

ICT Center Model: Global Centers

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ICT CENTER MODEL

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In 2016, exciting conversations began between Infrastructure for Sustainable Development (i4SD) and Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) at Earth Institute, Columbia University to merge energy provision with social services to areas with scarce resources, which launched a concept note on ICT Center for operation in 2018. The Model allowed for site-specific contextualization to align with the various local needs, populations and dynamics.

The first support and implementation plan were devised for a refugee resettlement area in Uganda. In India, the curricular iterations and interactions with trainees inspired the educational approach and contents of other Centers. In Myanmar, Ghana and Rwanda subsequently, the ICT Center training program was merged with local artisan and vocational training skills program to build further on the previous Information and Communications Technology (ICT) program that existed with CSD's Connect To Learn program.

Below gives an overview of the ICT Center Model's Global Centers and the variations per site context.

ICT Center: Nakivale, Uganda

The ICT Centers in refugee settlement area following both boosting of existing community centers as well as new center and variations in curricular implementation. Existing ICT Centers are being refurbished for electricity through solar panels, connectivity, hardware (computers) and management support. The ICT Center Model curriculum framework complements the operations of the existing Centers while two new Centers are currently being built. There are further incoming requests and proposals between local organizations and international partnerships to support electricity provision with education in the refugee resettlement and host communities.





ICT Women's Center: Mahabubnagar, India

The curricular iterations and interactions with trainees in this Center inspired the educational approach and contents of other Centers. Upon launching ICT Women's Center in December 2018, the over 450 young women have gone through the training program. The Center is powered by solar energy while offering education and job-readiness skills training.

The framework of ICT Center's curriculum content was devised by CSD education team, upon conversations and needs assessment conducted in the team's projects sites. The considerations for curriculum design were informed by needs assessments, conversations with local government leadership, education officers, educators, employers, community women, youth and students, through pilots tested in India, Myanmar, Uganda, Ghana and Rwanda.

The direct interactions and course evaluations with trainees in this Center enabled readjustments to contents that made the curriculum even more applicable and relevant for trainees. With the focus on skills desired in the local job market, contents were suggested for

Communication/English (conversational), Computer (presentations, computation, typing, social media), Business (computing and formulas, marketing and advertising), Life Skills (personal and interpersonal development, self-confidence, teamwork/collaboration and leadership).





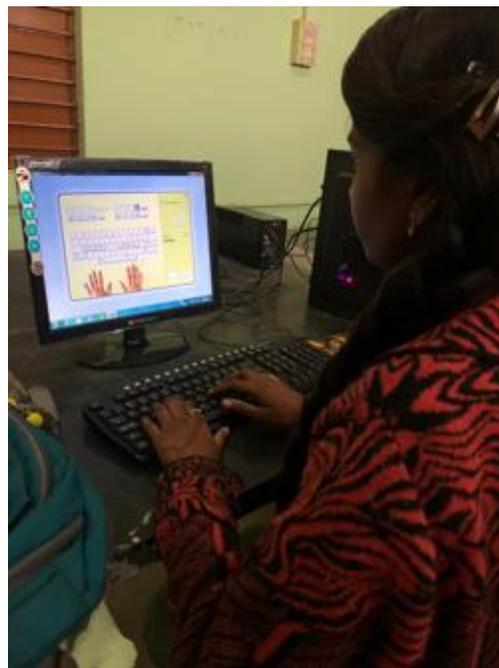
Implementing the first part of the course shed light on the need to continually reassess and adjust the curriculum, based on the existing skills of the trainees. This meant scheduling sessions so that ample practice lab sessions were built in along with scheduled core course topics. Additionally, to keep in mind the program the mission of this

program which ultimately links trained young women to employment opportunities, local employers and businesses are continually consulted, and guest speakers (local employers, professionals, women leaders) are invited to speak to the trainees on curriculum aligned topics, such as marketing, business/banking, entrepreneurship and wellness (hygiene, health, nutrition).



ICT Center: Bhopal, India

The ICT Center in Bhopal has taken an image of various community members coming together, from young women from various local schools, housewives to women in their middle ages as well as their children. The opening of the Center was marked by many interested participants which started off three cohorts within just a few weeks of operation. The artisan work of associated non-profit MSK, has provided a great décor of the space and usage of space, which enables both computer lessons as well as a space for accompanying children simultaneously. This separated area for children enable mothers to attend the class at scheduled times. Given the weak nutrition of some trainees, the health and nutrition education contents and some basic provisions are being brainstormed.





ICT Center: Yangon, Myanmar

The ICT Center in Yangon is held in a community service organization that trains young women for employment and income. There were limited opportunities and scarce income-related training for many young women who have limited access to quality education even at the basic education levels. The emphasis for this Center was particularly placed for what the trainees requested, for IT and English skills. Returned Peace Corps Volunteers who have teaching experience in English as well as background in ICT provided classes and conversation practice, and three cohorts have completed their training.





ICT Center: Mayange, Rwanda

Building upon the previous project's ICT learning and scholarship via Connect To Learn program, the ICT Center in Mayange pairs vocational training with the new ICT Center curriculum. The young scholars have been learning basic foundations from previous projects, but now have an opportunity to strengthen and continue their learning on their trade-related skills, such as business, communication and English skills that will help contribute to their job readiness.





ICT Center: Eastern Region, Ghana

In the Eastern Region of Ghana, the program with Youth and Women Empowerment (YOWE) focuses more on supporting their existing programs. YOWE offers a range of programs including adult literacy, vocational training and advocacy initiatives for marginalized communities (women, youth and persons with disabilities). The training in artisan skills for youth include glass blowing and bead making. Areas where CSD's educational contents have been complemented are financial literacy and business planning skills. The longer vision for this partnership is to streamline the trainings into national and formal education systems via the Ministry of Education.



ⁱ https://csd.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/ICT%20Center_i4SD_CSD%20Blog_Finalwpic.pdf

Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) is positioned at the heart of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, whose research and innovative solutions support governments and organizations around the world to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The education arm of the Center, *Connect To Learn*, is an initiative of CSD, Ericsson and Millennium Promise whose mission is to address the lack of universal access to quality education, with an emphasis on the marginalized - especially girls - in resource poor settings globally.

i4SD (Infrastructure for Sustainable Development) is a social impact design firm that uses innovation to change the way infrastructure systems are designed and operated. Their mission is to enable universal access to affordable and modern infrastructure services: Energy, Water, Transport & Connectivity. i4SD brings together traditional master planning, IoT technologies and public-private partnerships to deliver sustainable infrastructure projects providing access to essential services in traditionally undeserved areas.

