

ICT4D award finalists



The Development Gateway Foundation is an enabler of development. It helps to improve people's lives in developing countries by building part-

nerships and information systems that provide access to knowledge for development. The Development Gateway is an independent, not-for-profit organisation based in Washington, DC. Six finalists have been chosen from a field of 135 nominations for the Development Gateway Award 2005. The \$100,000 award, to be announced in September, will recognise one of the finalists for outstanding achievement in using information technology to improve people's lives in developing countries.

Working in all regions of the world, the nominees demonstrate the impact that technologies such as the Internet, satellite communications, smart cards, and others can have on development in various fields. The Award, with major sponsorship from Deutsche Telekom, will be presented at the Development Gateway Forum 2005 on September 16-17 in Beijing. The Forum, co-hosted with the Government of China and the World Bank, will bring together leaders of China's information technology and development sectors with their peers from around the world to address the theme of 'Information Technology and Collaborative Development'.

Finalists for the Development Gateway Award

ITC e-Choupal: ITC e-Choupal, a programme of ITC Limited, in India, is regarded by many as an example of best practice in e-Commerce that is improving farmers' productivity and livelihoods. Through the establishment of a network of 5,100 local computer kiosks (choupals) in Indian villages, an estimated 3.5 million farmers have access to real-time information that enhances their ability to make decisions, connect with buyers, and succeed in the marketplace. ITC aims to serve 100,000 Indian villages by 2010 – expanding its reach to 10 million farming households. Future plans also include choupals for telemedicine. (www.eChoupal.com)

Madhya Pradesh Agency for Promotion of Information Technology (MAP-IT): The e-Agricultural Marketing system (E-Krish Vipanan, or EKVI) was created by MAP_IT as a public-private partnership helping to organise the agricultural trading business in the state of Madhya Pradesh. Working with the state's agricultural marketing board, MAP_IT is benefiting an estimated six million farmers and 70,000 licensed traders by making the agricultural trading business more transparent and effective. The system, in Hindi and English, is designed so that other states can replicate it, in India and elsewhere. (www.mapit.gov.in)

Modemmujer: Modemmujer (Women's Modem) uses the Internet and an online network to inform, train, and empower

women throughout Mexico and Latin America. As a supporter of women's rights for 11 years, Modemmujer promotes transparency in Mexico, and through its network it affects the larger Latin American region. A participant in the United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, Modemmujer helped to spread awareness of women's rights. In Mexico, following passage in 2003 of the Federal Law on Transparency and Access to Public Government Information, Modemmujer began disseminating information on policies and laws affecting women. (www.modemmujer.org)

Prodem Fondo Financiero Privado: Prodem's automated teller network, using smart card technology and voice applications, enables rural Bolivians to overcome language and literacy barriers to reliably save their money and gain access to loans. Prodem expects to add 2,000 clients per month to this system. Its 76-branch network, reaching 1,500 communities, is the largest in the country and spans urban, as well as rural areas. (www.prodemffp.com)

Radio 68H: As Indonesia's only independent and nationwide radio network, Radio 68H has changed the nature of local radio in Indonesia. Using the Internet and satellite communications, Radio 68H is able to gather and disseminate news, information, and educational programming across the country's 17,000 islands. Radio 68H's activities have also been critical in the post-tsunami relief effort, for which it was presented the Tsunami Award by the Aceh Art Council. Radio 68H rebuilt radio stations in Banda Aceh, provided updates about relief operations, ran a missing persons bulletin, and conducted a fundraising campaign. Now that reconstruction has begun, Radio 68H is providing information on these efforts as well. (www.radio68h.com)

Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAFA): The VVAFA's International Management and Mine Actions Program (iMMAP) has been the driving force behind the use of a satellite and database system to provide what it calls 'Humanitarian Information Management' in some of the most dangerous places on earth, including Afghanistan, Iraq, and Sudan, and in countries affected by the Tsunami in Asia. VVAFA is an international humanitarian organisation that addresses the causes, conduct and consequences of war through programmes of advocacy and service for victims of conflict around the world. During an international crisis, leaders use iMMAP to gather critical data and provide a common operational picture to support their decision making. Following the Asian Tsunami, for instance, iMMAP provided support by monitoring and mapping logistical assets throughout the regions worst affected by the Tsunami. (www.vvaf.org/programs/immap) ■

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