telecentre.org

community

technology

people

telecentre.org

community.

Telecentres, telecottages, village knowledge centres, CTCs, telehuts, community multimedia centres: whatever they're called, wherever they are, people gather in them to share technology, use the Internet, learn new skills, tackle local social issues, face common challenges, and empower their communities. They are part of a vibrant worldwide movement.

telecentre.org exists to build bridges between people working in telecentres around the world. We're about sharing knowledge and learning together. We're about reinforcing a global movement by finding ways that people, communities and networks can connect over common issues. We're about telecentres getting stronger and better, together.

We believe that networks are the key to strengthening telecentres—networks that help people working in telecentres to share resources, improve skills, and innovate services. Telecentres working together are far more able to:

- improve their own **financial strength**, **technical know-how**, and **management abilities**, to serve more people in better ways

- develop and share **new social enterprise models**, training methods, and community services for telecentres and networks to adapt and use easily

- share information and learning on key issues like **business planning**, **fundraising**, **outreach**, and **community development**.

We want telecentres to be stronger, more vibrant, and better at what they do. We want to help fuel a global movement that innovates together. We want communities to join the information society on their own terms. That's what telecentre.org is about.

At telecentre.org social values are key!

All telecentre.org partners have commited to a common set of values that guide our work. These values include a focus on social mission, free knowledge sharing, transparency, collaboration, and learning. They also include a firm commitment to technology neutrality. Telecentres should use the technology that they believe is most appropriate for the communities they serve.

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Telecentres help people to overcome isolation and poverty, to better access medical and government services, and to create new economic opportunities. Telecentres catalyze new voices, so people can teach each other about the world, and the world about themselves. They help communities to participate in the knowledge economy on their terms.

technology.

Housed at IDRC, telecentre.org makes social investments and provides services that strengthen grassroots telecentre networks. These networks give people managing telecentres the raw materials they need to succeed: training, support, marketing, and technology. They also help telecentre people to learn and innovate together, to make technology more useful for the communities they serve.

telecentre.org social investments are provided to networks working at the national or regional level. These investments furnish telecentre people with financial resources to come together, and to build the friendships and trust that make networks possible. The investments also underwrite costs of new network-based services for telecentres: training programs, support lines, knowledge sharing, innovation. Things that make telecentres easier to run, and better for users.

telecentre.org also offers support services directly to networks, such as event facilitators from existing grassroots networks, business planning coaches with experience in social enterprise, and website tools that assist in the creation of online communities. Knowing that networks need nurturing and facilitation, we believe that services like these are essential to helping networks thrive.

The services are offered on a low-cost or no-cost basis to telecentres anywhere in the world.

At a global level, telecentre.org connects national networks to each other, highlights the best telecentre news and training materials, and generally shines a light of the good work of telecentres around the world. This is done through telecentre.org events, websites, and other activities that create stronger global telecentre movement.

With financial support from IDRC, Microsoft and SDC, telecentre.org social investments and services are provided to networks of telecentres working together. We do not provide funding for the creation or maintenance of individual telecentres.

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Each day, the telecentre movement grows deeper and broader, bringing closer a future where more telecentres in more places will allow everybody equal access to the knowledge society. It's a future that we need to make happen. It's a future that can happen if we work together.

people.

telecentre.org is investing in a future where people running telecentres are constantly connected to each other, sharing ideas, swapping resources, and lending a helping hand. This is a future with vibrant telecentres in hundreds of thousands of communities around the world. It's a future where information and knowledge are available to all.

As a starting point, we are making social investments that support the work of seven

regional telecentre networks. We are planning investments in:

- **Chile**, with the ATACH network, to support telecentres moving beyond access and training, into new e-government and local democracy efforts

- **India**, with the National Alliance for Mission 2007, to forge a train-the-trainer program to eventually build a pool of hundreds of thousands of skilled village knowledge workers

- **Mozambique**, with, UNESCO's Community Multimedia Centre program and others, to create a help centre that will provide training, technical support, and knowledge sharing services to telecentres across the country

- **South Africa**, with the Universal Service Agency, Microsoft Digital Villages SangoNet and others, to help small telecentre operators find ways to improve their social enterprise skills

- **Sri Lanka**, with Sarvodaya and eSriLanka, to set up a national network of social entre- preneurs and community organizers, to share different approaches to running telecentres

- **Uganda**, where UgaBytes will extend the support and training services that it offers to telecentres across East Africa

- **The Americas**, with the Telecentres of the Americas Partnership, to create an exchange program through which telecentre operators across the hemisphere learn from one another.

We're also working with a number of partners to build out global services that support the capacity of telecentre networks. This includes work with **TakingITGlobal** to create an online 'ecosystem' that connects telecentre websites in dozens of countries; and a series of workshops with **NESsT** that will provide social enterprise coaching and business planning support for telecentre networks.

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telecentre.org...

is a collaborative initiative connecting telecentres, networks, innovators, social investors and other interested groups who believe that information and communications technology, used locally, strengthens individuals and the communities where they live.

Hosted by Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC), we invest in actions that bolster the global telecentre movement to benefit small telecentres directly. We make these investments in existing and emerging telecentre networks that provide services and learning opportunities to people working on the ground in local telecentres.

telecentre.org's founding social investors include Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Microsoft Unlimited Potential Program and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). This partnership will expand to include new groups over time.

The **International Development Research Centre** is a public corporation created by the Parliament of Canada in 1970 to help developing countries use science and technology to find practical, long-term solutions to the social, economic, and environmental problems they face.

Microsoft Corporation is a global technology leader committed to innovation and broadening digital inclusion through its Unlimited Potential program, which enhances technology skills of undeserved young people and adults through community telecentres.

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation is Switzerland's international cooperation agency responsible for overall coordination of development activities and cooperation with Eastern Europe, as well as humanitarian aid.

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