MOOCs4D: Potential at the Bottom of the Pyramid

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Presentation by Bakary Diallo
Pragmatism Before Popularity: AVU’S Approach to MOOCs

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1 Overview. Who we are?
2 Our presence. Where we are?
3 Context of Higher education on Africa
4 AVU’s activities and approach to MOOCs
1997  AVU was created.

2003  AVU adopted Open Distance and eLearing.

2007-9  AVU was restructured redefining its focus through a Business Plan.

2010  AVU new Charter.

2012  AVU signed a MOU with African Union Commission
1. 19 countries have signed AVU Charter
2. Mandate-to increase access to quality higher education and training through use of ICTs
3. Works Across Africa in English, French and Portuguese
4. 30 African Countries
5. Contributed to train more than 43,000 students since inception
6. More than 53 Partner Institutions

Working Across Africa
Beyond Technological, Language and Cultural Barriers
Find more in www.avu.org
Nigeria became 18th member country of AVU
The Honourable Federal Minister of Education Prof. Ruqayyatu Ahmed Rufa’i OON signing the AVU Charter at the Ministry’s offices in Abuja on August 20th 2013
Our presence in Africa. Where we work?

**OUR OFFICES IN AFRICA**

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Our Presence in Africa

The African Virtual University: Our Presence in Africa

- Francophone sites
- Anglophone sites
- Lusophone sites
- Arabic sites
• Africa on a pedestal to become the next growth frontier
• However only 6% of school-leavers in Sub-Saharan Africa enter tertiary institutions.
• 12% to 15% workforce to attain tertiary education in order to sustain economic development
• Universities unable to increase physical infrastructure to meet the soaring demand
• Current mode of delivery unable to meet either current or projected demand
Distance education can help meet demand

Unlocking the potential of a virtual university in Africa

- appropriate policies and funding
- meticulous planning and execution
- innovation, including teaching & learning and student support
- quality control
- Research & development
- a vast sensitization campaign
Challenges for eLearning

- Limited internet connectivity
- High cost of connectivity
- Intermittent power disruptions
- Access to computer and other devices
- Lack of national and institutional policies
- Resistance to change
- Scarce experienced human resources
- Perception that distance education may not offer the same quality as face-to-face education
Opportunity for eLearning

- Fiber optics penetration
- Use alternative sources of power
- Emergence of mobile technology an asset
- Learner centered approach

In 2011 eLearning revenues in Africa reached $250.9 million and they are projected to increase to $512.7 million by 2016.

(A recent report by Ambient Insight, a US-based research firm)
Our Activities

Focus on Education and Support Services

- Setup and upgrade a Learning / ODeL Centre
- Training of Trainers
- Updating and developing content
- Open Educational Resources (OER) Development
- Research & Development- Focus on educational technologies and mobile learning
- Developing Professional Networks (consortia, communities of practice)
- Gender mainstreaming
- Quality Assurance, Evaluation & Benchmarking
Our Activities

Education and Support Services

- Certificate/Diploma Programs
- Degree Programs
- Consortium Programs
- Joint Programs
- Hosted Programs
- Self Learning Programs
- Webinars (Online Seminars)
- Workshops
AVU Multinational Project I 2005-2011

10 Countries
12 Universities

Overall objective

To strengthen the capacity of the AVU and a network of institutions coordinated by the AVU to deliver and manage quality ICT assisted education and training opportunities in selected African countries.
Our Activities

AVU Multinational Project I 2005-2011

- Funded by African Development Bank
- Four bachelor of Education in math & science developed and delivered
- Total of 219 modules and 100 videos -> OERs
- Universities capacity strengthened
- Infrastructure: 10 distance learning centers
- 459 academics trained in eLearning
- 4000 students enrolled in the 10 countries in 2011
- 13,000 unqualified teachers trained in Senegal by 2013
- Hundreds of qualified teachers trained in ICT skills & pedagogy, in collaboration with partner universities
- Gender mainstreaming
- Teacher Education Virtual Consortium established
Universidade Pedagogica, Mozambique - 2009
AVU Open Education Resources

- Full instructional path for programs – not only courses or learning objects
- 219 textbooks of math, science, and Teacher Education
- 2 million users worldwide in 201 countries and territories
- Education-Portal.com People’s Choice Awards – 2 Awards for “Best OCW Emerging Initiative” in 2011 and “Most Progressive” in 2012
- AVU Atomic Physics textbook won the OCW Consortium Text Course Award for Excellence 2013
- AVU is sustaining member of OCW Consortium
AVU Multinational Project II (2012-2016)

- US$ 21 Million: 15.6 funded by African Development Bank and $ 5.4 Million from AVU & partners institutions
- 27 universities from 21 countries
- 27 new or upgraded distance learning centers
- Training of trainers in ODeL
- Review of AVU 219 OERs modules
- New Bachelor of Applied Computer Science → OER
- Peace & Conflict resolution program
- Communities of practice
- Gender mainstreaming
- Research & Development
- Technical Assistance to countries and universities
Our activities

Innovation in Educational Technologies through R&D

- Center for Virtual Education Innovation
  - To launch by end of 2013 or early 2014 in Nairobi, Kenya
  - Research & Development
  - Mobile Learning Lab
  - Innovation in Education Technology and Learning Resources including OERs, MOOCs
  - Open Distance and eLearning Center

- Annual Conference
  - 1st AVU International Conference November 20th - 22nd Nairobi Kenya - 200 participants from some 30 African countries + all other continents

- 2nd International Conference 2015 in Nairobi
- Online open journal to be launched in 2014
• AVU strong in development services

• But program and course offers under developed

• Full fledged University to support the commendable efforts of country members
  
  ▪ Participate to increase human
  
  ▪ Contribute to regional integration, cross-border education and accreditation, employability, mobility of trainers and trainees, and sharing of resources

• Feasibility study in 2013
• AVU is well known for its leadership in Open Educational Resources (OERs)

• AVU seen as one of the organizations capable of spearheading MOOCs in Africa
Massive Open Online Courses

- MOOC concept appealing and great potential for Africa

- Challenges:
  - high bandwidth required for Hi definition videos; focusing on courses, not programs; completion rate < 10%; no formal accreditation

  - Existing MOOCs utilize video, highly pixilated graphics, synchronous learning platforms, large file transfers and so on. High resolution → Higher bandwidth requirement

- Massive accredited education required to provide human capital in order to sustain economic development in Africa

- Massive Open Online Programs (MOOPs), with low bandwidth platform, accreditation in all AVU countries members, higher completion rate?
Rationale

- AVU to include MOOCs in Business Plan 2014-2019 with a focus in preparing learners and professionals to contribute to the development of the African continent.

- AVU is considering providing accredited courses and programs throughout Africa, and upscale its offers to learners outside the formal university sphere.

- Campus for Development and Peace to focus on professionals and those working in the informal sector.

- MOOCs are expected to contribute significantly in increasing enrollment in AVU programs.

- The outputs of Multinational Projects I & II will be used strategically in implementing MOOCs at AVU.
OBJECTIVES

• Strengthen the brand of the AVU

• Forge new institutional partnerships

• Increase enrolment within the AVU and/or Partner Institutions.
STRATEGY

• Develop adequate infrastructure to support the development and delivery of MOOCs at AVU

• Launch two MOOCs in partnership with the AfDB as proof of concept:
  • ODeLPD (Open Distance and eLearning Professional Development)
  • and on Peace Management and Conflict Resolution

• Develop partnership with MOOCs providers, government and development agencies, donor and private sector

• Mobilize resources and develop a sustainability plan

• Mainstream MOOCs in AVU operations
Thank You

www.avu.org
http://oer.avu.org

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facebook.com/AfricanVirtualUniversity

www.youtube.com/avuorg