



DOT-COM is a USAID-funded alliance of international partners working with USAID missions and bureaus to apply information and communication technologies (ICTs) to achieve strategic development objectives.



### DEVELOPMENT IN THE INFORMATION AGE

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are powerful tools for development. They are contributing to social and economic change by creating opportunities for instant communication, local and global networking, and unparalleled access to information. One of today's challenges is to use ICTs effectively to achieve key development results and ensure that ICT opportunities are available to all.

ICTs refer to the collection of technologies and applications available from the convergence of "information technology" and "telecommunications." A wide range of ICTs are used in establishing telecenters, creating e-governance and e-commerce systems, enabling distance education, building human capacity and improving institutional efficiency. ICTs are being used to enhance interventions in virtually every development sector and socio-economic context. Around the world, ICTs are expanding learning opportunities, building institutional capacity, promoting better governance, and opening doors to economic growth. Even without traditional telecommunications and electricity infrastructure, innovative and increasingly affordable alternative systems including wireless, satellite, and solar technologies are enabling ICTs to benefit people in remote areas.

The DOT-COM Alliance works with USAID to bring the benefits of ICTs to under-served regions and populations, apply ICTs across different socioeconomic areas of development, particularly for women, and provide opportunities to increase economic growth. The DOT-COM Alliance places special emphases on fostering participation and ensuring equity along the gender dimension.

### CREATING DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY

USAID, through the DOT-COM Alliance, takes action through three interrelated cooperative agreements each focusing on a key area designed to maximize the benefits of ICTs for development:

- **dot-GOV - Promoting policy and regulatory reform to create enabling environments, paving the way for equitable ICT use and the free and open flow of information—led by Internews Network;**
- **dot-ORG - Extending access to ICTs by under-served communities, building skills by using ICTs for development, and developing relevant content and applications for target populations—led by the Academy for Educational Development (AED); and**
- **dot-EDU - Strengthening education and learning systems through customized ICT applications, interventions, and content for educators, students, and professional development in all fields—led by the Education Development Center (EDC).**

The DOT-COM Alliance offers USAID missions and bureaus expertise from over 75 partners including NGOs, universities, foundations, and private companies - innovators skilled at integrating ICTs into development programs. Expertise is available to create enabling policy and regulatory conditions through the dot-GOV consortium, enhance ICT access and applications through the dot-ORG team, and apply ICTs to education, training, professional development, and learning systems through dot-EDU partners.

### APPLYING ICT TOOLS

DOT-COM helps USAID missions and bureaus introduce ICTs at critical points in development programs to strengthen conventional approaches and achieve more rapid, widespread, and sustainable results. DOT-COM experts work with missions and bureaus to assess, design, implement, and monitor ICT-enhanced applications and interventions, build institutional capacity, and achieve strategic and sustainable development goals.

### CREATING COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Communication among DOT-COM Alliance partners is fostered by the DOT-COM Secretariat. This Secretariat is administered by AED as part of the dot-ORG project and links the work done by DOT-COM Alliance Partners with a wider circle of organizations working on issues of international economic development. The Secretariat maintains an interactive website which allows DOT-COM Alliance Partners to collect, synthesize and share information and experience. Reports, guidelines, model frameworks, and best practices will be available through this website. The Secretariat works to bring mission and DOT-COM Alliance Partners together to discuss the services, activities, and innovative practices available to meet the needs of countries who want to use ICTs as important tools for economic growth and development.

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dot-GOV, which is administered by Internews Network and is part of the USAID DOT-COM Alliance, works with USAID missions and bureaus to promote competitive policy and regulatory reforms in telecommunications and electronic commerce to enhance economic and social development and attain universal access to information and communications technologies (ICTs).

### TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT

Access to information is increasingly essential for social and economic development. With access comes opportunities for economic growth, job creation, good governance, education for all, and increased productivity in both the public and private sectors.

The dot-GOV project works with USAID missions to establish legal and regulatory frameworks that enable the open and equitable use of telecommunications and information and communications technologies (ICTs) services. In particular, dot-GOV encourages policies that create equal access to ICTs for women and disadvantaged groups, under-served, and geographically and socially isolated elements of the population.

### BRINGING THE BENEFITS OF ICTS TO UNDER-SERVED POPULATIONS

Privatizing telecommunication systems is not a sufficient first step to meeting this goal—more is needed. As the backbone of Internet access, telecommunication systems must be widely available, affordable and reliable. Competition among providers is the most effective way to expand the scope of these services, and creating enabling policies and regulations opens the door for the equitable use of powerful telecommunication tools for development. Private investment is also necessary to meet the accelerating demand for access to ICT services. Finally, an effective regulator is needed to establish confidence in a level playing field for existing and new providers and to assure universal access.



The dot-GOV project works with USAID missions and local partners to develop policies that encourage private investment, competition, and equitable regulation, leading to universal access and diverse service.

Areas of focus include:

- **Creating transparency and predictability in business regulation;**
- **Fostering privatization, competition, open networks, and universal service in telecommunications policy;**
- **Enabling private sector leadership in the build-out of networks and in electronic commerce; and**
- **Applying market-driven solutions, user-control, human rights protection, and limited government administration of the Internet.**



### PARTNERS AND PROCESS

Led by the Internews Network, dot-GOV is a consortium of international companies, experts, and organizations with significant experience working with USAID to link telecommunications and Internet policies with economic and social development. Electronic commerce and the free flow of information through the Internet depend on a collaborative process among government, the private sector, and non-governmental, educational, and civil society organizations. dot-GOV emphasizes a participatory, locally led process, bringing together key stakeholders and strengthening capacity among industry and non-profit partners to build networks and foster alliances.

### ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

- **Assessing local situations to identify and overcome policy and regulatory barriers to telecommunications privatization, Internet use, and development of e-commerce, especially those that inhibit under-served groups from using ICTs as tools for development.**
- **Convening regional workshops on telecommunications and e-commerce plans and national ICT strategies, including networked consultative discussions among experts from the US and developing countries.**
- **Providing expert technical and legal assistance to governments preparing telecommunications legislation, new laws and regulations, and implementing universal access and service programs.**
- **Training policymakers, regulators, service providers, entrepreneurs, and civil society organizations in workforce readiness, the production and dissemination of localized training materials, and building in-country telecommunications training capacity.**

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#### Core Partners:

Center for Democracy and Technology (CDT)  
Computer Frontiers Inc., (CFI)  
ARD, Inc.  
Center for Institutional Reform and the Informal Sector (IRIS)  
Center for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM)

#### Resource Partners:

Yale University Law School's Information Society Project  
Oxford University's Programme in Comparative Media Law and Policy  
Covington & Burling  
Development Informatics  
Aguirre International  
National Council of Negro Women  
Vital Voices Global Partnership

Bridges.org  
US Telecommunications Training Institute  
Management Systems International  
The Frank Hawkins Kenan Institute  
National Telephone Cooperative Association  
Washington State University  
University of Colorado, Boulder  
JPJ Group LLC, Inc.

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dot-ORG, which is administered by AED as part of USAID's DOT-COM Alliance, assists USAID missions and bureaus to achieve their strategic objectives by enabling disadvantaged groups with access to information and communication technologies (ICTs); strengthening local economies, building technology and professional skills; and promoting locally relevant content and applications.



### EXPANDING ACCESS TO DIGITAL OPPORTUNITIES

The proliferation of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in society can accelerate economic and social development—or exacerbate social and economic disparities. The dot-ORG project works with USAID missions and bureaus and local and international partners to ensure that participation in the benefits of the information age extend to under-served groups—particularly, the poor, rural residents, ethnic minorities and women—thus creating development opportunities through the use of ICTs. The dot-ORG project overcomes social, economic, and infrastructure constraints to ICT access, by strengthening skills, developing relevant applications, and providing disadvantaged people with opportunities to improve their lives through the creative use of digital technologies.

Example areas of focus for dot-ORG project initiatives include:

- **Creating innovative technical solutions in rural and disadvantaged areas where insufficient infrastructure limits access to ICTs;**
- **Building capacity among local groups to provide, use and maintain ICTs;**
- **Developing locally relevant e-commerce and e-government systems; and**
- **Providing under-served populations with affordable access to ICTs and locally relevant content and applications by establishing public access telecenters in collaboration with local partners.**

### HELPING DEVELOPMENT HAPPEN

ICTs offer enormous opportunities for enabling and enhancing economic and social development. The dot-ORG project works with USAID missions and bureaus, local and international partners to create innovative ICT applications to support specific development goals. Areas for dot-ORG initiatives include:

- **Expanding access to ICTs through telecenters;**
- **Localizing useful information resources for distribution via multimedia and web-based products, and making locally relevant software and content available to under-served communities, local businesses, NGOs and government agencies;**
- **Developing systems of interactive instruction for in-service training and life long learning;**
- **Expanding access to knowledge resources, including electronic databases and libraries;**

- **Disseminating selected information through more broadly accessible modes and media; and**
- **Organizing virtual communities and professional networks to foster knowledge sharing and build professional capacity.**

### STRATEGIES

By collaborating with missions and bureaus and local groups, dot-ORG customizes proven strategies to build ICT access, capacity, content, and applications that serve target groups. Innovative approaches to integrating ICTs into development initiatives include:

- **Establishing public access telecenters with computers, connectivity, and useful applications;**
- **Creating partnerships with the private sector to sustain ICT-enabled development initiatives;**
- **Designing programs to ensure ICT opportunities reach women, girls and other disadvantaged groups, including directed outreach and training activities;**
- **Employing alternative technologies where conventional approaches and infrastructure are insufficient;**
- **Creating and fostering new economic opportunities through ICT use;**
- **Accelerating production of relevant content in all fields by building local expertise with ICTs and multimedia;**
- **Establishing online professional networks and virtual communities to enable developing country groups to communicate, share experiences, and exchange information among themselves and with the wider development community; and**
- **Designing and implementing initiatives to take full advantage of ICTs in all development sectors—e-commerce, e-government, telemedicine, information systems for agricultural and environmental protection, electronic resources for conflict resolution, distance training and life-long learning.**

### RESOURCES

The dot-ORG project includes more than 60 partner organizations with broad ICT and development experience. USAID missions, bureaus and partner organizations can quickly and easily draw on this expertise to design and implement initiatives that support their strategic objectives. These may include, project planning and feasibility studies, ICT monitoring and evaluation strategies, approaches to expanding public access to ICTs, training programs, gender initiatives, capacity building and tailored pilot projects.

### COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION: THE DOT-COM SECRETARIAT

The DOT-COM Secretariat, housed in the dot-ORG program at AED, links the partners of the DOT-COM Alliance and creates communication channels with USAID and the broader professional community. Through its interactive web site (<http://www.dot-com-alliance.org>), partners share information, collaborate on strategies, and devise comprehensive solutions. The Secretariat also gathers, analyzes, synthesizes, and widely disseminates information about ICT innovations and successful practices and strategies.

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Education Development Center (EDC)

Research Triangle Institute (RTI)

Winrock International

Resource Partners:

AFRICON  
Agland Investment Services  
The American International Health Alliance  
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ARD, Inc.  
The Asia Foundation  
The Association for Progressive  
Communications (APC)  
Avaya  
Bellanet (IDRC)  
Bowie State University  
CNET.com  
Colorado State University  
The Community Learning and Information  
Network (CLIN)  
Computer Frontiers Inc. (CFI)  
CTCNet  
Development InfoStructure  
Florida State University  
FutureWorks (2001) Inc.  
Geekcorps  
Greenstar Foundation  
Health Management Resources, Inc.  
The Howard University College of Medicine  
The IBM Corporation  
InfoChange  
The International City/County Management  
Association (ICMA)

International Development Professionals (IDP)  
International Educational and Resource  
Network (I\*EARN)  
The International Research & Exchanges  
Board (IREX)  
The Institute for Public-Private  
Partnerships (IP3)  
Intel Corporation  
The Johns Hopkins Center for  
Communication Programs  
Knowledge Enterprise (KE)  
Lyman Brothers/Global Sat  
Michigan State University  
The MIT Media Lab  
Morocco Trade and Development Services  
S.A. (MTDS)  
Net Assessment  
Net Corps America Inter-American Agency  
for Cooperation and Development (IACD)  
Networked Intelligence for Development  
NIIT  
Omar Dengo Foundation  
The Organization for Educational Resources  
and Technological Training (ORT)  
Pacific Resources for Education and  
Learning (PREL)  
Pact

PEOPLink  
PricewaterhouseCoopers  
REDA International, Inc.  
Satelife  
Science Applications International  
Corporation (SAIC)  
SRI International  
Sun Microsystems  
Sylvan Teachers Institute  
The United States Telecommunications  
Training Institute (USTTI)  
The University of Illinois  
The University of North Carolina's Kenan  
Institute  
The University of Pennsylvania's  
International Literacy Institute (ILI)  
The University of Pittsburgh's International  
Institute for Studies in Education  
USASA International, Ltd.  
VITA  
Voxiva  
World Links  
The World Resources Institute (WRI)  
The WorldSpace Foundation  
Wordwise Services, Inc.

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dot-EDU, which is administered by EDC as part of USAID's DOT-COM Alliance, works with USAID missions and bureaus to bring the power and potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to education and training in developing countries.

The Internet and ICTs have revolutionized education for many worldwide. The dot-EDU project seeks to bring the benefits of ICTs to people in developing countries, providing under-served populations with opportunities to use innovative ICT applications for learning and development. With USAID missions and local partners, dot-EDU designs and implements ICT-based initiatives to improve basic education, professional development, educational management, technical training, workforce development, higher education, emergency education in crisis situations, participant training, and lifelong learning.



#### IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL DELIVERY, EQUITY, REACH, MANAGEMENT, AND QUALITY

ICTs are easily adaptable tools to strengthen traditional approaches to education and create new learning opportunities. These tools include:

- Helping meet the massive need for pre-and in-service teacher training;
- Reducing the isolation of educators in remote or rural areas by enabling communication with colleagues;
- Providing teachers with access to valuable instructional materials;
- Enabling collaborative working and learning;
- Enhancing learning through electronic simulations of complex concepts;
- Enriching individualized learning;
- Increasing access to educational resources and teaching materials;
- Promoting a student-centered approach to teaching;
- Collecting, managing, and sharing data, enabling easier school management and better tracking and analysis of student records and performance;
- Improving educational opportunities for indigenous people;
- Providing countries in crisis with critical educational inputs; and
- Increasing learning opportunities for under-served groups and providing disadvantaged communities with access to resources for lifelong learning.

#### LEVELING THE PLAYING FIELD

Working with USAID missions and partners, dot-EDU helps design ICT-based activities that strengthen learning systems. Through technical assistance, specialized knowledge products, tailored pilot projects, and customized training programs, dot-EDU builds local capacity and creates opportunities for:

- Online learning;
- School-to-school communication;
- Interactive multi-media instructional materials in national and indigenous languages;
- New curricula for classrooms and training programs;
- Digital production and editing of educational mass media;
- Distance learning using CD-ROM, the Internet, and broadcast media for teachers, students, and professional development in all fields;
- Innovative workforce development applications for students, adults, and out-of-school youth;
- Pre-and in-service teacher training;
- Virtual communities of educators and teacher-to-teacher networking;
- Teacher resource centers with media production capabilities;
- Access to worldwide knowledge resources for educators;
- Improved leadership through training for administrators;
- Community access to learning opportunities at school-based ICT resource centers and local telecenters; and
- Internet/ICT applications for teaching and learning in countries suffering from civil unrest, natural disasters, and HIV/AIDS.

dot-EDU activities capitalize on ICT benefits, such as:

- Self-paced, individualized instruction;
- Enabling on-the-job training;
- On demand asynchronous and synchronous instruction;
- Links to other resources;
- Interactivity within the instructional program;
- Online communication with instructors and peers; and
- Use of a variety of delivery mechanisms, such as face-to-face, multimedia CD-ROMs, Internet, and satellite-delivered video instruction.

#### DELIVERING SPECIALIZED EXPERTISE

Drawing on a consortium of more than 30 core and resource partners, dot-EDU customizes technology applications for particular countries and contexts, adapts bundles of ICT tools to supporting infrastructure, and tailors interventions to achieve mission-specific strategic objectives and results. Gender equity is always a priority.

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CPAL  
Council for Basic Education  
EarthWalk Communications  
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