

EDITORIAL

MICROSCALE AND LOW-COST CHEMISTRY

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The African Journal of Chemistry Education (AJCE), launched on the very first day of the IYC-2011, would like to join the chemists worldwide in saying GOODBYE to IYC-2011. But what does that goodbye mean to all of us and to AJCE in particular?

I personally believe that the GOODBYE is the beginning of implementing or putting into practice the promises we made during IYC-2011 period through national, regional and international meetings to enhance Chemistry's contributions to sustainable development. It is clear that IYC-2011 was set to serve as a springboard for, among other things, promoting the public understanding of chemistry in meeting world needs and for generating enthusiasm for the creative future of chemistry. It is also clear that such intentions are long-term goals and cannot be accomplished in just one year time.

AJCE, therefore, tries to bring to the attention of chemists and chemistry educators in Africa in particular strategies, case studies, and best practices that can possibly lead to the achievement of the IYC-2011 intentions.

One such strategy is the use of microscale and low-cost chemistry in African schools and colleges. In brief terms, microscale chemistry is an approach to teaching Chemistry by working with small quantities of chemical substances. Microscale chemistry is also called small-scale chemistry, which is a way to reduce the amounts needed of expensive chemicals in experimentation. It can support environmental protection by producing less laboratory waste.

Low-cost Chemistry, on the other hand, refers to a diversity of tools used for teaching and learning purposes and at the same time constructed using locally available materials at low or no cost.

This *Special Issue* titled **Microscale and Low-Cost Chemistry** presents the works and views of Ibanez (Mexico), Bell and Bradley (South Africa), UNESCO-Science Sector (Paris), Sileahi Yitbarek (Ethiopia) and Temechehn Engida (Ethiopia). Whereas the first three are on microscale chemistry, the last two are specifically on low-cost chemistry.

As you will recognize from your reading of this *Special Issue*, UNESCO has been mentioned repeatedly in almost all the papers. This indicates the importance UNESCO has been giving to the development of science education in general and microscale and low-cost chemistry in particular throughout the worlds, with a focus of developing countries.

Enjoy reading the papers!