



Text2Teach connects students to a more interactive learning environment

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ALMOST 57,000 grades 5 and 6 students in public elementary schools are now learning using mobile technology, thanks to a program called Text2Teach, which aims to alleviate educational problems in the country.

Nikka Abes, Corporate Communications manager of Nokia Philippines, said Text2Teach explores the usage of mobile phones as teaching tools for elementary students.

“We wanted to create a more interactive learning environment for students. By using Nokia’s Education Delivery (NED) technology, we could provide schools with effective visual aids on Grade 5 and 6 Math, Science and English subjects through 3G-enabled devices,” she said.

The program is the local version of the global BridgeIT educational program. It is spearheaded in the Philippines by Nokia, in partnership with Ayala Foundation Inc., Globe Telecom, the Department of Education, Seameo Innotech, and Pearson Foundation.

Nearly in completion of its third phase, Text2Teach has helped improve the academic performance, classroom behavior and participation of students in the recipient schools. The parents, school officials and community leaders have also shown positive attitudes toward using mobile technology in teaching. This was based on a consultant monitoring conducted from August to December 2011.

Text2Teach Phase 3 has reached 157 schools in 2011 alone, and an additional 15 schools in 2012, making a cumulative total of 557 schools covered. It has also trained more than 1,600 teachers on the use of the NED technology in the classroom.

Text2Teach Phase 3 reached nine provinces in Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Bicol and Cordillera Administrative Region.

Among the cities and municipalities reached were: Vigan and Candon cities in Ilocos Sur; Santiago City and the Municipality of Ilagan in Isabela; Tuguegarao City in Cagayan; the Municipality of La Trinidad in Benguet; Dagupan and Urduyayan cities, and the municipalities of Villasis, Asingan, and Sta. Barbara in Pangasinan; Ligao, Legazpi and Tabaco cities, as well as the municipalities of Polangui, Tiwi and Sto. Domingo in Albay; Batac City, and the municipalities of Badoc, Nueva Era, Carasi, Sarrat, Bacarra and Pagudpud in Ilocos Norte; Naga City, and the municipalities of San Fernando and Pili in Camarines Sur; and finally, Cabanatuan City in Nueva Ecija.

The year 2011 also marked several milestones for Text2Teach, gaining international exposure through knowledge-sharing sessions with organizations such as EZ Vidya in India, Unicef, the British Council and Unesco.

Chile's BridgeIT program manager also came to visit for some learning sessions and to visit Text2Teach schools. The project has also been invited by Unesco to participate in the 2012 Webinar organized by the International Institute for Educational Planning, Regional Headquarters Buenos Aires (IIEP-Unesco) and Flasco Argentina, to share about BridgeIT/Text2Teach, and dialogue with different initiatives around the world on the integration of ICT in Education.

Meanwhile, Text2Teach Phase 4 was launched on June 28, 2011 with an objective to develop new curriculum-based content, reach far-flung areas, enhance teacher training, and upgrade existing programs.

"The fourth phase of Text2Teach hopes to bring the project to a level where it can be mainstreamed into the regular programs of the Philippine Department of Education," said Mario Deriquito, senior director of Ayala Foundation's Education and Leadership Division.

Since 2003, the number of student and teacher beneficiaries has multiplied over the years of implementing Text2Teach. The completion of Text2Teach Phase 4 will have reached and covered Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa and Cordillera Administrative Region in Luzon, Western Visayas and Eastern Visayas in the Visayas, and Zamboanga Peninsula and Soccsksargen in Mindanao. **(PR)**

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