The African University of the future: foresight and experience in the use of ICTs

K P DZVIMBO
VAAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
UNESCO MARCH 25 2015
Challenges of the African university

- **Increasing access to higher education**
  - Participation rates range from as low as 4% in the poorest countries to 18% in South Africa.

- **Balancing the difficult equation of access and equity**
  - Access to quality education
  - Concern with epistemological access

- **Increasing cost of higher education amidst poverty and the underdevelopment of the state in some countries**

- **Lack of reliable bandwidth for the poor and the majority of students**
# Wireless and Wire Line Broadband Subscriptions per 100 Inhabitants, By Region, (Worlds Bank, June 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Wireless</th>
<th>Wire Line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Asia and Pacific</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe and Central Asia</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union and Western Europe</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub Saharan Africa</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Average Penetration rates: Top 10 Countries in SSA versus Bottom 10 (2008 – World Bank)
Where we stand in relation to the rest of the world

Internet Users Per 100 Inhabitants (ITU 2010:202)

- Africa: 7.5
- Asia & Pacific: 19.1
- Arab States: 19.6
- Americas: 48.7
- Europe: 62.7
Emerging new business model

- **Premise:**
  - The future of the African university and the African university of the future

- **The present:**
  - Focus on the contact university, print based materials, and the central role of the academic. Move toward a student centric model based on constructivism

- **The transition: blended mode of facilitation of learning and student learning**
  - The rise of the networked university and its challenges—learning spaces on campus
  - The emergence of NRENs on the African continent—emerging COPs

- **The transition:**
  - Move to an entrepreneurial academic program and its delivery 24/7

- **ICTs and increasing access to knowledge and focus of content delivery**
The African university of the future

- Use of ICTs in teaching and learning examples from South Africa

- Use of Moodle and Blackboard
- MOOCs
- OERs

New technologies for teaching and learning

The future
From the UoT to the ODeL university

Blended learning
- Most universities now have both print and electronic learning

ODeL
- The rise of the open and distance learning university and its challenges

The future
- The rise of MOOCs and OERs
- Changing role of LMS and the use of digital technologies
The South African higher education space

- The research intensive
- The ODL to ODeL
- The UOT
- The comprehensive

All making use of ICTs
Conclusion: the challenges

- Which model to adopt and how to manage issues of cost-efficiency and quality of higher education and training in Africa
  - Transition to an open mass university to satisfy the social justice mandate

- The niche versus the elite university (Barber, 2013)
  - Continuing challenge of differentiation and the research university

- The comprehensive university
  - The most prevalent model on the continent and for the best model
  - Allows use of ICTs to augment the contact universities with its limited resources.

- Capacity
  - Staff and institutional capacity remains a challenge especially bandwidth