



Next Level: re:publica celebrates a successful premiere in Accra

2,000 participants and 274 speakers from 30 countries discuss the state of a digital Africa under the motto "Next Level" at the first re:publica in Ghana's capital Accra.

Berlin, 19 December – On December 14 and 15, 2018, the re:publica – Europe's largest internet and digital society conference – took place in Ghana for the first time. At the two-day digital festival, which was organized with the Impact Hub Accra and supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) as its main partner, over 2,000 international participants came together in Accra to discuss questions such as net neutrality, data protection, civil rights, and other digital and societal issues such as „Access“, „Waste“, „Future“, „Female“, „Tech for good“ and „Data“ under the motto 'next level'. The majority of the 274 speakers came from throughout Africa. Around the globe, the community could follow along via live stream. In her opening speech, „What technology can't fix“, keynote speaker Nanjala Nyabola, author of „Digital Democracy, Analogue Politics: How the Internet Era is Transforming Politics“ in Kenya, illustrated the key limits but also the opportunities of technology. „It was great to be at re:publica Accra and to see so many leaders of various social and digital rights movements on the continent - and indeed from around the world.“, said Nanjala Nyabola. „I got a chance to share some of the ideas from my research with people from all over the world in a very open and warm atmosphere which I'm truly grateful for.“

Another highlight was a fireside chat with Prof. Nii Quaynor, who decisively shaped the internet in Africa and presented his vision of the networked continent. In his talk „How the Media Can Survive in a Facebook Economy“, Bernardino Avle, general manager of the local channel Citi FM & Citi TV, offered a comprehensive overview of the Ghanaian media landscape and its transformation through social media.

„What a finale for the year 2018! re:publica marks a new chapter with its first event on the African continent.“, said Andreas Gebhard, managing director and co-founder of re:publica GmbH, is pleased about the successful kick-off in Accra.

Tech for good

At re:publica Accra, the main partner, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), also announced the extension of the regional program "Make-IT" in Ghana. The program is a joint initiative of BMZ, companies, associations and social enterprises to improve the local framework conditions for technology start-ups in order to open up growth and employment potential for entrepreneurs in the digital sector of partner countries.

„The first edition of the re:publica on African soil was an absolute success. In Accra many new ideas were born and connections made between people who want to create digital solutions for Africa. Now it's time to implement the ideas. We are supporting this with a new digital center in Ghana, which will become a meeting place for start-ups, researchers and governments,“ said German Development Minister Gerd Müller (BMZ).

The 110-hour program of the re:publica in Accra (#rpAccra) was rounded out by art performances, exhibitions, journalism workshops, film screenings, yoga classes and live music - including rap-matador M.anifest and his band.

“The 21st century is African and digital society is global, so we all need to get onto the same level discourse and discuss eye-to-eye. With re:publica, we provide the right platform. One thing is clear: Accra has been a great success, and now let's all look forward to re:publica 19 in May in Berlin!”, said Andreas Gebhard.

You can find the highlights from re:publica Accra in images [here](#) as well as in videos [here](#) in the coming days.



About re:publica:

re:publica is Europe's biggest conference on internet and digital society. Here, bloggers cross paths with politicians, scientists meet entrepreneurs, artists meet activists. More than 19,500 people from 80 countries came together at re:publica 18 over the course of the three-day conference in Berlin to discuss current questions about digital society. The next edition of re:publica will take place from May 6 – 8, 2019, in Berlin. In addition, re:publica celebrated for the first time on African soil in Ghana's capital Accra from 14 to 15 December 2018. As a strategic partner of the “Deutschlandjahr USA” it will put on five events in the United States. The shareholders of re:publica GmbH, newthinking communications and Spreeblick Verlag have been actively engaged in the areas of network politics, digital culture and digital society for over a decade.

www.re-publica.com

About BMZ:

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) coordinates the German development cooperation. The BMZ supports at the moment about 380 digital projects in almost 80 countries worldwide. Through Initiatives such as “Digital Africa” BMZ provides about 150 Million Euros funding to digital projects. In the digital sector BMZ focuses currently on: building digital centers to foster sustainable development; applying technological innovation for sustainable development; on fostering public private partnership with the digital economy.

www.bmz.de

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