

ICT for Exemplary school future education Libya tomorrow

PRESS RELEASE

Project "ICT for Exemplary school future education Libya tomorrow"

In five years a sicilian company will give online access to 4,600 Libyan schools to guarantee a European standard of education to one and a half million students

The scholastic literacy project involving approximately one and a half million Libyan students between the ages of 6 and 18 years will be carried out by a Sicilian company. This company has signed an agreement with the Gaddafi Foundation that is chaired by Saif Al Islam Gaddafi, son of the head of state Muammar Gaddafi. The project entitled "ICT for Exemplary school future education Libya tomorrow", will give online access to 4600 schools in Lybia and will transform all classrooms into "smart classrooms" equipped with interactive electronic whiteboards, equipment for telepresence and virtual laboratories. Using this network only one teacher will be needed to give simultaneous lessons in different schools throughout the country; an educational web tv will also be activated.

The Gaddafi Foundation strongly desired the project to support the literacy process of the school aged population and to overcome the technological-cultural gap in the country. Temix has developed a technological platform that will give schools in Libya online access, whilst the Dutch consortium DCVI will supply the technology used for the smart classrooms and software for teaching. The ENI North Africa B.V. Libyan Branch will also participate in the project.

Tripoli and Beida are among the cities chosen for the first experimental classroom link. These cities have been chosen as they have a large distance, of approximately one thousand kilometres, between them and have different morphological characteristics. This will demonstrate that the technological platform, developed by Temix, is able to overcome the country's geographical obstacles and infrastructural deficiencies. It also demonstrates that where there aren't telecommunication networks and broadband connections this project can be realized using satellite systems.

3700 schools currently exist in Libya and another 900 are to be built by 2015. In 5 years, in different phases, the 4600 schools in the country should all be online, to give a basic education to approximately one and a half million students.

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The first smart classroom to go ahead – the project was launched on Tuesday 3 November with the first pilot link between “As Baha El Sobho” school in Tripoli and the school in Beida. Human resource representative of the Gaddafi Foundation Rashid Sweekh, the Primary Education minister in Libya Kadijja Abu Daker Ahmed, Public Affairs Officer from the American Embassy in Libya Joshua N. Baker, the Temix delegate Armando Caravella and the DCVI delegate Robert Simon were both present at the ceremony that opened the “new course” of Libyan schools.

The Libyan army opened the ceremony in the Tripoli school playing the national anthem. Students gave their welcome speech in Arab, English, French and Italian in a room filled with national and local government officials, teachers and journalists from the Libyan press.

Greetings were made on behalf of Saif Al Islam Gheddafi by **the research representative of the Gaddafi Foundation Rashid Sweekh** he also underlined the spirit of the project. <The Gaddafi Foundation – he said - in agreement with the government, has taken on the responsibility of launching the developing process of all the schools in the country on the basis of teaching standards shared at an international level, this will allow our students to have the possibility to reach the same cultural level as that of their peers worldwide. We have chosen the most up-to-date telecommunication and education systems to replace old methods that have already been set up in the East. This has demonstrated that Libya wants to grow and bring up our children in a better way. With smart classrooms it will be possible to have a uniformed teaching level throughout the entire country as already exists in the rest of the world, so our students' cultural preparation will be equal to that of their eastern peers>.

After Sweekh, **the delegate of Temix Armando Caravella** spoke. <The Gaddafi Foundation – he explained – asked us to come up with a telecommunication platform that would be able to eradicate the cultural gap of the country over a period of 15-20 years. A technological platform that would overcome geographical distances and infrastructural differences between larger cities and small rural centers was necessary to start a capillary process of education of the new generation and promote the learning of trades. The most difficult challenge was to connect a large versatile technological platform thought of as a hybrid high capacity network, we are talking about multimedia services that need bands that can go over 2MB, with extreme simplicity of its use of its applications. We have worked on interfaces that are very intuitive and have accesible services, which will give teachers and students the ability to interact without the support of technical staff>.

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Great commotion among the Tripoli students and those from Beida during the link up of classrooms between the two schools. Some students came up to the monitor and started talking to their peers from the other school. There was enthusiasm amongst the teachers who were able to discuss with their colleagues subjects such as syllabus and the teaching methods used. **After the telepresence session between the schools, the smart classroom in Tripoli was opened.** A DCVI teacher gave the lesson using the interactive electronic whiteboard, computer and biochemical and electrochemical equipment connected to the PC to promote the learning of scientific and technical subjects.

The technological platform for e-learning – It will be possible to use all the technology to link the schools using an integrated telecommunication infrastructure developed by Temix. This includes using: broadband where it is available in the large cities; Wimax for more peripheral zones such as rural centers where there still is no broadband connection but where central telecommunication exists; and finally communication systems via satellite to reach even more peripheral centers bordering the desert where broadband services do not exist yet.

The smart classroom applications – teachers and students can use the most up-to-date information technology (IT) this includes **high quality video conferencing**, telepresence, an extremely high resonance connection that is able to give perceptions of presence of the speaker thanks to the natural dimensions of the pictures shown on 50 inch screens and with strong audio services. The use of the video conferencing in classes allows a uniformed plan of study, promoting learning and guaranteeing a high standard of preparation in all Libyan schools, even those which are situated in the remote province of towns that have been cut out of the education system up to now due to problems whether structural, logistical or general difficulties of the teaching staff. Furthermore, using **electronic interactive whiteboards**, only one teacher is needed to reach different schools throughout the country and carry out the lesson as if they were actually physically present in each of the single classrooms. In each class with the eventual presence of a tutor it will be the students themselves that will interact with the teacher and locally manage the lessons. The technological platform developed by Temix, as a matter of fact, has been created to be used in an extremely simple intuitive way by the teachers and students without the need of technicians or experts in ICT. Another of the many applications provided by the technological platform will be **collaborative work** that will allow teachers to manage the syllabus and share documents (pupil's

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grades, professional updates and so on) from kilometres of distance. Furthermore a series of services are scheduled such as **school tv** which is an IP-TV platform in which a closed circuit channel will be available to every school where it will be possible to insert student's work such as essays, research, also performances, mini documentaries, class reports and to then publish these on a national scholastic network. Also **scholastic laboratories** will be computerized so that Libyan schools will represent the first step to starting work and training for a trade, they will have a predominant role in the education environment. Finally, the possibility to follow **experimental courses** will promote the learning of scientific and technological subjects and the ability to concentrate on the pupils.

These educational instruments together with intranets and dedicated telephone lines will allow all students to have an adequate and homogeneous basic preparation. Also, fewer teachers will be needed to teach from one centralized centre without having to move around.

Tripoli, 4 November 2009

Press Agency