

What demand is telling us, what we're learning, and what remains hard

Regional synthesis from Bangladesh, Cambodia,
Philippine, Sri Lanka, Vietnam projects

1. The
demand
we're
responding
to

2. What
we're
starting to
learn

3.
Reflections
on
doing the
work

4. The
unresolved
challenge

Five country projects

The projects enter through different policy problems, but increasingly converge on how education systems make, use and sustain evidence-informed EdTech decisions.

Bangladesh

Teacher AI
literacy +
EdTech
assessment

Cambodia

Teacher EdTech
adoption +
policy/toolkit

Philippines

School-level
decision-making
+ leadership
course

Sri Lanka

National EdTech
survey +
system/data
capacity

Vietnam

Digital
leadership +
system
transformation

The demand we're responding to

Ministries are asking less “what technology?” and more “how do we decide, govern and build capacity?”

Decision-making

Who decides, at what level, and using what evidence?

People & capacity

What competencies do teachers, leaders and officials need?

AI governance

How do systems guide responsible AI use already emerging in practice?

Data & systems

How can fragmented data and digital systems support decisions?

Bangladesh DSHE demand for AI literacy and TPD → project expanded into teacher AI competencies + enabling ecosystem.

Cambodia National evidence on teacher EdTech adoption → moving toward policy recommendations, toolkit and pilots; AI use has become a live issue.

Philippines DepEd/NEAP need stronger school-level EdTech decision-making → co-developed leadership programme for digital transformation.

Sri Lanka MoE + Prime Minister's Task Force need evidence on EdTech adoption, data systems and provincial innovation → national survey + policy engagement.

Vietnam Digital transformation creates demand for stronger digital competencies among school leaders and education decision-makers.

What we're starting to learn

Two working hypotheses are beginning to cut across the portfolio.

1 AI adoption is moving faster than policy

Practice is already emerging before formal guidance, training systems and governance are fully in place.

57%

Cambodia teachers
reported personal AI
use

52%

Bangladesh teachers
in the study reported
some AI use

91%

Bangladesh teachers
identified insufficient
AI training

Working hypothesis: the immediate policy question is not whether AI will enter education, but how to shape practices already emerging.

2 Institutional coordination may be the real bottleneck

- Philippines — school-level authority and central mandates do not always align.
- Sri Lanka — provincial innovations are emerging, but without clear institutional guidelines hard to share, sustain and scale.
- Cambodia — qualitative evidence strongly points to leadership as a driver.
- Bangladesh — one-off training is unlikely to sustain responsible AI use.
- Vietnam — leadership and readiness vary across locations.

Working hypothesis: EdTech adoption may be as much an organisational problem — authority, incentives, coordination and continuity — as a technology problem.

Regional signal: technology is moving faster than the institutions meant to guide it.

Reflections on doing the work

What seems to strengthen governments' ability to generate and use evidence on EdTech?

What has worked

- Start with a live government decision, not a generic research question.
- Co-produce with ministries and agencies — problem framing, interpretation and solution design.
- Work through existing structures where possible: NEAP, task forces, technical working groups.

Bangladesh • Philippines • Sri Lanka

What has not worked as well

- Assuming good evidence will automatically overcome administrative or political constraints.
- One-off capacity building without follow-up, mentoring or institutional routines.
- Rigid plans when approvals, leadership and government priorities change.

Sri Lanka • Cambodia • Bangladesh

What we adapted

- Mixed methods and triangulation when evidence points in different directions.
- Remaining flexible and responsive to the evolving requirements of government institutes.
- Designing low-tech, reusable outputs: frameworks, toolkits, courses and guidance.

Cambodia • Sri Lanka • Philippines

Regional lesson: “evidence capacity” is not only the ability to generate evidence — it is the ability of institutions to ask the right questions, interpret findings and turn them into sustained action.

The single most pressing challenge

How do we turn fragmented, fast-moving EdTech and AI adoption into coordinated, institutionally owned decision-making?

Bangladesh

AI demand > training systems

Cambodia

Practice > formal policy

Philippines

Central mandates ↔ school agency

Sri Lanka

Provincial innovation
↔ coordination

Vietnam

Digital ambition ↔ leadership readiness

One regional story across the four areas

The project is moving from stand-alone research toward helping education systems build a repeatable way to make and adapt EdTech decisions.



Where the Asia Hub adds value

COMPARE

Surface patterns and differences across five systems.

CONNECT

Bring ministries, researchers and regional initiatives into conversation.

TRANSLATE

Turn country evidence into regional lessons and policy-relevant products.

SCALE LEARNING

Identify practices worth adapting — without assuming one model fits all.