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New UN partnership to boost Information technology in Arab region

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INTERNATIONAL. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has teamed up with a Jordanian-based business services company to promote information and communication technology (ICT) to support education, science and culture in the Arab region.

The agreement signed in Paris between UNESCO and the Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization (TAG-Org) seeks to increase access to and measure the use of ICT in different sectors of society, enhance teacher training, and promote multilingualism and internationalized Internet Domain Names.

"UNESCO relies upon and welcomes partners such as TAG-Org to realize the vision of knowledge societies," stated Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO.

The agency and TAG-Org are planning to create a knowledge society portal on which data in Arabic and English on the state of Arab countries on ICT in education, science, culture, communication and commerce - collected through digital surveys, digital reporting, and digital resources - will be made available.

Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Founder and Chairman of TAG-Org, said availability of such data will assist local governments, institutions, and international organizations to understand gaps in ICT and to take a leading role in developing ICT infrastructure and building ICT capacity.

Under the new agreement, UNESCO and TAG-Org will develop an immediate action plan for that project, prepare a strategy to enhance multilingualism and Internet Domain Names in the Arabic script, and work together to increase the availability of Arabic content on the Internet, among other things.