



Activity Report

« As-Swat Shabab » CyberMedia Project



Tanmia.ma Association, August 2007

1. Introduction to the Project

1.1. Context

Recent progress in the universe of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has led to changes without precedents in the world of the media everywhere in the world. The Internet has revolutionized the ways in which one reaches and produces information. Web 2.0, the phenomena of blogs, podcasts and others vlogs has reinforced this tendency. As a result, the production and diffusion of news and information is no longer in the hands of a few media professionals and publishers; “citizen media” offers individuals, interest groups and activities from Myanmar to Marrakech to express their ideas and concerns and to attract a global audience.

The As-Swat Shabab project (“the voice of the youth”) intends to take advantage of these new opportunities to include the young Moroccans in the organization and the production of participative and community media in Morocco. They will be trained and encouraged to produce multimedia content, to be exhibited online.

With funding provided by EUCOM via USAID, the Association Tanmia conducted preliminary activities to test the feasibility of the project idea. The EUCOM funded project activities were centered in Tanmia’s Community Access Centers (CAC) in Salé and Temara. With the support of the Agency of Social Development (ADS) and the MEPI program (US Middle East Partnership Initiative), Tanmia.ma opened a Community Access Center (CAC) in Salé in November 2006 and a second center in Temara in July 2007. The CACs currently attract youth in large numbers who are looking for specific services offered traditionally in cyber centers (access to the Internet, basic computer training, printing, photocopying). In the CACs, the association seeks to develop a new model of cyber café: a centre for the exchange of information and ideas, meetings, and media training for youth and local associations. This model could eventually be used in other centres or cities in Morocco. The Eucom project allowed the association to test this idea.

Technical support for the project during its start-up phase was supplied by MTDS¹. In additional equipment and technical assistance was offered by Genesi and Sun Microsystems.

1.2. As-Swat Shabab vision

The As-Swat Shabab project seeks to contribute to community media development by mobilizing and training youth and youth organizations in Morocco. The Internet is a powerful communication tool, offering strategic advantages for transmitting cultural

¹ The project was launched during a period of time when Tanmia’s project management capacity was weakened by the departure of its original executive director. The role of MTDS included identifying the project manager and orienting him, orienting consultants Doug and Susan Davis, coordinating the visit of Johan Dams of GENESI and supervising the installation of the EFIKA network, identifying speakers for the round table and assisting with final reporting. MTDS assistance for launching the project was more extensive than it will be in the follow on project funded by MEPI, following the recruitment of an experienced executive director and the retention of Fouad Zahiri for phase 2 of the project.

values, mobilizing public opinion, reinforcing transparency and accountability and enabling social mobilization.

In this context, it is important to emphasize that youth are the primary Internet users in Morocco. The websites visited and consulted however, are usually produced outside of Morocco: 95% of the Moroccan traffic is directed towards international sources, in other words, to sites which might not reflect Moroccan culture and values. The Internet is still a tool that is both underutilized and under-explored in the training and informing of youth about issues related to local culture, citizenship, social development and economic productivity. In addition, almost no one is harnessing the potential of youth and their evident interest in the Internet and new technologies to enable them to become producers of local content. Young Moroccans could quickly move from the status of simple consumers of foreign media to the more enviable position of producers of local content and multimedia, thereby enabling them to express their points of view and share their own experiences actively engaging them in the life of their community.

1.3. Project Plan

The project action plan contained the following activities:

- Creation of communication materials about the project in French and Arabic.
- Organization of round table discussions for the launching of the project at the CAC in Salé and Témara
- Organization of round table discussions on the role of community media
- Organization of round table discussions on open source technologies
- Creation of an online survey for youth on internet usage and their interest in the project
- Organization of two training sessions on podcasting with 41 youth in Salé and Témara

Activities	April 07				May 07				June 07				July 07			
Article and project presentation																
Round table on the project launch in Salé																
Round table on the role of community media																
Round table on open source technologies																
Podcast training for youth																
Online survey for youth on internet usage																

2. Project description

2.1. Development of an article for the project

The project manager, Fouad Zahiri developed communication materials on the project to diffuse information about the project via the Internet and to recruit potential partners. An article was written in two languages (Arabic and French) and published on the sites Tanmia.ma, www.selwane.com and www.maroc-it..

Appendix 1 : Arabic project presentation article

Appendix 2 : French project presentation article

2.2. Project launch round table

The round table discussion to launch the project As-Swat Shabab was organized in the Tanmia.ma's Community Access Center in Salé on Wednesday May 3, 2007 under the topic of "Moroccan Youth and New Media".

Zahiri led the round table with the participation of Mr. Khalid Al Aarari, the manager of the CAC in Salé and Mr. Douglas Davis, professor of psychology from Haverford College and a consultant with extensive experience looking at youth and adolescence in Morocco.

Zahiri outlined the general objectives of the project to the participants requested the feedback of potential participants about their interest in youth media activities. Douglas Davis followed, discussing among other issues the importance of the Moroccan dialect (Darija) to facilitate expression between Moroccans. According to Davis, Darija constitutes a very important means of communication between Moroccans and one must recognize the language in order to facilitate the participation of Moroccans (young people primarily) in the contribution of information.

Following the presentations, the participants engaged in a lively debate about the role of youth in Morocco, the pluses and minuses of the Internet and the feasibility of engaging youth in content production.

After this discussion, a plan for collaboration between Tanmia and local youth NGOs was established within the framework of the As-Swat Shabab project containing the following points:

- Process for identifying youth for the podcast training organized by the project
- Process to encourage the youth to take part in the planned youth survey
- Decision to accept the participation youth who are older than 25.
- Identification of potential dates for podcast training;

Appendix 3 : List of round table participants list in the project launch

Appendix 4 : Round table program

2.3. Round table : The role of community media in social mobilization

As part of the As-Swat Shabab project, "Moroccan Youth and New Media", the Association Tanmia.ma organized a round table discussion on May 15, 2007 to benefit youth associations as well as youth in Salé's Community Access Centre.

The goal of this round table was to present and discuss the possibilities and the risks of collaborative citizen Internet as well as the opportunities to serve the initiatives of development and social projects.

The round table had a subject of “the role of community media in social mobilization” and was led by Mr. Thomas Bekkers, specialist in collaborative and citizen-oriented Internet in Morocco and Mr. Ayoub Ajami, charge for the web site www.selwane.com, a citizen media portal for Salé.

The presentations of the speakers led to very interesting debates and discussions. All the people present acknowledged the need for integrating youth in a social dynamic to create a center/local club of Community media via the Internet and also for encouraging the participation of the young associative members of the city.

Appendix 5 : Participant list

Appendix x 6 : Round table program

Appendix 7 : Presentation by Mr. Thomas Bikers

Appendix 8 : Presentation by Mr. Ayoub Ajami

2.4. Round table : Open Source Technologies and Development

A round table was held with the CAC in Salé on May 16, 2007 on Open Source Technologies and Development to benefit youth associations and the young people of Salé. The goal of the round table was to present and discuss together the possibilities and the challenges of deploying open source technologies (free software and copyright-free material) to serve the development initiatives. Several speakers representing the open source sector in Morocco and elsewhere took part in this round table.

The round table opened with a presentation by Mr. Johan Dams, representative of the company GENESI, who was sent to Morocco to install a 10 station computer network using the EFIKA stations in the CAC in Salé. This EFIKA system which is based on machines developed by GENESI, is composed of small boxes only equipped with a motherboard, a CPU and memory, connected to a central server offered by the company Sun Micro systems. This material was donated by GENESI for experimentation and training in free software for youth in Salé.

Johan’s presentation was followed by a presentation by Mr. Rachid Jankari, president of Tanmia.ma Association. He presented the state open source software in Morocco. He also presented various Moroccan experiences based on the use of the open software.

After Rachid, Omar El Hyani, student at the Mohammedia School of Engineers (EMI), presented the experience EMI for the development of a Lemix system, based on open source software and used to meet the specific needs of professors and students in the engineering school.

Silvia Aimasso, who represented the Regional office of UNESCO in Rabat, followed Omar with a presentation of a UNESCO project to promote open source software to youth known as the MIFTAH project.

The discussions were centered around the advantages, limitations and possibilities of open source development in Morocco. The participants could clarify and share their knowledge and experience they've had using this software, as well as opportunities open source software offers compared to other proprietary software.

The structure and subject matter of these first round tables enabled Tanmia to draw some conclusions about the project:

-There was strong interest from participating youth to participate in podcast training activities.

-Discussion was lively for the project launch

-The latter two round tables addressed interesting topics but were less youth oriented; their format was more classical and less interactive and do not represent the approach that Tanmia will implement for future round tables. For future round tables, the association will consult youth to select topics that are very relevant to their interests and use more participative format. The latter format was implemented during a round table organized in the Temara CAC on the Election Observatory. Following the meeting, several participating youth were offered the opportunity to be official election observers during the September parliamentary elections.

Appendix 9: List of Participants

Appendix 10: Round table program

Appendix 11: Rachid Jankari's presentation

Appendix 12: Omar El hyani's presentation,

Appendix 13: Silvia Aimasso's presentation

2.5. Survey on youth and Internet use

2.5.1. Context of the Survey

With technical assistance from Doug and Susan Davis², the project launched an online survey to collect information concerning the use of the Internet by Moroccan youth and to measure interest in youth podcasting. This survey was designed to gather information useful for improving the Cybermedia strategy as well as to identify potential participants in youth podcast clubs in Salé and Témara.

2.5.2. Development of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was based on 4 major axes:

- Educational level and activities (scholastic level, work, associative work)
- Internet use
- Knowledge on the Community Access Center (CAC) – Salé,
- The use and interest in podcasting among Moroccan youth

2.5.3. Questionnaire launch

² Susan Davis is an anthropologist with extensive research experience in Morocco. She and her husband, Doug Davis authored a book on Adolescence in Morocco.

The questionnaire was launched online on Tanmia and other web sites: www.tanmia.ma, www.selwane.com, and www.maroc-it.com.

The questionnaire was put online in French and can be accessed on any connected computer. We also discussed the development of a version in Moroccan Arab, "Darija" but this was not completed due to time and resource constraints (it may be done at a later time). The information collected was recorded directly into an Excel database hosted by Haverford so that it could be easily accessed and analyzed.

2.5.4. Questionnaire results

There were 179 usable responses to the survey submitted by Moroccan residents between May 5 and July 8, 2007. The first several dozen responses came primarily from computers at the Salé CAC. Later, a link was added to the Tanmia webpage and as word spread among Tanmia's client community responses began to come in from all over Morocco along with a few from outside Morocco.

Current audience for Tanmia Cybermedia activities

The survey results reveal that to date, the youth that have been attracted to NGO work and Tanmia's CAC activities are relatively well educated. According to Doug Davis' analytical report on the survey,

"On the whole, the usable sample of 179 responses to the CAC survey completed by persons residing in Morocco gives us a reasonable picture of the client population so far attracted to the CAC and to Tanmia's activities: educated (young) adults in white-collar professions with a wide range of interests and with access to many media, for whom home access to the Internet is now common. It is important to understand this population, because it is they who will determine Tanmia's initial success.

The "Voices of Youth" project, however, is an attempt to respond to different concerns. Millions of adolescent and young adult Moroccans are poorly educated and unemployed and alienated. They are enthusiastic consumers of music, sports, and other information on the Internet, and the widespread availability of inexpensive cybercafe access allows many to seek friendship, work, and romantic opportunities on the Internet. They are not, however, avid consumers of intellectual material online, in large part because this material is addressed to more privileged audiences in languages – French and literary Arabic – with which they have limited fluency.

No society can flourish with such a waste of its human potential, and Moroccan society is now responding in a variety of ways to the challenge of making ideas and marketable skills available to everyone, and doing this in a way that embraces the living culture of today's Morocco -- a blend of *darija* and Amazigh mother tongues in which what Moroccans communicate among friends and family.

Level of Interest in Youth Oriented Community Media

The NGO-involved people who have an interest in Tanmia's activities and who took time to fill out our survey express enthusiasm for the idea of youth podcasting, whether or not they have ever experienced a first-rate podcast addressed to or

produced by youth. Unfortunately, no one who has so far responded to our survey outlined specific topics for exemplary podcasts on behalf of their own organization or community. These findings suggest a readiness on the part of sophisticated Moroccan adults to endorse youth-oriented Internet media; but they do not yet allow more than inferences about what those youthful voices, when heard, will say.

Survey respondents' subject matter interests for podcasts

Many comment specifically on the need for a youth centered (or even youth-only) radio-like medium. Music, education, and sports are mentioned frequently as appropriate topics for such podcasts, as are problems of unemployment and bad social conditions. AIDS, sexuality, and drugs are mentioned specifically. Despite general enthusiasm for the idea, several people express concern about maintaining editorial control so that podcast material does not serve inappropriate social or political purposes. See attached Excel file **tanmia0707_suggestions.xls**.

Appendix 14 : Doug Davis' Report on the results of the questionnaire

Appendix 15 : Index card of investigation of the questionnaire

2.6. Podcast training for benefit youth in Salé and Témara

2.6.1. Training context and objectives

The project As-Swat Shabab offered training to a group of 41 young Moroccans (24 in Salé and 17 in Témara) in podcast production. The broad goal of the training was to see how a sample group of youth from Salé and Témara would respond to the opportunity to produce their own multimedia content and to begin building a network of youthful contributors to the prototype podcast platform podcast.tanmia.ma.

The objectives of the training were as follows:

- 1- To familiarize participants with the Web 2.0 environment and the sociocultural issues surrounding podcast technology
- 2- To acquire a specific understanding of the design/production/diffusion in regards to podcasts;
- 3- To master the basic techniques and skills necessary to the design and manufacture of podcasts;
- 4- To begin building a podcast club within the Community Access Centres in Salé and Temara.

2.6.2. Selection criteria of the youth for training

The selection criteria for training participants were:

a- Age :

The young people selected for the podcast training were generally between the ages of 17 and 25 years old. At the request of participants (NGO actors) of the project launch round table a few participants over the age 25 who were motivated and interested were accepted to the training.

b- Technical familiarity

Basic computer skills was a requirement to take part in the training. All of the participants met this criteria, although especially in Temara, some participants were more advanced technically than others.

c- NGO involved youth

Tanmia prioritized youth participants who were actively involved with local NGOs. The majority of the participants in the training met this criterion but not all.

d- Scholastic level

One selection criterion in selecting the group was level of education. Tanmia sought to select a relatively homogeneous group to facilitate team building and cooperation among the participants. For the Salé group, participants were relatively better educated - with a minimum of a high school education or higher. The Temara group was more mixed with participants still in lycee to college graduates.

Various procedures were adopted to identify the training participants:

- Via the three May 2007 round tables
- Via informative meeting with local associations by the CAC managers
- Invitation of the young visitors of CACs directly by the managers
- Invitation of the young members of the associations registered in the NGO directory of Tanmia.
- Invitation of the young people of Salé and Témara which took part in the online survey.
- Via word of mouth .

2.6.3. Training Implementation and results

The podcast training was organized June 18-23, 2007 in Salé and July 16-19, 2007 in Temara. The training was delivered by the Tanmia project manager and the respective CAC managers with assistance from a member of the MTDS ICT for Development staff and an American volunteer with previous experience using film production and youth development.³

Probably the most interesting part of the training was the last day when the participants presented their first podcasts to other members of the group. The subject matter of the first podcasts covered a range of topics from glue sniffers in Salé, theft and criminality in Temara, traffic congestion in Salé, the poor condition of the local highschool in Temara. The topics demonstrate that youth have something to say about serious issues facing their communities.

³ Mitchell Chanelis is in the process of developing the Story Exchange Project in Morocco. He previously worked in Prague. The proposed project is based on the idea that telling personal stories and finding commonalities between people is an effective way to build solidarity and tolerance within a society and between societies.

The quality of the first podcasts was low, demonstrating that quality production takes time and practice. In addition, the youth participating in the training did not all have access to video recording material and at the time of the training, Tanmia was not able to provide this (the association did not have sufficient funding to buy a video recorder).

Probably the most disappointing aspect of the training was the relative inactivity of the podcasters post-training. Only one podcast has been submitted to the podcast platform since the training in summer. While the summer holiday season followed by Ramadan may partially explain this, clearly more follow-up is needed if community youth media is going to take off. ***The creation of podcast clubs is a response to this observation – that youth need a social and pedagogical context in order to produce podcasts and this will be offered by CAC based youth podcast clubs starting in the Fall of 2007.***

Appendix 16: Report of the training of young people with the CAC of Salé

Appendix 17: Report of the training of young people with the CAC of Témara

3. Analysis of project results

3.1. Lessons learned

A major challenge to testing the feasibility of the Cybermedia project is the difficulty the project managers had in explaining the concept of online community media to potential project participants in the absence of existing good models. **There is a need to develop some good examples of the kind of multimedia content that could be produced and hosted on a community media portal.**

In addition, Tanmia has not to date developed its existing portal, tanmia.ma or the podcast platform, tanmia.podcast.ma to display multimedia content of the type it is promoting in the Cybermedia project. The existing podcast platform (tanmia.podcast.ma) is more focused on the training guide than on podcast media itself. **Improving the existing portals is needed to demonstrate how podcast content can be used as a communication medium and to attract user contributions.**

To date, with some significant exceptions (Connais Tes Droits, a limited number of podcast clips produced by former content manager Soufiane Ladham) content production has not been a strategic force of Tanmia. Most of the content that is currently on the portal is proposed by its user audience. Most of the podcast content was produced by participants of Tanmia managed workshops for the ALEF project. If there is a broader audience of Moroccan podcasters, Tanmia has not yet been in able to tap its potential in terms of spontaneous contributions from its user audience. **Reaching a relevant mass of community media producers will require additional communication activities, more training activities and as mentioned above, attention to building up a base of “model” content to inspire others.**

A second challenge was identifying youth that met Tanmia's criteria for participating in project activities, in particular its desire to work with active young members of local associations. The generally weak participation of young people in NGOs in Salé and Temara meant that Tanmia was choosing participants from a relatively small pool. In addition, youth that are active in NGOs are not necessarily representative of an average young person in Salé and Temara in terms of their social maturity, educational achievement and economic status (as indicated in the analysis of the survey by Doug Davis).

However, project managers believe that cooperation with local NGOs remains an important means to mobilize youth – not necessarily youth members of NGOs but youth participating in local development initiatives as participants. In Salé, many of the youth that took part in the round tables and the training had previously received some training in journalism from a local association. This made them more receptive to the project idea and easier to mobilize for project activities.

The training sessions and round tables revealed that getting youth to talk is not just about giving them technical skills (to produce a podcast) but also creating a social learning environment where youth feel comfortable and are able to express their views. **Tanmia initial vision of the project was perhaps too technocratic; the feasibility phase has pointed to the need to think more deeply about the techniques to be used in the planned podcast clubs to build youth confidence and to reinforce their critical thinking and communication abilities in addition to their technical skills.**

The observations of Doug Davis about the importance of local content in local languages were validated during discussions with potential project partners and youth. **There was broad agreement especially among youth that content in local dialects would fill a void and attract an audience.**

3.2. Conclusion

In general, the EUCOM funded CyberMedia project achieved its objectives. The communication activities with potential partners, the three round tables, the two podcast training sessions and the youth survey with the young people enabled Tanmia to develop its strategy for planned youth podcasting clubs, its community media activities, and the development of an improved online media platform.

With the lesson learned during these initial activities, the Association Tanmia obtained additional funding from MEPI to initiate youth podcast clubs in Salé and Temara, to organize additional round tables and to improve and promote its community media platform.

4. Rapport financier du projet CyberMedia

Rapport financier

Projet CyberMedia

Reunions, tables rondes, visites	l'organisations des deux tables rondes au CAC du Salé, les déplacements pour les différentes reunions dans le cadres du projet et visite au d'autres projet sur les jeunes	253,94	114,90	107,14	49,01	525,00		
Rubriques	Activités					Montant	Dépenses	Reliquat du
Sous Total 6 (USD)						Dépenses	Prévus	Montant
						925,00	600,00	75,00
Phase du Projet								
MTDS Project Management and								
Total des dépenses projet CyberMedia (USD)						17 893,52	Montant	Montant
Montant Global du projet CyberMedia (USD)							20 000,00	
Reliquat du projet CyberMedia (USD)								2 106,48
MTDS	(Facture 594 MTDS)							
Sous Total 1 (USD)						4 800,00	4 800,00	0,00
Tannia Project Manager		Avril	Mai	Juin	Juillet	Montant	Montant	Montant
Mr Fouad Zahiri	Indemnités du salaire	985,22	985,22	985,22	985,22	3 940,89		
Sous Total 2 (USD)						3 940,89	4 400,00	459,11
Technical Assistance/ Media Survey Development		Avril	Mai	Juin	Juillet	Montant	Montant	Montant
Ms Susan Davis	Assistance for Development of Youth Survey					1 500,00		
Mr Davis Douglas	Consultation pour la réalisation et l'analyse du sondage avec les jeunes ; Participation au formation de l'équipe Tannia production de podcast (Facture 594 MTDS)					1 600,00		
Thomas Bekkers and Doug Davis	Moderation of « Community Media » Round Table (Bekkers) and Presentation in Project Launch Workshop (Davis) (Facture 594 MTDS)					1200,00		
Sous Total 3 (USD)						1 600,00	1 600,00	0,00
Survey kits (MP3 player/recorder + headset + CD dyne + training sessions)		Avril	Mai	Juin	Juillet	Montant	Montant	Montant
Fournitures (Lecteurs MP3+Guides+Attestations)	Achat de 41 lecteur MP3 au profits des jeunes associatifs participants dans les deux formations (24 de la ville de Salé et 17 de la ville de Témara) avec les photocopies des guides formations et impression des attestations des formations			2 157,64	270,00	2 427,64		
Sous Total 4 (USD)						2 427,64	4 000,00	1 572,36
Monitors, keyboards for EFIKA boxes		Avril	Mai	Juin	Juillet	Montant	Montant	Montant
Boite EFIKA	Installations des boites EFIKA		1 500,00			1 500,00		
Sous Total 5 (USD)						1 500,00	1 500,00	0,00
Misc Tannia Meeting and Travel Costs (Round Table, Youth Meetings)		Avril	Mai	Juin	Juillet	Montant	Montant	Montant

Rapport financier
Projet CyberMedia