Cisco Networking Academy Program

The Least Developed Countries Initiative

Cisco Invests in Least Developed Countries
In July 2000, Cisco Systems formed a strategic partnership with international development organizations to help train students in the world’s Least Developed Countries (LDCs) for jobs in the Internet economy. This partnership has created opportunities for skills development in participating countries, empowering them to accelerate progress, attain sustainable development, and fully integrate into the world economy. Together, Cisco Systems, United Nations Development Program, United States Agency for International Development’s Leland Initiative, and United Nations Volunteers are investing in education and technology training for LDCs. Cisco’s initial $3.5 million investment established its global Cisco Networking Academy Program in LDCs, a comprehensive, eight-course, 560-hour curriculum that trains students and in-transition workers how to design, build, and maintain computer networks. Employing an e-learning model, the Networking Academies deliver Web-based educational content, online testing, student performance tracking, hands-on labs, and instructor training and support. Currently, more than 450,000 students are enrolled in more than 10,000 Academies established in 151 countries worldwide.

Aurore Valenta Kapay
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The Power of Partnership
The LDC Initiative provides a compelling example of how business, international organizations and governments can work together to meet the urgent needs of LDCs and promote digital opportunity. Cisco relies on the expertise and local relationships of its partners to facilitate implementation of the Cisco Networking Academy Program in LDCs. With the support of Cisco’s partners, by December 2003, the program had expanded to include 40 of the 49 LDC’s (see table), surpassing the initial goal of 24. An additional 13 non-LDCs in Africa are participating in the LDC Initiative. The founding partners of the Initiative include:

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP)

- Cisco and UNDP have launched the Academy Program in Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Caribbean. UNDP provides developing countries with advice and technical assistance on information technology, as well as the extra support needed to maintain and expand the Academy Program in LDCs.

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

- Through the Leland Initiative, USAID is helping African countries achieve sustainable development and deliver information worldwide. By joining forces with Cisco, USAID is making progress to improve Internet connectivity and access within Africa.

United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

- Through a partnership with the UNITEs project, over 30 volunteers have been deployed to strengthen and expand the Academy Program in LDCs.
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