October 12, 2022

Resolution on the results of the International Conference

Educational Strategies and Innovations in the Age of Digitalization

An International Conference *Educational strategies and innovations in the era of digitalization* was held on October 5-6, 2022, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. It was attended by over 160 offline participants and over 60 online participants from around the world, including Mongolia, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Croatia, Canada, Japan, England, India and others.

The agenda of the conference included issues related to the digital transformation of the education sector, advanced training of teachers and their mastery of ICT competencies; the participants got acquainted with the results of the research conducted to study the experience of distance education in Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia and Tajikistan; reviewed and discussed successful practices and international experience.

On the pre-conference day on October 4th, interactive trainings on digital tools for teaching and research took place, as well as an open lecture from an international expert. Activities of the two days of the conference included 7 thematic sessions where more than 30 speakers made their presentations; a round table with the participation of more than 40 teachers and school administrators; an open lecture; and 11 master classes for teachers. Public organizations, educational institutions and international projects presented their initiatives in the *Gallery of Digital Educational Initiatives*.

In general, the conference participants noted the relevance of the issues raised. It was noted that it is important to remember that education is a public good. The project implemented by Taalim-Forum public foundation and ongoing research is a contribution to our children and future generations, as well as the benefit of the earth as part of our ecosystem, and education serves as a lens that helps to understand the world around us. It was also noted that the Declaration of Human Rights includes the right to education, the Sustainable Development Goals have been developed, where SDG 4 includes ensuring the right to quality education. The UN Roadmap for Digital Cooperation draws attention to the gaps and challenges of an urgent nature and proposes measures to strengthen global digital cooperation. In this regard, we must always keep in mind the issues of the quality of education and the strengthening our cooperation.

Particularly important was the reflection on the experience of distance education during the pandemic caused by COVID-19, with a focus on vulnerable groups of schoolchildren that experienced the most difficulties. Participants noted the benefits of digital transformation to improve the quality and access to education, the importance of changing approaches in the system of professional development for teachers.

During the discussions, the conference participants noted the following:

- Diversity and access to various providers of education, including private ones, makes it possible to raise the level of education, make it more flexible and adequate to the challenges of the times.
- The pandemic has shown that digital gadgets today are no longer a luxury, but a necessity and a way to get a quality education.
- The transition to the electronic format of documents in the education system, including documents confirming the qualification of teachers, is an environmentally friendly and modern solution.

- The coherence of the actions of the managers of the education system of the Kyrgyz Republic made it possible to adequately overcome the challenges of the COVID19 pandemic.
- In Kyrgyzstan, during the pandemic, along with the measures taken by the government and the support of international donors, a number of organizations and initiatives mobilized their efforts to support teachers and schoolchildren; the level and interest in mastering ICT skills among teachers sharply increased; innovative teachers appeared as well as various forms of mutual support and self-education.
- The Republic of Tajikistan shows a steady growth in terms of access to education. The strategy for the development of the education system has set a course for digital transformation and the process of connecting all schools to the Internet is underway. However, in order to improve access to education for vulnerable groups of the population, it is necessary to improve the quality of infrastructure, develop inclusive education programs, and work with children who drop out of school for various reasons.
- After reviewing Mongolia's experience in the digital transformation of education, the participants noted:
  - Mongolia's success in ensuring 100% of coverage by preschool education in Ulaanbaatar, as well as successful experience in promptly finding modern solutions in infrastructure, construction, technical and information, educational and methodological support.
  - The transition of the teacher development system to an online format was noted as an interesting experience for adaptation in other countries.
  - The need for further study and analysis of the experience of digital transformation of education in Mongolia to familiarize relevant specialists in the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic.
- In the Republic of Kazakhstan, systemic reforms aimed at raising the status of a teacher, improving the material and behavioral motivation of teachers, promoting the institution of mentoring, supporting novice teachers, as well as mandatory, regular analysis of the effectiveness of training have made it possible to achieve significant success.

The conference participants agreed that the continuous professional and personal development of a teacher is the key to the success of the education system. In this regard, recommendations were made related to professional development of teachers. Among them are the following:

- Facilitate the transition from the existing system of professional development of teachers in the Kyrgyz Republic to the continuous professional development of teachers; change the established requirements for the completion of professional development courses for teachers.
- In connection with the adoption of the *Qualification requirements for the ICT competence of teachers*, Republican Institute of Advance Training and Retraining of Teachers and other participants in the system of advanced training of teachers should:
  - Revise the content of training courses related to the ICT competence of teachers, taking into account the recommendations made at the *Qualification Requirements* and international experience.
  - Develop criteria for the level of computer literacy. Consider existing experience and introduce three levels of advanced training: basic, intermediate, and advanced.
  - Introduce a system of independent evaluation of teachers' qualifications. Use the services of non-state and private providers of professional development services.
  - Implement a competency-based approach and expand course topics.
  - Implement and expand the system of online courses.

Other recommendations included the following:

- The digitalization of education should be considered not only as the use of technical capabilities, but also as an aspect of cultural and spiritual life, the development of "soft" skills among teachers, managers, and students.
- Contribute to the development of new curricula for inclusive education.
- Pay attention to the issue of access to educational materials among students through development of educational materials adapted for digital devices that are not heavy in volume to store in the memory of devices, in particular smartphones.
- Conduct systematic surveys among parents and students on the use of digital educational resources, study their wishes to improve the work on the development of such resources.
- Recommend the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic to develop mechanisms for financing and supporting educational initiatives coming from public and private organizations in order to stimulate and support their work.
- Analyze and take into account successful initiatives and innovations when making management decisions or developing strategies for education.
- Minimize bureaucratic barriers to the work of private initiatives (for example, canceling the licensing of the additional education provided by the private sector)