



ACCRA

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The AAU and the RRENs Call for strengthening of campus network infrastructure for African Higher Education Institutions to cope with COVID-19 disruptions

Amidst the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, many academic and research communities have resolved to work remotely for health and safety reasons. This situation has proved the importance of building strong communications infrastructures for higher education and research institutions, able to support advanced services delivered through high-speed telecommunications networks.

The Association of African Universities (AAU), the UbuntuNet Alliance (UA), the West and Central Africa Research and Education Network (WACREN), the Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN) and the National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) in Africa are therefore calling for investments to support the development and strengthening of campus networks & research and education networks infrastructure and provision of online/remote teaching and learning platforms/tools for African Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The campus networks, supported by the national and regional research and education networks, are fundamental in transforming methods of teaching, learning and research as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic that has led to the closure of a large majority of African Higher Education Institutions.

This is the opportune time for all of us to come together to support our African HEIs keep their doors of learning, teaching and research open. As a consortium, we appeal to African Governments, Development and Funding Partners and Private Sector to support (financially & in terms of human resources) the development of strong campus networks and the strengthening of National Research & Education Networks so that African HEIs can effectively provide all types of digital services for remote teaching. We especially appeal to African Governments to prioritize the **'last mile'** solutions in the African countries so that the rural areas have equal access to the internet as those in the urban areas. We appeal to telecommunications companies in Africa to design affordable internet access packages for students as well as staff. We also ask all humanity to support each other to protect our communities and fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

Founded in 1967, the [Association of African Universities](#) is composed of 400 member Higher Education Institutions from the 5 regions of Africa. The AAU is the Voice of Higher Education in Africa.

ASREN is the [Arab States Research and Education Network](#) and is the association of 22 Arab region National Research and Education Networks (NRENs), as well as their strategic partners.

[UbuntuNet Alliance](#) is a regional association of 16 National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) in Eastern and Southern Africa.

WACREN is the [West and Central African Research and Education Network](#) of 15 National Research and Education Networks (NRENs).