

Newsletter



SchoolNetAfrica

SUMMARY:

MTANDAO ACTIVITIES

MTANDAO AWARD FROM MICROSOFT

SNA PROGRAMS AND WORKSHOPS

PARTNERSHIPS

MTANDAO AFRIKA 2007 in a glance

Over 3500 students and teachers receives ICT training in 16 African Countries

Within the framework of Mtandao Africa program and with the support of Microsoft, Unlimited Potential Program SNA conducted a 40 hour Basic ICT Skills Training in 16 African countries, the training over 3500 students, teachers and community



members benefited directly from the training while hundred others benefited indirectly through the replication of the training program. The Regional ICT training program is conducted locally by SNA partners and is managed regional by the MAF Program Manager, Mr. Amr Hamdy and his team.

SNA organizes the MAF 3rd Annual Youth Camp & Awards Ceremony



With the support and partnership with the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Egypt, Ministry of Education in Egypt and Microsoft, SNA organized an outstanding event to celebrate the event. The Ministers of MCIT and MoE, Ambassadors of 11 African countries, dignitaries and VIPs from Microsoft, UN agencies and civil society celebrated over 64 African Students and Teachers who

attended the celebration of the 3rd Annual Youth camp and awards ceremony.



Professor Babacar Fall, SNA President talking to African Ambassadors in Cairo

Partnerships

In order to establish a stronger and more sustainable presence in Africa, SNA works on expanding and strengthening its existing network of partners and local SchoolNets in Africa, in addition to developing new strategic partnerships to ensure the growth of activities and expansion of outreach to the local communities, especially in hard to

reach African countries and distant marginalized areas of Africa. Within this framework SNA has started an initiative to formalize its relation with its existing partners and expand its partnership with civil society, government and private sector. Within this framework cooperation MoU was signed with the ministries of education in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Madagascar, Niger, and Senegal. Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, RDC and The Gambia are under way.

Activities and Outreach extends to the Arab Region



Based on its expansion plans to address the needs of different regions, SchoolNet Africa launched the Arabic version of Mtandao Afrika program with the purpose of enabling the youth to develop web sites in Arabic. For more information visit the site (www.mtandao-afrika.org)

Mtandao Afrika, the way forward



MAF receives Microsoft Prize for the quality of the work done throughout Africa in ICT for Education, empowering African youth.

Building on the success of MAF over the past few years and in order to explore the possibilities of expanding its scope to more countries and to be accessible by more students and educators, SNA organized a round table discussion in Dakar, Senegal on 17 September 2007 with the participation of University of Nairobi, Kenya, SN Uganda, University of California, Microsoft, Mindset Network. The meeting discussed the main issues related to expansion and sustainability.

SNA workshops in Ivory coast: IDRC financed a workshop on Training in Resource Mobilization for Schoolnet Sénégal

Which allowed to share this best practice with Schoolnet Cote d'Ivoire.(July 2006)

In February 2007, a workshop in Resource Mobilization and institutional Development was held in CI which main issue was to allow Schoolnet Cote d'Ivoire to get insights and skills about Fundraising strategies. At that occasion a 5 years Institutional Development Plan has been established. This workshop was financed by GKP.



Speakers

Ms Eboue from Schoolnet CI attended a week workshop in Resource Mobilization to consolidate the previous training in Dakar supported by IDRC.



Mr. Aboubacar

Workshop participation



The Executive Director participated in 2 GKP meetings in Ethiopia, and in the ICT Best Practices in Burkina where she chaired the last day workshop of the GKP pre- meeting and attended the donors`roundtable to plead for Schoolnet Africa.



Mtandao Afrika Youth Camp

In March 2007, 64 students from countries all across the African continent came together in Cairo, Egypt for the third Mtandao Afrika youth camp. Mtandao Afrika is the Kiswahili for connecting Africa.

Mtandao Afrika allows teams of learners from the African continent to create and design websites which reflect their experiences and their areas of interest; it allows learners to demonstrate their creativity while acquiring project management and communication skills. Last years projects ranged from aspects of indigenous culture to the use of child soldiers in conflict areas. The culmination of these projects is a week long camp where finalists present their projects to be judged by a panel of international educational specialists,



as well as attend several training programs, technical as well as managerial and soft skills. The camp is the highlight for most participants and for some it is their first opportunity to travel outside of their native countries. One such student, Moustafa Diagne, shared his experience with us, "It was incredible to see the pyramids that we have learned about since we were little." Moustafa is one of the four Senegalese students whose web site on the role of art in various African cultures won him recognition at the conference in Cairo. For him and others like him, getting to the Mtandao camp was not easy.

The process begins with gathering a team of four people to fulfil four positions, that of coach, web developer, graphic designer, and content researcher. The next step is choosing and researching a topic.

Then there is the lengthy process of putting the info together, translating into several languages, and formatting the site and putting it onto a webpage. This process can take a long time even with regular access to a computer, a luxury that many do not have.

Moustafa spoke of the difficulties encountered by his team. They were unable to access the school computers after hours to work on the project, so they had to rely on the good will of one of their professors. Lack of ready access to ICT requires that many teams be highly organized so they can most efficiently use their time on a computer. These difficulties were so great that of the multiple Senegalese teams that initially entered the competition, only Mustapha's was able to complete their project.

Many students across Africa receive training in information and communication technology; however, few are able to put this knowledge to good use. The Mtandao

project, though demanding in its requirements, allows students to demonstrate their creative as well as practical knowledge through the creation of an educational website.

As Moustafa Diagne said, “We’ve never had the opportunity to apply our skills, we really were fortunate”. When asked if he would repeat the process he was enthusiastic in his response though he hopes to use more up to date ICT as well as the resources now available to his team through newly established SchoolNet Africa connections.

SNA programs

Capacity building and resource mobilization

SNA assumes a new regional mandate to assist and support local SchoolNet organizations in implementing local programs, from that respect one of the most important SNA programs is capacity building and resource mobilization to empower African schoolnets.

Mtandao Afrika program

Launched in 2002, MAF is an educational program utilizing the internet as a tool to enhance the skills and capacities of the African youth to become contributors in the global economy.

1 million PC campaign

Considering the constraints and limitations facing the African youth especially with regards to access to computing resources and the internet, SNA has launched a campaign to acquire 1 million donated computers to be distributed in African schools. Schoolnet Namibia organized a workshop from October 8 to 10, 2007 in Namibia. The theme was: “**1 Million PCs for the school children in Africa – the next steps**”.

According to the organizers:

“The specific objectives of this engagement include:

- Inventory of, and relationship management of SchoolNet organizations, local and foreign NGOs, local and foreign donors, industry players and government;
- Project management and implementation planning addressing complexity (degree of transformation, social and technical implications), control (staffing, organization, management & control and resources) and audit trails;
- ICT sourcing-transportation-refurbishment-recycling,
- Assessing total cost of ownership of deployment and sustainability
- Funding opportunities”

The executive Director and the Deputy were invited to attend but didn’t because of visa problems.

Networking and partnerships

Establishing a network of organizations from the civil society, private sector and government that collaborate to institutionalize the use of computer and the internet in African schools.

African Teachers Network (ATN)

fosters collaboration among African teachers and empowers African teachers to use ICTs as an effective learning tool.

Research

Building knowledge on the African experiences on school networking and promotes learning to improve and support SchoolNet practice.

Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP) :partner of Schoolnet Africa

The GK3 conference which was celebrating at the same time its 10th anniversary was an occasion to meet sponsors, to exchange and share experiences, to learn new and very interesting practices. It took place in Kuala Lumpur from December 10th to 13th 2007.

It was at the same time an occasion for Networking, fundraising and finding partners. The Executive Director and the Deputy Executive participated as panelists to share the work which is being done with Mtandao Afrika. Another Lady specialized in Gender problems and Resource Mobilization participated too. She was sponsored by EED. She is sent by that organization to help SNA,



Latest news: the site of SNA has been transferred and is active! We need all your news for updating the site.