

Planning and implementation framework

There are many factors that one must take into consideration when planning and implementing a mobile learning framework. The following chart is a broad illustration of the considerations when designing a planning strategy and initiative:



Government Readiness. The idea of Mobile Learning must be introduced to the Ministry of Education. Ministries need to be aware of the learning capabilities of the mobile phone. Facts and figures regarding research on the benefits of mobile learning must be presented. Additionally, the government must be aware of exactly how a mobile learning framework can be implemented, the potential costs of implementing a mobile learning framework, and the amount of communication they have outside of the home is simply aiding their children with their education endeavours.

School Readiness: It is important to determine the type of school students attend. Does the school focus on long-distance learning scenarios or on in-classroom learning scenarios? Perhaps it is a hybrid of both in-classroom learning and distance learning.

money saved by implementing a mobile learning framework.

Societal Readiness. The culture where this initiative is to be implemented must be shown how mobile phones can facilitate learning. Parents and teachers will have to see mobile phones not as devices for entertainment and distraction, but as devices with learning potential. Furthermore, parents must not see the phone as a threat to the authority they have over their children and understand that the

Teacher Readiness: First and foremost, teachers need to know and understand how to operate the mobile devices. It is important for teachers to be aware of the many ways that mobile phones can facilitate learning instead of simply banning these devices from the classroom. Teachers must be aware of the appropriate pedagogies necessary to design a mobile learning curriculum and design the curriculum as such.

Student Readiness: Students need to understand and be willing to use their mobile devices for learning instead of distraction. Additionally, students need to know how to operate the technology. Other questions that need to be asked:

- 1) Is there an actual school building where teachers and students meet daily, weekly, or monthly or is it a make-shift classroom that is set up at various places outdoors?
- 2) If there is an actual building, does this building have electricity so that mobile phones can be charged on a regular basis? If there is not a building, do students have the opportunity to charge their phones at home?
- 3) Who is actually providing the mobile phones? Are governments or other institutions providing the mobile phones or are learners supplying their own devices, commonly referred to as 'bring your own device' (BYOD)? Students should be allowed to own their device whenever possible.
- 4) What type of mobile phones is being provided? To design a mobile learning curriculum, one must determine whether the phones have internet capabilities or are basic mobile phones that simply have voice-calls and SMS.
- 5) Does the teacher or the students know how to use the mobile phone? An assessment needs to be made to determine their knowledge of the device. Additionally, when necessary, both teachers and students must be properly trained on how to use the mobile phone and how to properly care for it.
- 6) Does the area have adequate network coverage to support a mobile learning curriculum? Does the coverage include the internet access or is it basic network coverage? It is important to take stock of existing infrastructure and determine targets for improvement of this infrastructure. Furthermore, how expensive is a mobile phone subscription?
- 7) Are there classroom or teaching supplies? If not, will the class be entirely taught on the mobile phone?

These are just examples of issues that need to be addressed when designing a mobile learning curriculum. There are many other factors that need to be taken into consideration that are not listed here. Additionally, one must look at the knowledge of teachers regarding a mobile learning curriculum. For instance, one must consider the needs of the particular teachers and classrooms as well:

- 1) **Content-Related Issues:** Does the teacher have prior knowledge of this subject or is the teacher being taught as well through the mobile device?
 - a. Is there a mobile learning programmer designed for this particular subject? If so, does the mobile phone have the capacity to function in the native language of the teachers and students?
 - b. How is the curriculum going to be organized around the mobile phone device? For example, will the students simply answer questions via SMS about subjects they learned that day from face-to-face learning? Or are they actually learning the subject through the mobile phone?
 - c. Cross-curriculum correlation.
- 2) **Classroom Organisation:** How often does the class meet face-to-face, if at all? How can teachers adequately grade or assess their students work via mobile phone? What is the length of the course and the course time constraints?
- 3) **Pedagogy:** What pedagogical theories can be used to implement mobile learning? For purposes of this toolkit, the Technological Pedagogical Content (TPACK) Framework is used. However, it is important to look at all possibilities when designing a mobile learning curriculum. See Pedagogy Section.
- 4) **Teacher Readiness:** Does the teacher know how to adequately use mobile phones to facilitate learning? See Teacher Readiness Checklist.

¹UNESCO.Education, (2013). Policy guidelines for mobile learning. Retrieved from United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization website: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002196/219641e.pdf>

²UNESCO.Education, (2013). Policy guidelines for mobile learning. Retrieved from United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization website: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002196/219641e.pdf>

³UNESCO.Education, (2013). Policy guidelines for mobile learning. Retrieved from United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization website: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002196/219641e.pdf>