

## September 2008-February 2009 Progress Report

During the period before September 2008, efforts were carried out for strategic planning of the Project and organizing the local development team. From September 2008 till February 2009, project activities realized were renewing the portal, correcting technical problems on the website, developing the content, building up the support team, and promotion of the website.

### The New Version of the Youth Portal:

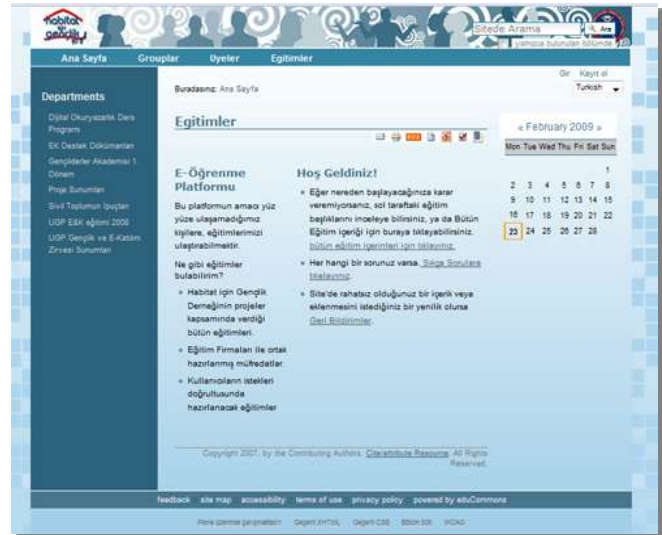


In the first quarter of the project, the social network section had been created and it contained basic features. This section was published on ning.com, which has a built-in system for creating a social platform. This system is also used for publishing MyTecC's social platform. In the new version, the whole system including social network, the public site, e-learning platform and management part was published with advanced features.

The new version of the platform, that was prepared by Teachers without Borders (TWB) on the basis of their own social network. Since the previous platform was an open source coded platform and

structural modifications on the platform were limited, this change was realized. For example; now young people members of local youth councils can create their own groups, transfer or uploads files via the group, open private forums for themselves etc. Besides, the e-learning platform was prepared via Educommon system in collaboration with TWB.

Since it was not possible to move memberships from ning.com system to the new TWB system, members were redirected to the new version and re-registered on the new platform.



## Development Teams

### Building up the Content Team:

The content team was built up in order to continuously update the content and make it possible to access news and activities in every region in Turkey. The team is composed of volunteers in the National Youth Parliament Training and Coordination Team.



Ahmet Batat, the development team member, leads this voluntary team of 14 people. 2 team members were promoted as responsible from uploading activities realized in one region. *Team Members are:* Ahmet Batat (İzmir), Gökhan Aydın (Yalova), Veysi Kuzu (Diyarbakır), Simay Kardeş (İzmir), Seyda Özçatal (Sivas), Serhat Özer (Gaziantep), Hakan Akkuş (Afyon), Gulsah Argunsah (Konya), Bahar Yıldırım (Eskişehir), Umut Kara (İstanbul), Fuat Kocabıyık (Rize), Mehmet Beyhan (Kocaeli), Ferhat Gök (Bitlis), Murat Başlar (Bursa), Burak Özyurt (Trabzon).

Responsibilities of development team members were defined and a training regarding website's properties and content preparation were delivered by Ahmet BATAT and Gujan ŞEN. The team started working after the training. The overall responsibilities of the development team are to announce all the activities of local youth councils and new developments on youth field by publishing them on the portal in a suitable format, communicate activities related to the portal to local youth councils and promoting the portal as well as organizing local trainings on how to use the portal.

These trainings have been performed in 26 cities until now and it is planned to reach 81 cities by the end of April 2009.

### **Building Up the Support Team:**

Burcu Kılınç, part of the Development Team, will be leading the Support Team, of which responsibilities are to identify problems or errors on the website, to support users and to ensure that websites functions well.

Team Members are composed of the volunteers and staff members in Youth for Habitat. Their names are Burcu Kılınç, Serdil Demir, Dilara Gök, Volkan Pek and Erdal Bayraktar.

Two different trainings were delivered to the Support Team leader Burcu Kılınç and team members on 15-16 December 2008 by the project coordinator Gujan ŞEN.

In these sessions, Team Leader Burcu Kılınç was trained on team management, technical reporting and system properties. Team's road map was prepared by Gujan ŞEN and Burcu KILINÇ. Members of the team started working after trainings and preparation of the work plan. This team will be responsible to compose monthly system analysis reports on a regular basis and to guide users on the portal for providing the efficient use of the website.

### Technical Issues and Solutions:

A joint plan was prepared together with TWB for switching the website to the new version and passing to a completely different system. The beta version of the second portal was realized as a result of the work done according to this plan. Problems and failing sections of the system were identified after the collaborative work done with the Support Team. TWB employee, Joel DUFFIN started helping in the functions, that will be newly added and in solving problems. But, because of communication problems with Joe Duffin, who lives in USA and additionally as a result of the end of his contract with TWB, there have been lots of problems in completing the planned activities related to the portal features.

Unfortunately, all these problems caused 2,5 months of delay in the project time-line. This problem was surmounted after renewal of the Joel Duffin's agreement with TWB. According to this agreement, Joel Duffin will continue his work on the system and resolve all problems until the previously prepared plan is completed. Meanwhile, The development of a detailed management panel was started in order not to experience similar problems. Joel Duffin and Gujan Şen worked to develop this system together. The management panel will facilitate solutions of the problems encountered on the portal without external support.

### Promotional Activities:

As foreseen in the project action plan, a booklet was prepared and printed. The booklet includes projects implemented in partnership between Youth Association for Habitat, Cisco Systems and UNDP.

During the Youth and E-Inclusion Summit, organized in Ankara between 21<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of December 2008, the youth portal was presented to the 290 young people coming from 71 cities as local youth councils' representatives and members of National Youth Parliament. As active or potential users of the platform, youth representatives made comments and suggestions about the content and user-friendly functioning of the portal.



The Content Team presented the portal in 26 cities during the local trainings on local youth council structure and National Youth Parliament process.

In addition to these activities, in order to make the activities of the National Youth Parliament and YfH more visible in national press, a meeting with Hakkı Devrim, a columnist in Radikal - one of the most read newspapers in Turkey-, took place and ways for the announcement of the portal were discussed.

At international level, the project was presented during the European e-Inclusion Awards Ceremony in Vienna between 30<sup>th</sup> of November and 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2008. Youth Association for Habitat (YfH) has been awarded with a medal in the 2008 European e-Inclusion Awards by being among 5 organizations in Geographic Inclusion Award Category with the program on ICT and Development. This program titled "Empowerment of Youth for





E-Transformation of Turkey” is composed of innovative projects like “Refurbishment and Distribution of Used PCs for Youth”, “Empowerment of Youth for E-governance of Turkey”, “Bridging Digital Divide”, “Youth Movement in Informatics”, “Mediterranean Youth Technology Club”, “Strengthening Youth Networks in Turkey: Young Human Network”. During four days, the Project was presented in the exhibition stand of YfH to the participants, among them there were also ministers of various countries and global ICT companies’ representatives.

### Our Visitors

On 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of October 2008, Michael Yutzenka, Zika ABZUK and Orgad LOOTSKI from Cisco Foundation visited YfH office in order to evaluate implementation of the Young Human Network Project. During this visit, a presentation was made about the portal’s current situation, project activities realized and work plan. Also, ideas about how to improve our partnership in the forthcoming process have been shared. After the presentation, students of the Mediterranean Youth Technology Club (MytecC) Project, another project implemented by Cisco Systems and YfH together with UN-ICTDAR, were visited and they were informed about the portal and encouraged to actively join to the portal.

Besides, Mayor of the Yalova Municipality was visited together with the group from Cisco Systems. During this visit, the Bee Hive project in Yalova was observed and Cisco Systems representatives were informed about aims and activities of local youth councils and National Youth Parliament.

