The community telecentres are used in many situations as tools to facilitate community learning, technology transfer and to tackle poverty on the ground. Gamos, in partnership with Big World (www.big-world.org) and commissioned by DIFD helped to start and support two such telecentres with the objective of evaluating a distinctive new content-led approach.

- Focused on a very poor community
- Designed and run by individuals (youth) drawn form the local community
- Contributing to an established locally-driven ongoing project rather than being set up as a new venture
- Content led rather than technology led with an active encouragement to design and publish local content
- Based on an integrated approach to livelihoods rather than set up purely as an information and communication centre
- Risk averted by utilising technology in a strategic way Alternative information appliances, open source software, alternative connectivity options



The NGO partners were Armonia (general community development in the slums of Mexico City, Mexico) and Youth Alive (youth development in Soweto, South Africa). After a consultation which showed how important content would be, the centres were designed around a team of youth who would collate from the global Internet and produce (mainly by video) content that was relevant for their own community.

The key feature of the model is that a group of young people form a team, receive training and then develop local content. This may be putting offline Internet content on to CD Rom so that it is easily available to the community at minimal cost. More frequently it involved the making of videos that discussed local issues in the local language in the local context. The potential for such products is that they have a saleable value outside the community, and that they have the potential to build up a digital body of knowledge relevant to poor communities.

The summary report is available to view here: Community TeleCentres For Urban Youth - Summary

The full report and other relevant documents are available to view on the project website www.youthtelecentres.org/