WHAT IS CONNECT TO LEARN?

Connect To Learn is a public-private partnership that involves the use of ICT solutions to promote universal access to a quality secondary education in developing countries, with an emphasis on schooling for girls. Ericsson is contributing by providing technical expertise and solutions in this partnership with the non-governmental organization Millennium Promise and the Earth Institute at Columbia University in the US.

Connect To Learn goals are being achieved by:

• improving the quality of education and connecting school children globally through the power of ICT
• increasing access to secondary schooling, especially for girls, through scholarships
• making use of private/public partnerships to advocate for policies that support universal secondary education.

Ericsson’s view is that broadband and other ICT solutions combine as a transformative force in facing key development challenges and achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Ericsson is developing new business models for ICT-enabled educational services. Ericsson’s standpoint is that the educational opportunities afforded by modern broadband technology should be inclusive.

There are considerable challenges in introducing modern broadband technology to schools in developing countries, among them: logistical difficulties of bringing connectivity to rural areas; access to electricity; security; low levels of IT knowledge among teachers; and the lack of a strong business model to ensure efforts are sustainable. Connect To Learn is helping to meet many of these challenges by demonstrating the business opportunities to operators and convincing governments to include ICT in national education policies and budgets.

To address these challenges, Ericsson is deploying a cloud-based ICT solution in schools that lowers both initial costs and total cost of ownership for schools, and significantly reduces the complexity of technology solutions for teachers and students alike. By using cloud technology, it aims to remove ICT support tasks from teachers and provides them with technology that is simpler to manage, so they can focus on improving the quality of education. The solution is provided as a service, and is designed for users with little or no IT competence. Improved access, energy efficiency and reduced costs are made possible because users do not have to worry about virus protection, software updates, content-control capabilities for safe internet browsing, application installation or maintenance – all tasks that are managed in the cloud. The solution also promotes the role of the network operator as a provider of both bandwidth and applications for educational purposes.
Technology improves educational opportunities by enabling personalized study, while enhancing the potential for learning through community-based education and access to educational resources, even in remote rural schools.

As of June 2014, over 40,000 students have received access to quality educational resources enabled by the cloud-based ICT solution deployed in their schools. These students attend secondary schools in Millennium Villages in Ethiopia, Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Senegal, Malawi and Rwanda. Connect To Learn has also been deployed in schools in Ghana, Cape Verde, Djibouti, India, China, Buthan, Chile and Brazil. Ericsson has also established a baseline from which to measure the socioeconomic impact of this initiative over the coming years, based on the academic results of students who graduate from these schools.

Ericsson and the Earth Institute shared the results of a collaborative, year-long research study of four Connect to Learn schools in Uganda and Kenya to understand the challenges faced by rural, marginalized communities, and develop potential models for measuring the impact of ICT on education.

The ICT in Education report highlighted a number of challenges and benefits as well as recommendations for implementing ICT into schools.

The initiative has already made an impact on the lives of hundreds of young people, mainly girls in the secondary schools in the Millennium Villages in Ghana and Tanzania. They are the first students to start the comprehensive four-year scholarship program that has been developed over the past year by experts at the Earth Institute and Millennium Promise. The first wave of students graduated in 2013. It includes a rigorous selection process requiring the explicit buy-in of the students themselves, their families, the school and the local education authorities.

Hear from one of the first graduates of the Connect To Learn program in Ghana.

PHOTOS
NOTES TO EDITORS


The Earth Institute: www.earth.columbia.edu

Millennium Promise: www.millenniumvillages.org/millenniumpromise

Millennium Development Goals: www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview.html

Download high-resolution photos and broadcast-quality video at www.ericsson.com/press

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Ericsson is the driving force behind the Networked Society – a world leader in communications technology and services. Our long-term relationships with every major telecom operator in the world allow people, businesses and societies to fulfill their potential and create a more sustainable future.

Our services, software and infrastructure – especially in mobility, broadband and the cloud – are enabling the telecom industry and other sectors to do better business, increase efficiency, improve the user experience and capture new opportunities.

With more than 110,000 professionals and customers in 180 countries, we combine global scale with technology and services leadership. We support networks that connect more than 2.5 billion subscribers. Forty percent of the world’s mobile traffic is carried over Ericsson networks. And our investments in research and development ensure that our solutions – and our customers – stay in front.

Founded in 1876, Ericsson has its headquarters in Stockholm, Sweden. Net sales in 2013 were SEK 227.4 billion (USD 34.9 billion). Ericsson is listed on NASDAQ OMX stock exchange in Stockholm and the NASDAQ in New York.

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