Digital Education Strategy
Fact Sheet

The African Union envisions **"a peaceful and prosperous Africa, integrated, led by its own citizens and occupying the place it deserves in the global community and the knowledge economy."** Digital education will contribute to this AU Vision and enhance access, quality, relevance, and education affordability. Digital education (competencies, literacy and skills) will be built at all levels to promote digital citizenship, facilitate ICT use for teaching, learning and research, and enhance Africa's competitiveness.

Vision

The Mission of the AU Digital Education Strategy is to **harness digital technologies to achieve the strategic objectives of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa**—namely: revitalising the teaching profession, improving learning outcomes, inclusion and equity, adult literacy, promoting Technical and Vocational Education and Training for employability and expansion of tertiary education, research and innovation and **providing all citizens with the digital competencies and skills needed to thrive in the digital age**.

Mission

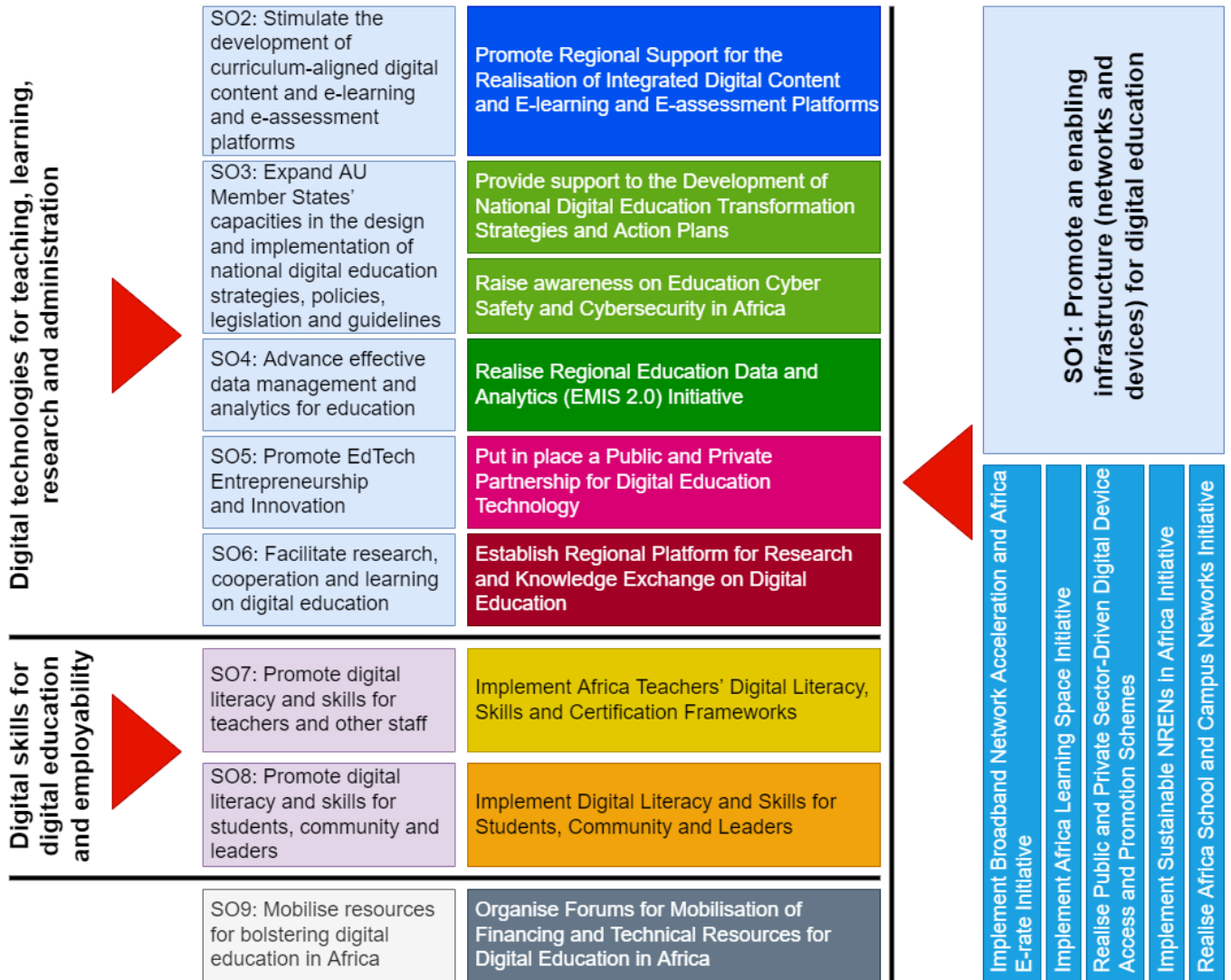The African Union Digital Education Strategy proposes the need for:

1. **Digital technology appropriation in education** – accelerating the adoption of digital technologies for teaching, learning, research, assessment and administration, and

2. **Education in digital technology for digitally empowered citizens/ for the digital economy and society** – strengthening digital literacy and skills for all, especially for teachers and students.

3. **Building the capacity of AU Member States in digital infrastructure (networks and devices)** for digital education.

Building digital Infrastructure is considered as the main Strategic Objective (SO1) of the Digital Education Strategy. Digital Infrastructure is a critical building block and cross-cutting element. The AU digital Education Strategy proposes five strategic action areas for promoting digital infrastructure for the education sector, namely:

- Africa broadband network acceleration and e-rate initiative
- Africa learning space initiative,
- Public-private sector driven device access scheme for students and staff
- Sustainable NREN initiative
- Africa school and Campus Network initiative.

The Strategic Objectives (SOs) and actions are shown in the figure below.

Strategic Objectives and Actions

Digital technologies for teaching, learning, research and administration

Strategic Objective	Action
SO2: Stimulate the development of curriculum-aligned digital content and e-learning and e-assessment platforms	Promote Regional Support for the Realisation of Integrated Digital Content and E-learning and E-assessment Platforms
SO3: Expand AU Member States' capacities in the design and implementation of national digital education strategies, policies, legislation and guidelines	Provide support to the Development of National Digital Education Transformation Strategies and Action Plans / Raise awareness on Education Cyber Safety and Cybersecurity in Africa
SO4: Advance effective data management and analytics for education	Realise Regional Education Data and Analytics (EMIS 2.0) Initiative
SO5: Promote EdTech Entrepreneurship and Innovation	Put in place a Public and Private Partnership for Digital Education Technology
SO6: Facilitate research, cooperation and learning on digital education	Establish Regional Platform for Research and Knowledge Exchange on Digital Education

Digital skills for digital education and employability

Strategic Objective	Action
SO7: Promote digital literacy and skills for teachers and other staff	Implement Africa Teachers' Digital Literacy, Skills and Certification Frameworks
SO8: Promote digital literacy and skills for students, community and leaders	Implement Digital Literacy and Skills for Students, Community and Leaders
SO9: Mobilise resources for bolstering digital education in Africa	Organise Forums for Mobilisation of Financing and Technical Resources for Digital Education in Africa

SO1: Promote an enabling infrastructure (networks and devices) for digital education

- Implement Broadband Network Acceleration and Africa E-rate Initiative
- Implement Africa Learning Space Initiative
- Realise Public and Private Sector-Driven Digital Device Access and Promotion Schemes
- Implement Sustainable NRENs in Africa Initiative
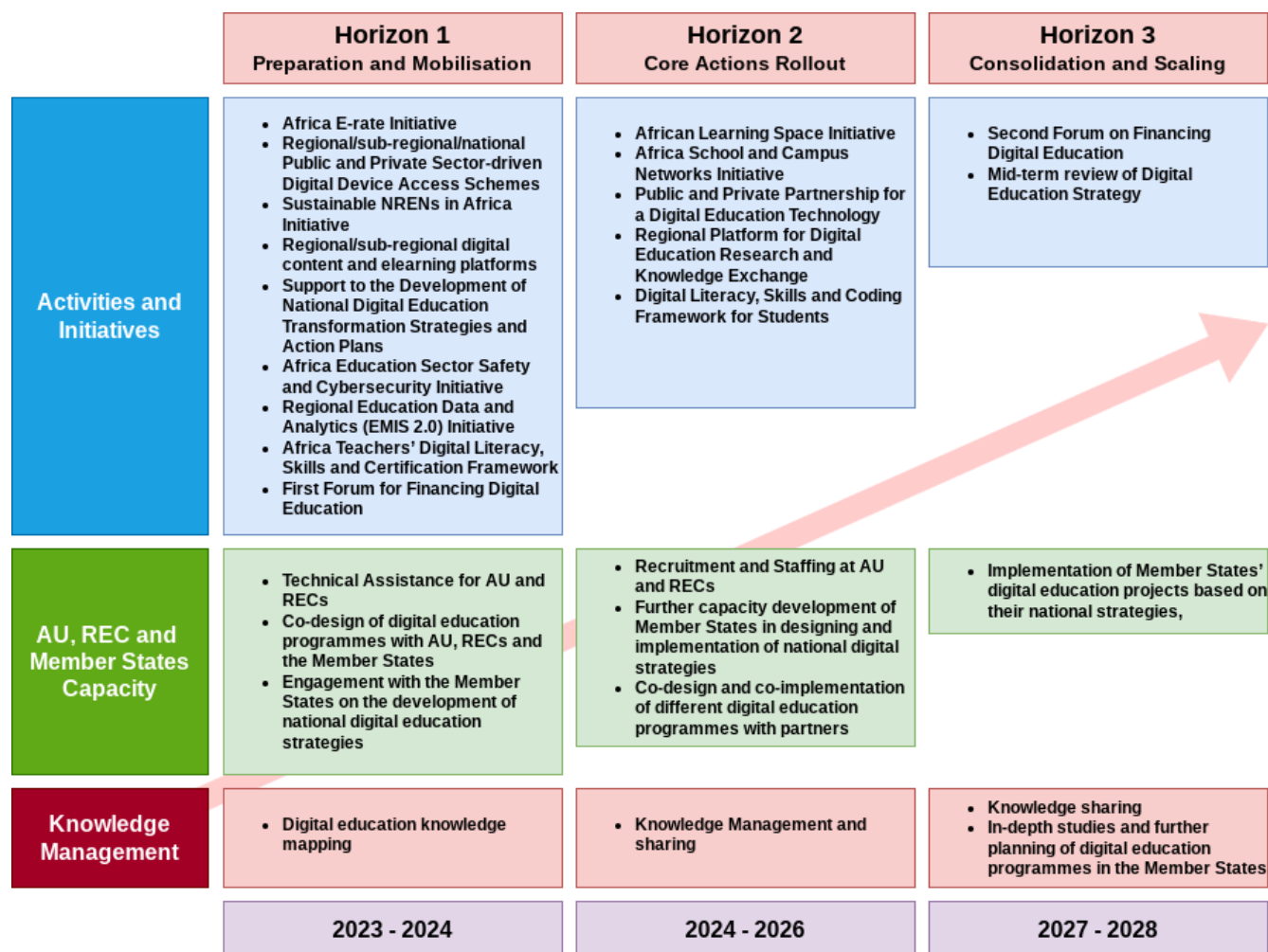- Realise Africa School and Campus Networks Initiative

The AU Digital Education Strategy and Implementation Plan recognise that essential supporting functions at the AU's Department for Education Science, Technology and Innovation (ESTI) and RECs levels need to change to achieve success at the Member States level. Implementing the different building blocks of digital education requires considerable communication, advocacy, coordination, convening, resources mobilisation, knowledge mapping, management and sharing at AU and RECs levels. The AU will ensure that digital education is funded and sustained to guarantee that every child and adult has access to learning opportunities available through information and communication technologies.

Digital Coordination Capacity of the AU/ESTI	Building RECs' Capacity in Digital Education	Building the Capacity of Member States
• Work with partners to strengthen internal digital education programme formulation and implementation capacity • Strengthen staffing in the digital education domain to provide ongoing technical assistance to Member States and coordinate different initiatives with its partners • Strengthen knowledge mapping, management and sharing expertise on the different building blocks of digital education to serve as a knowledge hub for Member States.	• Develop internal capacities of RECS to support Member States' efforts to design and implement national digital education strategies • Strengthen staffing in the digital education domain, • Interact with peer RECs in other continents, especially in the south, on digital education planning and implementation support at national level	• Support Member States to articulate national digital education strategies that respond to their context. • Support Member States' efforts to mobilise financial and technical resources for priority digital education programmes.

The Digital Education Strategy Implementation Plan proposes a five-year timeframe between 2023 and 2028 to carry out the fourteen actions divided into three horizons, as shown figure below. Horizon 1, which will start in early 2023, will focus on setting the foundations. Horizon 2 (2024-2026) will roll out all the proposed strategic actions in the Digital Education Strategy in coordination with RECs and development

partners. Horizon 3 (2027-2028) will consolidate all the initiatives.

	Horizon 1 **Preparation and Mobilisation**	Horizon 2 **Core Actions Rollout**	Horizon 3 **Consolidation and Scaling**
Activities and Initiatives	• Africa E-rate Initiative • Regional/sub-regional/national Public and Private Sector-driven Digital Device Access Schemes • Sustainable NRENs in Africa Initiative • Regional/sub-regional digital content and elearning platforms • Support to the Development of National Digital Education Transformation Strategies and Action Plans • Africa Education Sector Safety and Cybersecurity Initiative • Regional Education Data and Analytics (EMIS 2.0) Initiative • Africa Teachers' Digital Literacy, Skills and Certification Framework • First Forum for Financing Digital Education	• African Learning Space Initiative • Africa School and Campus Networks Initiative • Public and Private Partnership for a Digital Education Technology • Regional Platform for Digital Education Research and Knowledge Exchange • Digital Literacy, Skills and Coding Framework for Students	• Second Forum on Financing Digital Education • Mid-term review of Digital Education Strategy
AU, REC and Member States Capacity	• Technical Assistance for AU and RECs • Co-design of digital education programmes with AU, RECs and the Member States • Engagement with the Member States on the development of national digital education strategies	• Recruitment and Staffing at AU and RECs • Further capacity development of Member States in designing and implementation of national digital strategies • Co-design and co-implementation of different digital education programmes with partners	• Implementation of Member States' digital education projects based on their national strategies,
Knowledge Management	• Digital education knowledge mapping	• Knowledge Management and sharing	• Knowledge sharing • In-depth studies and further planning of digital education programmes in the Member States
	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2026	2027 - 2028

The AU will work with all partners in all areas of digital education, mobilising its Member States and coordinating knowledge sharing to accomplish the strategic objectives, activities, and outcomes below.

Strategic Actions and Tasks	Outcomes	Indicative Target and KPI
Broadband Network Acceleration and E-rate Initiative • Study broadband availability, models of connectivity and bandwidth cost • Identify strategies for increasing broadband and affordable bandwidth • Prepare policy brief to raise awareness on reducing the high cost of connectivity to education • Share the experience	• Reduced cost • Increased demand and use of digital education, • Increased awareness of bandwidth cost	Cost lowered below $25 per Mbps/month in all countries by 2027.
African Learning Space Initiative • Develop guidelines on the learning space for competency based and blended learning • Regional learning space design workshops and contest	• Modernisation of learning space • Resources reallocation • Support for a new mode of education – competency-based learning, blended learning	Half of the buildings meet minimum learning space guidelines by 2028
Public and Private Sector-driven Digital Device Access Promotion Schemes • Estimate cost and devices and outline access and maintenance issues including potential for local production and e-waste • Devise devices access schemes that involve private sector, development partners and parents and various strategies	• Availability of devices • Availability of assistive technology tools • Knowledge shared on devices schemes, maintenance standards	Devices will be available for 50% of students and 100% of teachers by 2030 Assistive devices available for 50% of students in 2030

Strategic Actions and Tasks	Outcomes	Indicative Target and KPI
including subsidies, local device production, etc. • Raise awareness • Forge public, private and academia partnerships • Establish an assistive technology fund		
Sustainable NRENs in Africa Initiative • Develop and implement NREN roadmap and business plans by leveraging expertise and experience of UbuntuNet Alliance, WACREN and ASREN • Support new and fledging NRENs • Promote e-research infrastructure • Promote platforms for an exchange experience	• NRENs developed and strengthened across Africa • E-research infrastructure accelerated	Sustainable NRENs by 2027
Africa School and Campus Network Initiative • Create academia, NREN and private sector-led platform for the design of school and campus networks, and • Share best practices and guidelines.	• Well-designed school network • Africa campus network platform	At least half of the school networks will be designed based on service ready architecture by 2028
Regional Digital Content and E-assessment and E-learning Platforms • Conduct assessment on e-learning content and e-learning and e-assessment platforms • Establish guidelines for e-learning and e-assessment • Train and motivate teachers • Accelerate distance, hybrid and blended form of learning • Curate and organise curriculum-aligned resources • Support sharing of experience on e-assessment applications and integrated national and regional e-learning platforms that leverage existing platforms of institutions, private sector and partners.	• Wider availability of curriculum-aligned content • Experience and resource sharing on e-assessment application e-learning content and integrated e-learning platforms • Reduced cost of access to online content	Integrated high quality online learning platforms for students and teachers for basic education in all AU Member States by 2025 from the low quality or non-existent e-learning solutions in 80% of countries in 2022. At least three regional platforms for exchange of online learning content and e-assessment and e-learning platforms by 2025 from no platform in 2022
Support for the Development of National Digital Education Transformation Strategies and Action Plans • Support countries' effort to design and implement national digital education strategies through technical assistance • Share experience in the developing and implementing national digital strategies	• Digital education is based on articulated strategies and action plans	All Member States develop their national digital education strategies and action plans by 2024
Africa Education Sector Safety and Cybersecurity Initiative • Conduct a full review of cybersecurity awareness in education • Develop guidelines on cybersecurity and cyber safety in education in alignment with regional and national guidelines, policies and regulation • Raise awareness on cyber safety and data privacy • Support multifaceted initiatives for raising awareness on cybersecurity and cyber safety	• Awareness on cyber safety and privacy • Regional guidelines on cyber safety and data privacy • Guidelines and experience sharing on cybersecurity in education in Africa • Increased investment in cybersecurity in education	At least 50% of education institutions follow Regional and national cybersecurity guidelines by 2027
Regional Education Data and Analytics (EMIS 2.0) Initiative • Conduct review of education data and analytics situation, including school, TVET and University-based information systems • Develop EMIS 2.0 framework • Mobilise support to strengthen education data and analytics based on EMIS 2.0 framework and advocate for optimal use of existing data to support planning and decision-making	• EMIS 2.0 architecture in place • Support for digital education powered data and analytics mobilised	At least half of the countries graduate from current data systems to data and analytics based on granular data powered by unique IDs, data models (EMIS 2.0) by 2027
Public and Private Partnership for a Digital Education Technology • Assess EdTech entrepreneurship and EdTech training • Review potential collaboration between African EdTech/universities with their peers worldwide and initiate	• Improved collaboration between African EdTech/Universities and their peers worldwide on solving education	At least ten enterprises delivering integrated solutions for education in all countries by 2027 Revised EdTech curriculum

Strategic Actions and Tasks	Outcomes	Indicative Target and KPI
joint programmes	challenges • Increased competitiveness of EdTech sector in Africa	informed by global practices in at least half of AU Member States by 2025
Regional Platform for Digital Education Research and Knowledge Exchange • Conduct a systematic review of evidence-based digital education in Africa • Funding for research on digital education • Establish and promote platforms for collaboration on evidence-based digital education	• Increased understanding of current research and gaps in digital education • A platform for the exchange of experience and collaboration on evidence-based digital education	A systematic review published by 2024 A platform for exchange of evidence on digital education created by 2025
Africa teachers' digital literacy, skills and certification framework • Assess teachers' digital literacy and skills gap • Review and adopt UNIESCO ICT-CFT or DigCompEdu digital literacy and skills competency frameworks for teachers, • Develop and implement teachers' digital literacy and skills competency framework for Africa • Review certification scheme for teachers' digital literacy and skills • Implement an African Certificate for Digital Education Teachers	• Understanding of teachers' digital literacy and skills training gaps • Publication and use of African teachers' digital skill competency framework • Teachers are certified based on African Certificate for Teachers Digital Education	All AU Member States adopt and implement teachers' digital literacy and skills competency framework by 2024 AU Members adopt African Certificate for Teachers Digital Education by 2026
Digital literacy and skills for students, community and leaders • Review and adapt the competency framework for students' digital literacy and skills • Review and implement digital literacy and skills for communities and leaders • Develop guidelines for skills at TVET and higher education in close alignment with market and industry demands. • Stimulate specialised ICT skills and coding in Africa	• African students' digital literacy and skills competency framework published and adopted • Education leaders and community receive digital literacy and skills • Job related digital skills are developed at TVET and higher education levels • Inclusive coding promoted at education levels	At least 50% of AU Member States adopt and implement digital competency frameworks and guidelines for students' digital literacy and skills. Increase in the number of coders (including girls and students with disabilities) by at least 10% on an annual basis in all African countries.
Forums for Financing Digital Education • Develop promotional materials and proposals for funding digital education • Communicate, advocate and raise awareness on digital education • Organise two forums on financing digital education in Africa (2022/2023 and 2025/2026) • Encourage private sector participation in financing digital education	• AU Digital Education Strategy and Implementation Plan funded • Financial and technical resources are mobilised for priority digital education projects in the Member States.	At least 50% of the AU Digital Education Strategy funded by 2024.