



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.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

USAID: dot-ORG Contacts

Mr. Brian Bacon EGAT/EIT/IT 202-712-0168 bbacon@usaid.gov	Dr. Anthony Meyer EGAT/EIT/IT 202-712-4137 ameyer@usaid.gov
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dot-ORG: Project Team

Dr. Dennis Foote dot-ORG Director Academy for Educational Development 202-884-8708 dfoote@aed.org	Dr. Eric Rusten Deputy Director Academy for Educational Development	Dr. Janice Brodman Associate Director Education Development Center	Mr. Sergio Ramirez Operations Director Academy for Educational Development
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Core Partners:

Education Development Center (EDC)
Research Triangle Institute (RTI)
Winrock International

Resource Partners:

Africon Agland Investment Services American International Health Alliance Asia Foundation ARD, Inc. Assoc. for Progressive Comm. Avaya Bellanet (IDRC) Bowie State University CNET Colorado State University Community Tech. Centers' Networks Computer Frontiers International Development InfoStructure Florida State University FutureWorks Geekcorps Greenstar Foundation Health Management Resources, Inc. Howard University IBM	I*EARN Intern InfoChange Foundation Inst. for Public Private Partnerships Intel Int'l City/County Management Assoc. Int'l Development Professionals Int'l Research and Exchange Board Johns Hopkins University Knowledge Enterprises Lyman Brothers MIT Media Lab Michigan State University Morocco Trade and Development Services Net Assessment Net Corps Americas (IACD) Networked Intelligence NIIT Omar Dengo Foundation ORT International Pacific Resources for Ed. & Learning	PACT PEOPLink PricewaterhouseCoopers REDA International SatelLife Science Applications Int'l Corp. SRI International Sun Microsystems Sylvan Learning Systems ThinkQuest U. of Illinois U.N.C.-Kenan Institute U. of Pennsylvania (ILI) U. of Pittsburgh (GINIE) USASA International U.S. Telecom. Training Insitute Volunteers In Technical Assistance Voxiva World Resources Institute World Links WorldSpace Foundation Worldwise Services, Inc.
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