

AI Tutors and Teaching: How Might the Role of the Teacher Change in an Age of AI?

An Artificial Intelligence in Education Community of Interest Event

14 May 2025

AI is reshaping education — from teaching to learning to administration and beyond. What readiness looks like rapidly changes day-to-day, context dependent. To help close opportunity gaps in the age of AI, the [World Bank](#) and EdTech Hub's [AI Observatory](#) are collaborating on a 2025 Global AI in Education Community of Interest (COI) series of events to share knowledge, expertise and tackle questions from across the sector.

One of the major questions we're hearing time and again is: what about teachers? The role of teachers, potential threats to the profession, limits of implementation are all major topics of debate when it comes to navigating the changing education ecosystem in the age of AI. So how are experts in the field getting beyond the hype and into productive outcomes? We're sharing what we heard during this special session on May 14, 2025, and what questions remain from our special COI convening on the crucial role of teachers in the age of AI.

Featured Speakers

- Mike Trucano, Senior Advisor, [EdTech Hub AI Observatory and Action Lab](#) and Non-Resident Fellow, [Brookings Institution](#)
- Verna Lalbearie, Executive Director, [EdTech Hub](#)
- Vicki Zubovic, Chief External Relations Officer, [Khan Academy](#)
- Hannah Horne-Robinson, Research and Assessment Manager, [Rising Academies](#)
- Michael Leventhal, Principal Investigator RobotsMali AI4D Lab, [RobotsMali](#)
- Maxwell V. Kayesi, HSC, Head of Technology and Physics Teacher

and [Co-founder and Director programs, Centre for ICT/Innovation in Education and Resource Network CiERN](#)

- Nick Schiner, Director of Peer-to-Peer Professional Learning, [Digital Promise](#)
- Alice Carter, Innovation Lead, [EdTech Hub AI Observatory and Action Lab](#)

Watch the webinar

Catch up on [the full conversation](#).

Key takeaways

Here are three key takeaways from the discussion about the role of teachers in the age of AI, particularly in the context of low- and middle-income countries:

1. Teachers must be central to AI design and deployment of tools intended for the classroom

Across multiple speakers, a consistent message emerged: AI tools must be designed *with* teachers, not just *for* them. Teachers are crucial facilitators of learning, and any attempt to introduce AI into classrooms without teacher input is likely to fail. Maxwell, a teacher in Kenya, emphasised that “any technology intervention that leaves out the teacher... is not going to kickstart.” While Hannah (Rising Academies) and Vicki (Khan Academy) highlighted how in their work close collaboration with educators to ensure relevance and adoption was imperative to developing their AI tools and practice.

2. AI should enhance, not replace, the role of teachers

Panellists rejected the notion of AI replacing teachers. Instead, tools like Khan Academy’s “Khanmigo,” Rising Academies’ “RORI” and “TARI,” and RobotsMali’s Bambara-based content aim to *support* teachers by reducing administrative workload, personalising learning for students, and helping with lesson planning or subject-specific tutoring. Teachers shift from being information providers to facilitators guides—helping students navigate and critically engage with learning, appropriately use AI tools, and providing the emotional and human-connection that often helps students thrive.

3. Equity, language, and cultural contexts are critical challenges

Many participants raised concerns about AI tools reinforcing digital divides, particularly in regions lacking infrastructure or where local languages and cultures are underrepresented in AI training data. Michael (RobotsMali,

AI4D Lab) warned that “AI could be an extinction event for African languages and cultures” due to the dominance of English in AI training datasets. The discussion underscored the need for localized AI solutions—tools that operate in low-tech environments (e.g., WhatsApp-based bots), support local languages, and reflect local educational contexts.

Closing this critical dialogue Mike Trucano posed an important challenge to the group: *What question aren't we asking that we should be?*

In a session about the role of teachers, we'll close on what Maxwell, a former ICT Teacher of the Year in Kenya, observed, “How do we prepare students to question AI? Are we preparing the teachers to effectively guide the learners on how to use AI effectively?” Furthermore, he queried whether service providers and developers are “bringing everybody on board? Are they bringing in the voices of the teachers? Are they bringing in the voices of the policy makers...What happens to the digital divide when the chatbot becomes common?” He concluded, “Those are the key areas that we need to address as we go forward in forging policies and developing this frontier.”

These questions—and the ones shared by the community—must continue to drive conversations forward and serve as a strong call to action for the sector.

Questions

The following questions were posed from community members. We're sharing to help stimulate further discussions and knowledge exchanges.

1. Localization and language adaptation

- Are there AI tools and full interventions available in **local African languages** such as **Hausa**, including teacher training, classroom use, and home learning?
- How can AI solutions be **adapted to linguistic, cultural, and infrastructural realities** in Africa (e.g., multilingual settings, curriculum alignment)?
- Is there AI teacher training content available in **French** for **francophone countries** like Senegal?

2. Teacher capacity, training, and role evolution

- With teachers often **lacking digital literacy** (e.g., in **Liberia**), what are effective strategies for **training and onboarding teachers** into AI-supported learning?

- Beyond enhancement, how will **teachers' roles fundamentally change** in an AI-integrated education system?
- How can AI support **teacher facilitation** while preventing **over-reliance by students**, preserving **productive struggle** and independent thinking?
- Should we be concerned about AI **depersonalizing teaching and learning** or eroding **peer and student–teacher interactions** through over-personalization?

3. Implementation and policy readiness

- How do AI tools like **Rori or Khanmigo** gain **government approval and support** for integration into public education systems?
- What guidance exists for **prioritizing investments** in AI within broader education systems—especially in **low-resource, non-English contexts**?

4. Broader ethical, philosophical, and environmental concerns

- Is there a risk that **humans begin to resemble machines** more than the reverse? How do we guard against dehumanization in education?
- How to raise the **importance of open source** as large tech companies largely dominate AI in the education (and beyond) landscape?
- While AI is in its early stages, isn't there a **contradiction** between calls to "tread lightly" and the **rapid pace of adoption** seen in EdTech?
- What are the **environmental impacts** of AI (e.g., energy use, server demands), and what implications does this have for scaling AI in education?

5. Evidence and impact

- Have there been **efficacy studies** on AI interventions, such as those in **Mali** by Robots Mali or other groups? If so, are results or links available?

Shared opportunities for further engagement

Digital Promise – AI Education Exchange

What it is:

- A global initiative to support peer-to-peer professional learning around AI in education.
- Includes access to the HP AI Teacher Academy, a free self-guided course on edX (available in English, Japanese, and Italian).
- Offers both a free version and a \$5 certification option.

Goal: To help educators explore AI meaningfully by engaging with tools, questioning assumptions, and sharing experiences in a global community (via LinkedIn, Facebook, and Discord).

Call to Action: Educators and education stakeholders are encouraged to [join the course and community](#), experiment with AI tools, and contribute to a shared global learning dialogue.

EdTech Hub's AI Observatory and Action Lab – Teachers in the Loop Survey

What it is:

- A new survey initiative called "Teachers in the Loop" to gather teacher perspectives on AI in education.
- Designed to inform deeper engagement and generate recommendations for policymakers, developers, and implementers

Goal: To ensure teachers' real-world needs and voices shape how AI is integrated into learning systems, especially in the Global South.

Call to Action: Teachers and organisations working with teachers are invited to register and share the survey to contribute insights that can influence future AI education policies and tools.

Resources

The following resources were shared by community members and participants. These have not been reviewed by the World Bank or EdTech Hub, but are useful indicators of what conversations, evidence, and methods are being explored in the sector.

Resources from the World Bank

1. [Digital Technologies in Education](#), World Bank.
2. [Frontier Technologies for Education: Artificial Intelligence \(AI\), Blockchain, Open Architecture, and more](#), World Bank.
3. [From chalkboards to chatbots: Transforming learning in Nigeria, one prompt at a time](#), World Bank.

Resources from EdTech Hub

1. [How to unlock learning outcomes in the age of AI?](#), EdTech Hub.
2. [How Can Participatory Methods Centre Teachers Within Education Policy?](#), EdTech Hub.
3. [Horizon Scan: Methods, insights and ideas to action](#), EdTech Hub.

Resources about Khanmigo

1. [Khanmigo](#)
2. [AI-Powered Tutoring: Unleashing the Full Potential of Personalized Learning with Khanmigo](#), Poverty Action Lab.
3. [An Evaluation of Khanmigo, a Generative AI Tool, as a Computer-Assisted Language Learning App](#), Columbia University.
4. [Meet Khanmigo: The student tutor AI being tested in school districts](#), 60 Minutes.
5. [Khanmigo Math Computation and Tutoring Updates](#), Khan Academy.
6. [Khanmigo for Teachers Now Available in Pilot Across Dozens of Countries, Powered by Microsoft](#), Khan Academy.

Resources about Kalamu

1. [Kalamu](#)

Resources on Rising Academies

1. [Rising Academies](#)
2. [Rori.ai](#), Rising Academies
3. [Effective and Scalable Math Support: Evidence on the Impact of an AI-Tutor on Math Achievement in Ghana](#), arXiv.

Resources on RobotsMali

1. [RobotsMali](#)
2. [With French under fire, Mali uses AI to bring local language to students](#), Washington Post.
3. [The AI project pushing local languages to replace French in Mali's schools](#), Rest of World.

Resources on AI and education

1. [Role of AI chatbots in education: systematic literature review](#), International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education.
2. [AI competency framework for students](#), UNESCO.
3. [AI competency framework for teachers](#), UNESCO
4. [AI and the next digital divide in education](#), The Brookings Institution.
5. [Youth Talks on A.I.: Final Report](#), Youth Talks.

This is part of an on-going series hosted by [the World Bank](#) and EdTech Hub's [AI Observatory and Action Lab](#). The AI Observatory is made possible by support from UKAid. Please follow along and join the conversation on [LinkedIn!](#)