

POST CONFERENCE REPORT

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MAY 23 – 25, 2012

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THE EVENT

eLearning Africa is the largest and most comprehensive capacity development event for ICT-enhanced education and training in Africa. The key networking event for education professionals, investors and providers of education and training in Africa, eLearning Africa enables participants to develop multinational and cross-industry contacts and partnerships, as well as to enhance their knowledge, expertise and abilities. Experts from across Africa and the rest of the world convene annually at eLearning Africa to discuss how to improve the practice of eLearning across a range of key sectors (including education, healthcare, agriculture and security, to name but a few) and inspire new ideas in a field that is constantly innovating and evolving.

Held in Cotonou, Benin, this year's conference was the 7th edition of eLearning Africa and 1,483 people from 69 countries took part. Of these participants, 23 came from China to share their experiences of technology-enhanced learning and learn from those of others. The three countries with the most attendees were Nigeria, Benin and South Africa. 40% of participants spoke French and the conference was held in both English and French, with half of the sessions offering simultaneous translation.

Focusing on **eLearning and Sustainability**, eLearning Africa 2012 explored creative ways in which eLearning can support development and help to build a sustainable future. This overall theme was addressed through a range of sessions focusing on the following themes:

- Collaboration and Partnerships
- Sustainable Culture, Economy and Society
- Learning Platforms
- eLearning and Sustainable Resources
- The Future of Educational Sustainability
- ICTs for Sustainable Communities
- Mobile Learning and Sustainability
- Open Educational Resources
- Sustainable ICTs, Implementation and Integration
- Sustainable Pedagogical Approaches
- Sustainable Professional Development
- Sustainable Tools and Practices
- Teacher Professional Development
- Technology, Youth and Young Learners

COMMENT

"The conference was a great experience. I left with a very strong sense of belonging to a learning community. For the first time (after attending the 5th conference), I realised the responsibility of this community within the broader Education community. I feel inspired and focused. Really looking forward to eLA 2013"

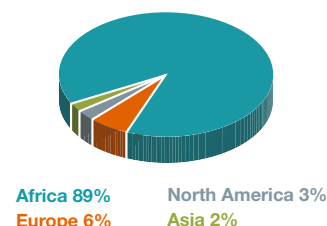
Susanna Ackerman, Learnthings Africa, South Africa

eLEARNING AFRICA 2012 IN A NUTSHELL

- 1483 participants from 69 countries
- Over 300 speakers and chairpersons from 50 countries
- 25 ministers and one head of state from 10 countries (Angola, Djibouti, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Niger, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe)
- 55 exhibitors from 15 countries

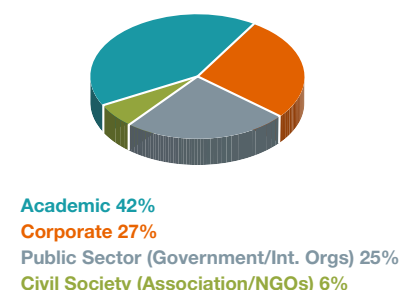
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GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION



SECTORAL REPRESENTATION

The sectoral composition of participants comprised stakeholders from all key areas connected with eLearning in Africa.



PLENARY SESSIONS



OPENING PLENARY

eLearning Africa 2012 was opened by the **Honorable Max Ahouèkè**, the Minister of Communication and Information and Communication Technologies of Benin. Speaking before the Prime Minister of Benin, **Pascal Irénée Koupaki**, and a packed auditorium, Ahouèkè used the occasion to launch *The eLearning Africa 2012 Report*. The Report, which examines how Africans are using new technologies to enhance education and training across Africa, analyses data collected from 447 survey respondents and contains opinion pieces by a number of prominent commentators including traditional chiefs, investors and academics from across Africa.

Emeritus Prof. Dr. Paulin J. Hountondji, Chairperson of the Council of Education of Benin, stated Benin's ambition to "become the digital centre of Africa" and noted Benin's pride in hosting the 7th edition of eLearning Africa. Minister Max Ahouèkè and Prof. Dr. Hountondji were joined by **Mark Jordan**, General Manager and Vice President EMEA, Wyse Technology, UK, and **Prof. Sugata Mitra**, Professor of Educational Technology, Newcastle University, UK and Visiting Professor, MIT Media Lab, Cambridge, USA.

THE eLA CONFERENCE PROGRAMME IN A NUTSHELL

- 60 sessions
- 4 plenary sessions
- 12 demonstration and best practice showcases
- 7 Atchakpokjis (Knowledge exchange sessions)
- 12 pre-conference events

Jordan explained that with there being over 800 million Facebook users and smartphone ownership at 500 million worldwide, technology was now undoubtedly the number one force bringing people together. He indicated that 64% of higher education CIOs expect to migrate more than 50% of their infrastructure to the cloud by 2015. Jordan referred to the constraining factors identified in *The eLearning Africa 2012 Report*, highlighting the impact of limited bandwidth, lack of human resource capacity and limited electricity supply as key factors in sustainability.

Professor Sugata Mitra presented his experiences of self-organised learning environments, including his famous Hole-in-the-Wall and The Granny Cloud projects. He called into question current schooling systems which are still based on dated Victorian standards that are quite set apart from the social, economic, political and technological realities of today.



THE eLEARNING AFRICA 2012 REPORT

Launched by Minister Max Ahouèkè during the opening plenary session, *The eLearning Africa 2012 Report* provides an insight from 41 different countries in Africa into the way information and communication technologies are influencing the education and training landscape in Africa. Based on the survey responses of 447 eLearning practitioners, the Report references and maps the emergence of new technology access models which were previously unimagined.



According to the Report, teachers, lecturers, entrepreneurs and policymakers all have high expectations about the ability of new technologies to scaffold progressive change at both institutional and system-wide levels. 74% of respondents use ICT for classroom teaching and learning, and 48% have used mobile phones for education.

The most significant constraint to eLearning at a national level cited by respondents is limited bandwidth. A lack of funds, limited electricity supply and insufficient human resource capacity were additional significant constraints. The government was identified as the most important change agent for accelerating ICT-enhanced learning.

The eLearning Africa 2012 Report is available for free download at the following address:

www.elearning-africa.com/media_library_publications_ela_report_2012.php

PLENARY SESSIONS



PLENARY B: TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY IN AFRICA?

African countries still face many challenges as they try to reach the Millennium Development Goals and build an inclusive knowledge society. Chaired by **Prof François Adébayo Abiola**, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Benin, Thursday morning's plenary session featured different opinions on how best to build knowledge societies in Africa and had a strong focus on the inclusion of rural communities.



Expert speakers provided insights into Africa's growing spirit of entrepreneurialism and sustainable 21st century learning initiatives. **Fasil G. Bekele**, Public Private Alliances Lead for Microsoft Sub Saharan Africa, presented examples from around the world of best practice in public private alliances aiming to achieve 21st century government goals such as affordable ICT access and employable skills.

Theophilus E. Mlaki, Consultant, ICT for Development (ICT4D), Tanzania, outlined the lessons learnt from Tanzania's efforts to use ICT to build inclusive knowledge societies, and emphasised the importance of making "people more knowledgeable through the use of ICT" and focusing on extending the reach to the rural poor.



Father Godfrey Nzamujo, O.P., Songhai Regional Centre, Benin, spoke of his experiences with the Songhai Regional Centre and the initiatives that tackle the "triple challenge of poverty, environmental degradation and difficult demographic transition in Africa", while **Gilletta Gbanhoun Mouyabi**, Director, AGeNTIC, Benin, outlined how eLearning and entrepreneurship can contribute to sustainable development.

COMMENTS

"eLearning Africa Conference is the largest ICT conference in the world. The conference gave me the opportunity to learn and share best practices in the use of ICT in education delivery and thus enhance my professional development. Indeed attending the conference was worthwhile."

Christiana Enang, Federal Ministry of Education, Nigeria

"It demonstrated that Africa given the opportunity and resources can measure to global demands."

Mavis Lungelwa YENGO, The Aga Khan University, Tanzania

PLENARY SESSIONS



PLENARY C: AFRICAN CULTURE, TECHNOLOGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Friday's plenary session addressed the question of whether the increasing integration of technology in the lives of Africans can add value to the richness of the Continent's indigenous knowledge and culture. The importance of making technologies more appropriate and effective through the integration of local content and indigenous African languages was highlighted alongside future projections for stable, affordable bandwidth for African communities and the business case for emerging technology solutions in Africa.

Goundé Désiré Adadja, Special Adviser to the President of the Republic of Benin and former Minister of Communications and Information and Communication Technologies, Benin, examined the eLearning and education challenges in Africa, focusing on the case of Benin and encouraging everyone to "seize the opportunities" presented by eLearning. **Dorcas Muthoni**, CEO/ Founder, OPENWORLD LTD, Kenya, presented case studies demonstrating how mobile and web technology can be used to tackle low literacy rates in Africa through entrepreneurship.

Gaston Donnat Bappa, Chief Executive, Microlog, Cameroon, examined how new technologies can be appropriated to re-appropriate traditions and local culture, which he views as the foundations of African development, while **Richard Addey**, Africa Area Manager, SMART Technologies, France, gave examples of successful private partnerships in using technology to support the classroom environment.

This session, which was chaired by **Aida Opoku-Mensah** of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), also featured presentations by Hon. **Stanley M. Simataa**, MP, Deputy Minister of Information & Communication Technology, Namibia, and **Maggy Beukes-Amiss** of Namibia's eLearning Centre.



COMMENTS

"After this conference, many Beninese are interested in eLearning and are aware of the advantages of technology in the educational sector."

Nadouvi Huguette Valérie KOHOUÉ, Institut supérieur de formation professionnel (ISFOP), Benin

"Thanking the organisers for that great work especially planning and logistics. eLA will soon be a household name in Africa in terms of the content and opportunities. Am sure that Africa will be great with ICT."

Toochukwu Patrick Okafor, Society for Promotion of Education and Development (SPED), Nigeria

PLENARY SESSIONS



THE eLEARNING AFRICA DEBATE

A highlight for many eLearning Africa participants, the annual eLearning Africa Debate addresses important and sometimes controversial issues affecting the Continent.

Chaired by former British parliamentarian **Dr. Harold Elletson** and international television broadcaster and trainer **Khalil Gueye**, this year's dynamic debate examined the long-term effects of mobile technologies on educational systems in Africa and the impact this might have on the traditional classroom and the role of teachers.

The motion was as follows:

'This House believes that we have underestimated the disruption mobile technologies will cause to formal educational systems in Africa and is concerned that their increased use undermines the traditional classroom setting, making teachers redundant.'

Four expert speakers took the stand, with **Carol Suzanne Adhiambo Otieno**, Doctoral Candidate, Niilo Mäki Institute / University of Jyväskylä, Finland; and **Wayan Vota**, Senior Director, Inveneo, USA, speaking in favour of the motion, and **Lauren Dawes**, Head of mLearning, GSMA, UK, and **Cheryl Douglas**, Programme Director, Teaching Biology Project (Africa Genome Education Institution), South Africa arguing against the motion.

When it came to the final count, participants voted against the motion with the majority deciding that the use of mobile technologies will not render the role that teachers play in the classroom redundant.

HIGH LEVEL REPRESENTATION AT eLEARNING AFRICA 2012

Amongst the 1,483 participants were Ministers of Education and ICT from Benin, Cameroon, Kenya, Namibia, Niger and Uganda, as well as representatives of Ministers of Education from Burkina Faso and Tanzania and representatives of Ivory Coast's Ministry of Post and Telecommunications. In addition to taking part in the Ministerial Round Table (see page 7) alongside international eLearning experts from the education, corporate and public service sectors, the Ministers and their representatives attended various sessions and events throughout the conference.

COMMENT

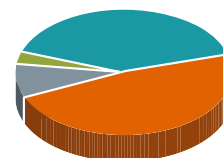
"The venue for the 7th eLA Conference provided a unique environment that is simple but very interactive. The location made it possible to meet and network with anybody without missing anybody. Rooms were well labelled for easy identification. The rooms were spacious enough to avoid any congestion. From my experience at the five previous eLA conferences I think ICWE and all the participants deserve Kudos!!!"

Agnes Akuvi ADJABENG, Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana

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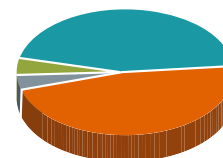
PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE eLEARNING AFRICA 2012 CONFERENCE PROGRAMME?



very good 37.3%
good 44%
sufficient 8%
poor 2.7%

HOW WOULD YOU EVALUATE eLEARNING AFRICA 2012 OVERALL?



Very worthwhile 45%
Worthwhile 47%
Not Worthwhile 4%
Not given 4%

MINISTERIAL ROUND TABLE



The Fifth Ministerial Round Table (MRT) on Education and Sustainable Financing in Africa was hosted by the Government of Benin and ICWE GmbH in association with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) at the recently-concluded eLearning Africa 2012.

It was noted that over the past four decades, more people in Sub-Saharan Africa have had access to education, with the number of pupils enrolling in primary school having increased more than fivefold, from 23 million in 1970 to 129 million in 2008. The growth is a reflection not merely of the increase in population size, but of the efforts by governments to provide Education for All. The sharpest increase has been in the enrolment figures for higher education. Forty years ago, tertiary enrolment stood at two hundred thousand; in 2008, 4.5 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa were enrolled at tertiary institutions.

Despite this growth, the average public expenditure on higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa has not only fallen but lags behind the rest of the world because donor aid for education in Africa has been in decline in recent years. At the same time, proportionally more public expenditure has been allocated to basic education relative to higher education. The Ministers focused their discussion on new ways to finance education in the face of dwindling resources and rising demand. In this respect, reference was made to the importance of shifting away from donor dependency as a crucial determinant of self-reliance and financial sustainability. The Ministers highlighted that on average, public education institutions are now generating about 30% of their own income.

Uganda is just one of the countries which are implementing dual-track tuition policies whereby a certain number of free (or very low-cost) university places are awarded based on criteria such as academic excellence, income level or positive discrimination, whilst other places are available on a tuition fee-paying basis. Similarly, in some Francophone countries, such as Benin, public universities have chosen to charge fees for professional programmes and programmes of excellence. The Ministers also noted the increase in the number of private higher education institutions.

The MRT paid considerable attention to the value that information communication technologies (ICT) can add to expand affordable access to quality education in basic and higher education. That 51 African countries have adopted some form of ICT in Education policy certainly provides an enabling environment for investment in quality education delivery through ICT. Here, the Ministers noted, in particular, the potential that mobile technologies hold to support efficient education delivery and management.

The MRT made a number of recommendations which include recognising the limitations of privatisation as a solution, but at the same time building partnerships with the national and international private sector, particularly in the banking industry. The MRT also recommended: that the resources of the African diaspora be harnessed to invest in education on the Continent; that the import of ICT products in education should not be taxed and that opportunities provided by modern technologies such as massive open online courses should be strengthened.

In closing the Ministerial Round Table, those present pledged to report positive developments at the next MRT which will be held at eLearning Africa 2013 in Windhoek, Namibia.

COMMENTS

"I am really impressed with the organisation and delivery of the conference. I am more touched with the rebate, sponsorships and considerations the organisers have given to support African participants. It goes to show that it's not all about money and profit!"

Wale Ajala, Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS), Nigeria

"It's a well commended programme and thumbs up for the Benin government's support, hospitality and security"

Toochukwu Patrick Okafor, Society for Promotion of Education and Development (SPED), Nigeria

2012 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

With 4 plenary sessions, 60 parallel sessions, 12 demonstrations and good practice showcases and 7 Atchakpokjis (knowledge exchange sessions), there were many different highlights of the conference, just a few of which are outlined below. Overall, eLearning Africa featured over 300 speakers and chairpersons from 50 countries.

mLEARNING

eLearning Africa 2012 served as a useful barometer for developments in mobile learning in Africa. This year several sessions were dedicated to discussing how this emerging phenomenon is taking shape within varied African contexts. One session was dedicated to early childhood development, particularly early reading, and a few projects using mobile technologies to support early reading competency development and assessment featured prominently. **Carmen Strigel**, from RTI International spoke about *Tangerine*, an open source electronic data collection software designed for use on low-cost, low-energy consuming mobile computers (including tablets and smartphones) and its use to support early learning assessments on mobile devices in low-resource environments.

Carol Suzanne Adhiambo Otieno, from the Niilo Mäki Institute based at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, discussed the need to address sustainability challenges based on her experience of adapting the *Graphogame* for a rural Kenyan early learning context.



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Another of the mLearning sessions explored different approaches to the way in which mobile learning applications can support community learning in schools and reach the youth who do not have access to formal schooling. **Qing Tan**, from Athabasca University, Canada, discussed a particular location-based adaptive mobile learning system and how this could be applied within an African context.

The presentation delivered by **Scott Isbrandt**, from Education Development Center (EDC), sparked considerable interest. He focused on how mobile phones were used among out-of-school youth in Mali, which served to improve their access to quality learning. Similarly, **Sailas Nyareza** from American International Health Alliance in South Africa discussed their experience of using handheld tablets and medical learning apps to enhance the training and education of mid-level health professionals. The latter reflects the uptake of mobile learning in the professional development of health care workers and professionals.



Another dedicated session highlighted experiences of integrating mobile solutions, learning content and learning platforms to support better farming, as well as improved literacy and livelihoods among African farmers. **Tawiah N. Agyarko-Kwarteng**, from World Education in Ghana spoke about creating sustainable cocoa farming communities through a mobile learning initiative for rural, low-literate farming populations while **Sountalma Ousseini** from the Catholic Relief Services, in Niamey, Niger, outlined their experience with literacy development among farming communities in Niger.

COMMENTS

"The conference was well planned, organisation was at its best. Thank you for a job well done. We hope to see something greater than this next year.... My belief is that IT CAN ONLY GET BETTER..."

Akinade Adeniyi Akinwunmi, National Open University of Nigeria, Nigeria

"Overall, an excellent conference as usual. We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves, were able to communicate our message to a large audience, and made some very useful contacts for our future work. Well done!"

Fiona Wallace, CoZa Cares Foundation, South Africa

2012 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Another more research-focused session engaged more with the experience of planning mobile learning initiatives and discussed how mobile phones are perceived by different stakeholders. **Mpine Elizabeth Makoe** from the University of South Africa discussed her research findings in which she sought to uncover the perceptions and concerns of teachers and learners who use mobile phones in education within a South African context. **Gabriel Syantema Konayuma**, from the Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training, Zambia, presented the conceptual framework within which he explored eLearning policies in Zambia's education and training system, which included mobile learning, while **Lauren Dawes** from UK-based GSMA highlighted the key findings from the GSMA survey among youth in some developing countries.



This year's conference also featured thought-provoking discussions on the conflicting views of different actors within the mobile learning space on the Continent. As well as taking centre stage at this year's eLearning Africa Debate (see page 6), this conversation emerged in an interactive role play session where the views of parents, policymakers, corporates, youth and teachers with differing opinions were presented and discussed

Evidently, eLearning Africa demonstrated that mobile learning is a growing feature on the African eLearning landscape, with an increasing number of initiatives focusing on integrating mobile technologies to deliver quality learning and teaching across different sectors of African society.



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eLEARNING FOR PEACE

'eLearning for Peace,' a new online community dedicated to examining the contribution that new forms of learning can make to peace-building and conflict resolution, held its first virtual session at eLearning Africa 2012. Chaired by **Harold Elletson** of The New Security Foundation, UK, and **Peter Baumgärtner**, Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit, Germany, this workshop sought to examine the connection between education and peace-building.

Expert speakers including **Khalil Gueye**, OPENRANGE MEDIA, USA; **Kolade Kamilu Bolarinwa**, Federal University of Agriculture, Nigeria; **Tamar Lominadze**, Georgian Technical University, Georgia and **Denise Perrault**, International Baccalaureate, The Netherlands, convened virtually to share their examples of how eLearning can contribute to new peace and reconciliation initiatives. Case studies included the use of eLearning for reconciliation in the Caucasus, eLearning initiatives to bring divided communities together in Kenya and learning projects to de-escalate small-scale rural conflicts in Africa.

Despite some technological challenges, participants and speakers alike were unanimous about the importance of using eLearning to support peace building and reconciliation and the usefulness of discussing such initiatives, and were keen to develop the online community further through regular online meetings. If you are interested in joining the eLearning for Peace community, whose members include representatives of the Georgian Technical University, GIZ (Armenia), The New Security Foundation, the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, the Russian Foreign Ministry, and the Africa Peace Forum, please contact Anna Shigwedha at info@newsecurityfoundation.org.

RESPONSIBLE eWASTE MANAGEMENT

The dramatic increase in the production, use and upgrade of electronic products in Africa is accompanied by a rapid rise of electronic waste. The following experts came together in a special focus session to discuss appropriate policy responses to this pertinent issue: **David Ongare**, National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Kenya; **Wale Ajala**, Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS), Nigeria; **Maman-Sani Issa**, Environment & Natural Resources Management. (AFTEN) – The World Bank, Mali; and **Leonard Mware**, Technology Partners Ltd/ICWE Africa Ltd, Kenya."

COMMENTS

"Very good platform to share good practices and learn from others"

Sailas Nyareza, American International Health Alliance, South Africa

"EXCELENT"

Sani Muktar, Federal College of Education [Technical] Bichi, Kano, Nigeria

2012 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

FAIL FAIRE

A number of new session formats were introduced to this year's conference, including Ignite, a dynamic, innovative and challenging session in which speakers' presentations were strictly limited to five minutes; the use of role play to explore different stakeholder perspectives on mLearning; and the "eLearning Africa Fail Faire".

The interactive "eLearning Africa Fail Faire" was dedicated to embracing and appraising failed eLearning experiences. In this lively and packed session, eLearning experts from across Africa shared their thoughts on the factors that cause eLearning initiatives to break down. Contributions came from **Fiona Wallace**, CoZa Cares Foundation, South Africa; **Barnabas Sang**, National ICT Innovation and Integration Centre - Ministry of Education, Kenya; **Maggy Beukes-Amiss**, University of Namibia/NeLC, Namibia; **David Rurangirwa**, USAID/Rwanda; **Charles Senkondo**, Tanzania Global Learning Agency; **Wayan Vota**, Inveneo, USA; **Leonard Mware**, Technology Partners Ltd/ICWE Africa Ltd, Kenya, as well as several participants.

Examples were wide ranging and included replacing foreign professors with computer-based teaching, only for the students to strike and demand that the teaching be classroom-based, to the refusal of the local community to accept the brand new equipment they were offered as to them the old equipment was just fine. Key lessons learnt included the need for leadership, localisation and appropriateness.

This successful session highlighted not only the value of discussing examples of failed experiences, but crucially, that learning from failure has to become a more conscious endeavor within the African eLearning network.

THE eLEARNING AFRICA REPORT: FOCUS ON 2013

The aspiration of *The eLearning Africa Report* is to provide yearly snapshots of how perceptions and realities combine and collide over time, with particular reference to eLearning experiences in Africa. It is hoped that these will lead to richer, more nuanced conversations, healthier decision-making and more effective action-taking towards ensuring Education for All in Africa.

With this in mind, co-author of the Report, **Dr. David Hollow**, Jigsaw Consult, UK, led a focus group discussion during the conference on critical matters relating to eLearning in education, training and development in Africa. Some 15 participants from across Africa came together to discuss their reactions to the 2012 Report, share their experiences of technology-enhanced learning and identify areas which they would like to see explored in detail in next year's Report. During the focus group participants cited affordability and motivation as key benefits of technology-enhanced learning, whilst also warning of the negative effect of technology not being used properly in learning and the need to consider the appropriateness of technology.

The session also featured a discussion on the influence of external technological advances on the Continent's own technology-enhanced learning sector; do such influences impede or facilitate the development of Africa's eLearning sector? The consensus was that the future of Africa eLearning sector lies in the development of home-grown initiatives and the importance of fostering such innovations. The findings from the focus group will be used to begin shaping the themes and priorities for the 2013 Report, which will be presented at eLearning Africa 2013 in Windhoek, Namibia. Please visit www.elearning-africa.com or contact us at report@elearning-africa.com if you would like to have more information on the Report.



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COMMENTS

"You are a fantastic team. Keep on!"

Matti Sinko, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Ethiopia

"This conference was superb. Please keep it up. I duff my hat to you all at eLearning Africa."

Ogunsoto Dele David, Lagos State Government, Nigeria

"I believe it is a worthwhile experience every year to attend the eLearning Africa conference"

Dr Muyiwa BAMGBOSE, Educational Advancement Centre / University of Ibadan, Nigeria



2012 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS



HOW TECHNOLOGIES SUPPORT YOUNG AFRICANS TO LIVE, LEARN, LOVE AND SUCCEED

Chaired by **Jules Aguessy**, JCI Aurore Bénin, and **Allan Kakinda**, SchoolNet/iEARN Uganda, this popular session offered young Africans the opportunity to exchange ideas on how they use, experience and appropriate technologies in ways that are helpful to them.

A key focus of the session was the question of whether the use of technology in Africa strengthens innovation and creativity among young people. Participants agreed that in the majority of cases, young people are consumers rather than innovators. Nevertheless, others thought that the young African has the capacity to innovate in software domains such as the development of applications and invention of programs. One of the main barriers to this is the lack of African-made hardware.

Negative issues associated with the use of technology identified by the young participants included cybercrime, pirating, the use of mobile phones during lessons, the dangers of prostitution for young people looking for an easy way to make money, the involuntary sharing of personal information while using Wi-Fi and outages in electricity supply. It was agreed that, on the whole, technology itself is neutral and these consequences are dependent on how it is used. However, the young people in the session recommended securing and protecting certain sites to limit their accessibility to young Africans.

The session enabled young people to share their views on how the use of technology can assist their efforts in determining and implementing growth strategies for the development of the African continent. It was noted that it is of prime importance to change the educational system in Africa to ensure that it adapts to and benefits from technological developments. Networks of young Africans must be formed to foster creativity and innovation in technology. Awareness-raising activities are required in order to mobilise young people and engage them in efforts to make technology available to all.


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COMMENT

"Since 2007, and over the years I have attended the eLA conferences and have continued to develop network partnerships, learning through meeting with experts in the eLearning sector and improving upon my skills and knowledge in the application of ICTs for mainstreaming eLearning into the environment sector"

Agnes Akuvi Adjabeng, Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana

2012 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS



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MY eLEARNING AFRICA

For the second year running, eLearning Africa organised a practical session to collate direct feedback from conference participants to ensure that the programme continues to improve year after year. Led by **Rosa Calero**, eLearning Consultant, Spain, this session acted as an interactive meeting point where participants could openly express their views on the sessions and share their ideas on how to improve eLearning Africa.

Participants suggested that the themes and sessions be developed using a bottom-up approach, addressing concrete African problems such as how educational technologies can help to improve poverty, school drop-out rates and the integration of homeless children to name but a few. In other words, the agenda should offer practical sessions and solutions to the pertinent issues facing the Continent.

On a practical note, it was suggested that, with there being so many parallel sessions, it would be useful if all the sessions could be recorded – albeit in a basic way – and made available on the eLearning Africa website.

Participants were unanimous about the excellent networking opportunity offered by the conference, and highlighted benefits of the interactive sessions in enabling the exchange of ideas with speakers and other participants.



THE PRE-CONFERENCE EVENTS



Prior to the official opening of eLearning Africa 2012 on the evening of Wednesday 23rd May, a range of interactive pre-conference workshops were held. Seven full-day and five half-day workshops offered participants the opportunity to gain practical knowledge and insight from leading experts in a variety of specialised fields. Highlights included workshops on distance learning, eLearning healthcare technology, the journalists' media briefing and the eLearning Africa newcomers' workshop.

THE eLEARNING AFRICA NEWCOMERS' WORKSHOP

For the first time, eLearning Africa held a pre-conference half-day workshop designed especially for newcomers. The intention was to provide a warm and informative welcome to all the participants that had never been to the conference before. Chaired by **Geneviève Puiségur-Pouchin** of **Apréli@** (the Association for the promotion of African open educational resources), the workshop proved very popular and was attended by over 80 people.

The workshop began with **Dr. David Hollow**, Jigsaw Consult, UK, facilitating speed networking between the participants, giving them opportunity to make connections with one another. He then gave an overview of the ethos of eLearning Africa and encouraged people to participate fully. **Ndeye Fatou Ndiaye**, Director ICWE West Africa, Senegal, then provided an engaging review of the conference, explaining to participants how it started, how it has grown and developed, and what are the objectives and overall purpose of eLearning Africa.

Rosa Calero, eLearning Consultant, Spain, then guided everyone through the conference agenda, explaining the session formats and each of the different themes. She also demystified the eLearning Africa terminology and gave wide-ranging advice on what to expect and how to make the most of the opportunities offered by the conference. Particular attention was given to highlighting the special networking opportunities that would be taking place, alongside the special events to look out for.

The workshop finished with a question and answer session regarding the practicalities of the conference. Overall, this new workshop provided a solid, informative foundation and warm welcome for those new to eLearning Africa. The main strength of the workshop was the way in which it enabled those that are new to the conference to get maximum benefit from the three days – fast-tracking them through the learning process.


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COMMENTS

"Brilliant conference"

Viola Machingura, Great Zimbabwe University, Zimbabwe

"Good organisation and presentation"

Adigun Johnson, Yaba College of Technology, Nigeria

"Very Good"

Akin Oke, Kenneth Dike Library, Nigeria

2012 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

JOURNALISTS' MEDIA BRIEFING

Over 40 journalists from Benin and neighbouring francophone countries attended a briefing on the future of eLearning in Africa. Participants were provided with an introduction to the eLearning Africa conference: its background, aims, achievements and ambitions. Three expert speakers then provided examples of recent projects that could potentially have a significant effect on technology-enhanced learning in Africa

Geneviève Puiségur-Pouchin, president and founder of **Apréli@** (the Association for the promotion of African open educational resources), outlined the preliminary findings of the test-phase of the eTwinning project in which Togolese, Senegalese, Burkinane and French schoolchildren work together to create a digital travel book on their partner's city.



Lawalley Cole, Coordinator at ADEA-GT COMED, then shared his experience of eLearning and sustainability in Africa, noting that "while Africa remains behind the developed world in terms of access to core technology such as electricity, radio, wireless technology and computer access, the rapid growth in use of these core technologies suggests that this is radically changing".

Cole's presentation was followed by that of **Fernand Nouwligbèto**, educational coordinator of the RefRak/APM project. Nouwligbèto gave an overview of the RefRak/APM project which aims to train radio broadcasters through eLearning, and explained that in certain circumstances it is necessary to couple eLearning with traditional learning techniques to ensure maximum effectiveness. Following a question and answer session, the journalists had the opportunity to visit the exhibition stands and learn about the latest products and services in Africa's eLearning industry.



BENIN UNIVERSITIES

As part of eLearning Africa, ICWE organised a workshop on Tuesday, May 22nd for Beninese universities on how best to build a digital network.

The session was led by two experts from Senegal - **Dr. Alioune Moustapha Diouf**, teacher and researcher at Fastef (the Faculty of Science and Technologies of Education and Training), UCAD (University of Cheikh Anta Diop), and **Modou Fall**, co-director of UCAD's Centre for Computing - who shared their experience and best practice advice with over 80 participants. Key issues discussed included how to mobilise stakeholders, and the technical, policy and financial requirements for the development of a digital network.

COMMENT

"It was a well-organised conference. Enjoy the Benin hospitality as well as networking with a lot of great people in the ICT for education and development field. Was great being part of this year's conference and look forward to eLearning Africa 2013"

Allan Kakinda, SchoolNet/iEARN Uganda, Uganda

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EXHIBITORS

eLearning Africa is accompanied by an extensive exhibition area where exhibitors have the opportunity to promote their activities, give demonstrations, hold meetings and establish valuable personal contacts with the most important multipliers and decision makers within the African education and training community. As the location for regular coffee breaks, the exhibition hall offers the ideal networking atmosphere and functions as a central meeting point within the conference.

This year's exhibition hall was truly international, with exhibitors coming from Africa, the Middle East, Europe and Asia to present their latest products and services.

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List of Exhibitors at eLearning Africa 2012

- Africa Develop Africa (ADA)
- Africa Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities
- AGeNTIC (Agence de Gestion des Nouvelles Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication)
- Aknan Company for Data Management Services
- Alink Telecom
- AlMotahida Group
- Boîte à innovations
- Business Link
- Centre for Educational Technology, University of Cape Town
- Cloud11
- CNED
- Computek International
- Computer Zentrum Strausberg GmbH
- CoZa Cares Foundation
- Designmate (I) Pvt. Ltd.
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
- DoT IT
- Edubicle (DialogWeb-Design)
- Educational Advancement Centre
- Egypt On
- eKnowledge
- Emerald Group Publishing
- Eumaugen
- Festo Didactic GmbH & Co. KG
- FIED
- Global Beam Communications
- GNSE Group
- Gouvernement du Bénin
- Groupe Cerco / Cocktail Office
- IFADEM
- Informatique for Information Technology
- Intercom Enterprises for Information Technology
- Japanese Academy - Narita
- Jeilecom - Egypt
- Koenig Solutions Pvt. Ltd.
- Lucas-Nülle Lehr- und Messgeräte GmbH
- Microsoft
- Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche français
- MISR2000 for Networking
- Public Cloud Services
- Raptivity by Harbinger Knowledge Products
- Rural Metro Emergency Management Services
- SANKORE
- SES
- Shift e-learning
- Sidmach Technologies Nigeria Limited
- SMART Technologies
- Society for Promotion of Education and Development - SPED
- SocketWorks Limited
- Televic Education
- The African Virtual University
- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
- University of Hertfordshire
- WWEDU World Wide Education
- Wyse Technology



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eLEARNING AFRICA 2013

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ICWE GmbH is an international conference organiser with a focus on education and training.

The company's flagship event "ONLINE EDUCA BERLIN" is the world's largest annual international eLearning conference and has been convening since 1995: www.online-educa.com

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