

## IEARN IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

### **Short Historic of IEARN at Congo**

During my journey in Dakar (Senegal) on November 2000, at the time of International Youth meeting "Afrilinux" about using of the free software and more especially the Linux by the young Africans in their activities. I heard spoken IEARN by a friend who has spin me the address of the web site. It was so interesting for me that I immediately visited the site and send messages for my integration in the group. I understood little English and thanks to a dictionary English-French whom I can understand the content of the site; the developed projects interested me a lot because of it never existed in my country. I expressed my desire to adhere to the projects by e-mail (in a bad English!) to Mr Ed Gragert that answered me positively and I have been take care by Ms Eliane(of Lebanon ) which integrated me gently in French Forum while appearing the procedure to participate in discussions of the French-speaking.

Back in the country, I had enormous difficulties to make understand the project; of as much more that it was a secondary school teachings network whereas I was simple student at Kinshasa University. For me, the project was so important and interesting for the Congolese pupils whom I was obliged to make something...

I gone in the research of schools that could accept to make projects participate their pupils. This task was very hard, since I made myself difficulties to understand the headmaster of schools because ICTs isn't accessible to schools, so a computer is luxury.

So, my task became more and more difficult; but as I have believed indeed I could have convinced the headmaster of Lumumba institute who accepted to make these projects of discussions with his pupils and other pupils of the world in the French-Forum. It is thus at the end of the month of January 2001 for the first time pupils of the Democratic Republic of Congo participated to discussions of the IEARN French-forum on the theme of " Customs and tradition". I don't have myself a computer, I collected the reflections of pupils on this theme which was written on the sheets of papers, I have am mailed these reflections then on Internet. To win of the time (since Internet is expensive) I seized these reflections on a off line computer that I put in a disk; and then it was copy and paste on the Net.

### **8ènth Yearly meeting of iEARN**

At July 2001 was the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting yearly IEARN to Cape-Town (South Africa); I didn't have means to take part there, but I held in spite of that to attend this meeting. Happy coincidence! In the same world I was selected (after a contest) to represent youth of my country to the meeting that UNOY (United Nations Youth Foundation) had organized at Cape-Town of June 30 to July 7, 2001 to the intention of Youth of all Africans countries on the prevention of wars and conflicts in Africa. Benefiting my journey and stay that have been taken in charge by UNOY, I prolonged my stay of one week in order to attend the 8ènth yearly meeting of IEARN that would have to begun one day after, that is July 8. My objective was to meet organizers of the network in

order to understand what made himself more and more and how I can make participate schools of my country.

The most moving moment for me was at opening ceremony during which took place the presentation of delegations coming from around the world; the majority was composed more than one person. When it came the moment to present the delegate of the Democratic Republic of Congo I was panicked (that I surmounted), to get only stand up in front of many persons which I don't know and that no one of them knows me before. In spite of that I was stand up! I immediately made myself of friends, since some people have appreciate my courage. The meeting with Edgard, Eliane, Losira, Aminata, Diane Medless and another was a great encouragement.

I was joyful to make this experience that carried me how coordinating IEARN activities in Democratic Republic of Congo.

Presently, activities always continue with pupils of the Lumumba institute which participate in discussions with the other pupils of the world in the French forum. But difficulties homes the same; lack of computer and Internet connection. While leaning on the Youth association that I lead " Initiative-young ", I do with pupils of some schools training on using of computer since they don't have course of computer in their school program.

Xavier Ndona

## **IEARN activities In Democratic Republic of Congo**

### **I. Vulgarization Of The ICTs In the School Surroundings**

#### **1) Context**

This activity leaves from a bitter report of the delay that accuses the Congolese youth in general and pupils in school surroundings in particular, concerning utilization and access to ICTs with computer and Internet.

Indeed:

- the lack of computer's course in the numerous schools;
- the lack of structures of framing of youngster initiation to the ICTs;
- the lack of cyber café (Internet space) to the disposition of youngsters;
- the disengagement of authorities to be able to change things;
- the deterioration of the socioeconomic situation of the country.

Conscious of this reality, us we are hired in an active voluntary service within the association " Initiative-Jeunes" to raise this challenge to train other youngsters especially those in school surroundings to the utilization of the computer and Internet. This action allows pupils to be capable to use the computer and by Internet to enter in contact with the other pupils around the world through the IEARN network.

It is in this very difficult socioeconomic context, accentuated since 4 years by the war in our country that we committed to make something to give a little hope to the most underprivileged pupils.

## **2) Objectives:**

- To train pupils on using of the computer;
- To allow pupils of the D.R. of Congo to come out of the isolation and to make hear themselves their voice and reflection through in the network;
- To take off the myth that plane on the computer and the Internet
- To cause the taste and the interest to the using of the ICTs
- To allow pupils the access to the knowledge through ICTs and to fully enjoy some;

## **3) Difficulties in these activities**

We meet, certainly, a lot of difficulties in the achievement of these activities. These last summarize themselves by the lack material, there are lack of computers and Internet connection. Schools that participate in the IEARN's projects don't have any computers; we are obliged to rent computers to try to give back more convenient our training. This exercise becomes more and more hard since we are a voluntary young man. The local partners are not much interesting to these kinds of project.

For take part on Internet to French Forum discussions , pupils write their reflections on the sheets of paper; we learn them seize themselves or we make it on a computer off line, then to post it on Internet in a cyber café. Other pupil reactions return them and so forth.

## **4) Methodology of initiation**

Of convenient manner, we displace computers to the school and then the sitting makes himself in two stages:

- A theoretical sitting on the structure of a computer;
- A convenient sitting, during which pupils will have to touch and to manipulate the computer by turns.

## **5) Tentative of solution:**

We have initiate a project that for the creation of a center of formation and information on the ICTs that will not only be to the disposition of a school, but of numerous schools that miss the computer tool and whose pupils feel enormous difficulties to reach there. We are until this day in search of partners that can sustain this project that is a carrier of hope the youngsters schoolchild's of Kinshasa to have access to the ICTs as in other heavens.

So, we call for all physical or moral person to be able to help us to achieve it.

If you want sustain us in bringing everything that you can: computers, connection, books either other contributions, please contact us above to the address in order to receive copy of the project:

INITIATIVE-JEUNES

E-mail: initiatives@netcourrier.com

Av. Mpudi 30B/bis Matete

B.P: 958 Kinshasa-Limete

Democratic Republic of Congo

## **II. SENSITIZATION ON STRUGGLE AGAINST HIV/AIDS IN THE SCHOOL SURROUNDINGS**

### **a) Motivation**

Basing on the reports of the specialized organisms of United Nations notably the OMS and UN/AIDS are seen that there is propensity of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on youth in our country.

On more than 51 million inhabitants, one considers at 8 % of the population affected by the HIV. The rate of prevalence of the AIDS is 6,2 % and the indication devastating is situated between 0,5 and 1 %. The young people are the most touched with 43 % of young people the trance of age of which varies between 15 and 39 years. The prevalence of the HIV/ AIDS is more important at the girls from 20 to 29 years old and the young men from 30 to 39 years old. The average age of the first sexual intercourse fell and is of 12 years.

This situation is become accentuated because:

- They are not into the school programs of the public establishments at the secondary level the lessons on the reproductive health and prevention lessons about HIV/AIDS.
- Also in our country the topics about sexuality are taboo between parents and children; there are not conversations on HIV/AIDS in many families.

Thus, according to this anxious and dark situation, we commit ourselves to give our best to sensitive pupils and other youngest about danger and risks of HIV/AIDS; and awareness on the means of prevention that they can use.

### **b) Purposes:**

- Sudden awareness of the danger that youth runs facing AIDS.
- To bring in the school surroundings the necessary information on the AIDS in view to decrease the risk youth of exhibition on this disease.
- To create a space of a real dialogue between youngsters on topics considered "taboos" in short to dissipate all misunderstandings and the bad current interpretations.

- To sensitize on means of prevention and precautions to avoid to either expose themselves and to expose others peoples to the contamination.
- To give back pupils actors and more active in the dynamics of the struggle against the HIV/AIDS.

### **c) Strategies**

To achieve this objectives we are going to process by:

- Video-forum: Projection of a film on the HIV/AIDS;
- To hold a dialogue on taboo topics; educational approach by pair, that is, the education of the young people by the young people to enable pupils to ask some questions which they can't ask to their parents;
- Distribution of brochures auto-education and information kits on the HIV/AIDS.