Code Week aims to train 5m African youth by 2025

NAIROBI, Kenya - SAP's ambitious goal of equipping 5 million African youth with basic coding skills by 2025 took a bold step forward following the release of the results of this year's Africa Code Week. Just less than 427,000 youth from 30 African countries completed training between 15 and 23 October, dramatically exceeding the initial participation target of 150,000 students.

Africa Code Week is a continent-wide initiative to spark the interest of African children, teenagers and young adults in software coding. Spearheaded by SAP in 2015 as part of its social investments to drive sustainable growth in Africa, Africa Code Week (ACW) is the story of hundreds of schools, teachers, ministers, community centres, code clubs, NGOs, businesses and non-profits getting together to give birth to the largest digital literacy initiative ever organised on the African continent.

The skills development initiative has surpassed expectations as it makes strides toward goal of training 5 million African youth by 2025.

"In East Africa we trained over 28,000 students, of which 37,5% were female," says Claire Gillissen-Duval, Global Project Lead for Africa Code Week. "With Africa contributing more than half of global population growth by 2050, the continent will play a leading role in the future global economy. By learning basic coding skills in an open, supportive environment, Africa's youth are able to take advantage of the immense opportunities presented by the Digital Revolution and become active players shaping the global economy."

Africa Code Week's long-term goal is to empower more than 200,000 teachers and positively impact the lives of 5 million children and youth within the next 10 years. Key partners include the Cape Town Science Centre and the Galway Education Centre. Strategic Partners include UNESCO, Google, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Ampion, King Baudouin Foundation, ALink Telecom, Camara Education and many more.

With the highest engagement ratio of 0,47% youth per 100,000 population and a total of 165,352 introduced to coding during this year's initiative, Morocco wins the continent-wide Africa Code Week 2016 award, retaining their top spot from last year. Cameroon was second with 0,26% per 100,000 youth engaged and a total of 62,918 introduced to coding, while Lesotho took third place, with an engagement rate of 0,24%.

Ethiopia won the regional award for East Africa, training 15,533 youth. Other highlights of Africa Code Week in the region include:

- The opening ceremony which was attended by the Ministers of Education, and ICT / Youth from Rwanda, UNESCO and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.
- The Irish Ambassador, Donal Cronin, launched Africa Code Week in Kampala.
- Malawi was added to the global Africa Code Week roster this year.
- The inaugural meeting of Africa Code Week Women in Technology took place in Kampala.

Brett Parker, managing director of SAP Africa says: "Africa Code Week 2016 exceeded all expectations and has made a significant impact on the skills development of Africa's youth. And with total female participation reaching 48,6%, this year's initiative also made inroads into gender equality in African ICT education. We will now build on the success of our first two years and, with the help of our partners, start preparing for Africa Code Week 2017."

Source: African Media Agency