

Innovation Africa 2027



MARKET INTELLIGENCE BRIEFING



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: AFRICA'S EDUCATION-TO-EMPLOYMENT INVESTMENT

Africa's education market is entering a different phase of development. For much of the past two decades, government and development-partner investment concentrated principally on **access**: classrooms, enrolment, textbooks and basic education provision.

The 2027–2028 opportunity increasingly revolves around **outcomes**.

Governments now face simultaneous pressures to improve foundational learning, modernise curricula, prepare young people for rapidly changing labour markets, expand TVET and tertiary capacity, digitise teaching, improve teacher quality and incorporate artificial intelligence into education without widening existing inequalities.

The scale of the underlying demand is extraordinary. UNESCO estimates that **Sub-Saharan Africa requires another 15 million teachers by 2030** to meet universal primary and secondary education objectives.

The World Bank estimates that **more than 230 million jobs in Sub-Saharan Africa will require digital skills by 2030**, while only about 11% of tertiary graduates currently have formal digital training and only around half of African countries include computer skills in their school curricula.



2027/28 Market Signals

- **Digital education is moving from pilot projects to national infrastructure.** The African EdTech market was valued at approximately **\$7.33 billion in 2025** and is forecast to reach **\$19.25 billion by 2034**, representing 11.33% CAGR.

- **Skills investment is becoming explicitly connected to jobs.** The World Bank's \$972 million SET4Jobs programme, the African Development Bank's forthcoming Youth, Skills and Jobs Action Plan 2027–2033 and numerous national projects increasingly tie funding to employment, industry participation and competencies.
- **TVET is being repositioned as economic infrastructure.** Governments are procuring equipment, simulation systems, competency-based curricula, industry certifications and Centres of Excellence rather than just vocational colleges.
- **Curriculum reform is becoming a technology market.** Competency-based education, digital assessment, learning analytics, STEM, entrepreneurship and AI literacy increasingly require new content, teacher retraining, digital examination systems and learning platforms.
- **AI in education is likely to be the fastest-growing individual technology vertical.** The broader Africa AI-in-education market generated **\$400.9 million in 2025** and is forecast to grow at **27.2% annually through 2033**.
- **Higher education is being linked more closely to industrial policy.** Universities are increasingly being funded to deliver STEM graduates, applied research, innovation centres, entrepreneurship programmes and partnerships with employers.
- **Education procurement is becoming increasingly ecosystem-based.** The strongest opportunities will often combine connectivity + devices + content + teacher training + assessment + support rather than selling one isolated technology.

Sources: *imarc: Africa Edtech Market Size, Share, Trends and Forecast by Sector, Type, Deployment Mode, End User and Country, 2026-2034; African Development Bank: Consultations shape Africa's 2027–2033 Youth, Skills and Jobs Action Plan (June 2026); Grand View Research: Africa AI in Education Market Size & Outlook (May 2026)*

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Africa has become one of the world's most strategically important emerging EdTech markets because of the combination of a rapidly growing learner population, increasing connectivity and strong government demand for scalable delivery models.

1. Current Africa Market Size

African EdTech market at **\$7.326 billion** in 2025 and approx. **\$8.2 billion** in 2026. The broader EdTech definition incorporates:

Learning platforms; digital content; educational software; classroom technology; administrative technology; assessment; devices and related education solutions.

The narrower African e-learning market is estimated at **\$4 billion** with a forecasted 19.2% CAGR

2. Expected Growth over the Next 5 Years

The African EdTech is projected to grow at a CAGR of 11.33% to 14.6% through 2031. The market is expected to reach ~ **\$13.9 billion** by 2031.

3. Expected Growth in 2027–2028

2027: approximately \$9.1 billion, **+\$0.9 billion.**

2028: approximately \$10.1 billion, **+\$1.0 billion.**

That means roughly **\$2 billion** of additional annual EdTech demand is created between 2026 and 2028 under the conservative forecast.

4. Business Opportunities for Industry

National learning platforms. Ministries increasingly favour nationwide platforms.

Offline-first EdTech. Low-bandwidth applications, downloadable content, edge servers have major advantages.

Localised digital content. Curriculum alignment and African-language content increasingly matter alongside the international content libraries.

Adaptive learning. Platforms that adjust difficulty automatically are particularly attractive in systems with extremely wide variation in learning levels.

School connectivity packages. Connectivity + content + devices + maintenance provides a stronger government proposition than connectivity alone.

Learning Management Systems. Ministries require national or regional LMS architecture covering schools, teachers and learners.

Digital examination and assessment. Education-management analytics. Interactive displays and smart classrooms.

Device lifecycle management. Governments increasingly need repair, security, charging, content management and replacement programmes.

5. Sample Major Projects in Africa 2027–2028

World Bank AIM4Learning. The regional Advancing Innovative Methods to Promote Learning programme is active through June 2029, to improve basic-learning outcomes in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Zambia Learning Passport / Digital Teaching and Learning. Zambia continues scaling digital learning through the national Learning Passport ecosystem.

Malawi Building Education Foundations through Innovation and Technology. Tablet-based personalised-learning aims to reach 3.5 million children in more than 6,000 primary schools by 2030.

Burkina Faso Digital Acceleration. Digital inclusion, skills and broadband programmes remain active until August 2028.

Sources: *imarc: Africa Edtech Market Size, Share, Trends and Forecast by Sector, Type, Deployment Mode, End User and Country, 2026-2034; Expert Market Research: Africa E-Learning Market Size, Share and Forecast Trends - Growth Analysis and Outlook Report (2026-2035); UNICEF: A Click Towards a Brighter Future (July 2026); World Bank: Advancing Innovative Methods to Promote Learning (AIM4Learning) in Eastern and Southern Africa; FT: Sowing the seeds of education through interactive learning (2025); UNICEF: Digital Education Strategy 2025-2030.*



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT & TRANSFORMATION

Skills development is one of Africa's largest human-capital investment themes to meet the need for the education sector to deliver workforce capability.

The critical change for 2027–2028 is from **"education for qualifications" toward "education for employability."**



1. Current Africa Market Size

The market spans government youth-employment programs; digital-skills; blended skills platforms; entrepreneurship training; professional certification; workforce development and post-school training.

Innovation Africa Intelligence estimate — addressable skills-development market, 2026: approximately **\$5 - \$7 billion** annually.

This estimate should not be confused with total government education expenditure.

The African Development Bank is simultaneously preparing a new continent-wide **Youth, Skills and Jobs Action Plan 2027–2033**.

2. Expected Growth over the Next 5 Years

Forecast growth of **12% – 15% CAGR** through 2031, taking the commercially addressable skills-development market to **\$9 - \$13 billion** annually.

Growth will be strongest in: digital skills; AI skills; green-energy skills; ICT; advanced manufacturing; construction; agribusiness; healthcare; tourism.

The World Bank forecasts that **230 million** jobs in Sub-Saharan Africa will require digital skills by 2030.

3. Expected Growth in 2027–2028

The 2027–28 period represents an acceleration of existing programs.

Expected annual sector growth: **13%–16%**.

A market of \$6 billion in 2026 growing to approx:

2027: \$6.8–\$7.0 billion

2028: \$7.7–\$8.1 billion

An important catalyst will be the launch of the AfDB's **2027–2033 Youth, Skills and Jobs Action Plan**.

4. Business Opportunities for Industry

Skills intelligence platforms. Education ministries require labour-market information systems capable of connecting training with future workforce demand.

Certification and assessment. International certifications offering governments evidence that programs deliver relevant competencies.

Industry-aligned academies. African Governments increasingly want employers involved in curriculum design and certification.

Microcredentials. Shorter employer-recognised qualifications in cloud, networking, cybersecurity, AI.

Training-as-a-Service. Governments need platforms capable of enrolling and tracking of learners.

Apprenticeship platforms. Digital systems linking institutions, employers and learners.

AI-assisted career guidance. Governments require scalable mechanisms matching skills to jobs.

5. Sample Major Projects in Africa 2027–2028

World Bank SET4Jobs — \$972 million. The program runs over eight years and is initially covering seven countries, expecting to benefit 18 million young people by 2034.

AfDB Youth, Skills and Jobs Action Plan 2027–2033. The Bank is designing a new seven-year continental strategy across major African markets.

Ghana STARR-J — \$300 million. Approved in June 2026, the project will support approximately 2.2 million students across 1,000 secondary schools.

Sources: *World Bank: New Program to Equip 18 Million Youth and Enable Jobs in Eastern and Southern Africa (Feb 2026); African Development Bank: Consultations shape Africa's 2027–2033 Youth, Skills and Jobs Action Plan (June 2026); Mastercard Foundation: Africa Youth Employment Outlook 2026. World Bank: press release (June 2026).*

CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT REFORM



Curriculum reform has become one of the most important education procurement markets in Africa.

Many African education systems are moving away from heavily examination-driven curricula toward: competency-based education; foundational literacy and numeracy; problem solving; digital literacy; STEM; AI literacy.

Every curriculum change produces a procurement chain involving content, textbooks, teacher training, assessments, software and data.

1. Current Africa Market Size

Innovation Africa Intelligence Estimate — commercially addressable curriculum, assessment, content and reform implementation market: approximately **\$1.2 - \$1.8 billion** annually in 2026.

This includes: curriculum design and consultancy; textbooks and curriculum-aligned content; digital curriculum; formative assessment; national examinations; assessment technology; analytics.

The underlying need is enormous: UNESCO's Africa-focused learning analysis finds that only **10.8%** of children achieve minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics by the end of primary education.

2. Expected Growth over the Next 5 Years

Innovation Africa forecast: **10% – 14% CAGR**, with the market reaching approximately:

\$2.0 – \$3.0 billion annually by 2031.

The fastest-growing component will be **digital and continuous assessment**, rather than traditional examination printing.

A major catalyst is the new **Continental Assessment Framework for Africa**, designed to harmonise measurement of foundational reading and mathematics across African Union member states.

3. Expected Growth in 2027–2028

Expected annual expansion: **12% – 15%**

Growth will be concentrated in countries introducing competency-based curricula. By 2027–28, procurement should increasingly move into the implementation phase:

New curriculum materials; assessment banks; digital examination tools; teacher retooling; learning-management platforms; school-based formative assessment; national learning-outcome datasets.

4. Business Opportunities for Industry

Industry opportunities are in:

Competency-based curriculum development.

Curriculum-aligned digital content.

Computer-based testing & automated marking

Adaptive assessments.

Foundational literacy and numeracy assessment.

Learning analytics dashboards for ministries.

National examination security.

AI-supported test creation and moderation.

Teacher training following curriculum reform.

5. Sample Major Projects in Africa 2027–2028

Continental Assessment Framework for Africa.

Implementation of CAF-Africa to create requirements for capacity development across AU states.

Côte d'Ivoire curriculum reform. The country reached an important implementation milestone during 2025/26 ahead of wider national rollout

Zanzibar Improving Quality of Basic Education. The World Bank programme runs through January 2029.

Zimbabwe Heritage-Based Curriculum 2024–2030. Emphasis on technical capability, skills, innovation and production.

Sources: UNESCO: *2025 Spotlight on basic education completion and foundational learning in Africa*; World Bank: *World Bank: Zanzibar Improving Quality of Basic Education Project*; UNESCO-IBE: *Curriculum Reform in Côte d'Ivoire* (May 2026). Zimbabwe Parliament Hansard (May 2026)

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING — TVET

TVET is moving toward the centre of African economic policy. The next generation of TVET investment is attempting to connect training directly with industrial demand.

1. Current Africa Market Size

Commercial research confirms that an identifiable African vocational-training market exists, however public summaries do not disclose continent-wide dollar values. Based on government expenditure and the large multilateral investment pipeline:

Innovation Africa Intelligence estimate: **\$3 – \$4.5 billion** African TVET supplier market in 2026, including:

Vocational equipment; laboratories and workshops; training delivery; educational software; industrial simulators; curriculum development; certification; apprenticeships.

2. Expected Growth over the Next 5 Years

Estimated CAGR: **12% – 16%**, creating a potential **\$5.5 – \$9 billion** market by 2031, depending upon the speed of national expansion implementation. The major demand drivers are:

Demographic growth; youth unemployment; industrialisation; renewable-energy investment; ICT; construction; manufacturing; agribusiness; mining; transport and logistics.

3. Expected Growth in 2027–2028

TVET is among the strongest verticals during 2027–28, with forecast annual market growth: **14% – 17%**.

The most rapid growth should occur in technical equipment, digital simulation, industry certification and modernised competency-based programmes.

4. Business Opportunities for Industry

The World Bank's regional TVET model explicitly includes 3D printing, digital fabrication, VR, employer linkages and competency-based training within institutional modernisation.

Nationally-led business opportunities are in:

Industry-standard laboratories and workshops.

Mechatronics and automation training.

Renewable-energy training systems.

Robotics and industrial automation.

Agricultural technology.

Healthcare technical training.

Digital fabrication and 3D printing.

Training-of-trainer programmes.

Competency-based assessment.

Digital apprenticeship platforms.



5. Sample Major Projects in Africa 2027–2028

SET4Jobs — \$972 million. Technical and tertiary education will be aligned with high-growth value chains across participating countries.

Kenya Higher Education Science and Technology Phase II. AfDB approved approximately **\$73 million** in 2025 to expand science/technology education and entrepreneurship infrastructure, including workforce retraining and competency-based approaches.

Angola Youth Employment Project. The AfDB-backed programme includes modernisation of four TVET institutions, four universities and 11 digital innovation hubs.

Zimbabwe SYWEP. AfDB-supported Government of Zimbabwe/ILO programme with implementation extending to December 2028. It covers skills development, TVET and work-integrated learning

Sources: 6W Research: *Africa Vocational Training Market (2025–2031)*; World Bank: *New Program to Equip 18 Million Youth and Enable Jobs in Eastern and Southern Africa* (Feb 2026); African Development Bank: *African Development Fund \$73 million to empower Kenyan youth* (Oct 2025); African Development Bank: *Angola - Youth Employment Project - Projecto Crescer* (2025–2029); Zimbabwe Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training (2026).

DIGITAL LEARNING AND DIGITAL LITERACY

This vertical overlaps with EdTech but represents a separate government-policy market. Digital learning and literacy describes the **system-wide ability of students and teachers to use technology effectively.**

The distinction matters commercially because ministries increasingly procure digital-literacy programs independently of EdTech products.

1. Current Africa Market Size

The current 2026 African digital learning market is estimated at: **\$4.0 – \$4.2 billion.**



2. Expected Growth over the Next 5 Years

Conservative industry forecasts imply approximately **8% – 10% CAGR**. More aggressive estimates are close to 19%. A base forecast of 12% growth implies a **\$6.5 – \$7.5 billion** market around 2031.

3. Expected Growth in 2027–2028

Using approximately 12% growth:

2027: ~ **\$4.8 – \$5.0 billion**

2028: ~ **\$5.3 – \$5.6 billion**

The strongest expansion should come from public-sector adoption.

4. Business Opportunities for Industry

UNICEF's Digital Education Strategy 2025–2030 particularly emphasises closing inequalities associated with gender, disability, language, geography and out-of-school learners.

Industry opportunities are in:

National digital literacy curricula.

School connectivity.

Learning management platforms.

Digital-content repositories.

Tablets and Chromebook-style devices.

Teacher digital-pedagogy training.

Digital-skills assessment.

Cyber safety and online citizenship.

Assistive and inclusive technology.

African-language content.

Education data and analytics.

5. Sample Major Projects in Africa 2027–2028

Western Africa Regional Digital Integration Program. Current programme indicators extend through 2028 and include formal digital-skills training and women's digital-finance education.

Zambia Learning Passport. National digital learning continues to expand with government, UNICEF and telecommunications-sector collaboration

Cameroon Connect My School. UNICEF and IHS Towers are extending digital learning into underserved communities with further scale explicitly envisaged.

Burkina Faso Digital Acceleration Project. The project targets 1.2 million beneficiaries completing digital-literacy programmes by August 2028

Zimbabwe–UNICEF Programme of Cooperation 2027–2031. Specifically identifies continued scaling of digital learning, equipping learners and teachers with tools, skills and connectivity, and using lessons from the previous TEACH programme to shape the next phase of nationwide education support.

Sources: *imarc: Africa E-Learning Market Size, Share, Trends and Forecast by Sector, Type, Deployment Mode, End User and Country, 2026-2034; Market Data Forecast: Africa E-Learning Market Report; EMR Claight: Africa E-Learning Market Size, Share and Forecast Trends - Growth Analysis and Outlook Report (2026-2035); World Bank: gital Transformation for Africa/ Western Africa Regional Digital Integration Program (June 2026); UNICEF: A Click Towards a Brighter Future (July 2026); UNICEF Cameroon: Opening Digital Doors for Every Child (Jan 2026); UNICEF Zimbabwe; Children First Newsletter: (March 2026); World Bank: Burkina Faso Digital Acceleration Project 2026 – 2028.*

TEACHER TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teacher development may ultimately become one of the largest recurrent education markets in Africa. Africa's teacher numbers are expanding rapidly.

1. Current Africa Market Size

The global teacher professional-development market was estimated at approximately **\$9.8 billion** in 2025, with 7.2% forecast CAGR to 2034. There is no authoritative Africa-only figure.

Using teacher numbers, public education expenditure, training programmes and Africa's high need for new teachers, *Innovation Africa Intelligence* estimate: \$700 million – \$1.0 billion African teacher-development market in 2026. This includes:

Initial professional training; in-service training; digital pedagogy; subject upgrading; AI training; leadership development; teacher certification; curriculum-reform training.

2. Expected Growth over the Next 5 Years

Africa should substantially outperform the mature global teacher-PD market with a forecast African CAGR: **12% – 15%**, giving a potential 2031 market of **\$1.3 – \$2.0 billion**.

The structural driver is UNESCO's estimate that Sub-Saharan Africa alone will need **15 million additional teachers by 2030**.

3. Expected Growth in 2027–2028

Forecast annual growth: **13%–17%**.

The reason for acceleration is the convergence of three training requirements:

1. competency-based curricula;
2. digital pedagogy;
3. artificial intelligence.

Teachers who were originally trained for textbook-led classrooms are increasingly being expected to manage all three.

4. Business Opportunities for Industry

UNICEF identifies teacher empowerment and upskilling as a central component of its 2025–2030 digital-education strategy, including digital pedagogy, inclusive education and AI. Business opportunities:

National teacher-learning platforms.

CPD management systems.

Microcredentials and digital certification.

AI competency training.

Digital pedagogy.

STEM teacher development.

School leadership training.

Instructional coaching platforms.

Teacher communities of practice.

Classroom observation and analytics.

Training-of-trainers systems.

Teacher-content creation tools.



5. Sample Major Projects in Africa 2027–2028

Angola TEST: World Bank targets include 16,000 teachers graduating from teacher-training institutions.

Egypt AI Competency Framework for Teachers. UNESCO and Egypt's Ministry of Education launched the national AI teacher competency framework in June 2026.

Ghana STARR-J. Increasing teacher capacity is one of the key targets the \$300 million programme.

Sources: Market Intelto: *Teacher Professional Development Market Research Report 2034*; UNESCO: *Global report on teachers* (Apr 2025); World Bank: *Tertiary Education, Science, and Technology Project Angola (2023 – 2028)*; UNESCO: *National artificial intelligence competency framework for teachers launched in Egypt* (June 2026); World Bank: *press release* (June 2026).

STEM AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

Africa faces both a capacity problem in tertiary education: enrolment needs to expand substantially, while a larger proportion of graduates must enter fields aligned with future economic demand.

A 2026 World Bank diagnosis reports that Africa needs approximately **23 million additional STEM graduates by 2030** to fill skilled roles in engineering, health, ICT and related professions.



1. Current Africa Market Size

There is no credible single figure for an African commercial "STEM market", because tertiary expenditure includes university staffing and infrastructure that are not addressable to suppliers.

For the supplier-oriented *Innovation Africa* definition — STEM laboratories, equipment, higher-education technology, software, research equipment, training and associated services, we give an estimate of:

2026 commercially addressable STEM and tertiary technology market: \$4 billion–\$6 billion.

This is deliberately narrower than total African higher-education expenditure.

2. Expected Growth over the Next 5 Years

Estimated CAGR: **12%–15%**. Potential addressable market by 2031: **\$7 – \$12 billion**.

Africa's demographic trajectory makes expansion structural rather than cyclical.

The World Bank's current tertiary work also demonstrates significant institutional scale: its African Higher Education Centres of Excellence initiatives have trained **more than 90,000 students**, including over 7,600 PhDs and around 30,000 master's graduates, and have generated hundreds of accredited programs.

3. Expected Growth in 2027–2028

Forecast: **13% – 16%** annually. Particularly strong procurement categories:

Laboratory equipment; engineering equipment; simulation; research computing; AI infrastructure; scientific software; campus networks; digital libraries; NRENs; university management systems.

4. Business Opportunities for Industry

STEM laboratories.

Virtual laboratories and simulation.

Research computing and AI infrastructure.

Engineering and manufacturing equipment.

Medical and health-science training.

Agricultural science.

University connectivity/NRENs.

Digital libraries and scientific publishing.

Research management platforms.

STEM teacher education.

Industry-sponsored university laboratories.

Innovation and entrepreneurship hubs.

5. Sample Major Projects in Africa 2027–2028

UNESCO TECH SPARK Africa 2025–2027.

Universities in Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe are introducing simulation learning into STEM and job-ready skills programs.

Kenya HEST II, \$73 million. Focused on science, technology, higher education, entrepreneurship and modernising institutional capability.

Angola Tertiary Education, Science and Technology \$199 million. The World Bank project includes a **\$150 million** IBRD loan plus **\$49 million** trust-fund financing and runs to December 2028.

Sources: *World Bank: A Diagnosis of STEM Education in Ghana's General and Technical Secondary Schools* (May 2026); *UNESCO: Sparking innovation: Universities in Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe set to redefine youth skills development through simulation-learning technology* (June 2026); *African Development Bank: African Development Fund \$73 million to empower Kenyan youth* (Oct 2025).

AI IN EDUCATION

AI in education is likely to become the fastest-growing vertical between 2027 and 2031. The opportunity has two separate dimensions:

AI for education — tutoring, assessment, lesson planning, administration and personalised learning.

Education for AI — preparing teachers and students to understand and use artificial intelligence.

1. Current Africa Market Size

Grand View Research estimates the wider Africa AI-in-education market at **\$400.9 million** in 2025, forecasting **27.2% CAGR** between 2026 and 2033.

Innovation Africa Intelligence estimate for Africa alone in 2026: **\$200 – \$300 million**.

The broader African AI market is expected to increase from **\$4.5 billion** in 2025 to **\$16.5 billion** by 2030.

2. Expected Growth over the Next 5 Years

AI-in-Education CAGR: approx. **25%–30%**

Africa's share should rise as ministries begin national programmes. An African market of \$200–300 million in 2026 could consequently become approximately:

\$650 million – \$1.1 billion by 2031.

3. Expected Growth in 2027–2028

This is one of the single fastest-growing supplier opportunity in this report. 2027–28 will see African governments move from:

"Should AI be allowed in education?" to:

"How do we safely integrate AI into the education system?"

4. Business Opportunities for Industry

One of the most significant findings already comes from Nigeria. World Bank-supported research found that students participating in a program combining generative-AI tutoring with teacher guidance achieved learning gains equivalent to roughly 1.5–2 years of typical schooling in six weeks.

Procurement will increasingly require safeguards, emphasising age appropriateness, teacher supervision, data protection and cultural relevance. Opportunities in:

AI tutoring.

Automated lesson planning & marking.

AI-assisted assessment.

Adaptive learning.

AI literacy curricula.

Teacher AI certification.

Academic-integrity software.

Student safeguarding and AI governance.

African-language education models.

University research compute.

AI laboratories.



5. Sample Major Projects in Africa 2027–2028

World Bank AI-enabled EdTech pilots. Current programs include adaptive learning in Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia and Mali, AI tutors in Ghana, teacher solutions in Ethiopia and youth-skills initiatives in Tanzania and Mauritius.

National AI curricula. UNESCO's AI competency framework for students provides a template specifically designed to support integration of AI learning objectives into school curricula.

Egypt National AI Competency Framework for Teachers. Launched in 2026 and likely to drive subsequent teacher training, curriculum and platform requirements.

Sources: *Grand View Horizon: Africa Ai In Education Market Size & Outlook (June 2026); Mastercard Foundation: AI in Africa to top \$16.5B by 2030 (Aug 2026); World Bank Blogs: The future is Africa, Shaping AI-enabled EdTech for skilling the next generation (Jan 2026); UNESCO: AI competency framework for students (Jann 2026); UNESCO: National artificial intelligence competency framework for teachers launched in Egypt (June 2026).*

THE 2027–28 PROCUREMENT SUPER-CYCLE

Looking across the research, there are ten particularly strong commercial opportunity areas for *Innovation Africa*.

1. EdTech and AI-enabled education

This is the fastest-growing emerging category, with devices being procured more for classrooms and assessment as well as for teachers and school management. In AI we see growth in teacher copilots, tutoring, assessment and AI literacy.

2. National digital learning platforms

Countries are moving from school-bases isolated applications toward education ministry-controlled digital-learning ecosystems.

3. Teacher transformation

The combination of 15 million additional teachers required by 2030 and the retraining of the existing workforce represents one of Africa's largest recurring education challenges. Major investment is required in teacher training & development.

4. Competency-based curriculum

Curriculum reform creates downstream demand for content, teacher training, assessment and technology simultaneously.

5. Modern TVET

Investment is moving toward industrial automation, renewable energy, mechatronics, AI, digital manufacturing and employer-linked certification.

6. STEM infrastructure

Scientific equipment, laboratories, engineering systems, simulation and university research infrastructure should experience strong growth.

7. Digital assessment

The adoption of CAF-Africa and increasing emphasis on measurable learning outcomes should make assessment one of the most important emerging GovTech-for-Education markets.

8. Digital skills & classroom technology

The requirement for 230 million digitally skilled jobs by 2030 makes digital literacy a structural economic requirement and an expansion of the use of edtech in the classroom is required to ensure digital literacy.

9. University-industry collaboration

Government-funded tertiary projects increasingly require courses to be developed with employers, internships to form part of programmes and employment outcomes to be measured.

10. Youth innovation ecosystems

Innovation hubs, AI labs, incubators and entrepreneurship programmes are increasingly becoming part of government education and employment strategies.

The Major Trend: The Education–Technology–Employment Convergence

For 2027–28 the increasingly common architecture:

Curriculum Reform
↓
Teacher Development
↓
EdTech & Digital Learning
↓
Digital Assessment
↓
Skills / STEM / TVET
↓
AI & Digital Competencies
↓
Industry Certification
↓
Entrepreneurship / Employment

This convergence is exactly why the World Bank's new programmes increasingly combine education, skills, private-sector participation and employment outcomes rather than treating education policy independently.

This market briefing was prepared in August 2026 as part of preparations for the 2027 Innovation Africa Summit, scheduled for 6 – 8 April 2027, Harare, Zimbabwe

