




AFRICAN
CURRICULUM
ASSOCIATION



REPORT OF THE 5TH AFRICAN CURRICULUM ASSOCIATION (ACA) CONFERENCE HELD IN ABUJA, NIGERIA



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Executive Summary

The 5th African Curriculum Association (ACA) Conference, held in Abuja, Nigeria from 1st to 4th September 2025, gathered 109 participants including educators, policymakers, and international partners such as the AU, UNESCO, and UNICEF. The event focused on transforming African curriculum and teacher development to foster inclusivity, resilience, and lifelong learning. Key discussions emphasised the importance of decolonising curricula, promoting African languages, and reorienting education to empower innovation and address continental needs. The conference showcased robust collaboration and commitment from diverse stakeholders, underscoring Africa's pivotal role in shaping educational discourse for the future.

Introduction

The 5th African Curriculum Association (ACA) Conference was held at the Abuja Continental Hotel in Abuja, Nigeria, from Monday, 1st September to Thursday, 4th September 2025. The theme of the conference was: Transforming curriculum and teacher development in Africa for inclusivity, resilience, and lifelong learning through the 21st century competencies. The conference recorded 109 participants, including educators, policymakers, curriculum developers, international partners, and other key stakeholders in education. Delegates represented countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Chad, Uganda, Benin, South Sudan, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Morocco, Sierra Leone, Lesotho, Cameroon, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), India, the United States, the Netherlands. Prominent partner institutions that were present at the conference were the AU, OSC, UNESCO, UNICEF, Plan International and the British Council, Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT), Curriculum Organisation of Nigeria, the Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA), among others. The diverse and broad participation underscored the global significance of Africa's curriculum development and implementation discourse.

Opening

The official opening ceremony commenced with the rendition of the Nigerian National Anthem and welcome remarks by Prof. Salisu Shehu, the Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC). Who, while highlighting the diverse representation of delegates from across Africa and beyond, described the conference as a unique platform for collaboration, knowledge exchange and continental solidarity. Afterwards, the ACA President, Dr. Ali Kore from Chad, gave his remarks, praising the resilience of the LOC and noting that the conference exemplified the power of a shared commitment to transforming Africa's educational trajectory.

The Secretary General of ACA, Dr. Gertrude Namubiru, expressed profound gratitude to the Nigerian Government, NERDC and all partners for ensuring the successful hosting of the conference. She traced ACA's journey from Uganda in 2018, Ghana (2019), The Gambia (2022), Kenya (2023), to Nigeria in 2025, noting that Tanzania will host the 6th edition in 2026. She emphasised that curriculum reform is a transformative pathway for Africa's destiny, calling on African curriculum centres to remain vibrant, united and committed to reshaping education across the continent.

Keynote

The keynote address was delivered by His Excellency, Manssour Bin Mussalam, Secretary-General of the Organisation of Southern Cooperation (OSC). He advocated for re-engineering Africa's curricula to reflect the continent's heritage, values and aspirations, rather than adopting external models. He highlighted Africa's historical contributions to global knowledge,

noting that the first university in the world was established by a woman in Africa, centuries ago. His key recommendations included:

- Decolonising curricula and integrating African indigenous languages into teaching and learning.
- Establishing Language Development Centres to nurture African languages as tools for knowledge production.
- Reorienting education to produce innovators and job creators rather than job seekers.
- Embedding critical thinking, creativity, and problem-posing in education.
- Enhancing continental cooperation to avoid fragmentation in curriculum development.

The Minister of Education's Opening Speech

The Honourable Minister of Education, Dr. Tunji Maruf Alausa, ably represented by Prof. Suwaiba Said Ahmad, the Honourable Minister of State for Education, expressed delight at hosting the 5th International Conference of the African Curriculum Association in Abuja. He emphasised the significance of the curriculum as the foundation of quality education and a catalyst for national development. The Minister highlighted Nigeria's ongoing curriculum reforms under the Nigerian Education Sector Renewal Initiative (NESRI), aligning curricula with 21st-century skills, digital literacy and manpower needs. He outlined progress in reviewing basic and senior secondary education curricula, integrating technical education reforms and establishing a National Education Data Initiative (NEDI).

He announced that the National Council on Education had approved the New Revised Basic Education Curriculum, and that the subjects were reduced to 12 from 20 to enhance learnability, while the Senior Secondary Education Curriculum is nearing completion. He revealed that the reforms in Nigeria's education sector were already yielding impact and assured participants that Nigeria is committed to implementing learner-centred and globally competitive curricula.

While declaring the conference open, he called for active engagement in the conference's technical sessions and looked forward to far-reaching recommendations.

Special Remarks by the ACA Patron

Hon. Dr. Osei Yaw Adutwum, ACA Patron and former Minister of Education of Ghana, shared valuable insights from his administration's reforms. He recounted how the introduction of a new curriculum in Ghana led him to review sample WAEC examination questions and discovered that most were limited to the lower levels of Bloom's Taxonomy (knowledge, comprehension and application). The higher-order thinking skills of analysis, synthesis and creation were largely neglected. As a result, he directed WAEC to reframe its examination

questions to reflect higher-order thinking skills, thereby ensuring that assessments aligned with the curriculum reforms.

He stressed the need for African countries to give attention to the hidden curriculum (what learners learn indirectly through school culture). He prescribed the 4c's: Critical thinking, Creativity, Collaboration and Communication for the curriculum.

He further highlighted Ghana's educational reforms in:

- STEM education: Positioned as the engine of innovation, competitiveness, and solutions to critical challenges such as climate change, health and food security.
- TVET: Prioritising technical and vocational education as a cornerstone for national transformation.
- Gifted and talented education: Identifying and nurturing exceptional learners to fully harness Africa's human potential.

He concluded by urging the participants to embrace critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication in educational practices. Stressing that moving beyond rote learning is fundamental for developing resilient and innovative future leaders with a problem-solving mindset. Education in Africa must move beyond policy documents to practical transformation.

Special Remarks and presentation by the African Union (AU)

The representative of the AU, Professor Michael Oladunjoye, informed the participants that the African Union has formally launched the 'Decade of Accelerated Action for the Transformation of Education and Skills Development in Africa (2025–2034)'. This, according to him, reaffirmed education and skills as central pillars of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. He highlighted that this initiative is in response to persistent challenges of high learning poverty, teacher shortages, gender disparities, youth bulge, global priority shift, inadequate financing and the need to address the historical inequities left by colonialism. And focused on harnessing the opportunities of Africa's demographic dividend, digital transformation and global shifts. The Decade seeks to ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all, strengthen foundational learning, invest in teacher professionalisation, and promote innovation, STEM, TVET, employability and sustainable education financing.

Accordingly, the African Union has set eight ambitious targets for 2034, including halving learning poverty, securing a minimum of 20% of national budgets for education, establishing teacher mobility schemes, expanding TVET and STEM education, and harmonising qualifications and quality assurance frameworks across Member States. Implementation will be done through a continental, regional and national collaboration, with strong accountability systems and a collective call to action for Member States, partners, the private sector, educators and youth.

Goodwill Messages

Goodwill messages were given by the representatives of UNESCO, UNICEF, the African Union, the British Council, Plan International, the Nigerian Union of Teachers, the Curriculum Organisation of Nigeria, and the Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA). They all reaffirmed their support for Africa's curriculum transformation agenda.

Lead Paper Presentations

First Lead Paper: Africa's Curriculum Imperatives for the Future That Is Already with Us

Presenter: Emeritus Professor PAI Obanya (University of Ibadan, Nigeria)

Moderator: Dr. Iyela Ajayi, Executive Secretary of the National Senior Secondary Education Commission (NSSEC).

The paper outlined a three-stage curriculum reform framework:

- Re-conceptualisation: Dismantling colonial legacies and expanding knowledge boundaries to ensure psycho-social and economic responsiveness in spatial, national, regional, and global dimensions.
- Re-design: Adopting participatory methodologies, formative evaluation, and balancing hard and soft skills.
- Creative implementation: Empowering teachers, leveraging technology, making teaching interactive, and broadening assessment beyond rote testing.

Prof. Obanya emphasised the urgency of curriculum reform due to the rapidly changing world and warned that Africa, having missed the first three industrial revolutions, must not be excluded from the Fourth Industrial Revolution. He concluded that education drives human progress, with curriculum as its engine, necessitating re-conceptualisation, redesign and creative implementation to avoid Africa remaining a "neglected slum" in the global village.

Second Lead Paper: Managing Teachers' Social and Educational Expectations in an Era of Technology

Presenter: Prof. Josiah O. Ajiboye, University of Ibadan, former Registrar/CEO Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN)

Moderator: Prof. Ali Idris, Special Assistant to the Honourable Minister of State for Education.

This paper addressed the evolving role of teachers in a technology-driven era. Key points included:

- Role of teachers: Technology cannot replace teachers, but those proficient in technology will replace those who are not, given the complexity of teaching in the 21st century.

- Assessment landscape: Digital tools are integral to core subjects (science, mathematics, language arts, social studies, and arts), with professional development enhancing teachers' digital assessment capabilities.
- Social media: Social media platforms offer immediate feedback and global interaction but pose challenges in trustworthiness, privacy and balancing engagement with academic integrity.
- AI in assessment: AI revolutionises assessment through automated grading, adaptive testing, learning analytics and bias detection.
- Teacher expectations: Educators face immense social and professional pressures, requiring investment in training, flexible models, and collaboration among educators, families and communities to ensure fair and accessible assessments.

Prof. Ajiboye concluded that empowering teachers with technology, training, and trust is key to unlocking student potential and ensuring equitable education.

Third Lead Paper: Approaching Curriculum Development from the Perspective of a Changing Social System and Learning Interests

Presenter: Prof. Salisu Shehu, the Executive Secretary, Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC)

Moderator: Prof. Grace Offorma, President of the Curriculum Organisation of Nigeria

Prof. Shehu began by stressing that the curriculum serves both as a subject and an agent of change. He remarked that “if you want to change society, you change the curriculum.” He highlighted that the educational system is undergoing unprecedented transformation, driven by social, technological and cultural shifts, which call for innovative approaches to curriculum development. He emphasised that the curriculum must be seen as an adaptive process, balancing societal demands with learners' interests. Specifically, for Africa, the rapidly changing social system presents opportunities for human capital growth and improved labour absorption, yet also risks, increasing unemployment and instability if reforms are not carefully managed. To ensure learners are adequately prepared for both local and global challenges, the presenter revealed that NERDC's revised curriculum integrates knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, embedding interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary learning.

Highlighting NERDC's innovations to curriculum, Prof. Shehu outlined several strategies used, which include:

- Democratisation of curriculum design with active learner involvement.
- Integration of digital literacy, digital technologies, and vocational subjects into the basic education curriculum, to align with digital age demands.
- Adoption of a competency-based curriculum that emphasises skills and outcomes rather than content memorisation.

- adoption of a curriculum framework with quantifiable performance measures, incorporating 21st-century skills across all subjects.
- Application of ICT-driven, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary methodologies to promote deeper understanding and real-world transfer of knowledge.

However, he noted persistent challenges such as teacher capacity gaps, resistance to change, and weaknesses in traditional systems. To address these, he suggested that: Strengthening continental cooperation through the African Curriculum Association (ACA), leveraging technology for curriculum delivery, expanding public-private partnerships to support curriculum innovation and recalibrating teacher preparation systems and regulatory frameworks.

Fourth Lead Paper: Rethinking Curriculum Development in Africa to Meet Global Demands and Afrocentric Development Challenges

Presenter: Prof. Mkpa Agu Mkpa, OFR, former Vice Chanselor, Abia State University, Uturu, Abia State

Moderator: Dr. Garba D. Gandu, Director, Curriculum Development Centre, NERDC, Abuja

Prof. Mkpa opened his presentation by urging participants to critically examine the curriculum currently in use in African schools, especially more than 60-65 years after independence. He argued that the strength of a nation’s developmental capacity lies in the quality and orientation of its curriculum. But, African nations, unfortunately, continue to serve primarily as producers of raw materials rather than processors, thus limiting economic transformation.

Drawing lessons from the Asian Tigers, Prof. Mkpa observed that rapid technological development in those countries was achieved through substantial investment in education. He cited Ghana, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Uganda as frontrunners in curriculum reform. This, he attributed to their emphasis on practical skills and technological integration.

He advocated for an Afrocentric curriculum that:

- Integrates African culture, values and epistemologies into education.
- Localises learning and indigenises knowledge.
- Promotes cultural sensitivity, community engagement and moral values such as respect for elders, hospitality, kinship ties and adaptability.
- Strengthens teacher training, professional support and partnerships with local communities.

Paper Presentation

The paper presentation was moderated by Dr. Chima Egbujoo of the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC). A total of 14 well-researched papers were presented. The following were papers presented:

S/N	Title	Presenter (s)
1.	Endogenous Education and Artificial Intelligence (AI) for African Education	Dr. Maurice Nkusi,
2.	Integration of Wisdom Pedagogy into the secondary school curriculum to foster innovative behaviour among learners	Dr. Miir Faruq, Department of Educational Management and Administration, Faculty of Education, Islamic University in Uganda.
3.	Assessing Digital Literacy among Nigerian Teachers: Implication for inclusive and teacher Ready Classroom	Prof. Grace Offorma, President, Curriculum Association of Nigeria (CON)
4.	Improving Learning Outcomes Through Curriculum Strengthening in South Africa	Ms Cheryl Weston, Department of Basic Education, South Africa
5.	Evaluation numerique au Tchad: defies sociaux et educatifs	M. Djasrabaye Ngaba, Centre National des Curricula
6.	New Curriculum Framework for Sierra Leone	Mr. Edward M. Kpakra, and Mr. Osman Kamara, Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, Sierra Leone
7.	Reforming Education System in Tanzania: Aligning Curriculum with 21 st Century Skill and National Development Goals	Dr. Godson Lema, Tanzania Institute of Education
8.	Giftedness and Teachers' Professional Development Evolving Curriculum for Teachers of Africa's Untapped Potentials	Drs. Amina Olasunbu, Priscilla Atte, Domminica Ngozi and Alfred Adegboye
9.	Towards a just Curriculum: Mainstreaming Gender, Justice and Historical Redress for Inclusive and Transformative Education in Africa-Lesson's from FAWE's Practice	Martha Muhwezi and Catherine Salina Asego
10.	Effect of Computer-Assisted Instruction on Biology Students' Academic Achievement in Secondary Schools in Sokoto Metropolis	Hamza Muhammad, Makkah International Academy and Dr. Idi Garba, Bayero University, Kano
11.	Analyse des Annuaires statistique et des rapports des delegations provinciales du ministere de l'education nationale au tchad: qualite et complementariate des variables	Dr. Frederic Nodjinaibeye
12.	Les meilleures pratiques pour l'education inclusive des apprenants ayant une deficiencie visuelle aut Tchad	Dr. Yerima Mangoussi, Centre National des Curricula (CNC)-tchad

13.	From Emotional Awareness to Better Connections: The Impact of Soft Skills Education	Dr. Vytautas Pukis and Princess Jenny Bisabyere, Blossomwood Foundation
14.	Elaboration de strategies innovantes pour le developement des curricula dans le context africain	Dr. Al-Khalim AbdurRahman Jibrin

Outcome of the 5th Continental African Curriculum Conference (Abuja, 2025):

Participants of the 5th Continental African Curriculum Conference, held in Abuja, Nigeria, endorsed the harmonisation of curriculum development across Africa and resolved to develop a Continental Curriculum Framework to serve as a reference document for guiding curriculum design, review, and implementation on the continent. This Framework will promote coherence, comparability, and shared educational values aligned with Africa’s vision for quality, inclusive, and contextually relevant education.

Closing

The formal closing ceremony of the ACA 2025 conference was held on the 3rd of September 2025. The ceremony began with a closing remark by Dr. Gertrude Namubiru, the Secretary General of ACA. She commended Nigeria for successfully hosting the conference and expressed her gratitude to all the participants for their commitment and active participation. She also encouraged participants who are not yet members of ACA to join and extend membership invitations to other organisations across Africa. She emphasised the need for both academic and non-academic knowledge and called upon stakeholders to work together to improve the African curriculum. Looking ahead, she announced that the 6th ACA Conference will be hosted by Tanzania in 2026. She wished all participants safe journeys back to their respective countries.

In his remarks, the Executive Secretary of NERDC, Prof. Salisu Shehu, thanked the local organising committee for the success of the conference. He appreciated the Keynote and Lead Paper Presenters, the President of CON, African Union representative, ACA executives, as well as the Honourable Ministers of Education, Dr. Maaruf Tunji Alausa CON and Prof. Suwaiba Said Ahmad. He also appreciated the Directors of EPR & O, the Support Services, and all directors from the Federal Ministry of Education whose contributions made the event possible. Prof. Shehu extended his appreciation to the ACA Patron for his illuminating address, constant guidance and commitment to education in Africa. He also commended the Secretary General

and the President of the ACA. The Executive Secretary concluded by reminding participants that Africa will gradually overcome its challenges if we continue to work together to improve curriculum and education across the continent. He prayed for God's protection upon all participants for safe return to their base. The closing session ended with the recitation of the third stanza of the National Anthem, after which the conference was officially declared closed.

Excursion

Following the formal closing of the conference, participants were treated to a brief excursion within Abuja. The tour provided delegates with an opportunity to visit some of the city's notable landmarks and cultural sites, offering a glimpse into Abuja's rich heritage and vibrant atmosphere. Attendees enjoyed guided visits to locations of interest, fostering informal networking and a deeper appreciation of the host city before departure.