

Press release
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Bridging the learning gap through digital STEM education using social entrepreneurial solution

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Siemens Stiftung and Ghanaian social enterprise BLUETOWN launch AccessSTEM to enable access to high-quality Open Educational Resources (OERs) in semi-urban Ghana. The collaboration enables up to 5,000 teachers to connect to BLUETOWN's infrastructure and access digital learning and teaching materials on the local cloud. The project will improve teaching methods specifically in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) subjects and vocational orientation of students, ultimately training the students in future skills.

The AccessSTEM pilot project has been kicked-off in four schools in the Eastern Region of Ghana using BLUETOWN's services, where the availability of digital learning tools is comparatively low. The social enterprise deploys solar-powered technology to work off-grid under rough conditions, providing more affordable internet than other providers to underserved communities.

The collaboration will facilitate 4,000 to 5,000 teachers and students to get access to BLUETOWN's connectivity infrastructure in combination with the latest learning materials in STEM subjects from Siemens Stiftung's internationally recognized OERs under a public license on its Media Portal.

BLUETOWN won Siemens Stiftung's empowering people. Award in 2019, a global competition for low-tech solutions addressing basic needs in developing regions, and subsequently became a member of its empowering people. Network, an international ecosystem for social entrepreneurs.

"This pilot supports the Sustainable Development Goals on 'Quality Education' (SDG 4) and 'Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure' (SDG 9) by not only providing educational resources to a wider population, but also improving digital infrastructure to prepare students for the future job market. Such initiatives bridge the learning gap exacerbated by the pandemic for students living in areas with no internet", says Dr. Nina Smidt, Managing Director, and Spokesperson of the Board of Directors at Siemens Stiftung.

The OER content is modular and adaptable to country-specific needs. It will be made available on the local cloud and can be downloaded in areas with low internet connectivity. The project team will offer training and familiarize the materials to teachers from the participating schools to ensure their optimal use in the learning process.

"The world is moving into a digital stage. Access to STEM digital learning materials is just the right solution to challenges in teaching and learning. The launch saw an enthusiastic interest among the teachers who welcomed it as an opportunity to gain knowledge", says Matilda Jimatey, ICT Teacher, Kibi Secondary Technical School, Ghana.

Together with local partners, Siemens Stiftung is providing a range of teaching and learning materials for science and technology lessons focusing on vocational orientation in Ghana since 2019. By joining forces with BLUETOWN, the foundation is bringing together expertise from its two working areas,

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Education and Social Entrepreneurship. The project demonstrates that simple technological interventions from social enterprises can go a long way to provide globally developed educational resources for local impact.

“We have an agreement with the Ghanaian Ministry of Education to expand BLUETOWN connectivity solutions to 1,000 schools throughout Ghana. This collaboration with Siemens Stiftung complements our goal of improving education through digitalization. We're excited to deliver access to internet and free quality STEM learning content across school campuses in the region,” adds Ann Fesu, Special Projects Manager, BLUETOWN.

About BLUETOWN

BLUETOWN, social enterprise and global Internet service provider (ISP), founded in Denmark, provides connectivity solutions for underserved areas in developing countries using a variety of technological solutions and innovative business models to expand affordable internet access to everyone. BLUETOWN is currently covering more than 3 million people with high-speed internet access through more than 7,500 installations in Ghana, India and Mozambique and has completed projects in Rwanda, Tanzania, and the US in collaboration with governments, UN agencies, NGOs and big tech companies. For AccessSTEM, Siemens Stiftung is collaborating with the Ghanaian entity of BLUETOWN.
bluetown.com/

About Siemens Stiftung

As a non-profit foundation, Siemens Stiftung promotes sustainable social development, which is crucially dependent on access to basic services, high-quality education, and an understanding of culture. To this effect, the Foundation's project work supports people in taking the initiative to responsibly address current challenges. Together with partners, Siemens Stiftung develops and implements solutions and programs to support this effort, with technological and social innovation playing a central role. The actions of Siemens Stiftung are impact-oriented and conducted transparently.
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