

Helsinki Process
 ICT Track Workshop
 "Exchange of Best Practices in E-learning, E-health, E- content"
 Sheraton Cairo Hotel
 September 13-14, 2006

Report on the First Session
 "ICT in Education"
 13th of September 2006
 10:45 am – 12:45 pm

- Presented Material
 - Two presentations were presented by two countries:
 1. Egypt: The ICT Era in Education in Egypt: An overview
 2. Finland: ICT in Education in Finland
 - The session started with Egypt's presentation given by Dr. Howaida Ismail from Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, entitled "The ICT Era in Education in Egypt". The presentation tackled the following points:
 1. Education as a top priority, and ICT as a component in the series of ICT in Education initiatives.
 2. A success story: Smart Schools Network (SSN) pilot project.
 3. On going efforts: Egyptian Education Initiative.
 4. Cooperation suggestions
 - Ms. Marja Kylama, Senior Advisor from the Finnish Ministry of Education gave a presentation entitled "ICT in Education in Finland" which tackled the following points:
 1. Education Training and Research in the Information Society
 2. Information Society Programme for Education, Training and Research 2004-2006
 3. The categories of the program
 4. Teachers' In-Service Training, Virtual School, and the Finnish Virtual University.
- Discussions

After presentations, a moderated discussion tackled the following issues:

 - *Egypt's experience in the Smart Schools Network (SSN) pilot project*
 - § Egypt justified the reason behind applying the SSN as a pilot project on the experimental preparatory schools explaining that the preparatory stage, students are literate, mature enough and the curriculum offers space to acquire ICT skills. These schools are distributed all over the country covering gender and socio-economic variance. They are also limited in number (less than 180 schools) allowing the replication of the model in future phases to cover all schools of this sector.

- *Impact Evaluation*
 - § The need to apply the Impact Evaluation, which helps in evaluating the outcomes after the initiatives as well as applying the post initiative operational sustainable models.

- *PPP*
 - § The private sector is coming in as a partner and a major player according to the Public Private Partnership (PPP) as it believes in ICT as a tool for a change. It helps on all levels (infrastructure, applications, services ... etc.)

 - § This partnership is based on a business model *not* donations, by giving incentives to the multinational companies. Therefore, the private sector gives for taking, which explains why two major multinational companies are adopting two basic IT programs for students in Egypt.

 - § The role of government is to determine the weak and strong points to identify the "Added Value" which the private sector should contribute.

 - § There should be a balance between the interest of the public and private sectors. The private sector not only means the multinational companies, but also the local private sectors companies.

 - § Articulating different models for PPP in ICT in education.

- *Technology Inclusiveness*
 - § Inclusiveness was a main discussion point, meaning that ICT in education should target all students in all schools, hence affordable model should be worked out to facilitate implementations.

 - § Discussions concentrate on ICT as computer based without reference to other aspects of ICT. All technologies should be employed to assure best results.

 - § Each country should look to the current curricula in its learning system to identify the ways of using ICT efficiently to communicate these curricula to the target learners.

- *Transfer of content*
 - § As much as openness was recommended, nevertheless, Helsinki process members discussed its impact on the learner. Availability of material on line should be perceived correctly as per the learners' culture and social background.

- *International Standards*
 - § A need for standards for the e-learning industry is of high importance.

- *IPR*
 - § Discussed IPR issues w.r.t. authors of higher education e-content. Finland has gone a couple of steps in this issue and its report will be available on the internet by the end of this quarter.

§ A call for open systems was highly recommended by all members, justified by the fact that what was developed by public money should be made public to all.

§ This issue is also a focal point in e-content development track, which will be discussed in detail during in the e-content session the following day.

- Suggested Cooperation

- Egypt suggests formulating a Task Force to conduct Impact Assessment of investing in ICT in Education.

- The task force will work as follows:

- Countries to nominate assessment experts
 - Moderator of a group (lead technical person) will be named. International resource people identified.
 - Developing the scope and deliverables of the group
 - Continuing e-group discussions
 - Mid course workshop to be held in the second quarter of the year 2007
 - The recommendations and report to be finalized by October 2007

- Canada and Finland will cooperate with Egypt to develop the scope of work for this task force.