

Twinning for e-inclusion and education

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Summary of workshop results

Participants to the workshop:

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During the workshop the following issues were discussed:

- e-exclusion factors
- technology importance
- community building
- blended approach
- how do we build a network of experiences
- what do we understand by twinning
- what are the hidden costs?

e-side

Access to technology

Access to training

social side

Most of the time we are talking of people that haven't full rights in their community;
They are in a way deprived of the access to the community itself

e-inclusion vs e-exclusion

Talking of e-inclusion is coping with the causes of exclusion

Double reflection on technology aspects and community aspects.

How can we use ICT to reinsert people in their community? As a paradox, we must say that technology isn't the key: **Technology itself isn't making the difference.**

The key question is how can we change attitudes,

- self esteem of the youth – able to do things and be recognized for it school dropouts - education is of no value to them – **the challenge is to re-establish the value of education.**

These kids have a lot to teach – create connections with other children – mediation work. Excluded young people are enthusiastic about the fact that “someone cares”. In this process these factors are relevant:

- parents' cooperation to be actors of the process
- teachers' willingness

Then, the key topic is to build community which is a real life issue and not a virtual matter. Building community is a matter of trusting each other. Participation issue is then crucial to make inclusion – and e-inclusion possible.

First assumption : successful schemes are based on real experiences answering to real needs in the community.

Identified risk: Teachers resilience towards change and innovation.

The blended approach

“e-inclusion is inclusion with ICT and not inclusion through ICT”

E-inclusion scheme should be based on an integrated learning environment.

Example:

5 computers – collaborative project in school

not all students can work on the computer

how to be sure that people interact?

Breaking the idea that computers are essential for collaborative projects

Start with a face to face approach

Create sub-group of learning centres

- One group talking to elderly about traditions and dances

searching for answers, bringing ideas, sharing them, first face to face then on the computer

How to add value to each other experience?

Networking and cooperation are the key elements to advance innovation processes.

What do we expect from a cooperative process?

Part of the cooperative process is to become more and more a team.

What lies behind the constitution of a network of experiences?

Social recognition

- Many teachers start exchanging with parents and other teachers; social recognition or interaction;
- “Las ferias del proyecto” – open doors in the school – to share the project and show what they are doing;
- to find the printout on the walls

Economic cooperation

ex; no electricity from 2 to 7; but they have cybercafes so you can make a deal and fill them with students and teachers

Media coverage

So what is twinning?

Discussion starts about twinning and cooperation: for some of us twinning requires differences in the starting conditions; if not cooperation. For others twinning is about connection with similar people; to find common points

Certain lack of definition.

Paradox: Another blended vision of twinning

Real twinning vs. virtual twinning – why to see each other if we have ICT based schemes

On-line and off-line approach (blended approach)

More funds available for travel in Africa than in the US. (to think again about funds distribution)

Is it a risk of distortion?

twinning = multidimensional concept

Allows you to partner with others on a cross-ethnic basis.

Twinning people with similar needs – i.e. Lefo (www.lefo.org) Iearn (www.learns.org) - Thinkquest (www.thinkquest.org)

Enable people from different countries to come together and create a new project (Global Junior Challenge)

The practical dimension

Concretely, the workshop showed possible collaborations with Bangladesh and Kenyan projects.

Exchanges of experiences constitute the first step to be taken

Twinning vs. sustainability

Telecenters charity initiative with a curriculum programme so that they can be employed for commercial tasks.

Go for some kind of organic partnership : come on and join in!

Not creating formal twin structures but some more organic communities.

Keypoint = sharing needs

Needs could be the same but strategies will be different; esoteric framework (and not so formal) where people can identify their needs.



Hidden costs

The general idea that technology access is free.

- Difficulty to identify ideas;

- Money required for quality project; or can you do things without money
2 types of approach – formal and more organic

- central – periphery tensions

You try to do cooperation with national organizations. You need to go to the periphery. Examples: for Concord it was not possible to work with MIT; The same in Colombia; partner with University de las Amazonas was much easier than with University de las Andes.

Relationship between the periphery and the center

North – south solidarity model doesn't work. The key is in trying understanding each other

- Language barrier

- Time barrier

- difficulty to go beyond the interactivity given by the machine to reach a truly participative dimension at the community level.