

For Further Information

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inadequacy of skilled workforce in the field of ICTs.

Taking cognizance of the above and to confront the challenges of inadequate educated and qualified workforce, the Inter Islamic Network on Information Technology (INIT) in collaboration with the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South (COMSATS), and the Industrial Research and Consultancy Centre (Sudan), is convening a 2-day International Conference on "Diffusion of ICTs in Academia: Learning in the Digital Age in Islamic Countries". The Conference is tentatively scheduled to be held on October 4th-5th, 2010.

Thematic Areas and Topics

The Conference will have multiple focus areas and themes to address the aforementioned issues and challenges. Various focus areas for integration of ICTs in academics in the context of developing world in general and Islamic countries in particular will be discussed, which mainly include (but not limited to) the following:

1. Educational Policy and Planning for Integration and Diffusion of ICTs in Academics
2. Current Projects and Best Practices

3. Institutional Capacity Building for Integration/Diffusion of ICTs
4. Language, Content and Curriculum Development
5. Delivery Mechanism and Options in an ICT-based Academic Environment
6. Infrastructure and Access
7. Effectiveness and Impact of ICTs on Learning and Achievements, and
8. Cost, Financing and Sustainability

Paper Submission

Academicians, practitioners, and researchers active in ICT research-applications are invited to submit papers in any of the identified and relevant areas. Suitable nominations of the reputed scholars may also be sent with complete contact details for the keynote addresses.

Financial Support

Partial or full financial support will be available for a limited number of selected participants.

Important Dates

Submission of Abstract	Aug. 31, 2010
Notification of Acceptance	Sep. 10, 2010
Submission of full paper	Sep. 20, 2010



Call for Papers

International Conference on

Diffusion of ICTs in Academia:

**Learning in the Digital Age in
Islamic Countries**

October 4 - 5, 2010

Khartoum, Republic of Sudan

Co-organized by

Background

With the emergence of new global economy, 'powered by technology, fueled by information and driven by knowledge', the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are seen as having a great potential for improving the socio-economic condition by creating new economic, educational and business opportunities, improving health delivery systems, governance, and general provision of services.

Everything around us including education system is changing rapidly. As the useful life of information continues to shrink, while the sheer volume of information is growing exponentially, academics cannot remain mere by-standers. Rather, academics must actively take part and promote "learning to learn", i.e., the acquisition of knowledge and skills that make possible continuous learning over a lifetime.

ICTs play a pivotal role to expand access to education, strengthen the relevance of education to the increasingly digital workplace, and raise quality of education, among others, by helping to make teaching and learning an active process connected to real life. ICTs have been utilized by education sector ever since their inception, but these have been massively present in schools only since the early 1980s.

State of ICTs in Developing Countries

The developing world has seen an increased pressure for a more rapid infusion of ICTs into academics in recent years. For developing countries in general and Muslim

countries in particular, ICTs have the potential for increasing access to and improving the relevance and quality of education and thus provide tools for the equalizing strategy.

Issues & Challenges

The issues and challenges of the information age faced by the Islamic World mainly include the following:

- Lack of skilled workforce and required infrastructure;
- Shortage of IT professionals due to brain drain;
- High costs of import of computers and peripherals with hardly any focus on indigenization;
- Software development only in the nascent stage and the widening capability gap with the developed countries;
- Inadequate investment in human resource development and for fostering the use of information & communication technologies; and
- Comparatively very low proportion of GDP dedicated for R&D, i.e., Islamic countries' expenditure on R&D as a proportion of GDP is about one tenth that is expended by most of the developed nations.

Objectives

The Conference will provide a forum for academicians and professionals from Islamic countries:

- To facilitate exchange of ideas and discuss best practices in diffusion of ICTs in academics of developing and

developed world;

- To present an opportunity for fostering collaboration, strengthening cooperation and enabling dialogue among the participants;
- To provide a forum to all the key players for enabling their respective areas of academics in integration of ICTs, i.e., universities, schools, training centres, decision-makers in the Islamic countries;
- To help rectify the shortage of infrastructure and build skills associated with diffusion of ICTs in the academics;
- To determine ways and means necessary to improve the integration of ICTs in academics, adaptability and social inclusion; and
- To help in promoting the employability of ICT professionals from the developing world in general and Islamic Countries in particular.

Common recommendations and priorities will be established by involving the educationists, academicians, IT professionals, and ICT trainers.

Way Forward

To face the challenges and achieve desired results, the Islamic World needs to rapidly expand educational opportunities and ensure that the entire population achieves high educational standards. A culture of lifelong learning is to be embedded in order to respond to the evolving skill requirements. The rapid pace of social, economic and technological changes coupled with future threat of higher competition has particularly created renewed urgency to find solutions to address the growing digital divide and the

REGISTRATION FORM

International Conference on

Diffusion of ICTs in Academia: Learning in the Digital Age in Islamic Countries

*October 4 - 5, 2010
Khartoum, Republic of Sudan*

Name _____

Designation _____

Institution/Organization _____

Highest Qualification _____

Present Field of Activity _____

Postal Address _____

City _____ Country _____

Tel. _____ Fax _____

Email _____

I wish to participate in the above mentioned conference and would like to register for the same.

I wish to present a paper in the above mentioned conference on the following topic: _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Last date for registration as a participant is September 1, 2010. You can also register online at COMSATS' website: www.comsats.org.