Asia Pacific Ministerial Forum on ICT in Education 2013
26-28 November 2013
Shenzhen, People’s Republic of China

Co-organized by
UNESCO Asia and the Pacific Regional Bureau for Education
Intel Asia Pacific
Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China

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Theme: Fostering Favorable Policy Environments for Mainstreaming Sustainable Innovations

1. Background:

The Asia-Pacific Ministerial Forum on ICT in Education (AMFIE) has been annually organized by UNESCO Asia and the Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok) since 2010. The AMFIE has been a platform for policy-level dialogue and sharing of promising models and experiences in developing, adapting and monitoring ICT in Education policies and practices (see Annex A for more details on the three past AMFIEs).

UNESCO pursues programmes and initiatives not only leverage the potentials of ICT as a gateway for quality education for all but also strengthen national capacity to foster favourable policy environments that are relevant and measurable, provide clear system goals and progressions, and support innovative ICT-enhanced educational practices.

In line with these efforts, UNESCO Bangkok takes into consideration the diverse nature of countries in the Asia and Pacific region in their political structures, social contexts, and educational goals that result in different levels of capacities and approaches to integrating ICT into education. Some focus on using ICT to increase access to expand educational opportunities while others move on to improving learning outcomes by facilitating technology-enhanced student-centred learning environments. Some demonstrate ambitious plans and abrupt progress in transitioning from traditional to technology-supported education practices while others launch rather cautious changes and incremental innovations through multi-phased pilot field implementations.

Despite the varied approaches to integrating ICT into education, most educational innovations are still seem fragmented – appearing either disconnected from the greater realities of the classroom, isolated from national educational visions and goals or bearing limited features to be mainstreamed to open up new progression paths. On the one hand, a number of pocket innovations at the field level are confined to a limited scale despite their potential to be scaled up, often due to lack of favorable policy environment and support. On the other hand, many political initiatives are prematurely scaled up, rushing into a scale or even into the roll-out stage without deliberating essentially interconnected factors at the implementation level, e.g. teachers, curriculum, leadership, technical support, and so on. More often than not, these fragmented innovations end up having a short life span for not being able to reach a wider scale of audience or are hard to sustain with no follow-through from the top. In view of this, important questions need to be addressed: How can

UNESCO 36/CS Approved (2012-2013) – Major Programme 1 Education (sect. 01003, p22)
policies help sustain educational innovation? How can innovative practices inform the education policies? What optimum level of balance is required from the top (policy) and from the bottom (practice)?

Built upon such reflections from the landscape of ICT in Education policy and practices from the region, the AMFIE 2013 is designed to contribute to the discourse on having a healthy balance between top-down strategic policy interventions and bottom-up field-level initiatives to enable relevant, effective, and sustainable ICT-supported educational innovations to flourish and expand. Therefore, the theme of the AMFIE 2013 is “Fostering Favourable Policy Environments for Mainstreaming Sustainable Innovations”. It is expected that the AMFIE 2013 will cross-fertilize significant evidences from various country cases and explore local/regional/global partnerships that foster such innovations to guide member states in adapting, planning, implementing, and monitoring appropriate innovations in their local contexts.

This year’s AMFIE will bring together three key actors in mainstreaming ICT in educational systems: policy makers, researchers, and practitioners. Focused ministerial-level discussion and participatory reflections will promote dialogue among policy, research, and practice. Discussions are intended to respond to the above questions, and thereby enrich ideas on how successful cases of innovations in a favourable policy environment could address localized issues and national goals and help in increasing relevance of new policies in education. Discussions aim to conclude with ideas on evidence-based policy options and well-balanced top-down and bottom-up actions for mainstreaming sustainable innovations.

In addition, key players from the region will be invited to showcase successfully implemented ICT in Education innovations via a Gallery Walk. Participatory workshop sessions are likewise scheduled in the morning of the 3rd day (28 November 2013) to provide country delegates with opportunities to update themselves on innovative policy development practices. Detailed information on these workshops will be disseminated soon.

UNESCO Bangkok, in partnership with Intel and the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, will consolidate these discussions as well as bring key reflections and recommendations forward through the AMFIE 2013 Outcome Document.

2. Themes of AMFIE 2013

The main theme of AMFIE 2013 is “Fostering Favourable Policy Environments for Mainstreaming Sustainable Innovation”.

Thematic deliberations will look into ways to establish appropriate policy environments where innovations can thrive. The innovation’s scale of depth, sustainability, spread and ownership\(^2\) as well as the different cases in mainstreaming successful school- or field-level innovations to national level would be relevantly considered in the discussions. Issues and opportunities will be discussed and analyzed through the lenses of policy, teacher professional development, research and innovations, organized around the following sub-themes:

\(^2\) Coburn (2003) highlighted that traditional notion of scale focuses more on increasing quantity of involvement; thereby suggesting a framework for re-conceptualizing scale and framing innovation around four dimensions: depth, sustainability, spread and ownership.
1) **Fostering Institutional Change with Policy Interventions**
   - as enablers for facilitating inter-directional reforms in the education system, thereby enriching ground-based, data-informed innovations rather than only through conventional roles of top-down approaches

2) **Scaling-up Teacher Professional Development to Support Students’ 21st Century Skills**
   - as a continuum for the systemic development and follow-ups, monitoring and enhancing teacher competencies in the effective and innovative use of ICT that help foster students’ 21st century skills as well as supporting complementary factors that encourage sustainable innovative practices among teachers

3) **Promoting Exchange of Discourse among Different Education Stakeholders at Macro-, Meso- and Micro-Levels for Up-scaling**
   - as a framework for up-scaling school-level reforms and innovations based on rigorous data and scientific methodologies on educational outcomes; and for facilitating discursive dialogue among policy makers, researchers and implementers (e.g. Rep. of Korea’s KERIS, Singapore’s NIE, Malaysia’s EPRD)

4) **Mainstreaming School Innovations: Case Studies**
   - as windows for taking stock of school innovations (relating to technology-assisted school-wide policies, curriculum, pedagogy, delivery, assessment, examination, school management, educational resources, learning environment, knowledge management) and synergizing collective efforts in scaling up and deep-scaling innovations into national level

3. **Forum Objectives:**

   1) Create platforms for sharing policies, challenges, experiences and innovations across countries in the Asia and Pacific region and beyond; and
   2) Provide regional directions and country-level support towards designing a policy-driven roadmap for scaling up ICT-enabled educational innovations at the school level, to cover:
      - Identification of scalable and sustainable ICT-enabled educational models and innovations in the Asia and Pacific region;
      - Fostering multi-directional dialogues on policy, research and practice for scaling up and deep-scaling ICT-enabled educational innovations at the national level;
      - Examination of existing country opportunities, limitations and untapped resources in implementing scalable innovations against present state of policy, capacity or partnership.

4. **Expected Output**

   An AMFIE Outcome Document will be produced and disseminated, to include:
   - Session Synthesis Reports
   - A compilation of Case Studies on ICT-enabled School Innovations
   - Policy Recommendations from workshop

5. **Dates and Venue**

   The forum will be held in Shenzhen, P.R. China from 26-28 November 2013.
6. Participation

The organizers will invite Ministers of Education and senior officials on education technology from at least 27 UNESCO member states across the Asia and Pacific region. Speakers and panel discussants representing experts, government officials, managers, researchers, and practitioners from the region and beyond will be also invited to share their experiences.

1. Australia
2. Bangladesh
3. Bhutan
4. Brunei Darussalam
5. Cambodia
6. China
7. India
8. Indonesia
9. Japan
10. Kazakhstan
11. Korea
12. Lao PDR
13. Malaysia
14. Maldives
15. Mongolia
16. Myanmar
17. Nepal
18. New Zealand
19. Pakistan
20. Philippines
21. Samoa
22. Singapore
23. Sri Lanka
24. Thailand
25. Timor-Leste
26. Vietnam
27. Vietnam
ANNEX A

SCOPE & ACHIEVEMENTS OF PAST AMFIEs

As basis for organizing the fourth AMFIE, achievements and lessons from past discussions were recorded and considered:

**AMFIE 2012 (jointly organized with Intel and the Ministry of Education of Thailand)**

**Date/Venue:** 9-11 September 2012 in Bangkok, Thailand

**Theme**  
*The Power of ICT in Education Policies: Implications for Educational Practices*

**Participants**  
Minister-level participants from 20 member states

**Aims**
- Provide a platform for sharing policy, experiences, good practices, and lessons learned from ICT in Education programs and practices;
- Strengthen the network of ICT in Education stakeholders and policy makers in member states;
- Raise awareness of some of the useful tools to help Member States build capacity in developing robust ICT policies; and
- Initiate focused reflection on key issues and concerns on ICT for education as well as future activities on the application of ICT to achieve education for all.

**Sub-Themes**
1. The Power of ICT Policies: Promising Cases and Lessons Learnt
2. ICT Policies and Smart Partnerships for ICT Infrastructure
3. ICT Policies and Teacher Development
4. ICT Policies and School Innovation and Emerging Technologies

**Highlights**
- Specific needs and challenges were shared by high-level officials from participating countries, opening up multi-directional dialogues to initiate or strengthen partnerships between emerging and high-performing countries.
- Recommendations were drawn on three key areas including Policies, Practice and Knowledge sharing.
  - For policy, recommendations were made on engaging in holistic, multi-sector and multi-year planning, enhancing public-private partnerships for strategic policy implementation, adopting competency frameworks and prioritization of data collection and consideration of societal costs of the long term use of technology.
  - To facilitate interventions in practice, it was emphasized that ICT can be a lever to achieve quality education for all. There is a need to build skills within the teaching body as a route towards achieving shared vision. Utilization of demonstration schools can provide means for testing and spreading innovations.
  - Using pilots and evaluations, sharing of data, policies and programs and thinking beyond borders were suggested to advance knowledge sharing.

**More info:**  
AMFIE 2011 (jointly organized with Intel, Department of Education of the Philippines, SEAMEO Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology (SEAMEO Innotech), Korea Education & Research Information Service (KERIS), and the World Bank).

Date/Venue: 13 – 14 July 2011 in Makati City, Philippines

Theme Evaluation and Assessment: Effective and Safe Use of ICT in Education

Participants Minister-level participants from 19 member states

Aims
- Strengthen the network of ICT in Education stakeholders and policy makers through effectively engaging them in dialogue on key issues relating to ICT in education;
- Provide platform for sharing policy, experiences, good practices, and lessons learned from ICT in Education programs and practices in their respective countries; and
- Initiate focused reflection on key issues and concerns on ICT for education as well as future activities on the application of ICT to achieve education for all.

Sub-Themes
1. Monitoring and Evaluating ICT in Education at the National Level
2. Cyber Risks for Students and Teachers
3. Assessment of 21st Century Skills and New Learning Outcomes

Highlights
- Policy-makers engaged in idea and experience exchanges with high officials from various countries during Ministerial Dialogue, reflecting back to the points raised in the experts’ keynotes.
- It was realized that UNESCO member states in the Asia and Pacific are greatly diverse in their stages of educational development, strengths and challenges, and such diversity sometimes occurs even within the country.
- Governments face a wide range of hurdles in education development; thus interaction among decision makers was considered highly useful for the participants as it was a golden opportunity to learn from others’ past successes or lessons, and to foster relationships that could bring about strategic collaborations.
- A side meeting was held among UNESCO-Bangkok APEID/ICT in Education team, UNESCO HQ, UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), World Bank, and KERIS to identify areas of collaboration and explore joint initiatives on ICT in education indicators. A memo was signed between KERIS, UIS, and UNESCO Bangkok promising collaboration in this area.

AMFIE 2010 (jointly organized with Intel)

Date/Venue: 25-26 November 2010, Bangkok, Thailand

Theme 1ST Asia Pacific Ministerial Forum on ICT in Education

Participants Minister-level participants from 16 member states

Aims
- share experiences, best practices, and lessons on the development, implementation, and monitoring of ICT in Education Master Plans.
- raise member states’ awareness of UNESCO’s role in supporting the enhancement of the ICT capacity of member states, through teacher training institutions and establishing school networks

Themes
1. ICT for Better Education Policies
2. ICT for Better Teachers
3. ICT for Better MOE
4. ICT for Better Learning
5. ICT for Better Access to Education.

Highlights
- Case studies were presented on country-level journey guided by ICT in Education Master Plans (Republic of Korea and Singapore); experiences on training teachers using television (United Kingdom, China and Thailand); experiences in establishing ICT infrastructure (Australia and Portugal)
- Despite the common issues and challenges faced by Ministries, it was collectively recognized that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to the challenges in integrating ICT in various aspects of education; however, innovative ideas can inspire a nation.
- Policymakers had an opportunity to voice out opinions, requests, and visions for developing ICT in education during Ministerial dialogue. Significant inputs were generated by organizers on programmes and support relevant for member countries which could also serve as indicators for future agenda items.

More info: http://www.unescobkk.org/?id=11452