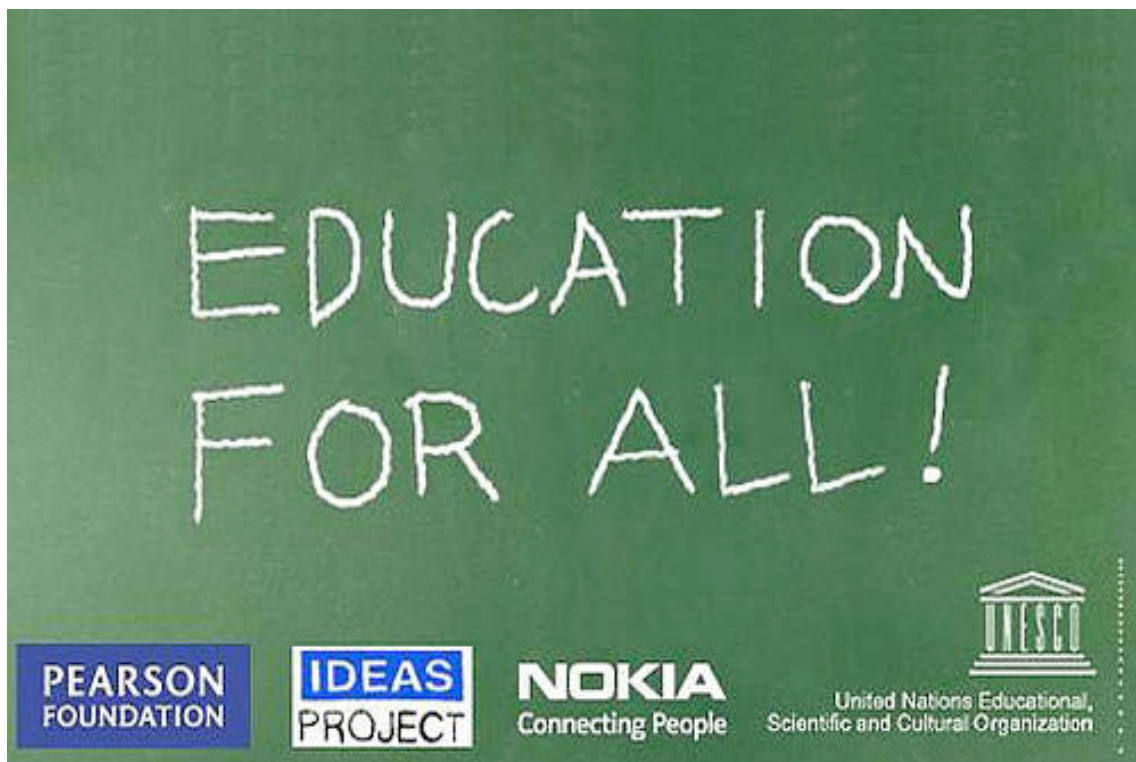


UN-backed prize honours mobile communication initiatives to advance education



Education For All (EFA) Crowdsourcing Challenge. Credit: Nokia

11 October 2012 – Initiatives from China, India, Kenya, Switzerland and the United States will receive an award recognizing how mobile communication can help advance education, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)) announced today.

For a period of eight months, UNESCO, Nokia and the Pearson Foundation asked education experts, teachers, parents, students, software developers and the public in general to take part in

the Education for All (EFA) Crowdsourcing Challenge, making suggestions on how mobile communication can help achieve the six EFA goals established at the World Education Forum in 2000.

The goals consist of expanding early childhood care and education, providing free and compulsory primary education for all, promoting learning and life skills for young people and adults, increasing adult literacy by 50 per cent, achieving gender parity by 2005, and improving the quality of education.

One winner was selected for each goal, and each will receive a prize of \$3,000. In addition, the Pearson Foundation will donate a library of children's books, worth \$3,000, to a not-for-profit organization in the country of each laureate.

The prize winner for application ideas concerning literacy was *Test On Texts* by Sanjith Yeruva from the United States. The mobile application that helps students assess their knowledge via text questions and suggests content in an intuitive manner. "This easily implemented idea has social and education potential for a wide range of groups," UNESCO said in a news release.

In the universal primary education category, Swaroop John from Switzerland created an application called *I-Learn*, which encourages picture-based learning to complement radio broadcasts. The combination of mobile technology and radio was seen as having enormous potential by the international jury, UNESCO said.

Also from India, Harkirat Singh won the category of improving quality education for his mobile *Mission for the week* programme, which provides teachers with a new mission every week, so that their way of teaching, understanding and helping students gives the best results.

In the youth and adult learning needs category, Eric Kotonya from Kenya will be honoured for his *Education Time Bank* application which encourages teens and adults to learn in personalized, interactive short session on highly-specialized topics, furthering the goal of promoting life skills for youth and adults.

Through the *Mobile Partners in Education* application designed by Laura Blackheart, girls in disadvantaged communities can pair up with an advantaged classroom close to home or across the globe through a mobile device via voice, video and text. Ms. Blackheart won in the gender parity and equality in education category.

In the early childhood care and education category, Nand Wadhvani's *Health Phone* was selected for providing information for women to help them make healthy decisions for themselves and their families. Content includes information on nutrition, childhood diseases, pregnancy, childbirth, the first year of life, child survival, development and protection, and women empowerment. Videos, audio recordings, images, and text messages will be produced and delivered to families via mobile phones.

Close to one thousand submissions were received in the competition from 10 October 2011 to 31 May 2012. In addition to the grand prizes, Nokia offered six "spot prizes" consisting of a Nokia Lumia 800 phone to the best ideas received during the competition.

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