The ConnectEd Approach

1. Provide more than hardware, software, and computer skills.

   Youth must learn to use these skills to solve problems - to find information and evaluate it, and to then create and communicate it well to others. This requires changing the way we educate.

2. Train in new ways of teaching.

   Students and teachers must learn to use technology, but technology must also be used to learn. Staff development should include technology and its integration into education. Investments must be made in hardware and software, training and time for teachers to learn how to use the technology.

3. Select technology based on program objectives

   The use of ICTs in a program must be thoughtfully and strategically approached. One must assess the needs of the audience and program objectives, and choose the strategies and technologies to best achieve those objectives.

4. Use technology appropriately; use is as important as its selection.

   Youth and teachers should use technology appropriately and in ways that match with one’s mission, all the while keeping themselves safe.

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In Indonesia, students have taken learn basic skills in photo editing while learning how to run a printing service.

A number of students have gone on to secure work placements based on their new skills.

In China, ConnectEd hosted an ICT competition among teachers to challenge them to use technology in the classroom.

Select technology based on program objectives

To help prepare students in Australia for the world of work, students were taught how to use the internet to research jobs and expected salaries.

In India, to reach homebound girls, tablets with special educational programs are downloaded to “bring the school” to these girls. In these conservative families, the program model must not be deviated from.
Technology makes it easier for volunteers to find their niche in helping programs and youth.

There are new opportunities for volunteers using technology, such as helping with tasks such as a website design, training teachers in ICT, or teaching youth digital photography.

In India, some girls decide to disobey their husbands by taking computer classes offered by ConnectEd. Technology is a level of privilege that allows students to enter any job interview with confidence.

In Indonesia, ConnectEd offers ICT skills in programs not offered in public schools, making students more competitive in the tech job market. One student in Indonesia has begun his own graphic design business.

In China, volunteers from local universities provide ICT training to teachers in disadvantaged migrant schools.

The key to the successful use of technology seems to be the investment of time and resources towards the training, ongoing support and development opportunities provided to teachers and staff.

Since 2011, World Education and the Alcatel-Lucent Foundation have worked in partnership to improve the lives of disadvantaged youth. ConnectEd uses a wide range of interventions to reach these goals, but a key driver in moving forward is the use of technology. The ConnectEd program has provided access to information and communication technology (ICT) to over 10,000 youth, trained over 300 teachers, and provided computers, tablets, and other ICTs in the five countries in which it functions: Australia, Brazil, China, India, and Indonesia.