Participant Evaluation of First University Leaders’ Forum

EVALUATION FORM

Profile of 39 respondents:

Vice Chancellors: 12 (31%), University Staff: 14 (36%), NGO: 5 (13%), Funders: 7 (18%), Unclassified: 1 (3%)

The anonymous raw data is available on request.

Question 1. Has the University Leaders’ Forum helped you:

a) Gain a deeper understanding of the global economy and challenges for African economies?

30 Yes (77%), 5 No (13%) 4 N/A (10%)

Comments:
- Drew attention to the need to link university to community needs.
- Better grasp of the need but not sure it is well articulated but better.
- Intended to use ICT for peer mentoring and for community development.
- Limited by connectivity.
- This aspect needs further work.
- Connection to the poor via indirect and could have been developed more.
b) Better understand the global and local talent markets as they affect the skill needs for university graduates in Africa?

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<th>Yes</th>
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<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Comments:
- Prime focus of meeting and well explained.
- Some good examples of how ICT can contribute to poverty alleviation, but there are larger challenges with marginalized populations in this area.
- Unfortunately it appears not enough being done.
- In more radical ways.
- How to sensitize the staff.
- Brought the linkage out in bolder relief.

c) Understand specific way that African universities’ can be engines of innovation?

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<td>%</td>
<td>92%</td>
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Comments:
- This requires more thinking.
- Has confirmed previous thinking in this regard.
- Use ICT as a player in global scene.
- But needs follow on specificity.
- But there was too much generalization.
- Although the ICT focus limited this somewhat.
- Need priorities and action agenda

d) Stretch your thinking about the range and nature of ICT tools?

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Comments:
- Already aware.
- The ICT focus was powerful on this front.
- Interesting
- I would have expected more emphasis on web 2.0 5.
- Exposed me to new possibilities.

e) Better understand how ICTs can empower universities to serve African communities, especially the poor?

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<td>%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Comments:
- Connection to the poor via indirect and could have been developed more.
- Need well-educated university grads to serve the poor.
- Intended to use ICT for peer mentoring and for community development.
- This aspect need further work 5. Better grasp of the need but not sure it is well articulated but better.
- Limited by connectivity
o Drawn attention to the need to link university to community needs
o The discussion has been too general and abstract

*f) Understand how universities can use ICTs to build opportunities for economic development in Africa?*

37 Yes (95%) 2 No (5%)

*Comments:*
o Brought the linkage out in bolder relief
o How to sensitise the staff
o In more radical ways
o A few good examples
o Unfortunately it appears not enough being done
o Some good examples of how ICT can contribute to poverty alleviation, but there are larger challenges with marginalized populations in this area
o Prime focus of meeting and well explained

*g) Understand policy reforms that can help to expand university use and innovation of ICT?*

37 Yes (95%) 2 No (5%)

*Comments:*
o Must exploit the REN to enhance teaching learning & service delivery
o I wish I knew more about this topic
o Very good
o Yes. E.g. telecoms regulations!!
o Many speakers tailored their papers/ppts well in this way
o To some extent
o Yes. Duncan Martin and Lishan Adam's papers
o Especially distance learning.
o Brought to my attention new possibilities

*h) Identify ways universities can build sustainable partnerships with the private sector in ICT-related areas?*

36 Yes (92%) 3 No (8%)

*Comments:*
o I understand the need for this but the ways still have to be explored
o A veritable resource for exploitation that need to be addressed
o Open systems will enable this.
o Yes. Eric Osiakwan
o Opportunities to network with private sector
o But the forum did not address the disjuncture and challenges between HE & the p/sector
o Could do more
o Too little. We need more
<p>This was well done--there are several levels of challenges--local, national, regional, international--they need to be distinguished, what are the appropriate vehicle and targets</p><p>Maybe next Forum?</p><p>Too little emphasis on this -need to promote more in Africa</p><p><strong>i) Identify opportunities for regional or sub-regional cooperation in ICT-related areas?</strong></p><ol><li>34 Yes (87%)</li><li>2 No (5%)</li><li>3 N/A (8%)</li></ol><p><strong>Comments:</strong></p><ol><li>But weakly explained. Much more needs to be done</li><li>Mentoring through ICT to marginalized communities. Harmonizing eLearning programs</li><li>Not enough coverage</li><li>Lots more to do</li><li>Fibre optic cable connectivity.</li><li>Has shown the great opportunities for both national and regional collaborations</li></ol><p><strong>j) Identify ways that ICT tools can be integrated to support university training and research?</strong></p><ol><li>34 Yes (87%)</li><li>5 No (13%)</li></ol><p><strong>Comments:</strong></p><ol><li>Has encouraged us to work in the direction we are currently going.</li><li>Open learning for students.</li><li>New elearning ways</li><li>That was not the main focus</li><li>This is a major area that was poorly covered</li><li>NRENS; Management tools; iLabs</li></ol><p><strong>k) Stimulate ideas on how universities can build entrepreneurial or social enterprise skills?</strong></p><ol><li>35 Yes (90%)</li><li>4 No (10%)</li></ol><p><strong>Comments:</strong></p><ol><li>A new idea we are committed to exploring</li><li>Giving an opportunity to students (young people).</li><li>Partner & use iveneo model of rural communication & training</li><li>Already aware</li><li>Maybe new forum</li><li>Case studies presented from African experience was great. Cell Life!!</li><li>Little coverage</li><li>Very important message to univs</li><li>Reinforced earlier ideas</li></ol>
1) Identify steps to ensure that universities have high speed internet access and management?

- Yes (82%)  
- No (18%)  

Comments:
- Networking how it can be used! KENET!
- Sun microsystems & CISCO will build infrastructure and capacity in IT use & support.

2. Which topics should future University Leaders’ Forums focus on in the future?

All responses are listed below, clustered under umbrella themes. Comments numbered 1-25 are from the primary Leaders’ Forum audience, Vice Chancellors and their university colleagues.

**University/Government Intersection**
1. Engaging with governments on the full implication of the ICT revolution: Access and Deregulation.
9. Governance and legislation
25. Regulation Forum
26. Policy Dialogue (public & private)
35. Intellectual Property Rights and 'Open Access' (appears also under ‘ICT Access/Connectivity/Management’)

**ICT for e-Learning**
3. Access using ICT-mediated distance learning
14. Curricula and accreditation
15. Using ICTs to enable the core business of Universities (i.e. teaching and research)
19. How ICT initiatives can be disseminated to faculty members
20. ICT and pedagogy and curriculum for all curricular at HEIs.
28. Integration of ICTs into teaching and learning
39. How Univ can incentivise and enable creative use of ICT.

**Inter-University Networking**
4. Networking Universities;
5. Opportunities and strategy for regional and sub-regional cooperation
9. Publication - home grown;
10. Curriculum
10. University governance
11. Knowledge Networks - mapping and areas of concentration, especially around research across HEIs in Africa
13. Explicitly set in motion collaborative plans
16. Working together for a cheaper bandwidth (appears also under ICT Access/Connectivity)
17. Regional strategic collaborations on ICT infrastructural development and management (appears also under ICT Access/Connectivity)
21. Discuss and share best practices and plot strategies to unlock the entrepreneurial spirit of their students.
22. The university as an economy.
24. Staff and student exchange
26. (a) Leadership; (b) Entrepreneurship. (c) Students participation
28. Creating an environment for innovation within institutions
35. Model for University collaboration across national borders
39. How to create regional African partnerships.

**ICT/HEd Financing**
4. Financing ICT
9. Financing and Infrastructure
18. Alternate Funding of Higher Education

**ICT Access/Connectivity/Management**
1. Implications for ICT on the total campus environment
4. Connectivity
9. Quality & quality assurance;
13. Identify Action plan in ICT infrastructure.
16. Working together for a cheaper bandwidth (appears also under Inter-University Networking)
17. Regional strategic collaborations on ICT infrastructural development and management (appears also under Inter-University Networking)
21. Plan a detailed strategy to increase bandwidth/cost available to their universities by 1000x, nothing less.
25. R&D and Innovation in S&T.
35. Intellectual Property Rights and 'Open Access'
**University/Private Sector**
6. How to establish effective collaboration between universities and private sector.
18. Private Sector Partnering
19. More presentations on the expectations of private sector
22. University Industry collaboration
26. Private partnership
28. Conceptual and empirical linkage between ICTs and Development. To what extent does ICT really drive economic development?
29. Higher Education and Economic Growth: the role of the Private Sector
30. University roles in Sectoral/local-regional/Innovation systems-links to the private sector/productive sectors
34. ICT -Partnership with private sector around ICT

**University/Community and Social and Economic Development**
5. How univs can use ICT to empower the poor.
19. Working with ICT in Africa where other social services are frail (e.g. electricity).
22. Harnessing ICT as a driver of economic and social development.
22. Social Networking.
29. Universities in the African Community: Tapping their Alumni Community
30. Social responsive development roles of universities -research and education contribution to public good (i.e. production of policy-relevant knowledge).
32. Outcomes and evidence demonstrating value of higher ed to development
35. More attention to ICT issues in relation to development
38. This Forum focused too much on the hardware, not enough on preparing university graduates to use ICT tools for economic development of Africa countries.

**Other Ideas not clustered above**
12. Impact analysis of post-forum activities/engagements of African universities
37. Monitor and evaluate the outcome and application of information gathered in this workshop.
23. Agriculture
29. Next forum should be organized around 3 or 4 Key presentations and the rest on roundtables on: African languages; learning in the African Universities; Bridging the Gender divide in the University in Africa;
31. This was well structured as a survey for this first meeting. In future we might focus on a particular joint task being pursued or a specific social/political/other problem, with action coming out of our gathering
33. Issues of Gender
36. A few more examples of practice; Implementation/strategy session

### 3. How might the University Leaders' Forum be better organized?

**How to Set the Agenda**
1. Greater input by Vice-Chancellors required; Steering Committee to assure greater role in future forums.
22. Ask participants to contribute agenda ideas
24. It is probably ok to coordinate it from the partnership for higher education in Africa HQ. However, a formal secretariat should be created at a later stage. This is to ensure sustainability of the Forum and also its growth.

**Invitations**

6. Invite government officials to be part of this.
12. Involve VCs and institutions other than those supported by PHEA
11. GOOD idea looks interesting - invite speakers/participants from private sector, governments and NGOs.
8. Need to have more participation of policy-makers, Government Ministers/officials dealing with University/Tertiary Education
21. Bring ministers of education and science and technology to listen to this broad community and share their perspective.
21. Bring more Africa examples of student projects that make a difference: have students talk and present their projects— poster sessions
26. Include policy makers and students
30. Inclusion of other universities from other regions?
38. Should have more private sector reps on program on what they need in grads

**Organization of Forum Sessions**

3. A less crowded agenda to allow more discussion
15. More time for reflection and discussion. Session 8 provided a model for how all sessions should have been. Other sessions too crowded. With such eminent speakers, the chairs had a hard time keeping them within the time allocated.
16. Give presenters more time to talk. Do fewer presentations a day.
18. Do not pack the programme too tight, allow space (time) for free networking.
19. Hold breakaway sessions where ideas from the day's presentations are dissected with the view to applying these ideas. Have some time to "unwind" after the formal end of the Forum.
21. Need more time between sessions for personal or group discussion.
26. Fewer topics; More discussion
28. Few presentations.
29. Number of presentations could be reduced to allow for more in-depth discussion
30. Slightly less density packed presentations, slightly more discussions. This event was well-organized and effective design.
32. More public exchanges, more young energetic people asking provocative questions and prodding for action!
34. I liked the intensity
35. Shorter days (working hours!) say 09:00 to 17:00. Fewer presentations to have time to assimilate and discuss ideas. More interactive presentations
38. This one was quite well done. Could do a better job of grouping similar presentations into sessions.

**Timing**

9. To proceed or succeed the AAU meeting same venue to attract more VCs.
**Post 1st Forum Action**

17. Begin to hold evaluative conferences/meetings at regional levels
20. Perhaps we could establish an online forum for participants to share ideas, and facilitated communication and collaboration between universities
33. I am satisfied with the present organization. Perhaps with improved funding, we might consider regional fora.
37. Is it possible to push the participants to commit to do something and then outline a strategy of follow-up to ensure they keep the commitment?
39. I wonder how much time the VCs will have to implement innovative ICT solutions. Need to engage lower levels in Univ in similar meetings. Next to post meeting presentations on net for use by lower level leaders

**Other Comments and Logistical Arrangements**

4. As this first one
10. At national and subregional levels
13. Fantastic Organization. Only addition - Internet Access
14. Very good organization
21. Need high-speed connectivity in room/or sharing of internet-based tools and applications.
27. Cooperative activities of universities
28. More focus on positive things that have worked in African universities
31. The organization was excellent. The venue could have been more conducive to conversations around the room and seeing presentations better, but this is a minor comment. The high caliber of speakers made this an excellent meeting. Thank you
32. Seating should allow for more interaction.
36. Wi-fi access only
37. This workshop was very well organized and the choice of speakers superb! Thanks.

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<th>4. Please provide feedback on the following:</th>
<th>Accommodation</th>
<th>Airport transfers</th>
<th>Hotel Meals</th>
<th>Forum Meals</th>
<th>A/V support</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Special events: dinner; reception</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent/Very satisfied</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
<td>21 (54%)</td>
<td>12 (31%)</td>
<td>15 (38%)</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
<td>12 (31%)</td>
<td>26 (67%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fine/satisfied</td>
<td>17 (44%)</td>
<td>9 (23%)</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
<td>20 (51%)</td>
<td>19 (49%)</td>
<td>23 (59%)</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor/Not satisfied</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>No response/NA</td>
<td>8 (21%)</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
<td>14 (36%)</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
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Question 4. Participant Satisfaction with Arrangements

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<th>Accommodation</th>
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<th>Special events</th>
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<tr>
<td>Excellent/ Very satisfied</td>
<td>Fine/Satisfied</td>
<td>Poor/Not satisfied</td>
<td>Excellent/ Very satisfied</td>
<td>Fine/Satisfied</td>
<td>Poor/Not satisfied</td>
<td>Excellent/ Very satisfied</td>
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Comments:
1. Accommodation: (a) Need internet (b) Should use a real hotel
2. Airport transfers: Not met on arrival (2 participants).
3. Hotel Meals: Use a real hotel next time
4. Forum Meals: Less sugar at breakfast
5. A/V support: (a) [I] note that there were a number of complaints about internet access (as in wireless hot spot in the venue); I find these disturbing, suggesting that participants have become accustomed to not paying full attention to speakers and discussion. While on site access for tea/lunch times would have been useful, I support the choice of an access-free venue. (b) wireless access would have been useful at an ICT conference (c) want live internet access
6. Venue: (a) Very uncomfortable. Too dark and stuffy. (b) Too hot and needed working space (c) Could we have writing material and tops to write on? (d) OK but hot
7. Special events (dinner, reception): (a) super; (b) But too late into the night making it a very long day
5. Do you think the Forum fulfilled its objectives?

a. Enable African academic leaders to share their ideas and challenges with each other, across the continent?

   Yes (87%)  
   No (13%)  

Comments:
- Provided an enabling environment for interactions and exchange of views, ideas and experiences
- Insufficient time for discussion
- Vice chancellors tended to be on the quiet side
- Most presentations were from outside Africa academies
- Having the focused university participation was a good way to go. VC…was excellent. Should have been broader university inclusion in the future?
- Excellent in achieving this objective

b. Allow African academic leaders to meet with first-rate specialists in key science and technology fields that constitute the frontiers of knowledge for the continent?

   Yes (90%)  
   No (8%)  
   N/A (3%)  

Comments:
- Hearing success stories is encouraging
- Only a few fields represented due to limited time
- More Africa examples would have been good
- Very effective private sector participation was excellent
- This was very well done!
- Good sample, not comprehensive

c. Provide a balanced view of the opportunities, challenges and risks of ICT for higher education in Africa?

   Yes (79%)  
   No (15%)  
   N/A (5%)  

Comments:
- However, I would have liked to hear more of the positive things already happening
- Very rich set of perspectives exchanged. Good set of themes covered
- We heard much about +ves on ICT. What about the risks?
- Risks were not discussed

d. Develop informed positions that can be presented to national governments and international organizations, enabling policy makers to strengthen the higher education sector?

   Yes (69%)  
   No (28%)  
   N/A (3%)
Comments:
- Has initiated thinking in this direction
- National govts are diverse, there is need to be specific. Need to invite Minister of S&T
- Not enough clarity as to what to do to solve bandwidth problem
- What is the approach to actually bring these to govts? Is someone going to follow up?
- There were many ideas that came forward, but it was not clear on what [are] the key policy issues that need to be addressed by specific levels - universities, at local/national governments, and at continent wide level.
- But any of them learned enough to pursue a wide variety of topics and to create those positions with excellent new contacts which is appropriate for this meeting
- Influence policy on making communication less costly for education and research. How would the forum help in coming up with Africa wide regulatory framework?
- Could have profited from a workshop on this.

e. Uncover ways that the higher education sector can work more closely with government, NGOs, the private sector and the science and technology sector (represented by the science academies) in African countries?

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Comments:
- Univ need to take lead in research and extension
- Many excellent examples presented
- This point was evident, but will require ongoing change to get stronger linkages between these groups.
- Could the AU/NEPAD meeting of Ministers of S&T be persuaded to call a presentation of resolutions made during this forum? The Min S&T Mozambique could be briefed to do it.
- Science academics are too narrow in exposure. Need technically oriented NGOs too.

f. Identify issues relevant to professional skill development in fields that promote economic development and have potential for direct benefits for poor and vulnerable populations.

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Comments:
- Relook at curricula in our institutions.
- Not enough at this: needed more local examples, success stories, even failed stories
- But we did not go to the nuts and bolts. We need to have a session on specific case studies.
- Some issues related to broader inclusion of marginalized groups were not addressed significantly, professional development of network apparatus, gender issues, etc received less attention.
Direct correlation between economic growth and need-driven application of research & technology
Too little focus on economic development, although some relevant coverage
Not enough on this topic

Explore ICT innovations in academic activities (curriculum, pedagogy, research, and outreach activities) that contribute to poverty reduction and to equitable and sustainable economic development.

22 Yes (56%) 17 No (44%)

Comments:
- Evidences of academic activities can be heightened by ICT
- Of all the objectives, this was the least addressed. Perhaps it needs a different forum given that it’s about implementation and mediation. The major issues in this space were related to policy & strategic choices.
- Without policy-makers and collaboration with the private sector on the continent and beyond, not much is going to change in the immediate and long-term.
- This needs to be the subject of another forum.
- Some coverage, but obviously much wider terrain could be covered in terms of ICT-enabled contributions in wide array of activities that contribute to development. Not significant cross out to commerce, agriculture, health, etc.
- Huge gaps between coverage here on ICT's and contribution to poverty reduction and economic development.
- Not enough. Maybe could be focus of future events. There was an underlying assumption that private sector ICT growth will lead to poverty reduction. The strength of this assumption not tested.
- It would be useful to make available the PowerPoint presentations to all participants and to produce a summary document drawing out the main themes of the conferences.