eLearning Africa

10th International Conference on ICT for Development, Education & Training

Addis Ababa
Ethiopia
May 20→22
2015

eLearning Africa→ In Review

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the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

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eLearning Africa

10th International Conference on ICT for Development, Education and Training

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> The conference has been very interesting. It has brought together diverse views of how we can use ICT to improve learning in West Africa and Africa as a whole. The eLearning Africa conference has been very helpful, in that we have been able to share ideas of how we can improve our various systems of government and eLearning in our countries. A very good experience!"
>
> H.E. Eugene Lenn Nagbe,
> Minister of Youth and Sports, Liberia

> eLearning Africa is, this year, setting the tone and a platform for a new momentum in Africa's development... eLearning Africa offers a great opportunity for partners in education at all levels to link up, to set up networks, to interact, to mingle, to create ideas, to innovate. This is where innovation is going to come from!"
>
> Thierry Zomahoun,
> African Institute for Mathematical Sciences, South Africa

> Attending the conference was a great experience. I believe that I came out of the conference positively different from the way I came in."
>
> Alex Okwaput,
> KampaBits, Uganda

> eLearning Africa? In three words, I would say: Informative, enriching, and black powerful!"
>
> Dr Obádélé Kambon,
> Institute of African Studies,
> University of Ghana

> We met everyone from Ministers leading the way in education in Africa, to the innovators and young makers. That connection between the two, the ability to meet with people who can change policy and are actually carving the future and to figure out how we can work together: that was amazing."
>
> Mark Surman,
> Mozilla Foundation, USA

Numbers

Key figures of eLearning Africa 2015

eLearning Africa

1,389 Participants

3,077 tweets using #eLA15 between May 20–22

32 Exhibitors

66 Sessions

11 Workshops

68 Countries

249 Speakers

14 Keynotes

Regions

Where participants came from in 2015



Sectors

Occupation of participants



Education 34 %

Public Sector 38 %

Business 28 %

Pre-Conference Workshops



The eLearning Africa pre-conference events offered participants the opportunity to gain practical knowledge and insight from leading experts in a variety of specialised fields. Events on offer included:



- Developing eLearning Systems Using Drupal
- Education Using Open Source Software & Materials: Hands-On Workshop with Raspberry Pi's & Android Tablets
- eLearning Africa Hub
- Growing Your Innovation Network
- Hands-On Workshop for Digital Video Media Authorship and Implementation: Creativity in Education
- Open Educational Resources for Entrepreneurs
- Paper Prototyping: A Human-Centred Design Approach
- Peer Assist: Unleash the Experience and Insight in Your Landscape of Practice
- Programmation sur mobile et éducation au développement, diffusion de contenu en/ hors ligne
- The eLearning Africa Newcomer's Workshop
- Wikipedia in the Classroom: Filling in Knowledge Gaps, Increasing Local Language Content

87% rated the organisation of the conference as very good or good

Special Events: New friends and lasting connections

The eLearning Africa 2015 programme was full of opportunities for serendipitous meetings in between the interactive sessions and workshops.

The main conference programme was kicked off by the **eLearning Africa Welcome Reception**, which gathered participants in the exhibition area to discover the many services and products being offered by 32 international exhibitors. Over the succeeding days, the exhibition area proved to be the vibrant networking hub of the event.

Thursday brought with it the hotly anticipated **GIZ hackathon award ceremony**, which drew crowds to see Team Afri One win the fiercely contested competition and a trip to Berlin to present their winning app at eLearning Africa's sister event, OEB (www.online-educa.com).

Participants came together once again to be treated to an impressive show of traditional Ethiopian dancing and music whilst they tucked into an extensive buffet of Ethiopian and international cuisine at the **eLearning Africa Participant's Reception**.





> The togetherness – the way people want to unite with one voice, and the different areas that they are working on towards one goal: that's what I have enjoyed the most. I have learned so much, the different applications, the different platforms, there are different modes of learning, different corporations looking at Africa as the frontier. It's Africa's eye-opener!"
>
> Caroline Munywoki,
> Business Sense Africa, Kenya

The Opening Plenary

The Opening Plenary, chaired by Seyoum Bereded, President of ICT-ET, Ethiopia, saw a panel of esteemed speakers highlight a range of issues around this year's theme, 'Enriching Tomorrow'.

Topics raised included the role of ICT and eLearning in the socio-economic development of Africa, the significance of smartphones and tablets to the future of education on the continent and the need to guard the open nature of the Internet.

Noah Samara

Chairman and CEO, Yazmi, USA

Technology for Learning: Limitations and Opportunities

"Yazmi is a proven system, ready to effectively and economically provide abundant support to teachers and students across the continent. We are looking to partner with governments, civil society and the private sector to roll out our solution. In Africa, we say: 'If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.' We want to go far. We want to do it with you."

Mark Surman

Executive Director of the Mozilla Foundation, USA

Building a Web Literate Planet

"I think we need a movement that says web literacy is absolutely an essential piece of how we imagine education empowerment and the future of human society... I believe an Internet that is made by all of us is something worth protecting and also I believe it is something that will unlock much of what we're trying to do in the pursuit of knowledge, the pursuit of education, and the pursuit of a just and equitable human society."

Günter Nooke

Personal Representative for Africa to the German Chancellor Angela Merkel, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany

Going Digital for Sustainable Development

"Fostering entrepreneurship, vocational training and civic training instead of persisting in focusing purely on academic issues is the only way to equip young people with e-skills for jobs."

"I want to underline the chance for inclusion through eLearning. If there is access to the Internet and if there are affordable devices, we can reach the marginalised, the discriminated against, the women and girls and citizens in rural areas."



His Excellency Erastus Mwencha

Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission

"ICTs remain a central stimulus of socio-economic development, and the future of our society is going to be determined significantly by the definitive strides and inroads we are able to make in harnessing new, creative technologies and innovation."

"There is an abiding imperative for Africa to foster innovation and creative technologies as the basis for advancements in ICT and sustainable economic development. It is the duty of our governments, the private sector and all segments of our society, to participate actively in maximising the use and application of ICTs to create competitive, knowledge economies, as well as economies of impetus."









His Excellency Dr Debretsion Gebremichael

Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Ethiopia

"For Ethiopia, the utilisation of ICT aims at accelerating development, sustaining growth and promoting the process of democratisation while, at the same time, reducing the national level of poverty. To this end, the government has been pursuing and implementing various sound and workable policies and strategies with a view to expanding the horizon of information and communications technology so as to play a pivotal role in the enhancement of the social, political and economic development of the country."

"For ICT to have a positive development impact, its use must be aligned with the goals of education for all and other development goals. It is thus important to recognise the need to develop sufficient capacity throughout society, including the marginalised and vulnerable groups, for this to bear fruit."







Thursday Plenary

The Thursday Plenary focused on the current state and future of higher education in Africa. Chaired by Dr Mesfin Belachew, Technical Advisor to the Minister of Communication and Information Technology, Ethiopia, the plenary examined Ethiopia's recent approach to higher education and also focused on the capacity for eLearning to overcome the major problems of accessibility and employability in African education.



Dr Samuel Kifle

Director General of Higher Education Administration Affairs at the Ministry of Education, Ethiopia.

"We should invest so that we are creating an environment where youths can innovate technologies, where the next apps are made in Africa, where the next technologies are coming from Africa. Investment in resources, laboratories and the rest can only be justified if we can exploit the best of our nation, nurture the talent and huge potential of our current youths."

"The key focus for the education system here in Ethiopia has moved to improve maths and science, which will be key to studying science and technology at a later stage of schooling."

"Universities are doing a lot to nurture the talent and intellectual capacity of their students. Now universities have business incubation centres, where students can experiment to see if their ideas can hold water in the real world, where their ideas can be visibly commercialised, technically produced and can make a difference when used by society. This will give graduates the opportunity not to wait for jobs but rather to make their own businesses, to be employers rather than employees for others."

Shai Reshef

President & Founder of University of the People, USA

The Future of Higher Education in Africa – the Potential for a Great Leap Forward

"There are two major challenges for higher education; accessibility and employability – opening the gates of higher education for all qualified students, and after we do that, making sure that the education they get is relevant for the job market. This problem is huge and without serving it, the continent cannot make the great leap it hopes to do to catch up with the developed world."

"A solution does exist. By using technology and best practice these two major challenges can be addressed... By using technology to bridge the gap of accessibility and employability, supplying quality education and workplace-focused skills creates graduates ready for the employment market."

"Online education can bring alignment to everyone, without the need to spend billions on building physical universities, and this is exactly what University of the People does."

Dr Eleni Gabre-Madhin

Chief Executive Officer of eleni, Ethiopia

"A commodity exchange is essentially a market connector, a way to bring buyers and sellers together, but doing so in the most reliable, efficient and transparent way around a set of standards."

"When we embarked on this exercise in Ethiopia, we were going to build a market for the little guys, not a market for the suits...but rather a market that anybody can use in Ethiopia - the smallest farmer and the smallest retailer."

"It's not really about building a technology per se, nor is it about having the right business processes, but it's really about bringing the people along and having a very important people focus as we build these systems."

80% rated the eLearning Africa plenary sessions as very good or good

Friday Plenary

The Friday Plenary saw speakers from Ethiopia, Egypt and Cameroon reflect on the changing face of education and ICT in their respective countries. Chaired by Dr Aida Opoku-Mensah from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the panel highlighted how technology is being used to improve education and foster entrepreneurialism.

His Excellency Mahamouda Ahmed Gaas

State Minister of Science and Technology, Ethiopia

"The key pillars of knowledge are ICT, education, science, technology and innovation. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has started to invest its biggest share of GDP in the education system, from basic education to higher education, and in universal access to education for all. The government is also committed to a high level of investment in ICT development... We believe that these activities will lay the foundation for a knowledge society for the country."

"Poverty means limited access to resources but also limited access to knowledge."

"It is the domestic technological knowledge that can enable us to achieve this standard of converting knowledge to product. What we aspire to in the developing world is attainable and can be easily enhanced and accelerated through ICT and the eLearning skills of our young generation."

Her Excellency Dr Noha Adly

First Deputy to the Minister of Communication and Information Technology, Egypt

"We need to capitalise on youth energy and we need to leverage it."

"There has been a total shift in the role of the teacher. There is no longer learning by memorisation and one way of conveying information. Now it is about communicating, it is about being an enabler, and this is where we should be developing their skills and providing them with the tools to do that."

"Vocational education has been overlooked, it is extremely important in our society... There is a huge gap in the market supply of graduates from vocational schools and the market demand of the industry. Do we need them? Yes. Do we have the right skills? No. There is a shortfall in ICT resources."

Rebecca Enonchong

Founder and CEO of AppsTech, Cameroon

"It is always important to make sure women are part of the development, and part of the equation."

"Active Spaces is a tech hub to support young technology entrepreneurs, so we give them not just office space, not just an internet connection, not just mentorship but that we give them real life exposure, experience and support to help transform their idea into a real business."

"In Cameroon, in the last year, we've had a startup raise 1.3 million dollars through venture funding, we've had another raise 240 thousand dollars through crowdfunding, and just three startups have generated 150 jobs. Those are real jobs and that's real impact...we always talk about the Africa of tomorrow but these tech entrepreneurs are working with the Africa of today, and we're building jobs and creating jobs today."









The eLearning Africa Debate

‘This house believes that Africa needs vocational training more than academic education’

On the final evening of the conference, four education experts came together to debate a motion, which co-Chairperson Mor Seck, President of the AADLC, described as “one of the hottest topics in African education”.

The annual eLearning Africa plenary debate was opened by education entrepreneur Donald Clark from Plan B Learning, UK, speaking for the motion: “I am not arguing for the abolition of universities or academic education. What I am going to argue for is the reversal of most of the policies in most African countries which aim to rush towards endless numbers of people obtaining degrees and the building of universities [...] Why would Africa want to mimic a system that has proven to be dysfunctional in Europe and other parts of the world?”

He was soon interrupted by his opponent, Prof Damtew Teferra, a professor of higher education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, and founding Director of the International Network for Higher Education in Africa when Clark’s comments turned to the economic benefits of higher education. In response to Clark arguing that higher education “won’t make a country richer,” Prof Teferra said: “This is a point from 25 years ago. The World Bank, OECD, the UN, African Union and other organisations admit that the era of placing more focus on primary education over higher education is gone.”

Prof Teferra’s teammate, Thierry Zomahoun, President and CEO of the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) Global Secretariat, South Africa, added: “If you want Africa to be on the global stage with South Korea, emphasising vocational education more than tertiary education won’t get Africa there.”

Prof Teferra then asked the audience: “Where do you really want your children to go? A vocational training institute or a top university?” and warned of repeating Africa’s “shameful history”, in which technical and vocational training was used to “train negroes to become the productive, docile, permanent underclass.”

Speaking alongside Clark for the motion, Gabriel Konayuma from the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education in Zambia, emphasised the impact of vocational education in society. “You sleep in a bed made by someone from technical and vocational education, and the plumbing in the room is also installed by someone with vocational training. Every day it’s all around us.”

When the debate was opened to the floor, a series of questions and comments from the audience revealed that many were swaying their opinions towards the motion. “Why do I need to go to school for four years and then have to sell clothes for six months in order to survive?” one audience member asked.

Another stated: “I think the issue is skills, skills, skills and expertise. No matter what you are learning in school, the issue is whether there is value in it.”

With all but a few hands raised in favour of the motion, co-chair Dr Harold Elletson proclaimed: “The motion is carried.”



> “The last debate was especially powerful and lived up to the two days of anticipation and expectation.”
>
> Alex Lancia, International Community School of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Parallel Sessions

This year saw 66 parallel sessions take place across two days, featuring expert speakers from around the world. Sessions were arranged into twelve thematic tracks:

- Academic, Evidence-Based Research
- African Entrepreneurship and EduTech
- Competencies and Tools for Pre-Service Teachers, Trainers and Educators
- Development Opportunities in and for Educational Institutions
- eInclusion, eQuality and Community Development
- Healthcare Initiatives and Healthcare Workers
- Mobile Learning Technologies, Devices and Methods
- Open Educational Resources and (Free) Open Source Software
- The New Agriculture
- The New Library
- Workforce and Capacity Development Initiatives



93% rated the relevance and content of the conference as very good or good

"I've loved the sessions. The selection of speakers was excellent. They were telling us all about these very nice projects in their countries and I was very impressed by that."

Sarah Kiden, Ugandan Christian University, Uganda

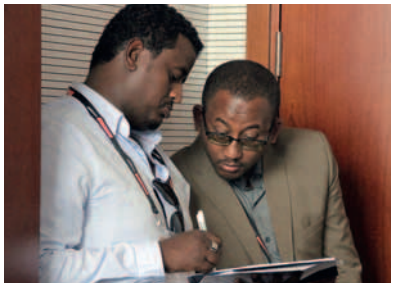
"The response from my session participants and session chairpersons after my presentation was massive and positive. It was overwhelming."

Chris Kwekowe, Slatecube, Nigeria









"A good quality, interesting and worthwhile conference."

Vyv Pettler, Open University Business School, UK

82% rated the interactivity of the conference sessions as very good or good

Parallel Sessions





Ethiopia in Focus

With more than 30 speakers from Ethiopia speaking in the programme, the host country was well represented and took full advantage of the opportunity to show off their local success stories as well as sharing some of the challenges and bottlenecks that are holding back efforts to extend education in the country.

In a special session dedicated to Ethiopian best practice, participants heard how educators and policymakers are improving education systems at all levels with the support of ICT.

Elsewhere in the programme, Markos Lemma of iceaddis was shedding light on ways in which ICT can support community literacy, Temechegn Engida from UNESCO-IICBA chaired a discussion on capacity development for teacher educators, and Solomon Teferra Abate shared his experiences of international partnership between his institution, Addis Ababa University, and the University of North Texas.

African Union Commission: Official Co-Organisers

In 2015, the conference was co-organised by the African Union Commission, who not only provided the outstanding facilities of their headquarters as the conference venue, but also contributed extensively to the programme, with particular focus on the AU science, technology and innovation strategy for Africa 2024 and the Agenda 2063 with its focus on ICT, new technologies and innovations.

> It has been a great experience. I have developed cognitively in as far as what are the projects that are happening in Africa and how they can be used for teaching and learning purposes. That's where we need to be going in Africa."
>
> Professor Reuben Dlamini,
> University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

> Awesome! It's fantastic, I'm so glad to be here!"
>
> Maryam Julde Aduran,
> Nigerian Television Authority, Nigeria

> To me, the most valuable aspect has been learning about all the different projects that people are working on and hearing about their first-hand experiences, developing new ideas, and going through the process of brainstorming and prototyping and actually building something out of it."
>
> Dr Casey Frechette, University of South Florida, USA

> I noticed that there were so many tools that we learned about during this event that we can use today to improve today, not just tomorrow."
>
> Rebecca Enonchong, AppsTech, Cameroon



#eLA15

Between 20th and 22nd May 2015, 3,077 tweets used the hashtag #eLA15, sent by 640 unique Twitter users.

Top Tweets



Rebecca Enonchong @africatechie:

Tweeting from Addis today #eLA15 #Ethiopia - currently in a session with African ministers talking about youth and innovation in education



LetstalkPastries @BrianNdyaguma:

After over 4days of coding, geeks are getting ready to pitch their concepts #GamifyIt hackathon @eLAconference #eLA15



Casey Frechette @cfrech:

Learning about some exciting projects and meeting great people at @ eLAconference #eLA15



Andriankoto Ratoza @harinjaka:

Günter Nooke speech at #ela15 helped me to have more understanding of @ BMZ_Bund vision on ICT and e-learning #Africa



Raphaël Dard @radard:

impressive audience at #eLA15 #AddisAbeba #elearning #Africa





Roser Noguera @ RoserNoguera

So many interesting things happening at the same time! Where to go? #eLA15



Dan Maxwell, Jr @DanMaxwellJr:

yesterdays session on Mind Blowing Tech really blew my mind. easily my best session yet. #eLA15



Maninder S Bajwa @Mann_Bajwa:

At amazing session regarding audacious technology changing education. #eLA15



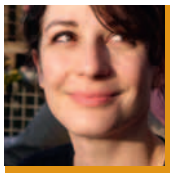
Solen F @ssolen:

Full house at #eLA15. amazing group of people from all over Africa and Europe.



Jakob Pedersen @Jakobp:

In at the Embracing OERs session. This room is Packed - suggests this is a popular topic! #emergeafrica #eLA15



Geraldine de Bastion @geralbine:

That was an amazing session - thank you #eLA15 for enabling the "Ministers meet Makers" event today!



Mark Surman @msurman:

Read! Write! Participate! @mozilla Web literacy skills jam at #ela15.





UndertheBanyan @underthebanyan:

Great to see plenary sessions delivered by dynamic, passionate and committed women. @eLAconference @africatechie @EleniGabre #eLA15

AhadooTec @AhadooTec:

Wow, great 3 days at the #eLA15! We've met awesome people, learnt a lot and launched "@fidel_platform. Thanks!

Numbers

Key figures of the exhibition

eLearning Africa

32 Exhibitors

14 Countries

21 Sectors and Industries

Satisfaction

What exhibitors think

95 % rated the service provided during the event as excellent or good

95 % rated the opportunity to establish new contacts as excellent or good

89 % rated the opportunity to consolidate existing relationships as excellent or good

90 % rated the number of visitors to their stand as excellent or good

Voices

Quotations from sponsors and exhibitors

> The number of people – from companies to users – that have showed up to the conference to discuss the urgent issue of delivering education. Seeing this teaming crowd of people coming together on an issue that is so important – that has been the most enjoyable part."
>
> Noah Samara, Yazmi, USA

> We were impressed with the number of visitors to our stand. Overall an excellent and well organised conference."
>
> Samantha Dorrington, The Open University, UK

> It was an interesting and insightful conference. It enabled networking both from international and local participants. Exposure to other offerings from fellow exhibitors was amazing. I also found room for other partnerships. It really was a worthwhile experience."
>
> Tolu Aina, EDU Platforms Ltd, Nigeria





Exhibitors

- Academia ERP by Serosoft Solutions
- AFMOBI
- African Virtual University
- AhadooTec
- Avanti Communications
- Computer Aid International
- Computer Zentrum Strausberg GmbH
- Designmate India Pvt. Ltd.
- EDU Platforms Ltd
- Educational Advancement Centre
- ETS Global, Academic & Business Assessments and E-Learning
- Excel Books Private Limited
- GeoSAS Consulting Services PLC
- German Cooperation / GIZ GmbH
- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
- ICDL Africa
- iCollege Pty Ltd
- Information Technology Industry Development Agency-ITIDA
- International Trade Centre (ITC)
- IT Without Borders
- Lifeline Technologies
- OPENCOLLAB (Pty) Ltd
- Piron Corporation Inc.
- Presentations 2Go
- Sterling Pixels Private Limited
- Televic Education
- Tesca Technologies Pvt. Ltd.
- TestOut
- The Open University
- UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
- Via Afrika
- YAZMI

“It’s a great conference. It’s always good to be here at eLearning Africa. We’ve met a lot of people here from all over Africa, so good contacts. It’s a great show!”

Michael Hegeman, Learning Valley, the Netherlands

“I thoroughly enjoyed my first experience attending the conference and look forward to benefitting from many more to come. The energy, information, and networks that I established last week are extremely valuable. I also met some great people whom have become quick friends.”

Emily Waters, Discovery Education, USA

“It’s a priority event for us. We’re really, really happy with the conference. Every year we meet delegates, in particular from West Africa – English speaking and Francophone – who we wouldn’t necessarily be able to meet otherwise. It gives us a chance to meet them all in one place and showcase our products and programmes.”

Marie-Claire Walsh, ICDL Africa



eLearning AFRICA REPORT 2015

M-Pesa pioneer's insights Don't forget universities
Wikimedia and open access Cables - who's connected?
Finding funds Survey results In focus: Agriculture, teacher training, entrepreneurs



Available free for download from elearning-africa.com/report

The trajectory of change

Next steps for education

55 country profiles

Firoze Manji • Emmanuel Jal • Bobana Badisang • Aida Opoku-Mensah