

# AFRICAN LEADERS IN EDUCATION FORUM 2014 REVIEW



# AILE 2014 IN SUMMARY



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**Folabi Obembe**  
Event Director  
**Worldview International Group**

**2014 marked the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual African Leaders in Education Forum but the 1<sup>st</sup> of its kind in West Africa. The event brought together leaders in education from different part of Africa with a common goal of sharing policies and strategies that have been implemented for the development of education.**

African Leaders in Education Forum 2014 is a Worldview International Initiative supported by the British Educational Suppliers Association UK; the organiser of the World Education Forum. The forum was the main meeting point for leaders in education to share ideas and learn from each other. The theme for 2014 forum was 'Policy Making and strategies for achieving quality education that competes on a global scale'.

The key focus of the event was to facilitate collaboration and sharing of policies and good practices among the leaders of education in Africa. The challenges facing education in Africa are particular to the continent and uniting its leaders to share best practices will enhance the developments needed in African education.

The Forum was held in Abuja, Nigeria as Nigeria is the sectoral hub of the region, and Abuja is the Federal Capital of Nigeria and the seat of power where decision makers in Education can be found. Abuja is also a city that is easily accessible by the leaders in education from different parts of Africa.

We were privileged to attract some of the major education stakeholders from different countries in Africa. We were also successful in attracting key government officials from the state and federal level of government, leading to a diverse audience which further enriched the forum.

In order to facilitate more diverse content and engagement, the African Leaders in Education forum will move around Africa biennially and the 2015 African Leaders in Education Forum will this time be held in Accra, Ghana. According to the World economic forum global competitiveness report 2014, Ghana continues to show strong public institutions, ranking in the top half of the 148 global economies surveyed in this category, and ranking 46th in the Quality of Education system category. With a primary school net enrolment rate of 84% in 2011, which is far ahead of the sub-Saharan African average, and a literacy rate of 71.5%, Ghana is gaining some ground in its education system among other West African countries. We therefore look forward to the 2015 forum in Ghana with much interest.

Among the 2014 delegates were Commissioners for education, vice chancellors, proprietors, heads of schools and heads of department as well as other stakeholders in education. We hope to attract even more delegates in 2015 from different areas of education and from different African countries.

Our challenge for the 2015 African Leaders in Education Forum is to continue to provide a platform that gives leadership and direction to the development of education in Africa and also to engage more deeply with even more countries and regions in Africa.

# Dominic Savage OBE; Director of World Education Forum in London sets the tone for a successful Forum



**Dominic Savage OBE**  
Director General  
**World Education Forum / BESA**

Dominic Savage OBE; Director of World Education Forum and the Director General for the British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA) UK was the first to speak at the African Leaders in Education Forum 2014 in Abuja. He pointed out how important it is for leaders in education to share their ideas and experiences of policies and strategies implemented in their respective organisations, countries or regions. Events like these provide delegates first-hand information on effective policies and strategies, and also provide case studies allowing delegates to learn from the experiences of others, said Dominic. The World Education Forum in the UK gathers more than 200 ministers and leaders in education across the world'. We would like to see this happen in Africa where all the leaders in Education in Africa gather to dialog and find solutions to the challenges facing education in Africa. Mr Savage went on to point out the African Resources and Technology for Education (ARTE) Show which runs simultaneously with the African Leaders in Education Forum as up-to-date technology and quality resources are imperative for the delivery of a sound education. Savage noted that while teachers would always be the greatest educational resource, equipment, materials, books and technology on the other hand constituted the second greatest resource in the attainment of the greatest possible

impact. He noted that policies and strategies should be developed putting global competitiveness and modernization into consideration.



**Professor Olusola Oyewole**  
Vice Chancellor / AAU President  
**Federal University of Agriculture  
Abeokuta (FUNAAB)**

**P**rofessor Olusola Oyewole, President of the Association of African Universities and Vice-Chancellor, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB) made a call to all African universities during the Vice-Chancellor's Plenary Session at the African Leaders in Education Forum. He said for Universities to be seen as serving the purpose for their establishment, there must be a renewed call for the development of quality assurance mechanisms within the institutions. Represented by Dr. Olusegun Folorunso, Head of Webometrics Centre of FUNAAB, the Vice-Chancellor spoke on "Quality Assurance in African Universities: Challenges and Strategies", as he traced the emergence of Quality Assurance in African institutions to the 1980s and the 1990s. "Quality Assurance is for systematic planning, monitoring and evaluation of our Universities to sustain and improve on the standards of teaching, research and extension mandate as well as providing confidence in the University outputs (students), services and facilities", Professor Oyewole stated. He noted that the key issues,

which necessitated the emergence of quality assurance, were demand for efficiency and competitiveness in higher education, increased mobility, brain drain, globalization and cross-border recognition of qualifications and involvement of private interests and expansion in student enrolment.

The AAU President said when assessing quality, there was the need to look at the process of transferring input to output in terms of government policies, governance, leadership, teaching and learning process by giving importance to the review of major elements in the academic curriculum, to meet national development needs through the evaluation of teaching and study programmes, which should be documented in written reports by the Course Co-ordinator and Head of Department while quality enhancement will be further enhanced through the collection, analysis, reporting and taking of appropriate action on student, staff and stakeholder's feedback.



**Dr. Olusegun Folorunso**  
Head of Webometrics Centre  
**FUNAAB**



Professor Oyewole's detailed and well-illustrated paper advised that in a bid to establish QA mechanisms, there should be an assessment of the current state of service provision and delivery, assessment of what needs to be done, as he called on veteran academics to mentor the younger ones

Professor Emmanuel Okoro from the Medical department at the University of Ilorin gave the imperative of preparing managers of education "for a future of intense competition and shifting competitive advantages, a future of ever-increasing change where technologies are replaced at an increasing pace.



**Professor Emmanuel Okoro**



and to also create a platform that would allow students to assess their lecturers to bring about quality teaching. He concluded by calling for the sustenance and improvement in the standards of teaching, learning, research and extension services in the African Universities within the quality assurance framework. He equally solicited for adequate enlightenment on the need for QA in the realization of the aims and objectives of establishing the University.



**Ms. Brittney Field**

Ms. Brittney Field of the Bridge International Academies from Kenya enjoined educational institutions to be aligned to the mantra, "knowledge for all" by embracing the use of the teachers' tablet, as a compulsory instructional device. She argued that for education to be of the same standard, teaching and learning has to be done in the same pattern across board, i.e. providing the

teachers the same syllabus and instructions on how to deliver the classes. She concluded that policy makers should ensure their policies aligned with their strategies.



**Professor Adebisi Daramola**  
Vice-Chancellor  
**Federal University of Technology Akure**

The Vice-Chancellor's Plenary Session panellists included Professor Adebisi Daramola, Vice-Chancellor, Federal University of Technology, Akure. Professor Daramola charged education policy makers to shun sheer political consideration and always put in

place enduring and sustainable policies that would transform the sector positively. He concluded by asking the policy makers to also involve those that will implement the policies in the process and development of any policy in order to be sustainable.



**Dr. Ugo Elizabeth**  
Honourable Commissioner  
**Benue State Ministry of Education**

During the education commissioners' Plenary Session on Regional Policies and Structures, which highlighted the various challenges being faced by state commissioners of education in

reaching out to students and achieving quality teaching and learning for optimizing educational impact in line with national goals, the Benue State Commissioner of Education, Dr. Elizabeth Ugo spoke on, "The Impact of Policies and Structures on Actualizing Educational Development: She used Benue State as a case study'.

Dr Ugo started in her presentation at the forum with a quote "Nigeria's educational system is like Joseph's multi-coloured cloak, patchy in places with threads running in all directions. It may sometimes seem that the system lacks direction and

growth and is often haphazard and disorganized" (Fafunwa, 1971 p. 251). She explained the development of education policy since 1977 in which the draft edition



published in 2013 was to accommodate recent developments like the transformation agenda and strategic plans in education.

She argued that some of the challenges facing regional policies and structures are; Lack of funding which makes it difficult to provide teachers with instructional materials and resources, inadequate infrastructure such as overcrowded classrooms, lack of uniformity in the educational sector because individual state governments have the power over how their education system runs, unstable curriculum which is rampant in rural schools because of frequent changes in teachers curriculum, lack of fund to provide equipment and maintain them, proliferation of illegal schools, politicization of education by the posting of relations teachers, rectors and vice chancellor even though they are not qualified, and a decline in indigenous authorship which makes it difficult for students to relate what they learn to their everyday reality.

According to Dr Ugo, her first initiative when she stepped into power was to look at the development of education in her state from a primary level; what she refers to as solving the problem from the grassroots.

In February 2014, she adopted a partnership strategy and influenced the government to develop policy to guide partnerships. This created an enabling environment for private partners to invest in education leading to the establishment of more than 7 private institutions in the state.

She argued that government has continued to partner with NGO's and private companies to improve access and quality education. She also shared her opinion and her strategy for the future. She said a Benue Education Summit will be organised to review the past, examine the present and strategize for the future. She wants to gather

the stakeholders in the state to jointly review the education policies which will fuel their policies for the future of education in the region. She concluded by saying 'the African Leaders in Education Forum is a good initiative and can help in facilitating the development of an education that every students in Africa deserves' but added that a practical approach should also be adopted whereby policy makers sincerely look at policies together and come up with a more feasible approach and strategies for achieving it.

Engr. Stephen B. Amponsah, Executive Director –



**Engr. Stephen B. Amponsah**  
Executive Director  
NVTI Ghana

National Vocational Training Institute (Ghana) argued that for Africa to achieve quality education that will compete on a global scale, governments would have to change their focus and emphasis on Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET), adopting a policy that will integrate TVET in every education system.

Engr Amponsah referred to UNESCO's position on TVET by stating the 'Declaration in Bonn, Germany in 2004' which stated ' Education is the key to development but TVET is the Master Key to the socio- Economic development of every nation'. He further argued that TVET can create self-employment apart from wage employment. It could be one of the solutions to rising Unemployment in Africa.

Mr Laolu Oguntuyi, Director Technical & Vocational Services, Lagos State Technical and Vocational Education Board also delivered a powered presentation during the Technical Vocational Education plenary session at the African Leaders in Education Forum.



**Mr Laolu Oguntuyi**  
Director  
Lagos State Technical &  
Vocational Education Board

He stated that the Lagos state ministry of education has identified the need for vocational education and has invested into it because it is the only way to reduce unemployment. He added that his office is working closely with the Ministry of Education to ensure the inclusion of TVET in the education curriculum of Lagos state.



# EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARDS AND NETWORKING DINNER

Another highlight of the event was the networking dinner and awards ceremony which took place on the first day of the Forum. Forum delegates along with ARTE Show exhibitors were exclusively hosted in a relaxed dinner environment where delegates could network and issues and business discussed during the day could be concluded or fortified. We also took this opportunity to acknowledge and award those leaders in education that have contributed to the continuing development of the Nigerian education sector. Guests were entertained with comedy and live music and served continental as well as traditional African dishes; an excellent conclusion to a successful event.

The 2014 Awards of Excellence in Education was given to Dr Ugo- Commissioner for Education, Benue State for her outstanding contribution to the development of teachers in Benue State. Among other commissioners in Nigeria, she sponsored a large numbers of teachers to the African Resources and Technology for Education Show and she also approved a large numbers of teachers in her state for ICT and quality assurance training. The dinner that was meant to end at 8.00pm ended at 10.00pm as guest unwound and enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere and the selection of food, drinks and music at the event.



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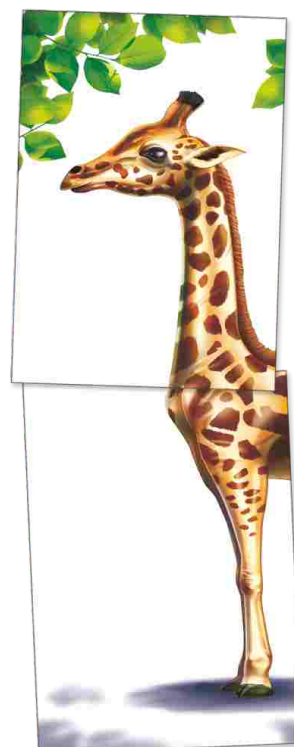
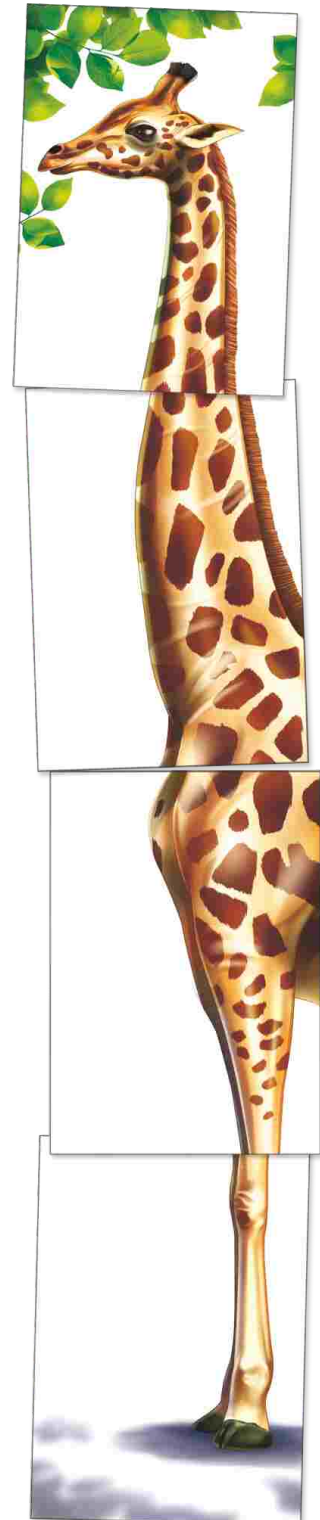
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