

A Report of the
Meeting
held under the auspices of the
United Nations Information and Communication Technologies
Task Force

Digital Bridge to Africa

The Launch of the Digital Diaspora Network – Africa (DDN-A)

Held on July 12, 2002

At the United Nations Headquarters, New York, NY



A Publication of the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force



United Nations
Information
and
Communication
Technologies
Task Force



UNFIP



DIGITAL
PARTNERS



Gruppo CERFE
CERFE - Laboratorio - ASDO

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Final Report	2
The Challenge	2
The Opportunity	2
The Meeting	2
The Digital Diaspora Network for Africa (DDN-A)	3
Meeting Events	3
The Morning Session	3
The Opportunity Technology Offers in Advancing Africa	4
The Role of Diaspora Networks in supporting ICT for Development	5
Leading Sustainable Change through Technology	6
The IndUS Entrepreneurs (TiE)	6
Overview and Organization of DDN-A	7
The Afternoon Session – Table Discussions	8
Results	8
Moving Forward	9
Appendix A: Details of Table Discussions	
Table 1	10
Table 2	13
Table 3	15
Table 4	17
Table 5	18
Table 6	19
Table 7	20
Table 8	22
Table 9	23
Table 10	24
Appendix B: Afrishare Questionnaire	
Afrishare Skills Database Form	25
Appendix C: Digital Bridge to Africa Registrant List	27
Appendix D: DDN-A Advisory Committee	30
The Roles and Responsibilities of the Advisory Committee	30

Executive Summary

In an effort to bridge the gap between the African Diaspora and partners in Africa, the United Nations ICT Task Force convened a meeting, The Digital Bridge to Africa, of leading members of the African Diaspora - influential individuals from technology corporations, foundations, and non-profit organizations. Held at the United Nations complex in New York City on July 12, 2002, over 130 leaders attended this day-long meeting to explore ways in which the combined knowledge, experiences and resources of the public and private sectors could be harnessed to effect positive and sustainable change in Africa.

The meeting served as the official launch of the Digital Diaspora Network – Africa (DDN-A), a non-profit organization that seeks to promote development in Africa and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by mobilizing the technological, entrepreneurial, and professional expertise and resources of the African Diaspora. The DDN-A is a collaborative effort of the *United Nations ICT Task Force*, the *United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP)*, the *United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)*, *Digital Partners*, and *Gruppo CERFE*.

Brought together with the growing number of organizations, corporations, foundations, and academics promoting the application of ICT to assist Africa's development, members of the African Diaspora provided a rich source of ideas, skills and support for promoting digital opportunities in Africa. The following points summarize the discussions of the day:

1. The participants thanked the United Nations, the United Nations ICT Task Force, and the partner organizations for taking the lead in convening this meeting and for its support of the development of the Digital Diaspora Network for Africa (DDN-A).

2. **AfriShare**, a network structure and a platform for engaging Africa's Diaspora community, was launched with support from Africast.com and Digital Partners. AfriShare will become a resource and knowledge-sharing facility that will also match innovative projects to mentors from the DDN-A network. A methodology will be put in place to facilitate this mentoring based on Digital Partners' successful Social Enterprise Laboratory (SEL) model.

3. The **Social Venture Fund for Africa** was launched to provide financial support for entrepreneurial activities using ICT. The fund is being launched with modest initial aims, but is intended to grow as a collaborative effort supported by individuals, foundations, development agencies and corporations. A total of USD \$16,000 was committed by participants at the meeting to launch the fund. Digital Partners will manage the funds under guidance from the Steering Committee.

4. The **DDN-A Steering Committee** was formed with several of the participants agreeing to become part of the effort. The Steering Committee charter and composition will be fleshed out over the next several weeks. Mr. John Sarpong, the CEO of Africast.org, and Ms. Awo Quaison-Sackey, the CEO of AQ Solutions, are taking the lead in forming the committee. Mr. Khan of ECOSOC, Mr. Dossal of UNFIP and Ms. Heyzer of UNIFEM have also agreed to be on the Committee.

5. Participants called for an Annual **DDN-A Digital Bridge to Africa** meeting. The participants agreed that the meeting was very useful and should become an annual event that offers participants an opportunity to meet, interact, and network. Further, such meetings should also be held in Africa itself to broaden participation and encourage effective linkages within DDN-A.

The Digital Diaspora Network for Africa will primarily work to engage individual ICT and business leaders. Consequently, the participants generally concluded that the DDN-A would be best suited to focus on economic empowerment - with a particular focus on women, youth, and the support of aspiring entrepreneurs.

**Final Report of the
Meeting of the United Nations ICT Task Force
The Digital Bridge to Africa:
The Launch of the Digital Diaspora Network – Africa (DDN-A)
July 12, 2002**

The Challenge

Given the speed with which Information Communication Technology (ICT) is developing and the breadth of their socio-economic impact, it is imperative that Africa is not excluded from the technological revolution. The use of ICT has been integrated into virtually every aspect of commerce, education, governance and civic activity in developed countries and has become a critical factor in creating wealth worldwide. Yet, in Africa, ICT has barely taken a foothold. Computer illiteracy and the lack of access to ICT are widely recognized as an increasingly powerful obstacle to the economic, civic and political development of Africa.

The Opportunity

As highlighted by the UNDP Human Development Report, many Africans in the U.S., and many others who feel committed to the development of Africa have important skills and wealth in terms of human and material resources that could effectively address Africa's challenges. Nevertheless, few avenues exist to apply these resources to the benefit of Sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, many potential ICT entrepreneurs in Africa could benefit from increased opportunities to meet and work with counterparts living outside of Africa.

The Meeting

In an effort to bridge the gap between the African Diaspora and partners in Africa, the United Nations ICT Task Force convened a meeting, The Digital Bridge to Africa, of leading members of the African Diaspora - influential individuals from technology corporations, foundations, and non-profit organizations. Held at the United Nations complex in New York City on July 12, 2002, over 130 leaders attended this daylong meeting to explore ways in which the combined knowledge, experiences and resources of the public and private sectors could be harnessed to effect positive and sustainable change in Africa.

The meeting, sponsored by The United Nations Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) Task Force, was organized by Digital Partners, a Seattle-based non-profit organization, in partnership with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and was facilitated by the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP).

The Digital Diaspora Network – Africa (DDN-A)

The meeting served as the official launch of the Digital Diaspora Network – Africa (DDN-A), a non-profit organization that seeks to promote development in Africa by mobilizing the technological, entrepreneurial, and professional expertise and resources of the African Diaspora. The objective of the organization is to build a network of entrepreneurs from Africa living in North America and Europe who will contribute to promoting digital opportunities in Africa. The DDN-A allows members to advance their own interests through collaboration and the exchange of ideas, while meeting the broader goal of supporting ICT-enhanced development activities in their home countries. The DDN-A is a collaborative effort of the United Nations ICT Task Force, the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Digital Partners, and Gruppo CERFE.

Specific objectives of the meeting that would further the progress of establishing the DDN-A included:

- Identifying key business- and development-oriented networks related to Africa in the United States and Africa;
- Identifying key Diaspora IT entrepreneurs from within these networks and mobilize them into a group;
- Enlisting commitments from the meeting participants to DDN-A's mission and objectives; and
- Collecting information on skills, networks, and resources of meeting participants to jump-start the AfriShare database as a network to exchange information, communicate with each other, and grow.

Meeting Events

The daylong meeting included a morning session of speakers that presented the potential of the African Diaspora to improve people's lives in Africa, particularly in the area of ICT and entrepreneurship. In the afternoon, participants broke into ten roundtables to brainstorm ways through which individuals can contribute in a meaningful way to the use of ICT in Africa. At the end of these intensive discussions, each table presented a summary to the entire group.

The following sections The Morning Session and The Afternoon Session – Table Discussions summarize the speaker presentations as well as details of the roundtable discussions in the afternoon.

The Morning Session

During the morning session, several prominent speakers discussed the value of ICT as an important catalyst to leapfrog development. **Ms. Awo Quaison-Sackey**, CEO, AQ Solutions, served as moderator and drew upon her own experience as a native of Ghana as well as from her experience as president and founder of AQ Solutions, a company that links U.S. businesses with freelance IT professionals in Africa. Each speaker reaffirmed the message that Africa is increasingly ready for successful entrepreneurs residing in the U.S. to get actively involved in both government and local efforts to bring ICT solutions to bear on Africa's social and economic problems.

Welcome

Mr. Sarbuland Khan, Director of the ECOSOC Support and Coordination Division, convened the meeting by welcoming the participants. He urged them to get actively engaged at the personal level and emphasized the role that the United Nations and the ICT Task Force can serve in convening prominent individuals. He described the United Nations ICT Task Force as a “new and innovative experiment” in ensuring equal and full participation by three key stakeholders: government, the private sector, and civil society. He stated that the objective of the United Nations ICT Task Force is to transform the process of development, while meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). He congratulated the audience on the day's launch of the DDN-A, stating that the U.S. network of the DDN-A will complement two other DDN-A networks, one in Europe and one in Africa. He emphasized that the network had to be built by Africans themselves and said that the United Nations ICT Task Force could only play a facilitating role. He said, “The digital bridge to the 21st century should be a truly African enterprise.” He expressed confidence that African ICT entrepreneurs had the vision and commitment to accomplish this task.

Introductory Remarks

Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, the Executive Director of UNIFEM, reminded the audience of the United Nations' commitment to bridging the digital divide. Quoting the Secretary General's report at the Millennium Assembly in September 2000, she said "the digital divide can -- and will -- be bridged." She stated that United Nations' Fund for Women, UNIFEM, is committed to ensuring that women, particularly poor women, are not excluded from accessing the benefits of ICT. "We know the cost of exclusion," she said, "and it is too high -- both for Africa and its women."

Ms. Heyzer described UNIFEM's efforts to help African women realize the potential of ICT, which "offer not only e-mail, e-commerce, and e-jobs, but E-quality." These efforts include work with African ICT entrepreneurs living in the Diaspora and convening a Global Advisory Committee of primarily African women and men ICT entrepreneurs in the Diaspora. She welcomed the launch of the DDN-A, adding that UNIFEM's work "is being dramatically upscaled" with this effort.

Ms. Heyzer said that Africa's "brain drain has long been a source of concern for people in Africa and those in the development community" and that UNIFEM recognizes the wealth of untapped expertise among Africans in the Diaspora. She emphasized that what is now needed most is intellectual capital rather than financial capital "because the major barriers are not technological but human - they depend on the political will and commitment of all of us."

Ambassador Effah-Apenteng, the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations, asserted that it is universally acknowledged that ICT can help the developing world, especially Africa, to "speed-up" and "jump-start" its development. Although Africa does face obstacles, he said that within his own country he has seen remarkable progress. Although Ghana's new government is only 18 months old, he said that it has committed to using ICT as a means for development. He said that the Ghanaian government, with support of the United Nations, the World Bank, and the private sector, is wiring at least one school and library in each of the 110 districts in the country to the Internet. Furthermore, he described Busy Internet, an American Company that has opened a cybercafe in Accra with over 100 workstations and has become an active center for young people. He also described a number of ICT providers, including ACS, a leader in offshore data processing, that are taking advantage of the skilled manpower in Ghana.

Ambassador Effah-Apenteng challenged participants to find "creative and innovative ways" to help Africa make more use of ICT to promote sustainable social, economic, and political development. The Ambassador emphasized the importance of the DDN-A to tap knowledge of resources and skills to promote ICT, particularly in rural areas. He also acknowledged that "we need to examine the gender dimension of the problem," asking participants to consider women farmers who often have little or no access to credit. He expressed high hopes for progress by saying that the challenges are not insurmountable, "where there is a will, there is a way."

The Opportunity Technology Offers in Advancing Africa

Amir A. Dossal, Executive Director of the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP), began his presentation by identifying pillars of support for a network such as the DDN-A. Mr. Dossal said that the first such pillar could be found in the call the Secretary-General made at the United Nations Millennium Summit; to make Africa's needs a top priority. The second pillar was comprised of the Millennium Development Goals, specifically the Goal to make available, in cooperation with the private sector, the benefits of new technologies -- especially ICT-- for development. He also mentioned the newly created African Union, as yet another vehicle to support to the DDN-A. Under the umbrella of the United Nations ICT Task Force, he called on participants to "explore how best to take advantage of the opportunities presented by ICT and the global digital economy to increase wealth while decreasing social inequities." He stated simply "Africa can use ICT and can benefit from it immediately." Although recognizing that technology is not the panacea, Mr. Dossal underscored it can assist in the development process. Inspired by the success of The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) in uniting the Indian IT Diaspora into a powerful network, Mr. Dossal stated that the purpose of the meeting was to explore the possibilities of creating a similar network for Africa.

Mr. Dossal briefly described UNFIP's role: the office was created to serve as the interface between the United Nations family and the \$1billion Turner donation in support of United Nations causes, and had the additional task to facilitate new United Nations partnerships and alliances with a variety of sources, including corporations, foundations and philanthropies, as well as bilateral and multilateral donors. He recognized that

the technology industry often cannot invest in a project without an expectation for immediate returns, and invited participants to contact the United Nations ICT Task Force Secretariat to explore joint initiatives.

Mr. Dossal stated that UNFIP has already facilitated technology projects in partnership with The Coca-Cola Company and Cisco Systems, Inc. In Malaysia, Coca-Cola and UNDP supported a project called “e-learning for life” to bridge the digital divide. In the Philippines, Coca-Cola is partnering with the Foundation for Information Technology and placing ICT labs in public high schools and providing ICT training courses for hundreds of teachers. Similar education programmes have been supported in China and Vietnam. Cisco Systems, Inc., has established the Cisco Networking Academy Program in 31 Least Developed Countries with 83 academies. The goal is to give students the same quality training in information technology (IT) as in advanced countries. The partners include Cisco Systems, UNDP, the United Nations Volunteer Programme (UNV), the United Nations Information Technology Service (UNITeS) and the United States Agency for International Development.

Mr. Dossal closed by quoting the Secretary-General “Many of the problems are worst in sub-Saharan Africa, where extreme poverty affects a higher proportion of the population than anywhere else, and is compounded by a higher incidence of conflict, HIV/AIDS and other ills. I am asking the world community to make special provisions for Africa’s needs and give support to Africans in their struggle to overcome these problems.”

The Role of Diaspora Networks in Supporting ICT for Development

Mr. John Sarpong, the CEO of *Africast, LLC*, prefaced his remarks by stating that as he prepared for this conference, he realized that he was part of the problem this meeting was called to solve and that he knows that he is not alone; “Many of us leave Africa with our experience and expertise, never to return, yet have significant resources and skills to offer the continent.”

Mr. Sarpong went on to say he believes that technology offers a way for the African Diaspora to give back to Africa even though there are many obstacles. “Africa is the most unconnected place, in an increasingly connected world,” he said. He noted, for example, that only 10 percent of the people in Africa have telephones or television and only 25 percent have access to a radio.

He went on to say that the situation is changing quickly, noting that just five years ago only eleven African countries had local Internet access, while today, people throughout the continent can go online. He added that about 5 million Africans use the Internet today and that it is predicted that 20 million be online within three years. “ICT is our best hope for achieving economic integration within the continent as well as with Europe, North America, and Asia,” he said.

Mr. Sarpong described the abundant skills and resources of the African Diaspora that could be used to bridge the digital divide, if organized properly. According to a U.S. Census and University of Michigan Study, he found that there are more than 6 million African expatriates in the U.S. today and, unofficially, there may be closer to 10 million. He found that African expatriates in the U.S. have the highest levels of education and affluence of any foreign-born immigrant group and that they hold Ph.D. degrees at double the rate of European immigrants.

Near the end of his presentation, Mr. Sarpong announced a new initiative “AfriShare,” a “program to share our skills, knowledge, and resources with Africans on the continent, as part of the Digital Partners for Africa (DAPA) initiative”. Launched a year ago, it is being developed to tap technical and entrepreneurial resources in order to address issues of poverty in Africa, he said. The immediate goal is to launch a new model of a “venture capital fund” to trigger social change in Africa, he said, based on the experience of the successful Digital Partners South Asia Initiative. “If this concept is well executed, we can develop AfriShare into a powerful and productive force for Africans,” he said.

Mr. Sarpong went on to challenge business leaders to supply the energy, initiative, and ingenuity that could leverage the Internet to benefit global Africa. He challenged government leaders to end telecom monopolies and open local communication markets to the private sector. He said, “Only when the forces of enterprise are firmly harnessed to our communications infrastructure will ICT sweep across Africa as quickly as it has throughout the rest of the world.” He challenged entrepreneurs to “work hard to provide the technology and platforms to make the Internet an everyday tool for improving the lives of Africans.” He challenged himself to develop both the DDN-A and AfriShare into a new cyber-bridge by which the Diaspora may return to Africa in the form of technical and economic support. He closed by saying, “I invite each of you to join me in making ICT

the bridge that brings knowledge and resources home to Africa and opens the door to a better and brighter future for our children.”

Leading Sustainable Change through Technology

Ms. Rebecca Enonchong, the CEO and founder of AppsTech and a native of Cameroon, emphasized that Africa should not try to follow or copy technology developed on other continents because it would be impossible to catch up. Instead, she urged Africans to develop new technologies for markets in Africa, which could then be expanded to markets in other developing countries and then eventually to the global market. She believes that the lack of infrastructure in Africa is not an obstacle to entrepreneurs, but rather that it makes Africans more innovative. Again, she urged Africans to think outside of the box and not to just imitate the existing infrastructure of other countries.

Ms. Enonchong stated that the main obstacle to African entrepreneurs is the lack of private sector support. She commented that when discussions at global forums turn to the private sector, the focus is on multinational rather than the local entrepreneurs. She emphasized that, “entrepreneurs create wealth.” She also strongly urged investors not to just think of micro-loans when funding women. She said that women entrepreneurs in Africa need millions of dollars to start businesses. She also said that African entrepreneurs need to be trained to grow and expand their businesses, to hire employees, and to think larger than the popular business model of “buy it, sell it.” She said mentorship programs and incubators are also critical for entrepreneurs.

Ms. Enonchong described a variety of initiatives already in place that support technology and business in Africa. A partnership between UNIFEM and the Columbia Business School, for example, is developing the African Technology Index (ATI) that will rank countries according to their technology-enabling environment. She also described ACTIVE - African Centre for Technology, Inventions, and Ventures. She pushed governments to develop e-governments instead of talking about politics if they genuinely believe that technology is the way out. Ms. Enonchong used her knowledge of African entrepreneurs and her dedication to their issues to urge participants forward in support of local initiatives.

The IndUS Entrepreneurs (TiE)

Mr. Kanwal Rekhi, Founder and Chairman of the Board of The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE), shared the experience of the Indian ICT entrepreneurial community, how it has mobilized itself, and the change it has been able to effect in India. He was cognizant of the fact that there is a great difference between India or South Asia and Africa. Yet he urged the participants to take note that when people like him came to the US, India was not a business friendly country. Over the last decade, he said, there has been a substantial change in the political climate in India, which has led to increased support of the entrepreneurial community there. This change of political climate combined with the rapid growth of the software and information and communications technology sector over which the government had little control, he said, were seen as the contributing factors to the changed development paradigm in India. This change, he said, is what the Indian Diaspora community in the US has been able to capitalize upon.

Further, he stressed that the Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) is a body that has grown from a small beginning to an international effort with a presence in many countries around the world. He felt this is due to a number of reasons but primarily because small groups of successful entrepreneurs decided to help other entrepreneurs who wanted to get a jump-start. He stated that these successful entrepreneurs felt that supporting new ideas would benefit the larger community. The lesson for the DDN-A, he stressed, is that entrepreneurship is critical to development. He said that if we can give people the tools to earn a living, then we have given them the key to success. He urged the gathering to use its success in the US and parlay that into helping people in Africa so that they, too, can become independent and successful. Finally, he stressed the importance of a network of entrepreneurs and others that reside in the US to push for reform and change back in their home countries. He said that it is hard work, but it is possible, and the impact of this work can be both dramatic and extremely satisfying.

Mr. Vijay Vashee, President of TiE Seattle who was born and raised in Zimbabwe, spoke on why Africa is a world issue and how we as individuals can and should make a difference. He prefaced his comments by saying that “people do not choose to be poor and given a chance they would die to succeed.” He cited the successful example of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and the substantial impact the project has had on poor

women's lives by giving them an opportunity to earn a meaningful living. Today, Grameen has close to six hundred million dollars in loans, he said, and this is bound to have a significant impact on the local economy of the country. He said this shows that even with micro-efforts one can achieve significant impact, and the poor can and do contribute to the country's growth if given the chance. He said that this is the power of entrepreneurship at the micro-level.

He further went on to say that Africa today is a global issue. Africa is rich in mineral resources that serve the critical needs of the world, but today the AIDS epidemic is devastating the young people of Africa. He said that without the young generation there would be no one to mine these resources. So even if the world does not look at the AIDS epidemic as a humanitarian problem it has to look at it from its own survival. He said that Africa needs our help and needs it now.

He pointed out that many local changes have started outside the country. He referred to the example of India which Mr. Rekhi spoke about earlier, where a group of Indo-Americans got together, coalesced, and began helping the community in the United States to grow. Now this community is in a position to influence and push for change and growth in India. The same thing has to happen in Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, South Africa, and elsewhere. However, for change to take root, we as individuals must be involved and ensure that governments and businesses are no longer corrupt. He stated that governments and businesses that take the time to build the nation's wealth would also benefit themselves.

Finally, he stated that entrepreneurs are needed to start social ventures; there needs to be hundreds of such efforts to motivate and promote change in Africa. "Networks such as the DDN-A, which is being launched today can be instrumental in supporting, mentoring and funding these efforts." He closed his remarks by stating that "the community that gives lives" and without giving we cannot expect change to take place.

Overview and Organization of DDN-A

Ms. Laketch Dirasse, Chief of UNIFEM Africa, described the DDN-A project through an African perspective, specifically through an African women's perspective, and within the context of UNIFEM activities to foster E-Quality in Africa. She emphasized the great potential in Africa, particularly through Africa's women. She stated that African women make up "over 50% of the population, more than 75% of the agricultural producers, and 55-65% of informal sector business owners and operators." In the era of globalization and new technologies, she warned that Africa and the international community could no longer afford to exclude women.

Ms. Dirasse presented highlights of UNIFEM's Digital Diaspora Initiative launched in January 2002. The initiative is in line with UNIFEM's 2000-2003 strategy and business plan that recognizes the importance of ICT and innovative uses of new technologies to tackle the feminization of poverty. Within this context, UNIFEM is fostering E-Quality in Africa through strategic partnerships with the private sector. The initiative is aimed at empowering African women to realize their economic rights and security in the context of globalization and new technologies.

The Digital Diaspora Initiative she emphasized was designed to turn Africa's "brain drain" into a "brain gain" in the new economy. More specifically, it is intended to mobilize and harness the IT and business expertise and financial resources of Africans in the Diaspora to promote women's economic security, provide new markets for IT Entrepreneurs in the Diaspora while participating in socially responsible economic development for women and Africa, and to expand the opportunities offered by ICT for improving the lives of African women through identifying business opportunities, providing training, and building the knowledge-base on ICT for poverty alleviation.

The Global Advisory Committee members of the Digital Diaspora Initiative are working closely with UNIFEM at three levels: Creating an enabling ICT environment (including advocacy for enabling policy and regulatory frameworks), Country-level capacity building (including ICT business, mentoring, business incubator services, venture capital fund, etc.), and Business Linkages (including networking, piloting and private sector and foundation partnerships). Ms. Dirasse concluded her presentation by welcoming UNIFEM's partnership with the United Nations ICT Task Force and Digital Partners in the launch of the DDN-A network, as a powerful complement to UNIFEM's work towards advancing E-Quality in Africa.

Akhtar Badshah, Executive Director of Digital Partners, thanked the participants for attending this significant launch event for the DDN-A. Mr. Badshah shared the work of Digital Partners and its mission to sup-

port social entrepreneurs that are using IT to bring benefits to the poor. He described the Social Enterprise Laboratory (SEL), a new model of collaborative problem solving designed to bring social entrepreneurs together with IT professionals, venture capitalists, academics, and graduate students from prestigious universities to design and deploy innovative applications of technology so as to create market-based solutions and new income generating opportunities for the poor. He said that through the provision of technical expertise and seed funding, SEL enables entrepreneurs in developing areas to leverage technology in service to the disenfranchised and empower those at the bottom of the pyramid. Digital Partners, he said, is very pleased to be working with the United Nations ICT Task Force, UNIFEM and UNFIP to launch the DDN-A and this approach to Africa.

Further, Mr. Badshah also spoke about the need for use of ICT in education and how today it is possible for a child in Uganda to learn together with a child in India and a child in Nigeria to learn with a child in the US and a child in Morocco to learn with a child in the UK. He shared the Global Classmates program of Digital Partners, a program designed to build ICT bridges between and among classrooms around the world. He explained that with a simple computer and Internet connectivity, students from all over the world can be linked via the Global Classmates platform to each other, expanding the classroom outside its four walls.

He urged the participants to action by emphasizing that now is the time to be get engaged. He said that Africa is at a critical juncture and it needs the minds and resources of people residing in the United States more than ever. He said that with just a small group mobilizing we could make fundamental change. He explained that today's break-out sessions have been designed to look at what is already happening in Africa, how local communities are using ICT to help themselves, and how we can work with these efforts so that we can help them reach scale. Moving forward he assured the participants that Digital Partners is committed to work with each and everyone gathered here to bring the value of ICT to poor communities in Africa.

The Afternoon Session - Table Discussions

Each participant was assigned to one of ten roundtables during an afternoon breakout session to maximize the diversity of experiences within each group and in order to fully utilize the talent assembled at the meeting. Each roundtable used two case studies as a catalyst for discussion. The case studies were assigned in a fairly random manner, only considering the table leader's expertise and ensuring that there was a mixture of topics, i.e. gender, entrepreneurship and education. The case studies are available on the DDN-A website (www.ddn-africa.org).

After an intensive three-hour discussion, each table presented a summary of their discussions to the entire group. Please see **Appendix A** for a detailed description of each table's recommendations.

After all the groups presented the summary of their discussions, **Akhtar Badshah**, Executive Director, Digital Partners; **Natalie Hahn**, Senior Private Advisor, UNFIP; **Awo Quaison-Sackey**, CEO, AQ Solutions; and **John Sarpong**, CEO, Africast, LLC, moderated a wrap-up session, which galvanized the enthusiasm and momentum created during the discussions into the commitments and involvement needed to move the recommendations of the participants forward.

The afternoon session concluded with announcements concerning individuals who had already stepped forward to serve on a Steering Committee, the donation of \$16,000 from various participants to launch the Social Venture Fund for Africa, and the commitment of AfriShare to support the goals on DDN-A.

Results

Brought together with the growing number of organizations, corporations, foundations, and academics promoting the application of ICT to assist Africa's development, members of the African Diaspora provided a rich source of ideas, skills and support for promoting digital opportunities in Africa. The following conclusions summarize the discussions of the day:

1. The participants thanked the United Nations, the United Nations ICT Task Force and the partner organizations for taking the lead in convening this meeting and for its support for the development of the Digital Diaspora Network for Africa (DDN-A).
2. **AfriShare**, a network structure and a platform for engaging Africa's Diaspora community, was launched with support from Africast.com and Digital Partners. AfriShare will become a resource and knowledge-sharing facility that will also match innovative projects to mentors from the DDN-A network. A methodology will be put in place to facilitate this mentoring based on Digital Partners' successful Social

Enterprise Laboratory (SEL) model. In an effort to capture the available skills, networks, and resources of participants, a questionnaire (see Appendix C) was distributed to each participant to complete and return. A total of 65 questionnaires were collected at the meeting that will provide a solid foundation for the AfriShare database.

3. The **Social Venture Fund for Africa** was launched to provide financial support for entrepreneurial activities using ICT. The fund is being launched with modest initial aims, but will be designed to will grow into a collaborative effort supported by individuals, foundations, development agencies and corporations. A total of USD \$16,000 was committed by participants at the meeting to launch the fund. Digital Partners will manage the funds under guidance from the Steering Committee.
4. The **DDN-A Steering Committee** was formed with several of the participants agreeing to become part of the effort. The Steering Committee charter and composition will be fleshed out over the next several weeks. Mr. John Sarpong, the CEO of Africast.org, and Ms. Awo Quaison-Sackey, the CEO of AQ Solutions, are taking the lead in forming the committee, and Mr. Khan of ECOSOC, Mr. Dossal of UNFIP and Ms. Heyzer of UNIFEM have also agreed to be on the Committee.
5. Participants called for an **Annual DDN-A Digital Bridge to Africa** meeting. The participants agreed that the meeting was very useful and should become an annual event that offers participants an opportunity to meet, interact, and network. Further, such meetings should also be held in Africa itself so that participants from Africa can be present.

The Digital Diaspora Network for Africa will primarily work to engage individual ICT and business leaders. Consequently, the participants generally concluded that the DDN-A would be best suited to focus on economic empowerment, with a particular focus on women, youth, and the support of aspiring entrepreneurs.

The meeting was successful in identifying key business- and development-oriented networks related to Africa in the United States and Africa. An invitation for participation was sent out to known networks. Participants were also allowed to self-identify and register through an online process (www.ddn-africa.org). Through these efforts, over 130 people registered and participated in the meeting. Other potential partners were identified through the meeting itself as participants offered their experience and networks for future ongoing work.

The process to launch the DDN-A in the United States is in place and the group is working to develop the strategy and identify specific projects that will be supported over the next several years.

Moving Forward

Next Steps and Resources:

- **Expand the DDN-A network to Europe.** On 27 September 2002 a meeting took place at the premises of the European Union's Directorate General for the Information Society (Avenue du Beaulieu, Brussels, Belgium) on "Bridging the Digital Divide: a new challenge for the African Diaspora in Europe". CERFE, a non-profit organization based in Rome, took the lead in developing the European Network.
- **Present the plan for the DDN-A to the United Nations ICT Task Force** meeting at the United Nations on 30 September 2002. The DDN-A Core Team was invited to present at this meeting.
- **Develop the plan for the next DDN-A meeting** to be held in Africa next year.
- **An Advisory Committee has been established** with roles and responsibilities of members identified. The Advisory Committee has been charged to follow-up with individuals who have shown interest and are willing to commit time and resources to the DDN-A. (Appendix D).
- **A database and a website of the Digital Diaspora Network has been developed** so that it can be used as a means for the network to exchange information, communicate with each other, and grow.
- **A selection committee has been established to shortlist innovative ICT projects for possible DDN-A support** that will bring benefit to poor communities. Digital Partners has received over 40 applications from Africa. A selection committee comprised of participants from the meeting selected the most promising, which were announced at the United Nations ICT Task Force meeting in New York on 30 September 2002

Appendix A Details of Table Discussions

Table 1

Table Leader: Ms. Karen Lynch, Director, Global Opportunity Project, Markle Foundation

Case Studies: BuySouthAfricaOnline and World Links

Rapporteur: Ms. Elizabeth Patton, United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP)

Summary Points

1. The DDN-Africa must be organized around **action**, and create leadership—both political and business leadership, at both the global and local levels.
2. It must develop a **strong mutual link** between “Diasporans” and Africans on the continent.
3. It needs to build a community of practice that should address **change management, cross-cultural management, mentoring, skills transfer, targeted peer-to-peer exchanges** on such important areas as e-commerce, and more.
4. A key focus should be on creating a **business context/enabling environment** in African nations--both in terms of business practice and national policy. It must demonstrate to governments the value proposition of the small, medium and micro enterprise for the future of nations’ knowledge economies.
5. The DDN-Africa should make the case for **investment in Africa** – a better understanding of potential markets and how they can be addressed; a better framework for philanthropy; a stronger focus of corporate social responsibility.
6. **Strong marketing** will be essential to the success of this organization.

The recommendations for the DDN-A to bridge the digital divide is to create a Resource Center/Clearinghouse containing:

1. **Case Studies**
2. **Advising/Peer to Peer mentoring** – skills bank
3. Information presented **thematically**
 - Information on **legal regulations** (esp. intellectual property), business/economic regulations, working with national/local governments, cultural/religious environment etc.
 - **Advice on how to run a business** – optimizing supply chain, writing a business plan. **Help local groups/entrepreneurs weigh pros and cons of using IT** – i.e., “being on the web” is not always appropriate/beneficial. **Emphasize appropriate technologies – Africa based, Africa led** (ex. Solar energy to power technology) – KEY: consult those on the ground to find out what their priorities are. Digital = everything from radio – internet- cell phones- to most advanced technologies.
4. Bring together Africans within Africa and those living overseas via **virtual network** – in particular, promote networking within the African Diaspora community, which is large, but disorganized.
 - A **network of networks** linking groups already working on projects with those Africans who can be of assistance, corporations looking to donate (for example, linking Development Space website to DDN-Africa website)
 - Through bringing Africans together, work to **“educate” those who hold power** in African countries – both leaders in government and business (following the Ghanaian saying that “the fish stinks from the head” start education programmed at the top!) **Promote regulations which are beneficial to small/medium size businesses**, promote accountability, transparency etc. Also, “Enlighten governments” – **persuade governments that small/medium sized businesses are not threats to their stability** (political dimension: many African governments came to power through extra-legal means, so often see empowering of business people as a threat to their own power, OR as a threat to government income – for example, using the internet to make phone calls creates competition

for the nationalized phone company). And, **create awareness among older generation of leaders** that IT technology is useful for everyone – overcome perception that anything to do with typing is “secretary’s work”

5. **Match corporations with appropriate projects**
 - Tap into corporations’ desire to be socially responsible, resource center serves as a screen for projects, makes it easy for multinationals to find projects that match interests.
 - Do the same with the Financial Industry
6. **Diaspora remittances** - Many Africans overseas would like to help own country – give info on how to donate within local regulations/law, whom to give to and where.
7. **Skills bank should be promoted to African governments, World Bank, IMF** etc. When a new project is starting in a particular African country, experts with relevant experience and expertise from that country can be found.

Potential obstacles to the DDN-Africa network:

1. **Difficulty of Diaspora Africans re-integrating into home country** – a kind of reverse culture shock, need to get reacquainted with the way things are done in home country (different from North America/Europe).
2. **Difficulty of navigating politics of African governments as an “outsider”** – Internal politics, individual egos, favoring of personal connections over most qualified individuals, multiple competing agendas within government agencies etc.
3. **Need to re-orient the Diaspora community to think in terms of “enabling people” rather than “thinking we have the solutions.”** Ask, “How can we enable local people?” rather than “what are the solutions?” (Turning the brain drain into a brain gain).

Needs for a successful DDN-Africa:

1. An **adaptable PR/Marketing strategy** pitched to several different constituencies including:
 - Africans abroad
 - Africans on the continent
 - Those with interest/expertise who wish to be advisors (Africans and non-Africans alike)
 - Corporations
 - Governments, NGO’s, United Nations system
 - People with projects on the ground in Africa, or those looking to start
2. **Have meetings like “Digital Bridge to Africa” in Africa**, to create balance of involvement between those on the continent and those abroad.
3. **Integrate Diaspora Africans** back into their own country via projects (possibly a way for Africans overseas to “work their way back home.”)
4. **Advocacy** – bring a higher profile to the African community overseas (i.e., lobby groups to North American/European governments etc) – create African interest groups.
5. **Investment** – “Sell Africa” as a place not just needing aid but as a market with excellent potential, as a business opportunity.
6. **Education** – educating local governments (Key: change management), educating on intercultural management (especially those Africans returning to Africa from overseas), education for all on “group dynamics”.

Other Thoughts and Ideas on the DDN-African network/IT in Africa:

1. **Use IT to capture local cultural knowledge** (especially those cultures with oral tradition -- medical, agricultural, history, traditions, religious, etc) that is being lost.
2. **Assess what skills are needed in each country**, so that students could be encouraged to go into fields in which employment outlook was positive – fill the gaps

3. **Be aware of unintended consequences** – impact on political dynamics etc.
4. **Build up the non-profit base in Africa**, which is currently nearly non-existent (creating philanthropy base, laws for philanthropy etc.)
5. **Learn from failures** (failures are the best teacher!) – also helps to avoid reinventing the wheel

Table 2

Table Leader: Ms. Natalie Hahn, UNFIP and Ambassador Koby Koomson, Ghana Ambassador to U.S.A. (1997-2001)

Case Studies: ASAFE and Women'sNet/SangoNet

Rapporteur: Ms. Jennifer Sly, United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP)

Our group proposed eight thematic areas for working groups within the DDN-A Steering Committee:

1. **Policy / Government**

- Work with governments to create an **ICT enabling environment**
- Use **tax free zones** and other tax incentives
- Strengthen **property rights** to protect small and medium size business
- Create local **better business bureaus**
- Use the United Nations to form an **umbrella organization** to protect entrepreneurs and to gain a critical mass. There is strength in numbers - businesses would be less likely to steal ideas/property if they know it is endorsed/protected by United Nations system. Also, investors will be more likely to fund entrepreneurs if they are associated with a United Nations group.

2. **Academic Linkages**

- Use Harvard/Makarere as a case study of university partnerships
- Use university partnerships for training and knowledge sharing as well as for the commitment of **financial resources**

3. **Research**

- Use research in science and technology to develop alternative and innovative solutions, especially **alternative sources of power** such as fuel cells

4. **Banking/Finance**

- "Aid is dependency, investment is independence"
- Need **champions** in the financial sector taking a lead to involve other financial leaders as much, if not more, than credit and savings
- Develop **business plan** and market the top ten bankers – many underestimate Africa's financial capacity
- Leverage **existing funds** – Mr. John Mack knows of three funds totaling \$500 million of which some has been marked for technology

5. **Education**

- Make education a priority from birth to death
- Use the Omni Initiative (description available on the DDN-A website), Advanced Interactive (www.advancedinteractive.com), and the Linkos Project as case studies/pilot projects for education initiatives
- Strengthen **distance learning**

6. **Advocacy**

- Advocate for Africa so that Americans and Europeans have a better understanding of Africa
- Move ICT Task Force Meeting to Africa. In the next year **hold three roundtables in three different African countries** to secure position in Africa. Target three countries as part of an action plan for pilot projects and other activities. Also, integrate action plan into Economic Summits in Africa. Ensure inclusion of Francophone and Arabic countries.
- Publish **success stories**
- Invite **young people** to participate in United Nations meetings

7. **Women Entrepreneurs**

- Increase **security** (i.e. property rights) for small to medium size entrepreneurs, especially women, to enable successful businesses
- See women entrepreneurs as a local resource for national and international meetings (not just the wives of ambassadors)

- Develop **business incubators** for entrepreneurs so that they can share resources and ensure that they have a clean space and IT infrastructure. Within one year have one new business incubator set up in Africa
8. **Knowledge Sharing**
- Leverage **professional associations** (see list below)
 - Use **global organizations and conferences** to share information – not reinvent the wheel (see list below)
 - Use **AfriShare** to not only share the (1) skills of **individuals**, but to also publicize (2) **professional organizations** and (3) **case studies/success stories**
 - Set a goal of having a database online within one month
 - The United Nations ICT Task Force should ensure **collaboration among the ICT initiatives** within the United Nations

Within our group, we had champions ready to take on these areas: Mesfin Sam Zaid of Wells Fargo was ready to champion Banking/Finance. John Mack was ready to champion Policy, Research, and Education. Karim Lakhani was ready to champion Education.

* **Professional Associations**

- Fate Foundation Nigeria (www.fatefoundation.org)
- Fate USA (www.fateusa.org)
- LEAP Africa (www.leapint.cjb.net)
- Africa Business Conference – Harvard Business School
- Africa Development Forum
- Urban Coalition of Financial Services (UCFS)
- Partners for Information Technology in Africa (PICTA) (www.picta.org)
- African and American Women's Business Association, Uganda/DC

* **Venues for Knowledge Sharing**

- BellaNet – hosts development databases (bellanet.org)
- International Telecommunications Union (ITU) (itu.int) – ITU has developed Centers of Excellence as well as initiatives for women
- World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) – ITU serving as lead organization, to be held in two parts in Geneva and Tunisia
- Global Knowledge Partnerships (gkp.org)

Table 3

Table Leader: Mr. Ethan Zuckerman, Executive Director, Geekcorps

Case Studies: GeekCorps and University of PA Ghana Project

Rapporteur: Mr. Alex Talel, United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP) and Mr. Ethan Zuckerman

Case Study Related Points:

1. **Zuckerman**- anticipated that he would encounter infrastructure problems in Ghana, but discovered that lack of skill was the main issue.
2. **Kwame Obeng**- cited that the significance of his project was that HP donated equipment and not funds; it is easier to convince a company to partake in equipment-based philanthropy.
3. **Obeng**- training of those native to Ghana, so that those on the ground will be able to train their “brothers and sisters.”

General Points:

1. **Motivation for Development** – The point was raised that we must declare, in developing technology in African Countries, why we are doing it. We must determine why we are giving them (mainstream Africans) technology: is it to empower them or us? Are our motivations selfish or philanthropic?
2. **E-Government** – development of technology in African Nations will allow for the development of E-Governments, which would make more efficient the inner-workings of a country.
3. **Paired Volunteering** – businesses, In African Nations, should be given hands on training in new technology. In addition, those doing the training should be experts in the field of business that those whom they are training are involved in.
4. **IT Villages** – these must be created in order to give “small-town” folks the opportunity to learn the ins and outs of the IT environment.
5. **Awareness Building** – Participants felt that there was a strong need to educate businesspeople and governments on the value of IT, as well as individuals who hope to be employed in those fields. There was an observation that there is an age gap between younger businesspeople and politicians who “get” IT and older ones who don't.
6. **Regional/local Cooperation** – before appealing to global corporations for funding, African countries should appeal to, either, each other, or to more local corporations, foundations and companies. It was agreed that partnerships with local institutions are critical, and that the most successful partnerships generally seem to involve organizations whose roles and missions are parallel, for instance, universities in the U.S. and Ghana.
7. **Individual Drive** – although many projects are driven by infrastructure, much can be said for the commitment of individuals. Without the full dedication of individuals involved in African IT development, nothing can be accomplished.
8. **Personal Information** – the AfriShare Network should contain a compilation of those “Diasporans” engaged or set to be engaged in IT development in Africa.
9. **Branding Countries as IT Nations** – Much of the conversation centered on the branding of nations as IT centers, as Ireland and India have successfully accomplished. It was agreed that one of the crucial ingredients in branding was government's aggressive adoption of IT. This adoption needs to be more than nominal - ministers need to start using computers, and government services need to be brought online. It was also agreed, remarkably, that regional approaches need to take precedence over single country approaches. Maybe it's a good path for West Africa that Ghana is recognized as the regional IT center, as long as it improves the profile of West Africa as a whole as an IT hub.
10. **Databases** – Establishment of programmes, and a database structure, that could allow African professionals visiting their homelands to volunteer small amounts of time during a vacation to offer classes or workshops. Such a programme would provide a structure for micro volunteering and make it easier for visiting professionals to share their skills without taking full responsibility for administering a large programme. Other ideas included:

- A database of people traveling to Africa who might be willing to share space in their luggage for donated books, computers or the fast transmission of letters or funds.
 - A database of institutions in African countries that might be willing to participate in digital divide efforts, documenting their capacities and needs
 - A database of RFPs from foundations and donors interested in funding digital divide efforts
 - A database of contacts within African governments who can facilitate importation of donated computers, visas, etc.
11. **Rural Initiatives-** Participants shared concerns that efforts be focused on rural populations. As rural to urban migrations continue, people from rural backgrounds are at a severe disadvantage when trying to find computer-connected jobs in urban areas. Specifically urged were training programmes that attempted to give both students and adults skills that they can use to find jobs and improve their financial situations.

Three Main Points of Difficulty:

1. **Investment** – Mr. Zuckerman stated that, for almost three years, there has been no interest on the part of the business community to invest in Africa.
2. **Credibility** – African Nations tend to have remarkable credibility gaps because “they are African”. Therefore, major businesses are not prepared to invest in Africa.
3. **Sustainability** – The table agreed that, while sustainability was an important consideration, a real concern is finding pools of funding that allows projects to reach a sustainable stage. The table observed that there is a large number of good ideas that haven't had the benefit of funding, and therefore have not had the chance to prove their sustainability.
4. **Infrastructure** – It was observed that unreliability of electricity supply is a major issue in most African nations and that intelligent approaches to the digital divide need to recognize the necessity of reliable electricity supplies and solid telecommunications systems.

Finally, we agreed that everyone participating in DDN should be required to write a short statement (2-4P) on their interests and expertise and documenting any projects they are working on to help develop synergies between projects.

Table 4

Table Leader: Mr. Awo Quaison-Sackey, CEO AQSolutions and Laketch Dirasse, Chief UNIFEM Africa

Case Studies: LAWA and Global Trade Network USAID

Rapporteur: Mr. Makambo Tshionyi, United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP)

Recommendations:

1. **Involving women** may increase our chance of creating an enabling advocacy environment. Involving women through ICT involves women in the political process as policy champions, a process within which they have not historically been enabled actors.
2. We must consider the value of generating a broad-based **cultural buy-in** to any ICT initiative. Therefore, we must consider the perils that may be associated with focusing such initiatives upon women. We must avoid alienating and marginalizing men.
3. We should consider deploying **remote strategic consultative efforts** on behalf of Diaspora organizations and entrepreneurs.
4. We must consider the best contribution of **market-based initiatives** to both our analytical framework and our practical solutions. For example, in areas of high density of ICT demand—e.g., Ghana, Ethiopia— an opportunity may exist for private entrepreneurial activity to align supply with demand (i.e.—no insuperable market imperfections).
5. The **infrastructure (bandwidth) issue** may be key: the Japanese government may be in the effort of developing a globally dispersed bandwidth capability that would link parts of Africa to other important locales. We should perform a due diligence to determine the nature, progress, and applicability of the initiative
6. We should in our private and professional capacities act as interlocutors for **indigenous business enterprises and organizations**; we should use our status to press for reform and other assistance from governmental entities.
7. We should **leverage domestic African populations** of means, influence, and expertise, including but not limited to Indian-descent groups.
8. We should **interface with local organizations and governments through United Nations** instrumentalities so as to make our involvement and advice seem completely non-partisan and geopolitically neutral.

Table 5

Table Leader: Mr. Sheetal Mehta, Microsoft, Tie, Digital Partners

Case Studies: Owerri Digital Village and Women's Net/SangoNet

Rapporteur: Mr. Sheetal Mehta, Microsoft, Tie, Digital Partners

General Recommendations:

1. Given that Africa is so diverse and varies from region to region we need to **use the DDN-A as an umbrella organization** to the various regional or even perhaps country specific subset groups. For example the infrastructure may be incredibly different from the infrastructure in Ghana.
2. **Use the TiE (The Indus Entrepreneurs) model to assess how the DDN-A can replicate some best practices.** The Indus Entrepreneurs consists of a professional group of Indians who are based outside of India/Pakistan etc but have managed to pool their intellectual capital to create a resourceful network.

Recommendations on Case Study – The Owerri Digital Village, Nigeria:

1. **Global Classmates** - connect the children via Digital Partners Global Classmates programmed so that they can exchange their knowledge capital with one another and benefit from creative learning. <http://www.digitalpartners.org/classmates.html>
2. **Technology Communities** - establish tech centers for women and men who can have access to connected computers and gain training (academic, vocational and tech), which would lead to long-term economic value.
3. **Job Placement / Internship programmes** - phase 2, potential placement and intro to small to medium size local businesses
4. **Certification** - so that students can earn and show their qualifications, which allow them to build a foundation of certified knowledge.
5. **Digital Partners Silicon Valley** - take the project to the steering committee to determine a level of interest in micro financing and mentoring
6. **Mentor Programme** - a database of 800,000 skilled Nigerians will be compiled shortly on behalf of the Government of Nigeria. The database will act as a pool of mentors/mentees and provide a network foundation for the students who become certified.

Recommendations on Case Study - Women's Net / SangoNET, South Africa:

1. The Website serves as a **good awareness site for gender equality**. We recommend that visitors to the site who take action (i.e. build a business, conduct speaking engagements, etc) as a result of viewing the content become showcased by UNIFEM in brochures and written material
2. **The model can be replicated** in other regions of Africa

Table 6

Table Leader: Mr. Rohan Amin, Project Coordinator, University of Pennsylvania

Case Studies: University of PA Ghana Project and LAWA

Rapporteur: Mr. Rohan Amin, Project Coordinator, University of Pennsylvania

Recommendations:

1. **"Killer apps"** - The people at my table feel that software needs are too often overlooked when considering ICT projects. They suggest that, in order for some of these projects to be successful, useful applications that are relevant to the target audience need to be developed/deployed. For example, if the technology were going to be used by a group of farmers, what software would be useful to them? What about teachers? Students? Elderly? Housewives? Different audiences have different interests and the success of an ICT project is directly related to how well you target your audience. We felt a database of free (and commercial) software needs to be developed. There is no central resource right now to find software for these purposes. Searching the Internet is possible (via a search engine) but not efficient and not comprehensive. Reviews and ratings can be provided. Most important is the ability to search and filter software relevant for particular target audiences.

2. **United Nations ICT Coalition** - It was suggested that the United Nations ICT task force **create a coalition of companies that are capable of providing software**. This provision of software can be on a limited basis (or a plan for its procurement can be developed) as to not completely deny the companies of any profit. The coalition should exist so that needed software can be procured quickly on as needed by project basis.

3. **Case Study of Upenn Ghana** - An independent case study of the Ghana effort by Upenn should happen in order to study if the CTC model is effective.

4. **Mobilize Student Efforts** - Students are an untapped resource. We need to mobilize student efforts at high schools and universities across the country. Students can play a powerful role in the actual implementation or projects and also in carrying out educational and training initiatives. Nowhere else will you find a larger base of fully qualified, free (as in volunteer) individuals with a lot of time on their hands.

5. **Make it personal** - These projects thrive on a driving force. We need to **establish a network of people** who are interested in giving back to their countries - not only for Africa or India, but for anywhere. There is no "national brand" for this. If I want to give back to my country (and do it via technology/ICT) where do I turn?

Table 7

Table Leader: Mr. Neeti Gupta, Program Officer, Digital Partners

Case Studies: Global Classmates and The Reproductive Rights Alliance

Rapporteur: Mr. Neeti Gupta, Program Officer, Digital Partners

Part I: People Present And Key Points From Their Introductions.

Vijay: Ex- Microsoft general manager involved in philanthropy. He believes in supporting entrepreneurs and has mentored 750 people till date. He believes in teaching people ‘how to catch fish’ – in business. He described his ideas of wealth creation.

Okule: A Nigerian born technologist works with Ms. Rebacca at Africa Tech and talked about activities at Africa Tech including the new initiative to start an African fellows program for African people much like the Kaufman Foundation’s fellowship but does not require applicants to be only U.S. citizens.

Debo: Another Nigerian expert in databases, works with Media solve and is engaged in various strategic projects attempting to leverage new technologies for different instructional and knowledge management projects.

Neeti: Program Manager for Global Classmates Initiative and implemented the pilot partnerships between India and U.S. This fall she will start graduate school at MIT and develop Global Classmates programmed there.

Paul: Paul is with the Open University at Milton Keynes –UK. Their strength is providing rich content and work with Universities in China and South Africa. He mentioned open course programmed at MIT as an example of role Internet is playing now.

Chris: He works for GE. He works in the credit card business and he said that he was primarily interested in exploring markets in Africa and works in several parts of India.

John: He represents a non-profit based in Washington and spoke of role of ICT, advocacy and economic reforms.

Part II: The Discussion

The case studies (Global Classmates and The Reproductive Rights Alliance) served as examples to provide a framework for the discussion. It was discussed that strengths of Global Classmates programmed are demonstrated in the way the programmed involves young minds and the implementation of program’s cross-cultural collaboration approach. Initial discussions reflected on how the point of view of Nigerian students is shaped by their immediate surroundings/ environments and that there is a need to help them look at various other perspectives beyond their immediate surroundings. Okule and Debo shared their experiences of growing up in Nigeria and their schools days. Okule spoke about the need to provide tangible experiences such as providing travel scholarships to students from Africa. Debo spoke about CD ROMs, which were used by his firm as a tool to disseminate information and create awareness about global issues in Africa. They also spoke about infrastructure issues in Africa and how some of these localized problems such as corruptions need to be overcome to implement projects in Africa. Vijay spoke of the enormous potential of Global Classmates in providing an opportunity for cross-cultural collaboration.

The group discussed the second case study (The Reproductive Rights Alliance) and spoke about the project implementation realities on the ground. Another point that was also brought up was that different African countries are at different level of technology infrastructure. South Africa was mentioned to be one of the leaders in ICT. Okule and Debo mentioned that things in Nigeria were changing slowly. Vijay spoke about the Bangladeshi success story with the mobile phones. Ideas on e-mentors, forming cyber cafes to involve communities and for centers if ICT in Nigeria, utilizing the potential of simple tools like CD ROMs, multimedia for information dissemination and training programmes were highlighted. It was suggested that engaging local partners in the process could help in the implementation of the projects in a cost effectiveness manner and enhance timely delivery at local level. A network of African Diaspora could contribute by mentoring local partners.

The discussion moved to cultural realities in different countries. Paul mentioned the recent rise of South Asian Culture in UK. Vijay spoke about how American culture is quickly absorbed in India and pointed that the idea of wealth creation is one in which everyone in the world wishes to participate. Most 'Table 7' members argued that issues of aid dependency need to be addressed and a change of the mental setup of people from aid dependency to entrepreneurship is required. China's business initiatives were discussed as examples of effective entrepreneurship model.

Chris spoke of promoting business through ICT and decided to be the listener and hear the views of two dynamic Nigerians in our group. He joked that he had come to sell credit cards. However, interesting discussions lead most people to look at many ideas critically and share their opinions at various levels – business, educational and organizational.

Vijay and Okule had an interesting dialogue on lessons to be learnt from TiE experience and how that can be applied in Africa. Vijay spoke about mentorship and steps for forming a successful group. Okule showed interest in taking the next steps and forming a smaller group. Vijay repeated that formation of a group of 10 successful African people with the capacity to provide seed money and 4-6 hours a month to put in for the group. This network of people will open the doors for new projects, partnerships and initial financial support. Okule mentioned that unlike Indian Diaspora very few successful African people work as leaders in IT industry. Vijay suggested that the entertainment industry and even African American successful performers' support could be solicited especially from those people who have been talking about giving back. He also suggested that areas of high concentration of African populations should be targeted for establishing such a network/ forum.

Everyone agreed that finding right partners on ground, a network of successful African Diaspora in U.S., utilizing the brain power of the professional of the African Diaspora forum and mentoring the local partners and projects was the direction the DDN- Africa should take.

Part III: Key Points

Mentorship was the key focus of 'Table 7' discussion. The mentors engage in various virtual and real networks and forums, which then work towards - facilitating improved infrastructure, organizing group meetings, annual activities, information dissemination, run awareness programmes and coordinate training sessions/workshops.

Lessons learnt from other countries (India, China, Bangladesh) cannot be implemented directly in Africa because of its size and conditions that vary from each country. Each effort in different African country needs to be focused on needs of that particular country – so that each and every African can reap the benefits of this synergy.

Table 8

Table Leader: Mr. Njideka Ugwuegbu, Youth for Technology, Kent, Washington

Case Studies: Global Trade Network USAID and Owerri Digital Village

Rapporteur: Mr. David Wendt, Technology Development Project Coordinator, United Way, Pennsylvania

Participants:

Justin Thumler, Managing Director, Digital Partners Shareware, Seattle, Washington

Yaw Owusu, Founder & CEO, Ghana Cyber Group, Washington, DC

Amadou Mahtar Ba, President, All Africa Global Media, Inc., Washington, DC

Debbie Meyer, Director of Development, Africa-America Institute New York, New York

Njideka Ugwuegbu, Youth for Technology, Kent, Washington

Kristin Randall, Economic Growth Officer, GTN Network, Washington, DC

Carl Pilgrim, International Marketing Officer, St. Lucia National Dev. Corp., New York

David Wendt, Technology Development Project Coordinator, United Way, Pennsylvania

Participants on Table VIII, led by Njideka Ugwuegbu, Founder Youth for Technology, had a very good report. Each delegate contributed to an interactive roundtable discussion. The Table VIII team:

1. Recommended an **annual conference** on utilizing ICT for Africa's development. Delegates endorsed the proposal and one participant suggested hosting the event in Africa in the future. The Conference Planning Committee agreed. Ghana topped the line-up of potential venues outside the United States for the 2nd Annual United Nations Conference on the Digital Bridge to Africa.
2. Urged organizations with limited capital such as The Owerri Digital Village to **partner with the media** e.g. local newspapers in Nigeria to advertise the names of the journals, radio or TV stations in exchange for getting their messages published or announced
3. Encouraged new organizations to solicit more **financial support from multinational companies** — U.S. sponsors increasingly lend more to 501C corporations than to governments of developing countries. Microsoft is already sponsoring The Owerri Digital Village project
4. Suggested more **investment in ICT to connect more kids** in Africa to virtual classrooms and entrepreneurs

Table 9

Table Leader: Mr. Timothy Anderson, President World Computer Exchange and Hariom Newport

Case Studies: World Computer Exchange and World Talk

Recommendations:

1. Develop a Networks structure and also a platform for **sharing best practices** in bridging the digital divide.
 - An example is the proposed AfriShare Initiative that will be launched by Africast.
 - Another example is the YES Knowledge Resource for sharing effective practices in youth employment. (www.youthemploymentsummit.org)
2. The development of a **Social Entrepreneurship Fund** to provide financial support for people in African countries hoping to undertake entrepreneurial activities.
3. Provide **mentoring** for various projects. Africans in the Diaspora can be a valuable resource for this and a structure needs to be put in place to facilitate this mentoring.

Table Nine also concluded that ICT investments should be driven by the need to promote sustainable livelihoods. It is widely agreed that ICT are a tool for promoting development and when considering the demographics of Africa, this development will come about through empowering the women and youth of the continent. The Youth Employment Summit will launch a ten-year campaign of action that will promote youth employment, and will include a focus on the African continent. One of the major themes of the Summit is that of youth employment through ICT as a tool.

Table 10

Table Leader: Mr. Touraj Rahimi, Schools Online

Case studies: Schools Online and BuySouthAfricaOnline.com

Rapporteur: Mr. Heiko Nitzschke, United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP)

1. **Sustainability of IT centers in schools:** Partnering is necessary not only with international partners (companies, United Nations) but especially with local companies, ministries, telecom agencies and the communities.
 - **Technical sustainability:** partnerships with local technical experts (for example university departments) that provide support in setting up and maintaining IT centers. Proposal: Universities can establish “internship” programmed to send university IT students to train teachers and students in IT and provide ongoing advice via email.
 - **Financial sustainability:**

Example: create sustainable revenue stream by provide access to computer labs in schools to local community after school for a fee. Students and teachers can teach community how to use IT, thereby creating interest and support from community (example of student fundraising).
 - Challenges: How to ensure that poorest areas are not neglected if they don’t have the financial/entrepreneurial networks that could provide financial means?
 - Impact measurement of IT in schools, especially how IT affects boys and girls differently?
2. **IT as educational tool:** Internet provides good means to provide supplemental information for school curricula.

Challenges:

 - Problem of “appropriate content” of distance learning tools devised abroad
 - African curricula are often rigidly designed to prepare students for nation-wide exams, therefore little room and interest of teachers to include ICT skills in teaching plan
 - Need for changes in curricula are often policy decision, need for high-level lobbying, contacts with Ministries
3. High demand for web-based database on best practices/lessons learned in form of case studies on ICT projects in Africa and abroad. Specific information needed, for example what were the problems the project faced and how were they overcome. Proposal: ITC task force webpage should host this database.
4. Importance of business incubators that provide space, access to IT, training, maintenance, lower access costs, etc. for small and micro enterprises, especially if unfavorable ICT policy environment and poor infrastructure.
 - Challenge: Make incubators financially sustainable. Proposal: incubators could hold stakes in “start-up companies”; close network with Diaspora and “graduates” from the incubator can create technical and financial support networks
 - Challenge: Infrastructure and regulations often out of hands of companies (governance issues). Proposal: Business incubators could serve as advocacy groups; if financially successful, they are in a good bargaining position vis-à-vis the government
5. ICT provides Africa with the opportunity to export its intellectual capital (example of a graphic designer who is based in Lagos, Nigeria, but provides services to U.S. companies.) However, there is a need to change investor perception of Africa. (Such as software programming in Ghana that does not get enough funding despite its international competitiveness). Hence, strong political will and government support for creating IT capacities in Africa is needed.

Appendix A - AfriShare Questionnaire

AfriShare Skills Database Form

Please take a moment to complete the following sheet. This information will be used by Digital Partners to compile a skills database so that we are better able to match individuals with social entrepreneurs seeking their skills. We will make every effort to accommodate individuals' interests and preferences.

Name _____

Country of Origin _____

Background and Related Experience (please check all that apply)

Academia _____	Manufacturing _____
Agriculture _____	Medical/health _____
Development _____	Micro credit _____
Education _____	Technology _____
Environmental _____	Telecom _____
Finance/Banking _____	Tourism _____
Import-Export _____	Transportation _____
Other (please specify) _____	

Skills (please check all that apply)

<i>Technical</i>	<i>Business</i>
Database _____	Business Plan Development _____
E-Commerce _____	Finance _____
HW development _____	Management _____
Network _____	Marketing _____
Strategy _____	
SW development _____	<i>Fundraising/Philanthropic</i>
Server _____	Corporate Matching _____
Website Design _____	Grant Writing _____
	Networking _____

Interests (please check all that apply)

Gender _____	Cross-Cultural Understanding _____
Economic _____	e-Government _____
Empowerment _____	Environment _____
Education _____	Youth _____
Health _____	
Other (please specify) _____	

Country (please specify) _____

Region (please specify) _____

Any _____

Appendix C - Digital Bridge to Africa Registrant List

Ms Olushola Aboderin Senior Education Specialist, The World Bank, World Bank Institute	Mr Bruce Chadwick Team Leader, Knowledge Technologies for Sustainable Development Winrock International
Mr Adesoji Adelaja Executive Dean Rutgers University	Ms Vanessa Chammah Summer Associate DevelopmentSpace
Ms Florence Adu Assistant Vice President New York City Economic Development Corporation	Mrs Nisha Chatani Editorial Advisor World Bank
Mr Abban Aggrey Chief Information Officer Ask Information Security Group	Mr Chima E. Chima Chief Technology Officer Bandwidth Technologies
Mr Ademola Aiyegoro Professor Howard University	Mr Tiberiu A. Codilean GIS Consultant UNHQ DPI
Mr Alfonso Alfonsi Vice President Gruppo CERFE	Mr Lorant Czarán Cartographer United Nations, Cartographic Section
Mr Milton Allimadi Publisher The Black Star News	Mr John Dada Programs Director Fantsuam Foundation
Ms Atieno Aluoch Interaction Designer RGA	Mr Ken Deering Vice President of Corporate Relations The .Org Foundation
Mr Rohan Amin Project Coordinator University of Pennsylvania	Ms Carolyn Demefack Program and Technology Manager iMentor
Mr Timothy Anderson President World Computer Exchange	Ms Laketch Dirasse Chief UNIFEM
Prof. Manny C Aniebonam President Nigerian IT Professionals in the Americas	Mr Amir Dossal Executive Director UNFIP
Mr Kobla Asamoah Capital Markets Intelligence Associate Thomson Financial	Mr Narku Dowuona President Silicon Sahara Group, Inc.
Mr Amadou Mahtar Ba President AllAfrica Global Media	Mr Denis Duggan Partnerships Coordinator Youth Employment Summit
Mr Olufemi Babarinde Associate Professor Thunderbird, the American Graduate School of Int'l Management	Ms Fiona Dunne Director of Communications The Africa-America Institute
Mr Dame Babou General Manager Sud Com USA	Mr Charles Eke CEO Infotex Systems
Mr Akhtar Badshah Executive Director Digital Partners	Ms Zohre Elahian Co founder, Full time Volunteer Global Catalyst Foundation
Mr Anish Badshah Digital Partners Youth Digital Partners	Ms Rebecca Enonchong CEO Appstech
Mr Samuel Bannerman President of GCG Foundation GhanaCyber Group	Mr Fome Ewoteraí Graduate Student Duke University
Mr Gregor Barnum Director of Marketing AQSolutions	Mr Godlove Fonjweng Assistant Dean University of Pennsylvania
Ms Jennifer Beaton Program Director Digital Partners	Ms Ama Fordjour Software Engineer GCG
Ms Nana Akosua Dwemoh Benneh Scientist GCG	Mr Larry Gell Director-General IAED
Mr Vladimir Bessarabov Cartographer United Nations	Ms Becky Gitonga Director Ecosandals.com
Ms Ilaria Carnevali Programme Specialist UNIFEM	Mr Ayokunle Giwa Vice President of Technology IT Workgroup Inc.

Mr Oswald Guobadia
CIO Felvid Technologies

Ms Neeti Gupta
Program Officer Digital Partners

Ms Nancy Hafkin
Consultant Formerly - African Information Society

Ms Natalie Hahn
Senior Private Sector Advisor UNFIP

Ms Ana Maria Harkins
Program Director Geekcorps

Mr Telema Harry
Board Member Youth For Technology Foundation

Mr Christopher Hedrick
President Learning Access Institute

Mr Ogu Idakwoji
Consultant Sanidas

Mr Al-Nashir Jamal
President and CEO, Alliances International, Inc.

Mr Sergei Kambalov
United Nations ICT Task Force

Mrs Cheick Kante
Director, Business Development World Link

Mr Lawrence Ken-Kwofie
Management Schering Plough

Mr Sarbuland Khan
Director, ECOSOC Support and Coordination Division

Mr John Kiwanuku Ssemakulla
Director MEDILINKS.ORG

Mr Koby Koomson
CEO ASK-ISG

Mrs Soraya LaFleur
Director of Business Development LaFleur Technologies

Mr Jean LaFleur
CEO LaFleur Technologies

Mr Karim Lakhani
President & C.E.O Advanced Interactive, Inc.

Ms Srila LaRochelle
Business Development Director Schools Online
Mr Richard Leclair
Deputy Director World Health Organization

Mr Paul Lefrere
Policy Adviser Open University
Ms Karen Lynch
Director Markle Foundation

Mr John Mack
CEO John Mack & Associates

Mr Olukunle Malomo
Chairman of the Board AfricSoft-HummingBox Inc

Ms Nina Marini
Vice President Ashesi University Foundation

Ms Ellen McDermott
Founding Partner BusyInternet

Ms Sheetal Mehta
Director, .NET Technologies Microsoft / Digital Partners /
TiE

Mr Matthew Meyer
Co-founder Ecosandals.com

Ms Debbie Meyer
Director of Development Africa America Institute

Mr Ayodele Mobolurin
Associate Professor of Information Systems Nigerian
Information Technology Professionals in the Americas

Mr James Moore
Senior Fellow Berkman Center for Internet & Society

Ms Niamani Mutima
Director Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group

Mr Heiko Nitzschke
Intern UNFIP

Mr Charles Ntamere
Product Marketing Manager Lucent Technologies

Mr Nicholas Nuamah
Attorney at Law Offices of Nicholas Nuamah

Ms Hariom Newport
Analyst, World Talk

Mr Obiora Nwogugu
Network Engineer Global Crossing

Ms Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli
Managing Partner LEAP Africa

Mr Dumisani Nyoni
Youth Coordinator Youth Employment Summit

Mr E. Kwame Obeng
Executive Director (US Operations) Community Services
Foundation

Mr Chuka Justin Obiesie
Real Estate & Mortgage Broker Jucoby Real Estate &
Mortgage Corporation

Ms Nana Yaa Ofori-Atta
Manager AQSolutions Ghana Ltd.

Mr Dayo Ogunyemi
Attorney at Law, Entertainment & Media Counselors,
LLC

Mr Joseph Okpaku
President and CEO Telecom Africa Corporation

Mr Michael Oladimeji
President Mikayola International Inc

Mr Olatunde
Technical Director Mediasolv

Mr Olu Oni
Principal Intellectual Capital

Mr Uche Onwudiwe
President/CEO COURE Technologies, Inc

Mr Oluwole Oshota
Executive Director Metarch Centre for Sustainable Future

Mr Vesper Owei
Assistant Professor, Information Systems The George Washington University

Mr Yaw Owusu
Chief Executive Officer Ghana Cyber Group

Mr Papa Owusu
Co-Founder Ghana Cyber Group

Mr Patrick Owusu
Network Architect Riser Technology Inc

Mr Johnson Owusu-Manu
Financial Officer Analyst JPMorganChase Bank

Mr Robert Patterson
Senior Liaison Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Ms Elizabeth Patton
Intern UNFIP

Ms Eija Pehu
Senior Advisor, Rural Development Department The World Bank

Mr Chris Perretta
CIO GE Capital

Ms Awo Quaison-Sackey
CEO AQSolutions

Mr Nenyi Quaison-Sackey
General Manager AQSolutions Ghana Ltd.

Mr Touraj Rahimi
President Schools Online

Ms Kristin Randall
Economic Growth Officer USAID

Mr Kanwal Rekhi
Chairman of the Board The Indus Entrepreneurs

Mr José Rocha e Silva
Professor University of Porto

Ms Melessa Rogers
Director of Operations The .Org Foundation

Mr Stephen Ronan
Managing Director Community Technology Centers' Network (CTCNet)

Mr John Sarpong
CEO Africast, LLC

Mrs Antoinette Sarpong
Vice-President Africast, LLC

Ms Meena Saunders
Program Intern iMentor

Mr Joseph Senyonjo
Vice-President Siyo Consulting Group

Mr Roger Shere-Wolfe
Physician (anesthesiologist)

Ms Kayoko Shibata
Gender Knowledge Management Analyst World Bank

Mr Ishwari Singh
President, NY Chapter Digital Partners

Ms Roshika Singh
CEO Boroda Associates

Ms Jennifer Sly
Intern UNFIP

Mr Scott Sorokin
Chair for Corporate Development Digital Partners

Mr Matthew Stearn
Vice President eNom

Mr Alex Talel
Intern UNFIP

Mr Justin Thumler
Managing Director Digital Partners

Mr Makambo Tshionyi
Intern UNFIP

Mr Njideka Ugwuegbu
Executive Director Youth for Technology Foundation

Ms Frances Uku
Analyst Goldman, Sachs & Co.

Mr Takeshi Utsumi
Founder and V.P. for Technology & Coordination Global University System

Mr Vijay Vashee
President TiE Seattle

Ms Khaita Wasiyo
Co-Founder Siyo Consulting Group

Mr David Wendt
Technology Development Project Coordinator United Way

Mr Ernest Wilson
Professor University of Maryland

Ms Gisele Yitamben
Executive Director ASAFE

Mr Mesfin Zaid
Vice President and Manager Wells Fargo Bank

Mr Pierre Zebaze
Computer Engineer OHRM

Mr John Zemko
Senior Program Officer CIPE

Mr Ethan Zuckerman
Executive Director Geekcorps

Appendix D - DDN-A Advisory Committee

The Roles and Responsibilities of the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee of DDN-A is being set up to guide and lead the organization. The Advisory Committee will have a small core team and at-large members. The Core Team will support the work of the DDN-A Coordinator who will be hired once funding becomes available. Digital Partners will oversee the implementation of the DDN-A, its committees and activities, and provide workspace for the DDN-A Coordinator.

Core Team

A small team will provide additional time to the DDN-A effort, raise resources for DDN-A and provide leadership and guidance to the organization. Current Core Team members include:

1. John Sarpong, CEO, Africast
2. Awo Quaison-Sackey, CEO, AQ Solutions
3. Ethan Zuckerman, Executive Director, Geek Corps
4. Chris Perretta, CIO, GE Card Services
5. Johnson Owusu-Manu of JP Morgan Chase
6. Dr. Adesoji Adelaja, Executive Dean at Rutgers University
7. Akhtar Badshah, Executive Director, Digital Partners

Advisory Committee At-Large Membership

A larger body with geographical representation from several African regions will serve as the Advisory Group. Each member of the advisory committee will work to promote the overall mission and goals of DDN-A and will participate actively in one of the established sub-groups. Members of the Advisory Committee will provide leadership for each of the sub-committees and will be responsible for the activities of the subgroups. Current Advisory Committee members are:

1. Prof. Manny Aniebonam – President, Nigerian IT Professionals in the Americas (Nigeria)
2. Amadou Mahtar Ba, President, All Africa Global Media (Senegal)
3. Amir Dossal, Executive Director, United Nations Fund for International Partnership (UNFIP)
4. Narku Dowu – President, Silicon Sahara (Ghana)
5. Rebecca Enonchong – CEO, Appstech (Cameroon)
6. Noeleen Heyzer – Executive Director, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)
7. Kristin Hughes – Manager Federal and International Public Policy, Hewlett Packard
8. Sarbuland Khan, Director, ECOSOC Support and Coordination Division
9. Ambassador Koby Koomson – President, ASK-ISG (Ghana)
10. Sheetal Mehta, Director Net Technologies, Microsoft (Uganda)
11. Dumi Nyoni, Youth Coordinator, Youth Employment Summit (Zimbabwe)
12. Debbie Meyer – Director of Development, Africa America Institute
13. Joseph Okpaku – President and CEO, Telecom Africa Corporation
14. Kwame Obeng – Director (USA), Community Services Foundation (Ghana)
15. Vijay Parmar – Policy Specialists, Directorate for Resources and Strategic Partnerships, UNDP
16. Vesper Owei – Assistant Professor, The George Washington University (Nigeria)
17. Yaw Owusu, Founder, Ghana Cyber Group (Ghana)
18. Nii Quaynor – CEO, NCS Internet Gateway, Ghana (Also member United Nations ICT Task Force)
19. Touraj Rahimi – President, Schools Online (Iran)
20. Charles Ugo Eke – Founder, CEO Infotex Systems Inc. USA (Nigeria)
21. Njideka Ugwuegbu – Executive Director, Youth Technology Foundation (Nigeria)

There will be sub-committees established to promote each of the areas listed below:

1. AfriShare

Members of this sub-committee will support the development of a network of expatriate Africans and Friends-of-Africa in North America and Europe to contribute talent and resources directly to those in need in Africa. They will be responsible for the development of a web platform where social investors and entrepreneurs can be matched.

2. Social Venture Fund for Africa

Members of this sub-committee will support the core team in raising funds. Each Advisory Group member is responsible for raising funds. The plan is to raise an initial \$100,000 by the end of September 2002 to hire the DDN-A Coordinator and kick off DDN-A activities. We will then raise an additional \$500,000 by February 2003, to support the activities of the sub-groups. Fundraising will be through individual contributions, grants from foundations, corporate support and support from development agencies to help reach the goal.

3. Social Enterprise Laboratory (SEL) for Africa

Members of this sub-committee will identify, mentor and support innovative projects. Some members may join the nominating and selection committee and others may become mentors to selected projects.

4. DDN-A Annual Meeting

Members of this sub-committee will be responsible for identifying the next location, seeking sponsors and planning each year's event.

5. Corporate Alliances

Members of this sub-committee will help in building corporate and development agency relationships and partnerships.

6. Government Alliances

Members of this sub-committee will help in developing alliances with local, state and federal (U.S.) government officials, and African government officials and their representatives in North America.

7. Other

Assist in identifying a program officer and resources to lead the program division at the Digital Partners Institute.

Published by the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force

Secretariat of the United Nations ICT Task Force
One UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017
Web site: <http://www.unicttaskforce.org>

42665—July 2003—1,500