



About Kachile

Kachile is a social venture dedicated to alleviating poverty in West Africa by creating digital opportunity through the targeted application of information and communication technologies (ICTs). Kachile aims for gradual and lasting social transformation through a number of projects, initially beginning with www.kachile.com, an e-commerce website for local artists in post-conflict Ivory Coast. In a second step, technology centers and educational hubs will be established that will serve as incubators for small businesses. A third focus will be leveraging mobile technology for microfinance to provide access to capital in a simple way.

kachile.com

The central problem that kachile.com addresses is the current lack of direct access for local African artists to global markets and the lack of promotion of African culture to mainstream consumers. Kachile.com will target to major markets: 1. Consumers and wholesalers from Germany, UK, France, and Switzerland; 2. West African corporations and philanthropists that are interested in promoting local African culture. Advantages over existing e-commerce websites for African artists:

- Direct access to first class African artisan products
- Door to door delivery
- Competitive pricing
- Background information including videos on artists and local African culture

Kachile Foundation

A focal element of Kachile is its multi-stage approach to building lasting and sustainable business solutions through knowledge transfer and empowerment in ICT & Entrepreneurial Learning Centers. This will be achieved through three major axes: offering of technological support and necessary ICT instruction, business coaching for local SMEs, focusing on female entrepreneurs, and eventually the introduction and application of advanced mobile technologies. Thereby, Kachile will direct ICT dissemination towards development goals by fostering entrepreneurship, spurring endogenous growth, reversing a psychology of poverty, and making lasting change.

Background

Today Cote d'Ivoire is a post-conflict environment with substantial unemployment (often reaching 40-50%), a large informal sector, an alarming HIV/AIDS rate and high Malaria risk, substantial pollution, high corruption, low trust in governmental institutions, large immigration and strong social tensions. However, there is hope on the horizon: the country is now widely peaceful and has been rather little affected by the global financial crisis. Foreign investors are slowly coming back to the country and the consciousness for the need for change is rising.

Business Model

Kachile will be based on two major pillars in order to assure financial viability. The e-commerce website kachile.com will be run as a social enterprise whereby generated profits will be repatriated back to the Kachile foundation. The Kachile foundation will apply for development grants, offer consulting services and invest in SME that will emerge from its activities. To be successful in the long run Kachile aims to join a number of different partners, among them local cooperatives of artists, local universities, development agencies and UN institutions such as UNCTAD and UNICEF, and corporate partners in West Africa.

Milestones

Thus far the following milestones have been achieved since the creation of Kachile in January 2009:

- Programming of initial e-commerce website (estimated to be operational for beta testing by the end of March 2009)
- Team building (students and local and international IT and development experts)
- Engagement of local stakeholders such as the International University of Grand Bassam (IUGB)
- Developed a concept for a foundation to build focusing on an ICT & Entrepreneurial Learning Center

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