

Networking steps in Nigeria

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Recap of earlier efforts

- From 1992 to 2004, there have been more than a dozen project efforts to *create* National networks in Nigeria. This list of projects to build NRENs is not exhaustive; most had positive “feasibility” studies, were acceptable to, or had inputs from” stakeholders”, etc:
 - Nigerian Universities Management Information System (NUMIS)
 - Nigerian Universities Network (NUNet)
 - Polytechnics Network (PolyNet)
 - Colleges of Education Network (TeachNet)
 - Nigerian Education and Research Network (NEARNet: a collaboration of NUNet, PolyNet and TeachNet)
 - National Virtual (Digital) Library Project (NVLP)
 - Nigerian Virtual Library Consortium (VLC)
 - National Information, Communication and Education Programme (NICEP)
- National Committees to Harmonize the bewildering number of such projects have been established

The missing (& present but wrong) links

- NREN Creation Vs Evolution
- The process was not “organic” and project schedules were not sufficiently thought out
 - Much emphasis on money, equipment & buildings; too little on capacity-building, human & social engineering
 - Where training was envisioned, it was mainly for technicians with little thought for user education & professional staff development
- *The correct* owners had little feel or sense of ownership for the initiatives. “Ownership” in Ng. often
 - is confused with “control”, “physical possession”, etc.
 - instigates territoriality and turf wars
- Successive failures have tended to erode confidence & compromise integrity of the process

The Nigeria ICT Forum of Partnership Institutions

- The Forum was conceived correctly, just a year ago (9 Sept '04) in Dar-es-Salaam, and a few month old (on 19 August 2005) as a legal entity. She is a not-for-profit NGO: a company limited by guarantee.
- A first significant step to grow an NREN has been taken: It is the first collaborative project to be wholly initiated & owned directly by HEIs in more than 30 years.

Institutional Membership & Staff

Member Institution	Representative
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (ABU)	Aminu Ibrahim (“Aminu”; Convenor) Nasir Bello (“Nasir”; Member / Secretary)
Bayero University Kano, Kano (BUK)	Dr. Ado Dan-Isa (“Ado”; Member)
Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife (OAU)	Prof. L.O. Kehinde (“Kunle”; Member)
University of Ibadan (UI)	Prof. Ayodeji Oluleye (“Ayo”; Member)
University of Jos (UniJos)	Prof. L. S. O. Liverpool (“Len”; Member)
University of Port-Harcourt (UniPort)	Prof. Ebi Bio Awotua-Efebo (“Ebi”; Member)

Ms. Sekyen Lois Niyang (“Sekyen”) was appointed to serve as full-time Forum Project Officer a few days ago (9 Sept '05).
She will head the Abuja Secretariat of the Forum.

Aim of the Forum

The Forum aims to:

provide an opportunity and serve as platform for the six member institutions to “organically” foster the development of a National Research & Education Network (NREN) in Nigeria

Objectives of the Forum

1. Help each other to build institutional capacity in Information & Communications Technology (ICT) for teaching & learning, research & community service;
2. Cooperate to take advantage of economy of scale in the development, procurement and utilization of resources, goods and services;
3. Develop and use ICTs to foster institutional collaboration among and between administrative and academic communities;
4. Share information, skills, resources and best-practices;
5. Encourage self-assessments by members and assist each other as peer-reviewers;
6. Undertake activities (including consultancy services, policy research & development, advocacy, training, etc.) that would cultivate the requisite environment for wider, sustainable collaboration and networking , beginning with our immediate and surrounding communities;
7. Assist each other to enhance our institutional capacities for networking, development and delivery of contents and services;
8. Cultivate and share effective and useful partnerships among and between member institutions, as well as with the private sector and other relevant institutions and agencies in Nigeria and the international community;
9. Undertake activities to facilitate members to serve as foci for sustainable development.

Securing the Forum

- The Forum is now a grantee of the Carnegie Corporation and the MacArthur Foundation
- Advisory Boards (International & National) are being *composed* to guide, challenge, protect, & indelibly stamp the Forum with the right properties
 - For the IAC,
 - Randy Bush, Steve Goldstein are already on board
 - With powerful search engines and **extreme** filters at work (Steve Huter, Randy Bush, Steve Goldstein and Steve Song), identification of international **volunteers** now has a life of its own
 - The NAC will mostly be Nigerians
 - who can also “hit the Forum with clue bats” of their own
 - advise on how best to apply clues from the IAC in Ng: these are mostly either abroad, or at home in the private sector
 - The Forum will not lack a clue
- Trusted Trustees with perpetual influence in Nigeria are being identified

Securing Allies & Partners

- Healthy capacity-building partnerships with the Nigerian private sector have begun to be put in place and are yielding fruits
 - Forum bid for Nigeria to host AfNOG 2007 was prepared in partnership with two firms, and was actually submitted by an ISP with a clue
 - Services & maintenance of <http://forum.org.ng> are a contribution of Datasphir Ltd.
- The Forum is working to have a leg in a significant National project being planned: a most pleasant synergy will result
- TENET & Mortensen Centre have agreed to work with the Forum

You will be most come...

... to participate &/or contribute in any way you can, to the Forum's first set of major policy & capacity-building events:

- The National Conference on ICTs and Education (2006 Feb 1 – 4)
- The Nigeria Network Operators Group Workshop (NgNOG I: 2006 Feb 5 - 11)

Thank you!