



CONNECTING HIGHER EDUCATION:

Enabling ICT for the Next Generation in Sub-Saharan Africa

A FORIS TELECOM DIGITAL INCLUSION PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

Foris Telecom (wireless broadband mobile WiMAX carrier) is forging partnerships with leading universities in Sub-Saharan Africa in order to enhance the ICT capacity of students and faculty by enabling increased, affordable access to knowledge and information. Through the Connecting Higher Education Program, students and faculty will have the opportunity to purchase discounted connectivity packages bundled with low-cost laptops, allowing for wireless broadband internet connectivity anytime, anywhere.

CONNECTING STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Universities have a critical role to play in efforts to stimulate national economic and social development and serve as leaders of innovation. Access to technology and full participation in today's marketplace of ideas through the Internet is a key requirement to fulfilling this potential. Indeed, ICT is essential to enhancing the capacity of universities to provide quality training and conduct high caliber research. However, the vast majority of African higher education institutions and their students have limited access to the benefits of technology. Underserved by high-speed Internet, universities on the African continent are increasingly left behind as information production and dissemination move down technological pathways to which they have little or no access. Existing approaches to this challenge are typically confined to increasing technology capacity on campus, requiring large investments in infrastructure and maintenance.

Foris Telecom's Connecting Higher Education Partnership Program provides an effective, sustainable, innovative solution to this challenge by providing affordable

access and broadband wireless connectivity to students and faculty at their homes, offices and on the go throughout urban centers in Africa. Moreover, the program opens the door to additional opportunities such as the development of new educational tools and e-learning programs that enable high quality, motivating learning experiences. By providing essential ICT capacity and access, the Connecting Higher Education Program will contribute to preparing African university students for success in the 21st century.

CONNECTING HIGHER EDUCATION PACKAGE

The Connecting Higher Education Program will offer the following ICT package to students and faculty of the University:

- Netbook + WiMAX modem
- Broadband connectivity (256 kb)

This package will be offered through an affordable, phased payment subscription plan of 36 monthly installments.

KEY DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS: Harnessing ICT for delivering the MDG's

Access: Connecting Higher Education offers a sustainable alternative to mainstream development programs that often support the purchasing and distribution of laptops in order to promote the goal of increased access. Foris Telecom facilitates a market-driven model based on the principles of affordability, accessibility and innovation. Key success factors of this approach include:

- dramatically reduced prices (approximately 50% less than found in the current market)
- flexible payment methods (installments, pay as you go plans, adding ICT package to tuition payments, adding connectivity/laptop payments to standard student loans, combining connectivity packages to existing employee installment plans for laptops that deduct payments from their salaries)
- innovative method of bundling laptops and connectivity
- Foris Telecom's WiMAX network allowing wireless mobile broadband access throughout urban centers where universities are located

ICT4D: The program enables countless possibilities for utilizing ICT to deliver programs that advance multiple development goals. Examples of such programs can include:

- Youth employment & entrepreneurship
- Capacity building & training
- Health education & awareness
- E-learning

KEY UNIVERSITY BENEFITS: Leading the Way towards an Information Society

- 24/7 connectivity and access for students/faculty from anywhere in the city
- Increased ICT capacity and skills for students
- Increased participation of students and faculty in global intellectual communities
- Enhanced student-faculty interaction
- Creation of technological platform for future e-learning initiatives
- Cost savings for students who will need to spend less money on travel to and from the university for access to computer facilities
- University saving on physical space and infrastructure required for computer labs, with increased computer usage available from home or anywhere in the city
- Branding of University as leader in ICT, including co-branding of laptops with university logo
- Revenue sharing with universities of bundled connectivity/access packages
- Possible establishment of internet café on campus

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Connecting Higher Education program is currently being developed in Uganda and Mozambique, with additional countries to follow in the future. The program's innovative model presents numerous partnership opportunities that can enhance its success and ultimate impact. As such, Foris Telecom is spearheading a diverse consortium of local, national, regional and global public and private partners to lead the Connecting Higher Education Program forward.

Universities

Universities are the primary partners in the program, working together with Foris Telecom to jointly design and tailor the program to meet the specific needs and objectives of their institutions. Key features of partnership include:

- Revenue-sharing arrangement of connectivity/access packages whereby the university receives a percentage of income generated from subscriptions
- Joint marketing & distribution of connectivity packages on campus
- Collaboration to leverage connectivity/access offering for the development of advanced e-learning and technology programs for the university

Partnerships are under way with the following leading universities in the first two countries of program operation:

- Makerere University, Uganda (37,000 students)
- Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique (20,000 students)

Banks & Financial Institutions

Banks and financial institutions have a key role to play in the financing and guarantee of the phased payment plans, an essential component to affordability. Discussions are in advanced stages with regional banks and financial institutions, and local banks are being approached in this regard. Additional financing partners are being sought for the program.

Netbook and Notebooks Vendors

Foris Telecom is exploring partnerships with various types of vendors that can supply low-cost laptops for the program. Key attributes of preferred program vendors include competitive pricing and innovative business models.

Content & Application Providers

Connecting Higher Education offers a strategic platform for the integration of relevant content and applications onto the connected hardware devices. Foris Telecom is identifying potential business partners that can facilitate the generation of relevant localized content that will add meaningful substance and functionality to the access and broadband services offered to program participants. Such alliances will complement and enhance the program model, while contributing to the cultivation of information societies in the countries of implementation.

- **Global** content & application providers utilize the program platform in order to offer operating systems, Office application suites, dictionaries and search engines.
- **Local** content & application providers offer useful, culturally sustaining content in local languages, relating to local circumstances as well as global realities such as edutainment content, e-Commerce and news portals.

Skills & Capacity Building Partners

Instilling skills for Internet use in general and broadband applications in particular, are necessary to ensure that users reap the maximum from information and communications technologies. Foris Telecom works with partners to develop and run ICT capacity training programs for the private and public sectors.

Governments

Foris Telecom works closely with governments in order to align itself with national ICT strategies and programs. Government participation in the Connecting Higher Education initiative can enhance the program's impact and sustainability in a variety of ways - from subsidizing ICT packages and assisting with student credit guarantees, to leveraging broadband connectivity & access for promoting university engagement in ICT4D programs.

International Development Agencies & Initiatives

The Connecting Higher Education program can serve as a powerful platform through which critical development objectives can be advanced. As such, Foris Telecom is pursuing partnerships with international development agencies and public initiatives that can leverage the company's affordable wireless broadband connectivity and bundled access offering in order to enhance their programs. The facilitation of subsidized ICT packages and credit guarantee assistance can allow for increased student participation, thereby significantly widening program impact.

Going one step further, development agencies can bring added value to their projects by integrating them into the Connecting Higher Education program framework which can serve as a mechanism for project delivery, capacity building, training, awareness raising, development-focused content, knowledge sharing, and more. A wide variety of development-related content areas can be addressed in this context, adding training and e-learning components to select university faculty programs. Finally, Foris Telecom can serve as a technology partner to regional higher education initiatives, providing competitive and tailored ICT packages (based on low cost wireless broadband bundled with laptops) to university partners of these networks.

ABOUT FORIS TELECOM

Foris Telecom is a wireless broadband mobile WiMAX carrier and Internet Service Provider that deploys and operates scalable, low cost, wireless data networks in emerging markets. The company holds triple play licenses in 15 countries in Africa and Asia, covering some 300 million people. Foris Telecom provides broadband access at dramatically reduced prices, bringing the benefits of high-speed internet services to mass populations in its target markets. The company promotes digital inclusion by partnering with governments to foster a transition to an information society through the facilitation of public-private partnerships and business alliances designed to establish a one-stop shop solution for connectivity, access, ICT skills and content. Foris Telecom is a member of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Development Sector.

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