Opinions & Perspectives

5 ways ICT can support the Millennium Development Goals
This article, written by Linda Raftree, puts together thoughts around girls, child rights, information and communication technologies and the Millennium Development Goals. It lists five ways that ICTs can facilitate accountability and transparency, citizen engagement, and public debate, all of which are necessary to bring about development improvements and achieve the MDGs.

News & Events

UNESCO-INTEL launch ICT in Education Policy Toolkit for India
To help policymakers and educational planners, UNESCO New Delhi Office and Intel India collaborated to develop an ICT in Education Toolkit for India. This tool was officially launched during the National Forum on ICT in Education Policies for Sustained Education Transformation held on 6 December 2010 at the Taj Mahal Hotel in New Delhi.

HOW and WHAT to study in 21st Century?
A success story of UNESCO Tashkent on teacher training: “Introduction to Educational and Information Technology in 21st Century.” This project was founded to help teachers to master contemporary information and pedagogical technologies.

Using ICT for an educational ecosystem and not only as subject matter
A new infoDev paper shows that more emphasis is usually placed on teaching ICT as a curriculum subject than on using it as an instructional aide.

To spread the light of IT
As one of the first steps to digitalise Bhutan, 500 teachers will be trained in ICT skills at the seven teacher training centres that opened recently.

ITU estimates two billion people online by end 2010
ITU’s latest statistics reveal that the number of Internet users worldwide doubled in the past five years and will surpass the two billion mark in 2010.

Education 2011-2021 global challenges and perspectives of blended and distance learning summit
The Distance Education Hub (DE Hub) and the Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia (ODLAA) will host the Education 2011-2021 Summit from 15-18 February 2011 in Sydney, Australia.

Programmes & Projects

Media Literacy – “Common Sense Media” a great online source
Common Sense Media seeks to provide trustworthy information that can help families make educated decisions regarding the media their children will consume.

Resources

Capacity-building for ICT integration in education
As governments in the region embark on large-scale adoption of ICTs in education, it is
important to move away from technocentric planning and implementation approaches to models that focus on establishing sound policy and support strategies leading to capacity development and empowerment.

UNESCO launches first computer game for young people on HIV and AIDS
UNESCO is launching the first interactive multimedia tool on HIV and AIDS prevention for youth, available in English, French and Russian. The computer game “Fast Car: Travelling Safely around the World” aims to provide young people with accurate and reliable information about HIV prevention, while educating, entertaining and promoting healthy behaviour.

At what age can a child start using a computer?
Without necessarily advocating the use of ICT as early as possible in childhood, this article tries to temper the negative view by providing some reflections and interpretations of the conclusions of recent research reports.

Learn Genetics
This website delivers educational materials on genetics, bioscience and health topics. They are designed to be used by students, teachers and members of the public. The materials meet selected US education standards for science and health.

The Super Book of Web Tools for Educators
This free eBook aims to give a comprehensive introduction to implement new technological tools in your classroom.

Opinions & Perspectives
5 ways ICT can support the Millennium Development Goals
I’ve been putting together my thoughts around girls, child rights, information and communication technologies and the Millennium Development Goals. The angle I’m taking is not from the large donor, top down, huge institutional program side, but instead, looking at examples from the work I’ve been closest to over the past few years at the community and district level, mostly focused on child and youth participation in the development process. Check my MDGs through a child rights lens post for more background.

My last post (3 ways to integrate ICTs into your development organization) uses Hannah Beardon’s framework to discuss how organizations can integrate ICTs into their work. Hannah suggests that ICTs can be integrated directly (providing access to ICTs), strategically (using ICTs as tools to support development processes) and indirectly (using ICTs to improve efficiency and communication within the organization).

To complete that post, I’m listing below 5 ways that ICTs can facilitate accountability and transparency, citizen engagement, and public debate, all of which are necessary to bring about development improvements and achieve the MDGs. Obviously these are not the only ways ICTs can support the MDGs, but this post would have been miles long if I’d listed all the initiatives that are out there.
1. Engaging children and youth in the development process

An engaged and active population is a key ingredient for good development programs. Children and youth have much to offer, are directly targeted in the MDGs and many other development initiatives, offer valuable ideas and energy, and make up around half the population in many of the countries that are lagging in reaching the MDGs. ICTs can help children and youth engage in the development process and bring their ideas, opinions and voices alive at the community, district, national and global level.

"Using new technology, new media, children and youth can claim a space that they didn’t have before. They can influence certain things, advocate on particular issues that are important to them, take ownership in communities and in leadership. ICTs excite them and encourage them to be more involved and engaged." Anthony Njoroge, Plan Kenya Community ICT Manager.

ICTs empower young people with skills that make them more confident and more involved at the community level.

"Using ICTs, children and youth have become more responsible because they are not waiting for adults to come in with something. Now they are designing it themselves, they are creating space for themselves and bringing their agenda to adult meetings instead of waiting to be invited in or having to work within the agenda of the adults. It used to be that you’d start working with 20 youth, you’d invite them into a community meeting. You’d see the number go down to 10, to 4, to 3, because they didn’t see any relation to themselves in the topics and the goings on.

With integration of technology and the arts however, youth have a high level of interest. It’s really bringing in their opinions, their thoughts and ideas to join their voices with parents. Now they use arts and media to promote communication, dialogue on their issues and look for ways to resolve them. Before they were totally missing from the discussion, but now they are here." Judith Nkie, Plan Cameroon Youth Empowerment through Arts and Media Project Coordinator.

Arts and ICTs were used in the above-mentioned project as tools for youth engagement, mapping and prioritizing, research and community dialog. The media produced with the ICT tools was shared first within the community and then outside at the district, national and global levels as a way of engaging decision makers and the public in the youths’ agenda.

For more on how arts and ICTs are being used in the above-mentioned project, see this post. Watch 100 videos made by youth in 6 African countries on topics they are passionate about.

2. Identifying resources and mapping patterns for better decision making

Tracking and visualizing information is an excellent way to improve decision making capacity. The advent of simpler and open source participatory digital mapping tools allows community members to map their communities digitally and to have more ownership of the information. Mapping helps identify patterns that may not have been visible before. Local maps shared on-line allow local people to provide their own information from their own perspective, and that information serves multiple purposes at the local level and beyond.

Digital mapping can be helpful when governments decentralize. Municipalities are mapping resources as well as projects and interventions. District authorities can track their own
initiatives and those by local and international organizations to avoid duplication of efforts and wasted resources. When maps are public, the population can better demand answers about where resources are being allocated and why.

Maps can help with disaster risk reduction and tools such as Ushahidi can help during emergency response. Mapping information is also useful for holding up a mirror to the population to ask them questions about themselves and their behaviors and for showing the direct consequences of actions; for example in a Community Total Led Sanitation mapping project, the community faces its realities about where their own waste is entering food and water sources.

Map Kibera is a good example of participatory digital mapping. mGEOS is a mobile mapping tool developed to help Plan Kenya staff to gather and share data needed for their daily work. Map Kibera and Plan Kenya are collaborating in Kwale on youth and governance work, and in Mathare to work on Community Total Led Sanitation using digital mapping tools (see July 27th entry). In this video, a district youth officer in Kenya talks about why digital mapping is useful for his community.

3. Pulling in quick information to guide further investigation, response, or advocacy; pushing out information for targeted actions

ICTs can be used to gather quick information from a broad population. This can be useful in a variety of situations and themes, including those outlined in the MDGs. For example, SMS are being used to report on whether teachers are showing up at school, where violence against children and women is happening, where help is needed in the aftermath of a disaster, and for tracking endangered wildlife. Crowd sourced information can help governments and agencies get preliminary information so that further investigation and support can be provided in a particular area.

Another example is the use of mobiles in different health initiatives, including: child-birth care; HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment programs; support for volunteer community healthcare workers; and bed net treatment reminders. Most of the ICT and development world is also already familiar with the work of two organizations: Ushahidi and FrontlineSMS who have been combining SMS with digital mapping.

A program that I'm closely involved with is SMS reporting of violence against children in Benin, where local communities, government agencies and NGOs are collaborating to improve the child protection system. This type of program shows promise if heed is paid to the pros and cons of collecting information by SMS, and if those implementing are clear about the type of information that will be gathered, privacy implications, and how the system will complement existing systems. (Here is one document that outlines some considerations).

Increasing controls by governments and mobile phone companies, including SIM card registry and Mozambique's recent government shut down of SMS services during the bread riots are good examples of how quickly the ICT landscape can change, and how flexible and agile those working in the area of ICTs need to be.
4. Supporting accountability and transparency

ICTs are useful to support accountability and transparency, necessary for attempts to track and ensure good use of funding for different efforts, including those related to the MDGs and other aid and development programs. Making information more available to the public by mobile is one such way. SODNET’s budget tracking tool, for example, informs Kenyans of how much funding is allocated by the Constituency Development Fund to different municipalities in different categories.

Combined with mapping, as outlined in this post, the budget information can help constituents to track where their funds are actually being spent. Other interesting examples of how ICTs can be used for transparency and accountability can be found at TacticalTech’s Info Activism site and at Technology for Transparency.

5. Improving municipal services and information management

Civil registration documents, especially a birth certificate, are a precursor to demanding any number of rights or accessing a wide array of services. Without a birth certificate a child may not be able to sit for school exams, receive immunizations or free health care or claim rights to inheritance or legal protection in courts of law. Proof of age is critical in successfully prosecuting perpetrators of crimes against children such as child trafficking, sexual offences, early recruitment into the armed forces, child marriage and child labor. ICTs are being used to digitize civil registry in Kenya, for example. Not only are records being digitized, but mobile phones are used to make it more convenient for the population to know when their documents are ready. This saves people time and money and means that more parents will register their children.

But wait, there’s more!

These are only a few examples of ways that ICTs are being used at the grassroots level to improve participation, transparency, accountability, debate and ownership of the development process. The MDGs are lofty, but informed local community participation and ownership is key in efforts to reach them and in ensuring that marginalized populations can also be included.

Author: Linda Raftree
Linda Raftree is the Social Media and New Technology Advisor for the Plan West Africa Regional Office and also the ICT4D Technical Advisor for Plan USA.

Further information:

- 5 ways ICT can support the Millennium Development Goals

Related links:

- Blog by Linda Raftree
ICTworks
Ban welcomes launch of digital initiative to attain Millennium Development Goals
UN Millennium Development Goals
Senior UN, private sector officials define vision for globally connected society
UN ICT Hub publishes ICTD Briefing Note Series
UN urges improved access to information technology in hospitals, schools
Technology and innovation can help expand education for all
ASEAN’s future ICT leaders awarded scholarships to explore the role of ICT in achieving the Millenium Development Goals

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

News & Events
UNESCO-INTEL launch ICT in Education Policy Toolkit for India
You can feel it in the air – the optimism for change. A high-level education policymaker from one of the 14 states in India noted the much improved environment in the education sector. It is true there are still many challenges to face such as tackling illiteracy and bringing back out-of-school children to schools, not to mention improving the quality of education. The big difference, however, is that various stakeholders from the government to the local communities are coming together with open minds to contribute to a common goal.

As India’s economic growth accelerates, so does the expectation from the schools. Employers expect graduates to possess the necessary 21st century skills – especially critical thinking, communication and ICT skills – to be productive. This makes introduction of ICT in schools an important component in any educational initiatives.
To help policymakers and educational planners, UNESCO New Delhi Office and Intel India collaborated to develop an ICT in Education Toolkit for India. This tool was officially launched during the National Forum on ICT in Education Policies for Sustained Education Transformation held on 6 December 2010 at the Taj Mahal Hotel in New Delhi. Around 50 participants, many of whom are high-level policymakers from the national and state-level governments, attended the event.

Recognizing the important role of teachers in any ICT in Education initiatives, a Forum on ICT Based Professional Development for Education Stakeholders immediately followed a day after the launch of the toolkit. Representatives from schools and teacher training institutions actively participated in mapping out the training needs and identifying areas for improvements.

In addition to the local participants, representatives from UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education based in Bangkok, Thailand and from the governments of Singapore, Sri Lanka and Maldives were present to share experiences and international perspectives.

As a result of the two successive fora for policymakers and teachers, respectively, participants look forward to follow-up actions. UNESCO New Delhi and Intel India promised to help interested states to develop ICT in Education policies as well as provide training for more teachers.

For more information and updates, please contact Ms. Huma Massood, h.massood@unesco.org

Further information:

- [ICT in Education Policy Toolkit](#)

Related links:

- [ICT in Education policy project](#)
• ICT National policies & case studies

• Developing a national information and communications technology strategy for education in Pakistan

• Bangladesh begins initiative to develop its National ICT in Education Master Plan

• Bangladesh receives USD$81 million from the World Bank to build up higher education

• India launches a new scheme on ICT in Education, minister says

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

HOW and WHAT to study in 21st Century?
Enhancing educational quality is a constant process and is our top priority. Education systems work to prepare the next generation for a successful future in a changing world, the knowledge economy of 21st century. Today, it is necessary to help students develop the intellectual skills they need for a higher order of thinking and to assist them to realize their abilities and potential.

Intel is working to fruition with teachers all over the world, implementing one of the most effective and successful initiatives in the field of education. Their work in education includes programs for basic, secondary, tertiary and lifelong education. These multilateral projects between Intel, UNESCO Tashkent and The Ministry of Public Education of the Republic Uzbekistan present successful examples of private and public sector cooperation. They stand as mentors in the field of education for the professional development of teachers, sharing the ultimate goal of improving the quality of education.
This project, a teacher training program of the UNESCO Tashkent, was founded to help teachers master contemporary information and pedagogical technologies. The project was designed to enable teachers to expand upon their knowledge of these technologies, to enhance their approach to teaching. They have improved their classroom preparation and organization of teaching materials in schools. The central idea of the project is to harness the potential of information and educational technologies to develop effective, cohesive teaching strategies for students which are based on cultural values, knowledge and the skills needed in the 21st century.

This project allows teachers from a diverse background of subjects, with little to basic computer knowledge, to develop skills in information technology. Only this way may they contribute to teaching and learning in the 21st century. In participating in the training programme, teachers may comprehend and master such skills as critical thinking, collaborative learning, the teacher’s role as facilitator, project-based approaches to learning and student-oriented education.

This project began in May 2010 with the first training commencing in Samarkand. Tutors and school subject teachers were prepared through the instruction by teacher training- and pedagogical institutions. Following initial courses in Samarkand, teacher training materials were translated and adapted into Uzbek language. Since that time, teacher trainings continue to be conducted for secondary level teachers in the cities of Nukus, Urgench, Karshi and Termez. Today over 125 teachers have been adequately prepared to teach the next generation.

This program has been well acknowledged by education experts and participants as the program merges together both pedagogical technologies and ICTs while providing an effective methodology for their implementation into the educational system.

UNESCO experts have evaluated the effectiveness and efficiency of this program and analyzed the influence and comprehensiveness of such a program in schools.

"We should keep in mind that our school graduates get accustomed to the most innovative educational and information technology, so that they should be able to shape necessary skills for perfectly positioning themselves in the dynamic developing technological world”

– Jorge Ivan Espinal, Head of the UNESCO Tashkent.

Observations reveal that training participants experienced a common question: “What kind of technologies, methods, and methodology complimenting one’s professional interests might they introduce into teaching practices... and how can it be ensured that these skills are regarded as worthy?“

This training program allowed teachers to look at their pedagogical activities from different perspectives; to master new approaches to project-based learning for students, to change their views on educational content and the effective organization of learning process and to understand the key role of a teacher in the 21st century.
The ultimate questions are: ‘What did participants acquire from these trainings?’ ‘What was the improvement?’ and ‘What are the action plans for changing the way of classroom teaching in response to what they have learnt in the given course?’ The answers to these questions are yet to be available, as we must await the long-term results of these trainings. However, we believe, from participant accounts, that these trainings had a positive impact allowing for the attainment of newly acquired skills. These skills contributed to a response of positive emotions and a sense of pride for one’s team and for one’s school. It appears as though the quality of life, for those involved with this case study, enhanced and changed for the better. Here, there is renewed hope for professional employment and continued opportunities for teachers to contribute to the universal education information space.

Today, this program is just beginning to receive wide recognition by teachers and the pedagogical community alike. That said, we are confident that this program presents great potential for professional success among the new teachers of Uzbekistan!

Source: UNESCO Tashkent

Further information:

- HOW and WHAT to study in 21st Century?

Related links:

- UNESCO Tashkent
- Training workshop on new pedagogy and ICT in Samarkand, Uzbekistan
- New electronic device brings history to life
- UNESCO Forum on enhancing capacity in ICT in Tashkent

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
Using ICT for an educational ecosystem and not only as subject matter

A new infoDev paper shows that more emphasis is usually placed on teaching ICT as a curriculum subject than on using it as an instructional aide.

The effective use of ICT as a tool for education relies on the coordination of various governmental, financial, educational, and community-based groups and policies. The planning process must include those at all levels, from the micro-level of the classroom to the macro-level of national policies on infrastructure, connectivity, and communication. One of the key learnings of this essay is that more emphasis needs to be placed on using ICT for instruction, as opposed to teaching about ICT as part of a curriculum.

Education is a key element in social and economic prosperity. This essay studies existing policies in the focus countries of South Asia, both in the education and the ICT sectors, focussing on the enabling features and the gaps with respect to content development, curriculum design, infrastructure and capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, as well as use of ICTs in education management.

Policy Coherence in the Application of ICTs for Education, an infoDev commissioned paper by Price Waterhouse Coopers India, emphasizes the necessity of locally developed ICT for education policies that are based on pedagogical practices and use ICTs as a tool to meet learning objectives. The lack of infrastructure in many South Asian countries requires a range of products be produced to meet the needs of all.

The fifth and final essay to be released, Policy Coherence in the Application of ICTs for Education accompanies the Survey of ICTs for Education in India & South Asia and focuses on the trends and dominant features of the use of ICTs for school education as profiled in different initiatives captured in various country reports.

This infoDev / PWC India report examines the policy structure in several South Asian countries and identifies measures that need to be taken to ensure the effectiveness of a given policy, such as:

- provide a detailed implementation plan
- ensure financial allocation
- increase institutional capacity and political and administrative will
- heighten community demand for ICT

Further information:

- Using ICT for an educational ecosystem and not only as subject matter
To spread the light of IT
Some 500 teachers across Bhutan will spend about 10 days of their approaching winter
vacation acquainting themselves with some aspects of computer applications.

As one of the steps to digitalise Bhutan that “clicked off” in April 2010, this first batch of 500
teachers will be trained in information and communication technology skills at the seven
teacher training centres that opened recently.

The centres are at the colleges of education in Paro, Samtse, Damphu, Zhemgang, Mongar
and Ranjung higher secondary and Samdrupjongkhar middle secondary schools.

“It’s to empower teachers with ICT skills, which could be used as a teaching tool,” Chiphen
Rigphel project director Tandi Wangchuk said. “The training would teach teachers to use
computers for correspondence, research, lesson planning and record keeping.”

A survey of some 4,000 teachers revealed that about 70 percent of them had no or very little
computer experience, and the remaining 30 percent had some computer usage proficiency.
ITU estimates two billion people online by end 2010

ITU’s latest statistics reveal that the number of Internet users worldwide doubled in the past five years and will surpass the two billion mark in 2010. The number of people having access to the Internet at home has increased from 1.4 billion in 2009 to almost 1.6 billion in 2010.

162 million of the 226 million new Internet users in 2010 will be from developing countries, where Internet users grow at a higher rate. By the end of 2010, 71% of the population in developed countries will be online compared to 21% of the population in developing countries. While in developed countries 65% of people have access to the Internet at home, this is the case for only 13.5% of people in developing countries where Internet access in
schools, at work and public locations is critical. Regional differences are significant: 65% of Europeans are on the Internet, compared to only 9.6% of Africans.

With the rapidly increasing high-bandwidth content and applications on the Internet, there is a growing demand for higher-speed broadband connections.

While high-speed Internet is still out of reach for many people in low-income countries, mobile telephony is becoming ubiquitous, with access to mobile networks now available to over 90% of the global population. ITU’s new data indicate that among the estimated 5.3 billion mobile subscriptions by the end of 2010, 3.8 billion will be in the developing world.

Further information:

- ITU estimates two billion people online by end 2010

Related links:

- Advances in mobile services and broadband are transforming Asia-Pacific connectivity
- UN chief spotlights broadband’s potential to accelerate development
- UN Millennium Development Goals
- Mobiles and internet improve the livelihoods of the poorest
- UN rolls out action plan to expand global broadband access
- Senior UN, private sector officials define vision for globally connected society
- UN ICT Hub publishes ICTD Briefing Note Series
- UN urges improved access to information technology in hospitals, schools
- Technology and innovation can help expand education for all
- ASEAN’s future ICT leaders awarded scholarships to explore the role of ICT in achieving the Millennium Development Goals

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
**Education 2011-2021 global challenges and perspectives of blended and distance learning summit**

The Distance Education Hub (DE Hub) and the Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia (ODLAA) will host the Education 2011-2021 Summit from 15-18 February 2011 in Sydney, Australia. The summit has a focus on the three themes that underpin the DEHub and ODLAA objectives:

- Theme 1: Research and Development;
- Theme 2: Community and Open Learning; and
- Theme 3: Learning and Teaching.

Keynote speakers presenting at the summit include:

- Diana Laurillard, Chair of Learning with Digital Technologies in the Faculty of Culture and Pedagogy with the London Knowledge Lab, UK.
- Mohamed Ally, Director of the Centre for Distance Education and Professor in Distance Education, Athabasca University, Canada
- Sugata Mitra, Professor of Educational Technology at the School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences at Newcastle University, UK.
- Gráinne Conole, Professor of E-Learning in the Institute of Educational Technology, Open University, UK.
- David Wiley, Associate Professor of Instructional Psychology and Technology, Brigham Young University, USA
- Michael Crock
- Yoni Ryan
- Colin Latchem
- Bruce King

The summit is directed at colleagues involved in research, teaching, corporate and community oriented blended and distance education.

Visit the website of the Conference for more information:


**Programmes & Projects**

**Media Literacy – “Common Sense Media” a great online source**

Have you been wondering if the latest Fockers movie is something your youngster should see?

Thinking about a Wii or Kinect Box so as to get your child out from behind the computer and up and moving?

Or have you been wondering just what steps you should be taking to ensure your child is safe online?
Better yet, have you wondered why Doritos, Oreo’s and M&Ms have such significant levels of brand equity among 8-12-year-olds?

**Digital Generation**

We cannot kid ourselves. When it comes to digital media, our children are hooked. Today, our children spend more time interacting with digital media than they do with their own families. They also spend more time daily with digital media than they spend in school.

But thankfully, parents as well as educators have an excellent resource to assess all things digital: Common Sense Media.

Under the leadership of CEO and founder James Steyer, Common Sense Media seeks to provide trustworthy information that can help families make educated decisions regarding the media their children will consume.

First and foremost, Common Sense Media recognizes that our children are smitten by all the digital opportunities being provided today. Therefore, the organization’s core beliefs set aside any notion of censorship and replace it with sound advice that allows for effective decision-making.

Among their ten belief statements, two in particular make clear the philosophical stance from which the organization operates:

- **We believe in teaching our kids to be savvy, respectful and responsible media interpreters, creators, and communicators. We can’t cover their eyes but we can teach them to see.**

- **We believe that the price for free and open media is a bit of extra homework for families. Parents need to know about the media their kids use and need to teach responsible, ethical behavior as well as manage overall media use.**

**Family Resources**

On the web site families will find links to exemplars: Best Movies, Best Video Games, Best Apps, Best Websites, Best TV, Best Books, and Best Music. In addition to those best lists, the site offers parents interested in a particular movie, game, web site, book, or television that did not make the best lists hundreds of additional reviews on the site.

As but one example as to the insight available, video game reviews feature a 1-5 rating system on each of the following basic categories: ease of play, educational value, online interaction and role models. Furthermore, parents will find a second set of basic assessments on items that frequently cause concern: messages provided, level of violence, sex, language, consumerism and drinking, drugs, & smoking.

In addition, parents will find Common Sense Media’s suggested age for which the game is appropriate and one of three overall basic ratings: on, iffy, or off. But also included on the site is feedback from users, parents, educators, and of course, kids.

For parents wanting to promote a more active lifestyle, the site offers a number of links to games that help everyone in the family stay active. Recommendations are set forth for the
new hands-free active gaming with Microsoft’s Kinect as well as Best PlayStation Move Games, Best Wii Games, and Best Wii Balance Board Games.

A multitude of other resources are available and grouped by grade level, topic, and type of digital media. Once registered parents can participate in community based discussions regarding a topic or question of their own concern.

**Educational Resources**
In addition to helping provide parents insight about specific digital products, the site offers a number of educational related links. The idea is to help provide resources for both parents and educators around the issue of new media.

Thus parents will find a number of instructional videos on such topics as *Tuning Out Junk Food Ads*, *Setting TV Time Limits*, *Talking About Advertising*, *Cartoon Violence*, *Setting Internet Filters*, *All About Avatars*, *Staying Safe Online*, *Checking Browser History* and *The Truth About “Sexting.”* Links to additional resources for educators can be found on the site including grade level appropriate learning materials to help provide youngsters digital lessons in Safety and Security, Digital Citizenship and Research and Info Literacy.

If there is a question to be had regarding media and children, *Common Sense Media* addresses it or provides visitors a forum space to seek an answer.

*Source: Open Education blog*

**Further information:**

- [Media Literacy – “Common Sense Media” a great online source](#)

**Related links:**

- [The dangers and opportunities of girls in cyberspace](#)
- [Safe - A digital certificate in social networking for primary schools](#)
- [ICT for Education in South Asia: Computer labs for kids are not enough](#)
- [The code of best practices in fair use for media literacy education](#)
- [Living and learning with new media: Summary of findings from the Digital Youth Project](#)

**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

Resources

**Capacity-building for ICT integration in education**

As governments in the region embark on large-scale adoption of ICTs in education, it is important to move away from technocentric planning and implementation approaches to models that focus on establishing sound policy and support strategies leading to capacity development and empowerment (Uimonen 2004).

For this to happen, policymakers themselves need to develop their capacity in holistic and systematic policy formulation and strategic planning for ICT integration. While they do not need to know the nuts and bolts of technology, policymakers need to understand how technologies and education systems interact. They need to have a good grasp not only of the potential benefits of technologies for education, but also of the conditions necessary for ICTs to be effective in educational contexts and the process of educational change.

A sound policy and holistic plan for ICT integration recognizes the critical role that teachers play in ensuring the appropriate, effective, and sustainable use of ICTs to provide quality education for all. Thus, such a policy and plan give priority to teacher professional development that empowers teachers not just to implement but also to *lead* educational innovations that will transform schools and ultimately, all of society.

Authors: Wai-Kong Ng, Fengchun Miao, and Molly Lee

**Read the whole paper:**

- [Capacity-building for ICT integration in education](#)

**Related links:**

- [What is reasonable to expect from information and communication technologies in education?](#)
- [Educating the educators: Capacity-building essential for successful ICT in Education](#)
- [The pedagogical enhancement of open education: An examination of problem-based learning](#)
- [Creating the next generation of educators](#)
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 discuss this topic

UNESCO launches first computer game for young people on HIV and AIDS

UNESCO is launching the first interactive multimedia tool on HIV and AIDS prevention for youth, available in English, French and Russian. The computer game Fast Car: Travelling Safely around the World aims to provide young people with accurate and reliable information about HIV prevention, while educating, entertaining and promoting healthy behaviour.

The target audience for the game is young people from 16 to 24 years or older. Teenagers often want to talk to their parents about HIV-related issues, but may find it difficult to do so. Children may worry about parents’ disapproval and have fears about the risk of becoming infected with HIV. Parents are often shy, lack accurate information about HIV and AIDS, or do not have sufficient skills to speak about prevention with their children, and teachers frequently assume that parents will talk with children at home.

Fast Car: Travelling Safely around the World is the game that provides information on existing preventive practices, treatment and care for HIV and AIDS. The player can race on circuits on five different continents and virtually visit some of the UNESCO World Heritage sites. It also presents images of sites and interesting facts about them as players race by.

There are two tracks for each continent - a Preliminary track and a Championship track. Every track has a set of check points. At the check point one can take part in a Mini-Quiz and possibly earn a time bonus. The mini-quiz asks the player a multiple-choice question related to HIV and AIDS prevention.

The importance of the game lies in providing young people with information materials on HIV and AIDS that can be widely distributed through communication channels in order to help them to gain an accurate understanding of these issues and preventive practices. UNESCO expects that this may change their behaviour.
The following local researchers and experts contributed content for the game, working together to ensure its scientific accuracy: Path Ukraine (Ukraine), the Institution of Social Development (Viet Nam) and Heidelberg University, Department of Virology (Germany). Lakshya Digital Pvt. Ltd. (India) helped UNESCO to develop the game concept and realize it technically.

UNESCO has begun the development of a second interactive multimedia tool/computer game on HIV and AIDS.

Further information:

- [UNESCO launches first computer game for young people on HIV and AIDS](#)

Related links:

- [HIV Prevention and Health Promotion - UNESCO Bangkok](#)
- [Wealth of resources on sexual health online](#)
- [HIV and AIDS online data hub launched](#)
- [Building knowledge about HIV and AIDS: An interactive course for educators](#)
- [Video games: Why kids play and what they learn](#)

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 discuss this topic](#)

At what age can a child start using a computer?
Let us consider at what age a child might be allowed to use a computer. Experts have suggested that children should be forbidden from using computers in an academic setting until the age of 9, due to adverse impacts of computer use on the mind.

Psychologists including Dr. Aric Sigman, confirm that premature introduction and the excessive use of technology have negative effects on children’s development since their cognitive abilities are being formed at this stage: “There is evidence to show that introducing information and communication technology (ICT) in the early years actually subverts the very skills that government ministers said they want children to develop, such as the ability to pay attention for sustained periods.”

In contrast, the counter debate supports ‘positive’ effects of new technologies on cognitive and social development for children, arguing that such technologies enable children with opportunities for educational development in globally digitized world.

The researchers conclude that computers should be allowed (in schools), for academic purposes beginning at the age of 9. They support that the added value of educational software used for the attainment of educational goals can no longer be doubted. However, the following precautions should be considered: practice computer education in moderation (the duration can be increased from less than an hour (for 6 year-olds) to two-three hours a day (for those around 14), apply educational software that has a real value for learning and is adapted to children’s/students’ psychological age, use the internet only after teachers have completed the necessary configurations to ensure children’s secure access to websites and finally educators must make sure that their child understands the computers role as a tool for communication, information, skill development and play.

Read the full article:

- [At what age can a child start using a computer?](#)

Related links:

- [ELearningeurope](#)
- [The end of techno-critique: The naked truth about 1:1 laptop initiatives and educational change](#)
- [Safe - A digital certificate in social networking for primary schools](#)
- [What happens when *all* children and teachers have their own laptops](#)
- [ICT for Education in South Asia: Computer labs for kids are not enough](#)
- [Child online safety in the developing world](#)
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 discuss this topic

Learn genetics

Protein shakes are one of the most common drinks to order in a fitness gym. But thinking about proteins as something only designed to let muscles grow faster, is a very limited approach. Furthermore, what do you know about RNA or Ribosomes? Doesn’t ring a bell? Well, then you should visit http://learn.genetics.utah.edu/

The website is hosted by the University of Utah and offers an opportunity for students, teachers and the general public to refresh their knowledge about genetics, bioscience and health topics.

The best way to start is by using the very convenient and easy to understand online tour through the basics. This animated slideshow provides the user with all the necessary basic information about DNA, Genes, Chromosomes, etc. Even the principle of Heredity is explained. If you want to deepen your knowledge there are sections about how DNA and Proteins are related, Heredity & Trait, the detailed inner life of Cells and many more.

The website offers a variety of activities such as building a DNA Molecule, funny ideas for board games like traits bingo or traits & tradition, a memory game. The cloning section clears up with some common myths about cloning and it is even possible to clone a mouse online. You can also find detailed answers to interesting questions like “Why do fireflies glow?” These interactive features make it easier for the user to get familiar with the academic names and purposes of our assistants of life.

The University of Utah did a great job in designing a website, which is innovative and interactive. Besides, it has the nice side effect that the user learns something about Genetic, without working himself through heavy unfriendly books.

Further information:
The Super Book of Web Tools for Educators

Teaching methods all over the world haven’t changed a lot during the last 30 years. But since there are new communication technologies available, teachers all over the world have to open up themselves for the modern times. Implementing a new technology in school lessons can be very difficult for the teachers. Even watching a TV-movie was quite a challenge for the educators since they have to choose the movie wisely. Does it fit with the content? Might some students be offended by the film?

Teachers who want to set up technology in their classrooms but are in need of a little help can now use the eBook “The Super Book of Web Tools for Educators” (http://ilearntechnology.com/?p=3422)
The eBook was designed by eleven well-known bloggers, teachers and school administrators who wanted to share their knowledge with teachers from all over the world and help them to get past the fear of making mistakes.

Not every technology is useful for every age level of the students. Therefore there are special chapters in the eBook with a recommended set of tools for Elementary School, Middle School and High School.

The modern ways of communication like Skype or Blogging are explained as well. In one section the topic of Blogging in Elementary School Classroom is introduced. The idea behind that is to give the pupils a platform where they can publish their own writings or start a discussion with other pupils. The feeling that somebody except their teacher is paying attention to their work can motivate those children a lot.

Skype can also be a very useful tool in modern education. This video conference program is giving teachers the opportunity to invite guest speakers from all over the world with just a few mouse clicks. Of course there are things to be considered but the “Super Book of Web Tools for Educators” gives you the ideal instruction to implement new technological tools in your classroom.

Read the eBook:

- [The Super Book of Web Tools for Educators](#)

Related links:

- [New UNESCO publication: ICT transforming education: A regional guide](#)
- [Technology to the rescue - Can gadgets in the classroom enhance learning?](#)
- [Top 50 education technology blogs](#)
- [The amazing web 2.0 projects book](#)

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 discuss this topic

Disclaimer

The authors are responsible for the choice and the presentation of the facts contained in this newsletter and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.

The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.