

Press release
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Springboarding Nigerian youth to careers in digital economy with IT training and internships

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Siemens Stiftung has launched the first-of-its-kind hands-on Information Technology (IT) training project “BeMINT” for high-school students and recent school graduates in Lagos. Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and supported by the Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Nigeria (AHK), it trains 300 students and 60 teachers from low-income communities. Nigerian educational authorities, NGOs, and SMEs join forces to prepare the country’s next generation in vocational orientation improving their job prospects.

The program BeMINT (MINT is the German abbreviation for STEM: mathematics, IT, science and technology) is a year-long project providing IT and life-skills training for students and recent graduates at a training center in Lagos. When the training center is not used by students it will be utilized by companies for upskilling their employees. This will generate a regular flow of income that will be further reinvested to improve IT training for students from underserved communities. Siemens Stiftung is facilitating the training sessions in cooperation with the Lagos State Universal Basic Education Board, a local NGO Empowering Africans through Education Initiative (EAE), the Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Nigeria (AHK), and local private companies.

Chioma Aniagolu, Project Manager, EAE, said: “The Nigerian youth hold key to unlocking the country’s economic prospects. They need upskilling in IT to diversify our largely agrarian economy to the growth-enhancing digital sector. This project will contribute to improving educational equity and opportunity for the youth from low-income households through after-school STEM and digital literacy education training, ultimately improving their job prospects.”

100 students (50 girls and 50 boys) in high school and 200 school graduates (100 girls and 100 boys) have been split into small batches, each receiving training for six weeks. The beneficiaries will also attend workshops with private sector employees, giving them a taste of real-work scenarios through company visits, and learning how to use digital platforms to exchange information with potential employers. The program will culminate in internships for a large number of trainees in local companies. STEM workshops introducing start-up fundamentals are also included in the program.

“Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics – the links between theoretical knowledge and practical skills have never been more important. Siemens Stiftung’s approach will equip both students and teachers with this expertise. The project is tailored to meet the growing demand in Africa’s largest economy” Rafael Teck, Deputy Head of the Division for the Cooperation with Civil Society at BMZ explained.

Germany’s development cooperation aims to increase employment, especially for youth and women. It supports the Nigerian Government in improving the living conditions of the broader population and strengthening the transition to a climate-compatible and a socially equitable economy.

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“The demographic boom in Nigeria makes technical and vocational training crucial to integrate its youth into the labor market and combating poverty. We are thankful to BMZ for recognizing our field experience in Africa and tasking us with the implementation of IT and soft skills training for students and teachers from underserved communities in Lagos”, added Dr. Nina Smidt, Managing Director and Spokesperson of the Board at Siemens Stiftung.

Siemens Stiftung has been engaged in the vocational orientation of students and teachers in Nigeria since 2016, providing a range of teaching and learning materials for science and technology. So far, over 150 teachers and 30,000 school students have benefitted from the foundation’s innovative and inquiry-based resources.

Empowering Africans through Education Initiative

Empowering Africans through Education Initiative is an organization with a strong commitment to sustainable development through action. It is committed to supporting science and technology education in Nigeria and Africa at large. Their mission is to expand the interests, participation, and collaboration of young Africans in science and technology-related disciplines and to ensure their engagement in technological innovations and entrepreneurship in Africa. empoweringafricans.org

About Siemens Stiftung

As a non-profit foundation, Siemens Stiftung promotes sustainable social development, which is crucially dependent on access to basic services, high-quality education, and an understanding of culture. To this effect, the Foundation’s project work supports people in taking the initiative to responsibly address current challenges. Together with partners, Siemens Stiftung develops and implements solutions and programs to support this effort, with technological and social innovation playing a central role. The actions of Siemens Stiftung are impact-oriented and conducted transparently. siemens-stiftung.org/en