

Chalkboard computer teacher is international conference star

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Eeek! Akoto's pupils had never seen a computer before and had no idea that a mouse could be anything other than an animal until he drew them an example on his chalkboard

A Ghanaian schoolteacher who used chalkboard drawings to teach computer science because his farming village had no laptops found himself the star of a global conference in Singapore.

Richard Appiah Akoto, who drew coloured chalk diagrams to teach impoverished rural pupils how a PC works, rubbed shoulders with Silicon Valley hotshots in the glitzy Asian tech hub.

Akoto, who had never been outside of Ghana before, said he was invited to the Microsoft-sponsored meet after video of his jury-rigged lessons went viral.

Facebook users delighted in his intricately detailed [computer](#) screen—replete with toolbar icons—and his precisely decorated keyboard and [mouse](#), which he drew for children who had never seen a computer before.

"Then I will just draw the mouse with the cord and I would say this is the mouse, this is the body and this is the tail of the mouse," he said.

As a teacher of information and communication technology (ICT) at a junior high school in the impoverished Sekyedomase [farming village](#) in Ghana, Akoto said he had to improvise because the school had no computer and his own laptop had broken down.

After pictures of the class were uploaded, the global response was immediate, with pledges of donations pouring in.

"People started calling me... I said what trouble have I created for myself. But it's all good. At the end of the day, something good has come out from it," he said.

One donor from Britain donated a laptop, and a Ghanaian IT firm gave five desktops to the school and another [laptop](#) for Akoto.

When the students saw the computers for the first time, they were excited but they already knew the parts from his drawings, Akoto said.

After a three-day conference in Singapore, at which he was given a standing ovation, the 33-year-old said the donations meant he would never have to resort to a chalkboard again.

"I hope to get more computers so that every student will be behind one," he said Friday.

"I also hope that the other surrounding schools who are also lacking like my [school](#), we hope to get more so that we also give them (computers) to help in their teaching of ICT."

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