

Cap Gemini Ernst & Young and IICD team-up to advance e-commerce



In a nutshell...

- Cap Gemini Ernst & Young (CGEY) and IICD are now strategic partners, working together to meet the needs of developing country partners in their e-commerce activities.
- The strategic enabling partnership was officially launched during the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations.
- The partnership's objectives are to:
 - Bring together CGEY's e-commerce knowledge and IICD's partner network as IICD's e-commerce sector twin;
 - Link CGEY's broad staff expertise with that of IICD's expert network and advisory services
 - Identify other opportunities to work together to support ICTs for Development in developing countries under a portfolio approach.

"This is a big step. Through this MoU, IICD helps find solutions to technical problems. With IICD and Cap Gemini Ernst & Young in a permanent agreement, we can continually get access to expert technical advice."

- IICD Project partner Mr. Edward Addo Dankwa, Ghanaian Ministry of Food and Agriculture

The partnership

By end year 2000, IICD had in its projects portfolio more than six projects in which local project partners were actively pursuing some form of e-business in support of the project's overall goals and objectives. These projects range in terms of sector, from agriculture to livelihood opportunities such as music. In their activities, project partners began to express to IICD a need to have strengthened e-business knowledge - knowledge they could apply to the betterment of their individual projects. In response, IICD's Partnerships Programme began pursuing a partnership with a private sector company with solidly proven e-business skills. It did not take long for IICD to find that partner in Cap Gemini Ernst & Young (CGEY).

IICD and CGEY's Public Sector Division signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in 2000 to reflect their new strategic alliance. This strategic enabling partnership is based on e-business knowledge sharing as symbolically illustrated by Jeroen Simons, Business Unit Manager of CGEY's Public Sector Division, during the MoU signing ceremony. At the event, Mr. Simons handed IICD's Managing Director, Jac Stienen, a voluminous book about the development of e-business applications, stating at the time: "by giving you this book, I am furnishing you with actual knowledge and worthy practical examples."

A strategic alliance

In its role as an independent knowledge broker, the closing of this MoU is central to IICD's achieving its mission and to more effectively working with its country programme partners. The strategic enabling partnership with CGEY is founded on the sector twinning approach, with the focus being e-business.

What will this mean in practice? It means that for the period of the MoU, CGEY will serve as IICD's primary source of e-business knowledge during a series of collaborative activities that are structured and organised as part of a systematic twinning approach. The e-business sector twinning approach will begin in February 2001 with an e-business workshop, jointly organised by CGEY and IICD. The



workshop is geared to its participants who are IICD's e-business project partners.

The goals of the workshop are threefold:

- 1) to strengthen the e-business knowledge of IICD's project partners in the context of their individual development project goals and objectives;
- 2) to assist them to develop one-year Action Plans towards implementing improved e-business tools and thereby 'deepening' their project objectives; and
- 3) to support a channel through which these southern partners can share experiences and practices among country programmes.

After the workshop, the work really begins. Each e-business project partner will then begin implementing his or her individual project Action Plans. IICD's e-business project partners are by and large from the agriculture sector - they are sector specialists with good ICT skills. These partners are likely to encounter some stumbling blocks while implementing their Action Plans. CGEY together with IICD's Knowledge Sharing Advisory Services will be available to these e-business project partners to provide specialised e-business knowledge and assistance during this implementation period.



More information

For any questions on the CGEY-IICD partnership or if you are interested in more information on how to partner with IICD, please contact IICD's Partnerships Manager at partnering@iicd.org. Be sure to visit the websites of Cap Gemini Ernst & Young (www.nl.cgey.com) and IICD (www.iicd.org) to learn more about each organisation and its activities in the field of ICTs and ICTs for Development.

The International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) assists developing countries to realise sustainable development by harnessing the potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs). The driving force behind IICD activities is that local 'change agents' themselves identify and develop proposals for realistic ICT applications - local ownership forms the essential basis for sustainable socio-economic development. Acting as a catalyst, IICD's three-pronged strategy is mainly delivered through a series of integrated Country Programmes. First, IICD facilitates ICT Roundtable Processes in selected developing countries, where local stakeholders identify and formulate ICT-supported policies and projects based on local needs. Second, working with training partners in each country, Capacity Development activities are organised to develop the skills and other capacities identified by the local partners. Third, IICD draws on its global network to provide information and advice to its local partners, also fostering local information exchange networks on the use of ICTs for development. The best practices and lessons learned are documented and disseminated internationally through a Knowledge Sharing programme. In support of these activities, IICD invests in the development of concrete partnerships with public, private and non profit organisations, thus mobilising knowledge and resources needed by IICD and its local partners. Country Programmes are currently being implemented in Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Jamaica, Mali, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.