



Concept Note for Capacity Building on e-Learning Content Development

A side event to be held during the 7th African Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Triennial Conference 2021

Date: 18th -22nd October 2021

Time: 11.00-14.00 (East African Standard Time)

Venue: Virtual via Zoom (Meeting link: <https://bit.ly/3g8VPj9> Zoom ID: 868 3261 1097, Passcode: 242532)

Funded by: Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA)

Background

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The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is an African owned organization with a membership of 129 universities from 38 countries across Africa. The network envisions 'vibrant, transformative universities to catalyze sustainable, inclusive agricultural development to feed and create prosperity for Africa'. The RUFORUM Vision 2030 mandates the Secretariat to facilitate universities to innovatively use ICTs to improve teaching. Through the K-Hub flagship programme, RUFORUM is expected to facilitate universities to provide relevant and practical training, not only through innovative and creative teaching, but also by using the latest electronic means to deliver and enhance the student learning experience. RUFORUM envisages that all its network university should be well equipped to deliver using e-learning most especially during unforeseen circumstances such as the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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RUFORUM has received funding from the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) towards the establishment of the regional e-learning platform for universities in Africa. As part of this project, RUFORUM is expected to build capacity of university staff on e-learning content development. Therefore, RUFORUM aims to use this year's convening to provide sort training for selected staff from the network universities on e-learning development. This sort of training will facilitate effective delivery of teaching and learning using ICTs.

It should be noted that many reports continue to show that lecturers and Universities are still ill equipped to use ICT to support learners beyond the physical classroom through the use of technology. The closure/lockdown of all higher institutions of learning across the world including the African continent due to the COVID-19 pandemic put the student population and their parents at stake with arguable responses to handling the teaching of these students ubiquitously. It is evident that in such circumstances prevented higher institutions of learning like in the RUFORUM network to continue teaching due to the lack of capacity (human and infrastructure) to partake their mandate. Substantial gaps have been identified within lecturers at many higher institutions of learning to effectively handle students' teaching and learning amidst uncertain times. There is emerging evidence that up to now lecturers within higher institutions of learning have been and still continue to be trained to handle teaching for face-to-face interaction. This proposed capacity building for RUFORUM network University staff is hinged on the relevance of intervening in lecturer training by integrating ICT Pedagogy.

The effective adoption of e-learning is indeed of strategic importance to higher institutions of learning delivery of services to all its stakeholders. It is against this background that RUFORUM is planning a capacity development for the network University staff in E-learning Pedagogy, Content Authoring and Delivery which will improve the skills on the use of available ICT tools to deliver education ubiquitously.

2. Objectives of the Side Event

- i) To provide an overview of foundations of e-learning design strategies that are not specific to any technology (authoring tool) but that focus on universal principles of effective instruction and learning
- ii) To discuss design processes for efficient and easy design of e-learning activities
- iii) To provide guidance on assessing and evaluating e-learning courses
- iv) To provide hands on experience in planning, preparing, designing and implementing an e-learning course

3. Expected Outcomes of the Side Event:

At the end of the capacity development event, it is expected that:

- v) Participants made aware of the e-learning design strategies that are not specific to any technology but are universal principles of effective instruction and learning

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- i) Good understanding of design processes which are efficient and easy design of e-learning activities
- ii) Gained expertise in the use of at least 2 technologies for content authoring and delivery
- iii) At least 50 University staff trained on e-learning pedagogy, content authoring and delivery
- iv) A team of trainers of trainers created out of the 50-trained staff to become trainers within their universities
- v) A profile of a few open-source e-learning ICT tools that can be used by staff to author e-learning content
- vi) Be familiar with the hypes and realities of e-learning in an African context

4. Methodology

The training will be conducted as a five-day virtual workshop through Zoom. The training will have both theory and practical sessions that will be undertaken in and outside of the training sessions. Majorly the participants will be able to learn how to prepare for an online class using well known pedagogical aspects, use tools (such as eXe and Hot Potatoes) for content authoring and assessment development. Being an online workshop, training and resource materials will be prepared and shared with the participants prior to the training within the RUFORUM e-learning system. RUFORUM will work closely with individual experts in e-learning to develop course materials and deliver the training. In detail, this is what will be done during the 5-day training;

- i) In the 5 days' workshop, the academic staff shall have an intensive hand on training in different aspects of e-learning including but not limited to: pedagogical perspectives of e-learning (how to facilitate learning in e-learning), e-content development, student centred learning, online video conferencing teaching etiquettes, student-teacher interaction, educational technology strategies, etc.
- ii) Participants will be facilitated to plan, design and implement an e-learning course for an online classroom session
- iii) The participants will also be given an opportunity to look at and evaluate existing e-learning courses that they are familiar with or have interacted with before. Case studies will be evaluated during the discussion of best practices.
- iv) The workshop shall have presentations, case studies and practical work

Facilitators: **TBA**

Target group: Selected course designers and instructors from across RUFORUM Network

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Session	Topic	Mode/Activity	Facilitator / Venue
Day 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and Learning with Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibilities and Potential Issues (e.g. engagement & interaction) Online Learning Environments Learning Networks/ Communities Associated software tools Challenges Changed roles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher role; Learner role Class environment - themes and characteristics 	<p>Presentation</p> <p>Discussion and group activity on the changing roles and environment in the face of technology</p>	
Day 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> First Steps to Effective E-Learning: The pedagogical perspectives of e-Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problems with course design Effective VLE course design Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levels of learning Autonomy and learning Delivery methods and approaches E-learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Myths and reality Online learning Evaluating E-Learning and Course Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to plan basic steps of implementing online learning Evaluating an online course development solution 	<p>Presentation,</p> <p>Group activity on the pedagogical differences between traditional learning and e-learning</p>	
Day 3	<p>Effective E-Learning Content Design using the Learning Object Concept</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need for e-content 	<p>Presentation,</p> <p>Lab activity and hands on practice</p>	

Session	Topic	Mode/Activity	Facilitator / Venue
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process of e-Content Development e-Content rendering and structuring e-Content structuring – Detailed Table of Content Story board/sitemap – presentation Setting Course Objectives Using Flash to author learning objects 	in groups on content design,	
Day 4	<p>Content Development - Production Issues-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional Design Quality Assurance Tools & Media <p>Planning Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning template/story boards <p>Transforming existing courses</p>	<p>Presentation, practical work</p> <p>exploration of media, readings, and discussion</p>	
	<p>Rapid E-content Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EXE e-Learning Architecture (e-Learning Objects and Guide to e-Learning Content Development using EXE) <p>Transforming EXE produced content into offline based materials on CDs</p>	<p>Presentation, hands on practice, lab activity using a real sample course</p>	
Day 5	<p>Rapid E-content Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EXE e-Learning Architecture (e-Learning Objects and Guide to e-Learning Content Development using EXE) 	<p>Presentation, hands on practice, lab activity using a real sample course</p>	

Session	Topic	Mode/Activity	Facilitator / Venue
	Transforming EXE produced content into offline based materials on CDs	activity using a real sample course	
	Introduction to Digital Assessment using Hot Potatoes tool <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating Interactive Online Tests • The Hot Potato architecture • MCQ • Fill in • Option • Essay Demonstration of Content Upload and Delivery via the RUFORUM E-learning System	Training on use of hot potato application, lab activity using a real sample course	

5. Conclusion

The e-learning workshop will go a long way in further enlightening the academic staff from the RUFORUM University Network about the possibilities of enhancing educational delivery through the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT). It will provide an impetus for further development of e-learning across the entire African Universities.