



# African Education Resource Center

Our Programs As Potential  
Solutions to Educational  
Challenges





# AERC's Programs



## 3 Rs



### 1. Resources

- Scholarships
- Reading materials

### 2. Research

- Access to quality education
- Distance education/E-learning

### 3. Role models

- Mentoring
- Women & leadership



# AERC: Target Groups

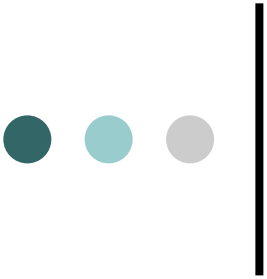


Let's inspire and empower underprivileged:

- Girls
- Women

In order to change our communities and the world at large because...

When you educate a woman, you transform society!



# Rationale: Why Promote Literacy?



# Millennium Development Goals

- Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and associated targets for reducing global poverty by 2015
- Millennium Summit at UN Headquarters in 2000
- **#2 Achieve universal primary education.**
  - ensure that all boys and girls complete primary school
- **#3 Promote gender equality and empower women.**
  - Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and at all levels by 2015.



# Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)



1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
2. Achieve universal primary education.
3. Promote gender equality and empower women.
4. Reduce child mortality.
5. Improve maternal health.
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
7. Ensure environmental sustainability.
8. Develop a global partnership for development



# Challenges Facing African Ed.

- Poor instructional materials
- Very limited instructional materials
- Multiple languages
- Limited research
- Limited research-based materials in local languages
- Limited training for teachers on language of instruction
- Change = ICTs can now give students and teachers language options.
- Limited progress in overcoming illiteracy

(Wagner, Day & Sun, 2004)



# Systemic Effects

- Vulnerability to
  - Illiteracy
  - Disease
  - Poverty
  - Death





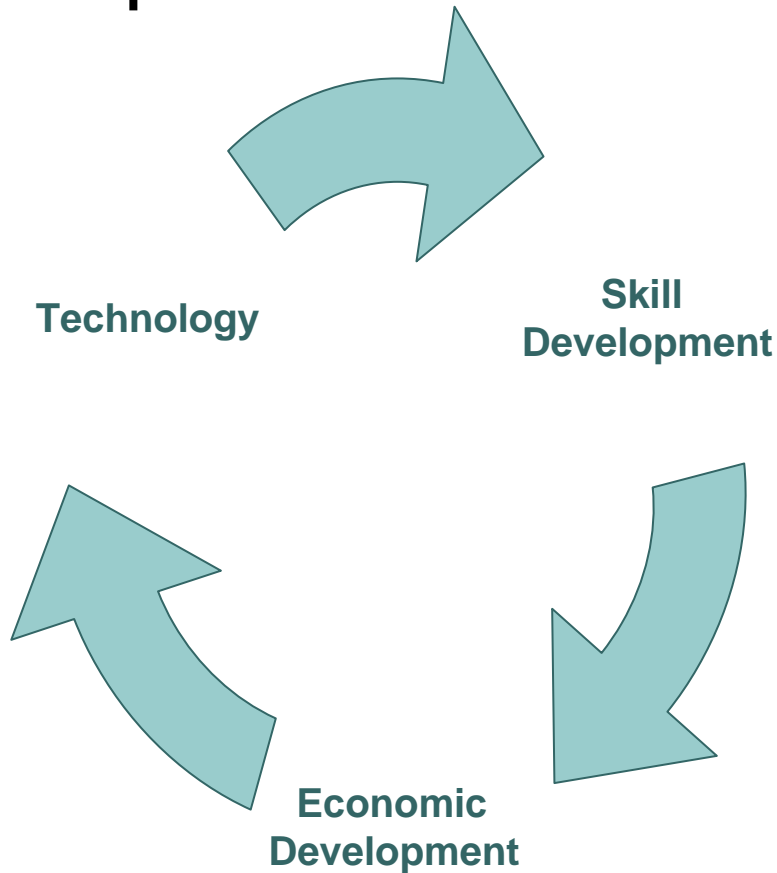
# Why Promote Literacy?

- “Literacy **for all** is at the heart of basic education for all and that creating literate environments and societies is essential for achieving goals of...
  - Eradicating poverty
  - Reducing child mortality
  - Curbing population growth
  - Achieving gender equality
  - Ensuring sustainable development
  - Peace and
  - Democracy.”

(Wagner, Day & Sun, 2004, p.10)



# Why Promote Literacy?



- UNDP Model (2001)
- Multi-factorial relationships among:
  - Technology
  - Skill development
  - Economic dev.



# Bigger Picture

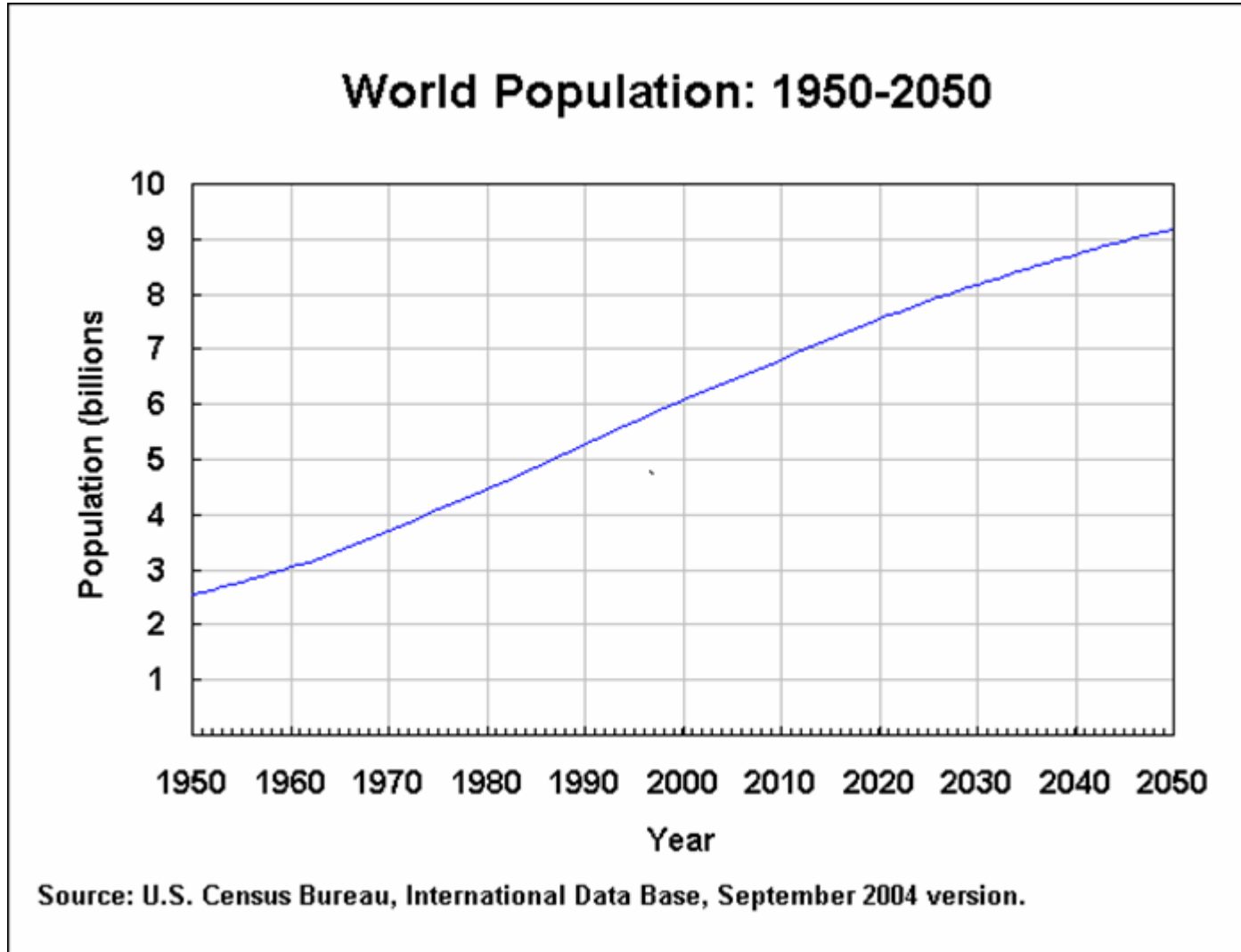
- Today's total population of the World is **6.5 billion** (est.)
- Increase to 9.1 billion people by 2050.
- Most population growth by 2050 will take place in LDCs World population
  
- Africa's population is **770 million** people
  - i.e. 12% of the world's population
  
- United States population is **295,625,937**

U.N. World Population Report, March 7, 2005) <http://www1.voanews.com/>

U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2005). Population projected to 03/09/05 at 14:14 GMT (EST+5))  
<http://www.census.gov/main/www/popclock.html>



# World Population



# Prevalence of Illiteracy Worldwide



- 1990: Est **900 million illiterate** adults **worldwide**
- 2005: Est. **771 million** illiterate adults **worldwide**
  - (>14 yrs old)
- **60%** of the world's illiterate people are **women**.
- 27% of the world's illiterate are in LDCs
- Est. **200 million** illiterate adults **in Africa (1/4)**
- LDCs= Least Developed Countries

Sources: Rumagojee, 2003; Perraton, 2000; Wagner, Day & Sun (2004)  
(UNESCO 1993:24; 2005)



# Youth Illiteracy in Africa



- Africa is the most youthful continent in the world
- 50% Africans are below 18 years (SSRC, 2004)
- >1/2 of Africa's youth & adults do not have basic literacy skills
- >1/2 have not completed primary or secondary school
- >1/3 or more of youth and adults in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) are poor
- **By 2015: 75% of out-of-school youth in Africa**

Rumagojee (2003);Nafula, J. (2004);Wagner, Day & Sun (2004)



# Illiteracy Among Girls

- 100-125 million kids not in school worldwide
- 44-50 million kids in SSA are not in school
- 30 million girls in SSA are out of school
  
- Worldwide, nearly **two-thirds** of the 125 million children not in school are **girls = 83 mil.**
  
- The African literacy problem may be even more serious than this!

SSA = Sub-Saharan Africa

Source: Nafula, J. (2004). *The Monitor*. (UNESCO 1993:24; 2005)

# Problem: Girls' Fate



- Today, nearly **two-thirds** of the 125 million children not in school are **girls**.
- Girls are less likely than boys to stay in
  - Upper primary
  - Secondary school
- Why?
  - Poverty
  - Conflict
  - HIV/AIDS
  - Early marriages
  - Sexual harassment
  - Harsh school environment
  - Priority given to boys



Source: Nafula, J. (2004). The Monitor. AERC, 2005



# Universal Education



- Education promises a better life for children living in the developing world, yet many obstacles stand in the way.
- Universal primary and secondary education is **yet to be achieved** in SSA and South Asia (Perraton, 2000).
- Improving access to education is urgent.

(Survey by UNESCO in 1998:56-7 in Perraton, 2000)



# Special Education Needs

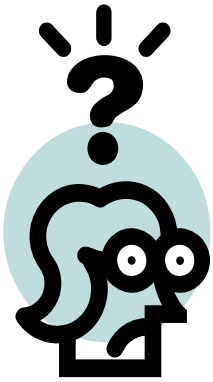
- Low enrollment of disabled kids
- 30% of 800,000 disabled children in Uganda attend school



# Learning Resources Limitations



# What is a Classroom?



“...the average classroom is not much more than a designated meeting place for a teacher and a group of pupils....”

- o UNESCO (1998:56-7) survey in least developed countries. Source: Perraton, 2000

# Learning Resources Limitations



- Limited education budgets worldwide - only 5% of national budgets worldwide are spent on illiterate populations
- Public expenditure on education in developing countries fell from \$200 bil. (1980) to \$150 bil. (1985)
- Expenditure per inhabitant fell by 30% from \$61-\$41 (Perraton, 2000 has detailed table on world's total public expenditure on education).

# Learning Resources Limitations



- “Over 90% of the pupils in the final grade of primary education do not have any textbook in their mother tongue, over a third of them do not have a mathematics textbook in any tongue and over a third ....do not have a desk or writing place.”

(Survey by UNESCO in 1998:56-7 in Perraton, 2000)



# Limited Learning Resources



- “Schools in developing countries **often lack the most basic resources needed for education** such as qualified teachers, facilities, and textbooks.”
- “The **number of days in a school year** have been reduced, **teachers salaries** are on the decline so much that fully qualified teachers are often a luxury and **teacher turnover** and attendance are problematic.”
- “Even with low salaries, almost all of the school budgets are spent on personnel, **so there is little left for textbooks and other instructional materials** –less than \$1 in low income countries at the primary level vs. \$52 in industrialized countries.”

Source: Perraton, 2000 citing Levin and Lockheed, 1993:3).



# Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs)



# ICT Challenge

- “It is deeply concerning how little serious attention has been paid to the potential ways in which ICT can enhance (literacy) skills....”(Wagner, Day & Sun, 2004, p.1).



# ICT's Potential

- “There is **much ignorance** among many in education as among those outside it about what distance education can do and cannot do, what does and does not constitute good practice in distance education, its efficiencies and **governance.**” (Dhanarajan, 1999)
- Need to raise teachers' awareness
  - To raise quality
- Incorporate ICTs
  - to increase access



# Information Literacy

- Shift to a Knowledge Society
- More than the 3Rs...to new literacies
- Broader definition to include information literacy
- It's now critical for people to
  - Learn new literacies
  - Develop the ability to locate info
  - Evaluate info
  - Effectively use information in multiple ways.

(Wagner, Day & Sun, 2004, p.10).

- Teachers should be at the forefront of information literacy!!



# Teachers' Challenges





# Teachers' Challenges

- High teacher-student ratio
- Limited training opportunities
- Limited skills or knowledge
- Lack of access to relevant technology
- Lack of incentives to change current pedagogical techniques
- Low self-esteem and self-efficacy
- Lack of confidence that one can master necessary skills
- Special needs among students



# Potential Solutions

- Create **enabling environments**
- Need for credible action **research**
- Need for **capacity building** in Africa
- **Information access** is critical for HRD
- Prioritize **local content**
- Prioritize **reform**



# Potential Solutions

- Access to quality education is critical
- Alternative fundraising
- Raise awareness on areas of need
- Collaboration & partnerships
- Integration of ICTs
- Training/education of teachers
- Take personal initiative & responsibility

- AERC 2004
- Wagner, Day & Sun, 2004);
- Perraton, 2000



# Acronyms

- AERC = African Education Resource Center
- DE = Distance Education
- E-learning = Electrically-mediated Web-based distance education
- ICT = Information & Communication Technology
- LOI = Language of Instruction
- LDCs = Least Developed Countries or Developing countries
- MDGs = Millennium Development Goals
- SSA = Sub-Saharan Africa



# Reference

- AERC. (2006). *African Education Resource Center: Our programs As Potential Solutions to Educational Challenges*. Available online at [www.aerckeny.org](http://www.aerckeny.org)

WWW Resource Available



# Reach Out!

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