eLearning Africa 2013: ICT for education solutions

Now in its eighth year, eLearning Africa will be bringing together a wide range of perspectives on ICT for development, education and training in Windhoek, Namibia, from 29-31 May 2013

Africa is experiencing a technological surge and it is having a dramatic effect on education throughout the continent. Tech hubs are blossoming, new mobile devices and apps are being designed and produced in Africa, by Africans, and Africa's eLearning market is reportedly the fastest-growing in the world.

With self-paced eLearning revenues forecast to double to US$512.7m by 2016, it is clear that sales to Africa are experiencing a sharp upturn. However, Africa is not just an end user of new products: the engines driving this growth are also powering industry and innovation as well as supporting African businesses. And with fewer than 1 000 days left to the target date for the Millennium Development Goals, such African-born initiatives are also helping to accelerate the worldwide action against poverty.

With a record number of proposals submitted and more attendees expected than ever before, eLearning Africa 2013 is certainly feeling the effect of the technology boom.

Made in Africa solutions

The conference, which is the continent's leading forum for the technology-assisted learning industry, will be bringing together a wide range of perspectives on ICT for development, education and training in Windhoek, Namibia, from 29-31 May 2013. Now in its eighth year, eLearning Africa will be celebrating the rise of Made in Africa solutions. The conference will also be preceded by the annual eLearning Africa round table meeting of education and ICT ministers from across Africa.

"This year our focus will be on innovation and we are all really proud that some of the most exciting and innovative new solutions in education have been pioneered and developed in Africa", says Rebecca Stromeyer, founder of eLearning Africa and executive director of ICWE.

This local innovation reveals itself in many forms. Expert speakers at the conference will talk on such diverse issues as African MOOCs, eLearning in refugee contexts, technology's role in preserving oral traditions and imaginative solutions to

lack of broadband access.

The overarching themes of the conference, Tradition, Change and Innovation, set up a tension which these speakers will explore in many different and fascinating ways. Erin Hayba, the associate community services Officer at UNHCR, will show the results of his work in the Dadaab refugee camp, Kenya, where the installation of solar-powered ICTs in 39 schools, and an innovative community-based maintenance and sustainability programme, have overcome the traditionally problematic language barriers in the camp and improved the prospects of 80 000 young people.

Mignon Hardie of the FunDza Literacy Trust, South Africa will be talking about the impact of mobile networks on literacy and literature. Her organisation's creative writing platform shares quality teen fiction among young South Africans and encourages them to share stories - creating their own African content.

The full programme will be available online by Friday, 19 April.

For more, go to www.elearning-africa.com