Cooperation Agreement

between

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

and

Microsoft Corporation

UNESCO Headquarters
Paris, 17 November 2004

Cooperation Agreement

between

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,
7, place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP
France
(referred to as "UNESCO"),
represented by its Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura

and

Microsoft Corporation,
One Microsoft Way
Washington 98052-6399
USA
(referred to as "Microsoft"),
represented by its Chairman and Chief Software Architect, Bill Gates.

UNESCO and the Microsoft each referred to as the "Party" or collectively as "the Parties"

Whereas The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) promotes international co-operation among its Member States in the fields of education, sciences, culture and communication. As a specialized UN agency, it has a mission to mobilize resources, review approaches and build up multilateral action in order to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture, and communication;

Whereas Microsoft Corporation is a company whose mission is to enable people and businesses throughout the world to realize their full potential through the use of innovative information technology. As an international corporate citizen of conscience, it is committed to initiatives throughout the world that seek to create social change and to expand opportunities through greater access to technology;

Whereas UNESCO is participating in the building of an international strategic partnership to bridge the digital divide and establish open and inclusive knowledge societies. It seeks to use Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and information to accelerate social and economic development, acting through the collaboration of a range of stakeholders;

Whereas In this context, UNESCO recognises the significant contribution that can be made by the private sector to these strategic objectives and is therefore actively promoting and building relationships with a variety of private sector stakeholders, including various companies in the ICT industries. UNESCO's intention is to mobilise partners from civil society and, in particular, from the private sector to achieve its strategic goals and programme priorities;

Whereas Microsoft supports the objectives of UNESCO as stipulated in UNESCO's Constitution and intends to contribute to UNESCO's programme priorities;

Whereas The Parties entered into, on 25 January 2004, a Letter of Intent stating their intention to collaborate on a variety of activities in support of the common objectives of UNESCO's and Microsoft's government, education and community programmes. This Agreement seeks to build on that Letter of Intent and provide a framework to achieve the objectives expressed by the Parties;

Whereas UNESCO and Microsoft entered into a regional agreement on 18 May 2004 for Latin America and the Caribbean to provide a framework under which UNESCO may access the Microsoft Partners in Learning Programme in that region (known as the "OREALC Agreement");

Whereas UNESCO and Microsoft wish to explore possibilities for collaboration in several areas, including education and learning, community access and development and facilitating software application sharing, cultural and linguistic diversity, digital inclusion and capacity building, as well as the exchange of best practices in the area of mainstreaming ICT into socio-economic development programmes;

UNESCO and Microsoft hereby agree as follows:

Article 1 – Objectives

UNESCO and Microsoft recognise the importance of harnessing the use of ICT for education and community development programmes as a means of improving sustainable livelihoods in developing countries. As part of this common understanding, both Parties recognise that analyzing possibilities to align global and regional initiatives, as well as programmes, can enhance mutual efforts to build capacities, foster the diversity of ideas and empower people through participation in web communities and through their ability to access information and ICT.

Article 2 – Scope of Agreement

This Agreement establishes a strategic framework within which the Parties agree to cooperate to achieve the stated objectives. Further information on the strategic background is contained in Appendix 1. The Agreement defines: the institutional aspects of the partnership; the details of current projects and special initiatives that are already underway, about to begin or are being contemplated by the Parties (referred to collectively as "Projects"); a structure for future cooperation; and, general conditions that will govern the Projects.

Article 3 – Areas of Cooperation

UNESCO and Microsoft have identified the following areas where their cooperation and partnership can provide significant benefits to society and communities everywhere, but especially in developing countries:

- Education and learning
- Community access and development
- Cultural and linguistic diversity and preservation
- Digital inclusion and capacity building
- Exchange and promotion of best practices on the use of ICT for socio-economic development programmes (known as ICT4D, or ICT for Development)
- Fostering web-based communities of practice, including content development, knowledge sharing and empowerment through participation
- Facilitating exchange of information and of software applications
- Sharing expertise and strategies, such as on ICT4D efforts

Article 4 – Initial Projects

UNESCO and Microsoft will commence their collaboration on the following initial Projects and initiatives. Further details are contained in Appendices 2 and 3.

In the field of education and learning : -

(i) Syllabus for Teacher Training on Integrating ICT into Teaching

UNESCO believes that ICT has a major contribution to make in supporting teachers and teaching; particularly if the technology can be integrated into instructional design, planning, pedagogy and the other critical components of effective learning and teaching. There are various providers of teacher training courses and certificates on the technical use of ICT for teachers and classrooms. Together, UNESCO and Microsoft aspire for there to be a quantum leap in the quality of courses and in accelerating their uptake by educationalists and teacher training institutions through the availability of standards, guidelines or benchmarks on what ought to be provided by those who offer courses on ICT teacher training.

Therefore, UNESCO with assistance from Microsoft is embarking on a multi-stakeholder initiative to develop a reference master curriculum ("Syllabus"), targeting those offering certificated courses on teacher training on the use of ICT. Examples of Syllabus components could include: skills for teaching and managing through ICT (for example development of generic ICT skills, effective use of ICT in the classroom, effective assessment techniques, knowing how to decide when ICT can bring improvements in learning); open and distance education; courseware development tools; and instructional design.

As a second phase, UNESCO proposes the development of a transparent mechanism by which course providers, educational policy-makers and teachers can refer to the Syllabus as a benchmark and ascertain whether or not course content and training programmes meet the requisite standard.

Microsoft will be one of the founding members of UNESCO's multi-stakeholder initiative to improve the quality and availability of teacher training on using ICT. Microsoft will

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collaborate with UNESCO on the Syllabus by drawing on Microsoft's experience in designing ICT products and services for use by educationalists and contributing know-how and technical expertise during the Syllabus concept and development phase. Microsoft will also contribute resources to illustrate and promote the concept of the Syllabus, commencing with a multi-media presentation of "lessons" that illustrate potential outputs from the Syllabus.

(ii) UNESCO Knowledge Communities
- building web communities of practice

UNESCO's work on building knowledge societies recognizes the great importance of "community" and the power of "communicating". ICTs make it possible to connect collaborative people and spaces – to build "web-based communities of practice" that will foster the exchange of know-how and sharing of experiences. With a focus on community empowerment and participation, UNESCO will utilize the Solutions Sharing Network ("SSN"), formally known as the Open Application Sharing platform or OAS, developed by Microsoft to develop UNESCO's experience in web-based communities of practice.

In particular, UNESCO will bring together international and national experts and stakeholders to develop content, best practices, share tools, mobilize interested parties, and to suggest solutions and strategies to address critical issues. Initially, UNESCO will build and moderate a suite of knowledge communities that will develop capacities around the themes of 'Technology Solutions in Education', 'Multilingualism in Cyberspace' and 'Information for All'. UNESCO will use this experience to better understand the modern dynamics of interactive, decentralized, multiple, online communities that are driven by their users from "the bottom-up", in an attempt to put information to work and to build a powerful collaboration environment.

(iii) Innovative Teachers Network

UNESCO and Microsoft will explore how the Innovative Teachers Network (ITN)[1] could further UNESCO's aims with the education community. The goal of ITN is to allow teachers to join and participate in networks sharing the same concerns and interests. UNESCO will explore how to facilitate content development. Microsoft will contribute the structure and framework necessary to share its best practices around content development and work with UNESCO to promote its adoption in accordance with UNESCO's stated objectives of promoting ICT learning in schools.

(iv) Partners in Learning

Microsoft's global initiative, Partners in Learning[2], seeks to address strategically issues concerning the use of ICT as a way to improve and facilitate learning and to leverage the exchange of expertise in education. The objective is to enable holistic solutions to the problem of access to current software and the use of ICT to improve learning in both technical and non-technical curricula. The initiative also envisions close partnerships with government, education systems and NGOs to enable programme delivery and facilitate measurable outcomes.

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[1] SEE APPENDIX 2
[2] SEE APPENDIX 2

UNESCO and Microsoft will cooperate through Partners in Learning in the following ways:

(a) Global Partners in Learning Education Board

Microsoft may invite UNESCO to join the global Partners in Learning board that oversees the program, provides advice and guidance on education issues, and is responsible for reviewing the Partners in Learning programme with a view to deriving the maximum benefit.

(b) Regional Partners in Learning Cooperation

Regional representatives of UNESCO and Microsoft will consult, whether through bi-annual regional cooperation meetings or through other means, to assess how the Partners in Learning programme is being implemented in the five areas of: Asia; Latin America and the Caribbean; Middle East and Africa; and Eastern Europe/CIS/Russia, and will explore initiatives for future Projects.

(c) OREALC

On 18 May 2004, a regional cooperation agreement between the Regional Bureau of UNESCO for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC) and Microsoft was signed under the PiL framework. This regional agreement provides elementary and secondary educational institutions in Latin America with a series of programmes dedicated to support and strengthen the learning and teaching process and foster the use of ICT in the classroom. The OREALC Agreement will run concurrently with this Agreement and to the extent that its objectives align fully with this Agreement, the parties will coordinate accordingly.

(d) Case Studies for Policy-Makers

UNESCO and Microsoft will establish a mechanism for the exchange of case studies and lessons learned on integrating ICTs into education. They will identify ways of sharing a synthesis of lessons learned with policy-makers serving as an advocacy instrument to gain the support of policy-makers and other stakeholders for the appropriate use of resource to support the integration of ICT in education. This synthesis will be used to inform UNESCO's evaluation programmes on Integrating ICTs into Education, as well as the Microsoft Government Leaders Forums (GLFs).

In the field of community access and development : -

(v) North-African Resource Facility to Support Youth Information and ICT Centres

The Project focuses on empowering youth through capacity-building and IT skills development. The programme aims at establishing a sub-regional resource centre to provide opportunities and conditions for improved access to information and communication technology, ICT skills development programmes, participation in cyberspace and the sharing of information and experiences among youth, working across geographical boundaries. This will be a collective effort by UNESCO, Microsoft, and the Government of Tunisia (or such other host country) to host a sub-regional centre of excellence that will share resources and

expertise with other centres to benefit under-served youth, help them meet future challenges and prepare the future workforce in North African countries.

(vi) Unlimited Potential Programme[3]

Unlimited Potential (UP) is a programme dedicated to improving lifelong learning for underserved communities, youth and adults through the provision of IT skills training in community technology centres or telecentres. The programme focuses on partnerships with local communities, government, NGOs, to improve technology skills and accelerate the socio-economic development of their communities and countries. Microsoft is supporting the programme through cash donations to hire trainers, the creation of curriculum to be used by the community learner, the development of a support network and donations of software in 78 countries. The above Project (v) for a youth resource facility is an example of an Unlimited Potential activity. UNESCO and Microsoft will explore the potential for further Unlimited Potential Projects to be developed elsewhere.

(vii) Global Support Network

Microsoft and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) are establishing a long term partnership to develop a telecentre support network, locally-driven and internationally connected to provide practical and relevant services to the community of telecentres around the world in their efforts to provide technology skills, training and lifelong learning opportunities to individuals in their communities.

With the focus on ICT capacity-building and digital inclusion provided by the World Summit on the Information Society, the UNICT Task Force and other initiatives at national and international level, Microsoft and IDRC aim to work with as many committed partners as possible in a joint effort to scale-up support to community-based ICT.

UNESCO recognizes the widespread need for such an enabling partnership and competence-driven platform and intends to work with Microsoft, as well as with IDRC and other prospective partners, to facilitate the GSN resulting in a network that effectively meets the needs of community-based ICT. Microsoft and IDRC may invite UNESCO to join IDRC and Microsoft in driving the GSN 5-year partnership commitment and to attend consultation meetings. UNESCO, IDRC and Microsoft will further engage to identify specific activities for cooperation which will be broadly identified across the four main goals of inclusiveness, localization for access to all (especially with a focus on people with disabilities), leveraging know-how and best practice, and policy engagement based on experience from the GSN implementation.

[3] SEE APPENDIX 2

In the fields of access and learning : -

(viii) Computer Refurbishment and Vocational Skills[4]

The Parties recognize the importance of capacity-building as a key component of improving ICT in developing countries. The Digital Pipeline Pilot Project, whereby Microsoft is building a model leveraging its resources and partnerships to help orchestrate a PC pipeline from developed countries to developing countries, is designed to help countries access cost-effective computer technology and develop corresponding ICT and vocational skills. The intention is to assist developing countries to scale education and community development projects while creating value and the basis for a sustainable economic model in the country to support ICT development.

As more actors consider the refurbishment of computer equipment as a strategy to address the digital divide, UNESCO believes that there is a growing need to understand the challenges and critical success factors of refurbishment projects.

Microsoft will share information with UNESCO on the implementation of its Digital Pipeline pilot. Based upon the experience gained through the pilot, UNESCO will either develop or facilitate the development of a series of best practices or other guidance material for wider dissemination to assist other actors and developing countries in their efforts to establish refurbishment projects.

UNESCO will also cooperate with Microsoft to promote and influence the pilot with a view to increasing the supply of PCs for refurbishment through partnerships with companies, refurbishers, shipping partners, NGOs and governments.

In the fields of access and cultural diversity : -

(ix) Local language development

Microsoft and UNESCO recognize the importance of providing access to technology in a way that preserves language and culture and will work together on the following three initiatives.

(a) Local Language Programme

Microsoft has developed a global initiative called the Local Language Programme to provide desktop software and tools in local languages by collaborating with local experts (governments, universities and other interested parties) and in turn to help build robust local IT economies.

The goals of the Local Language Programme are to:

- Bridge the digital divide between developed and emerging markets;
- Preserve language and culture through the use of technology to impact language and culture in a positive way;
- Help build the local ICT economy.

[4] SEE APPENDIX 2

UNESCO and Microsoft will work together to identify which languages should be prioritized as part of the programme. Microsoft will then work with local Governments to pursue such localised language software development.

(b) Multilingualism Event

UNESCO and Microsoft will collaborate on an event (whether through Mother Language Day or associated with UNESCO's efforts on the theme of Multilingualism in Cyberspace) to promote cultural and linguistic diversity and work together on a strategy to promote the event.

(c) Language Sources

UNESCO and Microsoft will work together to identify the appropriate sources to ensure that the official versions of a given language are correctly identified and attributed.

Article 5 – Future Projects

The Parties will work together to achieve the goals of the relationship. Beyond the Projects identified expressly in this Agreement, such collaboration will include identifying further possible areas and projects for cooperation. The Parties will ensure that such a dialogue occurs at the appropriate level within their respective organizations. This will involve the Parties consulting with national Governments and authorities where appropriate. The Parties will negotiate in good faith to finalize the terms of any subsequent agreement(s) that are required to give effect to a specific project or the undertakings set out in this Agreement. Where the Parties agree, this may be done by an exchange of letters detailing the deliverables and responsibilities of the Parties in respect of the relevant Project and will be presumed to incorporate the General Conditions set out below.

Article 6 – Review and Information Exchange

The Parties will meet no less than once every 6 months to review the status and progress of the objectives set out in this Agreement. Each Party will appoint a suitable representative to attend such review meeting. As well as reviewing status and progress, such meetings will provide a forum for the Parties to exchange information about new initiatives and opportunities to collaborate in the context of the goals of the partnership.

Article 7 – Term and Termination

This Agreement will remain in effect for five (5) years unless otherwise terminated by either Party. Either Party may terminate for convenience at any time by giving not less than sixty days' prior written notice.

Article 8 – Confidentiality and Public Announcements

This Agreement is not governed by an obligation of confidentiality and, subject to the prohibition in Article 11, either Party may issue press releases or make public announcements relating to the Agreement. However, with regard to the subsequent agreements that are required to give effect to the undertakings set out in this Agreement or relate to a specific Project, there may be confidentiality obligations between the Parties and, if applicable, these will be set out in the subsequent agreements pertaining to the relevant Project.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

Article 9 – Financial Contribution

If Microsoft agrees to make financial contributions to UNESCO, such contributions will be made in accordance with UNESCO's financial regulations, including those regulations concerning administrative support costs.

Article 10 – Liability and Status

Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as establishing a legal partnership (such as, by way of clarification, partnership liability), joint venture, agency, exclusive arrangement, or other similar relationship between the Parties. Neither Microsoft nor anyone whom it may employ shall be considered as an agent of UNESCO or a member of the staff of UNESCO and, except as otherwise provided, shall not be entitled to any privileges, immunities, compensation or reimbursements, nor shall be authorized to commit UNESCO to any expenditure or other obligations.

Article 11 - Use Of Name, Emblem Or Official Seal of UNESCO or its Affiliates

Microsoft Corporation and its affiliates shall not in any manner whatsoever use the name, emblem or official seal of UNESCO or its affiliates, or any abbreviation of the name of UNESCO or its affiliates in connection with its business or otherwise without express prior written permission of UNESCO.

Article 12 – Amendments

This Agreement shall not be effective unless and until signed by both Parties. This Agreement may only be changed, modified, amended or supplemented by written agreement of the Parties.

Article 13 - Entire Agreement

This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement and understanding of the Parties with respect to its subject matter and supersedes all oral communications and prior written documents.

Article 14 - UNESCO Status

Supporting the objectives of UNESCO and of the United Nations Organization, Microsoft will respect the status of UNESCO as an intergovernmental organization of the United Nations system with its own distinct Constitution. Microsoft confirms that it is not directly involved in the production of goods or the delivery of services which would be opposed to the objectives and principles of UNESCO, the United Nations Organization or other institutions of the United Nations system. Nothing in or relating to this Agreement shall be deemed as a waiver of any of the privileges and immunities of UNESCO.

Article 15 - Conformity with Laws

Microsoft agrees to respect the laws of the countries in which it operates. Microsoft guarantees that it will not permit any official of UNESCO to receive a direct or indirect profit from this Agreement. Microsoft will comply with U.S. export law to the extent that such export laws are applicable to the terms of this Agreement.

Article 16 - Settlement of Disputes—Arbitration

All disputes arising out of or in connection with the present Agreement shall be settled by mutual understanding. However, if no amicable settlement can be arrived at, any dispute shall be arbitrated according to the rules defined by UNCITRAL (United Nations Conference on International Trade Law).

Article 17 - Indemnity

The Parties shall hold each other harmless, defend and indemnify each other against all awards, damages or costs incurred resulting from any intellectual property lawsuit or other liability occurring under the present Agreement and arising out of acts or omissions of the other Party.

Article 18 - Intellectual Property Infringement

In the event a Party learns or believes that a breach or infringement of its intellectual property rights or confidential trade secret information has occurred or is occurring, that Party (the "non-infringing Party") shall notify the other Party (the "infringing Party") of the existence of such breach or infringement. The infringing Party shall immediately exercise all necessary and best efforts to halt such breach or infringement. In the event that after the notice is delivered to the infringing Party, there is a dispute, controversy, claim or disagreement between the Parties with regard to any infringement or breach of intellectual property or confidential trade secret information, the infringing Party shall cease and desist from any such action(s) in question until the dispute, controversy, claim or disagreement can be submitted and resolved pursuant to the Settlement of Disputes – Arbitration provision.

Article 19 - Notification

The addresses for service of notices under the present Agreement shall be:

If to Microsoft:

Copy to: Microsoft Corporation
One Microsoft Way
Washington 98052-6399
USA

If to UNESCO:

Copy to: UNESCO,
The Director,
Division for Co-operation with Extra-budgetary Funding Sources
Sector for External Relations & Co-operation
7, place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP
France

IN WITNESS WHEREOF this Agreement has been executed by duly authorized officers of the Parties

Executed in Paris on 17 November 2004 in two original copies.

For UNESCO

Koïchiro Matsuura
Director-General

For Microsoft Corporation

Bill Gates
Chairman and Chief Software Architect

APPENDIX 1 – STRATEGIC POSITION OF THE AGREEMENT

UNESCO is participating in the building of an international strategic partnership to bridge the digital divide and establish open and inclusive knowledge societies. It seeks to use Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and information to accelerate social and economic development, acting through the collaboration of a range of stakeholders. The challenges of poverty reduction, achieving the Millennium Development Goals and addressing the disparity between the "information haves and have nots", are enormous.

In this context, UNESCO recognises the significant contribution that can be made by the private sector to these strategic objectives and is therefore actively promoting and building relationships with a variety of private sector stakeholders, including various companies in the ICT industries. UNESCO's intention is to mobilise partners from civil society and, in particular, from the private sector to achieve its strategic goals and programme priorities.

The mobilisation of partners from the private sector is advocated by the UN ICT Taskforce. It was also endorsed by the World Summit on the Information Society ("WSIS"). This produced a Declaration of Principles and a Plan of Action, articulating a common vision of the scope and complexity of commitments and actions necessary to address the digital and knowledge divides. More particularly on the issue of software and access to knowledge, Paragraph 27 of the Declaration states:

> "*Access to information and knowledge can be promoted by increasing awareness among all stakeholders of the possibilities offered by different software models, including proprietary, open-source and free software, in order to increase competition, access by users, diversity of choice, and to enable all users to develop solutions which best meet their requirements. Affordable access to software should be considered as an important component of a truly inclusive Information Society*".
>
> And Paragraph 10.e of the Plan of Action provides:
>
> "*Encourage research and promote awareness among all stakeholders of the possibilities offered by different software models, and the means of their creation including proprietary, open-source and free software, in order to increase competition, freedom of choice and affordability, and to enable all stakeholders to evaluation which solution best meets their requirements*".

Under its Medium-Term Strategy (2002-2007), UNESCO's responsibilities include the following: acting as a clearing house, in gathering and sharing information knowledge and best practices in its fields of competence; identifying innovative solutions and testing them through pilot projects; building human and institutional capacities in its fields of competence; and playing a catalytic role for international and development cooperation.

In the area of education and learning, Microsoft prioritizes its support for the use of ICT to close the digital and learning divides for those who have been marginalised from the education process as a result of gender, geographic circumstance, poverty and other factors. Microsoft believes that ICT could make universal primary education an achievable goal, particularly through teacher training and development, dispersal of high-quality teaching resources, and remote schooling and online interactive learning. Microsoft considers that ICT

could prove to be equally important in generating a greater supply of trained teachers and enhancing student learning and improving life chances.

In the area of community access and development, Microsoft considers that knowledge and information sharing through the internet by every country and every community in the world is of vital importance for the economic participation, social cohesion and enrichment of linguistic and cultural diversity of mankind. In the area of cultural and linguistic diversity, Microsoft will continue to support strategies to put ICT to the service of preservation and resurrection of languages in danger of disappearance. Microsoft believes that it is important that all segments of society have access to software tools in their mother language.

UNESCO and Microsoft believe that mainstreaming ICTs into educational and community development programmes in developing countries has great potential for improving quality, increasing access to and reducing costs in education and training, promoting digital inclusion and, eventually, bridging the digital divide.

APPENDIX 2 – MICROSOFT INITIATIVES

INNOVATIVE TEACHERS NETWORK

ITN is a web-based knowledge sharing and collaboration platform that provides teachers with content, tools and services. The core objective of ITN is to enable teachers to efficiently perform their daily classroom tasks, collaborate and communicate with peers, students and parents in a community environment, and enhance their professional skills by learning and sharing best practices. It allows teachers to access these features literally from anywhere in the world, thereby providing them the flexibility and convenience to plan their time and schedules, and learn and teach more efficiently.

The goal of ITN is to allow teachers, within countries and across the globe, to initiate, monitor, join and participate in communities or networks of teachers sharing the same concerns and the same interests; continuously share information, education materials, techniques, ideas, knowledge and best practices and to communicate with each other; locate education and professional materials to use in the classroom and to collaborate on the improvement and development of additional materials for the classroom; increase their knowledge and skills by identifying personal and professional development needs, defining development plans, localizing, and consuming professional development materials adapted to their needs.

PARTNERS IN LEARNING

The Partners in Learning structure offers three integrated programmes designed to help teachers and students realize their potential by providing high quality curriculum for teacher training; access to digital content; student skills assessment and certification and technical support; and affordable desktop tools and licensing. It is a five year commitment made to education by Microsoft around the world via:

- Fresh Start for Donated Computers -- designed to provide licensing certainty for Primary and Secondary (K12) schools using donated computers to increase access to technology.
- Partners in Learning School Agreement Subscription -- makes MS's core educational desktop tools, Windows XP Pro and Office XP Pro, available at a deeply discounted price per license, and therefore more affordable to primary and secondary schools in developing countries worldwide.
- Partners in Learning Grants Program-- providing a cash investment of over $225M over the next five years in an effort to provide government and education leadership with the local tools and resources to deliver comprehensive ICT skills training, as well as ongoing development and curriculum leadership to primary/second teachers and students within their countries.

UNLIMITED POTENTIAL

Through this global programme, Microsoft seeks to use technology training to create social and economic opportunities that can change lives, transform communities, and strengthen local economies. Through UP, Microsoft aims to empower and reach millions of community members. During the last year and half, Microsoft has supported 261 community centre

projects in 78 countries across the globe, developing for community learners, a multilingual IT skills training curriculum series in English, Spanish, French, and German, Simplified Chinese, Russian, Arabic, and Brazilian Portuguese.

GLOBAL SUPPORT NETWORK

UNESCO's expertise in ICT for development as part of its Multipurpose Community Tele-centres programme and its local level experience in rural communities of five least-developed African countries (Benin, Mali, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda) and its support to the global support network, will result in a network that effectively meets the needs of community-based ICT. To this end, UNESCO will be included in the partnership, which will be announced later this year, including Microsoft's, UNESCO's and IDRC's 5-year commitment.

DIGITAL PIPELINE

In developed countries, the computer refurbishment industry is driven by the continual replacement of technology and, in the EU, the new EC WEEE Directive. However, refurbishing computers has associated costs: transportation (both for collection, screening and delivery), inventory management (asset tracking for refurbishers and/or original owners), sorting, testing, re-assembly (compiling a "unit" of CPU, monitor, keyboard, mouse, etc.), testing and component repair, software re-installation.

Refurbishment of redundant computers has taken place worldwide for many years as enterprises dispose of functional equipment during upgrade cycles. In addition, most of these computers are sold for re-marketing or recycling activities and a few number of them are being reused by schools or underserved communities both in the country of origin and internationally.

The Microsoft Digital Pipeline Pilot project's ambition is to embrace and extend this refurbishment scenario as an opportunity to help developing countries get access to cost-effective technology while creating value and the basis for a sustainable economic model in the country to support IT development. Microsoft will document the different steps of the implementation of the pilot and share information with UNESCO.

The Digital Pipeline Pilot is linked to the Microsoft refurbishment initiatives such as the MAR (Microsoft Authorized Refurbishers) programme that Microsoft has launched to support refurbishment activities. Through the MAR programme, Microsoft will provide re-installation of Windows 98 Second Edition and Windows 2000 Professional in over 18 languages. The refurbished PCs will be accompanied by a Certificate of Authenticity (COA) and a special End User License.

The MAR program complements the Unlimited Potential program to promote digital inclusion through education, lifelong learning and IT skills development.

APPENDIX 3 – PROJECT DETAILS

1. UNESCO Knowledge Communities - building web communities of practice

UNESCO's Knowledge Communities
Web-based communities of practice in UNESCO's fields of competence

UNESCO's quest towards building knowledge societies recognizes the great importance of "community" and the power of "communicating". The evolution of modern technology makes it possible to connect collaborative people and spaces – to build a galaxy of "web-based communities of practice" that will foster the exchange of know-how and sharing of experiences. With a focus on community empowerment and participation, UNESCO will use the technology to bring together international and national experts and stakeholders to develop content, best practices, share tools, mobilize interested parties, and suggest solutions and strategies to address critical issues.

Initially, UNESCO will convene and moderate a suite of knowledge communities that will develop capacities around the themes of 'Technology Solutions in Education', 'Multilingualism in Cyberspace' and 'Information for All'. Future plans envision the creation of a multitude of other web communities in areas such as "Libraries and Archives", "Communication & Media", "Freedom of Expression & Democracy", "Memory of the World", and "ICT4D", among many others. UNESCO will use this experience to develop its understanding of the modern dynamics of interactive, decentralized, multiple, online communities that are driven by their users from "the bottom-up"; it is an attempt to put information to work and to provide a powerful collaboration environment.

UNESCO seeks to use the technology to "take the community pulse" in its areas of competence. It hopes to catalyse the involvement of other convenors and facilitators, and to learn about priorities as expressed by communities of practice in its Member States. It is, in a way, UNESCO's online participation programme.

1.1 Communities of Practice – Definition and Rationale

Many organizations recognize the place of community and the power of sharing for learning. In addition to having access to relevant, timely information, people also want to be involved and to feel like a participant of a community rather than feeling like a student attending a course. For these reasons, web-based (or "virtual") communities of practice are increasingly being seen as an important medium for learning and sharing knowledge.

> *"Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and who interact regularly to learn how to do it better." (Source: Etienne Wenger[5])*

Web-based communities of practice provide a model for a digital era of collaboration. They are an empowering model and tool to engage experts; they can mobilize those with the know-how as well as the other members who utilize communities of practice as sources of knowledge and expertise in order to find solutions to recurring problems. They are not just

[5] Cultivating communities of practice a quick start-up guide *by Etienne Wenger*
http://www.ewenger.com/theory/start-up_guide_PDF.pdf

built from web sites, databases and sets of best practices. They also consist of members exchanging knowledge, sharing experiences, building relationships, and developing a sense of belonging and mutual commitment. In many instances, the community members may share a homogenous vision and approach.

Regarding the new opportunities offered by the information and communication technologies (ICTs), and in particular Internet and the Web, Etienne Wenger says: "*New technologies such as the Internet have extended the reach of our interactions beyond the geographical limitations of traditional communities, but the increase in flow of information does not obviate the need for community. In fact, it expands the possibilities for community and calls for new kinds of communities based on shared practice. The concept of community of practice is influencing theory and practice in many domains. From humble beginnings in apprenticeship studies, the concept was grabbed by businesses interested in knowledge management and has progressively found its way into other sectors. It has now become the foundation of a perspective on knowing and learning that informs efforts to create learning systems in various sectors and at various levels of scale, from local communities, to single organizations, partnerships, cities, regions, and the entire world*".

The knowledge produced by web communities of practice is "shared"; this means that the content is open for reading and improvements (peer review) to the community members. It is an iterative process that produces high quality knowledge. The social context of learning and sharing knowledge (about and with ICT) is an important aspect of socialization within communities of practice and the networked society. Communities of practice are social entities in which new roles (beyond just lecturer-student) are defined. Conflict and disagreement sometimes appear and mechanisms to handle tensions are required. One big difference with the portal approach is that the practitioners themselves are generating the knowledge and know-how being developed in the communities of practice. It is not generated by a centralized source.

According to Etienne Wenger, organizations that function solely as a centralized knowledge resource are ignoring the critical role of active engagement in effective learning and knowledge sharing, "*Learning is best understood as an interaction among practitioners, rather than a process in which a producer provides knowledge to a consumer*[6]," he says. "*Communities of practice have both a short-term value and a long-term value*". He continues, "*In the short term, the people within the group help each other solve problems. They share and learn what can be reused across the membership of the community. In the long-term, the communities of practice increase their capacity. By solving problems together, they develop a repertoire of stories and issues they have solved*".

Communities of practice facilitate "empowerment" through their members' ability to participate in a community and allow the participants to drive the community. They are a model for the digital era where "bottom-up" decentralized approaches prevail, comprising matrices of links, multiple authoring and non-binding co-ordination – users becoming authors and content producers. Community members learn, share and improve their knowledge through the communication and collaborative process. Such a model is the architecture of the new "information culture".

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[6] Etienne Wenger on Communities of Practice: Engagement, Identity & Innovation by Seth Kahan published in *The Journal of Association Leadership*, March 2004 and including commentary by Jeff De Cagna

1.2 Vision and Objectives

The vision that is driving UNESCO's commitment to this project is that if UNESCO can realise the potential of communities of practice, this could be of significant assistance in fulfilling its mandate to create, share and disseminate knowledge. This will happen through the creation of web-based communities of practice that empower participants through their ability to produce their own content, exchange information and share experiences, solutions and best practices in UNESCO's fields of competence.

One of UNESCO's strategic outlines of the 31 C/4 "Medium Term Strategy" for 2002-2007 is expressed as, "promoting empowerment and participation in the emerging knowledge society through equitable access, capacity-building and knowledge-sharing". This translates into the following main lines of action, in the 32 C/5, of "Fostering equitable access to information and knowledge for development", "Capacity-building in ICTs" and "Increasing community access".

UNESCO's traditional role and modality has always been one of facilitating exchange of knowledge and know-how by bringing together people and experts in its fields of competence. This is usually done through the organization of conferences, workshops and meetings, i.e. by providing administrative support and a physical collaborative working space. After participating in such an event, people and experts often become members of a community related to the specific UNESCO activity. The use of ICTs would allow creating and cultivating of web-based or virtual communities of practice to follow this real world community model of people and experts coming together based on a common interest or an issue in order to generate and share knowledge.

The main goal is to empower community participants through their ability to produce their own content, exchange information and share experiences, solutions and best practices. UNESCO could then extend its role to become a convener of web-based communities of practice aimed at sharing knowledge rather than being only a provider of knowledge. Therefore the objectives of UNESCO's knowledge communities may be described as:

- To offer a community of practice environment for effective learning and knowledge sharing in UNESCO fields of competence; and
- To provide a platform for interaction among practitioners. The ultimate focus will be directed towards delivering an electronic workspace for communities. A prime objective of the UNESCO's "Knowledge Communities" platform will be to create communities of peers around a catalogued repository of knowledge and solutions.

1.3 Operationalising the Concept

The technology platform to support communities of practice should have the following functional aspects:

- A web-based portal with a home page to assert the existence and describe the domain and activities of the Community allowing remote access;
- A conversation space for on-line discussions of a variety of topics;
- A facility for floating questions to the Community or a subset of the community;
- A directory of membership with some information about their areas of expertise in the domain;

- A document repository for their knowledge base;
- Mechanisms for organizing, searching, rating and cataloguing content;
- Community management tools, mostly for the moderator or coordinator but sometimes also for the community at large, including the ability to know who is participating actively, which documents are downloaded, how much traffic there is, which documents need updating, etc.; and
- The ability to spawn subcommunities, subgroups, and project teams.

Furthermore, a technological platform for communities of practice should ideally be:

- Easy to learn and use;
- Easily integrated with the other software that members of the community are using for their regular work so that participation in the community requires as few extra steps as possible; and
- Not too expensive; if significant investment is required "up front", potentially useful communities will not be able to take advantage of the platform.

In order to catalyse this work, UNESCO will take advantage of an opportunity presented by Microsoft's Solutions Sharing Network (SSN), which is a community portal. The SSN is meant to serve as a portal gateway leading to multiple online communities. For each community that is created, a corresponding collaborative web site will be created to serve as the focal point and facilitation tool for the community. This platform will offer a community/collaborative environment facilitating the sharing, rework and enhancement of resources, among peers.

1.4 Community Descriptions

The project, called UNESCO's "Knowledge Communities", would start by initiating a few pilot knowledge communities to be identified in the areas of "Multilingualism in Cyberspace", "Technology Solutions for Education", and the "Information For All Programme" (IFAP).

Technology Solutions for Education

The multitude of problems facing formal education systems today is well known. Most notably, there are an estimated 900 million illiterates in the world and 130 million children unable to attend primary school. Their access to education is limited by time and space, age, socio-cultural environment, work schedules and physical or mental handicaps. Current educational problems are discussed in terms of: the declining numbers of qualified teachers and increasing numbers of students per class; inaccessibility and inflexibility of schools and universities; outdated and irrelevant curricula and methods of learning; and the lack of quality educational materials.

Today, ICTs afford an exciting opportunity to begin questioning some of the basic assumptions and the choices that were predicated on them and to re-open discussions around the nature and content of learning, the role of facilitators and places for learning. It is vital to explore the use of learning systems that encourage reflection, creativity, expression,

cooperation, social responsibility, democratic values, and tolerance. Learning modes will become a diversified mixture of self-instruction, group work and tutoring.

This Community is intended to provide a collaboration space for experts working in the area of "ICTs and education" to address the foregoing issues, to define the most important emerging problems and solutions, and to identify appropriate strategies, policies and more immediately technological solutions.

Multilingualism in Cyberspace

The goal of universal access requires people to have the skills and tools to access the world's riches of knowledge. In a digital world, this includes knowing how to access and use the Internet and the World-Wide Web, yet, for much of the world's population, the language barrier means universal access remains a dream. This is why UNESCO is facilitating a web-based community of practice, comprising experts and stakeholders committed to fostering Multilingualism in Cyberspace. The aim is to identify strategies, solutions and collaborative opportunities that will foster a linguistically and culturally diverse cyberspace.

Information for All Programme

UNESCO's Information for All Programme (IFAP) is an unique intergovernmental initiative to support the goal of universal access to information. It provides international policies on information for all and works to translate these into national implementation strategies and actions. National IFAP Committees are therefore an important feature of the programme. UNESCO is facilitating the gathering of information specialists and national IFAP Committees into a community of practice that can inspire and learn from each other, and thereby accelerate and deepen the work of IFAP.

1.5 Grant of Licences

For the purposes of this Agreement, Microsoft will grant to UNESCO all software licences required to implement the Solutions Sharing Network or SSN (comprising what was previously known as the OAS and ITN environments). The scope of software licence includes all SSN source code as well as all required Microsoft platform products (to be used solely for the implementation of the SSN environment). Microsoft will also make available all SSN and platform product updates and patches that arise throughout the duration of the Knowledge Communities project life.

Microsoft envisages that the environment will develop as a valuable asset within UNESCO's CI and communication strategy. The software grant will remain in effect for as long as the SSN environment is needed and the Microsoft/UNESCO partnership remains.

In the event that the Microsoft/UNESCO partnership is dissolved, the grant will remain in place for up to 90 days thereafter for the sole purpose of allowing an orderly shut-down/migration of the environment.

All data and content created, uploaded or archived (including documents and discussions) in the framework of the SSN environment are non-proprietary to Microsoft.

SSN Data Migration and Porting Capabilities

The SSN provides an environment in which communities may be created and documents/discussions shared. The environment is implemented on the Microsoft Sharepoint Server (SPS), with Microsoft SQL Server as a data repository. While the SSN environment is bespoke and implemented on a set of Microsoft proprietary products, the data (including documents and discussions) held within the environment are stored via standard database mechanisms that allow for backup, migration and export via widely available industry tools or bespoke filters as required.

More specifically, the following mechanisms may be used to migrate SSN data:

- Migration tools (e.g. smigrate and spout) that export documents and data files that may be exported/extracted and subsequently imported by another environment
- Export of data objects from the Sharepoint database via standard SQL Server object modelling functions.
- Widely available toolkits that leverage standard interfaces such as XML web services

2. Syllabus for Teacher Training on Integrating ICT into Teaching

UNESCO Teacher Training Syllabus
Quantum leap in teacher training on using ICTs in the classroom

UNESCO strongly believes that modern information and communication technologies (ICTs) can make a major contribution to the capacity-building of teachers. Of particular interest is the effective integration of technology in education while taking account of instructional design, pedagogy and many other critical components of effective teaching and learning.

2.1 Project Proposal

There are various providers of teacher training courses and certificates on the use of ICT for teachers and classrooms. UNESCO and Microsoft aspire for there to be a quantum leap in the quality of courses and in accelerating their uptake by educationalists and teacher training institutions through the availability of standards, guidelines or benchmarks on what ought to be provided by those who offer courses on ICT teacher training. Therefore, UNESCO with assistance from Microsoft is embarking on a multi-stakeholder initiative to develop a reference master curriculum ("Syllabus"), targeting those offering certificated courses on teacher training on the use of ICT.

More specifically, skills for teaching and managing through ICT (for example development of generic ICT skills, effective use of ICT in the classroom, effective assessment techniques, knowing how to decide when ICT can bring improvements in learning); open and distance education; courseware development tools; and instructional design.

It is not envisaged that UNESCO would offer worldwide training activities nor would it offer a UNESCO certification. UNESCO seeks to develop the Syllabus to illustrate the level of ICT knowledge and skills that an international expert group (including course providers) believes is desirable for teacher training course certification. The Syllabus could then form the basis for deriving training content to be delivered to teachers in a multitude of ways and by different providers.

As a second phase, UNESCO proposes the development of a transparent mechanism by which course providers, educational policy-makers and teachers can refer to the Syllabus as a benchmark and ascertain whether or not course content and training programmes meet the requisite standard.

2.2 Engagement with Microsoft

Microsoft will be one of the founding partners in this multi stakeholder initiative to improve the quality and availability of teacher training on using ICT. Microsoft will collaborate with UNESCO on the Syllabus by drawing on Microsoft's experience in designing ICT products and services for use by educationalists and contributing knowhow and technical expertise during the Syllabus concept and development phase. Microsoft will also contribute resources to illustrate and promote the concept of the Syllabus, commencing with a multi-media presentation of "lessons" that illustrate potential outputs from the Syllabus.

3. A Sub-regional Resource Centre to Support Youth Information and Learning Structures in the North African Arab States

Community Access and Development
Supporting youth technology and learning centres

Information and communication technology (ICT) represents an opportunity for Arab nations to accelerate their socio-economic development and provide a sustainable community of development solutions. In a region where 50% of the population are under the age of 20 and 65% are under the age of 35, an investment in youth capacity-building would assist in the building of knowledge societies. Knowledge is a foundation for development. Through knowledge, a new generation that is capable of facing global challenges will emerge. Thus, investing in youth is a key strategy for progress.

3.1 Project Proposal

There are numerous initiatives for introducing youth to ICT, including youth community centres, that have been established in some of the countries in the sub-region of the North African Arab States. This gives rise to several needs. First, there is a clear need to draw on the positive experiences and successful practices that have accumulated in order to catalyse the creation of new info-structures in response to growing needs for access to, and use of, information technology. Second, there is a need to reach a new level in capacity-building in the form of a resource facility that could support sub-regional initiatives such as promoting economies of scale and creating opportunities for collaboration on training and other services.

In terms of the users of the various youth centres in the sub-region, this collaboration and sharing of knowledge and experience could introduce a new dimension. It could contribute to the dialogue among youth where the cross-cultural exchanges, the sharing of knowledge and information and the active participation in the cyber world will become a reality for many young people.

The proposed initiative focuses on building the capacities for youth empowerment and gives a high priority to addressing the needs of the underserved and disadvantaged young people. The strategy would be to establish a sub-regional resource centre in order to provide opportunities and conditions for improved access to information and communication technology, ICT skills development programmes, participation in cyberspace and the sharing of information and experiences among youth, working across geographical boundaries.

UNESCO and Microsoft, in collaboration with existing information structures, networks and youth associations in the participating countries, and in close cooperation with the official bodies in charge of youth in Tunisia (or such other host country), would collaborate to establish a sub-regional information technology and learning centre that can become a resource facility.

This initiative has the following strategic objectives:

- Develop ICT skills training schemes targeted at the needs of youth;

- Promote the efficient use of Information and communication technology resources in the sub-region through the pooling of know-how, identification of common resource needs and facilitation collective responses;

- Establish a centre of excellence and a shared resource for capacity-building for youth oriented information structures and networks;

- Create conditions for regional and inter-regional networking, including contribute to the creation of a regional network of information centres and build a knowledge community among youth;

- Facilitate local content production;

- Empower young people to realize their potential through improving their technical skills and helping integrate a new style of leaning and thus prepare them for the requirements of the labour market;

- Invest in the youth leaders and information workers through technical and managerial skills development;

- Engage youth to participate in the development of knowledge portal in different fields through collaborative learning programmes;

- Implement pilot community access based projects for youth; and

- Collection, dissemination, and share of best practices.

3.2 Roles and Responsibilities

It is anticipated that UNESCO would concentrate on:

- Leading negotiation with the host country national authorities on the conditions for the creation and hosting of the Centre;

- Providing information on tools and systems in use in other countries in relation to youth activities;

- Promoting the programme among national and regional partners;

- Sharing the learning and the experiences from other similar initiatives of the Infoyouth programme that includes already created info-centres;

- Financing some pilot activities of the centre related to Infoyouth (for instance, in the field of creation of micro-enterprises, HIV/AIDS prevention, youth community based voluntary programmes, youth mobility and exchanges); and

- Evaluating the impact of the project on the socio-economic development of the community and youth performance and their contributions to the knowledge society.

The Microsoft Unlimited Potential programme focuses mainly on narrowing the technology and skills gap to promote digital inclusion and a society that invests in life long learning. The programme also provides IT skills and access to community learning centres. Through this programme, Microsoft would contribute in the following ways:

- Unlimited Potential Grants – seed money to support Train the Trainer & IT skills development for young people;
- IT skill development curricula and certification;
- Software donation and solutions;
- Capacity-building through the support network;
- Providing technical support and expertise in setting up the Centre;
- Microsoft employee(s) involvement;
- Leveraging the youth programmes that have been supported through Unlimited Potential; and
- Assisting in mobilizing IT partners and other partners to maximise impact.

3.3 Contribution by Host Country

UNESCO will lead a negotiation with the national authorities of the host country to consider the conditions for the creation and hosting of the Centre, including:

- The necessary infrastructure for the Centre (venue, installation etc.) and provide appropriate furniture;
- The maintenance and security of the Centre;
- Related operational costs (management, utilities, phone lines, supplies, etc.);
- The costs for the coordinators responsible for the functioning of the Centre;
- The effective management of the Centre and the promotion of the services and the activities at national and regional levels; and
- Periodical reports on the project and the outcomes of the different activities.