

Ongoing Learning of the Global Libraries Initiative

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BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation

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BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION



- Guided by the belief that every life has equal value
- Our goals:
 - » Improving health
 - » Strengthening education
 - » Reducing poverty

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GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT



- **Agricultural Development**
 - » Reducing world poverty by helping smallholder farmers increase their yields and find markets for their products



- **Financial Services for the Poor**
 - » Improving family economics by increasing access in developing countries to financial services – loans, insurance, and savings accounts



- **Global Libraries**
 - » Opening a world of information and knowledge by helping public libraries provide free access to computers, the Internet, and training

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THE CURRENT SITUATION

- Worldwide, just one person in ten has access to the Internet
- Computers and the Internet can provide opportunities for greater social and economic well-being
- Access to information technology is just one step in improving lives

The goal of the Global Libraries initiative is to narrow this digital divide by improving equitable access to information technology in transitioning countries

WHAT WE DO

- Large-scale programs
- In selected transitioning countries
- With government partnerships
- Install computers and Internet connectivity
- In libraries
- Steps to ensure that they are useful and used
- Flexible program allows focus on national needs and priorities

HOW WE WORK

- Building capacity beyond access is key to improving lives:



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Ongoing learning

- Foundation's culture of learning
- Libraries is the oldest program in the foundation, yet Global Libraries is one of the youngest
- Lessons from the US that can be applied more widely (and many that cannot)
- Learning with our grantees
- Studying the impact of our work

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Learning with grantees about challenges and opportunities

- Understanding the areas where grantees face the greatest challenges (and may need the most help)
- Understanding where the greatest opportunities lie, and helping grantees act upon them
- Peer learning and the grantee toolkit

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Lack of infrastructure



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Geographic isolation



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Remote villages connected by satellite



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...And wireless



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Infrastructure improvements



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Lack of local content



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Government officials can be obstacles...



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...and champions



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Connecting with the Diaspora...



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The human networks are essential



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Learning through grantee impact planning and assessment

- Built into country grants and project life cycle
- Owned by the countries, driven and determined by the grantees, based on their national needs and priorities
- Implemented according to the timelines of the projects
- Focusing grantees on:
 - » Use and usefulness
 - » Social and economic benefits
 - » Quality of activities
 - » Achievements and course corrections
 - » Convincing stakeholders

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Impact assessment → advocacy → sustainability

- Core relationship
- High expectations for the government to ensure sustainability by investing in the project and providing long-term support
- So the libraries and library "systems" must be able to articulate the benefits of the public access program to governments so they understand the value of investment

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Our requirements for impact assessment

- Consultative, participatory process
 - Using our philosophy and what we have learned
 - Using impact assessment as part of their sustainability strategy:
 - » Based on national priorities and needs
 - » Embedded in the library system
 - » Designed to continue beyond the life of foundation funding
 - Certain performance metrics
 - Report to us on impact
- ➔ We do not otherwise mandate the design or process for impact planning and assessment, and we expect process in each to be different

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How we understand – and measure – success

- It is **not** about how many computers and connections in how many libraries
- It's all about focusing our attention – and the attention of our grantees – on the positive impacts of free public access to computers and connections in libraries:
 - » The **social and economic benefits** that can be and are gained
 - » Ensuring **equitable access** so those benefits reach people who do not otherwise have access

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Focus on desired outcomes

- Increased **availability** of appropriate computer and Internet technologies, especially in areas w/little or no previous access
- Increased **capacity and motivation among public library staff** to use and integrate computers and the Internet in the library and their work
- Increased **computer and Internet skills** among public library users
- Increased **advocacy (and corresponding increased demand)** for public libraries and publicly-accessible computers and Internet
- Increased local, regional and national **funding, and other kinds of support**, for public libraries and publicly-accessible computers and Internet
- Increased availability and use of **locally relevant content** and services in libraries
- Emergence of **innovations** in/from/for/to library-based network
- Establishing or expanding **stable support mechanisms** for librarians

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National goals drive the project plans

- **National goal:** Improve government delivery of services to citizens
- **Outcome:** Increased capacity and motivation among public library staff to use and integrate computers and the Internet in the library to improve government delivery of services to citizens
- **Activities:** Training of library staff in e-government services available, workshops to promote staff engagement and collaboration, online discussion group for library staff
- **Indicators:** Increases in use of e-government services in library, technical capacity of library staff to use such services, advocacy capacity, number of librarians trained, number of new projects designed and implemented by library staff
- **Methods and instruments:** Survey of library staff, statistical survey of library staff trained, interviews with library staff, library case studies
- **Reporting:** Focused toward other library staff to spark ideas and encourage participation, focused toward government officials to demonstrate library staff commitment and success in making libraries an essential tool for achieving the national goal

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Outcomes lead to social and economic benefits



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Key areas where we expect to see impact

- Health
- Communication
- Employment/Economic Development (including Agriculture)
- Education
- Governance/Government Services
- Cultural Heritage

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HEALTH

PADAHUEL, CHILE

A booming grape vineyard economy in South Padahuel



ACCESS THROUGH INNOVATION

In a community where few people have their own computers, the town set up a library inside a railroad car in the courtyard of a primary care health clinic. Now those seeking basic health care can access health information right next door.



FORGING PARTNERSHIPS

The location proved to be so successful that the library is now working in partnership with the clinic to provide computer courses to adults suffering from stress or psychiatric problems – bringing technology and health to one location.

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PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

VERACRUZ, MEXICO

Community members in the southeastern state of Veracruz benefit from a unique program to connect distant family and friends through the Internet



A SIMPLE YET VITAL TRAINING

"Communicate with Your Relatives through the Library" teaches people how to use email and instant messaging.

ACCLAIM SPARKS GROWTH

Because of its overwhelming popularity, the library now dedicates each Saturday to teaching people how to communicate with their family, many of whom left their homes to find work.

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ECONOMIC BENEFIT

GUADALUPE, MEXICO

When Oralia López first walked through the doors of Biblioteca Central Estatal Mauricio Magdaleno, she didn't know how to use a computer and had never tried to find information on the Internet



Street sweeper
making 50 pesos a
day



Enrolled in
computer classes at
local library



Now a computer
teacher earning a
larger salary

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EDUCATION

RURAL BANGLADESH

Isolated communities in flood-prone regions of northern Bangladesh benefit from access to educational services, technology, and computer trainings



EDUCATION THROUGH INNOVATION

Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha (SSS) converts boats into mobile education units, providing needed year-long education and trainings.

TRAINING WITH AN IMPACT

Nazma Begum has benefited from learning about new farming techniques from Dr. Samajit Pal, an agricultural scientist and SSS volunteer.

BENEFITS AT HOME

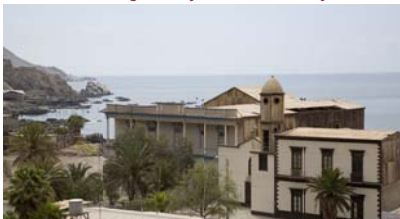
"I've been able to double my yield of eggplants and leafy vegetables in my small backyard." – Nazma Begum

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E-SERVICES

PISAGUA, CHILE

Residents in Pisagua, an isolated town with few communication tools, knows about the benefits of having a library in their community



Isolated community with few information outlets

7.9 magnitude earthquake damages power lines and roads

Using a generator, the library provides internet access and information

Town members can communicate with family and find information

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Moving from anecdote to evidence

- Too often the value of libraries is told as anecdote
- More and better evidence is needed to concretely demonstrate the value of public access to the Internet through libraries
- GL wants to work with libraries to support the move from anecdotes to evidence
 - » Building on previous work
 - » Learning with thought leaders in the field
 - » Support new thought leaders (our grantees)
 - » Sharing what we're doing / learning

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HEALTH

x number of patients access treatment information online through the library and corresponding increases are seen in treatment adherence among the population



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PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

x number of people use email at the library to communicate with family members and corresponding improvements are seen in reported quality of life



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EMPLOYMENT

x number of people that receive computer skills training through the library get jobs that they would not have been able to do without the training



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

x number of farmers that accessed agricultural information online through the library increased their yield by x% over x years



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EDUCATION

x number of school children participate in online reading program through the library and corresponding increases are seen in matriculation scores among the population



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E-GOVERNMENT SERVICES

x number of people access e-government services through the library and corresponding improvements are seen in reported quality of government-citizen interaction and lower cost per citizen to deliver government services



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Continuing to learn...

- Adjustments we've made:
 - » Improving our understanding of the "total cost" of a Library Program, not just for up front investment, but long term costs that continue after our funding ends
 - » Working with wider groups of stakeholders
 - » Better understanding of content issues and what's at stake
- Former grantees Chile and Mexico still sharing lessons
- Current pilot countries: Latvia, Lithuania, Botswana
- Future grantmaking on the horizon
- Soon sharing more information with the field
- Learning from you!

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Thank you!

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Performance metrics

- Public libraries receiving computers (Number of libraries)
- Workstations installed (Number of workstations)
- Librarians trained (Number of librarians)
- Library visits (Number of people using the library for any reason)
- Personal Access Computing users in library (Number of PAC users, including new users)
- Library users trained (Number of users)
- PAC users w/o alternate access to ICT (Number of PAC users)
- Reported usage of library PAC (% of PAC users, examples such as health, education, business, others)
- Libraries with sustainable Funding (Number of libraries)

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