

Empowering Education

in Mali



Schoolchildren in Mali's remote far north are now getting access to a vast new world of information and learning opportunities, thanks to an ITU E-Strategy project to bring the power of high-speed Internet to the classroom.

Developed and delivered in partnership with Swisscom, the project is initially providing online access for 750 children at Haidara high school in Timbuktu.

A large desert community in one of the planet's most isolated regions, Timbuktu has one of the world's lowest teledensities. Through a major E-Strategy e-Learning initiative launched in June, ITU aims to help bridge this Digital Divide by exposing young people to the exciting possibilities of ICTs.

Project components include:

- Provision and installation of computer equipment and software
- Installation of fast Internet links
- Fellowship programmes to bring Haidara teachers to Switzerland for training in ICT use
- Development of online learning
- Establishment of an ongoing online relationship between a Swiss high school and Haidara, to promote cross-cultural exchange and friendship

Building Capacity through Youth

Just three months after the launch of the project, Haidara already had a computer lab in place providing full Internet access, offered free of charge by Swisscom.

ITU's E-Strategy project in Mali is part of a wider global project to develop local ICT skills and awareness through school programmes and the training of young people.

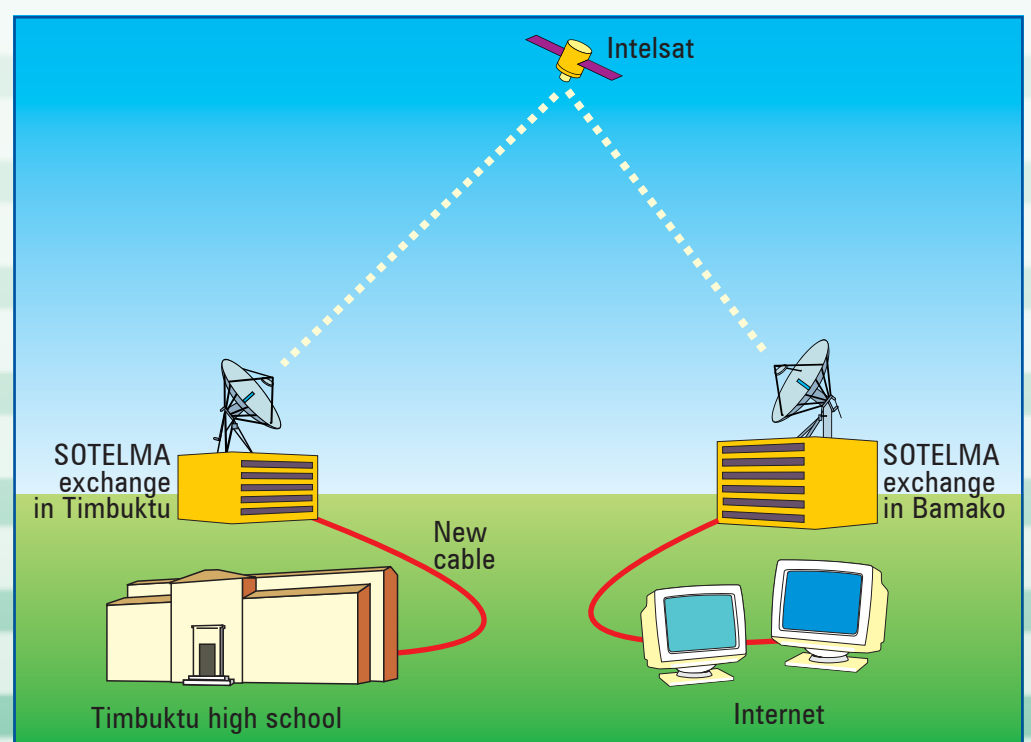
It also builds on earlier ITU efforts to improve ICT access in one of the world's poorest regions through establishment of the Timbuktu Multipurpose Community Telecentre in 1998.

The Power of Partnership

ITU's E-Strategy project emphasizes the value of partnership in improving access to ICTs and bringing real and rapid benefits to people's lives.

Mali's Haidara e-Learning project is an excellent example of a cooperative effort by multiple stakeholders, including ITU, the Mali government, the Haidara teaching staff and Swisscom, which launched its own Internet at School programme in 2000.

ITU's E-Strategy programme already enjoys fruitful partnerships with leading private sector organizations as well as other international organizations like the World Health Organization.



Timbuktu is 100 km from Bamako