

# ONE MILLION COMPUTERS FOR AFRICAN SCHOOLS

## A CALL FOR PARTNERS

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<b>PROJECT TITLE:</b>	<b>CAMPAIGN FOR ONE MILLION COMPUTERS FOR AFRICAN SCHOOLS</b>
<b>NATURE OF PROJECT</b>	<b>AWARENESS RAISING, LOBBYING AND ADVOCACY AND CAPACITY BUILDING</b>
<b>TIMEFRAME:</b>	<b>1 AUGUST 2003 - 31 JULY 2005</b>

SchoolNet Africa (SNA) is an independent pan-African non-government organisation which promotes learning and teaching through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in African schools, in partnership with a network of schoolnet practitioners operating in up to 30 African countries. It is the first African-led, African-based pan-African organization promoting digital inclusion in school education in Africa.

African SchoolNets are campaigning to increase access to ICTs for millions of African learners, by building computer refurbishment capacity in Africa, by promoting affordable software educational application/content delivery for accelerated integration of ICTs in education, by encouraging appropriate liberalisation to provide affordable and innovative wireless telecommunication access for the "last" mile in disadvantaged rural communities, and by empowering youth and encouraging appropriate gender responsiveness in education through ICTs.

By stimulating paradigm shifts through global cross-sectoral stakeholder partnerships involving United Nations development agencies, multi-national IT corporations, international donor and aid agencies, international computer distribution agencies, African open source developers and national schoolnets across Africa, African SchoolNets expect a co-ordinated global effort to provide affordable and sustainable access to ICTs for African learners.

This document outlines a proposal for a campaign to raise awareness, build capacity and lay the basis for accessing computers to thousands of African learners as part of an African strategy towards local economic development and the development of the ICT sector in Africa. The campaign involves

- Awareness-raising among SchoolNet practitioners, policymakers, the donor and development community and economic and industrial strategists on the importance of investing in the growth of the ICT and related sectors in Africa;
- Capacity-building programs among Schoolnet practitioners and policy-makers on understanding the global ICT value chain and the economic advantages for Africa in establishing of local computer refurbishment centres as part of a strategy for employment creation, skills development and the development of an ICT industry in Africa;

- Lobbying the large corporations in the OECD countries for the free dispatch of 1 million end-of-lease computers to African schools via the SchoolNet Africa network operating across Africa based on the estimated 600 million PCs that are understood to be decommissioned in OECD countries in the next 5 years;
- End-of-lease decommissioning costs paid by corporations in OECD countries to cover the cost of sourcing, shipping and distributing such computers to African computer refurbishment centres for subsequent local redistribution and technical support to African schools;
- The establishment of local computer refurbishment centres which will also function as centres for deploying such computers to schools, and provide sustainable and affordable local technical support, training and educational content to these schools;
- Lobbying governments in Africa to relax import duties and taxation on computers destined for education institutions;
- Lobbying and advocacy on internationally accepted standards for the export and use of end-of-lease computers in Africa.

SchoolNet Africa calls on the leadership of the international corporate ICT sector and the international development sector to partner with us in achieving the above-mentioned outcomes by ensuring the practical realisation of:

- The establishment of a "put-aside" fund established by SchoolNet Africa and its partners to facilitate environmentally-appropriate decommissioning facilities in Africa over a 5-10 year period;
- The liberalisation of the telecommunication sector to provide affordable telecommunication access for the "last" mile in disadvantaged rural communities;
- The growth of knowledge-based economies to promote sustainable, viable, appropriate and cost effective software products for Africa through education and local economic development.

**The success of a campaign based on raising awareness, lobbying and building capacity on the issues raised above, will mark a major contribution in the endeavour to bridge the digital divide in a meaningful way.**