

IRC News

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THE POWER OF PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

‘On January 27, PAS Abidjan organized its first CY 2010 Book of the Month conference based on the French version of the Nouveaux Horizons book ‘*Le Petit Eloge de la responsabilité pour prendre sa vie en main et accomplir ce qui compte vraiment pour soi*’. The program was attended by more than one hundred people, including the former Minister of Environment, representatives from the Ministry of Reconstruction and Social Reinsertion, NGO leaders, youth, civil society, and media professionals.

The PAO, Sita Liane Chakrawarti, delivered the welcome address. She appealed to the audience’s awareness that accountability is essential to live a truly rich and meaningful life by achieving “what matters to you.” The panelists included Mrs. Yaoua Honorine, a journalist, Dr. Consuela Fofana, a Chief Executive Officer of Spark Strategies corporation, and Mr. Louis Amede, a former IV grantee and also the president of the National Association of Economic Journalists. In a clear-cut expose, they provided a synopsis of the

message expressed by the authors. They effectively transmitted the path to accountability by defining the bottom line of personal accountability through the eight steps described in the book. These steps include breaking the ‘victim loop’, taking charge of your life, recognizing your current reality, owning your part, forgiving, practicing the art of self-examination, being a master learner, and taking action. The participants offered constructive reactions and contributions. They fully agreed on the reliability of the book to stimulate readers’ determination to positively change their lives by applying the eight powerful steps to an accountable life. One of the participants from the Ministry of Reconstruction and Social Reinsertion testified that the book’s principles of personal responsibility can be perfectly accommodated to her environment. Observing the participants’ great interest to the discussion, the PAO in her closing words, urged them to facilitate follow-up events around the topic.



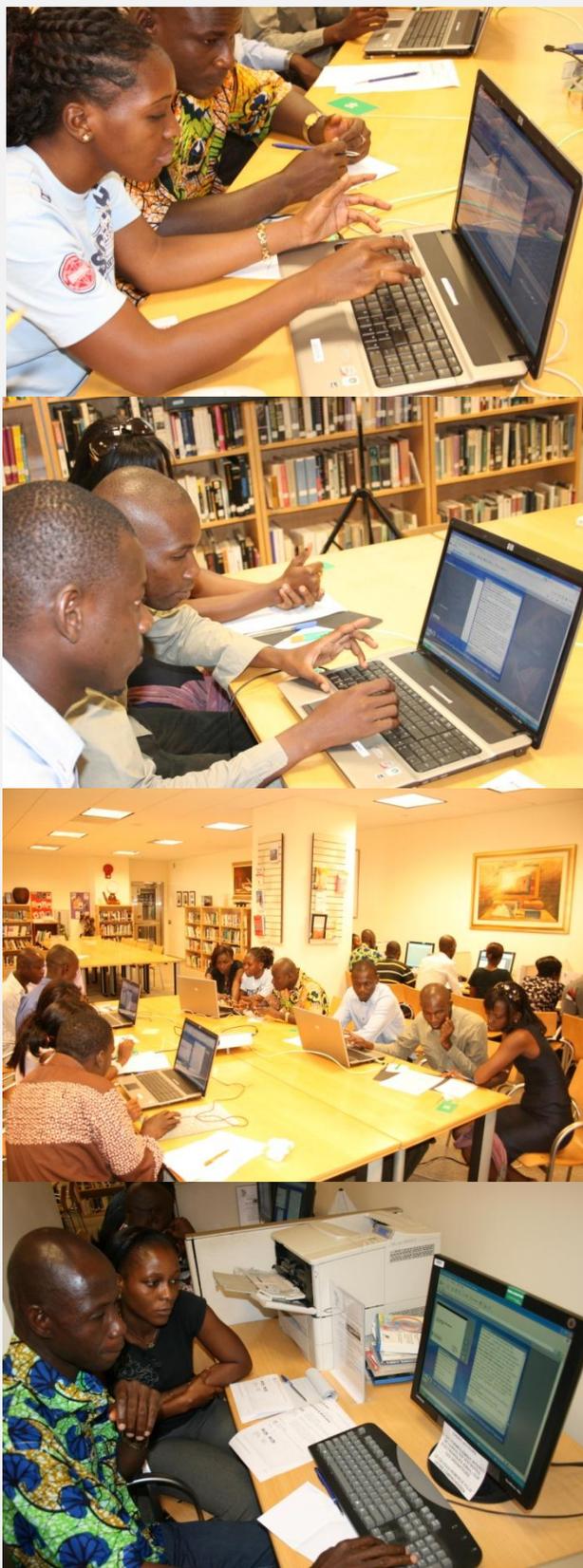
**PAO Chakrawarti, Dr. Fofana, Mr. Amede
and Mrs. Yaoua Kouman**

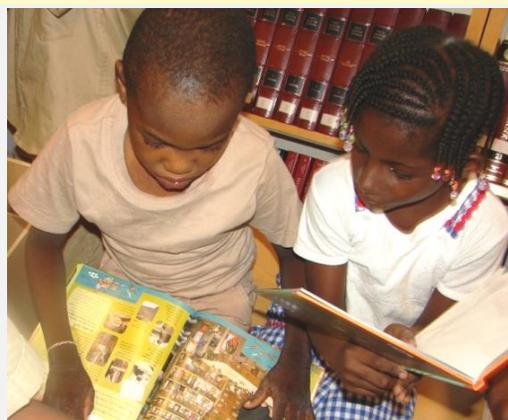


Partial view of the audience

IRC Abidjan joined the online discussion on 'The World Digital Library' held on January 13, 2009. Twenty-one attendees including information professionals and students specializing in library and information science enthusiastically participated to the Webchat. Following the introductory address from the PAO Ms. Sita Liane Chakrawarti, the participants engaged in the online exchange. Participants seized the opportunity to discuss with the technical project director of the World Digital Library at the Library of Congress about the main purposes, the public interest of such a significant information tool, and how it can also benefit internet uneducated parts of the world. After the online discussion, the PAO invited the participants for a live conversation for them to deepen their understanding regarding the subject. They admitted that they were not aware of such a valuable educational instrument until they participated to this online program. They praised the project initiators for providing a worldwide free- access to such a strong historical and cultural resource that contributes to reinforce mutual understanding among nations. They promised to make the most out of the world digital library in their work environment and to enhance their career.

Webchat: World Digital Library





YOUNG READERS IN THE IRC

On January 21, 2010, the IRC hosted an immersion program for fifty-five children and their educators from 'La Madeleine', a primary school specialized in the education of children with disabilities. The goal was to provide these particular children with opportunities to benefit from PAS Young Readers initiative designed to stimulate kids' love for reading and develop youth leadership aptitude. The program began with the PAO, Sita Liane Chakrawarti's welcome address followed by an interactive discussion between her and the young audience who demonstrated a particular interest to the program. Despite their handicaps, they were receptive to the PAO's message encouraging them to express themselves freely about leadership and what they can do to contribute to the improvement within the scope of their environment. The PAO seized the opportunity to teach them how they can take first steps toward leadership through reading and serving their community. The program proceeded with film projections portraying American diversity and presenting a timeline of the evolution of books throughout the ages. The highlight of the activity was the reading session during which children were passionately browsing through the youth collection. Most of them even wanted to take along the books. The participants including the children and the school administration members testified that they were fully satisfied with the program and promised to take advantage of the 'Young Readers' facility offered to kids. The PAO presented to the school headmistress, a set of IIP publications (the outline series) and fifty copies of the E-journal on 'American Teenagers.' The program met the MSP goals of promoting education and reinforcing youth leadership capacity.

The association of students from Bafing learn Leadership principles

The IRC organized an immersion program for fifty members from a student association called 'Cellule Fraternelle des Elèves et Etudiants du Bafing' on January 15, 2010. The IRC staff provided a guided tour of the IRC to allow the students get an exposure to the mine of print and online resources available. They applied for membership and joined the IRC Facebook. PAS presented to the association fifty copies of the E-journal *choosing a Career*. As part of the program, the PAO, Ms. Sita Liane Chakrawarti, engaged the participants in a dynamic conversation about leadership. The participants actively and enthusiastically took part in this exchange about such a popular and important topic. The students defined leadership as the ability to influence a group and lead it to accomplish an objective. They cited examples of past and contemporary leaders. The PAO demonstrated that leadership is also a process by which a person takes responsibility for

setting a personal course and may then try to influence people to follow that direction. She encouraged the participants to develop leadership qualities in their daily life because it is applicable to any aspect of ensuring effectiveness in communities and in managing change. She added that good leaders grow through a continuous process of self-study, education, training, and experience. The participants appreciated the program and admitted that it increased their awareness about their responsibility, as young people, to ensure a sustainable future society. Therefore, they said they are determined to use the IRC resources to reinforce their learning capabilities and to integrate leadership principles and practices at their community level. The program met the MSP goals of promoting education, strengthening civil society, and increasing mutual understanding.'



Webchat on 'Freedom of Expression and Defamation of Religion'

On January 20, 2010, IRC Abidjan invited religious leaders and their community members to join the Webchat organized in the framework of the Religious Freedom Day to discuss '*Freedom of Expression and defamation of religion*' in the international political context. The PAO, Ms. Sita Liane Chakrawarti introduced the program, explaining its significance and encouraged the attendees to freely communicate their concerns and contributions about the challenging issue of defamation of religion and its drawbacks on society. The participants appreciated the topic for its relevance and timeliness. They liberally interacted with the guest speakers and raised worries about religious denigration as a serious human rights violation, because nobody should impose his creed on others. At the same time, they stated that freedom of expression cannot be used to justify offense to religious doctrines. They accounted religious defamation to the lack of true communication and understanding of the different religious practices. Although people may not agree about their different religious approaches, they should admit that religious freedom is part of cultural diversity and contributes to enrich and reinforce human society. Participants committed to share the benefits of it with their respective religious communities and to promote tolerance through cross-religious dialogs.





COMING SOON!!!

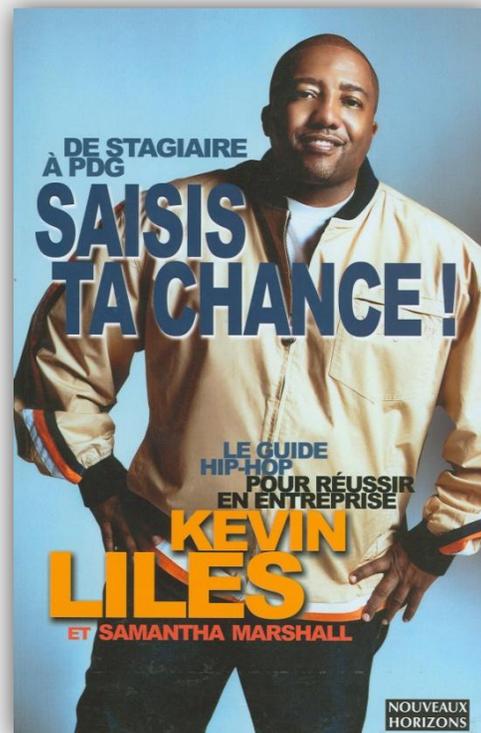
February 03 – American libraries explained to teachers

February 04 – Immersion session with Event Academy

February 16 – Rotating Library to Sikensi

February 25 – Book of the Month of February ‘Saisie ta chance’

You are invited to share your comments and analysis either in English or in French on the IRC Facebook page. Just click on this icon.



Please join the IRC community @:

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/Abidjan/Information-Resource-Center-Abidjan/78472454205?ref=ts>