

KATHA, Delhi, India

ICT and Communication education targeting youth

Introduction

Description of case Study

Started in 1988 by Geeta Dharmarajan, Katha is a nonprofit organisation. Katha endeavors to spread the joy of reading, knowing, and living amongst adults and children, the common reader and the neo-literate. Katha has striven to establish a code of excellence in all that it does, to enhance the quality of life in every project it has attempted. Katha works mainly with very poor communities and ICT project targets children many of who are school dropouts, work as child labour, and girls specially work hard at home and look after their siblings.

Katha's main objective is to enhance the pleasures of reading for children and adults, for experienced readers as well as for those who are just beginning to read.

KATHA entered into ICT as it felt it has the potential to empower the lower income group community if boys and girls from the community get an opportunity to learn ICT. In partnership with BT they have set up the Katha Information Technology and eCommerce School (KITES). KITES also has a Business English Lab and a Lifelong learning Centre for adults in the community. The students have been taught Web Designing, Graphics, Accounts; DTP on a project based system. Their ICT capacities are increasing progressively through the intervention.

Aim of Project

To empower the lower income group community if boys and girls from the community through ICT training. This is especially important to the area as a KATHA conducted surveys showed that small business houses are slowly but surely moving to computerised work and the need for IT professionals to serve this growing population of small businesses, is immense.

Role of ICTS

Using computers, printers, software, Internet connection, web cam and computer microscope. Integrating these into other initiative into its programmes and activities so that ICT does not remain a stand-alone initiative.

Sources of funding

From BT. Details not given.

Project process

Project based approach enables the students to relate the learning skills to their environment as the focus areas are health, drinking water facilities, housing, basic literacy. In addition, a lot of teamwork is used. The work done by the older students is used as a Teaching aid for the younger students and peer learning is also encouraged.

Points of Interest

Demand is current exceeding the number of computers available. Upgrading the computers is also expensive. Purchase of New Software is a very important area and again very expensive. In the project area, Internet is a problem requiring a costly solution such as a Dish Antenna or VSAT for Internet connection.