



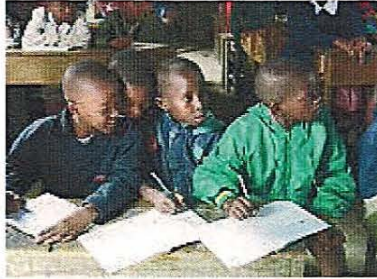
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Getting Kenya Connected

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Learning conditions in Kenya are often crowded and not ideal. Here schoolboys squeeze around a bench, using it as a desk for taking notes. "People really want to learn," says Jim Wynn. "It is just opportunity that they are missing."

Kangundo, a small town of 10,000 in Kenya, would at first glance seem an unlikely candidate for a serious Cisco business venture. It is a cash-strapped place with more than 60 percent unemployment and significant youth crime as a result. While the town is only about 35 miles away from Nairobi's greater opportunities, the poor condition of the roads makes frequent travel back and forth prohibitive.

And yet here, in a modest building of less than 400 square feet known as the Blossom World cybercafé, Cisco has helped launch what it hopes will be the start of big things in terms of getting all of Kenya more fully tapped into the digital age.

When Blossom World officially opened on July 28, and a thousand people from Kangundo turned out en masse to get a closer look, no one could have been prouder than Jim Wynn, Internet Business Solutions Group (IBSG) director in the area of emerging markets and the public sector.

Blossom World is the first of six pilot "pasha centres" that Wynn has been steering, along with IBSG teammate Peter Drury and Michele Castegnaro of Emerging Africa Business Development as part of a Digital Villages Project in Kenya. The word "pasha" means "to inform" in Swahili, and the goal of the



A former head teacher in the U.K. school system, Jim Wynn (on the left in the background) helps to train staff at the Mukuru Kiaba pilot pasha centre on the edge of Nairobi.



Jim Wynn did research on student skill levels before seeking educational content for the pasha centres. Here he speaks with two boys in a mathematics class in Nairobi to gauge their math skills.



Most schools in Kenya are not digitally connected. In fact, some schools are little more than outdoor classrooms. While outdoor schools are not typical, they are not uncommon either.

centres, explains Wynn, is to provide a ready source of vital information to Kenyans in the areas of basic education, vocational training, health knowledge, and government services.

Pasha Potential

If the Digital Villages Project takes off according to plan, there will be approximately 3,500 pasha centres scattered across Kenya within the next three years, according to Wynn. Every Kenyan citizen will be within walking distance of the connectivity provided by a pasha centre.

Africa is currently well behind the rest of the world in terms of being connected.

"The country of Namibia has less bandwidth than I've got at home," says Wynn. As such, Africa represents fertile ground for Cisco, which has joined forces with the World Bank, the Kenyan government, telecommunications operator Telkom Kenya, and PC provider Copycat to get the pasha centres up and running.

Connectivity and Content

Drury was alerted by Cisco colleagues in Kenya to the Digital Villages Project that was part of the World Bank's investment of \$115 million to build out the broadband infrastructure of Kenya. This was in large part stimulated by the three submarine fiber optic broadband pipelines, the first of which, provided by Seacom, has now been connected with the land-based fiber optic network.

When all is in place, the connectivity is going to increase from a small number of megabits to 4 terabits: 40 million times better connectivity. Drury realized that this provided a real opportunity to show what connectivity and content could do to support development.

Wynn became aware of the pasha idea while working in Nairobi on a smaller project. Based on input from Revlon, he and Drury had been instrumental in the construction of a New York-quality hairdresser's training salon on the edge of a Nairobi slum, Mukuru Kiaba.

"Cisco donated \$50,000 to create the theory part of a hairdressing course that could be taken online," says Wynn. "And Revlon brought in their top stylist, who cuts Madonna's hair no less, for some 'train the trainer' for the practical part of the course."

The happiest part of the story for Wynn was when a young woman from the slum, who lived with five other family members in a 10-foot-by-10-foot tin shack where they slept in shifts on a single bed, successfully completed the course and got a job at a hairdressing salon. She was able to become the sole breadwinner for the



Schoolchildren in Kenya are provided a daily meal of maize by the World Food Programme. Because the meal is still fairly meager, teachers help students grow vegetables to supplement the maize and teach a lesson in extra responsibility.



The tin shack shown here houses a shop in Mukuru Kiaba on the edge of Nairobi. This slum will be the site of one of six pilot pasha centres in Nairobi. Says Jim Wynn: "The slum is a community of 60,000 people living in tin shacks. The first time you see it, you go back to your hotel room and you cry."

family.

Where Wynn saw a potential point of failure in the connectivity game plan—and a significant business opportunity for Cisco—was with the pasha centre component itself. He was concerned that people would not truly grasp the potential of the pasha centres and would let all the new technology languish. He also realized that the Kenyan government would need to be strongly convinced of the ultimate value of the expanded digital infrastructure to be willing to contribute to its ongoing success.

With the success of the Nairobi hairdresser experience in mind, Wynn approached the Kenyan government's Information Communication Technology (ICT) board and made his case. He and Drury asserted that the pasha centres would need content that the ordinary Kenyan would find truly useful and be willing to come to the centre and pay a few Kenyan shillings for. This in turn, they maintained, would present the Kenyan government with a sustainable business model that it would be motivated to invest in.

This led to the Kenyan government tapping on the business model and pilot design of Cisco IBSG to get the pasha centres rolling. With Castegnaro's help, Telkom Kenya then came into the picture with a commitment to providing "last mile" connectivity from fiber optic lines into buildings, and Copycat, the computers and furniture for the pasha centres.

Polling the Kenyan Populace

When Connie (a Kenyan entrepreneur) spoke to everybody, she said the pasha centre was going to transform their lives and give them opportunities to train. And, just watching people's faces, it was so important to them, because it was giving them some sort of permission to join the world as it were. I had a real physical lump in my throat. I could not have spoken until I managed to calm myself down

**Jim Wynn,
IBSG,
director,
Emerging
Markets and
Public Sector**

And so, Wynn, Drury, and team went out into Kenyan communities and talked to people about what they wanted in terms of online vocational training. Their research turned up a need for help with farming, bricklaying, plumbing, construction, transportation, restaurant hygiene, refrigeration, car repair, bicycle repair, and much more.

"Some at Cisco might think that the opportunity would be all about providing networking skills, and it is for some people in the country, but not for most," says Wynn. "We're not pretending that we're going to teach farmers IT skills. We're just going to help them get through their problems."

Wynn, Drury, and team got much of the online content donated. For example, a vegetable processing company, Frigoken, contributed information on supply chain functionality to help small farmers market green beans to high-end markets in other parts of the world.

As a former head teacher in the United Kingdom secondary schools, Wynn realized that a critical component to the pasha content platform would be basic educational content that Kenyan teachers could share with students, either by bringing students to the pasha centre or by having a pasha

centre exist within a school. In fact, one of the six pilot pasha centres is a school by day and a vocational training center in the evening.

To this end, the Cisco team contacted Learnthings, a Johannesburg-based creator of top-quality interactive learning content and enlisted their support free of charge in localizing their curriculum for Kenyan students.

From the United Kingdom, NHS Choices provided access to its knowledge base that is focused on the needs of citizens. Government services, such as help with tax returns, are also available on the pasha content platform. It is all what Kenyans like to call a "bouquet of services," says Wynn.

Eager for Empowerment

During the opening of the Blossom World pilot pasha centre in August in Kangundo, with its strong turnout, Wynn received positive confirmation that Kenyans are ready to leap ahead into the Internet era. "The excitement was enormous. Everyone wanted to get in and have a look—it was like a football crush inside," says Wynn.

Numerous high-level government officials and business representatives spoke at the opening, interrupted only by a herd of goats wandering through the proceedings. But it was the Kangundo owner of Blossom World, an entrepreneur by the name of Connie Kisuke, who most uplifted Wynn that day.

"When Connie spoke to everybody, she said the pasha centre was going to transform their lives and give them opportunities to train," says Wynn. "And, just watching people's faces, it was so important to them, because it was giving them some sort of permission to join the world as it were. I had a real physical lump in my throat. I could not have spoken until I managed to calm myself down."

Wynn's manager, IBSG emerging markets vice president Mohsen Moazami, understands the depth of feeling that his employee has brought to this project: "Jim has a passion around education and bringing skills to people throughout the world. He and Peter have been in the driving seat and the champions of the pasha centres from the beginning."

Smart Opportunity for Smart+Connected


The pasha centres project is a vital piece of the Smart+Connected Communities initiative that Cisco employees have been hearing more and more about this year. "Smart+Connected Communities is not just about big cities like New York City or London," says Moazami. "The other side of the coin is rural development and rural access to broadband because if we address this area well, it can help stem some of the urbanization challenges."


As Kenya begins to benefit from the efforts to get it more fully connected, and that effort spreads out to other parts of Africa, Cisco stands to gain much from the IBSG consulting work and leadership of Wynn and Drury.



Says Moazami, "John Chambers is passionate about 'country transformation' and believes that Cisco is one of the few companies that can do country transformation based on broadband. So, anything that promotes the usage, deployment, and greater investment in national broadband ends up being a very very good piece of business for Cisco."

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