

Hewlett-Packard, EMPA and the Global Digital Solidarity Fund (DSF) join forces to improve e-Waste management in Africa

e-Waste management in Africa



At a Glance

Partners

- **Hewlett Packard Corporation (HP)** – World Leading IT Company
- **EMPA** – Swiss Materials Science & Technology Research Institute
- **Global Digital Solidarity Fund (DSF)** – International Financial Organization for Digital Solidarity

Mission

- Assessment of e-waste management in Kenya, Morocco, Senegal and Tunisia
- Carry out pilot project for the processing of e-waste in South Africa

Applications

- Public Health
- Environment
- Digital Solidarity
- Safety
- Jobs creation

The facts: electronic and electrical waste impacts public health and the environment

As African countries join the global information society the volume of ICT equipment in these markets grows.

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) estimates that up to 50 millions tones of electronic waste is generated annually worldwide. As it reaches the end of its life cycle, it is important to arrange for recycling and safe disposal of the equipment.

E-waste contains both valuable materials, such as gold and copper, as well as highly toxic substances, such as lead and mercury. While fully operational appliances do not pose any danger to the user, recycling of discarded equipment can bring severe health and environmental hazards without the right health and safety measures.

Most e-waste recycling in developing and transition countries is done informally and there is little regulation in place to safeguard the health of those who dismantle the electronic equipment.

The solution: Assess the current situation and improve the management of e-waste in Africa in order to generate jobs in the informal recycling sector

This program will provide answers to e-waste management within the context of each country. First, by assessing the current conditions for electronic recycling in communities in Kenya, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa and Tunisia, and second, by testing methods and practices that will help make recycling of electronic equipment safer. The project also aims to explore how additional local jobs can be created in this sector.

Experiences from China and India show that e-waste recycling is mostly done in the informal sector and provides jobs for people that have difficulty accessing formal employment. This is why the partners involved are committed to working with the informal sector with the aim to boost the employment opportunities it offers.

However, methods used to treat e-waste need to be enhanced in order to safeguard the health and safety of the individual and to minimize any damage to the environment.

Thus the program aims to help develop a blueprint for a sustainable e-waste management system in African countries, in collaboration with existing local recycling projects. It is intended to gain insight into e-waste recycling operations in Kenya, Morocco, Senegal, and Tunisia and to carry out one replicable pilot project for the processing of e-waste in South Africa.

By sharing knowledge between countries and learning from other continents, new usage and potential markets for recycling products can be explored.



Solution at a Glance : The partners

Local Partners (Beneficiaries)

- Kenya
- Morocco
- Senegal
- South Africa
- Tunisia



About the Hewlett-Packard Corporation (HP)

HP has considerable experience in electronic recycling. It has recycled its products through a number of schemes for the last 20 years. In Europe, in partnership with other leading IT vendors, HP set up the Electronic Recycling Platform (ERP). ERP is a dedicated facility to recycle electronic equipment under the requirements of EU law. Currently, nine EU countries which generate 85 percent of Europe's e-waste recycle their electronic and electrical equipment through ERP. To date, 157,000 tonnes of e-waste have been collected and recycled on behalf of the members of the scheme. The African continent is one of the emerging markets for IT with high business potential and excellent growth opportunities. In 2006, IT contributed 3.4 percent to the total GDP in Africa. HP is represented in Africa with its own subsidiaries since 1971 and has sales operations in Algeria, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa and Tunisia. In general, HP focuses on simplifying technology experiences for all of its customers – from individual consumers to the largest businesses. With a portfolio that spans printing, personal computing, software, services and IT infrastruc-

ture, HP is among the world's largest IT companies, with revenue totaling \$97.1 billion for the four fiscal quarters ended April 30, 2007. HP is the number one IT Company in Africa.

More information on HP (NYSE: HPQ) is available at www.hp.com

About EMPA

Empa is the multidisciplinary research institute for material science and technology of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) domain. Empa is specialized in applications-oriented research and development, as well as in offering services to help solving demanding problems in the fields of sustainable materials science and technology. The Technology and Society Lab analyses the impacts of technological developments on society and the environment and hosts among other activities the technical monitoring team for the Swiss e-waste management system. Empa is leading the Swiss Global e-waste Program, which aims at building capacities for e-waste management in developing economies (www.ewasteguide.info).

More information on Empa is available at www.empa.ch

About the Global Digital Solidarity Fund (DSF)

The Global Digital Solidarity Fund (DSF) is the only global organization entirely dedicated to reducing the digital divide. Its objective is to equip the developing world with the means to access the knowledge society. Through access to ICT and valuable content, the DSF works at community level to promote the development of marginalized populations. The DSF collaborates with local and national authorities, the private sector, international organizations and NGOs, as well as civil society. The DSF is recognized by the United Nations for its role in the fight against the digital divide. As a sustainable source for funding, the DSF has devised an innovative financing mechanism, the "1% digital solidarity principle". A voluntary contribution of 1% is deducted from the profit margin of suppliers in ICT-related commercial transactions, with those suppliers receiving the "digital solidarity" label.

More information on the DSF is available at www.dsf-fsn-org



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