

InWEnt launches new ICT programme

InWEnt, last month launched a new programme called "ict@innovation" in Africa.

The training and networking initiative is aimed at building capacities in innovative Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) through Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) in East and Southern Africa.

This is done in partnership with The Free Software and Open Source Foundation for Africa (FOSSFA). FOSSFA was the main organiser of the third African Conference on FOSS and the Digital Commons - Idlelo 3. The conference took place in Dakar, Senegal in mid March. Like ict@innovation, this year's Idlelo conference focused on the theme: "Making the Knowledge Economy Work for Africa."

At Idlelo, InWEnt and FOSSFA jointly organised two conferences on "Human capacities, capabilities and competencies" and "Business models and community development."

About 400 representatives from African IT associations, IT SME, IT training institutions, government, public sector and civil society from various African countries took part in Idlelo 3.

The Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar (UCAD) and the Campus Numérique de l'Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) hosted Idlelo for the first time in West Africa following similar conferences in Kenya and South Africa.

Major directives for ict@innovation were discussed with key partners from the continent at the first planning workshop for ict@innovation at Idlelo 3. The gathering examined strategic issues with FOSS entrepreneurs, trainers and other actors dealing with FOSS-based services for the development of African knowledge economies.

Key topics discussed were options for African business models based on

FOSS and the development of related training programmes.

The events at Idlelo 3 were the first steps towards achieving the objective of ict@innovation, which is to foster African ICT-SME sectors through FOSS-related capacity building and networking. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) funds [ict@innovation](http://www.ict@innovation.org).

All conference material is available at: <http://fossfa.net>

About [ict@innovation](http://www.ict@innovation.org)

ICT represent key elements for economic and social development in sub-Saharan Africa in sectors such as education, administration and business development. However, the region lacks sustainable local ICT service providers, ICT-driven businesses, IT-experts, and innovation managers, particularly in the promising field of FOSS. Therefore, InWEnt's new programme ict@innovation focuses on fostering SMEs in the field of ICT in East and Southern Africa capable of providing adapted applications and services to the public and private sectors.

The focus is on FOSS as a key technology to drive innovation, add local value and foster development-oriented and affordable ICT applications. The improvement of regional networking and strengthening of consulting capacities of ICT associations and training institutions as well as of other relevant change agents is a key vehicle of the programme.

InWEnt and FOSSFA are inviting interested partners to join the initiative, particularly FOSS entrepreneurs, trainers and other actors dealing with FOSS-based services for the development of African knowledge economies. See also a form on expression of interest online at:

http://www.itinwent.org/e735/e3326/index_eng.html

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Teaching and the AIDS pandemic

by Dr Ulrike Wiegelmann - InWEnt Germany

The fourth InWEnt Blended Learning course for Teacher Educators in Africa was held in March.

It commenced with an introductory training at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), in South Africa.

Twenty-two lecturers and experts in curriculum development from Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, Namibia and Zambia were introduced to the eLearning tools of the online learning portal - *Global Campus 21*.



Participants exchanged experiences and information on challenges and the special role teacher educators play in response to the impact of the HIV and AIDS pandemic in the education system.

Field visits were conducted in Mfuleni Township where participants visited a non-governmental organisation - "Women for Peace," a secondary school and a privately sponsored orphanage, which were all valuable practice material.

Participants started working on the six-month online-training accredited by the UWC. Experts from the university and a colleague at Chancellor College, Malawi tutor the eLearning course.

Nearly 90 participants who previously received training through this programme welcomed the new group to their community and invited them to join the regional *Network of Teacher Educators Responding to the AIDS Pandemic* (NTERA) founded in 2007. For more information contact Dr Ulrike Wiegelmann - Education Division (3.01)

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