From the logo project to OLPC

By
FATIMATA SEYE SYLLA
President of Bokk Jang
OLPC Elearning Team Member
THE LOGO PROJECT IN SENEGAL 1982-1988

1. THE IDEA AND THE POLITICAL WILL
3. THE LANDSCAPE
5. STRATEGY
7. STEPS
9. OUTCOMES
Idea of using computers in primary schools as learning tools. Very visionary approach.

Political will from the Minister of Scientific and Technical Research who happened to be a scientist.
THE LANDSCAPE in 1982

- Computers were not well known
- Computers were expensive
- Not enough schools
- Not enough school tables
- Too many children in classrooms
- Lack of educational tools, books
- The failure of the “CLAD” project
- Teachers and students very often on strike
THE STRATEGY

- The logo project was introduced as a research project

- A multidisciplinary concept (science, technology, research and education): 2 Ministries involved + the National University

- Great planning (see steps)
THE STEPS

- Selection of a good multidisciplinary research team (4 primary school teachers, 2 University researchers, 1 computer engineer), people willing to change, already involved in research for a change, desperate by CLAD, a top down project
- Teacher training
- The Logo Lab set up according to the team’s concept, good collaboration among the team, everybody learning from each other (10 computers)
MORE STEPS

- Selection of 4 pilot schools, 2 more schools teachers involved
- 1 Bus for the schools children
- New paradigm:
  - Teachers free to think about their own teaching/learning methods
  - Children free to learn their own way
  - A lot of sharing among teachers and children
Very committed team (I became very good at teaching: taught Pdt Senghor, the teachers became great researchers and great computer programmers, local contents development to teach/learn grammar, maths, physics via motion, translation of Logo messages into a local language (wolof)

Children interested in programming and teaching

The first team became teacher trainers
Very committed children, wouldn’t stop, would like to work even on week ends
Children became better learners and practitioners in scientific subjects
1 pilot school created its computer room and got great results:
- 1 girl who didn’t like maths ended up teaching maths to her classmates
- one of the children has a double major in maths and electrical engineering and is working on his PHD dissertation
- another one, now a young lady, is in charge of Francophonie commission in Senegal
I went to MIT to learn more about computers in Education with Seymour Papert and was part of the Hennigan school project in Boston.

The computer lab evolved to be an IT learning centre for teachers and Ecole Normale Superieure, a teacher training school hosting the lab, is today a faculty of Educational science.
One Laptop Per Child

Good results led to OLPC “all kids should have access to new learning/ thinking Tools”
Guiding principles

- OLPC
  - Not a laptop project
  - Not a market opportunity
- Educational project
• **Child ownership**

Right to own a laptop (low cost, robust and powerful designed for children of elementary schools), Children will protect, care and share their valuable equipment.
Low ages

Ages from 6 to 12 no need to learn, to read/write, to use XO and play with it.
• **Saturation**

Digital saturation in a given population (country, city, village,...) for collaborative Work within a community
1. Connection

XO connected to each other (even off) work together
(Chat, share information on the web, video
conference, music, edit text, read e-books,
collaborative games)
1. FOSS

Child with an XO not a passive consumer of knowledge but an active participant in a learning community (Localization, debugging, adaptation to the needs without external dependency, free Redistribution)
Senegalese children with XOs

In 5 days of practice, amazing results
THANK YOU

- QUESTIONS ?