

NEPAD e-SCHOOLS NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE



AS AGREED TO BY PARTICIPANTS AT THE
**WORKSHOP OF THE NEPAD e-SCHOOLS
PHASE ONE COUNTRIES
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The 16 NEPAD e-SCHOOLS PHASE ONE COUNTRIES: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo (Republic of), Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda

NEPAD e-SCHOOLS IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

1. INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the NEPAD e-Schools Initiatives is intended to lead to a steady and sustainable process in which young Africans graduate from primary and secondary schools equipped with skills which will enable them to function well in the emerging knowledge economy and information society of the 21st century.

The implementation process involves the installation of ICT equipment in the schools along with the associated software; it involves the training of pre-service and in-service teachers to use this technology to impart ICT skills to the students as well as facilitate preparation and delivery of course materials in all other subjects; it involves the use of ICT to develop appropriate course materials and make them available to schools and teachers.

Implementation involves the establishment of an Africa-wide satellite network that will connect the schools to the Internet as well as to points within each country from which educational content will be fed to the schools on a continuous basis. Implementation will also provide for systems and procedures to be in place to assure that the hardware and software installed in the schools will operate smoothly and reliably.

The NEPAD Heads of State and Governments Implementation Committee (HSGIC) has endorsed a timetable for the NEPAD e-schools Initiative which provides that implementation will be completed in ten years from commencement (five years for the secondary school component).

While this timetable is ambitious, it is the minimum that this continent should aim for. Its achievement will take serious commitment on the part of all of us, harnessing collaboration and mutual support on a continental basis. In addition, it will take concerted effort, a good organisation and substantial funding. At the core of this is **a good implementation structure.**

The purpose of this paper is to describe the kind of implementation structure that the e-Africa Commission believes will be required in order to attract and harness the human and financial resources necessary to accomplish this initiative in the anticipated timetable.

2. NATIONAL EXECUTION, CONTINENTAL COORDINATION

The structure of implementation proposed by the Commission is one that requires national execution with continental coordination. In the proposed structure, the core tasks of installing the hardware and software in the schools, deploying teachers and getting the children taught will be managed at national level, while the tasks of formulation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the project will be performed as a continental collaboration through the NEPAD e-Africa Commission.

The whole initiative, comprising activities at the national level and at the continental level will be performed in the context of NEPAD. The Commission will be required to report periodically as it does now, concerning progress on implementation of this project across the continent, through the NEPAD Steering Committee to the Heads of States Governments Implementation Committee.

At the national level, it is envisaged that an implementation entity will be established to execute this project. The entity will have strong links with the government of the country, but will have an independent governing body, charged with responsibility for the proper and successful implementation of the project.

3. FUNCTIONS TO BE PERFORMED BY THE COMMISSION

3.1 Formulation

The Commission is currently engaged in the process of formulating and defining the NEPAD e-Schools Initiative. It has already performed a significant advocacy role in African and international fora to the extent that today, 'NEPAD e-Schools' is fast becoming an internationally recognised brand name.

The formulation process has included the definition of the NEPAD e-Schools concept as well as the planning and other activities related to the demonstration project which, when completed, will yield important information related to the environmental, social and pedagogical aspects of implementation. Evaluation of these aspects will inform the process of execution at the national level. Future definition work includes the development of the NEPAD e-Schools business plan as well as the detailed Implementation plan to be developed after the business plan is completed.

3.2 Continental coordination

This effort includes the continental coordination of the work performed by the countries and providing support where such is

needed. The purpose is to ensure continuously that the work is proceeding well and in accordance with the established timetable.

3.3 Monitoring and evaluation

The Commission will monitor progress in the achievement of national timetables as well as conformance with norms and standards set to evaluate progress towards meeting the objectives of NEPAD e-Schools. The results of the monitoring and evaluation effort, in addition to being reported to the HSGIC periodically, would also provide a useful resource to the management of implementation activities at the national level.

3.4 Partnership

The Commission has already developed a core corporate partnership for NEPAD e-Schools. The task ahead is to expand this partnership to include more African and international companies, development partners, the civil society and the foundations. The target partners are those with an overall continental view of Africa.

3.5 Satellite Capacity

One of the major functions of the Commission is to procure satellite capacity of the right kind in bulk and to make it available for connection of the schools to the Internet. The overriding motivation for this effort is to reduce the cost of airtime for access to the Internet by the individual schools. A subsidiary purpose is to optimise the use of scarce technical skills in the satellite field in a network, which will serve the entire continent.

3.6. Bulk Commitment for Equipment, Optimum use of scarce technical skills

By establishing a common network and common operations for the continent, it is possible to optimise use of available skills as well as leverage the benefits of a large network and common standards to reduce the cost of equipment and technology. Negotiations on an overall basis and with common standards will provide critical leverage benefits in order to attain significantly improved prices for computers, communications equipment, power systems and accessories. This will constitute a major factor in securing affordable implementation of this project.

3.7 Development of Standards

The Commission will develop standards to ensure sound and effective operations of NEPAD e-Schools in a wide range of areas: technical, operational, pedagogical, financial, procurement, etc. The Commission will seek to bring to bear, international best practice in all operations

of the initiative. A team of experts will be assembled to develop the required standards and to constitute a resource group that will support the work of national implementing entities. These standards will help both to reduce prices and to integrate NEPAD e-Schools operations for ease of coordination and mutual support.

3.8 Demonstration Project

The Commission will directly manage the operations of the NEPAD e-Schools demonstration project as described above.

3.9 Funds Mobilisation

Funds mobilisation from international sources will be an important function of the Commission. It will perform this function by establishing relationships with the development partners, the corporate sector and the civil society. This task will commence in earnest after completion of the NEPAD e-Schools business plan.

3.10 Initiation of teacher training effort

The Commission will initiate ICT teacher training for secondary schools through the African Virtual University. At the present time, the AVU has learning centres in 17 countries. The AVU satellite infrastructure will be expanded to encompass other African countries in the next two years. In the meantime, the Commission, together with its partners, are discussing ICT teacher training needs for primary schools. When this programme is initiated and progressing satisfactorily, consideration will be given to transfer control to national implementing entities.

4. FUNCTIONS TO BE PERFORMED BY THE NATIONAL IMPLEMENTING STRUCTURE

- 4.1 Supervise the installation, operation and maintenance of ICT hardware and software in the schools.
- 4.2 Coordinate with ministries of education, modalities for ICT training of pre-service and in-service teachers and their deployment to the schools.
- 4.3 Work with those concerned, to provide educational portals to facilitate the flow of educational material between appropriate sources and the schools.
- 4.4 Coordinate with the ministries of education, the proper teaching of ICT skills to students, the use of ICT technology for the

improvement of education and for the management of the schools.

- 4.5 Work with ministries of education and other appropriate certifying authorities, to set appropriate ICT skills proficiency standards for graduating students
- 4.6 Coordinate with the ministries of health, the installation and operation of 'health point' facilities.
- 4.7 Provide recommendations to the Commission concerning schools that are fit to qualify as "NEPAD e-schools".
- 4.8 Coordinate with the appropriate ministries in order to obtain the appropriate government contributions towards NEPAD e-schools operations in the country.
- 4.9 Create and sustain partnerships from local private sector and civil society.
- 4.10 Create public support and enthusiasm for the NEPAD e-Schools Initiative in the country.
- 4.11 Raise funds from other sources
- 4.12 Establish sound working relationships with all appropriate government ministries and other authorities within the country.
- 4.13 Manage the operations of the entity in an ethical and professional manner.
- 4.14 Conduct all operations for the entity in accordance with standards that have been established in every field for the NEPAD e-Schools Initiative across the continent.
- 4.15 Establish sound financial operations.
- 4.16 Submit an Annual Report to NEPAD.
- 4.17 Achieve the established timetable and other targets established for NEPAD e-Schools in the country.
- 4.18 The national Implementation Structure may invite any experts to assist it in the performance of its functions

5. ORGANISATION STRUCTURE OF NEPAD e-SCHOOLS

INITIATIVE

5.1 NEPAD e-Africa Commission

The continental organisation will comprise a NEPAD e-schools unit at the e-Africa Commission headed by a Coordinator who will report to the Executive Deputy Chairperson of the Commission. The Coordinator will be supported and guided in his/her work by a 'Coordinating Body' comprised of senior representatives of the governments of the 'first phase' countries who will meet periodically to discharge this responsibility.

The Coordinator will perform the functions listed in section 3 above and will be supported by a team of experts in various fields. The Coordinator will work with governments participating in the programme as well as with major corporate and civil society partners. He/she will undertake a major responsibility for funds mobilisation for NEPAD e-Schools. He/she will oversee the development of the NEPAD e-Schools Sat link project and the teacher training projects at the African Virtual University and elsewhere.

5.2 National Implementing Structure

The governments will inform the e-Africa Commission what Implementation Structure they have chosen to carry out the functions in section 4 of this document

6. AGREEMENT

The Participants in the workshop agree to the NEPAD e-Schools implementation structure described in this document pending the availability of the French version.