Advancing Learning Through Technology

My Story: Ahmed

At 22, Ahmed Mohamed Abdullah had a mobile phone, but had never held a job. The phone helped him change that.

Abdullah received a text message alerting him that a local government internship was available. "I went straight to the nearest Internet café and applied," he says. Now, instead of talking politics with his friends in local coffee shops, Abdullah works for the mayor.

Abdullah got the message through the Souktel InfoMatch system, a text message service that links young people with jobs and a component of Education Development Center's Somali Youth Livelihood Program, or Shaqodoon.

Youth ages 17 to 30 use mobile phones to post their profiles and receive job listings from local employers. Youth gain employment and training opportunities, alternatives to negative activities such as piracy and political extremism. Employers gain reliable workers. Shaqodoon expects to reach 8,000 young people over three years; to date, 39 percent of Shaqodoon youth are female. Many of them receive life-changing text messages just as Abdullah did. "Every morning I look forward to dressing up and going to work," he says. "Shaqodoon has given me a morale boost [and] skills to find a job."

Impact

Through the power of technology, EDC supports learning that is:

- **Accessible.** In **Mali**, EDC has provided teachers with sample lesson plans, answered questions, and received feedback, all via SMS text messaging. In **Somalia**, the **Democratic Republic of the Congo,** and **Southern Sudan**, EDC delivers learning amid instability—including to internally displaced groups—via radio and MP3 technology.

- **Mobile.** In **Tanzania**, EDC supported moblie learning in nomadic communities by supplying on-demand instructional and teacher training materials and solar equipment.

- **Scalable.** In **India**, EDC reaches over 40 million students in 300,000 schools each day through Interactive Radio Instruction; programs in **Mali** and **Malawi** are nationwide. In **Indonesia**, EDC's online training course and online coaching enable the frequent, timely, cost-effective support needed for teacher improvement.

- **Effective.** Data consistently show strong learning gains among students and improved practice among teachers supported by EDC programs.

These students in India are using an innovative Group Teaching and Learning approach designed especially for one-computer classrooms.

EDC transforms learning using technology tailored to the context, from radio to Internet connectivity to mobile phones and SMS texts.

Approach

EDC uses radio, mobile and digital technologies to improve teaching and learning. We devise strategies to reach very poor and remote learners, offering sustainable technologies that provide new opportunities to learn and improve the quality of education. We match accessible, affordable tools to an understanding of real-world constraints—both inside and outside the classroom.

In West Bank/Gaza, youth learn video production, in this case for a health awareness campaign.

EDC **Learning transforms lives.**

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These young women in Somalia can connect to training and job opportunities via their mobile phones.

"In many ways, the hardware is the easy part. It is important to focus on the hardest parts of ICT-based education: developing effective content and creating a social context around the learning experience."

—Simon Richmond, Senior Technology Specialist