



**ADN** AGENCE POUR  
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PRÉSIDENTE DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE DU BÉNIN

## Digital transformation headlines a conference on research and education in West and Central Africa

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Accra, Ghana - Stakeholders of research and education in Africa will gather to deliberate on “Digital Transformation for Development” at WACREN 2021, the 6th Annual Conference, organised by the West and Central African Research and Education Network (WACREN), from March 15 to 19, 2021.*

The multi-session online rendezvous, hosted by the WACREN in partnership with the Agence pour le Développement du Numérique (ADN Benin), is expected to draw a wide range of participants. They include higher education policy and decision-makers, academia, National Research and Education Networks (NRENs), ministries and agencies in charge of higher education and digital transformation across the region.

Through insightful presentations and roundtable conversations by subject-matter experts, it is expected that a consensus will be reached concerning how higher education stakeholders can exploit digital infrastructure, resources and services to enhance development and growth.

Speaking ahead of the Conference, the CEO of WACREN, Dr Boubakar Barry, said this year’s theme is quite pertinent considering the urgency of digital transformation brought to the fore by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“It’s quite clear that the world, especially our education sector cannot proceed successfully into the future without recourse to digital. Digital has now become a need-

to-have, not a want-to-have. And this Conference will provide the needed platform for experts and stakeholders of the digital space to share ideas and exchange thoughts, to chart the way forward for the research and education sector in the region to undergo the needed transformation to survive the future,” Dr Barry said.

For the Director General of the Agence pour le Développement du Numérique, Serge Adjovi, this Conference provides an opportunity to focus on the new challenges in the higher education sector, especially during the Covid-19 health crisis.

Mr Adjovi says “In this trying time of sanitary crisis, it is obvious that the key challenge for higher education is to get access to the information. WACREN, with its broadband network is bringing part of the solution by connecting to research centers and databases across West and Central Africa, and even further to the rest of the world. Digital service platforms on top of the WACREN network is the next challenge”.

The Conference will make a case for the value and impact of NRENs across the WACREN region, especially as they work hard to support higher education institutions to survive future challenges against academic continuity.

WACREN 2021 is open for free registration and participation. Please visit the [Conference website](#) to register and see event details.

#### **About WACREN**

[WACREN](#) is the regional REN for West and Central Africa. Its vision is to build world-class infrastructure and services for the research and education community, for development. It focuses on availing affordable, high-speed connectivity to students and researchers in HEs for discovery, sharing and usage of knowledge for development. WACREN has digital services fashioned to foster collaboration among students and researchers and connect them to their peers across the world to produce useful knowledge to solve problems in society. WACREN works with NRENs to implement its activities at the national level while collaborating with sister RENs - ASREN and UA across Africa, under the [AfricaConnect](#) project (now in phase 3), funded by the European Union.

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## **About ADN Benin**

[ADN](#) Benin is a government agency in charge of implementing Benin government's digital strategy and flagship projects in the digital sector. ADN Benin works with a variety of stakeholders to achieve the government's ambition to make Benin, a hub of digital services in West Africa.

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