

Learning about Living (LaL) is a two year project which uses Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to teach adolescent reproductive health education to young people in Nigeria. It has been developed as an educational tool that can be used in and out of school to improve the mental and physical wellbeing of young people by engaging them in the relevant issues and empowering them 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 to the e-learning tool, LaL uses mobile phones to engage young people through a Question and Answer service.

Partners

This is a multi-stakeholder project led by OneWorld UK and implemented with over ten Nigerian and International partners:

- 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)

Funding provided by

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

Project News

Monitoring visits to the pilot schools were conducted by members of the steering committee in May. After the development and testing of the eLearning system for LaL, the first phase of the pilot began in two schools in each state, supported by AHI in Lagos and GPI in Calabar. Feedback collected during the visit is now being collated and acted upon.

International eLearning Conference:

Learning about Living was presented at the 3rd International eLearning conference in Accra, Ghana, from May 28th – 30th. Emer, of BFW, led a demonstration session with assistance from Uju and Damilola Abokede, Project Officer from AHI. Uju, the Project Manager, also presented a paper on the theme 'Use of eLearning for the prevention of HIV/AIDS'. The team drew valuable lessons from other eLearning programs and explored potential collaborations with numerous organisations.



Emer and Damilola demonstrating Learning about Living at the 3rd International eLearning conference in Accra.



'Training of Trainers'

Training and Capacity Building Workshops:

The second stream of 'training of trainers' workshops was held in June, to prepare teachers for the next phase of the pilot. The training was facilitated by Butterfly Works and organised by the lead NGOs in each state. A total of 233 teachers and 30 peer educators have been trained so far, and 6364 students have participated directly in the program.

Evaluation Workshop and 3rd Steering Committee meeting:

The first Evaluation Meeting for the project was held in Abuja on Tuesday, June 17, 2008. It was preceded by the 3rd steering committee meeting held the previous day. Challenges facing the pilot were identified and plans to ensure its future effectiveness were agreed upon. The project team is grateful for the passion and commitment which the partners and pilot teachers continue to show. In September 2008 a new version of LAL will be ready, incorporating the changes agreed at the evaluation workshop.

Contact Learning about Living

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Project News Continued

Introducing Catherine: A new project Assistant has joined the LaL team; Catherine Okereke will be based in the Abuja office in ActionAid's premises. She can be reached on +234 703 5733040.

Novib Grantees Meeting and Field Visit with Novib: Uju and Catherine attended the NOVIB grantees meeting in Kaduna, hosted by BAOBAB. It was a great chance to meet Dr Ronke Ladipo of the Society for Family Health (SFH) who has since proved to be extremely helpful regarding the incorporation of LaL into relevant IEC material produced by SFH. A field visit to the GPI centre in Calabar was also conducted by Uju and Novib's Program Officer for Nigeria, Gertjan Van Bruchem.

Visit to Fantsaam Foundation: In June Uju visited the Fantsaam Foundation, an organisation that works with ICT in Kafanchan, northern Nigeria. They have a solar power source and impressive ICT facilities. The Foundation has since introduced LaL into the centre and we will be inviting them when we hold the training for the new state.



Right: Contributors to the first Evaluation Meeting held on June 17th in Abuja.

Update on MyQ and MyA

The mobile platform continues to be very successful and has received over 27,000 SMS messages as of mid July. The reporting system on the platform is constantly undergoing improvements, enabling us to support young people with appropriate sexual and reproductive health information. Reports which we can generate currently include the time taken to respond to answers, the preferred medium for users to ask questions, and the types of question most frequently asked. At the moment, over 90% of the questions come via SMS.

We are continuing discussions with other telco's to open the service to subscribers of these networks. Discussions are also ongoing with NACA to ensure that the SMS and web/email service offered by LaL compliments the proposed national information centre on AIDS, which NACA is spearheading. EVA, the lead partner on this is working hard and has concluded the training of the first set of Counsellors in the NACA centre. We will keep you updated on developments.

We have experienced a few technical problems on the platform, as has everyone who has a mobile phone in Nigeria in the last few months, but we are working hard with all the partners—especially Vas2Nets—to keep disruptions to the service to a minimum.

Since its inception in December, the MyAnswer service has seen over 70 people win prizes in the form of airtime donated by NACA. The Question of the month can be obtained by sending a text to '38120'. Flyers to advertise the service can be obtained from EVA.

Next Steps

- Second phase of pilot in schools will commence in September in the three states following a baseline survey which will be implemented by the lead NGOs in the three locations. Six schools will take part in FCT Abuja as well as four new schools in both Lagos and Calabar.
- A teacher training tool for the eLearning resource is being produced by BFW with AHI and should be completed by September 2008.
- We will be engaging the services of an external consultant to evaluate the pilot so far. This should be completed in October.
- A Strategic workshop to review the pilot and discuss potential paths for scale up will be held with partners and wider stakeholders by December 2008.