

LEARNING ABOUT LIVING

THE ELECTRONIC VERSION OF FLHE

Newsletter, Vol.2, No 1. – February 2008

Learning about Living (LaL) is a two year project designed to use Information and Communication Technology (ICT), to teach adolescent reproductive health education to young people in Nigeria. It is designed as an educational tool that can be used in and out of school to enhance the physical, reproductive and mental well-being of young people by engaging them in the issues and giving them accurate information to make informed decisions about their sexual health.

It involves the development and implementation of an e-learning system based on the national Family Life HIV/AIDS Education (FLHE) curriculum.

In addition, LaL uses mobile phones to engage young people through a Question & Answer service, MyQuestion, and a competition service, MyAnswer, with a chance for them to win prizes monthly.

Partners

This is a multi-stakeholder project led by OneWorld UK as project managers, working with over ten Nigerian and International partners including:

- ActionAid Nigeria (AAN)
- Action Health Incorporated (AHI), Lagos
- Butterfly Works Netherlands
- Education as a Vaccine Against Aids (EVA)
- Girls' Power Initiative (GPI)
- The Federal Ministry of Education (HIV/Aids Unit)
- The Federal Ministry of Health (ARH Unit)
- MTN Foundation through their SchoolConnect Program implemented by SchoolNet
- The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC)
- World Population Foundation

Funding provided by

Oxfam Novib Netherlands; The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation USA; The Dutch Ministry through Butterfly Works

Project news

First national electronic version complete: The first version of the interactive digital e-FLHE was completed on schedule by BFW and AHI. Visit www.learningaboutliving.com to see the great job they did.

A stand alone version is available for young people who are not in school or are being taught the FLHE in school. A feedback section enables us improve the final version which will be ready by May 2008.

Launch of MyQ and MyA on mobiles: The two services were launched 20 November 2007 at a high profile event in Abuja. The service has taken off more than we anticipated with over 11,000 texts received by January 20th. See page two for more.



Panel at the launch event, 20 November 2007

Training: Training workshops for partner NGO staff, teachers from the first demonstration schools and state Ministry of Education officials in Lagos and in Cross Rivers State happened from 12-17 November 2007. In Lagos the workshop was run by AHI and BFW with 24 participants, and in Calabar by GPI and BFW with 58 participants. Another day was spent training 20 peer educators in the GPI centre to test the stand alone version.

LaL film ready: OneWorld UK has produced a nine minute film about LaL. You can watch it online here: <http://tinyurl.com/2zrm33>

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Launch of Mobile component of LaL: MyQuestion and MyAnswer

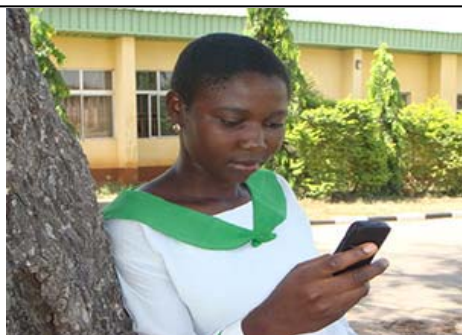
To further engage young people two mobile phone services were launched on 20 November 2007. Notable guests and stakeholders led by the Honourable Minister of State for Education 2, Mrs. Aisha Jibril Dukku, Dr. Shettima of the MacArthur Foundation, The DG of NACA and several Directors of the MTNF as well as the Senior Special Assistant to the President on the MDG, Project partners were present at the formal launch in Abuja. The event was a huge success and we thank all the supportive parties and MTN Nigeria for their event sponsorship.

MyQuestion: How it works: MyQuestion enables young people to ask questions about HIV/AIDS or reproductive health through text messages, online or using a telephone hotline. The questions are answered by trained counsellors at EVA's Abuja office.

It is free to send questions and receive answers by text message. The number, initially only available from MTN mobiles, is **38120**. Other networks will be included shortly. Questions can be emailed to MyQ@learningaboutliving.com or asked on www.learningaboutliving.com/MyQ. Answers for mobile and email will usually be received within 24 hours during the office hours of Monday to Friday 9.00-17.00, otherwise the following working day. The phone hotline, 08027192780-2, is free from Celtel phones, and standard rates from other lines.

My Answer: How it works: MyAnswer is competition aimed at motivating young people to reflect on the issues with an opportunity of winning prizes by answering a monthly question. The question of the month will be announced in radio programmes, on the LAL website, through schools and youth serving organizations. Young people can enter the competition by texting 'MyA' followed by their answer to **38120** from MTN mobiles or by completing the online form at www.learningaboutliving.com/MyA. Ten winners will be picked amongst the accurate answers, and they will be notified directly. The prizes are airtime sponsored by MTN and NACA.

Response so far: The response has been overwhelming – over 11,000 texts have been received in the first two months. EVA has had to take on extra staff to cope with the demands of providing timely and appropriate response to these questions.



Appreciation

In addition to the project partners, the project coalition would like to express our appreciation to MTN Nigeria, MTN Foundation, The DG of the National Agency for the Control of AIDS, NACA, The offices of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on the Millennium Development Goals, The Country Adviser for Packard Foundation Nigeria and to her the Honourable Minister of State for Education.

Next steps

- ❖ **Baseline survey and Test in Schools:** In January, all the partners started a baseline survey before commencing the first phase of the demonstration in schools in Lagos, Abuja and Cross Rivers State, and in the GPI centre in Calabar. This will run for an initial period from January till April/May 2008.
- ❖ **Next workshop:** A monitoring and evaluation workshop is scheduled for May 2008 in Abuja. Prior to that a monitoring visit by members of the project group from the Ministry of Education and Health and NERDC is scheduled.
- ❖ **Scaling up of MyQ and MyA:** After consolidation of the very successful start of MyQ and MyA there will be a marketing push in early 2008; and the services which currently are only available on the MTN network will be expanded to include other telco operators in order to have more young people access this crucial service. Our technology partner, Vas2Nets, is working to ensure this happens.
- ❖ **Fundraising and planning for post Feb 2009:** It is clear that this programme has the potential to go beyond the three states included in the initial funding. We have started engaging with various organisations who have expressed an interest in working with us to scale up, and planning for sustainability post February 2009.