CISCO SYSTEMS

Bridging the Digital Divide

Due to the expanding role of information and communication technologies (ICT) in global economic and social activities, the digital divide between those with access to ICT and those without has become a growing concern.

To accelerate efforts related to digital inclusion, Cisco® has developed new models of collaboration that harness the power of ICT to provide underserved populations with greater access to education and opportunities for social and economic participation.

Greater Access to Education

The Cisco Networking Academy® Program is a powerful example of how the Internet can be used to increase access to the knowledge economy by enabling network-centric skills. There are approximately 10,000 Networking Academies around the world, many of which have been developed in support of global initiatives. The ultimate goal of the program is to aid in social and economic development through digital inclusion and education.

Least Developed Countries Initiative

Cisco collaborated with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and United Nations Volunteers to launch the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) Initiative in 2000. Within this initiative, more than 200 ICT training centers, primarily Cisco Networking Academies, have been established in 40 LDCs and 11 other developing countries. More than 17,000 students have been trained and targeted gender initiative projects have been established in more than 25 developing countries to address the under-representation of women in the ICT industry.

Economic Regeneration in Africa through ICT Workforce

There are currently over 300 Networking Academies in Africa teaching over 14,000 students. Cisco is partnering with the Government of Ethiopia to establish 100 Networking Academies in support of a project aimed at using Internet technologies to promote education, health, and prosperity. These Academies will play an important role in a plan for economic regeneration, which will help lift Ethiopia from its position as one of the poorest countries in Africa through the development of a sustainable ICT workforce.

Cisco is also working with the Minister of Capacity Building in Ethiopia to deliver leadership training through local companies to help accelerate plans to reform government organizations and improve the delivery of services to citizens. One of the primary goals of the program is to train more than 1000 managers and leaders over the next two years.

Internet Training Centers

Cisco and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) have worked together over the past 5 years to establish affordable Internet Training Centers in many developing countries. Within this initiative, Cisco and ITU have established more than 60 Internet Training Centers in 49 developing countries, and have trained more than 5000 students. There are more than 2000 graduates of this program, many of whom are now working in networking

technology careers. This initiative also includes training for government officials and staff members in ministries of communications and telecommunications in developing countries.

In support of the Internet Training Centers Initiative, Cisco and ITU provide teacher and student training, online curricula, lab equipment, and support for workforce development programs. Cisco and ITU also announced a joint sponsorship of 100 Internet Training Center scholarships for women at the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2006 in Doha, Qatar. This initiative provides a compelling example of how business, international organizations, and governments can work together to meet the urgent needs of developing countries and promote digital inclusion.

Jordan Education Initiative

At the World Economic Forum in 2003, John Chambers, the president and CEO of Cisco, encouraged companies to work in partnership to narrow the gap between developed and less-developed countries through better education. This led to the development of the Jordan Education Initiative, which aims to create a model for Internet-enabled learning that can be implemented in other countries.

The JEI harnesses the power of technology to boost educational and economic development. The JEI is supported by 45 organizations, including international companies and government ministries. Its main objective is to create a transferable model for education reform through teacher training, technology-enabled learning, and ICT adoption in schools.

Achieving E-Quality in the IT Sector in Morocco

Cisco collaborated with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and USAID in September 2004 to implement a project called "Achieving E-Quality in the IT Sector in Morocco." This project aims to empower participants to benefit from the ICT sector and to narrow the gender gap by strengthening women's capabilities and professional skills.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education and State Secretariat for Professional Training in Morocco, the project partners identified six vocational training centers, four technical high schools, and one nongovernmental organization (NGO) to host Cisco Networking Academies, under the guidance of a Regional Academy. In less than six months, instructors from these institutions successfully completed training and enrolled more than 500 students in the Cisco CCNA® course. There is currently more than 50 percent female participation in the program.

In conjunction with this project, Morocco was chosen as one of seven countries to participate in the Women in Technology Scholarship Program, funded by USAID. One hundred women were selected to receive scholarships to attend Networking Academies in Mohammedia, Rabat, and Errachidia.

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