

ORGANISATION NAME:

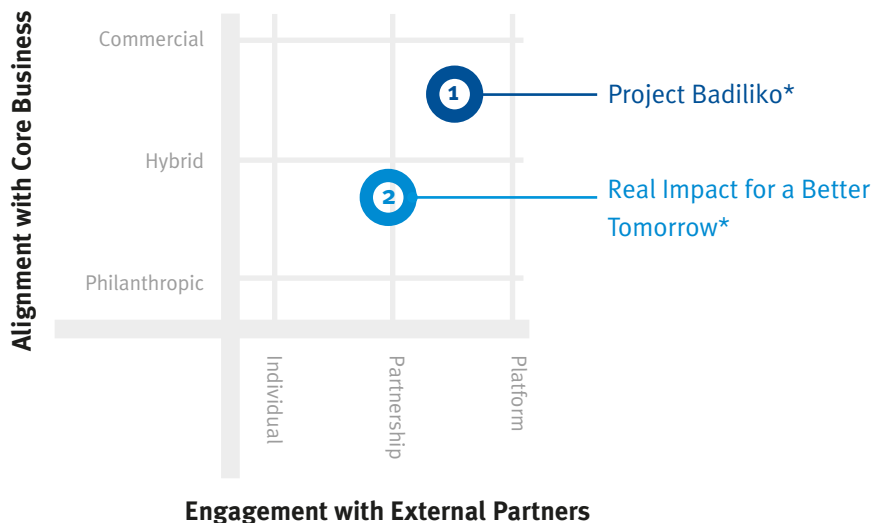
MICROSOFT



Microsoft is a multinational technology company headquartered in Redmond, Washington.

Microsoft's bold mission, to empower every person and every organisation on the planet to achieve more, aligns strongly to the SDGs, enabling the company to extend existing partnerships while driving business growth and expanding social impact.





***1.** Partnership with the British Council to spread digital literacy across several sub-Saharan African nations.

***2:** UNHCR, Microsoft employees and partners developed a mobile registration system for refugees.

Microsoft is able to make the case for building shared value to internal stakeholders, as the company sees education initiatives in the developing world as a way to open up new growth markets.

Working on information and communications technology (ICT) education in collaboration with the British Council is seen as key to Microsoft's core business, as the company estimates that its next billion customers will come from emerging and developing markets.

The partnership between Microsoft and the British Council emerged from personal contact between employees, which grew into small-scale projects and later into wider partnerships across 28 countries.

"Building a partnership required very honest discussions based on a fundamental shared philosophy of

using technology to improve teaching and learning. We started small and built up from there," said James Bernard, Global Director of Strategic Partnerships, Microsoft in Education.

The company has been one of the drivers in partnerships within the United Nations and is excited to see more entities moving to this type of model, particularly in the ICT for Development (ICT4D) space. The specialist skills and knowledge that companies can bring into partnerships can have a far higher monetary value than cash donations or sponsorships. Companies can benefit from the neutrality of international organisations, such as the British Council or UN, who can also add a trusted brand to social-sector partnerships where corporate involvement could be viewed as strictly commercial.

Microsoft has found that success in building partnerships between organisations relies on the agency of the individuals involved. The company's partnership with the British Council flourished because the employees who met in the beginning had the power to create pilot projects that could be measured, evaluated and scaled.

SUPPORTING THE SDGS

The following are two illustrative examples of initiatives that are supporting the SDGs.

Project Badiliko

Partners: British Council

Launched in 2011, 100 “digital hubs” have been built in schools across six countries in sub-Saharan Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Ghana and Nigeria), introducing ICT as a new way of learning for teachers and students. Teachers are trained in leadership, a global citizenship curriculum and ICT teaching practices and in turn train other teachers from surrounding schools. Where schools are off the grid, digital hubs are supported by solar power and long-range Wi-Fi. The project has trained 13,000 teachers, reached 600,000 ICT learners and increased innovative teaching practice and learning outcomes.

The partnership was built on a philosophy shared by Microsoft and the British Council: that technology can be used as a platform to deliver improved education outcomes when combined with curriculum, content and teacher professional development. Microsoft brought expertise in delivering technology and the use of ICT in education, and the British Council contributed its expertise in working with government ministries, schools, teachers and students, as well as the global citizenship curriculum. Both partners originally invested cash into the project, plus staff and in-kind resources. In many cases, communities have made additional investments to make the labs self-sustaining.

Each organisation brings complementary strengths to the partnership and each gleans benefits. For British Council, the partnership was a natural extension of its long-standing Connecting Classrooms project. For Microsoft, the project is a key part of its core business strategy, representing a long-term shared value approach to drive business growth and social change in developing markets through investing in digital literacy and skills development.

Real Impact for a Better Tomorrow: Applying ICT to Support Refugees

Partners: UNHCR

This project is based on a shared vision to include refugees as part of the global technology movement and support ICT education and learning in challenging environments.

The partnership between Microsoft and the UNHCR began in 1999 as the Kosovo refugee crisis unfolded. A group of Microsoft employees contacted the UNHCR to volunteer their time and technical knowledge. Together, UNHCR, Microsoft employees and other partners developed a mobile registration system, now called the proGres database, implemented globally.

proGres is a standardised system for refugee registration, replacing dozens of old, incompatible databases. It currently operates in more than 250 locations in 82 countries, including 32 in Africa, and has provided assistance to nearly five million refugees.

Through proGres, refugees are registered upon arrival at camp, improving management by accurately determining the size and composition of refugee populations and helping with assistance needs. The proGres database is used for the administration of the refugee status determination process.

Once status has been granted and refugees are in the system, proGres issues identification cards, records addresses for refugees living outside camps, issues voluntary repatriation forms and identifies individuals with special needs like unaccompanied minors or the elderly. At the end of 2010, UNHCR had rolled out proGres in 82 countries.