KIX EMAP Webinar 22
CONCEPT NOTE

KIX EMAP Webinar 22: The Future of Education Technology in South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa

Date & Time: Wednesday, 04 December 2024, 2:00-3:30 PM (CET/Geneva)

The webinar will be conducted in English with interpretation in Arabic

Countries in South Asia, such Bangladesh and Pakistan, are focusing on scaling up digital education infrastructure to support equitable access to learning. In Bangladesh the government's Vision 2021 included a push for digital education, with e-learning platforms like "Shikkhok Batayon" aimed at teacher development and student learning (UNESCO, 2020). In Pakistan, under the Digital Pakistan Policy, the government is integrating ICT in education, including the use of digital content and learning management systems, to bridge gaps in quality education across the country (UNICEF, 2023). In the Middle East and North Africa, the focus on EdTech is largely aligned with national efforts to modernize education systems and foster digital skills for future economic development. The Egypt Vision 2030 includes significant investments in digital education, with platforms like Egyptian Knowledge Bank offering open access to a wide range of educational resources. The Ministry of Education has also expanded the use of tablets and online assessments to modernize the learning experience (Moustafa, Elghamrawy, King, & Hao, 2022; & UNESCO, 2023). Whereas in Tunisia, the country is embracing EdTech as part of its broader National Digital Strategy. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with international organizations like the World Bank, is focusing on digital platforms, such as the Virtual School of Tunisia, to enhance access to education, particularly in remote areas (World Bank, 2023). As for Jordan, as part of the Education Reform for Knowledge Economy Project, Jordan has been focusing on digital transformation in education by enhancing ICT infrastructure and integrating EdTech tools to improve student outcomes, especially in marginalized areas (Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship, 2020; & United Nations, 2023).

Regardless of the diverse national agendas in SAMENA, there are common themes like equitable Access where there is a shared focus on closing the digital divide, particularly in rural and underprivileged areas, to ensure that all students have access to online education. Teacher Training and Capacity Building is also getting attention as many governments are investing in the professional development of teachers, ensuring they can effectively use technology in classrooms. SAMENA countries are also leveraging collaborations with private EdTech companies and international organizations (e.g., UNESCO, World Bank) to expand digital learning infrastructure. Digital transformation policies often emphasize the importance of data security and student privacy as online platforms and digital content become more prevalent.

Yet, there are persisting challenges like infrastructure gaps especially that many rural and underserved regions lack the necessary internet connectivity or digital tools. Moreover, despite the push for digital education, many teachers and students still lack the digital skills required to fully benefit from EdTech. Also, ensuring that these technologies are not only accessible but also sustainable over time, with continuous funding and support.

Thus, the primary objective of this webinar is to bring together policymakers, educators, researchers, and EdTech innovators to discuss the role of technology in reshaping education in South Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa. The event will:

- Share insights into current EdTech trends and solutions in SAMENA sub-region.

- Explore the challenges and opportunities of integrating technology in general education.

- Discuss best practices for sustainable EdTech implementation.

- Facilitate knowledge-sharing between stakeholders from different sub-region countries.

References

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