

ICT4D Partnerships for Education: critical success factors and things not to do

Following short presentations by John Traxler (University of Wolverhampton), Simon Mulcahy (World Economic Forum) and Matthias Giersche (GTZ), participants at the session on ICT4D Partnerships in Education held at Online Educa Berlin on 30th November 2006 explored the key factors in ensuring the success of ICT4D partnerships for education, as well as those things which should not be done. These are listed below in summary form

Critical Success Factors

- Need to understand the languages we use
- Plan for when the funding ends
- Build on local resources
- Focus on contextualised content
 - But some caution needed
 - Need for quality and ownership
- Need for guidance/backup services
- Focus on needs of users
- Partnering external and local to deliver
- Ensure appropriate monitoring/evaluation
- Learn within the partnership
- Learn from previous examples (such as interactive radio)
- Must involve senior management within all stakeholders
- Ensure mutual added value
- Crucial to foster ownership
- It takes time to build partnerships and get to know each other
- Forget your competitiveness!
- Be honest and transparent
- Know capacities of the partners
 - But not easy with ICTs
- Know what you mean by success and deliver it
- Address the development approach - focus on the needs of the population
- Adapt what we do to people's needs
- Listen to different voices

Things not to do

- Rely on the experts
- Impose external help
- Start anything unless there is local ownership and demand
 - and top-level championing
- Get caught up in the trendiness of 'partnership'
- Try to do things too quickly
- Go into it just because of prestige
- Forget to create a project management office
- Reinvent the wheel
- Forget to monitor
- Overestimate the value of e-learning
- Forget to build in sustainability from the beginning
- Start unless you have community ownership
- Be too successful because you will challenge existing power structures
- Ignore the private sector - business models help ensure sustainability
- Parachute in external solutions
- Increase the digital divide
- Forget these points