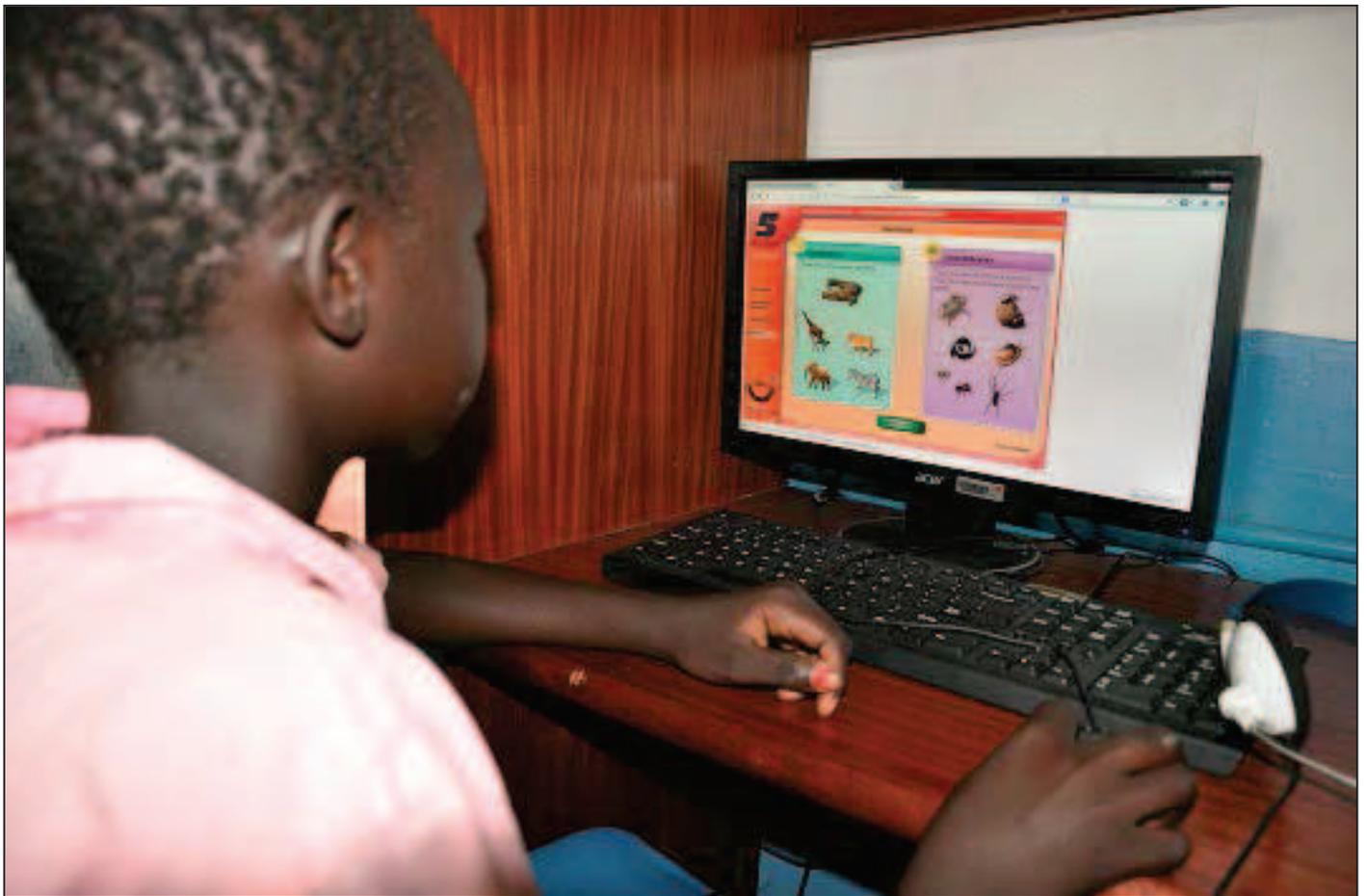# World Vision

END OF PROJECT REPORT
Community Learning Centres Project
KENYA

Faith, aged 10, learns how to use a computer at the Kitengei Community Learning Centre.
Photo: Dennis Mosota/World Vision

Project overview

The UN Millennium Development Goal of digital inclusion called for global partnerships to support poor communities to access Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), specifically through the internet and mobile telephones.

Many societies across the world use these technologies to share important information and knowledge. However access and availability is a major problem for the rural poor. The Community Learning Centres (CLCs) project aimed to address this imbalance.

In rural Kenya literacy levels are low, which means there is limited dissemination of health and other development issues in print media. Many people die from preventable diseases due to a lack of information that can help them make informed decisions about their health. The concept of CLCs follows the model of a traditional African village in providing a central location where a community can come together to learn, access information and communicate with each other, enabled by ICTs.

Following the establishment of CLCs in three districts, children and families are saving money and time by having access to information and technology within walking distance of their homes. Teachers are using resources at the Community Learning Centres to plan their school program, calculate student examination results, and stay informed since children are using the resources to learn by themselves and are now challenging their teachers with questions on different topics.

Project length: October 2012 – September 2015

The goal of this project was to enable and enhance access to health and development knowledge, to create informed, empowered and healthy communities.

Key project activities included:

➢ strengthening vulnerable children, youth and community members' knowledge of development information and their ability to communicate this information to others;
➢ improving access to and use of quality information by children, youth and community members to encourage positive social change; and
➢ improving access to and proper use of technology by children, youth and community members.

Progress and achievements

Strengthening vulnerable children, youth and community members' knowledge of development information and their ability to communicate this information to others

➢ In FY15, 45 people completed training through the CLCs to have their information technology skills recognised by the Institute of Advanced Technology (IAT). This has sparked interest in other community members, who have since begun working towards the same goal. Becoming certified with the IAT will make community members more employable and raise their incomes, which in turn will raise the living standards for many more people in the community.

Snapshot of project achievements, 2012-2015*

- **6,165 people** have accessed information through the CLCs.

- **5,975 people** have visited and used CLC facilities.

- **18 communities of practice** have been formed for the continuous exchange of information, including through community newsletters.

- **5,220 children** have completed training in the use of information and communication technologies.

- **All three CLCs** have been equipped with electronic encyclopedias and other teaching and learning aids.

- **235 youth and community members** have been trained in community communication and how to generate and share local information.

*Source: End of project evaluation report, September 2015

➢ Through a partnership with Camara Education, a not-for-profit organisation that provides affordable and high quality ICTs pre-loaded with educational software to schools and education institutions, communities can replicate the Community Learning Centres in schools. This year, nine schools were equipped with computers from Camara.

➢ The CLCs are run by local committees which have now been established as community-based organisations with proper legal status. The project has provided committee members with training on financial management, resource mobilisation and business administration so they can sustainably run and manage the CLCs by themselves.

➢ CLC committees are now raising money to support the centres. In Kisapuk, the CLC has initiated two income-generating activities; a steer fattening program and a greenhouse. In Kiteng'ei, the CLC runs a maize mill for profit and has raised enough to also fund the roofing of two classrooms in the local primary school. Committees are also exploring ways to advocate for resources, including petitioning the local government for assistance.
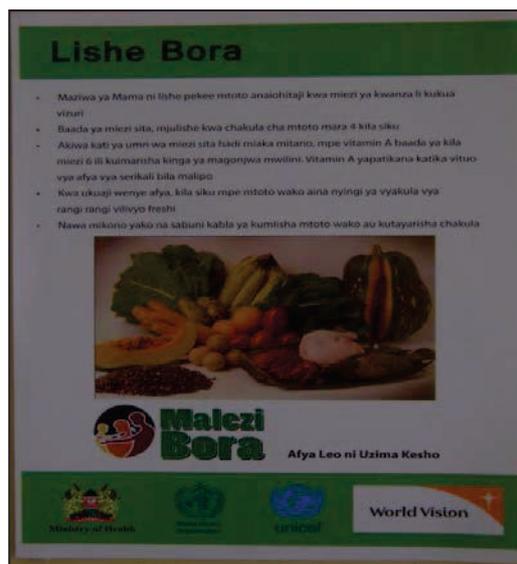

Students use the computer lab at the Kisapuk CLC.
Photo: World Vision

Improved access to and use of quality information by children, youth and community members to encourage positive social change

➢ The CLCs are becoming important meeting points for various community groups to discuss and share information on health and development and other important issues. Through local schools, the CLCs have established children's health, reading and radio listening clubs where children can access important information about health and development.

➤ Children are beginning to advocate in their communities on issues that affect them, such as child protection and early marriage. The Communication for Development method has been instrumental in empowering children to share their views. Other community members are sharing information with each other on best practices in farming, food security and drought management.

➤ Access to digital content and books in schools has improved, and many children are opting to attend CLCs to study on their own, without pressure from their teachers or parents. During a recent nationwide teachers' strike, so many children used the CLC library in one district to study that another classroom had to be made available because the library could not accommodate them all. Some youth are now pursuing online courses at home to improve their employment prospects.

An example of health information posters on display in the CLCs. Photo: World Vision

➤ Through exchange visits between the three CLCs supported by the project, people have learned from each other, particularly about financial management and income generation, and communities are sharing information.

➤ Community Health Volunteers have access to a wider range of health information from the internet, books and Ministry of Health publications, enabling them to provide better quality healthcare to their communities. In Katito District, the Community Health Volunteers have used CLC facilities to automate their records, hence improving service delivery. They have also designed and displayed preventative health and hygiene posters for the community. An end of project evaluation found that children and their caregivers are aware of and are practising safe sanitation and hygiene as a result of information disseminated by Community Health Volunteers within the CLCs. Public health officers in Mtito-Andei and Kisapuk reported that use of health and hygiene information acquired at CLCs had led to a reduction in cases of common hygiene-related diseases including diarrhoea and typhoid.
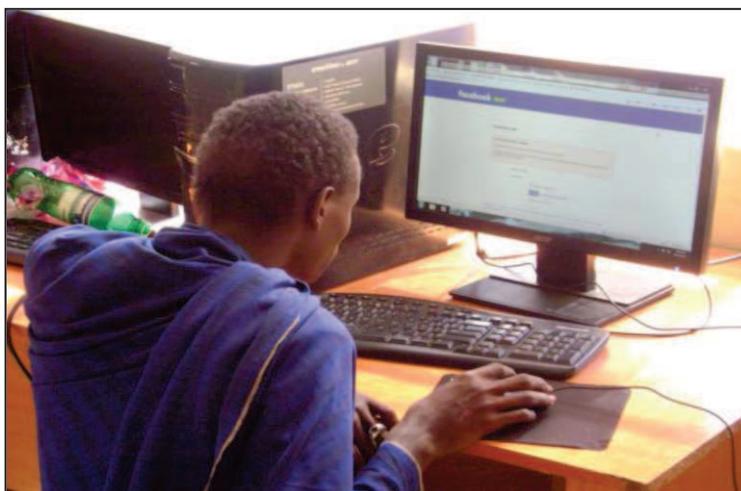

How people are using the CLCs to improve their lives*

- **CHILDREN** are learning from the electronic encyclopaedia and sharing their knowledge with peers.

- **YOUTH** can prepare CVs, apply for jobs online and access government portals to complete forms, saving time and money.

- **TEACHERS** can now type, print and document exam results.

- **CROP FARMERS** are learning about new farming technologies and improved management of livestock and poultry diseases, and they can now access market information more easily.

- **CATTLE FARMERS** use the communications network to inquire about livestock prices and monitor weather patterns to protect their animals against drought.

* Source: End of project evaluation report, September 2015

Improved access to and proper use of technology by children, youth and community members.

➢ Children and youth in particular are now comfortable with technology and are using it in their daily lives. An end of project evaluation revealed that children and youth were using computer-based training to study the school curriculum and they reported that this had enhanced their academic performance.

➢ Through the internet the community is connected to the world, and children in the project area have access to a variety of information that they did not have just a few years ago. Digital content has expanded what children are taught in class. Teachers report that they have used the facilities to set and store

Youth are using computers and the internet to share information and apply for jobs and drivers' licences.
Photo: World Vision

examinations, develop information systems for pupil record keeping, and integrate information technology into their curriculum. They say they are now studying themselves in order to stay ahead of their students, since students are now challenging them by asking questions about subjects they have encountered through the CLCs.

➢ The Community Learning Centres have expanded, with their replication in nine schools. This brings technology closer to communities that are far from the CLCs, and will contribute to people improving their employment prospects and livelihoods in these areas. In addition, several county governments are borrowing from the project's CLCs model and replicating it to bring technology to other areas of Kenya.

Project adjustments and challenges

➢ More and more girls and women are accessing the resources available at the centres, a huge improvement from the beginning of the project. This is due to constant advocacy to overcome the gender gap to help women take leadership roles and feel confident about speaking up about what they would like to achieve with their lives.

➢ Although the internet is an important tool for the CLCs, the project had to put controls in place to safeguard children, youth and the community from accessing potentially harmful information. Staff were trained to ensure that the centres are only used to provide information that will positively impact the communities.

➢ The CLCs in Kisapuk and Kiteng'ei are both connected to the internet using VSAT technology. However, reliability of connection is linked to weather patterns as solar panels are used as the power source. This can be addressed by use of a hybrid system where the centre is also connected to the main electricity supply, which is nearby and easy to access.

Thank you for your support

Thank you for your support of the Community Learning Centres Project in Kenya. Thanks to your generosity, children and communities have access to information and technology that can help them learn and make informed decisions about their health and other development needs.

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