Ubongo: Educartoons & SMS for Engaged STEM Learning

We create fun, interactive edu-cartoons, that help kids learn, and love to learn on technologies they already have through animated stories and catchy original songs. DIV Stage 1 funding is supporting a pilot project to increase the reach of this content to rural areas.

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At a Glance

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http://www.ubongokids.com/ <http://www.ubongokids.com/>

How Can You Help?

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Development Innovation Ventures (DIV) is an open innovation fund that sources, tests, and scales breakthrough ideas that address global...

ABOUT THIS INNOVATION

Funded By

U.S. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT **LAB**

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USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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Innovation Stats

Innovation Type:	**Media/Communication** </innovations/innovation-type/461>
What phase of development is your innovation currently in?:	**Stage 2: Research & Development** </innovations/innovation-stage/448>
Actual Lives Impacted:	**2,000,000**

Related Programs

DIV

Where did you create your innovation?:	**Tanzania** </innovations/created-in/248>	</programs/development-innovation-ventures-div>
Where have you implemented your innovation?:	**Tanzania** </innovations/implemented-in/248>	
Are there any related Programs?:	**Development Innovation Ventures (DIV)** </programs/development-innovation-ventures-div>	
In what sectors does your innovation belong?:	**Education** </sector/education> **Basic Education** </sector/education/basic-education>	

Provide a status update for your Innovation.

Ubongo Kids has been broadcasting in Tanzania since January 2013, and is watched in 600,000 -1,000,000 Tanzanian households each weekend. With an average of 2.4 viewers per household, Ubongo Kids reaches over 2 million children. Our impact studies have shown that children who watch Ubongo Kids episodes show math learning outcomes significantly greater than children who watch other, non-educational cartoons.

How does your innovation work?

It is exciting to explore the possibility of getting our top quality, fun, localized, educational content to kids in rural communities in Tanzania. By leveraging existing video banda's, we are able to do this at low cost and in a sustainable fashion. We want to transform learning for the 440 million kids in Africa, and the only way we can do that is if we are also reaching the poorest kids. We want to use lessons learned from these communities and the project to develop a scalable model for UKC's to reach children in rural communities across Tanzania without need for external funding to sustain them. Should the solution scale successfully in Tanzania, we would seek to expand it into new countries and markets.

Do you have current users or testers?

The target market is kids between age 4 -17 years in rural and peri-rural communities with limited access to electricity.

What is your strategy for expanding use of your innovation?

- Our target impact is to see improved learning outcomes and educational performance for children in rural Tanzania.

- Our project outcomes is to have improved access to educational resources for children in rural Tanzania, communities to adopts innovation and Ubongo Kids Club continue beyond project and other communities see value & business model, then adopt innovation and launch own Ubongo Kids Club.

- Our long term goal is to use experiences from those communities to develop a scalable model for UKC's to reach children in rural communities across Tanzania without need for external funding to sustain them. Should the solution scale successfully in Tanzania, we would seek to expand it into new countries and markets. This will involve the development of an Ubongo Kids Club kit and training for community ambassadors and video banda operators who wish to start Ubongo Kids Club in their communities. These would be promoted through radio, social media, and TV.

- Our goal is that someday, any community in Tanzania that wishes can start its own Ubongo Kids Club, by leveraging their existing screening centers or working with our technology partners to rent or buy electrified screening centers, then bringing children together to learn through Ubongo Kids.

Next Steps

We will work with communities to develop UKC's, each facilitated by a community ambassador. In communities with existing screening spaces, we will incentivize the operators to host UKC's during offhours that generally have low attendance by adult audiences. In communities without existing video bandas we will help the local community install solar powered video units to screen Ubongo Kids and other educational content. We will test a number of different funding and screening. Through these activities we will also rigorously test the educational impact of this localized edutainment content on children in non-electrified rural areas, and examine the effect of frequency of UKC attendance on children's numeracy and science abilities.

Discuss

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