



### Industry

Higher education

### Daily Use

- Student lectures
- Multi-point conferencing
- Recording and streaming lessons
- Broadcasts the university's graduation ceremony and the student research symposium to different locations within the university's campus
- To develop an e-library

### Solution

- a cost-effective video conferencing solution that would deliver visual access to geographically-remote students and lecturers, other universities and relevant government departments

### Results and Benefits

- The ability to link with other universities throughout the country
- Allows external professionals to deliver lectures
- Expand the University's distance education programme
- Offers short term training to the general public

## Polycom solution helps Ethiopian university deliver enhanced educational services

### Overview

With rapid growth and an increasing student population, Ethiopia's Jimma University was faced with a staff recruitment problem exacerbated by a critical scarcity of skilled resources. As a result, the university experienced delayed semesters and exams, late academic years, increased teaching costs and other administrative issues that impeded its ability to fulfil its education remit. This situation forced university administrators to seek a more economical and flexible solution.

With government funding, the university decided to implement a cost-effective video conferencing solution that would enable it to connect with geographically-remote students and lecturers, other universities and relevant government departments.

After reviewing several options available on the market, Girum Ketema, Director of ICT Development at Jimma University chose a Polycom solution based on Polycom® HDX® 9004, Polycom RMX® 2000, Polycom RSS™ 2000 and Video Media Centre™ (VMC™) 1000.

The systems were installed in classrooms and offices by Polycom Service Partner, FVC, the leading Value Added Distributor in the Middle East and North Africa region with the help of local Authorised Polycom Reseller, Africa Connect Ethiopia LLC.

Operating across the university's VPN network, the Polycom video conferencing solution is expanding the reach of its distance learning programme and providing an enhanced syllabus to students.

### A centre of academic excellence

Located in Jimma, 354km south-west of Addis Ababa, Jimma University is a public institution of higher education created in December 1999 by the amalgamation of Jimma College of Agriculture (established in 1952), and Jimma Institute of Health Sciences (established in 1983). The combined campuses host over 20,000 students.

As a centre of academic excellence, integrating training, research and extension/outreach programmes, Jimma University has seen its student intakes increasing since its establishment. However, as with many other developing countries, Ethiopia faces a critical scarcity of teaching staff and skilled resources.

In 2008, the University decided to implement a comprehensive visual communication network that would allow it to conduct video lectures as well as to communicate with other universities and governmental departments.

According to Girum Ketema, Director of ICT Development, at Jimma University, their selection criteria for video conferencing vendors were primarily based on the quality of the product and the experience of the solution provider. It was on these criteria, added Ketema that: "Polycom outweighed all the other brands" and ultimately chose them to provide a comprehensive video conferencing solution.

*"The new system is absolutely fantastic and provides incredible video and voice quality for our users."*

*Girum Ketema, Director of ICT Development, Jimma University*

*“The system has brought unexpected benefits to the university, enabling us to expand our distance education programme and offer short term training to the general public.”*

*Girum Ketema, Director of ICT Development, Jimma University*

### The Polycom implementation

In collaboration with FVC and Africa Connect Ethiopia LLC, Jimma University deployed five Polycom HDX 9004 systems in classrooms in the first phase of the implementation programme. This high definition (HD) dual-screen telepresence system offers flexibility in terms of audio-visual integration, powerful functionality and future-proof technology.

The University also deployed Polycom RMX 2000 real-time media conference platforms to allow for multipoint conferencing with other campuses and to connect 10-12 classrooms at the same time, thus expanding the University's capabilities for distance learning.

“The system's installation and integration with the university network initially created complications,” said Girum Ketema, Director of ICT Development at Jimma University. “However, with the kind co-operation of FVC and its local partner, the problem was overcome and the university's staff was trained in the operation and maintenance of the system.”

In addition, Jimma University invested in the Polycom RSS 2000 centralized server to record lectures and stream them to students across the network. The University also invested in the Polycom Video Media Centre (VMC) 1000 to edit classroom material, syllabus etc and to develop an e-library for future reference.

### Results and benefits

Once implemented, the Polycom solution enabled the University to link with nine other universities throughout the country through a VPN network called ETHiopian Education and Research NETwork (or EthERNet).

“The new system is absolutely fantastic and provides incredible video and voice quality for our users,” Ketema added. “Aside from allowing external professionals to deliver lectures via visual

communication, the system has also brought unexpected benefits to the university, enabling us to expand our distance education programme and offer short term training to the general public.”

One of the first tasks for the new Polycom video conferencing system was to broadcast the university's graduation ceremony and the student research symposium to different locations within the university's campus.

The Operation Theater of the university hospital is now connected to a lecture hall using Polycom systems. Students are now able to watch surgeons performing Surgeries from a different room. The University is now looking for Pathologists from abroad to have a similar service to their Pathology department, they have tested the system by connecting a Microscope to the Polycom videoconferencing system, and the results are very encouraging.

### Future plans

The University plans to deploy the system in more classrooms and expand its syllabus to take advantage of the new capabilities.

Ketema also confirmed that the University plans to link its VPN with the wider bureaucratic WOREDA1 network so as to extend their reach beyond Jimma for distance learning students.

““We plan to expand the video conferencing system to cover the entire university including new buildings,” Ketema concluded. “Among the major advantages of the system is that the University not only saves time and money, but is also able to regularise schedules, syllabuses, and classes.”

### Partner

FVC

[www.fvc.com](http://www.fvc.com)



### Product Listing

- Telepresence and Video Conferencing:
- Polycom® HDX® 9004

### Infrastructure

- Polycom RMX® 2000

### Services and Support

- Polycom Professional Services Elite Support Service
- Polycom RSS™ 2000
- Polycom Video Media Centre™ (VMC™) 1000

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