



INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

eLearning: Redefining Education and Training

Computers, mobile phones, radio, television, and the Internet are all examples of eLearning tools that can be applied to foster and facilitate learning. RTI International's approach to eLearning provides focused, practical interventions to help stakeholders deliver quality education and training despite challenging conditions. Our clients come from a variety of disciplines, including education, health, national and local governance, municipal finance, and environmental management.

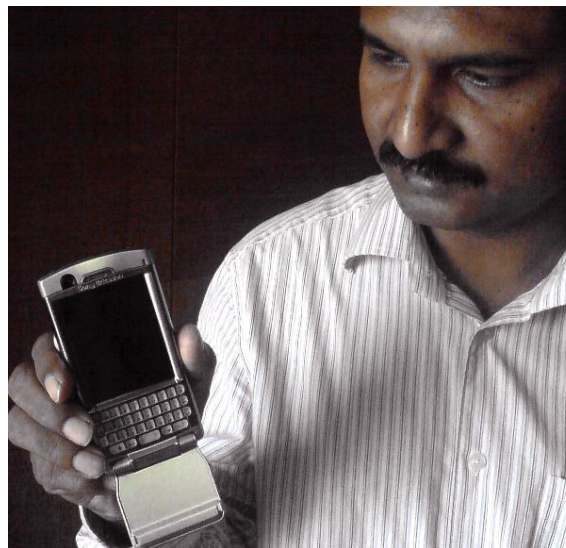
RTI's eLearning initiatives are designed to

- Increase access to education and training, especially in rural and remote areas
- Enhance delivery of face-to-face training by incorporating ICT
- Overcome geographical, social, health, or security barriers to regular communication and information exchange
- Ensure delivery of flexible, locally tailored training to key stakeholders

For more information, please contact

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A training participant shows the mobile phone model used during a study on ICT-supported teacher training in Bangladesh. [Photo: RTI study team]

Understanding needs to determine appropriate interventions

Local Governance Project (LGP), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) (2005–2008)
Through LGP, RTI worked to strengthen Moroccan local governments' responsiveness to citizens' needs. In 2007, RTI experts explored the feasibility of introducing eLearning tools to enhance local officials' ability to manage information, collaborate with one another, and communicate constituents' needs to higher levels of government. Site visits and interviews with government, private sector, and academic leaders helped identify constraints to rapid integration of advanced eLearning technologies, such as computers and the Internet. Weaknesses in computing infrastructure and connectivity, and high illiteracy rates among local officials

in rural areas, for example, drove RTI's recommendation to increase the use of existing radio and television resources for information sharing and communication with other elected officials, while gradually introducing computer and Internet technology.

Increasing access through Web-based training

Training Model Primary Providers Project, USAID (2005–2006)
RTI helped the Iraqi Ministry of Health (MoH) sustain training programs, despite security concerns and travel restrictions, by demonstrating use of a Web-based training portal for primary health care providers. RTI developed electronic resources—integrating text, digital pictures, video, and audio clips—and piloted a free and open-source Learning Management System to give local providers convenient access to in-service

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training curricula and exercises. RTI also introduced a Training Management Information System, a skills testing and administration database, to help health care supervisors monitor staff performance before, during, and after training.

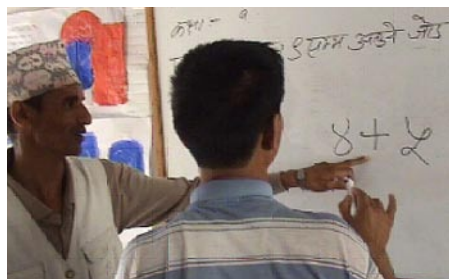
Dialogue of Democratic Decentralization (DDialogue) and Local Government University (LGU) Pilot,

USAID Leland Initiative (1996–2000)
From Ghana, RTI built an online community of practice to increase cross-border dialogue and exchange of decentralization experiences, local governance best practices, and news across West Africa. RTI also helped establish the LGU, an online learning management system providing access to courses in core local government management skills. Fifty-four elected officials and journalists participated in courses covering topics such as financial management for district-level officials.

Maximizing the impact of face-to-face training through eLearning approaches

Innovative Information and Communication Technology in Education and Its Potential for Reducing Poverty in the Asia and Pacific Region,

Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2006–2007)
Linked to two large-scale teacher education programs funded by ADB, RTI conducted studies in Nepal and Bangladesh to determine whether the use of ICT could improve teacher training in rural areas. In Nepal, RTI equipped three mobile teacher training teams with digital video recording and playback technologies, and provided guidance on integrating this technology into self-assessment and reflection activities during face-to-face training sessions. The experience indicated that using video can



Video recorder captures a teacher trainee in Nepal learning how to deliver a mathematics lesson.

[Photo: RTI study team]

help increase teachers' content retention, self-confidence, and overall motivation, and reduce isolation during the training period. The experiment also allowed program administrators to remotely assess the training program and trainers.

In Bangladesh, RTI introduced mobile telephones with advanced multimedia features to convert an existing face-to-face professional development program to a distance-learning format. Twenty trainees in a cluster of ten remotely located schools used the speakerphone and a three-way calling feature to hold weekly conference calls with trainers in other locations, and to discuss the contents of provided print materials with participating teachers in other schools. Results revealed a strong preference for the distance mode of training, and that the method can be as effective as face-to-face training in terms of content retention. The phones also catalyzed greater contact between schools in the same district, and improved cooperation among teachers within participating schools.

Education Quality Improvement Program II (EQUIP2): Accountability, Governance, and Quality of Decentralized Education in Africa, USAID (2006–2007)

RTI collaborated with the World Bank and the British Council to create a distance-learning course, designed to permit

real-time interaction between participants across Africa. Videoconferencing, DVD-recorded presentations, and face-to-face interaction were used to deliver course modules on decentralized school and teacher management, professional development, accountability, and capacity-building. Over 145 national and district Ministry of Education officials, university researchers, headmasters, and local program facilitators were trained through two consecutive course offerings. The first course, in 2006, included trainees from Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana, Uganda, and Zambia. Following the course, a capstone meeting in Ethiopia was attended by approximately 100 representatives from participating countries. In 2007, leaders from Cameroon, the Gambia, and Liberia joined the program.

Local Governance Program (LGP), USAID (2003–2005)

RTI helped newly formed Citizen Advisory Councils across Iraq establish routine interactions between citizens and local government to restore basic services and facilitate economic recovery. RTI developed training modules to prepare inexperienced and untrained officials elected in 2005 take on their new roles as representatives of local communities. Trainings covered issues such as council procedures and functions, code of conduct, legislative oversight, citizen participation, budgeting, transparency, and decentralization. RTI and Iraqi staff trained over 500 council members in three languages—English, Arabic, and Kurdish—using hard copy materials, MS PowerPoint presentations, and multimedia CD-ROMs that incorporated audio and video presentations of Iraqi governance experts.