African Union

2020 SILENCING THE GUNS: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

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The African Union (AU) Joins forces with HP INC to Expand Digital Learning Opportunities for African Youth

"The partnership with HP will accelerate our education response to Covid-19 to ensure accessible and continued learning for African youth". AUC Human Resources, Science and Technology, H.E Prof. Sarah Anyang Agbor said at Extra-Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Education, Science and Technology held virtually on 30th April 2020. The virtual meeting was attended by AU Member States Ministers of Education.

Africa has the youngest population in the world with more than 400 million young people aged between 15 to 35 years. Almost all countries across the continent have introduced some form of nation-wide school and university closures to contain the Covid-19 virus. This means that there are a very large number of children and young people that are not receiving any form of schooling.

"This partnership speaks directly to H.E Moussa Faki Mahamat's 1 Million by 2021 initiative by providing educational opportunities which will assist in positioning our youth to venture into the entrepreneurial sector, commissioner added as she encouraged AU Member States to make the most of these opportunities as this partnership means young people can access educational opportunities at no cost for the rest of this academic year.

Managing Director and Vice President of HP Africa, Elisabeth Moreno, presented HP's Learning Initiative for Entrepreneurship (HP LIFE) and Be Online programmes, two unique online learning platforms that can be utilised by ministers to support schools and educators in their distance learning endeavours. Both entities have agreed to collaborate exchange of information and expertise, as well as promotion of online platforms to support digital learning.

"Education is a fundamental human right that should be available regardless of a person's age, class, race, gender or location," said Moreno. "To that end, HP has pledged to enable better learning outcomes for 100 million people by 2025, as well as adding 1 million users to HP LIFE between 2016-25 – a commitment that aligns with the AU's Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA), which aims to change Africa's education and training systems to meet the knowledge, competencies, skills, innovation and creativity required to nurture core values and promote sustainable development on a continental level."

The two online learning platforms will contribute towards the, The 1 Million By 2021 initiative which seeks to provide opportunities to young Africans from the 55 member states in the areas of Education, Employment, Engagement and Entrepreneurship (the 4Es).

Today, technology can support new styles of learning. PCs and tools designed for education can offer students flexibility of time, place, and pace of learning, whether in or out of the classroom, or in a blend of environments. HP and AU joint efforts have the potential to uplift access of education and opportunities for career work and economic growth. The collaboration aims to promote innovations that hold the best potential to make lifelong learning a reality.

BeOnline is a programme that was developed by HP in partnership with Classera, the leader in Learning Management Systems and Mirai, a learning innovations group focusing on learning strategy and digital pedagogy, to assist the endeavours of the education community. In line with the most recent regional governments' directives for distance learning, the programme aims to support schools and universities in establishing a fully-fledged virtual learning environment, by providing expertise and tools at no cost.

The HP Foundation has created its global programme HP LIFE to provide business and IT skills training free of charge to people all over the world. The online community and more than 30 self-paced courses are designed to help users develop business and IT skills in their own time and at their own pace. The courses are modular, interactive, and full of information and practical exercises that enable users to grow their business skills.

For more information on Be Online, please click here, and for more details about the HP LIFE platform and its learning curriculum, please click here

Note to Editors: The 1 Million By 2021 Initiative responds to Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063 which speaks to "an Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children". This recognizes the importance of harnessing Africa's demographic dividend through investing in its youth. The African Union defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 to 35.

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