4th International Conference on
ICT for Development, Education and Training
An Annual Event for Developing eLearning Capacities in Africa

Post-Conference Report
Le Méridien Président, Dakar, Senegal
May 27 – 29, 2009
www.elearning-africa.com
After the success of the eLearning Africa conferences held in Ethiopia (2006), Kenya (2007) and Ghana (2008), eLearning Africa moved to West Africa and became the first pan-African conference on technology-enhanced learning in a francophone country. The conference was successfully held in French and English and attracted 83 countries, who gathered at the Le Méridien President Hotel in Dakar, Senegal from May 27th – 29th, 2009. It included plenary sessions with world-class experts, smaller presentation and special focus sessions, practical demonstrations and debates on specific topics, as well as various informal networking opportunities where practitioners shared their experiences, ideas, new information and perspectives.

This year’s conference brought together a diverse group of practitioners, experts, donors, suppliers and others interested in using the tools of the information revolution to improve the educational and training opportunities available to the people of Africa. eLearning Africa once again served as a continental hub for major international and African corporations, as well as for development organisations, who used the event to hold their own meetings before or after the gathering in Dakar. Last but not least, the success of the conference was also due to the excellent cooperation with the Ministry of Education of Senegal. The local eLA09 Committee and above all our partner, the Government IT Agency (ADIE) under the inspirational guidance of Mouhamed Tidiane Seck, provided the organisers with tremendous support, especially in situations where on-site support was essential. The Ministry’s commitment was highlighted in the speech by His Excellency Abdoulaye Wade, President of Senegal, when he stressed the importance of technology in education and how this pan-African conference serves as a powerful tool to reach the goal of technology for all.

**CONFERENCE PROGRAMME**

Learn, Share, Network – those were the keywords at the 4th eLearning Africa Conference on ICT for Development, Education and Training.

eLearning Africa 2009 featured:

- 1350 participants from 83 countries
- 318 speakers and chairpersons from 58 countries
- 4 plenary sessions
- 60 parallel sessions
- 20 best practice demonstrations
- 21 pre-conference events

The conference programming team received several hundred proposals for the various sessions, which were divided into the following themes: Learning, eLearning and Pedagogy; Designing eLearning Systems; Sector Strategies; Infrastructure and Access Solutions; Capacity Development; Content Development and Delivery; Research, Monitoring and Evaluation; Reaching the Education For All Goals; Resource Mobilisation and Partnerships; Policy and Planning.

**COMMENTS**

“Let me congratulate you and your team for the great success of the Conference. Its organisation, management, quality of audience and presentations, everything has been at the highest level. I hope that I will be able to attend the next one in Zambia.”

Gérard Rwagasana, National University of Rwanda, Rwanda
PLENARY SESSIONS

The Opening Plenary took place on Thursday, May 28th and was split into an “official part” and a “scientific part”. The “official part” featured His Excellency Abdoulaye Wade, the President of the Republic of Senegal who outlined his vision for radical change in African education, criticising European governments for restricting access to African students to educational institutions in their countries. The President summed up the relevance of eLearning Africa, saying: “At a time when Europe closes its doors, eLearning is the answer for African students.”

Other keynote presentations, from Mouhamed Tidiane Seck, ADIE, Republic of Senegal and Henry Chasia, Executive Deputy Chairperson, NEPAD e-Africa Commission, South Africa, centred on the role technology-supported learning plays in increasing education and training opportunities for African citizens.

The “scientific part” was led by Hon Moustapha Sourang, Minister of Higher Education, Universities and Academic Centers, Republic of Senegal. Speakers in the session included Abdou Salam Sall, Rector, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Republic of Senegal; Stephen Dukker, CEO, NComputing, USA; and Tim Unwin, UNESCO Chair in ICT4D, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK.

His Excellency Ibrahima Cheikh Diong, Minister, Adviser to the President of the Republic of Senegal, chaired the Evening Plenary which drew attention to e-Education initiatives and the importance of partnerships. The minister was joined by Cheick Modibo Diarra, Chairman for Africa, Microsoft Corporation, South Africa; Nancy Hafkin, Director, Knowledge Working, USA; Abdoullah Cissé, Rector, Université de Bambey, Republic of Senegal; and Artur Dyro, Managing Director, Young Digital Planet SA, Poland.

The Friday morning plenary led by His Excellency Abdourahim Agne, Minister of Telecommunications, ICTs, Road Transport and Railways, Republic of Senegal, brought several thought leaders together to exchange their ideas on how best to make use of the latest developments in teaching and learning to achieve Education for All in Africa. The keynote speakers in this session were Hon Gabriel Namulambe, Minister of Science, Technology and Vocational Training, Republic of Zambia; Ferruh Gurtas, Corporate Affairs Director, Middle East, Turkey and Africa, Intel Corporation, Turkey; Aissatou Sow, Chief Executive, Digital Links, UK; and Yvonne Biggins, Manager of Education Business Development for EMEA, SMART Technologies, Canada.

eLEARNING AFRICA DEBATE

The Conference debated two propositions about the role and importance of technology in education in Africa. Chairpersons for the debate were Harold Eletson, Director, The New Security Foundation, UK and Khalil Guèye, Director, OPENRANGE Media Strategies, Washington, USA. Discussing the role of technology in African education were Neil Butcher, Project Consultant, OER Africa, South Africa; Astrid Dufborg, Lead Specialist, Sida, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sweden; Stephen Dukker, CEO, NComputing, USA; Mor Seck, GDLN/AADLC, Republic of Senegal; Nnenna Nwakanma, NNENNA.org, Ivory Coast; and John Maurice Traxler, Director, Learning Lab, University of Wolverhampton, UK. The audience became very much involved in the heated debate, resulting in the liveliest closing ceremony ever.

COMMENTS

“I’m very happy to congratulate the entire team which worked very hard to make eLearning Africa 2009 a success, as usual. The innovations introduced this year have been very important, such as the plenary end of conference debate which revealed great concerns of participants on the way technology is to be implemented in Africa, and the recommendation to make it be known by decision makers all over the world.”

Gaston Donnat Bappa, Microlog, Cameroon

“Thank you very much for a wonderful conference. I would love to be part of next year’s proceedings as the conference has allowed me to network, present our research and have lots of interesting discussions. Congratulations on all your hard work, both before and during the conference. I look forward to seeing the pics, videos, and docs that you will be sending to us, delegates. [...] I really, really had a great time, intellectually challenging and professionally motivating, so I am, as we say in Southern Africa, ‘chaffed about it’.”

Karen Ferreira-Meyers, University of Swaziland, Swaziland
PARALLEL SESSIONS

This year’s programme was based on 10 themes which covered a large palette of important topics for ICT in education and development. The specific element of this year’s programme was its bilingual aspect: of the 60 parallel sessions, 11 sessions were held in French, 23 sessions in English and 26 sessions were bilingual with simultaneous translation. The session formats were structured to be highly interactive – presentation sessions and panel discussions always included participant interaction.

This year’s themes were:

- Learning, eLearning and Pedagogy (PED)
- Designing eLearning Systems (DES)
- Sector Strategies (SEC)
- Infrastructure and Access Solutions (INF)
- Capacity Development (CAP)
- Content Development and Delivery (CON)
- Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (RES)
- Reaching the Education For All Goals (DEV)
- Resource Mobilisation and Partnerships (PAR)
- Policy and Planning (POL)

PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

An important aspect of eLearning Africa is always the optional pre-conference events which were held on Wednesday, May 27th. In 5 full-day and 16 half-day almost 50% bilingual seminars and workshops, participants had the opportunity to deepen and extend their practical knowledge in different fields of relevant topics concerning ICT for education and development. The choice of subjects was the largest ever at eLearning Africa and the numbers of experts and participants at the different events was extremely high.

This year’s pre-conference events were:

- 3rd UNESCO – UNEVOC TVET Summit on “Access and Inclusion: Improving TVET Through ICT-Based Information and Learning Solutions
- The AVU eLearning Day
- Technology-Supported Learning for Environmental Education
- Social Networking Technologies for Teaching and Learning Transformation
- Building Capacity: Invest in the Future by Investing in the Present
- Introducing and Teaching Mobile Application Development
- Presentation Skills
- Open ECBCheck – A Community-Based Quality Label
- Building on Multi-Stakeholder eLearning Centre Models as Rapid eLearning Multiplicators in Africa
- Demonstrations of Telemedicine
- Effective Evaluation – A Participatory Workshop to Improve Practice
- Le Certificat Informatique et Internet (C2i) : Atout majeur de productivité pour les entreprises et les administrations
- Forum for Education in West Africa (FEWA)/ Forum de l’Education pour l’Afrique de l’Ouest (FEAO)
- Getting the Most out of eLearning Africa 2009: The Newcomer’s Guide
- Mobile Learning for All
- “Storytelling @ eLearning Africa”
- Universities 2.0: Global Learning Organisations?
- How Should a Master’s Programme in Educational Technology be Responsive to the Needs of Africa?
- A Hands-On Guide to Using an Open Source Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle)
- W3C Senegal Office Public Launch
- NEPAD e-Schools Group of Experts

COMMENTS

“This year’s conference was above previous standards. I feel very honored of chairing the very interesting session.”
Litsa Panayotopoulos, OTE Academy, Greece

“Very well organised event with a diverse and interesting programme. The high-level endorsement of the event from senior decision makers means the event is good value for money for supporting existing commercial relationships and for evaluating new opportunities.”
Paul Coyne, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, UK

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“Very good effort! Getting even more exciting and entrenched into the arena of major global events.”
Dr Elijah I. Omwenga, University of Nairobi, Kenya
The eLearning Africa conference programme also included a variety of Special Focus Sessions led by principal organisations in the field of African education and training. In its session, UNESCO gave an overview of its actions in the field of education. NComputing offered a session which focused on the political and educational imperatives driving the decision to create the Computer for Every Child initiative. Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) provided a session where Francophone activities in the fields of pooling resources to boost the integration of ICT into education were discussed.

In this year’s agenda, health featured significantly with presentations about numerous examples of new perspectives for health and eLearning practitioners. These were presented by such organisations as the International Institute for Communication and Development, University of Lome, Togo; Ministry of Higher Education and Research, France; University Cheikh Anta Diop, Republic of Senegal; SOS / Youth and Challenges, Burkina Faso; Ministry of Telecommunications, Posts and ICT, Republic of Senegal; CNRS, Senegal; University of Cocody Abidjan, Ivory Coast; REIMICOM, Mali; University of Education Winneba, Ghana; Johns Hopkins University’s Center for Communication Programs (JHU/CCP), USA; Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Tanzania; common sense – eLearning training consultants GmbH, Austria; Tanzania Training Centre for Orthopaedic Technologists (TATCOT), Tanzania; and GIMP – Distance Learning Centre, Ghana.

Finding ways to support learners and schools in rural Africa continues to be a crucial challenge. A session chaired by Gaston Donnat Bappa, Microlog, Cameroon with presentations from Samson Apantaku, University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria; Leantile Nthaga, BCA, Botswana; Charles Fodya, Chancellor College, Malawi; and Gabriel Cohn Bendit, Education For All Network in Africa (REPTA), France provided real working examples of how ICTs are being used to bridge the gap for rural learners.

Microsoft held a session where an innovative partnership-driven approach affordably to introduce ICT to rural schools was explored. Speakers in this session included Kevin Connolly, Microsoft Unlimited Potential, South Africa and Dave Andrews, Astralab, South Africa.

Sessions dedicated to eLearning and the environment certainly attracted quite some interest from conference participants. These included a session on mainstreaming eLearning for the environment chaired by Gerard Cunningham, United Nations Environment Programme, Kenya and a lively debate on eWaste led by Shafika Isaacs, Microsoft Unlimited Potential, South Africa.

Open Educational Resources (OER) continued to attract attention and sessions dedicated to this topic included a discussion with Neil Butcher, OER Africa, South Africa; Paul Coyne, Emerald Group Publishing, UK; and Michèle Deane, Open University, UK. The presenters in this session chaired by Maggy Beukes-Amiss, NOLNrf/eLC, Namibia articulated their views based on their experiences in a growing OER movement in Africa.

Continuing in the same vein, Catherine Ngugi, OER Africa, Kenya led a very interesting debate on open source which continues to be a very important topic for eLearning Africa participants. The debate included panelists such as Felix Kayode Olakulehin, Regional Training & Research Institute for ODL, National Open University of Nigeria, Nigeria; Nnenna Nwakama, NNENNA.org, Ivory Coast; and Silvia Aimasso, FOSSFA, Ghana.

Partnering and Networking Sessions were a new addition at eLearning Africa 2009 and were designed to help people find partners for specific projects. These included two sessions led by Leonard Mware, Computer Aid, Kenya, who was joined by Tove Sorenson, WHO Collaborating Centre for Telemedicine and E-Health, Norway; Belinda Tynan, University of New England, Australia; Philippe Mero, Education Impact, France; Ignatz Heinz, Avallain Education for Development, Switzerland; Lars Strupeit, International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics, Lund University, Sweden; Willy Ngaka, Uganda Rural Literacy and Community Development Association (URLCODA), Uganda and Richard Straub, European Learning Industry Group (ELIG), Belgium.

Game-Based Learning and Edutainment proved to be a very popular topic with presentations from Dorothy Leab, Agence de Medecine Preventive (AMP), Mathilde Landier, Radio France Internationale, France; Susanne Fuchs, Deutsche Welle, Germany; and Evelyne Paquier, TV5MONDE, France. This session was chaired by Tom Wambreke, ITC-ILO (United Nations), Italy.
The conference benefitted from the presence and input of several ministers and high-level education administrators. These sessions were organised by Thierry Karsenti from the University of Montreal, Canada in the context of the CRDI’s Panafrican Research Agenda on the Pedagogical Integration of Information and Communications Technologies. These sessions featured presentations by Alioune Mustapha Diouf, University Cheikh Anta Diop, Republic of Senegal; N’Guessan Claude Koutou, University of Cocody Abidjan, Ivory Coast; Mohammed Maiga, ISFRA, Mali; Harriet Kidombo, University of Nairobi, Kenya; Alice Nankya Ndíde, Makerere University, Uganda; and Nkëhsera Claire Ndangle, Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa, Cameroon.

In a highly interesting session entitled eLearning and Post-Conflict Situations, chaired by Harold Elletson, The New Security Foundation, UK, presenters described their experiences whereby eLearning has been used to considerable effect in enhancing opportunities in highly difficult circumstances.

Universities continue to play an important role both in terms of the research they carry out into improving systems and services for African learners, as well as through their experience in implementing institution-wide ICT-supported learning services. Universities represented at eLearning Africa this year included University of Cheick Anta Diop in Senegal, University of Education Winneba in Ghana, African Virtual University in Senegal, Makerere University in Uganda, University of Nairobi in Kenya, University of Zambia in Zambia and many others from all corners of the continent.

The conference agenda also included the eLearning Africa Demonstration and Best Practice Area where prototypes and working examples of tools and applications, as well as excellent examples of eLearning aimed at African learners were on show.

High-Level Representation at eLearning Africa

The conference benefitted from the presence and input of several ministers and high-level education administrators. They included:

- His Excellency Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal
- The Hon Souleymane Ndéné Ndiaye, Prime Minister of the Republic of Senegal
- The Hon Prof Moustapha Sourang, Minister of Higher Education, Universities and Academic Centers, Republic of Senegal
- The Hon Ibrahima Cheikh Diong, Minister, Adviser to the President of the Republic of Senegal
- The Hon Abdourahim Agne, Minister of Telecommunications, ICTs, Road Transport and Railways, Republic of Senegal
- The Hon Gabriel Namulambe, Minister of Science, Technology and Vocational Training, Republic of Zambia
- The Hon Prof Jumanne Abdullah Maghembe, Minister of Education Tanzania, Tanzania
- The Hon José Antonio da Cruz Almeida, Minister of Infrastructure, Transportation and Communication of Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Buissau
- The Hon Albert Pahimi Padacke, Minister of Post, Information Technologies and Communication, Republic of Chad
- The Hon Vera Douarte, Minister of Education et Higher Education, Cape Verde
- The Hon Fabien Onovo-Ngoua, Minister of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Technological Development, Gabon
- The Hon Laure Olga Gondjout, Minister of Communication, Post, Telecommunications and ICT, Gabon
- The Hon Dr Joseph S. Annan, Deputy Minister of Education-Tertiary & ICT, Ghana
- The Hon Yonton B. Kesselly, Assistant Minister Vocational & Technical Education, Liberia

Comments

“I must say I am proud to be associated with the eLearning Africa Conference. eLA is a powerful vehicle for popularizing and accelerating eLearning roll out in Africa. Too many of our communities are increasingly being left out of developments, and eLearning is one of the most powerful tools to avail opportunities.”

Thomson Sinkala, University of Zambia, Zambia

“Thank you for the excellent organisation of the conference and the exhibition! We made a lot of new contacts and we are confident that some new partnerships may develop from these initial meetings. We may certainly be interested in attending the next eLearning Africa event in Zambia.”

Lars Strupeit & Katsiaryna Paulavets, International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics, Lund University, Sweden
SPONSORS

eLearning Africa enjoyed the support of the following sponsors:

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EXHIBITORS

eLearning Africa 2009 was accompanied by a parallel exhibition that established itself as a central meeting and networking point within the conference and provided participants with the opportunity to find out about the latest services and products available. Expressive appreciation of the display and presentations was articulated by representatives and attendees alike.

List of Exhibitors 2009

COMMENTS

“Thanks for your help and support with this event. Our guys on-site found it an excellent event and made good contacts.”
David Angwin, Wyse Technology, UK

“I just wanted to say, on behalf of the whole team: many thanks for a great great show and the outstanding support from ICWE before and during the show! We met many high level people and had a great time! Great thought leadership event and outstanding audience!”
Geraldine Rizzo, NComputing, UK

“This conference provided CyberSmart! with an excellent networking & market opportunity! We’ll be back!”
James Teicher, CyberSmart! Education, USA
“Very well done! I am truly impressed with ICWE’s capability in gathering over 1200 people throughout Africa and have such a smooth running of a 2 – 3 day event. Congratulations for a job extremely well done.”
Rama George-Alleyne, Global Development Learning Network, USA

“Excellent organisation. Friendly staff. Very good turnout of participants.”
Batoul Ajlouni, Integrated Technology Group, Jordan

“An excellent event. Full marks to the organisers.”
Iqbal Siddiqui, Designmate, India

“A big thumbs up and keep up the good work. Hope to see you again!!”
Philise Rasugu, The African Virtual University, Kenya

“Thank you for the conference, it was superbly organised. Now, I am looking forward to seeing the results.”
Ilan Weichselbaum, Sky 2 Net, Israel

“My demonstration was a huge success and we will keep you informed of possible collaborative efforts that this demonstration initiated. It was a pleasure to meet like-minded individuals working in the area of rural development.”
Justin Mupinda, World Links, Zimbabwe

“The conference brings almost the whole of Africa together to discuss important issues such as education and development despite the existing political, religious and cultural differences and that is a very important step in uniting the Continent.”
John Stephen Oluoch, Cordio East Africa, Kenya

“This conference was excellent.”
Richard John Self, University of Derby, UK

“A very successful conference.”
Jerome Terpase Dooga, University of Jos, Nigeria

“Really think you are doing a great job, I am already advertising for next year.”
Susanna Ackermann, Learnthings Africa, South Africa

“I found this conference to be well organised, planned and run in sometimes difficult circumstances. Well done and thank you. If I have a paper to present next year, I will certainly see you in Zambia!!”
Peta Bezuidenhout, Rhodes University, South Africa

“Continue the good challenging work. We are getting there. You are a great team and we should succeed at all costs.”
Morecome Mumba, ZESCO Limited, Zambia

“eLearning Africa 2009 has been very inspiring to me!”
Ibrahima Sory Coumbassa, Université de Conakry, Guinea

“I’m glad that I participated in the eLearning Africa Conference in Dakar, Senegal. It gave me a wider horizon and broadened my views.”
Peace Abraham, AfriHUB Nig Ltd, Nigeria

“I was impressed and satisfied with the overall organisation and management of the 4th eLA Conference. Kudos to ICWE, Dakar Government and eLA Planning Committee and all participants.”
Agnes Akuvi Adjabeng, Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana

“Thanks for organising such an inspiring event!”
Rob van den Bogaard, The Netherlands

**ORGANISERS**

ICWE GmbH

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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