



ABCDE

Educational Stakeholders

Round Table Forum



"Adopting New Technologies for Teaching and Learning"

15th October, 2020 | 10:30am - 1:30pm
Wan-Shi Garden, Opposite Impact Clinic, Asylum Down

Organiser



Sponsors





BACKGROUND:

The stakeholder round table forum was organised by African Business Centre for Developing Education (ABCDE) to commemorate the 2020 World Teachers Day celebrated on 5th October every year. The theme adopted for the conference was 'Adopting new technologies for teaching and learning' with the back-drop of the Covid 19 pandemic. The conference brought together key stakeholders in Ghana's educational sector, such as Teacher Groups, UNESCO, Government Agencies, Private Companies, among others.

“The ABCDE Education Stakeholders Round Table Forum” was organised to engage various stakeholders in the education sector to generate ideas and suggestions in regards to their respective roles in efforts to promote and sustain the teaching and learning experience through the use of technology.

Over the years, ABCDE had been striving to make a positive impact on the educational and business sectors of Ghana, with the aim to strengthen the educational sector by introducing to second and third cycle educational institutions some of the professional knowledge existing in the business world which Senior High School (SHS) and tertiary students need to be employable or to create jobs after graduating.

The ABCDE Education Stakeholders Round Table Forum was to achieve the following expectations:

- Generate workable recommendations to aid the teaching and learning experience;
- To garner the private sector support for the promotion of alternative learning solutions using technology;
- To reintroduce ABCDE as a credible NGO facilitating educational initiatives;
- Identify challenges and stumbling blocks in the Edutech space; and to
- Recognise some successful innovative Edutech solutions.

WELCOME ADDRESS BY DR. EKWOW SPIO-GARBRAH

Delivering the welcome address, the Chairman of ABCDE, Dr. Spio-Garbrah explained the purpose of the gathering and expressed the hope that, the outcome of the Round Table Forum would enhance the teaching and learning process through the use of technology in Ghana's educational sector.

He acknowledged the challenges the education sector has experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, especially on students and teachers who have to adapt to new technologies for teaching and learning.

Dr. Spio-Garbrah explained the importance of stakeholders to discuss how best they can utilize technology for teaching and learning post-COVID-19.



He admitted that the COVID-19 crisis has created a unique situation for teachers across the globe to exhibit leadership, creativity and innovation.

He, therefore, urged them to bring out ideas, suggestions as well as strategies of how to effectively use technology in the educational sector to promote and sustain teaching and learning experiences.

He also used the occasion to outline the mission and vision of African Business Centre for Developing Education (ABCDE) and spoke about the EduTech platform that collaborates with schools and other education stakeholders to transform educational content into fun, interactive platforms and learning tools that inspire both students and educators, regardless of their degree of access to resources.

MESSAGE FROM UNESCO COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE

The Head of office for UNESCO Ghana, Mr Diallo Abdourahamane, who was the Special Guest for the Forum, emphasized that teachers around the world including Ghana are working individually and collectively to find solutions and create a new learning environment for their students to ensure continuity of learning.

“Every year on 5th October, UNESCO he explained, celebrates World Teachers' Day (WTD) to commemorate the anniversary of the signing of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers.

"It sets forth the rights and responsibilities of teachers, and standards for their initial preparation, ongoing professional development, recruitments, employment, teaching and learning conditions", he stated.

He cited Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which talks about education and recognises teachers as key stakeholders in the achievement of the 2030 Education Agenda.

He, therefore, commended ABCDE for the initiative to engage Stakeholders in the educational sector on how new technologies for teaching and learning can be adopted during and post COVID-19.

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION:

Participants were divided into 5 groups to discuss various themes under the subject matter. The groups were

- Public Sector
- Broad Private Sector
- Technology Service Providers
- Teachers, Alumni, and
- Students and Parents

PUBLIC SECTOR:

The Public Sector group was made up of the Head of Office for UNESCO Ghana and the Chairman of African Business Centre for Developing Education (ABCDE).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is a need for effective Public Education and Public Awareness of the government's decisions and actions on the opening dates of schools in the country.
- The need for teachers and students to know what opportunities or resources are available to them, either free or subsidized from the government.
- The need for government to put in a mechanism to build the capacity of teachers during days out as well as prepare them adequately for the classroom or online courses.
- The government should take the pandemic occurrence as an OPPORTUNITY to address the numerous gaps in the educational sector.
- The government should address the Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) accessibility, infrastructures, connectivity, availability and affordability of internet devices and services post COVID era.
- The public and especially parents want to know the current status and outcome of government negotiations with ICT providers on issues of provision of materials and equipment to schools, parents and students.
- The government should outline its support schemes such as student loans and grants, as well as teachers' loans and grants.
- Finally, how can STAKEHOLDERS commit to a program to connect, to ICTs, for example, 100,000 students, 1,000 teachers and 100 schools initially by 2022.

GROUP TWO: BROAD PRIVATE SECTOR

The Broad Private Sector deliberated on how best the private sector can support the ideas and suggestions of promoting and sustaining teaching and learning experiences using technology in the educational sector.

The group was made up of Joshua Quaye from Vivo Energy, Kate Owusu and Meredith Zagson of ADB, Haidar Mathias and Elizabeth Owusu-Gyebi of Interplast Limited.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote sponsorship by providing financing to institutions and teachers to acquire the technical skills, purchasing of equipment to resource Information and Technology (IT) Centers.
- There is a need to empower Ghana's human resources by ensuring grandaunts are technology inclined to compete with the global world. This can be done by partnering with technology service

providers such as e-Campus among others to electronically provide past questions to teachers and students across the country.

- Providing scholarships to teachers and students individually to build their capacity in IT, for example giving scholarships to the winners of the Best Teachers Awards as an incentive to further education in IT.
- Financing ICT infrastructure by purchasing technology equipment to aid in teaching and learning.
- Facilitate internship packages for students and teachers to expose them to some of the ICT tools used in the corporate world to give them a first-hand experience on how to use them for work purposes.
- The group agrees that the usage of technology in education is critical and a key to promote and sustain teaching and learning during post-COVID-19.

GROUP THREE: TECHNOLOGY SERVICE PROVIDERS

This group, Technology Service Providers, aimed at how best they can contribute towards the adoption of new technologies for teaching and learning during and after COVID-19.

The group was constituted Nancy Brown of WeGo Innovate and Adiza Ibrahim, Marketing/Media Relations Manager of Electroland Ghana Limited.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The next academic year in Ghana would be a hybrid system as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.
- Teachers must be open to accepting new technological ways of teaching and learning to enhance the educational sector.
- Teachers need training and capacity building on ICT or on how to use these technologies, emphasizing on non-profit and EduTech projects.
- The duo acknowledged that private organisations are important stakeholders in the provision of needed equipment for teachers/schools as well as financing some of these activities.
- Parents must understand that they are also stakeholders, Parent & Teachers Associations (PTA) need to be revamped especially in all schools and must be educated on the importance of technology in teaching and learning.
- There is a need to subsidize data to make it cheaper and affordable.
- Providing all Second Cycle institutions with Wi-Fi connections to aid in research, teaching and learning especially in the rural communities.
- The need for Public/Private Partnerships to provide these technologies to teachers and schools to enhance teaching and learning in post-COVID-19.

- Ghana Library Authority and Ghana Education Service should increase their support to institutions in deprived communities to aid the adoption of ICT in teaching and learning in these communities.
- On a smaller scale, alumni of schools especially Junior High and Senior High Schools must return to their alma maters to inspire current students by providing them with ICT gadgets and facilities.

GROUP FOUR: TEACHERS, ALUMNI, P.T.AS

The Teachers, Alumni and P.T.As group members were Mr. Enoch Kwasi Gyetuah of Ghana National Association of Private Schools, Mrs. Clarita Nyantewaa Anokye of Teacher Mmo, Mrs. Rita Tackie-Manison of Presec-Legon, Micheal Hoke of R.C Basic AKatsi, Esther Quist Wood of GNACOPS and Emmanuel Kwaboni of Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is a need for behavioural enhancement that meets global expectations and belief that this can be achieved through 50% face-to-face interaction and 50% outside the classroom.
- The need to change the curriculum of the educational sector by adopting new technologies for teaching and learning for Ghana to be able to compete in the globally.
- Distance Learning should be enhanced through the use of online tools like zoom, google classroom and TV learning.
- The adoption of solar power systems for institutions to reduce the cost of electricity.
- The provision of Internet services at the various educational institutions across the country as well as the provision of digital tools/ gadgets like computers, smartphones, tablets television sets, etc.
- Training of stakeholders (Parents, Teachers, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), government as well as students) on new technologies with regards to teaching and learning.
- Passage of a Digital Policy to spearhead the adaptation of new technologies for teaching and to operationalise the Policy in the various schools
- Proposed that all these should be disability-friendly to ensure all and sundry become beneficiaries.

GROUP FIVE: PARENT AND STUDENTS:

Parent and Student group members were Clara Nyarkoah Anim, Belinda Andoh, Josiah Spio-Garbrah, Wisdom Gadzekpo and Dr. Rev. Aramansah Barnor.

THE GROUP AGREED ON THE FOLLOWING OUTCOMES:

- The need for basic IT training for parents and students just like adult education.
- Strengthening Parent & Teachers Associations (P.T.As) to be able to support teachers and students in this regard; new technologies in teaching and learning.

- They called for parental control on technology gadgets used by wards/ students to avoid the misuse of the gadgets and the Internet.
- Parents should be encouraged to invest in new technologies for teaching and learning at school and home.
- The need for government to support parents/students in the acquisition of technological gadgets at a subsidized price as well ensure wide network coverage across the country.
- Improve the use of technology in parent-teacher communication

THE WAY FORWARD:

All the five groups at the end of their discussion agreed on the following as the way forward in adopting new technologies for teaching and learning, hence improve the educational sector to compete with the global world in post-COVID-19.

They are as follows:

1. Ensuring that technology providers create resources that are inclusive to roll in the marginalized in society hence the need to be disability-friendly.
2. The use of local language(s) on new technologies for teaching and learning to close the language barrier, thus the creation of a variation of products.
3. Transparency and Accountability are essential when schools and stakeholders provide resources and support to schools; ensuring that, these resources and support reach the right people, the teachers and students.
4. Sustainability of these new technologies should be a priority that, evaluation and monitoring should be encouraged.
5. Continuous general feedbacks from stakeholders should be encouraged and practised to enhance teaching and learning in the educational sector.
6. Technology creators should also look at creating resources that are inclusive to roll in the marginalized in society.
7. The use of television to teach in post-COVID-19 is important and parents must ensure their wards utilizes it under parental guidance.
8. Have to ensure with all technologies created are user friendly, educative and interactive.
9. ADB expressed readiness to support the private school teachers with laptops and other technology gadgets by financing its purchase at no interest rate as its contribution to the use of technology in teaching and learning.
10. Electroland Ghana Limited also expressed its readiness to provide these gadgets at low cost to enable more teachers and students to get access to them to enhance their teaching and learning respectively.



CLOSING REMARKS

In his closing remarks, Dr. Spio-Garbrah thanked the various stakeholders for their in-depth and insightful ideas and suggestions as to how to adapt new technologies for teaching and learning in the country's educational system.

He also assured them of African Business Centre for Developing Education's (ABCDE) commitment towards the realistic and wonderful ideas and suggestions shared at the Educational Stakeholders Round Table Forum.

Adding that, their doors are always opened to dialogue more on the theme and how to improve EduTech at the various educational levels in the country.

He also thanked the Country Representative of UNESCO for honouring ABCDE invitation to be part of the discussion and pledged to continue partnering with them to achieve the SDGs on education in Ghana and Africa at large.

He expressed his gratitude to the sponsors; ElectroLand Ghana Limited, Interplast Ghana Limited and Agricultural Development Bank for their support and allowed them to interact with the participant to showcase their products and services to them.

All three sponsors pledged their continuous support to ABCDE in its quest to enhance teaching and learning in the educational sector through technology.

The Round Table Forum closed with a group photograph of stakeholders, Special Guest and the Executive Director of ABCDE.

Annexe: Gallery



ABCDE Chairman – Dr Ekwow Spio-Garbrah



UNESCO Head of Office - Mr Diallo Abdourahamane



Some Delegates in a group photograph

