

Cisco CSR Initiatives and Community Outreach

Cisco has developed strategic collaborations, joined in and partnered with governments, their agencies and in-country organizations to bring networking skills and training to the underserved and disadvantaged as part of the company's Corporate Social Responsibility and Community 'outreach' programme. Often these projects are rolled out in conjunction with NGOs such as the United Nations Development Program, the UN Fund for Women, UNIFEM, International Telecommunications Union, UN Volunteers, USAID, the Cisco Learning Institute and others.

The Objectives of such programmes are to:

- Improve disadvantaged individuals' marketability in the IT and related industries by imparting technical and life skills, and relevant practical experience.
- Fill existing and future IT skills gaps.
- Benefit the local and national economy.
- Be of benefit to disadvantaged communities, regardless of location.

The demand for a highly trained, technically savvy workforce continues to grow and much of the available technology training often trails behind the demand for the latest technical skills and, or is unavailable in many areas of the world. Without an educational framework that can train a qualified workforce, communities cannot benefit from local IT industry or obtain skills to attract employment.

Some examples of projects in East Africa include:

KENYA

- **Kibera Project** - A community-based project is underway to train highly disadvantaged students in Africa's second largest slum, which lacks even basic amenities such as sanitation. The Networking Academy Program has partnered with Belgian PC donations charity, Close the Gap, to ensure that the project is expedited.
- **Mukuru skills training centre** - The skills training centre is a multi-stakeholder partnership initiative (British Airways, Microsoft Education, Colemar (Revlon) as well as the Ministry of Education in Kenya (and the UK) and a number of local and international charities) that provides a number of services in a large slum close to the central business district of Nairobi. Cisco's involvement is in the skills training centre and four schools. Two of Cisco's education team have worked with UNESCO on developing a set of standards for teachers in the use of ICT in teaching in the K-12 sector. In order to test the appropriateness of these standards for teachers in sub-Saharan Africa, it was decided to implement a training program that would be built from the ground up by working with key teachers and school principals in a small group of schools.

RWANDA

- **Muhura Secondary School** – A NEPAD e-School initiative in which Cisco is the consortium lead. The project aim is to provide ICT skills and knowledge, provide trainers with relevant skills to enhance teaching and learning, and enhance schools management to help create the next generation teaching and learning solutions. Through the intervention of Cisco and other

consortium partners, Muhura Secondary School is one of the schools selected as an e-school demo project, where real life experiences of implementing ICTs in schools will create learning's for a roll out across Africa. The NEPAD e-schools initiative will be executed over a ten year period before its broader continental roll out.

For more information: www.cisco.com