

REMARKS BY UNESCO AT THE NATIONAL LAUNCH OF THE  
“ICT TRANSFORMING EDUCATION IN AFRICA”

VENUE: AREBBUSCH LODGE, WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

DATE: 12 MARCH, 2025

*\*\*\*Greetings\*\*\**

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*Recent advancements in technology, particularly in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and digital platforms, have fundamentally transformed the way we teach and learn.*

*The rise of AI-powered tools like ChatGPT, DeepSeek and adaptive learning systems has made personalized education more accessible, enabling students to learn at their own pace and receive instant feedback.*

*Additionally, the proliferation of online learning platforms, virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR) has expanded the boundaries of traditional classrooms, allowing for immersive and interactive experiences that were unimaginable a mere 10 years ago.*

*These changes necessitate a shift from how we teach and learn, to an education system that fosters critical thinking, creativity,*

and digital literacy. Education must prepare students for a rapidly evolving, technology-driven world.

This is why I am pleased to deliver remarks at today's launch of the "ICT Transforming Education in Africa" project, here in Namibia.

At UNESCO, we believe that integrating technology into education goes beyond adopting tools; it is about transforming lives by creating inclusive, equitable, and high-quality learning opportunities for all.

Building on our mandate to promote peace and development through education, the sciences, culture and communications, we see technology as a powerful enabler to address disparities, empower school communities, and promote the human right to education.

For Namibia, the "ICT Transforming Education in Africa" project comes at a critical time, as it builds on the momentum generated by the launch of the "Implementation of the Recommendations of the National Conference on Education, 2022" Project Charter in November 2024 by the two Ministries of Education. The Charter serves as a roadmap for transforming the education sector in Namibia, and the "ICT Transforming Education in Africa" project will directly support activities under Objective

4 of the Charter, which focuses on “Improving access to universal, inclusive digital learning.”

To ensure the success of the “ICT Transforming Education in Africa” project, we must adopt a human-centred approach to integrating technologies. This means designing and implementing solutions that prioritize the needs, contexts, and lived experiences of learners and teachers in Namibia. Such an approach ensures that technologies are not only effective but also ethical and responsive to the unique challenges faced by different groups in our society. It calls for deliberate efforts to address disparities and align technology implementation with the broader goal of creating a future where every learner can thrive.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to highlight four key principles that guides implementation of the “ICT Transforming Education in Africa” project. Since its inception in 2016, the initiative has been rolled out in phases. Phase I and Phase II successfully reached six countries (Mozambique, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Senegal, Ghana, and Côte d’Ivoire) from 2016 to 2023. We are now in Phase III, which runs from 2024 to 2027 and includes Uganda, Tanzania, and, of course, Namibia. The principles which have been instrumental in ensuring the project’s success across all phases are:

- 1. Country Ownership and Needs-Based Design:** Following an inception phase and a needs assessment, the project interventions are tailored to the specific needs and contexts of Namibia. This approach ensures that the project is fully aligned with national priorities and fosters long-term sustainability.
- 2. Sustainability:** Our aim is to create lasting impacts by embedding sustainability into every aspect of the project – from policy development to content creation and capacity building.
- 3. Synergies with Other Initiatives:** We recognize that this project does not exist in isolation. Namibia has already made significant strides in integrating technology into its education systems, and there are many other ongoing initiatives in this space. We are committed to aligning with and building upon these efforts to maximize impact, foster synergies, and avoid duplication of resources.
- 4. Inclusion and Cross-Country Learning:** Leveraging its multi-country nature, the project nurtures inclusive practices and creates opportunities for cross-country learning. This enables each participating country to benefit from the experiences and best practices of others,

ensuring a collective and collaborative approach to transformation.

UNESCO is fully committed to supporting Namibia's journey towards digital transformation in education. We believe this project has the potential to significantly impact how we teach and learn, improve the quality of education, and empower learners with the skills they need to thrive in the 21st century.

Before I close, please allow me to say a word of thanks to the Republic of Korea for their commitment to and funding of this "ICT Transforming Education in Africa" project. In an Upper Middle-Income Country such as Namibia, resource mobilization is a challenge, and so we are grateful for the steadfast support shown to this project by the ROK.

Allow me to also urge all stakeholders to actively participate in and contribute to the success of this project. By working together, we can create an education system that is innovative, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of all learners, preparing our students for a rapidly evolving, technology-driven world.

I thank you for your attention.