://www.tigweb.org/contest/youthvoices/)]

In the fall of 2007, TakingITGlobal, with the support of Adobe Youth Voices, offered capacity building workshops to underserved youth in 10 different countries: Argentina, Brazil, China, Canada, Kenya, Mali, Russia, Sweden, Egypt, and South Africa. These workshops aimed to familiarize the youth participants with digital image editing using Adobe Elements 6.0 software, as they created images to communicate their perspective on two key issues: Climate Change and Culture & Identity.

The three main goals of the Adobe Youth Voices project were to empower youth in underserved communities to create online media including digital art, photo journalism, animations, and multimedia projects, to provide youth with the technology tools to make a positive impact in their communities and around the world, and to leverage these breakthrough learning experiences to foster cross cultural dialogue and understanding, with a special emphasis on outreach to marginalized and underserved youth.

The themes of Climate Change and Culture & Identity were chosen because they are both global issues, relevant to youth everywhere, and also because youth involvement in the dialogue and solutions related to them is prominent. All over the world youth



have adopted Climate Change as their issue to champion, as it will be younger generations that are most affected by the consequences.

Youth are taking part in forming solutions to this problem in their local communities and are also calling on global leaders to take action. Similarly, youth play a major role in influencing and reinforcing Culture & Identity, but also, as a generation more exposed to cultural diversity, youth today are more open, accepting and embracing of cultural differences.

The major challenges that the project faced included locating and encouraging host organizations with the necessary computer/internet facilities to participate. Internet availability was difficult in certain



Communities, and this, coupled with the fact that not all Country Coordinators were previously acquainted with Adobe software making, made it challenging for workshops to run completely smoothly.

Recruiting participants with the basic computer literacy required was sometimes difficult in certain communities. While the project was meant to focus primarily on underserved youth, in order to participate, these young people needed to have a basic

understanding of computers and familiarity with the internet. Oftentimes though the youth who wanted to participate the most lacked these skills.

TakingITGlobal's collaboration with Adobe helped promote the idea of global outreach in an innovative and fun manner. Because the project was conducted in ten separate countries, the potential to gain members from these was vast, as was the recognition TakingITGlobal received.

NOTEWORTHY

- Parliament outside Parliament, The Young Advocates for the Advancement of ICT-related Development (Y.A.A.ICT-D), Malawi.

<http://www.youngictadvocates.org>

- eGovernance for Municipal Development, Canadian Executive Service Organization - Philippine Partnership Branch, Philippines.
- Laptops for Public Servants Programme, Ministry of ICT, Uganda.

<http://www.ict.go.ug>

- E-participation in policy process, e-cube foundation and Global youth Coalition on HIV/AIDs (Nigeria), Nigeria.
- Project Australia Online Incubator for Social Innovation, Project Australia, Australia

<http://projectaustralia.org.au/>

- Building MOMENTUM through the use of ICT! MOMENTUM, Canada.

<http://momentumweb.ning.com/>

CHAPTER 2

Education

Education is widely regarded as being at the core, if not the primary driver, of socio-economic development because it holds the potential of connecting people with opportunities that can improve their livelihoods. However, people living in the world's poorest countries oftentimes live within a poverty trap that prevents them from gaining access to quality education even if the individual and family desire is there to lift them out of poverty through educational opportunities. NGO's, and the public and private sectors alike, have all joined the battle to eliminate the poverty trap that is holding back so many people around the world. Empowering the youth in the least developed countries through education pays immediate and long-term dividends for the countries where they are living as having an educated young population is essential for any kind of long-term and sustainable socio-economic development. As was demonstrated by the best practices featured in this chapter, most individuals and organizations were motivated by this same need to empower the group that form the core of each nation's workforce and can best help increase socio-economic opportunities.



Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), if used effectively, have the potential to transform and drastically improve the state of education that exists in the developing world and is thus a key driver today for all of the work being done on education development. Getting connected computers into classrooms around the developing world gives the young people there access to a previously unthinkable amount of information and educational resources. ICT can even connect teachers and students in developing countries with their counterparts in a school situated in a developed country, thousands of miles away. Entries in this category demonstrate this, with projects from Africa, Asia, Europe and North America. Some were initiated by individuals driven by their recognition of the need to provide value while others are led by institutions including citizen sector organizations and government agencies. Projects also served the purpose of reaching out to youth in rural areas as well as youth in urban communities, with the use of both online and offline tools.

Many community development initiatives are known to focus on empowering disadvantaged groups who are at the highest risk for falling into the poverty trap for a variety of reasons. Young girls and

women in many developing countries, for cultural or religious reasons, are not given the same educational opportunities as the young boys and men in their own communities. Youth who might be living in an area where there is conflict or political unrest are also at a great disadvantage. However, NGO's are partnering with the public and private sectors to address these issues head-on. Disadvantaged groups are being targeted and initiatives such as community computer learning centers are being set up exclusively for them to help them overcome their unique challenges.

Another common theme amongst community development initiatives is an effort to bridge the rural-urban divide. The urban centers have much more existing infrastructure and thus it is easier to bring ICT into the schools there. Underserved communities, on the other hand, are oftentimes overlooked. The youth living in rural areas deserve the same quality of education as anyone else around the world though, which is why so much work is being done to bring ICT into the rural schools. Distance learning, through radio, television and computers (using online and offline resources) is becoming very popular in these schools, allowing the students to get lessons from the most highly trained teachers who oftentimes are at schools in the urban areas. There are also projects being initiated that are taking advantage of the ubiquity of mobile phones in the provision of educational opportunities to the young people at the bottom of the pyramid.

Education initiatives are not exclusively targeting primary and secondary schools, they are also working on educating teenagers and young adults who are entering, or trying to break into, the workforce. Education training specific to employment creation, through online lessons and workshops on the various uses of ICT in today's rapidly ICT-dependent global economy, including e-commerce training and

online business networking, are very popular and useful for these age groups.

Among the entries from community development initiatives involved in education, it is important to highlight the impact recorded by those projects that are locally driven and collaboratively run with the support of local communities and the public and private sectors. These initiatives demonstrate unique understanding of the needs, ownership, long-term sustainability and potential for easier replication. Evidently, once the communities' needs are identified, long term success and sustainability requires partnerships and collaboration between the local community leaders and private and public sector stakeholders who provide critical support in terms of financing the projects and integrating the initiatives into the national development agenda.

In all of the different initiatives around the world working to integrate ICT into education, an important task that is often overlooked is the need to educate teachers and other school/community administrators on how to use the ICT tools once they acquire them. This is why practices that aim to "Train-the-Trainer" are both critical and becoming more prevalent. If the students don't have someone who can train them to use the computers that are arriving in their classrooms, or teachers who can effectively integrate the technology into the curriculum and lesson plans, the idea of technology integration will then exist only at the level of desire and plan. Many teachers in the developing world have never seen the technology that is being brought into their classrooms, thus training them on how to best use it is absolutely essential.

This chapter highlights, and provides more details, on some of the most innovative and successful initiatives from around the world that are working with ICT to improve educational opportunities.



ORGANISATION RESH

HAITI [[HTTP://WWW.RESHAITI.PAGE.TL](http://www.reshaiti.page.tl)]

Haiti is one of the poorest and most disadvantaged countries in the Western Hemisphere. It ranks 153rd among 177 countries on the Human Development Index. Countries of the Caribbean as a whole are largely dependent on the most advanced countries for their technological development. They have not sufficiently grasped the tremendous opportunity for empowerment and creation of wealth that these technologies provide. Organisation RESH was created to address these issues directly, and seeks to encourage innovation in technology as a basis for societal development.

The RESH program trains 50 young people aged between 15 and 24 years in the town of Camp-perrin

every 6 months, totalling to approximately 100 over a period of one year, on the subject of information management (Word, Excel, Windows and Power Point) and the culture of ICT. Every year, 100 young people have the ability to develop a technological background which they can use as a basic tool for the development of their community.

RESH aims to help the people of Camp-perrin overcome the numerous obstacles they face in terms of their social and economic development by introducing technological culture to young people, who can then apply what they have learned in the community.

SPROUT E-COURSE

TAKINGITGLOBAL, CANADA [[HTTP://WWW.SPROUTCOURSE.ORG/](http://www.sproutecourse.org/)]

Founded as the brainchild of the founders of Toronto-based social network TakingITGlobal, the e-course named Sprout, which is supported by the Pearson Foundation, has 'grown and found its own voice.' Says Emily Briggs, the course's manager. Based on the idea of bonding communities, Sprout was created to help young leaders develop their own project ideas. Participants are selected on the basis of an application process, and are asked to consider enrolling for Sprout only if they have a pre-existing idea of a project they would like to develop. 'Sprout grew out of the conviction that there exists no shortage of innovation in the world, but rather a lack of capacity to get started.' Says Emily, further stressing Sprout's role as a mechanism designed to connect participants with their idea-based needs.

Perhaps, Sprout's ability to engage is shown through Emily herself, who says that she learnt perhaps as much as anyone else during the planning, imple-





mentation and management of Sprout's pilot phases. 'Given the novelty of the course, we needed to provide participants with the confidence they needed to stand up and make their own dreams a reality.' As such, Sprout's primary purpose is to enable creativity for real-world solutions. 'The essence of innovation is that it is new, unexpected and it creates transformational change.' Says Emily. 'The fact that the program is relevant to such an eclectic mix of ideas that deal with such a wide variety of issues and their multiple facets from a diversity of perspectives, is something that really makes this program unique. There's something in the plurality that makes it irresistible!'

Emily's enthusiasm has been echoed by some of Sprout's participants, most of whom are still enrolled in formal education programs around the world. The course's website is peppered with phrases of praises. 'Everyday I feel like I am sprouting - reaching new heights I never thought possible!' 'Sprout is exactly what it says! Young, fresh and exciting.' And, with multiple exclamation marks, 'A unique learning experience that will make any seed sprout!' With this outpouring of congratulations, the initial challenges that Sprout faced had to do mostly with the conceptualization and design of the course, while keeping in mind its necessity for broad appeal, across the traditional youth age gaps. 'The long, hard nights of

work came with something of a down low, because the effect, back then, seemed indirect. We didn't know how much of an impact we would have.'

Understanding the course from a participant's view was an important contributing factor to the course's design, Emily says. While often facing issues such as little or no Internet access, which was slow at best when available, Sprout's layout had to be light on graphics and heavy on processor-based documents. Creating trust was a major factor, simply because many participants often shared project ideas that were of fundamental importance to them. 'Learning online challenges, and understanding

how to create a comfortable online environment for knowledge exchange was crucial to our planning. Often, that meant taking yourself halfway across the world, and thinking about access issues at a computer where a faulty internet connection could mean missing out on a day's session of Sprout.' Emily considers the challenges Sprout faced as lessons, more than anything else.

Overall though, it was the 'horizontal approach' to learning that seemed to have worked, and Emily says that her favorite parts were in the humanizing of the online experience. 'Understanding the





importance of the trust placed in us, and realizing the vulnerabilities associated with that was so big.' 'It was almost beautiful.' And what about personal gratification? For Emily, it lies in the future development of Sprout, which is to concentrate on a sustainable expansion of the project. 'The beauty of online global education is that it is dynamic and constantly changing.

'The key is to harness this evolution and find new and exciting ways to enable amazing young people to swing the world by its tail!' And even though the program's upscaling will likely take more work than its previous phases, Emily is undeterred by this prospect. 'It's my baby,' she laughs, 'I've been here since the beginning and plan to see it blossom all the way through.'

EXPANDING K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS' ICT COMPETENCY AND USE

DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY TRUST, UNITED STATES [[HTTP://WWW.DOTRUST.ORG](http://www.dotrust.org)]

DOT (Digital Opportunity Trust) USA's TeachUp! Program empowers educators to infuse ICT into their lessons in pedagogically-sound ways so that students gain the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully compete in the 21st century global economy. Through this innovative program—the first of its kind in the United States—DOT USA places tech savvy college students or recent graduates in participating schools for the entire school year to support and train teachers in the use of available educational technologies. The interns serve as catalysts for change, providing teachers with hands-on coaching as they develop their confidence, knowledge of and proficiency with ICT.

It is testament to the skill of the program and its interns that experienced teachers are now embracing new technologies, in spite of their comfort with traditional methods they have been using for decades. Some teachers, in fact, have postponed retirement and/or returned to the classroom to explore the possibilities that ICT offer for both teaching and learning.

In New Orleans, where DOT USA now has a significant presence, the public school system received

a flood of new hardware after Hurricane Katrina. Unfortunately, educators there did not receive adequate support and training. Hence, even when available, technical resources were largely underutilized. The significance of this shortfall is magnified when one considers the general lack of exposure to ICT that children in public schools in New Orleans receive at home. The TeachUp! program fills this crucial gap by providing dedicated on-going support and training to teachers in integrating technology into the classroom.

The students also benefit from early exposure to ICT and they thrive on the chance to incorporate ICT into their schoolwork. From using on-line literacy programs to participating in collaborative technology-infused projects, such as podcasts, multimedia presentations, and GPS learning quests, students are more motivated.

TeachUp! was created and launched in 37 schools in 2006. Today, DOT USA has 103 TeachUp! Interns serving 1,500 teachers and 30,000 students in Mississippi and Louisiana. In 2009, at the invitation of the Cisco Systems Foundation, the program was also expanded to earthquake-affected areas of China.

VUBON.COM

DREAM DOOR SOFT, BANGLADESH [[HTTP://WWW.VUBON.COM/EDUCATION](http://www.vubon.com/education)]



'The primary purpose of this project is to connect youth with knowledge online,' says Khan Anwar, one of the five creators of Vubon.com, a community-based project management website. Conceived as a collaborative project between a group of five participants at the 2006 YES Global Summit, the organization's own management stretches across countries and continents. While Khan Anwar is from Bangladesh, his co-founders hail from Singapore, Malaysia and New Zealand, making time zones and coordination a challenge, but one that has been overcome.

Vubon.com is aimed at youth, with the platform being designed as a site for sharing learning methods, with peer-based education having a large impact on the functioning and design of the project. The organization also provides leadership and capacity-building skills, especially emphasizing the need for young people to develop their Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) skills.

The project also regularly publishes books on computer education, e-learning and leadership training.

The aim here, says Khan Anwar, is to reach areas where infrastructure prevents technology from doing so. The process can also be reversed, where writers are given a chance to share their works online.

As far as the actual platform, Khan Anwar says it's a matter of educational institutions utilizing a service that is free of cost and easy to share, to benefit youth by providing them access to online education and support through a need-based quota, and to hone skills for the future. Khan Anwar states the importance of leadership through his own example, with proper leadership opportunities being instrumental in developing his own capabilities. In turn, he states, 'I felt a need of such an organization where young people can get the highest help they want.'



YOUTH RESOURCE CENTRE - LEVERAGING PROGRAMME

NDOLA RESOURCE CENTRE, ZAMBIA

[[HTTP://WWW.IICD.ORG/PROJECTS/ZAMBIA-YOUTH-RESOURCE-CENTRES](http://www.iicd.org/projects/zambia-youth-resource-centres)]

The Ndola Resource Centre initiative aims to provoke interest among local Zambian youth to adopt ICT and use them for both social and economic de-

velopment. After being trained at the Centre, youth in business enterprises use ICT for advertisements (brochures, flyers), marketing (using VoIP, Internet



chat and messaging, emailing etc), preparing proper business documents, and use Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) such as Gnucash to maintain and manage their finances.

Prior to the opening of the Centre, the young population in Zambia was at a considerable disadvantage in terms of their ability to compete in the national economy. They lacked the ICT training that is so nec-

essary when running a small business enterprise. Generally, the initiative has provided skill, knowledge and understanding of ICT to youth leaders and workers. After training at the centre, participating young people are better prepared to both join the workforce in Zambia, and to start their own businesses that can lift their respective communities and families out of poverty.

Additional Best Practices, Education:

THE WOMEN'S TECHNOLOGY EMPOWERMENT CENTRE (W.TEC)

NIGERIA [[HTTP://WWW.W-TECONLINE.ORG/](http://www.w-teconline.org/)]

The Women's Technology Empowerment Centre was formed in 2008 in the Nigerian capital of Abuja with the aim to 'build a digital library for gender equitable science and language.' Says Oreoluwa Somulu, the Centre's founder and innovator. Simply put, W.TEC was created to provide mentorship to Nigerian youth in science and technology. Gradually, the project was expanded to provide software courses for Nigerian women. The reason behind this, says Oreoluwa, is that computer literacy has become an almost-essential skill in Nigeria, much as in other parts of the world. The focus here, is to bring back some of the high-ranking jobs to the Nigerian populace, because the majority of these positions are held by expatriate workers.

With ample experience as a blogging mentor, educator and due to her education in Information Systems and Applied Sciences, Oreoluwa felt it was time to move back to Nigeria and use her skills to empower women and youth. Initial interest was low, however, especially with the online blogging project that had been introduced prior to the Centre's conception. 'I don't think

they (young participants) realized the impact of online communication back then. I got a lot of "what's the points" back then.' Says Ore. Much has changed since then, however, as the Centre's brightly colored walls now hold newer computers and online access equipment, which serve as a testimony to the Centre's continuing upkeep and popularity.

With regards to women specifically, the education programs introduced are aimed at giving women the financial independence that is much needed in Nigerian society, says Ore. While society and culture





demand that women play multiple roles of mother, wife and now, professional, the expectation that women must juggle these roles successfully has led to tremendous strain being put on them. The introduction of computer literacy programs serves to take some of this load off women, by educating them on issues ranging from household finance management techniques to the proper formatting of their resumes. 'We try to teach women exactly what they need to get by.' Says Ore. And while technology does what it can, it cannot solve all problems

entirely, especially in a thoroughly patriarchal society like Nigeria. 'Technology does not guarantee to solve any of these problems effectively, and might even amplify the digital divide.' Ore says. 'But, it certainly is a skill that if they do have the access to, can connect women to possible solutions, and therefore, create a way out.'

The Centre is now focusing on providing safe access to Internet for women, many of whom have to resort to cybercafés when the need for a computer arises. A lot of these places are simply not safe for women, and the rowdiness and constant disturbance can often turn them away from technology use altogether. Plans are also underway to connect with women in rural communities across Nigeria, by working with organizations that focus on grassroots projects in these communities. By understanding that women are at the core of society, the Women's Technology Empowerment Centre seeks to overcome the challenges affecting a developing society by instilling confidence at the very centre of it, in the lives of its women.

TARA AKSHAR COMPUTER BASED LITERACY PROGRAMME

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE, INDIA [HTTP://WWW.GDCMP.ORG]

The literacy rate of a group of students is no doubt a matter of pride for an educator. But few can boast of a rate that is close to 100%, and Ameen Charles is proud to say that Tara Akshar's Computer Literacy Programme is achieving these results. The six-month education classes are in the very centre of the villages they sought to impact, putting them within walking distance of their participants.

Founded to benefit India's rural communities, Tara Akshar's programmes focus on bringing education and computer training to the remote tribal-inhabited regions of the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. This often forgotten area is the region of choice for Ameen Charles, who has spent more than



fifteen years working in the field of social development. The women in the tribal areas of Madhya



Pradesh caught his attention in particular, because their severe lack of education had led to an unfair wage distribution among the men and women. After providing a free course that taught the basics of mathematics and employment laws, about 1200 women have now demanded a fair wage assurance from the government, and have even managed to negotiate a contract of sorts. Ameen agrees that

while this is a feat, his future plans for the organization must get underway soon, to be in time for the next session of students.

'We need desks and chairs,' he says, 'And better infrastructure. A steady supply of electricity especially, because of the computers.' A small order for some, but definitely a big step towards significant lifestyle changes for the tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES FOR VIRTUAL HERITAGE: NEW MUSEUMS FOR THE WORLD

YES ROMANIA [[HTTP://PROJECTS.TIGWEB.ORG/YES-ROMANIA](http://projects.tigweb.org/yes-romania)]

Career changes often come at various points in people's lives— earlier sometimes, and later for others. Rodica Silvia's change came after a twenty-five year career as a teacher, when she enrolled in university in Bucharest, Romania, for a Master's in Philosophy, after which she combined her experience and her love of history to become a curator and form YES Romania. It was here, as the curator of the Murames County Museum in Romania that Rodica initiated the idea of combining ICT to preserve cultural heritage. 'A successful integration of ICT will widen the access to cultural heritage, create new paradigms for education and learning, facilitate the harmonization of different cultures and races, and provide a sustained flow of wealth toward the countries in the world.' Says Rodica. Most museums in the region are severely strapped for funds, a factor that often leads only a percentage of their actual collections to be displayed. If ICT were to be used in the museums, Rodica says there will be a lot more exposure, and therefore, interest, in cultural heritage. 'It'll show our museums to the world.' says Rodica, adding that the virtual dimension to a museum will play a large role in promoting cultural tourism around the world. Rodica says she feels up to the challenges the initiative might face on the way.

'I think of myself as very flexible. I am always eager to meet the new, and to face it.' Rodica says, citing



her interest in the preservation of the cultural heritage of Romania as something she felt almost obligated to take up. Her experience as an educator helped her to understand the various intricacies involved with implementation and training, especially where the creation of an interest was needed. The multi-disciplinary nature of the work being done also led to an interest of a very varied group of people, making the issue of relevance challenging, but also very exciting for almost everyone involved.

The biggest lesson, she says, is about teaching people to believe in themselves, as this is where an inner pride and interest of cultural heritage will develop from. 'It's a matter of nurturing self-confidence,'

says Rodica. 'The aim is to provide a bit more self-confidence, and therefore, a bit engagement, with

each subsequent moment. This is what I aim to do. This is the project of my life.'

NOTEWORTHY

- Young People We Care (YPWC), Ghana
<http://www.ypwc.org>
- Government Secondary School Website, Minna, Niger State, Nigeria
<http://www.governmentsecondaryschoolMX.org>
- ITCIG, Cameroon
<http://www.itcig.org>
- Strong Youth-Strong Nation, Public Fund 'Center for Youth Initiatives', Kirghizistan
- Youth Empowerment, Computer Academy Nigeria
- Building Support Capabilities On E-Commerce For International Competitiveness For SMEs, International Center For Global Trade And Strategic Studies, Nigeria
<http://www.tcieng.com/csis>
- EdTEC, Education Training and Enterprise Center, Kenya
<http://www.flashbuilder.net/users/edtec>
- World Youth Congress Virtual Congress, TakingITGlobal, Canada
<http://www.wyc2008.qc.ca/virtual>
- Dreamaright foundation, Nigeria
- Nenasa - Dialog Digital Bridge, Dialog Telekom PLC, Sri Lanka
- "Open Architecture Challenge", hosted by the Open Architecture Network, USA
- Girl-Child Education, Conscience International Sierra Leone
<http://conscience-international.org>
- Youth Development Foundation, Zambia
- Foko Blog Club: Une nouvelle communication pour les jeunes, Foko Madagascar, Madagascar
<http://www.foko-madagascar.org>
- Peace Child India, India
<http://www.peacechildindia.org>
- Awareness creation on ICT among Secondary Schools in Benue State, Children's Rights Information Network (CRIN), Nigeria
- Creating Local Connections: West Africa: TakingITGlobal; OSIWA, Canada
<http://projects.tigweb.org/CLCWA>

CHAPTER 3

Health Care

Lack of access to healthcare is a dire challenge for the developing world. As HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis exacerbate problems of malnutrition and sanitation for the poorest of the poor, national health accounts cannot effectively meet the demand for healthcare. Among the hardest hit are youth in developing countries, who lack access to healthcare at a staggeringly high rate compared to their counterparts in advanced industrialized countries. As recently as 2004, 97 percent of the world’s adolescent deaths occurred in low and middle income countries. In Africa and South Asia, where HIV/AIDS rates are the highest in the world, female youths die at higher rates than males. While a range of ailments plagues youth around the world, the best practices evaluated in this report deal predominantly with HIV/AIDS. While treatment is vital, perhaps more important is prevention. Education and the availability of contraceptives are proven to reduce the risk of transmitting HIV. At the same time, long standing cultural barriers must be surmounted to ensure that available resources have an impact in combating this health crisis.

To be sure, the efforts of governments and international organizations have made a positive difference: the one Millennium Development Goal (MDG) that has met or exceeded benchmark targets is the reduction of the infant mortality rate. But combating communicable disease among youth requires much more than treatment—it requires education and support. Youth around the world are taking advantage of the digital age, using ICT to

fill the gaps in the fight against AIDS. Social networking provides outreach to combat stigma, educate and link at risk youth to healthcare resources.

In evaluating the best practices pertaining to youth and healthcare—like the other categories—innovative approaches were an important criteria. Those practices that leveraged connections and resources to connect youth in new and effective ways scored higher than those that did not. But more important than approach was the development impact that each practice had on its target population. Especially in a category like healthcare, successful practices can directly correlate with lives saved. Taking that into account, the best practices in the healthcare all attempt to alleviate the burden of HIV/AIDS on young people. These practices focus on using ICT to provide emotional and educational support and networking resources to young people who are HIV positive or are at risk for contraction. The three best examples of youth using ICT to combat HIV are: Project Zumbido of Mexico; Taking IT Global: Youth-Force (International AIDS Conference) of Canada;



and Free online counseling on HIV/AIDS, sexuality and reproductive health for Youth, of Vietnam.

It is clear that each of these best practices has had a deep development impact on youth. Project Zumbido, which uses mobile phone networks to provide services to HIV positive youth, had over 250,000 SMS messages sent across its network in just three months. The Free online counseling program in Vietnam has over 100,000 members, two-thirds of whom have received some form of online counseling from the program. TiG's Youth Force concept builds on previous conferences and gets youth delegates to follow up by committing to AIDS relief projects in their communities.

While all three best practices share networking as a vehicle for success, they face different obstacles. Project Zumbido faced barriers from mobile phone service providers, who sometimes denied access to application technology. They had to overcome this hurdle by facing higher costs. The free counseling

program in Vietnam did not report any major problems but it is likely that faced technological hurdles as well. By contrast, TiG's project had difficulty maintaining contact with disparate participants. Institutional challenges included high turnover rates from participant member organizations. Still, all three organizations have managed to make a difference by overcoming these barriers.

While these three practices clearly outshined their peers because of innovative approaches with a real impact, the fact that they all cover HIV/AIDS did not escape the evaluators. While progress on the AIDS front is critical to improving the healthcare of young people, 40 percent of adolescent deaths in the developing world are from injuries. More must be done to reduce youth violence, work place injuries and address mental health concerns. As important as treatment is to the healthcare of youth, so is education and prevention. It is our hope that future practices and efforts will target these areas in addition to the HIV/AIDS crisis.

TELERADIOLOGIE

IKON, MALI [HTTP://WWW.TELERADIOLOGIEIKON.ORG]

Lancé en 2001, le projet de Téléradiologie a pour but de faire face à la pénurie de radiologues dans les zones les plus reculées du Mali. Répondant à un besoin unanimement exprimé par les populations locales, le projet intègre des TICs simplifiées et adaptées aux contextes locaux dans une région où les compétences en TICs sont aussi rares que le personnel de santé. Ces difficultés n'ont pas fait reculer Dr. Mohammed Sangaré, médecin passionné par l'informatique et déterminer à relever le défi. Il a dû surmonter des difficultés culturelles pour amener les autorités locales à adhérer à un tel projet dont « les idées sont véhiculées par un jeune. »

Le système, qui s'appuie sur des appareils photos numériques coûtant une fraction du prix d'un scanner de films radiologiques, combine l'usage de

logiciels libres et une connexion Internet pour transmettre les images de films radiologiques à un centre de diagnostic disposant d'un personnel qualifié. OpenYaLIM, un logiciel libre développé localement, est utilisé pour la transmission des images et des renseignements cliniques, la réception des comptes-rendus, l'historique des dossiers envoyés, et bien d'autres fonctionnalités.

Dans chaque site 5 personnes ont été formées à l'utilisation des différents outils et logiciels mis à leur disposition. Elles ont également suivi des séances de formation sur la méthodologie et la déontologie liées au traitement à la transmission des données médicales sur internet.

Grace au service de téléradiologie mis en place, plus de 1000 dossiers de radiologie ont pu être traités et

une nette amélioration de la qualité des soins dans les centres de santé périphériques peut être constatée, due à la disponibilité de meilleurs diagnostics.

Face à un tel succès, le projet est en voie d'expansion dans d'autres pays de la sous-région et une plateforme

d'enseignement à distance de la radiologie est sur le point de démarrer.

Pour Dr. Sangaré, « L'innovation technologique peut être déployée et utilisée en Afrique, en la pensant, la mettant et l'adaptant aux contextes africains. »

PROJECT ZUMBIDO

SHM PRODUCTIONS LTD, MEXICO

Knowing that there are high levels of social isolation amongst those living with HIV/AIDS in Jalisco, Mexico, Project Zumbido seeks to create a support network for these people to improve their quality of life. The main objective of the project is to focus on providing (i) medication, (ii) emotional support, and (iii) access to resources and services. By providing these, the affected population of Jalisco has found that mobile phones allow accessibility and immediacy of communication in creating the support networks.

Participants took to using the mobile phone technology very quickly and sent of 250,000 text messages in three months. Through this use of technology, the participants' quality of life improved in a number of key areas: (1) improved emotional state, in particular levels of anxiety and depression reduced, (2) participants' knowledge of access to services and human rights improved, and (3) participants' knowledge of how to manage their medication and how to manage secondary effects improved.

YOUTHFORCE 2008: INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE

TAKINGITGLOBAL/YOUTHFORCE CANADA [[HTTP://WWW.YOUTH AIDS2008.ORG/](http://www.youthaids2008.org/)]

The XVII Toronto International AIDS Conference introduced, among its other initiatives, a platform for participants and delegates to understand the depth of the issue internationally, and to pledge their support towards creating awareness, raising interest among the world's youth, and perhaps most importantly, to give the youth of the world a voice to express their concern about the need for methods to put theories into practice. As part of the initiative, Youth Force's aim was to gain commitments from participants and to galvanize into action the thousands of already-interested youth from around the world.

Ricardo Baruch, along with TakingITGlobal, was instrumental in this endeavor, and Ricardo says he found this experience one of the most powerful he



has had. 'We never met in person, and didn't really have to, all our work was done through TIG groups.' TakingITGlobal's online social network served as the main standard of communication and creation during

all phases of the conference. From sharing files, documents and participant-generated media like videos, and audio from real-time events at the conference, Ricardo says everything from plenary sessions to street parties were shared online. The effect then, was something like an interlinked worldwide conference of youth interested in issues of AIDS awareness, made possible by the virtual tools that were provided by TakingITGlobal's online social networking site.

This unprecedented use of ICT also had some drawbacks that the organizers are seeking to address for the next session. While the Internet is rapidly becoming the primary means of communication worldwide, a majority of developing regions did not have the steady stream of access they needed. Encouraging participants to adapt to online communication methods was harder initially, says Ricardo, as was promoting online videos in regions where bandwidth limitations were a major issue.



In spite of this, the conference did what it was primarily meant to—connect young people from around the world, in diverse regions of different levels of development, and to involve them in the policy-making procedure of a crucial global matter. And Ricardo, for one, is a fan of emerging ICT. 'There is no reason to not include people from different backgrounds and countries in the planning processes of events and initiatives that are related to youth. And with ICT, we can make the processes easier and cheaper!'

Additional Best Practices, Health:

FREE ONLINE COUNSELING ON HIV/AIDS, SEXUALITY AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH FOR YOUTH

CONSULTATION OF INVESTMENT IN HEALTH PROMOTION, VIETNAM [[HTTP://TAMSUBANTRE.VN](http://tamsubantre.vn)]

Given the rise of unwanted pregnancies, drug abuse, and HIV/AIDS in Vietnam, this organization seeks to utilize the Internet to offer free online counselling on HIV/AIDS and sexuality and reproductive health issues using a website that provides information dissemination and email discussion to Vietnamese youth.

Launched in 2003, the website, www.tamsubantre.org, has been one of the top websites on education on these issues and has been designed and created

by youth for youth, targeting those between the ages of 14 to 25.

There are now more than 100,000 members using the website from all 64 provinces/cities in Vietnam. The site also caters to Vietnamese who are living, working and studying abroad. The project has provided nearly 20,000 online consultations and 51,000 emails, addressing personal issues and questions that the youth have about these critical health issues.

CHAPTER 4

Entrepreneurship

Global efforts in the past 60 years have not been very effective in tackling development, eradicating poverty, and reaching environmental sustainability. The delays in addressing these issues threaten with continual human development setback. The time has come to not only stop but to reverse the damage caused by either inactivity or ineffective approaches. The world requires creative capitalism, one which combines economic, ecological, and communal elements as one prescription for success – constructive entrepreneurship.

Since the beginning of civilization, humanity’s advance has been through people’s entrepreneurial behavior. We did not coin the term entrepreneurship until the 19th Century though, when French economist Jean-Baptiste Say used it to describe a person who brokers a link between capital and labor to elicit financial gain. Currently, two major types of entrepreneurial activities support the economic marketplace – commercial and social. The commercial, or classic, entrepreneurship (most best-practices in private sector) has been around since some millennia ago when two people arrived at a conclusion that a transaction involving an exchange of an apple for an intangible future in return can be done at an acceptable risk. Conversely, the social entrepreneurship as a structured economic practice is a relatively new phenomenon (most best-practices are not for profit organizations).

All people are inherently entrepreneurial. Their engagement and success relies largely on knowledge, access, and the mindset. The 2009 World Economic Forum paid a great attention to entrepreneurship and in its subsequent report it clearly suggested that, “surveys in many countries indicate that youth specifically harbor strong if latent entrepreneurial tendencies.”

Youth entrepreneurship is becoming increasingly common and the success of the “best practices” is testament to its effectiveness and significant potential. By pioneering innovative and organized approaches for meeting the needs of the impoverished and disenfranchised, the young entrepreneurs of these practices are directly promoting the most basic of human compassion through a specified set of knowledge and skills. A recent project in Argentina,



for example, seeks to train youth to recycle and recover computer waste and to develop dynamic tools to address complex socio-economic situations in their city.

Engaging young people as producers and consumers in their own economies adds a new significant element to overall economic activities. Young entrepreneurs who are inherently versatile, innovative, and driven by combined economic, communal, and environmental motives tackle development challenges more quickly and effectively than government and aid mechanisms. Youth innovations that bring together the objectives of business and development to create constructive, market-oriented approaches are the prescription for global success.

The fortune of this critical mass is that this generation has the advantage of a particular technological knowledge that could drive global constructive entrepreneurship. Adding a new corps of young people into the economy through entrepreneurship using ICT adds a substantial effort to increasing global workforce and making societies sustainable.

These “best practices” in entrepreneurship yield rewarding possibilities. Demonstrating the impact of their endeavors, these entrepreneurs present issues and challenges they face along with their successes. Many of these youth led organizations aim at teaching more efficient methods for conducting business and assisting in developing partnerships for development through the innovative use of ICT; thus, their scalability is substantial and through their efforts, they are able to reach people of all backgrounds and genders.

The promotion of aspiring constructive entrepreneurs will help spread the use of ICT to remote and rural areas. By integrating ICT in these regions, rural

entrepreneurs have greater and improved domestic and international flow of information, facilitating the use of e-business solutions relevant to their needs. For example a subsistence farmer looking for more efficient ways to produce crop could contact an initiative specializing in agricultural-related growth with a mobile phone, thereby employing swift communication and, in many cases, more reliable resources leading to higher productivity. Through the distribution and utilization of proper ICT tools, it is clear that these entrepreneurial programs have the capacity to empower youth and, most importantly, provide relief to disadvantaged.

Not only is the dissemination of ICT advantageous, consequently are the jobs created through these small and medium enterprises. These sectors are built on policies, business training, and organization, each providing numerous occupations. By hiring and training people in poverty-stricken regions, entrepreneurs are cultivating further entrepreneurial behavior, creating a cyclical system that can be economically beneficial.

Understanding that the road to poverty eradication is not easy, these entrepreneurs address communal challenges and continue advocating ICT awareness and use, distribution of knowledge, and job creation. Of the submissions we have received, there are a number of examples of promising entrepreneurship initiatives that we have had the pleasure of reading about. This chapter will highlight and further illustrate the efforts of these projects. By recognizing the importance of entrepreneurial initiatives and that the utilization of this private sector solution encourages social and economic stability, a larger network for social change can be formed to achieve the ultimate mission, combating and alleviating global poverty.



LINKING SMALLHOLDER FARMERS TO PROFITABLE MARKETS, THROUGH PARTICIPATORY MARKET RESEARCH BY USE OF MOBILE PHONES

ARISE AND SHINE INTERNATIONAL, MALAWI

With each addition to the mobile phone industry, there doesn't seem to be any singular purpose for a cellular telephone anywhere. With the advent of gaming, mapping, internet and music capabilities, it seems unlikely that the cell phone will ever again be considered just a 'talking' device anymore.

But Tennyson Magombo of Arise and Shine International has managed to do precisely that. After spending a number of years working with the Ministry of Agro-Enterprise in Malawi, Tennyson decided to focus on finding solutions for the very same issues that he had researched. 'I see farmers as partners in rural development,' says Tennyson, 'Especially when it comes to agricultural empowerment.' Arise and Shine International is the result of the cumulative experience that Tennyson gained by researching Malawi's agro-economy. What he found was that there were no sustainable agricultural techniques being employed, an issue that was clearly linked to farmers being unable to understand the potential of their crop, which in most cases, was soybean.

Tennyson's next step was to study the economic agro-market that small farmers were faced to reckon with. 'They needed to analyse, understand and prioritise,' says Tennyson emphatically, 'So I began to teach farmers how to create their own business plans, and to monitor where their crop was going, and how much it was being sold for.' Lack of knowledge about the potential prices of crops, as well as the often-desperate need for money led farmers to being left with much lesser than they deserved for their crops. The efforts seemed to have paid off. In

the 2008-09 year, farmers registered a whopping 200 metric tons of soybeans being sold for a 400 million Malawian kwacha, a more than sizeable profit, according to Tennyson. 'But beyond that, it's about seeing farmers empowered, about being able to stand up for their rights, and about creating sustainable livelihoods.'

Arise and Shine International, while still in its conception stages, has begun to take on education projects by enlisting the help of the Malawian government to create a reliable exchange system and to promote better agronomic practices. 'It's a matter of changing civic attitudes, and in some cases, even gender approaches to agriculture.' Since women are at the core of any agro-economy, Tennyson makes a special effort to ensure their participation. This also creates a better potential for commitment, he says, especially with regards to the literacy and educational aspects of the business practices. 'One of the first things we realised, was that how were the farmers to understand supply and demand when they couldn't count?'

Tennyson is responsible for the majority of liaisons between farmers and their potential customers, who are traders of soybean in international markets. 'I make sure they get a fair price, and find the right buyers. Then I try and find a suitable price for both sides.' And all this is accomplished while studying for a Masters degree. How does he do it? The smile in his voice is apparent over the telephone line. 'With our mobile phones. We just talk when they have questions. And no, they're not Blackberries.'

RURAL ICT TRAINING AND BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

EZEL ENTERPRISES LIMITED, UGANDA

The Rural ICT Training and Business Solutions initiative seeks to integrate the Internet and other ICT tools into rural communities to improve local business operations by specially designing these tools to fit their needs. Its mission is to provide access to ICT at affordable prices while making them available to rural communities in Africa. This project has already improved access to economic, educative and commercial information to rural people, especially young dynamic rural entrepreneurs. It has also helped increase the domestic and international flow of information which further facilitates the availability of e-business solutions specifically adapted to their needs. In return, this has led to business growth, improved competitiveness and increased business opportunities in these areas.

Unreliable electricity has been the primary challenge. The frequent power shortages can last up to two weeks and to work around this, fuel generators are used as alternative sources of power to minimize service interruptions.

By establishing a good relationship with the local government and other local organizations, this particular organization has benefited from networking references, which has given them a substantial platform to sell and promote their services. This initiative thrives on Internet access, computer use and phone connections for their daily operations. Through all this, they have learned that the most effective way to engage youth is to appeal to their love for change and adventure.

CULTURAL CLASSICS

PAKISTAN [[HTTP://WWW.CULTURALCLASSICS.COM](http://www.culturalclassics.com)]

Jamil Anwar, the founder of Cultural Classics, describes it as 'a "social enterprise" from Pakistan that is trying to contribute towards the economic empowerment of skilled artisans, improve their lifestyles and create opportunities for them in economically disadvantaged areas of the country.' Understanding the paradox of talent versus lack of recognition in the lives of these artisans, who lived in sub-standard conditions while their art ended up 'in exquisite lifestyles of the rich,' led Jamil to found Cultural Classics.

The organization's focus is not solely economic empowerment, but also to promote knowledge of the centuries-old handicrafts and art of the region.

Cultural Classics has adopted an innovative approach to use emerging online tools and technolo-

gies like e-commerce, social media and Internet marketing to develop a brand for these artisans and their handicrafts, by opening the path for their



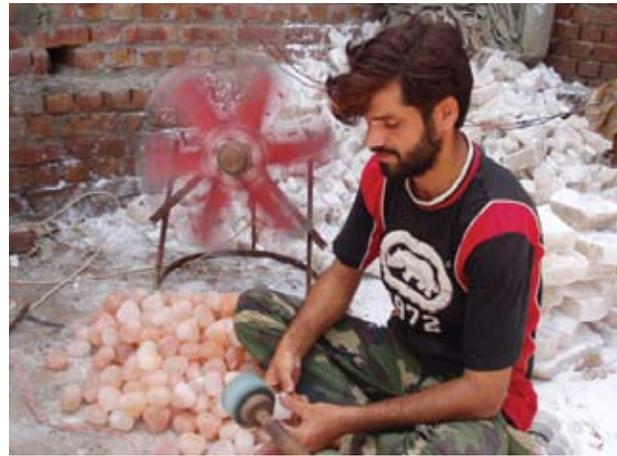


products to the global markets and setting information sharing channels between the artisans and global community.

Marketing is done on the Internet, with a website displaying various products and handicrafts. The organization uses a three-step business model, with there being a special emphasis on accessibility of art to potential clientele. This method seems to bode well with the artisans, who are more confident of their abilities, and are empowered to negotiate better prices for their craft.

The necessity of linking the consumer to the producer in cottage industries, according to Jamil, is something that cannot be ignored. 'The link between the artisan and consumer is missing, both unaware of each other. Sales and exports are done in a traditional manner while the strength of Internet is still unknown. Cultural Classics is determined to use the Internet medium to create awareness, branding, marketing and selling which will make these products globally available. This effort intends to bring a socio-economic change by stopping century's old art and cultural heritage from going extinct.'

So far, the organization deals with five communities of artisans, numbering about 2000 in total. Profits have



increased by 20% since the initiation of the project, and Jamil hopes to involve about 10% more women in the trade. Cultural Classics also offers its artisans capacity-building and business training workshops, as well as knowledge of fair trade principles.

For the future, the expansion of the Cultural Classics website to include a global network of artisans is also something Jamil dreams of. For him, it is a matter of empowerment and sustainability through sharing. 'The most important thing I have learnt is to understand how to share a vision, while making others own that vision to create interdependencies.'

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ON USE OF ICT FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT

COMMUNITY AID DEVELOPMENT FUND INTERNATIONAL (CADIF), KENYA
[[HTTP://WWW.CADIFKENYA.INTERCONNECTION.ORG](http://www.cadifkenya.interconnection.org)]

Led by the Community Aid Development Fund, International (CADIF Kenya), this project aims to mentor and motivate the young people living within the slum areas of Kisumu to move beyond the existing cycle of poverty in the area. The Peri-Urban/Rural Youth Livelihood Support Programme was started to create employment and livelihood access for semi-urban and rural youth and women along the Agriculture,

Environment and Natural Resources Value Chain by venturing into both on and off-farm enterprises and income generating activities. The program empowers disadvantaged youth by increasing their access to economic opportunities and by improving health and education standards, through the innovative use of ICT in Kisumu.

This initiative is unique because it is self-sustainable. The project was started and is expanding without any donor funding. The strength of the program comes from community contributions and professional volunteers that provide time, expertise, and motivational leadership. Over 5,000 youth and women have been trained on Mushroom cultivation,

which is a rare farming technique in the lake region. They also received training on the use of ICT for Entrepreneurship development. The project has been recognized by the Ministry of Youth affairs, Kisumu District as the Best Innovative Youth-Led Sustainable Project, and by the YES Kenya Country Network as the Best ICT and Entrepreneurship Project.

NOTEWORTHY

- TIC: Passeport pour l'emploi, Conscience Civique Universelle, Benin
- Mobilising ICT with Entrepreneurial Guidance to create jobs, improve microenterprises in Post-Conflict West Africa, Kachile, Cote D'Ivoire, Africa.

<http://www.kachile.com>

CHAPTER 5

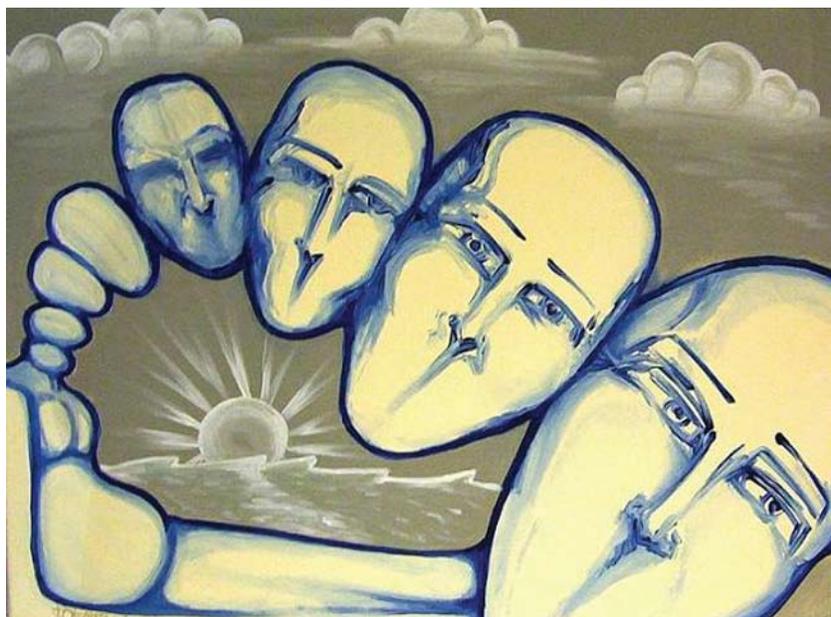
Advocacy

Technology is changing how governments and people do business, learn, and share information. As we push further into the 21st century, technology and its applications are lifting millions out of poverty and opening doors to information for billions more. These steps are progress-change for the better- as we dive deeper into the digital age. The catalyst for this progress is advocacy. Advocacy is a tool that every world citizen can use. Through education, awareness, and action, advocacy aims to empower vulnerable people, promote access and influence policy.

Advocacy serves as a platform for the dissemination of existing information and new ideologies across continents, addressing a myriad of global issues. Similar to education, advocacy aims to inform and educate the public. However, unlike education, advocacy is not about just becoming informed; it is about using knowledge to positively change the way things are. With the advancement of ICT, advocacy has become much more effective and far-reaching with such tools as the Internet. Nevertheless, the digital divide still renders a majority of nations technologically underdeveloped. In addressing this issue, numerous youth groups have developed advocacy initiatives as a means of bringing about change in their regions. With ICT as their main tool, a majority of the initiatives submitted for this publication aimed to 1) increase usage of ICT or 2) Promote the utilization of ICT as a tool for various advocacy issues, such as HIV/AIDS awareness, proper Internet usage and political transparency to name a few.

In order for the technology to be embraced by governments and communities, individuals and institutions must first be influenced to embrace new methods. Through the use of websites, interactive blogs, seminars, trainings and conferences, these advocacy best practices strive to influence their local communities to do just that. By engaging the communities, individuals and institutions embrace new technology that bridges the digital and information divide.

Reviewing the best practice advocacy mechanisms it can be found that they work on two complementary levels: social influence and citizen empowerment. Although the main objective may be the same, regional motivations for creating these projects remain unique. In the Asian continent for instance, entrants stress four key motivations for the formulation of ICT advocacy initiatives which include the need to: 1) Raise awareness about the benefits of the Internet to counteract the resistance of adopting



technology, 2) Spread knowledge and promote an educated society, 3) Connect citizens to the global economy and 4) Preserve wildlife and/or transform the local environment in order to make it more habitable. The environment projects in particular consist of a collaboration of individuals, local or global organizations, non-profit or youth groups, communities, academics or students and corporations that are attempting to catalyze action on climate change. In Latin America and the Caribbean however, the majority of initiatives center on the need to: 1) Increase transparency in the community, 2) Distribute real-time information and 3) Promote job creation.

With the largest number of entries, African youth groups have developed numerous advocacy initiatives for a multiple of reasons. In our data set, the majority of these projects were initiated to: 1) Introduce ICT into underdeveloped communities, 2) Increase the presence of African content on the Internet, 3) Strengthen understanding of hu-

man rights, 4) Empower and educate the youth, 5) Encourage entrepreneurship, 6) Promote Internet security and proper usage and 7) Develop an information society. It is also important to note that although too few entries were submitted from the Arab region, North America and the WEO, to develop a trend analysis of motivations, their primary concerns paralleled those above.

Nevertheless, no matter what the motivation, advocacy and ICT are both powerful tools which when combined, can promote positive change and development throughout the world. This publication examines best practice advocacy initiatives which have made a significant impact on their communities in the face of social, economic and political challenges. Through advocacy, change happens: -- changes at the individual, social, and governmental levels; -- changes that ensure individuals are raised out of poverty, empowered to change their situation and to influence their surroundings.



CARAVANE DE LA TECHNOLOGIE MOBILE

ROTARACT CLUB, DJIBOUTI

Depuis plusieurs années, Djibouti est en proie à une sécheresse chronique qui rend difficile l'exploitation de ses ressources agricoles et piscicoles. L'insécurité alimentaire est ainsi devenue la priorité numéro 1 dans un pays qui importe la totalité des produits de consommation locale et souffre ainsi particulièrement de la flambée des prix sur les marchés mondiaux. En vue de sensibiliser les populations des zones rurales au potentiel des technologies de l'information et de la communication (TICs) de contribuer à l'autosuffisance alimentaire, le Rotaract Club de Djibouti en collaboration avec le Ministère de la Communication, l'Armée Nationale, Djibouti Telecom et les autorités locales a organisé une tournée baptisée « caravane mobile ».

Pendant dix jours, un véhicule de l'armée, équipé de matériels informatiques et d'une connexion à Internet par satellite, a fait le tour de onze localités en zone rurale, touchant sur son passage plusieurs centaines de jeunes qui ont été initiés à l'usage de l'Internet pour accéder aux informations concernant l'exploitation de leur environnement (terre et mer) en tenant compte des conditions climatiques.

Pour M. Kadar Mouhoumed Omar, l'initiateur du projet, « L'utilisation de l'Internet dans les prévisions

météorologiques pour la récolte est l'exemple parfait d'exploitation de la nature en utilisant les nouvelles technologies. »

Ayant fait ses études en Malaisie, où il a été témoin de l'extraordinaire essor de ce pays grâce aux TICs, M. Omar s'est donné pour mission d'informer ses concitoyens des bénéfices qu'ils peuvent tirer de la maîtrise de cet outil des temps modernes.

La mise en oeuvre du projet n'a pas été facile car les éleveurs, pêcheurs et agriculteurs n'étaient pas du tout exposés préalablement aux outils technologiques. Cela a poussé le Rotaract Club à s'appuyer sur « les jeunes plus souples à apprendre, comme un medium pour accéder aux TICs et ressortir les informations demandées par les aînées. »

Selon M. Omar, « Les jeunes sont l'intermédiaire le plus sûr pour réduire le gouffre technologique qui existe dans le monde. Ils sont également un intermédiaire important pour exploiter les ressources actuelles en utilisant la technologie mais également partager le savoir-faire de leurs parents avec le reste du monde et ainsi éviter la perte des traditions d'antan. »

DANCE4LIFE WIDGET

DANCE4LIFE INTERNATIONAL, NETHERLANDS [HTTP://WWW.DANCE4LIFE.COM]

Dance4Life is an international initiative set up to empower people around the world living with HIV/AIDS. The organization also teaches at-risk and high-risk youth important life skills needed to protect themselves and to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS. Once every two years, the organization coordinates a large event for participating countries on the Saturday before World AIDS Day.

The events, taking place simultaneously in different parts of the world are connected by satellite, and aim to celebrate the achievements of change-makers from around the world. They also aim to draw the attention of the world—from leaders to the general population—and aim to initiate their commitment to young people, to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

To ensure the maximum number of viewers, Dance4Life developed a global viral campaign consisting of a special Dance4Life widget. This widget showed specific Dance4Life images and captured public interest, encouraging people to tune into the widget on the day of the event.

Within less than a month, the widget was viewed over 500,000 times and news articles about the wid-

get appeared on several news sites, marketing sites and social networks. Due to the popularity of gadgets (widgets) among youth, this initiative was found to be an appropriate medium for youth to embrace and popularize their actions. The widget allowed the possibility to enable embedding on different social network sites, and provided direct streaming of the live event on the actual day of Dance4Life's bi-annual initiative.

WORLD SUMMIT OF INFORMATION SOCIETY (WSIS) YOUTH CAMPAIGNS

TAKINGITGLOBAL, CANADA

While new technologies have the potential to create new opportunities, the reality is that the vast majority of the world's populations have limited access to radio and print media, let alone computers and the Internet. Different stakeholders in local communities, especially youth, need to work with governments to promote access through tele-centers, community media programs, and educational institutions.

Young people are some of the most active creators and consumers of information and communications technologies. Those under 25 make up more than 50% of the global population. Tapping into young people's expertise and enthusiasm should be considered an essential component of any national ICT strategy.

The focus of the project was to showcase the benefits of ICT, as well as to encourage young people to creatively use the technology for their own purposes. As such, the entire project focused on, and used ICT, and showed participants sustainable ways to use ICT for their country's development.

The project's effectiveness was measured by a series of conclusions the project came to. Some of the major ones included the following:

- i. Technology must be mainstreamed, and not merely incorporated, into school curricula. ICT must become an integral part of all disciplines, from the humanities to the sciences, and not be confined to computer science classes, as is too often the case.
- ii. ICT provide new opportunities for job creation. Youth themselves are providing entrepreneurial leadership in ICT and industries, creating jobs for themselves and others. Youth need support for their enterprises, a level playing field and access to financing and infrastructure.
- iii. Governments should actively involve young people in their WSIS activities taking on board their inputs, supporting youth during the Action Plan's implementation, and consulting youth on follow-up and evaluation.



Additional Best Practices, Advocacy:

WEBRECHERCHE

CLUB NTIC, BENIN [[HTTP://WWW.LECLUBNTIC.AFRICA-WEB.ORG](http://www.leclubntic.africa-web.org)]

Crée en 2004, le Club des Nouvelles Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication (Club NTIC) est une association de jeunes qui a pour but de faire la promotion des technologies de l'information et de la communication auprès des jeunes (des milieux scolaires, universitaires et autres). C'est dans cette optique que le Club NTIC a initié le projet « WebRecherche » en 2008 pour

renforcer les capacités des jeunes à faire de la recherche approfondie d'information sur Internet. Ils disposent ainsi d'outils efficaces pour compléter leur formation académique et préparer leurs rapports et mémoires de fin de formation.

Le projet a déjà bénéficié à plus de 1000 jeunes étudiants et élèves béninois.

COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY CENTRE (C2ICOT)

ELENA NGO, CAMEROON [[HTTP://WWW.ELENGO.ORG](http://www.elengo.org)]

The Community Centre for Information and Communication Technology has the following seven objectives: (i) to provide rural women, youth and students with Internet services currently unavailable in Mamfe, Cameroon, (ii) to teach women, youth and students technical and leadership skills necessary for job placement or academic advancement, (iii) to expose the rural population of Cameroon to the outside world using the potential inherent in new ICT, (iv) to reduce the gap between levels of technology awareness between the targeted population in Mamfe and surrounding rural areas, as compared to those of other urban areas, (v) to make cheaper, faster and more secure Internet available, (vi) to invest in people and skills, and (vii) to stimulate Internet use in the rural areas of Cameroon.

C2iCot believes implementing the above goals will help reduce the costs and frequency of long dis-

tance travel to send and receive information. It will also improve the quality of general services, increase the number of Internet users in the area and improve the living standards of the entire population. Challenges that C2iCot has faced include occasional power outages. As a response to this, the organization will have standby generators or use solar energy panels to generate electricity. The perception that ICT centres are unaffordable, and only for the richer populace is one that the Centre seeks to overcome. It aims to do so by paying for variable and fixed costs if the connectivity fees are paid by a user approximately 6 months in advance. As a means to court user loyalty, and to maintain a steady rate of prices, the Centre focuses on using creative solutions for ICT development in Mamfe, Cameroon.

THE YOUTH INTERNET SAFETY FOCUS GROUP (NET-AMAN)

CYBER PEACE INITIATIVE (CPI) OF THE SUZANNE MUBARAK WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL PEACE MOVEMENT (SMWIPM), EGYPT [[HTTP://SMWIPM.CYBERPEACEINITIATIVE.ORG/](http://smwipm.cyberpeaceinitiative.org/)]

The Youth Internet Safety Focus Group (Net-Aman - 'net safety' in Arabic) is a group of young Egyptians covering a wide range of ages, geographical background, technical experience, and gender. Its mandate is to increase Internet safety awareness and the huge potential of ICT. The group aims to offer children and youth the chance to self-identify harmful Internet content and teach them the best way to approach such material. It is considered as one of the very first concrete youth models working on Internet safety not only in their region but worldwide.

Net-Aman empowers youth through ICT tools while spreading the culture of Internet safety and how to use these tools securely.

Net-Aman, along with CPI partners, has reached out to more than 100,000 people, among them students, youth, parents, educators and prosecutors. CPI has received several requests to replicate the Net-Aman model in other countries and soon another model of the Youth Internet Safety Focus Group will be created in Azerbaijan.

NOTEWORTHY

- Campagne nationale sur la société de l'information : Jeunesse Rurale Et E-Entrepreneuriat, ISF / TakingITGlobal, Cameroon
- Vename, Cinetcore, Ivory Coast
<http://beta.vename.com>
- Addis Ababa technical and vocational education Technology (TVET) data bank, Addis Ababa Education Bureau, Ethiopia
- iPEACE, Infogroup International, Sweden
- Project Based Multimedia Learning, Ministry of Education and IREX, Morocco
- MDGs-Only With Your Voice, International Education and Resource Network, Pakistan
- Project Discovery, Kenya
<http://www.projectdiscovery.or.ke/>

