

The e-Knowledge Public Domain Project Eastern Visayas and Quezon City Pilot Sites

Project Concept

I. Overview

In many countries of the world, it had been shown that government and industry have made considerable strides in their development efforts through judicious application of information and communication technology (ICT). Technological innovations have made it possible for rural and urban communities to have access to the digital world at affordable costs.

The potential of the new information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the development of a knowledge society and the application of these technologies to provide connectivity to marginalized sectors has been recognized. This is best captured in portions of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) vision statement that reads in part:

“(To) build a people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life (A-1,WSIS 2003 Geneva Declaration of Principles).”

But harnessing the potentials of ICT in achieving development goals goes beyond access to hardware technology (including interconnectivity and interoperability). Equally, if not more, important is providing adequate and appropriate content. We broadly define software to include philosophy, messages or content, systems and procedures, AND languages, among others. In this proposed activity, we shall focus on content or messages.

The WSIS 2003 Declaration of Principles also states that **“ICT should be regarded as tools and not as an end in themselves (A-9).”**

The recently concluded WSIS 2005 in Tunis reaffirmed the importance of content planning and development and identified priority content areas in the following statement:

“ICT applications and content aimed at the integration of ICTs into the implementation of poverty eradication strategies and in sector programmes, particularly in health, education, agriculture and the environment.”

An example of an ICT project that needs content dimension is the **Community e-Centers Program (CeC)** of the Commission on Information and Communication Technology (CICT). The CECs are envisioned to be “retail outlets” that provide the general public with affordable access to a variety of services enabled by computers and communications technology (Diaz de Rivera, T.,2006).

As of today, there are over 2000 CeCs nationwide. The goal is that by 2010, all municipalities nationwide will have at least one CeC. Admittedly, it is in the area of content (information) provision that CeC services need to be maximized.

The e-Knowledge Public Domain Project

The **e-Knowledge Public Domain Project** was conceptualized to address the development information needs of marginalized sectors using CeCs as access or connection points. In the process, the Project also addresses the content dimension of an otherwise solely infrastructure project.

The e-Knowledge Project is a collaborative initiative of the CICT with its partners – UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines, Intel Microelectronics (Philippines) and the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication (AIJC). In March 2006, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by these partner agencies committing to pursue collaborative activities promoting the use of public domain information for human development.

The project seeks to use selected CeCs as channels for accessing public domain information in priority development areas such as education, health, agriculture, small and medium business, etc. Much of this information need to be digitized and “re-packaged” to meet content standards, i.e., *“making the learning experience appealing and engaging, rewarding, easy to follow, understandable, and fun to participate in.”*

The project is part of the broader ASEAN e-Knowledge Public Domain Project conceptualized by the same partners mentioned earlier. A comprehensive project proposal has been prepared by a Technical Working Group (TWG) with the AIJC as initial technical secretariat. The proposal covers five ASEAN countries with the Philippines as pilot country. The other countries invited to participate are Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. To facilitate exchange of content

(leading to economies of scale), participating countries are encouraged to focus on five areas: basic education, health, agriculture, small and medium business enterprises, and environment.

The ASEAN Proposal has been reviewed by the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris which is committed to source funds from various multilateral and bilateral agencies. Each participating ASEAN country is expected to mobilize local resources from government and industry to complement UNESCO-generated resources.

The Eastern Visayas and Payatas Pilot Project

To jump-start project implementation in the Philippines, the e-Knowledge Public Domain Project shall be pilot tested in Eastern Visayas and Payatas, Quezon City. The pilot project will focus on health messages particularly those concerning: (a) public health, and (b) emergency and disaster management. Many of the existing ICT-based projects are on basic education, agriculture and livelihood. The goal is to use CeCs as interactive venues for health information and education.

A CeC is already existing in Payatas, while appropriate infrastructure facilities are to be set up at the Department of Health Eastern Visayas Regional Office in Tacloban City as part of UNESCO's US\$50,000 Emergency Assistance Fund that will support DOH-Region VIII proposed e-communication project.

Each CeC will have a Learning Facilitator who will work closely with the CeC Manager. The facilitator will organize the health lessons available online and will ensure their availability and accessibility to health workers. The facilitator will train the health workers on the use of the facilities. He/she may facilitate learning discussions using the digitized materials as main learning resource. Meanwhile, community members, especially mothers, also will be encouraged to use the CeC for health information and education.

II. Objectives

Overall Objectives

To set up Community e-Centers as access points for public domain health information in Payatas, Quezon City and Eastern Visayas.

To design a framework for conceptualizing, designing, developing, distributing and utilizing public health messages integrated in ICT platforms

Specific Objectives

To facilitate access by community health workers and community members to public health messages as inputs to improved quality of life of individuals and society.

To provide a venue and mechanism for continuing education of community health workers particularly on public health concerns including emergency and disaster management.

To provide participatory learning experiences in (digitized) content development.

III. Project Users and Beneficiaries

Primary Users

Primary users are the community health workers who are expected to access PDI-based health messages from the connecting or access points - community e-centers and DOH regional office. These health workers include municipal and barangay health workers.

Primary users also include local government officials who are already using the e-centers for governance and therefore may find the Project's technologies and modules appropriate in enhancing their delivery of social services.

End-Beneficiaries

Another group of users include regular clientele of the community health workers. They are the end-users of the packaged public domain information available in the community. In some cases, these end-beneficiaries may have direct access to the connection points. Thus, there may be a need to train them in IT literacy as well.

End-beneficiaries or users include parents (especially mothers), elementary and secondary school students, neo-literates, farmers and fisherfolk, women and children, etc.

IV. Project Components

1. Strategic Planning and Research

Strategic planning and research activities will be undertaken to design the e-Knowledge Public Domain Management Model/System focusing on (public) health information and education.

The initial planning activity is the Workshop on Content Development for ICT-based Development Programs and Projects scheduled on July 2006. The forum aims to come up with a framework for conceptualizing and developing health messages for integration in various ICT platforms as well as a framework in identifying priority health information messages. The workshop is supported by Intel Microelectronics.

Research activities are integrated in all major components of the project, i.e., from systems design to Monitoring and Evaluation. In content development, a key research area is information needs analysis. Prior to content development, an inventory of existing and accessible development messages in various formats will be undertaken. Meanwhile, a training needs analysis shall be conducted prior to the design of a comprehensive training program for various project actors.

2. Infrastructure Development (Identification of Access Points)

In the case of Payatas, the existing CeC shall be the access point. The project shall conduct an inventory of available equipment and facilities to determine if there is a need for facilities upgrading. For Southern Leyte, a new CeC may have to be set up as the existing CeC is located in xx which is far from the DOH regional office where the UNESCO equipment grant will be located.

3. Capability Building (Training)

Training courses are for all project actors and stakeholders including planners, project managers, implementers, community leaders, e-center managers, and even end-users. The training courses shall be conducted at the project headquarters and in project sites. This component will include related services such as development of training handbooks, documentation, and monitoring and evaluation, among others.

4. Content Development

A critical project component is that of content development which starts with information needs assessment and inventory of existing knowledge banks/data banks on health, inventory of available/accessible content, e.g., learning modules that are available for the utilization of e-centers, available information, Internet, CDs and other materials that can be repackaged.

Content development includes production of “original” learning materials or modules and adaptation of existing/accessible ones. The messages of these materials are essentially covered by public domain.

5. Linkages and Networking

Linkages and networking are needed for sourcing additional content materials, generating additional resources (funds), mobilizing experts, etc. Linkage and/or network institutions include other relevant government agencies; local government units (various levels); private (business) companies; and civil society organizations (especially those engaged in content development and distribution/exchange).

6. Process Documentation, Monitoring and Evaluation

Documentation will facilitate institutionalization of learnings and institutional memory which are useful in evaluation and scaling up of the project. Monitoring and evaluation will provide measures of project efficiency, effectiveness and impact. Standard ProcDoc, M&E methodologies and tools will be developed.

7. Institutionalization and Sustainability

Appropriate structures and mechanisms to ensure institutionalization and sustainability will be included in a mainstreaming strategy. These structures and mechanisms may include use of community organizations, participation of local government units, linkage with existing related programs and projects, e.g., Telemedicine/Tele-health.

V. Organization and Management

The pilot projects shall be a collaborative undertaking among the MOU signatories/partners with the local government unit of Quezon City and DOH Region VIII. Specifically, the areas of responsibility of the collaborating organizations are as follows:

Commission on Information and Communication Technology

- Assist in the design of the e-Knowledge Public Domain Project
- Provide technical advice on infrastructure requirements and software development
- Ensure access to selected CeCs as project sites
- Participate in content development process
- Facilitate linkage with related international and local initiatives
- Participate in resource mobilization for operations and scaling-up activities

UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines

- Assist in the design of the e-Knowledge Public Domain Project
- Provide advice on content development
- Assist in accessing relevant software and content
- Facilitate linkage with related international and local initiatives
- Participate in resource mobilization for operations and scaling-up activities

Intel Microelectronics (Philippines)

- Assist in the design of the e-Knowledge Public Domain Project
- Provide technical advice on infrastructure requirements and software development
- Provide access to Intel learning platforms (software)
- Participate in resource mobilization for operations and scaling-up activities

Quezon City Local Government

- Ensure use of Payatas CeC as pilot site
- Provide counterpart support for MOOE
- Mobilize support and participation of local officials and employees
- Participate in content development process (especially information needs assessment)
- Facilitate linkage with related international and local initiatives
- Participate in resource mobilization for operations and scaling-up activities

Department of Health (National and Region VIII offices)

- Set up access point in the regional office
- Provide counterpart support for MOOE
- Mobilize support and participation of national and regional officials and employees
- Participate in content development process
- Facilitate linkage with related international and local initiatives
- Participate in resource mobilization for operations and scaling-up activities

Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication

- Serve as project technical and administrative secretariat
- Coordinate research and training activities
- Document lessons and experiences
- Participate in content development process