



### Summary

ICT for Africa is an International Conference that brings together stakeholders of the educational and industrial sectors in Africa, with the aim of reflecting on how to transfer, diffuse and adopt the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) within the African context. The 2008 ICT for Africa Conference was organized by the International Center for Information Technology and Development, Louisiana, USA and ADCOME, Cameroon. These organizers were supported by a number of other US-based partners including The National Science Foundation, USA, the National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA), the Louisiana Board of Regents, and other Cameroon-based partners like ANTIC, and AIESEC.



Opening Panelists with Mr Stephen Fox, DCM, US Embassy, Cameroon

The conference successfully ended on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December in Yaoundé, Cameroon. Over 150 participants came from more than 15 countries in Africa and abroad to learn and share knowledge and experiences in the use of ICTs in education, business, healthcare and development. The opening ceremony was graced with speeches from Mr. Stephen Fox, Deputy Commissioner, Embassy of United States, Cameroon and Mr. Edouard Ebah Abada, Secretary General, Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, Cameroon. Lecturers and professors from educational institutions including Xavier University, Southern University, Auburn University, and Georgia Institute of Technology in the United States, as well as American University of Nigeria and University of Buea and University of Yaounde I in Cameroon, chaired the doctoral, panel and track sessions in conference. The VIP Summit also brought together a fine audience comprising government ministers, policy makers, university deans and chancellors. These audience included Dr. Ebote, Director, ANTIC, Cameroon; Prof. Vincent P.K. Titanji; Vice-Chancellor, University of Buea; Prof. Sammy B. Chumbow, University of Yaounde I; Prof. Terry Byrd, Auburn University; and Prof. Michael Best, Georgia Institute of Technology.



A number of new ideas on the opportunities and challenges of using ICT in education, business, healthcare and development in Africa were shared. Recommendations and solutions from the VIP summit had a key emphasis on education and policy implementation. More importantly, partnerships with between American and Cameroonian educational institutions were established during the conference to support doctoral research in Africa. With peer reviewed paper presentations, a panel session on Telemedicine, a VIP Summit, and networking during lunch and dinner events, the 2008 ICT for Africa conference was an unforgettable educational and practice-oriented event.



**Prof. Terry Byrd,  
Keynote Speaker**

The next ICT Africa conference will be held in Cameroon in 2009 at a venue and time to be announced. Please check the conference website – [www.ictforafrica.org](http://www.ictforafrica.org) – for updates or sign up to our mailing list by clicking on the "Subscribe Now" icon on the left menu bar.

### Key Outcomes of Conference

1. The International Center for Information Technology (ICITD) signed a memorandum with the University of Buea to support doctoral research in the University of Buea. Read more... at the conference website.
2. To extend support given to the doctoral consortium participants at the conference, an online/electronic resource portal will be developed to support research students in Africa. This will also be a platform for resources on ICT research in Africa. See [www.ictforafrica.org/eresources/](http://www.ictforafrica.org/eresources/). The platform is being managed by Dr. Richard Boateng; inquiries can be made through email – [eresources@ictforafrica.org](mailto:eresources@ictforafrica.org).
3. A number of selected papers from conference proceedings are to be published into a book and a special issue of the African Journal of Information Systems. The lead editor of the book is Dr. Patience Akpan-Obong. For more information, Visit [www.ictforafrica.org](http://www.ictforafrica.org) - click on Book Publication. The Lead editor of the special issue of AJIS is Prof. Victor Mbarika.
4. From policy to practice: the Conference Chairs will support ADCOME to seek ways of developing projects from ANTIC's policy document.



**Prof. Mbarika, Director, ICITD, Southern University and Prof. Titanji, Vice-Chancellor, University of Buea, Cameroon**



**Key Lessons – The Way Forward**

In a business meeting on a last day of the conference, Participants expressed a general satisfaction for their participation the conference. Key suggestions for future conferences outlined below:

**Partnerships beyond the Classroom**

This conference was an example good Academia-Private-Public sector partnership between ANTIC, ADCOME and ICITD. These partnerships are necessary to ensure sustainability of development initiatives (including ICT initiatives) especially within developing countries.

Future conferences should seek to bring more institutions into this partnership.

**Paper Presentations**

About 50 research papers were received for consideration but only 28 papers were accepted for publication and presentation after a rigorous review by the submission editor. Topics included the following:

- ICT in Business, Education, Healthcare and Development, respectively
- Internet and Society

Unfortunately only about 75 percent of authors of the papers participated in conference. While this gave ample time for adequate discussion on the papers presented, it limited the expected learning outcomes for some participants. A number of contributory reasons included the lack of funding to support travel to the conference, especially held in the last month of the year and limited/late publicity about the conference. Recommendations included early dissemination of future conferences, expanding sponsorships and informing participants of institutions with travel grants for conferences.

**Redefining Future Conferences**

It was quite interesting to have a diverse group of conference participants – undergraduates, graduates, workers with an academic thirst, distinguished lecturers and professors, government officials and et cetera. While this helps to create a room for sharing of diverse knowledge and perspectives on issues, we also realise that the key needs some groups were somewhat left out.

Hence, future conferences will seek to create special sessions for key groups – undergraduates, workers with an academic thirst and government officials. We intend to extend our awards list – to include best paper and uprising scholar and practitioner. Our partnership with local team of AIESEC will help us achieve that.



Talk by Prof. Muhammadou Kah at Doctoral Consortium



Telemedicine Session Being Chaired by Prof. Michael Best



Additionally,

1. Conference website is to be developed for this and future conferences – [www.ictforafrica.org](http://www.ictforafrica.org)
2. ICT for Africa Conference was renamed with a 'international component'. International Conference on ICT for Africa was suggested. The new website is being branded with this new name.
3. Details concerning the 2009 International Conference on ICT for Africa are to be published within the first quarter of 2009. Diverse outlets for dissemination were suggested.

## Acknowledgements

The opening and closing panelists and keynote speakers in attendance:

1. Mr. Stephen Fox, Deputy Commissioner, Embassy of United States, Cameroon
2. Mr. Edouard Ebah Abada, Secretary General, Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, Cameroon.
3. Dr. Ebote, Director, ANTIC, Cameroon
4. Prof. Vincent P.K. Titanji; Vice-Chancellor, University of Buea
5. Prof. Sammy B. Chumbow, Dept. of Linguistics, University of Yaoundé I
6. Prof. Terry Byrd, Auburn University
7. Dr. Lind Byrd, Auburn University
8. Prof. Michael Best, Georgia Institute of Technology
9. Dr. Carlos Thomas, College of Business, Southern University

### Conference Chairs (in attendance):

Conference Chair

- Prof. Victor Mbarika, ICITD, Southern University, USA

Conference Co-Chairs

- Mr. Roland Kwemain, Executive Director ADCOME, Cameroon
- Prof. Muhammadou Kah, American University of Nigeria, Nigeria

Conference Lead Track Chair

- Dr Richard Boateng, ICITD, Southern University

Doctoral Consortium Co-Chairs

- Prof. Adekunle Okunoye, Xavier University, USA
- Prof. Enoch Tanjong, University of Buea, Cameroon

Session Chairs

- Dr. Abiodun Bada, George Washington University, USA
- Dr. Patience Akpan-Obong, Arizona State University, USA
- Dr. Felix A. Bollou, American University of Nigeria
- Prof. Anele Nwokoma, American University of Nigeria
- Dr. Adekunle Okunoye, Xavier University
- Prof. Michael Best, Georgia Institute of Technology
- Dr. Mathais Fonkam, American University of Nigeria

Conference Grounds Co-Chairs

- Dr Richard Boateng, ICITD, Southern University
- Mr. Emmanuel Nkabyo, Cameroon
- Mr. Calisus Andoh Taku, ADCOME, Cameroon
- Mr Clauvis Daniel Akemamen Dakou, Cameroon





### Conference Sponsors

- The International Center for IT and Development
- The National Science Foundation
- The Dr. Lamar Ellis Trust
- The Louisiana Board of Regents
- NASA
- ADCOME, Cameroon
- ANTIC, Cameroon
- MERLOT Africa Network



**Thanks to participants for your active participation.**

For Conference Media Gallery, Visit [www.ictforafrica.org](http://www.ictforafrica.org) and click on Media

To contribute or join the 2009 International Conference on ICT for Africa, please contact us using the email - [info@ictforafrica.org](mailto:info@ictforafrica.org).

You can also sign up to our mailing list by clicking on the "Subscribe Now" icon on the left menu bar on the conference website – [www.ictforafrica.org](http://www.ictforafrica.org).

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