Connect a School, Connect a Community Overview

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Agenda

- What is the Connect a School, Connect a Community initiative?
- Why Connect Schools?
- Best practices in using ICTs for persons with disabilities
- Best practices in using ICTs for women's empowerment
- Best practices in providing ICTs for indigenous persons

Connect a School, Connect a Community: ICT for All

To promote access to and use of ICTs by all people, including marginalized and vulnerable groups:

- **women and girls**
- **indigenous peoples**
- **persons with disabilities**
- **youth and children and**
- **communities in underserved areas**

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Why Connect Schools?

- Leverage existing infrastructure and community resources
- Use connected schools as a platform to teach ICT skills to children and youth
- Schools can incorporate ICTs into the regular curriculum
- Help our members meet the WSIS and MDG targets

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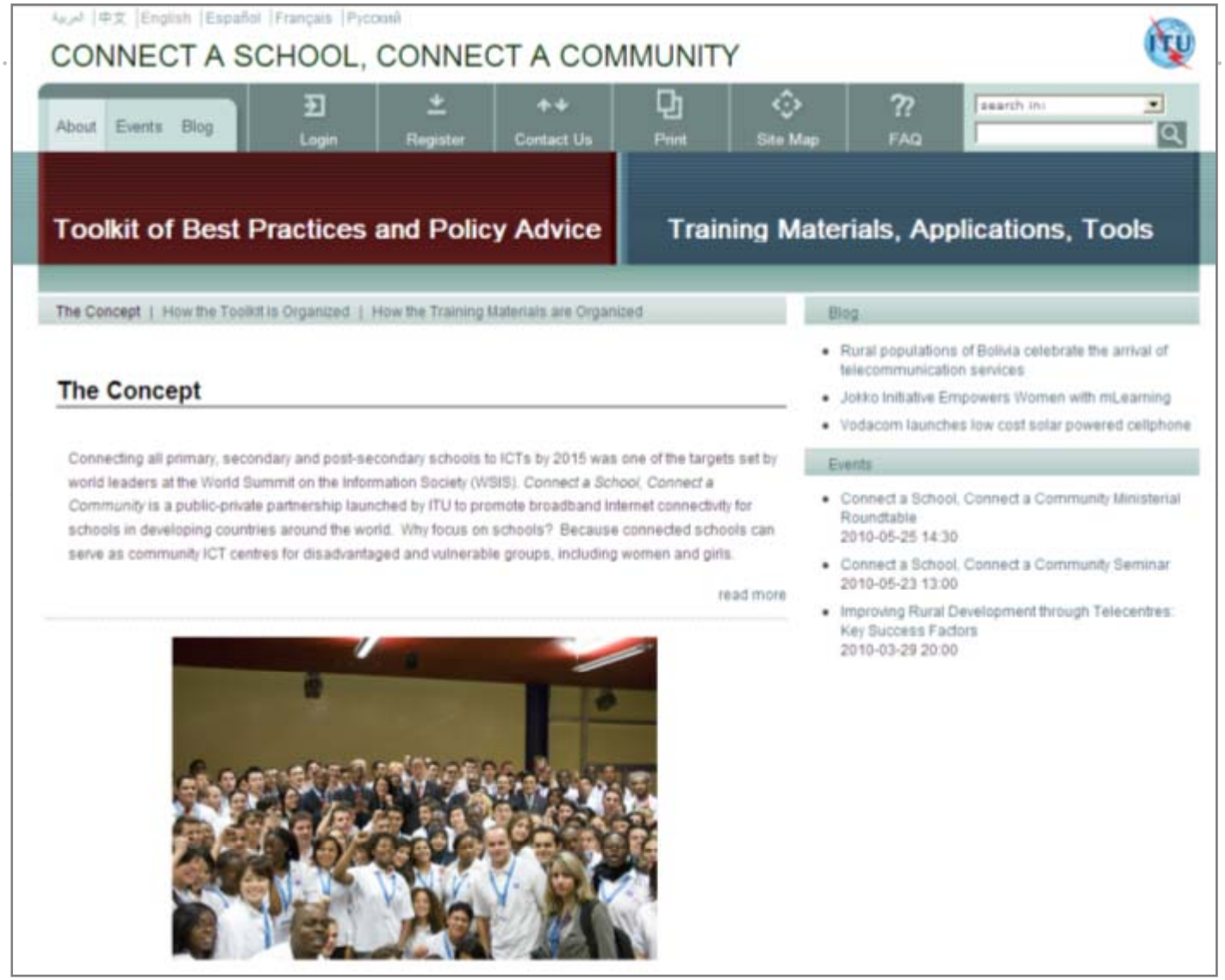
Why Connect Communities?

- Connected schools can be used as community ICT centres to meet the ICT needs of the local community in which they are located
  - Meet their accessibility needs, including for persons with disabilities
  - Provide basic ICT and language literacy training to women and indigenous peoples
  - Provide ICT-based life skills as well as vocational and educational training



www.connectaschool.org

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Toolkit of Best Practices and Policy Advice

Module-1-Policies-and-Regulation-to-Promote-School-Connectivity
download PDF version | download HTML version | executive summary | table of contents

Module-2-Disseminating-Low-Cost-Computing-Devices-in-Schools
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Module-3-Providing-ICTs-to-Indigenous-Peoples
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Module-4-Assistive-Technologies-for-Persons-with-Disabilities
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Module-5-Community-ICT-Centres-for-the-Social-and-Economic-Empowerment-of-Women
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National Connect a School Projects - Nicaragua

- Development of Model Schools
- National School Connectivity Plan

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Persons with Disabilities

ITU Country Projects in Promoting Accessible ICTs for Persons with Disabilities

- 2003- ITU and UNESCO in conjunction with local Adaptive Technology Centre for the Blind (ATCB) in Addis Abba:
  - Centre established
  - ITU and ATCB provided training equipment and software
  - UNESCO provided training and curriculum development materials
  - Cost: USD 70,000
  - Outputs:
    - Centre established
    - Blind students and government employees trained to use voice synthesisers, magnifying software
    - Courses provided for trainers an and students at 5 technical colleges
- Next steps: development by Faculty of Electrical Engineering at Addis Abba University of an Amharic text to speech synthesiser

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UNESCO

OUTLINE of Persons with Disabilities Module

Section 1 – Introduction
Section 2 – Current situation, challenges and opportunities
Section 3 – Assistive Technologies (ATs)
Section 4 – Developing and Implementing accessible ICT connected schools
Section 5 – Accessible Multipurpose Community Telecentres in Schools
Section 6 – Checklist for policy makers
Section 7 – International texts on Person with Disabilities
Section 8 – Case studies
Section 9 – Resources for teachers and policy makers

What can you do to promote accessible ICTs

- Ensure accessible ICTs and assistive technologies are available in the market (mobile phones, websites, etc) and promote their awareness among disabled users – a lot is already built in
  - regulate availability and awareness
  - industry codes
- Ensure captioning, video description and for digital TV
- Use universal service funds for projects to provide job training for persons with disabilities or education to children
- Procure only accessible ICTs
- Raise awareness about the CRPD and the capabilities of persons with disabilities
- Ensure access in times of emergencies

For all actions, include persons with disabilities in your work!

Why ICTs for education and job training

- Persons with disabilities face blatant exclusion worldwide
- The figures:
  - 10% of population worldwide (World Bank)
    - 690 million (2010) ---------- 915 million (2050)
  - One third of 75 million children out of school worldwide have disabilities– lowest of any cohort (UN)
  - 90% of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school (UNESCO) with 97% not having basic literacy skills – 1% for women with disabilities (UNESCO)
  - Poverty and disability closely linked – 20% of worlds poorest (World Bank)
- Reasons for exclusion:
  - Attitudinal
  - Physical
  - Pedagogical
  - Infrastructural

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Assistive Technologies: Not one size fits all

An arthritic hand trying to use a standard mouse

A single switch mounted on a wheelchair

Keyboard text-to-speech generating device

Speech generating device

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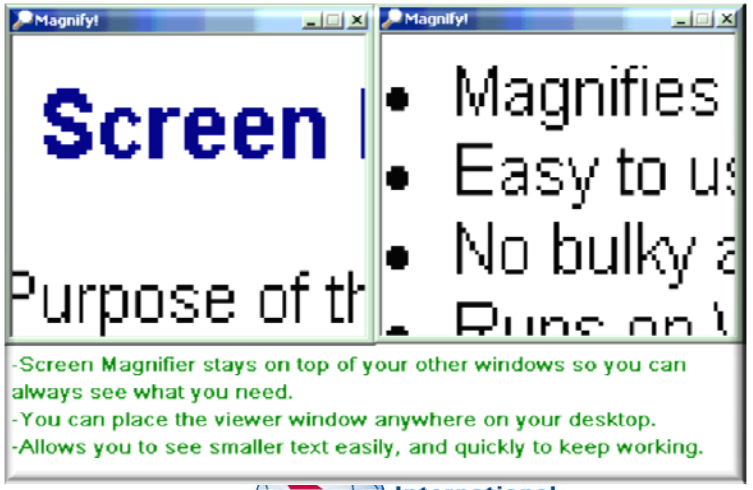
Screen Readers and Screen Magnifiers

- Screen reader – video clip

- Screen magnifier



Key policy areas for accessible ICTs in schools

- Buy-in from teachers and students
- **Infrastructure** – connectivity, accessible ICTs
- **Support for practice** – teachers and students – pedagogical practice
- **Needs assessment**
- **Training** - during initial training and on the job
- **Co-operation / research** – sustainable eco-system
- **Evaluation**

Some Solutions to promote accessible ICTs in schools

- **Develop National School Connectivity Plans to promote necessary Internet access and that include provision of accessible ICTs**
- **Regulators and policy makers ensure that accessible ICTs are available in the market and that customs duties and taxes remain low**
- Educators **Procure only Accessible ICTs** – create demand for accessible ICTs
- Equip schools according to need of students and develop an AT ecosystem
- **Fund Assistive Technologies through Universal Service Funds**
- Teacher and Student Training
- Conduct stakeholder consultations
- Conduct monitoring and evaluation
- Development of affordable screen readers in local languages
- **Use the Connect a School, Connect a Community toolkit to raise awareness and build capacity**

Using schools for skills and job training for Adults with Disabilities

- Accessible ICTs hold the potential to enable persons with disabilities to receive job skills that would otherwise be inaccessible to them
- Sufficient and appropriate training enables persons with disabilities to reach their own personal potential
- Toolkit Case studies on job skills training, certification and employment opportunities

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Women


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Gender Module Outline

- Chapter 1: Introduction
  - Gender related concepts and definitions
  - Why it's important to reach women and girls?
- Chapter 2: How can community ICT centres reach women? e.g. women-specific design elements
- Chapter 3: Meeting the learning needs of women, including use of ICT in literacy and life-long learning
- Chapter 4: ICTs supporting women's entrepreneurial and professional activities
- Chapter 5: Guidelines for ministries and regulators
- Chapter 6: International, regional and gender-specific policy frameworks
- Case Studies and Reference Documents

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Why reach women and girls?

- Too many have no access to
  - Education and literacy skills
  - Health and financial services
  - Land rights
  - Agricultural information
  - Decision-making
  - ICTs

What is Sustainability in Reaching Poor Women?

- The fundamental issue in reaching poor women is not one of profitability of models, but the creation of a set of technology-mediated services and products that enable women to engage in emerging opportunities
- Distinguish between economic sustainability, social sustainability and institutional sustainability

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Guidelines for Gender-inclusive design

- Participatory community involvement
- Partnership development and building community linkages
- Gender-disaggregated data and record keeping
- Community responsiveness of the centre must identify and cater to girls and women's activities, interests and information needs
- Develop content and training materials with and for women; Content drives traffic
- Make the community centre physically accessible to women and girls
- Gender-sensitive governance structures
- Funding: subsidies, donations/grants, tax incentives, pay-for-use fee

Guidelines for Regulators- Sector liberalization

- Is sector liberalization promoted, with the view of bringing in investment and bringing down end-user prices to make telecommunications and ICT more accessible to men and women?
- Is the national regulator directing private sector players to deliver on social and gender policy objectives such as universal access?
- In return for granting licenses, is the regulator compelling service providers to provide service to underserved areas where women predominate?

Guidelines for Regulators - Universal service obligations

- If regulators call for establishment of telecentres in underserved areas as part of license-holder universal service obligations, have the different needs of men and women in the concerned communities been considered?
- Does proposed service delivery to underserved areas reflect geographical gender distribution in the population?
- Is any priority for service, subsidies or special pricing given to disadvantaged and/or rural women such as single mothers, widows, or disabled women?

Guidelines for Regulators - Licensing

- Has consideration been given to reducing fees for telecommunications, Internet Service Provider (ISP), and mobile service licenses to promote improved affordability by women and the poor?
- Has consideration been given to allocating special licenses for rural operators or community ICT centre operators, especially those run by and for women?
- Do license awards contain conditions that promote gender analysis and mainstreaming for the particular company?

Indigenous Peoples

- Indigenous peoples and ICTS
  - Contribute to conservation of their cultural heritage
  - Address development needs
  - Ethnic expression and education
- Keys to success:
  - the promotion of indigenous content and the participation of indigenous peoples in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies and projects that directly affect them, including by creating permanent consultation and participation bodies

Next Steps for Connect a School, Connect a Community

- Capacity building through regional events on using connected schools as community ICT centres for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups
- Implementation of country projects
- New modules for the Toolkit – troubleshooting computers and networks
- Additional training materials for the Repository

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