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Организация
Объединенных Наций по
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Regional Literacy Conference Addressing “*Literacy Challenges
in Europe with a sub-regional focus:*”

Building Partnerships and Promoting Innovative Approaches.

(Baku, Azerbaijan, 14-16 May 2008)

“Distance Education Centers in Rural Areas”



United Nations Literacy Decade

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

Presented at the UNESCO Regional Conference in Support of Global Literacy "Addressing Literacy Challenges in Europe with a sub-regional focus: Building Partnerships and Promoting Innovative Approaches", 14-16 May 2008, Baku, Azerbaijan

Programme name: Distance Education Centers in Rural Areas

Implemented by: Centre for Constant Practical Education, 4system Polska Ltd., Ecorys Polska Ltd. and Foundation Supporting Physically Disabled Computer Specialists

Basic facts

Country: Poland

Starting year: 2007

Outreach: 40,000

Target Population: Adults in rural areas

Operating in: 379 computer centers in 2008

Main Funding: European Structural Funds

Contact: Ms Weronika Pielas, centranawsiach@idn.org.pl

Website: www.edukacja.online.pl

Brief Description

In the rural areas of Poland, the level of literacy among adults is much lower than in cities, and people have little access to further learning that would enable them to improve their competencies and chances on a changing labour market. Distance education through ICTs was considered to be an efficient means to reach these populations. Therefore, computer centers were established in rural districts in Poland by a consortium of four partners including the Centre for Constant Practical Education, 4system Polska Ltd., Ecorys Polska Ltd. and Foundation Supporting Physically Disabled Computer Specialists. It has been estimated that this nationwide project is going to reach at least 8000 beneficiaries per month.

The centers have been providing free of charge access to a wide range of educational on-line courses and career guidance tools. The offer of centers aims at developing and supplementing users' vocational qualifications using modern ICT solutions. It will lead to diminishing digital exclusion and disproportion in the level of education between cities and villages.

The educational process of the beneficiaries is counseled by a staff member at each Center. The counselors support users' on-line education, and promote the project in the local community. The project's activities are accompanied by promotion campaign on national and local level.

By February 2008, 379 computer centers have been established, which are open for 20 hours a week. They are fully equipped and also accessible for physically disabled persons. Since then, about 16,000 users have been given access to the centers' educational offer, and more than 13,000 of them have finished at least one on-line course.