International Telecommunication Union

Telecommunication Development Bureau

"Smart Learning in Five Arab Countries"	
Location(s)	Five Countries in the Arab Region
Expected duration	3 years
Estimated Budget	Total: USD 500,000
Implementing Agency	International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
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Brief Description:

The aim of this project is to provide assistance to five countries in the Arab region on formulating their national strategy on Smart Learning in addition to transforming five schools in each country as a pilot in implementation of the adopted national strategy. This regional project will be implemented with a multistakeholder approach in line with the Arab Regional Initiative Smart Learning Initiative. Furthermore, the selected countries will be based on a the received requests for assistance from the countries in the region. The ITU already received an official request from Palestine and so it will be the first country to receive this assistance.

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

There is an increased awareness in Arab region in recent years towards the need for improving ICTs in education. In this context, the Arab League countries adopted Arab Regional Initiative on Smart Learning at the ITU's World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2014[1]. This resolve has seen further

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[1] http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Conferences/WTDC/WTDC14/Pages/default.aspx

support in the form of United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals[2] that aim to achieve universal primary education and the Qingdao Declaration on transforming education[3], undertaken by the Ministers of Education worldwide at the International Conference on ICT and Post-2015 Education in 2015.

Within that framework the ITU/Alecso Smart Learning Forum was organized from 14-16 December 2015 in Dubai, UAE hosted by the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority and Mohamed Bin Rashed Smart Learning Programme on Smart Learning. The forum was also organized in collaboration with Intel and Millennium@EDU. Participants of the forum were officials from the Ministries of Education and Ministries of Information and Communication Technologies. In addition to a variety of stakeholders relevant to smart learning representing private sector companies, international and regional organizations, and academia. The forum adopted a number of recommendations aimed at promoting Smart Learning in the Arab region. The final report of the forum can be found on the forum website:
http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/ArabStates/Pages/Events/2015/SL/default.aspx

One of the key recommendations adopted by the forum was as follows:
> Encourage countries in the Arab region to adopt national strategies in Smart Learning in line with the Guidelines on Formulating National Strategies on Smart Learning that will be published by the ITU, ALECSO, in cooperation with Intel and Millinium@edu, which was published its draft on the website of the Forum for receiving the comments of the stakeholders before 15 February 2016, in order to adopt and translate into Arabic during the first half of 2016.

2. Overall Objective

In line with the background elaborated above, this project will aim at promoting smart learning in the Arab region by assisting five countries to formulate national strategies on smart learning. Furthermore, assistance will be provided to the selected countries to transform five schools as a pilot in implementation of the adopted national strategy.

3. Project Strategy

Based on the above objective, the project will aim to formulate partnerships with interested stakeholders from international and regional organizations, donors, civil society and relevant private sector companies. The aim of this partnership will be to conduct a synchronized regional approach to promoting smart learning in the Arab region. The partners involved will dedicate resources to implement this project in the selected countries. The specific roles for each of the partners in addition to the governments will be elaborated and defined within the process of formulating this project.

4. Expected Results

- Formulation of national strategies in smart learning for five countries in the Arab region;

- Transformation of five schools in each of the five selected countries as a pilot in implementation of the adopted national strategy.

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[2] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300
[3] http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/resources/in-focus-articles/qingdao-declaration

- Creating an enabling environment for investments in smart learning in the selected countries

5. Indicators

- Number of countries assisted to formulate national strategies on smart learning.
- Number of schools transformed to be smart schools.

6. Activities

The following key activities will be undertaken:

- Identification of the resource requirements to be mobilized under the project;
- Forming partnerships with key stakeholders with identified roles for each partner;
- Develop plan for assistance in selected countries;
- Implement this project starting with Palestine;
- Monitoring and evaluation of project implementation;

7. Inputs

The project implementation will depend on the successful mobilization of resources (human, material and financial). It is envisaged that the project will require funding to the tune of **USD 500,000**.

ITU:

IN-CASH Contribution: The ITU will allocate a small portion of the required financial resources for the project as seed funding for the project.

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION: ITU will provide skills, Identifying experts and consultants in the region to work with and care and diligence to ensure the success of the project.

Beneficiary Countries:

IN-CASH Contribution: The governments may be required to allocate a quarter of the required financial resources for the project to demonstrate commitment to the outcomes of the project.

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION: Assist in identifying regional needs, Hosting-training programs conducted under the project; and Promoting the program in the region.

Partners:

Cash CONTRIBUTION: The Partners will provide funding support for the implementation of the project.

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION: Assist in the implementation of the project deliverables.

8. Risks

The risks include failure to raise the funding resources required to finance this project. This risk could be mitigated by using the ITU wide network of partners through which this project could be sold. ITU also has in-house capabilities for fundraising activities and it is the intention to activate these capabilities for this project.

Furthermore, political instability in the Region may militate against resource mobilization efforts or even implementation. Also, lack of support for the project at national and regional level may hamper the implementation.

9. Sustainability

The project is designed to promote a long term commitment by the selected countries to transform its education system by adopting national strategies on smart learning. Furthermore, the transformed small number of schools will shed light on the opportunities and challenges that smart learning may provide.

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10. Management

The project will be managed by the ITU Project Manager in close collaboration with country counterparts and partners yet to be identified, as well as representatives from regional organizations and some beneficiary countries.

The ITU shall be the implementing agency, and shall be responsible for the recruitment of experts.

11. Budget

The proposed budget of the project is $ USD **500,000** and this includes expert recruitment's, procurement of IT devices for schools and travel.