Highlight: ICT in Non Formal Education

Connected Community Learning Centres
In Asia and Pacific, there are more than 100,000 Community learning centre (CLC) and similar education centres providing various learning programmes such as literacy, post-literacy, income generation, life skill, and basic education with the support of the government, NGOs, and private sectors. The purpose of CLC is to empower individuals and promote community development.

News & Events

ICTs in Education Prize: Call for Nominations
Educating Youth for Responsible Global Digital Citizenship is the theme of the 2011 UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of ICTs in Education. Funded by the Kingdom of Bahrain, the US$50,000 prize is divided equally between two winners. The deadline for submissions is 16 April 2012.

UNESCO Bangkok is kicking off the KFIT International School Project (KISP)
With generous support from the Korean-Funds-In-Trust (KFIT), the KFIT International School Project (KISP) was initiated to provide teachers and students with an opportunity to collaborate with other groups beyond their local boundaries in developing international and inter-cultural projects. The project connects schools from four countries to engage in the three-phase project-based learning.

UNESCO launches a meeting report on accessible ICTs for students with disabilities
UNESCO, jointly with Microsoft Corporation, launched the report on Accessible ICTs and Personalized Learning for Students with Disabilities at the International Conference on Assistive Technology and Persons with Disabilities in San Diego, USA.

Safer Internet Day: Promoting safer and more responsible use of online technology and mobile phones
Safer Internet Day (SID) has become a landmark event in the online safety calendar and the ninth edition of the event, celebrated on 7 February 2012, was another huge success. With a theme of ‘Connecting generations and educating each other’ and a slogan of ‘discover the digital world together...safely!’ the day focused on the reach of the online world across all generations and cultures, and encouraged families to work together to stay safe online.

Establishment of a Public Software Centre in India
UNESCO Delhi, in cooperation with IT for Change, supported the creation of Public Software Centre (PSC) to work pro-actively with the public education system at the policy and programme level, to guide ICT Projects in their design, development and implementation and to work with governments to formalize these experiences through public education software policies.

Australia escalates US$2.56 billion digital education revolution
Australia’s foray into a “Digital Education Revolution” has picked up momentum with nearly one million computers already installed in Australian schools. Computers will soon outnumber students.
Programmes & Projects
Community Multimedia Centres: Empowering marginalized communities in Nepal

Village teacher training via video conferencing
This essay illustrates a short-lived project in rural villages in Mexico and challenges the project team faced. Three organisations partnered to train undereducated teachers on a project designed to bring Internet access to rural villages in Mexico. Local schoolteachers, many of whom had not received any training beyond a standard high school diploma, were to be trained by experts via videoconferencing.

Resources
Use of ICTs in non-formal education
This essay on the use of ICTs in non-formal education provides a perspective on how ICTs are increasingly being used in the community in general to make available information and learning to a larger target group outside of the formal school system.

PISA: Are boys and girls ready for the digital age?
This brief ‘PISA in Focus’ report compares the performance of 15-year-old girls and boys in digital reading tests.

NMC Horizon Report > 2012 Higher Education Edition
This report describes annual findings from the NMC Horizon Project, a decade-long research project designed to identify and describe emerging technologies likely to have an impact on learning, teaching, and creative inquiry in higher education.

Fast Car: Travelling safely around the world
This game aims to provide young people with accurate and reliable information about HIV prevention, intending to educate and entertain as well as promoting healthy behaviour. In this game, the player can race on circuits on five continents, and virtually visit some of the UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Telling tales from Southeast Asia and Korea
Aimed to multiply actual practices of telling stories in classroom, this collection presents video clips of 26 folktales (both in English and national languages) plus 2 new stories created by the participating storytellers from Korea and 11 Southeast Asian countries.

Highlight: ICT in Non Formal Education
Connected Community Learning Centres
More than 800 million people get connected in social networks like Facebook and the number has increased so fast. With surprises and excitements, we have been observing political, social, and economical changes resulted from connected people. In education, there are a lot of changes and improvements with connected teachers and learners. One entertaining teacher has been teaching millions of learners over the world through YouTube. More than hundreds of thousands teachers are connected to share their lesson plans, teaching materials, exams, and curriculum. Teachers have been developing their professional skills through one another.

Community learning centre (CLC) is a local space to provide various learning programmes with the support of the government, NGOs, and private sectors. Those programmes include literacy, post-literacy, income generation, life skill, and basic education. The purpose of CLC is to empower individuals and promote community development. In Asia and Pacific, there are more than 100,000 CLCs and similar education centres. Its number has been constantly increasing.

Currently, most of CLCs are operated independently and get information from the government or head offices. Since CLCs are located geographically far from each other, communications among CLCs are weak and less frequent. Social networks could easily help this situation by getting CLCs connected horizontally.

Social connections among CLCs would bring about three good advantages. First of all, CLCs will share useful information among themselves in the country and across countries. Innovative methodologies of literacy, income generation for poverty reduction, community development, and new affordable technologies will spread through rapidly at the grass root level. An approach of income generation created in a village in Thailand can be replicated on the next day in a village in Indonesia and Pakistan.

Secondly, social connection among CLC can get more people familiarised with activities of CLCs. The accountability and transparency of CLC can be enhanced by posting information on activities, staff, learners and finance in timeframe. It indicates that the government or head offices don’t have to require CLCs to provide information and regular reports. The latest information of any CLC is always available on line. When the government would like to send information or documents to all CLCs, it is also easy and quick. This could be a paradigm shift of educational management information system (EMIS), which used to be totally a centralized system.

Thirdly, when social networks come to have financial functions, people could send direct support to empower the underprivileged children and people at CLCs. Moreover, cultural art crafts and any goods produced by people at CLCs could be sold efficiently through online. Generating income is one of the most effective ways to reduce the poverty in the rural areas. In 2012, a pilot activity was started with support of the Ministry of Education, Thailand to connect 100 CLCs in Facebook.

Further information:
Community Learning Centres (CLCs) - UNESCO Bangkok

Related links:

- Many countries unprepared to advance Non Formal Education (NFE) using ICTs
- Mobile learning and life skills
- SMS education in Pakistan
- The impact of a mobile phone literacy program on educational outcomes

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- UNESCO “ICT in Education” Announcement e-newsletter

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News & Events

ICTs in Education Prize: Call for Nominations

Educating Youth for Responsible Global Digital Citizenship is the theme of the 2011 UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of ICTs in Education. Funded by the Kingdom of Bahrain, the US$50,000 prize is divided equally between two winners. The deadline for submissions is 16 April 2012.

Every year, this prize rewards projects and activities that demonstrate best practice as well as creative use of ICTs to enhance learning, teaching and overall educational performance.

Submissions for candidature must reach UNESCO via the governments of Member States, in consultation with their UNESCO National Commissions, or by international non-governmental organizations which maintain formal relations with the Organization.

Winners will be celebrated at an award ceremony on 16 May 2012 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

Contact: m.patru(at)unesco.org

Further information:
UNESCO Bangkok is kicking off the KFIT International School Project (KISP)

With generous support from the Korean-Funds-In-Trust (KFIT), UNESCO undertakes a project aiming to create an enabling environment for student-centred use of ICT. One strategy to achieve this is to build a stronger partnership between teacher education institutions (TEIs) and schools to facilitate effective integration of ICT into classroom pedagogical practices using “project-based learning” and “telecollaboration”. This approaches emphasizes the need for a whole-school support strategy on integrating ICT in Education.

In line with the eleven Capacity Building Workshops on PBL-Telecollaboration previously organised in six different countries by UNESCO Bangkok, the KFIT International School Project (KISP) was initiated to provide teachers and students with an opportunity to expand their local boundaries and collaborate with other groups internationally in developing intercultural projects. The project connects schools from four countries (Canada, China, Korea, Philippines) to engage in project-based learning locally and internationally.

The project was formally launched on 5 March 2012 at UNESCO Bangkok through an online meeting and video conference of all collaborating Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) and schools (teachers and students who will take part in KISP), held via Skype.

Three TEIs will guide participating schools and help induce collaboration among the schools. Eight teachers teaching grade 4 to 6 of eight schools will act as the core facilitators of the project.

Throughout the implementation period, schools will make full use of the potential of ICTs - from the conceptualization of ideas, implementation and working with local and foreign schools (telecollaboration).

“Collaborative learning activities with ICT allow teachers and students to communicate and collaborate with others from different countries. The KISP provides students authentic
learning opportunities that enhance their engagement and motivation to learn and promote global awareness and cross-cultural understanding as global citizens”, says Dr. Gyeong Mi Heo, Education Consultant, Center for Research and Innovation in Organizations through ICT (CEFROI), Quebec, Canada who is a core member of the project.

“The KISP offers teachers professional learning opportunities that develop the competence to integrate ICT into classrooms by collaborating with teacher educators and other teachers across countries. As a community of practice for teachers, the KISP makes it possible for teachers to share their experiences, thoughts, resources, and knowledge with other teachers from different countries, reflect on the practice of teaching and learning, and hence co-construct knowledge in relation to their professional practice.”, she adds.

The main assisting tool will be the UNESCO Education Community, a new web portal specifically developed for KISP, which was launched during the ceremony. The Education Community provides several productivity tools such as a wiki or a collaborative document-editing tool as well as online groups, discussion forums and chat rooms for users to exchange their thoughts and ideas.

The project is expected to generate various insightful outputs that will be documented, such as student project outputs, various forms of products from the national and international collaboration, different pedagogical approaches and activities by the teachers and findings from the project impact research by the TEI researchers. The experiences and cases of the project will also be part of the upcoming “UNESCO Regional Guide on PBL and Telecollaboration”.

It is hoped that the project will be expanded and sustained through succeeding rounds and intrigue interests in the potential of telecollaboration among the larger number of countries in the region.

Further information:

- Facilitating Effective ICT-Pedagogy Integration Project

Related links:

- Successful series of project based learning (PBL) and telecollaboration workshops continued in Bangladesh
- Project-Based Learning and Telecollaboration enhances teachers’ confidence in Bangladesh
- Connecting Classrooms
UNESCO Bangkok supports Thailand’s second decade of education reform using project-based learning and ICT

Capacity Building Workshop on Project-Based Learning and Telecollaboration, Chonburi (Thailand)

UNESCO launched project-based learning and telecollaboration in Chinese schools

Next Generation of Teachers Project

Vietnam to develop Next Generation of Teachers

Nepal develops Master Plan for ICT in Education

Creating the next generation of educators

UNESCO Bangkok kicks-off new ICT in Education project funded by Korean government

ICT in Education Teacher Training Modules for Developing Countries

UNESCO Bangkok and Intel sign agreement to deliver Next Generation of Teachers Project in Asia-Pacific

Next Gen empowers teacher education institutions

Fourth Deans Forum – The Next Generation of Teachers Project

Developing ICT curriculum for the next generation of teachers

Next generation of teachers from the Asia-Pacific successfully trained in integrating ICT into teaching

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter

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Safer Internet Day: Promoting safer and more responsible use of online technology and mobile phones

Safer Internet Day (SID) is organised by Insafe [http://www.saferinternet.org] (the European network of Safer Internet Awareness Centres) in February of each year to promote safer and more responsible use of online technology and mobile phones, especially amongst children and young people across the world.

This year, thousands of events were celebrated in more than 90 countries worldwide; with almost 30 new countries joining the 2012 campaign. These included countries in the Middle East (Lebanon and Bahrain), Africa (Angola, South Africa and Algeria), Asia (Thailand and Pakistan) and Europe (Belarus).
Safer Internet Day (SID) has become a landmark event in the online safety calendar and the ninth edition of the event, celebrated on 7 February 2012, was another huge success. With a theme of ‘Connecting generations and educating each other’ and a slogan of ‘discover the digital world together...safely!’, the day focused on the reach of the online world across all generations and cultures, and encouraged families to work together to stay safe online.

**Insafe Network Activities**

For SID 2012, the Insafe network produced two videos – the customary video ‘spot’ based on the year’s theme and also a generic video, giving background information on the SID campaign. Each has been viewed in excess of 22,000 times on YouTube [http://www.youtube.com/user/insafe01/] alone. Safer Internet Day was also launched on social media with new Facebook and Twitter accounts updating users on SID activities across the world. There was also a real SID buzz on Twitter, with the hashtag #SID2012 ‘trending’ a number of times worldwide throughout the day.

However, most important of all was the **SID Kit for schools**. Many schools had communicated an interest in celebrating SID, but lacked the resources or background information to organise activities. Therefore Insafe prepared a school kit including logos and banners, the campaign videos, a participation certificate and SID resources developed especially for the 2012 campaign. The kit also contained information on a SID competition devised to connect generations, as participants produced internet safety videos and acceptable use posters.

The kit was a huge success with over 1500 schools registering from countries across all the world’s continents.

**Highlights from across the globe**

Please find below a selection of highlights from SID 2012:

- **World Vision** formed and led a new Safer Internet Day Committee in Palestine [http://www.saferinternetday.org/web/palestine/home]; their campaign to raise awareness about online risks was the first of its kind in Palestine. They partnered with internet providers to reach out to members of the local community.
- In Croatia, **Udruga "Suradnici u učenju"**, invited teachers from across the country to plan a lesson on Internet safety and to share their experiences and ideas on how to teach children to use the Internet in a safe, responsible and effective manner. Their articles were published in the February issue of the digital magazine Pogled kroz prozor.
- In Georgia, several events were organised including a big event with 900 attendees: children carried out performances imitating different websites, blogs, chats and forums, while announcing key messages on the advantages and disadvantages of internet usage.
- **Safernet Brasil**, created a new SID Brazil website [http://www.safernet.org.br/site/sid2012] which included a dynamic map showcasing events across the country. Visitors to the website used geo-location to
register their events. In total, 127 organisations were mobilised across all the Brazilian States, including the Federal Police.

For more information on activities in other countries please see the Safer Internet Day 2012 campaign report which is due for publication in April 2012 at www.saferinternetday.org.

Plans are already underway for Safer Internet Day 2013 - the tenth edition of the event - which will take place on Tuesday 5 February 2013. For more information please contact sid-helpdesk@eun.org.

Further information:

- Safer Internet Day

Related links:

- Safer Internet Day 2011

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter

What do you think about this topic?

- Visit our on-line forum and share your views

UNESCO launches a meeting report on accessible ICTs for students with disabilities

UNESCO, jointly with Microsoft Corporation, launched the report on Accessible ICTs and Personalized Learning for Students with Disabilities at the International Conference on Assistive Technology and Persons with Disabilities in San Diego, USA.

G3ict, the Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies, a flagship advocacy initiative of UN-GAID, the United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development, provided a generous financial contribution to the organization of the launch and contributed to the discussion.
Personalized learning requires attention to the unique needs of all students of all abilities, acknowledging that each have different learning styles including students with mild, moderate or severe disabilities. Technology plays a particularly vital role by enabling flexible curriculum development and assisting students with disabilities to participate as equals in the learning experience.

The new report summarizes the multi-stakeholder discussion organized at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 17 to 18 November 2011. The discussion focused on challenges of and practical solutions for promoting personalization through technology in the classrooms for students, particularly with learning difficulties and physical disabilities. The report includes a number of successful case studies and recommendations on how educators and students could use existing technological solutions in classrooms, and how UNESCO’s ICT Competences Framework for Teachers could be applied for teachers’ capacity building on issues related to the accessibility.

The key recommendations on practical solutions for the use of accessible ICTs contained in the report target teachers, policy makers and administrators. They focus on a number of core themes that include:

- **Maximizing use of accessibility features in currently available technologies**
  Most mainstream ICTs, such as computers, tablet PCS and other technological solutions, used in schools contain a wealth of features, which, through the setting of preferences, can help many students in accessing the curriculum and recording their work.

- **Enabling students to ‘self-accommodate’ by learning the computer features that best suit their needs**
  The ability to personalize technology to suit ones preferences and needs is a life-skill that will benefit students as they progress through the educational system.

- **Monitoring the potential of new developments and near-future technologies as a means of addressing current barriers**
  The following technology trends are worth monitoring: mobile learning, cloud-based solutions and research into the use of game consoles for learning.

- **Creating an inclusive and positive attitude towards the use of technology for learning**
  Attitudinal barriers towards and fear of technology by teachers, parents and administrators will significantly reduce the chances of teachers exploiting the benefits of accessible ICTs even in well-resourced settings.

- **Training and supporting teachers**
  If teachers are to be convinced of the value of accessible ICTs in the classroom they must first have the necessary skills, attitudes and knowledge.
• **Team effort in training and on-going support required for effective accessible ICT usage**
  A functional accessible ICT eco-system requires joined-up thinking at a policy level as communication between all actors as a local level including assistive technology specialists.

• **Considering students’ needs from the earliest stages of curriculum development**
  The development of curriculum that is designed from the outset to meet the greatest number of students will reduce the need for costly and time consuming retrofitting (universal design).

• **Accessible ICTs as a key consideration for national and regional policies**
  The potential of accessible ICTs should be fully explored by national educational authorities and ministries with a view to updating national and regional policies to promote their use as a tool for achieving inclusive education.

• **Use of accessible ICTs as an integrated part of a school’s ICTs plan**

The meeting concluded that national authorities and governments face significant human rights and educational specific goals and challenges in relation to the provision of education for children with disabilities. The major tendency in new policy approaches is towards inclusive education. Whatever the policy environment is, accessible ICTs can significantly empower children with disabilities to participate in lessons, to communicate and to learn more effectively.

**Further information:**

• [UNESCO launches a meeting report on accessible ICTs for students with disabilities](#)

**Related links:**

• [WSIS Forum 2011: UNESCO strongly highlights the potentials of ICTs for building inclusive, open and diverse knowledge societies](#)
• [ICT Resources Centres for Special Needs Education](#)
• [UNESCO publishes report on ICT for persons with disabilities](#)
• [Interactive session on ICT and persons with disabilities](#)
• [UNESCO and G3ict sign a partnership on ICT for persons with disabilities](#)
• [e-Accessibility Policy Toolkit for persons with disabilities](#)
• [Access to technology for people with disabilities focus of UN Asia-Pacific forum](#)

**Previous issues of the e-newsletter:**

11
Establishment of a Public Software Centre in India

UNESCO Delhi, India, supported the creation of Public Software Centre (PSC) with IT for Change, (an NGO that works on the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICTs) for social change), to work pro-actively with the public education system at the policy and programme level. More specifically, this collective effort aims to guide ICT Projects through design, development and implementation stages and work with governments to formalize these experiences into public education software policies.

The use of public software (software, which by virtue of its public ownership is freely shareable and customizable), especially public educational tools are an important feature of the work of PSC. During 2011, Karnataka was the primary Indian focus state with similar activity being initiated in a second state.

PSC conceptualized and designed the Subject Teacher Forum (STF) programme-1 of the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyaan (RMSA), Karnataka, and provided training and support in the use of public software to empower teachers to become digitally literate, use public software educational tools to advance their own subject understanding, engage in discussions about the discipline (Mathematics, Science and Social Science), participate in an online community of learning and create and share digital resources.

The work spanned high schools that had ICT facilities provided by the government across 15 districts in Karnataka. There have been 15 workshops conducted by PSC resulting in 240 resource persons, who will train around 2,500 teachers in more than 800 schools in the 15 districts.

The larger goal of the Subject Teacher Forum is to strengthen subject matter expertise amongst teachers, increase the range of curricular resources available to teachers for use in their classroom transactions and to support new models of teacher professional development based on creating ‘teachers learning communities’.

In this new model, in-service teacher development is continuous, as the teachers are in touch via email groups and web portal virtually, apart from the workshops. This enables their learning to be self-directed, self-paced, peer based and mentored.
PSC also conducted capacity building workshops for the DIETs (District Institutes of Education and Training) that support schools as well as NGOs that are supporting RMSA in this programme such as the American India Foundation.

Contact: Ms Alison Macbeth (a.macbeth@unesco.org)

Further information:

- UNESCO New Delhi

Related links:

- Successful series of project based learning (PBL) and telecollaboration workshops continued in Bangladesh
- Distance Education for Teacher Training: Modes, Models, and Methods
- ICT-enhanced teacher development model
- Transforming Education: The Power of ICT Policies
- ICT education breaks through gender barriers in India
- Rural schools connected to ICT in southern Sri Lanka

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Australia escalates US$2.56 billion digital education revolution

*By Shahida Sweeney, FutureGov magazine*

Australia’s foray into a “Digital Education Revolution” has picked up momentum with nearly one million computers already installed in Australian schools. Computers will soon outnumber students.
This latest tally exceeds the national target of 786,000 computers aimed at turning every secondary school into a digital school, says Australian Minister for School Education, Peter Garrett.

Australia’s computers-for-every-classroom reform is part of an AUD $2.4 billion (US$2.56 billion) Digital Education Revolution.

This classroom revolution seeks to prepare students for a 21st century digital economy, while providing enough computers for every senior high school student nationally.

“It’s imperative that Australian students have access to world-class computers and technology if we are to remain competitive in an increasingly digital world,” says Peter Garrett.

Educational reform is more than just delivering computers. “It’s also about providing the extra digital resources teachers and students need to make the most of the technology.” Australia’s computer roll-out is transforming the way students learn, enabling them to work autonomously and develop ICT skills needed to go on to higher education, into a trade or enter the workforce.

Federal, State and Local government agencies are teaming with educational institutions and peak learning bodies to more effectively integrate ICT with school curriculum and deliver on-line learning to computer-savvy students.

Based on current projections, school computers may outnumber students. Computer purchases are being fast-tracked across key states and territories. Schools are also adding mobile devices to inventory, including iPads and tablets.

This computer purchase program is supported by access to high-speed, fast-access broadband communications — connecting classrooms across cities, towns and regional areas.

The Australian Government’s Digital Education Revolution taps into feedback from a high-level advisory board. Members of this board represent higher education, peak distance learning bodies, government agencies, and teaching and learning institutes.

Further information:

- [Australia escalates US$2.56 billion digital education revolution](FutureGov Magazine) (FutureGov Magazine)

Related links:
Programmes & Projects

Community Multimedia Centres: Empowering marginalized communities in Nepal


The CMCs aim to develop the communication and learning capacities of certain marginalized communities (such as Janajatis, Dalits, Muslims and women) in selected districts of Nepal, and increase their access to community media, thus allowing them to express themselves and participate in democratic processes more effectively.

The project was implemented in three phases – (a) setting up the CMCs; (b) conducting six capacity building workshops; and (c) conducting three networking meetings. The UNESCO Office in Kathmandu, the Community Radio Support Centre (CRSC), the Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NFEJ), and experts from the two radio stations jointly addressed the CMCs’ technical and infrastructural requirements.

The CMCs at Radio Kapilabastu and Radio Today became fully operational in January 2011 and August 2011 respectively.

Three capacity building training workshops were then conducted at each of the centres training approximately 90 participants. These included sessions to develop the communication capacity of radio program producers, journalists and social workers from
disadvantaged communities; and a more technical ICT training session that introduced participants to computer skills and the use of the Internet.

In the project’s third and final phase, three networking meetings were held to share information about the operation and benefits of CMCs with members of local communities, and to share experiences and best practices among the CMC personnel themselves.

Although the project was completed as recently as November 2011, its impact is already being felt. Members of local communities and the target communities in particular have begun to use desktop and Internet services from the CMCs.

The Radio Kapilabastu CMC now conducts computer training classes for community members, teaching them to use basic application packages. Both CMCs have begun to collect books and other information to create real and virtual libraries.

The quality of the radio programs, news and personnel output at the two community radio stations have improved considerably after the capacity building workshops.

However, the project’s most significant outcome is perhaps the strong sense of ownership that local communities and stakeholders have felt towards the two CMCs.

Contact: Ms Iskra Panevska (i.panevska@unesco.org)

Further information:

- UNESCO New Delhi

Related links:

- Interactive radio instruction – How cost effective ICT can have a remarkable impact
- Creating a new culture of teaching and learning
- UNESCO to help community media with mobile content production
- UNESCO develops community multimedia centre for education in Indonesia
- From the ground up - the evolution of the telecentre movement

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Village teacher training via video conferencing

By Jeffrey Swindle, Graduate Student at University of Cambridge, Educational Technology Debate

This year I had the privilege of working with an LLC, a partnering local NGO, and a non-profit that trains undereducated teachers on a project designed to bring Internet access to rural villages in Mexico. Local schoolteachers, many of whom had not received any training beyond a standard high school diploma, were to be trained by experts via WebEx videoconferencing. The project was promising, but ran into financial troubles, and currently the project is at a standstill. I, however, am still optimistic that the project can be a positive educational tool.

I will explain the project design and implementation below. First, however, I want to pose three questions to readers:

1. What funding mechanisms are most secure for telecentre sustainability?
2. Are videoconferencing training programs effective when trainees have no prior experience with these technologies?
3. What pedagogical assumptions are instilled into videoconferencing trainings and what repercussions do these assumptions cause?

The need

For the first time, local schoolteachers in rural Mexico could receive teacher training, many of whom had never received formal teacher training. The non-profit planned to put these teachers through a 50-hour training course via videoconferencing tools and a satellite broadband Internet connection.

In a Mexican government program, and with assistance from the IDB, villagers from underserved areas in Mexico can receive a financial scholarship for college and a modest stipend in exchange for teaching elementary or middle school for two years in other rural communities. The program, CONAFE (which stands for National Council for to Promote Education), is a great asset to these communities who are otherwise without teachers.

The problem, however, is that the CONAFE teachers have not gone to college or received much formal training. Though the teachers are required to attend monthly seminars and receive a few weeks of training before entering the classroom, they are otherwise without preparation and come with no more than a high school education.

The project
To solve this problem, a technology-focused LLC who provides Internet connectivity via satellite to rural villages worldwide partnered with a local NGO to open an Internet café in the largest village (about 80 families) in the area. A local social entrepreneur was selected, who bought the technological equipment from the local NGO at low interest rates, and the Internet café quickly opened. Then, the local NGO partnered with the non-profit who trains undereducated teachers to put the CONAFE teachers through a 50-hour training course via videoconferencing tools.

Considering the unfamiliarity with computers that the CONAFE teachers have, it was apparent that they would have to rely heavily on the local Internet café owner to help them connect to a videoconferencing platform and to use the computers. Some of the teachers had never used a computer before, and even the most advanced had only used them a dozen times. The idea was that through this training, the CONAFE schoolteachers would not only become better teachers, but they would learn the basics of computer and Internet usage, invaluable skills without which they would be lost once entering college.

**Difficulties and questions**

Unfortunately, however, the Internet service was cut after just three months of service to the café. The cost of the service increased ten-fold in the contract with the satellite service provider after three months, a key detail in the contract that the local NGO had overlooked. Now, it has been over one hundred days that the Internet café has been without service. The social entrepreneur feels disgruntled and embarrassed in front of the other villagers, and wants nothing to do with the local NGOs efforts to reconnect the café with new service providers.

Without this connection, the videoconferencing training obviously stopped. Consequently, it is unclear whether the training would have been effective. The first training took place just one week before the Internet was cut off. I was at the training and afterwards I had a series of question regarding the program. How would the mentor relationship between the teacher trainer from the non-profit and the recipient CONAFE teachers affect their self-confidence and later self-development efforts? How would the training affect the teachers’ actual actions in the classroom? How much freedom would the CONAFE teachers have to modify the national curriculums that they were mandated to teach? Was a certification from the non-profit organization enough to motivate the CONAFE teachers to participate in the program? Would the certificate actually prove to be helpful in securing future employment?

It is impossible to find these answers from the short-lived project in Mexico. What experiences have you, reader, had that could shed light on the effectiveness of videoconferencing training over international boundaries? And can telecentres be financially sustainable in rural villages as they are in urban cities in developing countries? What increases the probability of financial success? If not funded through user fees, what are implications of government sponsorship or subsidies in telecentre projects?

I’d appreciate your comments and feedback from your own experiences. (Please post your comments on the original webpage of the article here: [https://edutechdebate.org/open-discussion/village-teacher-training-via-video-conferencing/](https://edutechdebate.org/open-discussion/village-teacher-training-via-video-conferencing/))
Resources

Use of ICTs in non-formal education

This essay on the use of ICTs in non-formal education (NFE) provides a perspective on how ICTs are increasingly being used in the community in general to make information and learning available to a larger target group outside of the formal school system.

This paper attempts to understand the penetration of ICT in the field of NFE. It outlines the various modes of delivery in NFE using ICT tools, important enablers, successful and innovative projects and the emerging trends.

It also highlights the advantages accrued by the use of ICT in NFE, the critical success factors for such projects and impediments, and barriers faced in the implementation of ICT-enabled NFE.

The widespread use of ICTs at this level for lifelong and continuous learning as well as community empowerment is a significant trend in realizing the 21st century ambition of living into truly “knowledge societies.”

Read the paper:

- Use of ICTs in non-formal education
Related links:

- Many countries unprepared to advance Non Formal Education (NFE) using ICTs
- Mobile learning and life skills
- SMS education in Pakistan
- The impact of a mobile phone literacy program on educational outcomes

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter

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PISA: Are boys and girls ready for the digital age?

This brief 'PISA in Focus' report compares the performance of 15-year-old girls and boys in digital reading tests.

Summarized, the findings of the study are:

- More than 17% of students in Australia, Korea and New Zealand are top performers in digital reading, while fewer than 3% of students in Austria, Chile and Poland are.

- On average, girls outperform boys in digital reading; however, the gender gap is narrower than it is in print-reading proficiency.

- Among boys and girls with similar levels of proficiency in print reading, boys tend to have stronger digital navigation skills and therefore score higher in digital reading.

Read the full report here:

- PISA in Focus - (pdf)

Related links:
Are the new millennium learners making the grade?
UNESCO evaluation shows student achievement increases by combining professional learning, compelling interactive digital content and technology in the classroom
Technology companies lead collaboration to improve global education assessments

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:
UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter

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NMC Horizon Report > 2012 Higher Education Edition

The NMC Horizon Report > 2012 Higher Education Edition is a collaborative effort between the NMC (New Media Consortium) and the EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (ELI), an EDUCAUSE Program.

This ninth edition describes annual findings from the NMC Horizon Project, a decade-long research project designed to identify and describe emerging technologies likely to have an impact on learning, teaching, and creative inquiry in higher education.

Six emerging technologies are identified across three adoption horizons over the next one to five years: Mobile apps and tablet computing as technologies expected to enter mainstream use in the first horizon of one year or less; Game-based learning and learning analytics are seen in the second horizon of two to three years; Gesture-based computing and the Internet of Things are seen emerging in the third horizon of four to five years.

The report also describes key trends and challenges expected to continue over the same period, giving campus leaders and practitioners a valuable guide for strategic technology planning.

The 2012 Horizon Project Higher Education Advisory Board initially voted on the top 12 emerging technologies - the result of which is documented in the NMC Horizon Project Short List > 2012 Higher Education Edition. This Short List helped the advisory board narrow down the 12 technologies to six for the full publication.

To download the report you need to subscribe free of charge as user.
Further information:

- NMC Horizon Report > 2012 Higher Education Edition

Related links:

- ICT for higher education: an overview of case studies from the Asia and Pacific region
- Collaboration in higher education and its benefits for ICT
- Web-based lecture technologies and learning and teaching: a study of change in four Australian universities
- Open educational practices recognized through OPAL Awards
- Implementing online or hybrid courses in a traditional university

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

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Fast Car: Travelling safely around the world

The Fast Car: Travelling Safely around the World, a racing game that helps the game players to learn about HIV and AIDS prevention and takes them on a tour of some of the World’s Heritage sites.

The computer game was originally produced in English and has been recently translated into Chinese language by UNESCO office in Beijing.

The game aims to provide young people with accurate and reliable information about HIV prevention, intending to educate and entertain as well as promoting healthy behaviour. In this game, the player can race on circuits on five continents, and virtually visit some of the UNESCO World Heritage sites.

The game is expected to be used to promote dialogue, especially balanced-gender relations, and self-expression as well as present and share science content.
The game is also available in French and Russian.

For further information about the Chinese version of the game, please contact: Li Hongyan, UNESCO Beijing at (h.li@unesco.org)

Download the game:

- **English/French Russian**
- **Chinese**

Related links:

- [5 ways ICT can support the Millennium Development Goals](#)
- [UNESCO launches first computer game for young people on HIV and AIDS](#)
- [UNESCO's response to HIV and AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (Library Collection)](#)
- [Interactive multimedia tools for youth to help combat HIV and AIDS](#)

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- [UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter](#)

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Telling tales from Southeast Asia and Korea

The storytelling DVD “Telling Tales from Southeast Asia and Korea” presents folktale collected in a book that was produced by the [SEAMEO-APCEIU Multimedia Educational Material Development Project](#) and published with the same title.

Aimed to multiply actual practices of telling stories in classroom, the DVD package carries video clips of 26 folktales (both in English and national languages) plus 2 new stories created by the participating storytellers from 12 countries, a guiding manual for storytelling, and the book “Telling Tales from Southeast Asia and Korea” in pdf format.

All video clips can be viewed online.
Further information:

- Telling tales from Southeast Asia and Korea

Related links:

- Animoto for Education
- Malaysian teens reveal their lives and concerns through one-minute videos
- Tikatok: Kids create and publish books
- VoiceThread – Interactive multimedia albums for collaborative work in the classroom

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