

Community development solutions portal unveiled

BY JIMMY BYAWAKA

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One Global Economy (OGE) in collaboration with Cisco Systems, has launched an online educative portal with community development solutions.

The website portal dubbed, 'Rwanda Beehive' with an internet link; <http://rwanda.thebeehive.org>, was launched last week with the aim of empowering Rwandans on different aspects of development.

"It is a centre of information to solve problems within the community. When people have access to the Internet and can connect to good resources like the Beehive, they have the power to change their lives," said Moustafa Mourad, the President of OGE.

The Rwanda Beehive is equipped with information and solutions in Kinyarwanda concerning day-to-day issues such as money, health, jobs, school and family.

The portal was developed with the help of the local communities, who highlighted their areas of concern that need solutions.

NGOs too provided guidelines, depending on their areas of speciality, on what information is relevant for the local communities. It is accessible to locals through the telecentres which are being spread across the country by government to ease population access ICT facilities.

Sylvia Karenzi, the Portal Editor, said that they are considering other languages (English and French) to reach out to all members of the communities. "With the help of other stakeholders in empowering the local communities, the portal will be updated quite often...we are also seeking for more interesting but educative information to attract people's attention."

It is also expected to enhance the participation of the local private sector in community development, through implementing 'social responsibility' development projects among others.

The OGE Chief of Operations, Harry Goodall, explained that the link also supports and develops NGOs through an active community engagement process. "It is the first of five projects planned across the continent."

The Rwanda Beehive cost \$100,000 (Approx Rwf56m) as initial investment, however Goodall said that OGE will look for further funding to support the project in gathering information and training youth to educate others.

OGE works with partners to provide communities and individuals with the tools needed to maximise the potential of technology to facilitate the economic livelihood of the poor.