Partnerships in ICT for Education
Activities in Africa

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Imfundo: Partnership for IT in Education
Outline

- Meanings of partnership
- Issues in implementing ICT for education activities in developing countries
- Requirements for good partnership practice
- Examples from Imfundo’s work
- Conclusions
Meanings of partnership

- Everyone ‘talks’ partnership, but few really practise it
- Often seen merely as ‘public-private partnerships’
  - governments getting something more cheaply and with less risk
- Donors often define ‘partnerships’ as being agreements with recipient (i.e. partner) governments
- Need for everyone involved to understand the kind of partnerships being advocated
2003 major study funded by 13 donors and four partner countries on partnerships in basic education

- “truly effective partnerships for basic education have not been achieved in many countries”
- Continuity, capacity, participation and relevance are key factors in contributing to more developed partnerships in basic education
  - context of budgetary support mechanisms
- But focus is exclusively on “partner countries” and concentrates on shift from projects to programmes
- Almost completely ignores private sector, civil society and academic institutions
Education-ICT partnerships in developing countries

- Fundamental poor country E-ICT needs
  - Resources
  - Human capacity
  - Knowledge and experience

- Misunderstandings of educational-ICT
  - To date, mostly education for ICT
  - Need for real understanding of ICT for education
    - The enormous potential of multimedia and virtual learning environments
  - Importance of being demand driven not supply led

- Comprehensive partnerships essential for success
Requirements of good practice

- Partnerships should be
  - Mutually beneficial
  - Mutually responsive
  - Based on shared understanding
  - Based on clear guidelines
  - Task focused
  - Time bound
  - Flexible
The essence of partnership

- Achieving what individuals cannot do alone
- Maximising potential of each party
- Creating mutually reinforcing benefits for all those involved
- Time must be invested in managing the partnership
- A partnership is a relationship
- Need to understand the interests of different kinds of partner
  - Focusing on ICT for education in Africa
Private sector interests

- In receiving
  - Visible support for development
  - Delivery on CSR objectives
  - Increased market understanding
  - Access to government officials
  - Potential future market share
  - Networking
  - Increased political stability

- In offering
  - Ability to deliver on the ground
  - Technical knowledge and expertise
  - Seconded staff
  - Hardware, software and infrastructure
  - Understanding of sustainability imperatives
  - Research and development
Civil society interests

- In receiving
  - Delivery on strategic objectives
  - Enhanced identity
  - Access to Governments
  - Enhanced knowledge through access to research
  - Staff development opportunities
  - Networking benefits

- In offering
  - Expertise in delivery of ICT for education activities
  - Involvement with local communities
  - Project management skills
  - Shared project delivery
  - Practical experience on the ground in developing countries
In receiving
- Practical delivery of activities
- Achievement of strategic objectives
- Approval rating from electorates
- Enhanced programme delivery
- Sustainability of activities after departure

In offering
- Financial support
  - Although increasingly through budgetary support
- Relationships with recipient governments
- Knowledge of global development agendas
- Networking potential
Recipient interests

- **In receiving**
  - Enhanced educational experiences
  - Efficient delivery of educational activities
  - Enhanced human capacity
  - Training in ICT for education

- **In offering**
  - Commitment to sustainability
  - Practical delivery of activities
  - Local language capacity
  - Understanding of local circumstances
The example of Imfundo

- Prime Ministerial initiative within DFID specifically to create partnerships to deliver ICT for education activities
- Five year programme 2001-2006
- 40 partners now supporting activities in eight African countries
- Immense challenges, but also real achievements
Imfundo’s partners
Examples of partnership in practice

- **Content**
  - CD ROM on malaria prevention and treatment
    - Government of Tanzania; Atticmedia; Teacher Training Agency; Mediae; Automatic TV
  - Webwise for Africa
    - BBC and local partners in Ghana, Kenya and Ethiopia

- **Research publications**
  - Satellite primer (with ATiT)

- **Workshops**
  - Special Educational Needs
    - Supported by VSO, Government of Ghana
Examples of partnership in practice

- Ghana
  - Support for Ghana Education Service
    - ICT strategy for teacher training, focusing on untrained teachers
    - Special Educational Needs strategy and implementation
- South Africa
  - Involving partners in Khanyisa ESP
    - Delivering EMIS outputs
    - Supporting Open Source software development
- Ethiopia
  - Working with FSCE in support of street children
Lesson learning: partnerships

- Immense potential
  - Expertise, experience, resources…
- Must reflect shared interests
  - Clear benefits framework
- Combining the international with the local
  - To help build capacity and sustainability
- People and corporations
  - Importance of trust
  - Ensuring partnerships last beyond the involvement of individuals
- Very time consuming
  - Easier simply to pay!
  - But this is less rewarding and less sustainable
Imfundo: partnerships that are helping to change African education

www.imfundo.org