



# e-SHE Graduation, Progress and 2024 Plan Review

December 12 and 13, 2023



In partnership with





# **Meeting Report**

---

**Date:** December 12 and 13, 2023

**Venue:** Dire-Dawa University

**Agendas :**

- Graduation of Instructors with graduate certificate in Instructional Design and Performance Improvement and Master Class Training of Trainers Course
- Presentation and Discussion on e-SHE progress and 2024 plan.
- Discussion on Master class cascading plan and graduates' deployment strategy
- Quarterly progress review with the resource center universities, ICT directors and e-learning coordinators.

## Overview

The e-Learning for Strengthening Higher Education (e-SHE) Project graduated 32 higher education instructors with a graduate certificate in Instructional Design and Performance Improvement and 19 instructors in Master Class Training of Trainers course as part of its instructors' capacity-building initiative at Dire-Dawa University on December 12, 2023.

The 32 instructors attended the training at Arizona State University's (ASU) Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College for eight months. The 19 Masterclass ToTs underwent an intensive four-step training program, which equipped them with the necessary skills to cascade the Masterclass training within their respective universities.

The graduation ceremony was attended by project partners and stakeholders including representatives and officials of the Ministry of Education (MoE), Mastercard Foundation, ASU, Shayashone plc, Public Universities, the e-SHE project team, and members of the Dire-Dawa University Student e-Learning Advisory

## 1. Opening Remarks and Keynote Speeches

In his keynote speech, Dr. Ebba Mijena, CEO of the Academic Affairs at MoE said such graduation is the first of its kind in the Ethiopian higher education institutions and it is a milestone achievement in the journey towards the digitization of the education system.

He also added that building the capacity of instructors is crucial to enable them to adapt to the rapidly changing education landscape and to meet the educational demands of the modern student in the modern age.

Dr. Ebba also emphasized the importance of the e-SHE project's teachers capacity building training to the Ministry's Human resource development strategy. The program would also help fill the gaps in the education sector such as education access and digitalization and deliver policy outputs, learning management systems, and digital course content to underwent an intensive four-step training program, which equipped them with the necessary skills to cascade the Masterclass training within their respective universities.



In particular, Dr Ebba stressed that the graduates are expected to contribute a lot to modernizing the education system in terms of learning and teaching strategies, and in helping to bring significant changes in the education curriculum and pedagogy.



Samuel Yalew, Mastercard Foundation's Country Director in the opening remark noted that the graduation of the trainees is a small but significant milestone in the partnership the Mastercard Foundation initiated with the Ministry of Education during COVID-19 to address the challenge of reaching young people as there were no alternative ways of delivering education at the time.

"It took a long time to develop the partnership but finally we made it happen in a way that is going to transform our education system," he added.

As to him, one of the partnership's outcomes will be to democratize education in Ethiopia. It would enable students who are attending higher education in different universities to access the same kind of educational content if this partnership is implemented in the way that is envisioned.

"All partners and stakeholders are working towards one goal, which is to make sure that those young university students are equipped with the right and relevant skills and receive quality education in line with the Foundation's Young Africa Works Strategy which aims to enable 30 million youth to find job opportunities and ensure sustainable livelihood across Africa by 2030," Samuel said adding "Our goal for Ethiopia is 10 million of which 70 percent will be women. As we speak, we created 1.3 million jobs across the country in different sectors."

Dire-Dawa University which hosted the graduation ceremony is one of the e-SHE project's resource center universities where state-of-the-art multimedia studios are to be established.



**Ato Samuel Yalew**

Country Director, Mastercard Foundation



**Dr. Ubah Adem**

President, Dire-Dawa University

Dr. Ubah Adem, President of Dire-Dawa University said that the university has been undertaking efforts to facilitate and realize technology-based teaching and learning processes and to make research outputs and community based services accessible. For this to happen, she said, the university has been engaged to put in place information and communication technology infrastructure. Its massive investment in setting up ICT infrastructure and establishing data centers and smart classrooms enabled it to be among the five resource center universities in the project representing universities in the eastern part of the country.

She also appreciated partners for their support in the university's effort to digitalize education underlining the capacity-building initiative in terms of instructors' training as it will have an immense role in the digitalization endeavor.

Dr. Zelalem Assefa, CEO of ICT and Digital Education at MoE, said after making extensive investments to ensure access to education in the past years, the government will reduce its focus on physically expanding higher education institutions in the coming 10 years, and hence, he pointed out that digital education will be one of the main options to improve access and quality of education. He also urged the graduates to reaffirm their commitment to support the digitization of education in their respective institutions applying the knowledge they acquired which required a huge investment.



## 2. Reflections of Graduates

In their speeches representing the Instructional Design and ToTs graduates respectively, Tseganesh Moges from Wachamo University and Mahdi Ismael from Jigjiga University respectively said the training has a significant impact on their personal and professional development.

“We acquired new skills, knowledge, and a deeper understanding of Instructional Design and online class facilitation with a particular focus on e-learning.”

Tseganesh said adding “We have engaged in rigorous intellectual discourse pushing the boundaries of our knowledge. We venture into the implementation of the knowledge we acquired to introduce digital education as the course has enabled us to address the real-world challenges of educating learners with different backgrounds.”





### 3. Arizona state university message and certificate handover

Elizabeth Gordon, Assistant Director at Arizona State University, delivered a graduation message representing Team ASU. Following her message, Ato Samuel, Dr. Ebba, and Elizabeth presented the certificates to the graduates. Elizabeth also took a moment to personally congratulate the graduates afterward.



Certificate Handover

### 4. Presentation and Discussion on the e-SHE Project Progress and 2024 Plan

The e-SHE Project Program Director, Yared Sertse also presented the major milestones of the year in terms of project deliverables. During 2023, Yared stated that the project finalized the preparation of the national e-Learning Policy which serves as a framework for introducing e-learning in Ethiopia's higher learning institutions. In addition, the project also finalized the production of two model digital courses (Mathematics for Natural Sciences and Emerging Technologies) and the configuration of microsites for resource centers and champion universities.

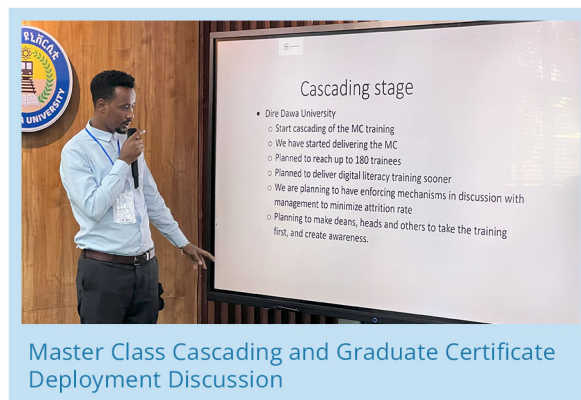
Dr. Getahun Mekonen from the e-SHE team presented the e-SHE project 2024 plan. He stated that the major lessons learned in 2023 were a harmonized plan among stakeholders and partners such as MoE, ASU, and e-SHE as well as university-led execution of the project activities are effective means to achieve accelerated and sustained project implementation.



Discussion on the 2024 Plan

On the second day of the event, Muluneh Atinaf from the e-SHE team presented a paper on the cascading of the master class and the graduate class training and the project team held a fruitful discussion with the graduates on the matter. Muluneh said in cascading the training, due emphasis needs to be given to the inclusion of diversity, and engagement of stakeholders.

In the session, the new Instructional Designing and Master Class Training of Trainers graduates took part in a group discussion and presentation session where they reflected their views on solidifying and introducing the e-learning initiative in their respective universities.



The graduates reflected the following points:

- The need for the preparation of e-learning documents (policies, directives, and manuals) at the institutional level to facilitate the implementation of the e-learning project.
- The delivery of Master Class and Graduate Class training at their respective institutions.
- The importance of raising awareness among the higher education community regarding the e-learning project.
- Specifically, they highlighted that for the project to succeed, university leadership needs to be on board and project stakeholders have a huge role to play in this regard.

Members of the Dire-Dawa University Student Advisory Group also shared their perspectives and demands regarding the project. They highly emphasized student participation in the implementation of the project and wanted to make sure that the opinions and voices of students were heard in shaping the project.

## 5. Quarterly Project Progress Review with Resource Center e-Learning Coordinators and ICT Directors

The e-SHE project team and ASU's representative Elizabeth Gordon also discussed the 2023 progress report and 2024 plan with the e-Learning Coordinators, ICT Directors, and the new Instructional Design and ToT graduates of the five resource center universities.

On the occasion, the e-Learning Coordinators of Addis Ababa, Jimma, Hawassa, and Dire-Dawa universities presented their respective quarterly performance reports and the 2024 plan in terms of each project thematic area – Institutionalization and Policy, Capacity Building, LMS/SIS, Infrastructure, and Model Course Production.



During their presentation, they highlighted:

- Their effort to align their e-learning project plans with the overall annual plans of their respective universities.
- Their plans to train academic staff and students and nominate ICT Staff for training
- Capacity building achievements in terms of training and student success suite courses' promotion
- The construction process of the multi-media studios and onboarding of two multimedia personnel
- And the significant progress made in student institutional email creation.

As the next priorities and way forward, they emphasized:

- The importance of speeding up the policy and guideline approval and implementation in their universities as it solves several structural and procedural issues.
- The engagement of the student advisory groups in ensuring the active participation of students
- The coordination & implementation of the upcoming awareness creation and account activation campaign
- Aligning the e-learning plans with their respective universities' plans.
- The need to make sure the issue of gender balance in terms of the number of trainees.

The e-SHE team also appreciated the progress they made after their previous quarterly reports and pledged to address their concerns with concerned stakeholders.



Discussion with e-Learning Coordinators and ICT Directors