Digital Transformation in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

Empowering SMEs in the BRICS for a competitive future

WEBINAR 1: AI AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF BRICS SMES

Date: March 13, 2025. 9:00 to 11:30 AM (Brasília time, GMT – 3)

- **Welcome remarks and housekeeping announcements** – (5 min)

- **Opening remarks** - Ministry of Entrepreneurship & SMEs of Brazil (MEMP) – (7 min)
  Institutional opening, providing context about the nature and objectives of the webinar series and highlighting the importance of AI and digital transformation in fostering growth among SMEs in BRICS countries.
  - ➢ **Luciana Mancini**, Special Advisor to the Minister on International Affairs and BRICS SME Working Group Chair, Brazilian presidency of the BRICS 2025.

- **PANEL 1: "HARNESSING AI FOR PRODUCTIVITY AND INNOVATION IN SMES"** – 60 min

  Moderator: Daniella Vieira, Head of Artificial Intelligence. Brazilian Micro and Small Business Support Service. (SEBRAE) (5min).
  Panelists: (8 min each)
  - ➢ **Valentina Rollo,** Head of research, International Trade Center (ITC).
  - ➢ **Denis Bruno Verissimo**, AI & Analytics Manager, Technological Research Institute (IPT). Brazil.
  - ➢ **Clariça Soares**, Coordinator of Innovative Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Development, Industry and Commerce of Brazil (MDIC). Brazil.
  - ➢ **Evgeny Osadchuk,** Director of the Artificial Intelligence Department of the Supervisory Board of Digital Economy (ANO). Russia.

  Q&A (10 min)
  - ❖ *This panel will discuss real-world case studies and strategies for AI adoption in BRICS SMEs, focusing on how these technologies enhance productivity, innovation, and created a competitive advantage for SMEs, while identifying the main difficulties facing them.*

  Panel wrap-up: Daniella Vieira, Head of Artificial Intelligence at SEBRAE. (5 min)

  Key topics:
  - *Examples of AI applications that have driven growth in SMEs.*
  - *Strategies for scaling AI adoption within SMEs to enhance operational efficiency.*
  - *The role of AI in increasing global competitiveness.*

- *Main challenges facing BRICS countries SMEs.*

- **PANEL 2:** **"DIGITAL SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE: BUILDING CAPACITIES FOR AI INTEGRATION"** – 60 min

  Moderator: Alexandre Barbosa, Head of Center for Studies on the Development of the Information Society (CETIC/NIC.br). Brazil.
  Panelists: (8 min)
  - **Basheerhamad Shadrach,** Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia Director, Commonwealth of Learning. India.
  - **Celso Camilo,** Co-founder of Artificial Intelligence Center of Excellence of Federal University of Goias (UFG), Brazil.
  - **Juan Ivan Martin Lataix,** Skills Digitalization Specialist, International Labor Organization (ILO).
  - **Ana Paula Nishio,** Chief of Digital Transformation and Artificial Intelligence, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).
  - **Robert Vasiliev,** Deputy Director of the Artificial Intelligence Laboratories Association (AILA), Head and Founder of the Applied AI lab Z-union. Russia.

  Q&A (10 min)
  - ❖ *This panel will explore the critical need for upskilling and workforce development to ensure that SMEs are prepared for the digital economy. The discussion will focus on developing the digital competencies required for successful AI adoption.*

  Panel wrap-up: Alexandre Barbosa, Head of Cetic.br/NIC.br. Brazil. (5 min)

  Key topics:
  - *The role of both basic education and specialized professional training in supporting digital transformation.*
  - *Programs and initiatives designed to equip workers with digital skills for AI adoption.*
  - *The impact of upskilling on SME success and long-term growth.*
  - *Main challenges facing BRIC countries.*

- **Wrap-up and closing remarks** – 5 min
  Description: A summary of the key takeaways from the webinar, followed by closing remarks. Information on the next webinar of the series, to be held in April 2025.

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ANNOTATED AGENDA:

- ✓ **Welcome remarks and housekeeping announcements** – 5 min

- ✓ **Opening Remarks** – 7 min
  Institutional opening, providing context about the nature and objectives of the webinar series and highlighting the importance of AI and digital transformation in fostering growth and among SMEs in BRICS countries.

- ✓ **Panel 1: "Harnessing AI for productivity and innovation in SMEs"** – *60 min*
  This panel will discuss real-world case studies and strategies for AI adoption in BRICS SMEs, focusing on how these technologies enhance productivity, innovation, and created a competitive advantage for SMEs, while identifying the main difficulties facing them.

  Key topics:

  - Examples of AI applications that have driven growth in SMEs.
  - Strategies for scaling AI adoption within SMEs to enhance operational efficiency.
  - The role of AI in increasing global competitiveness.
  - Main challenges facing BRICS countries SMEs.

  Panel 2: "Digital skills for the future: building capacities for AI integration" – *60 min.*
  This panel will explore the critical need for upskilling and workforce development to ensure that SMEs are prepared for the digital economy. The discussion will focus on developing the digital competencies required for successful AI adoption.

  Key topics:

  - The role of both basic education and specialized professional training in supporting digital transformation.
  - Programs and initiatives designed to equip workers with digital skills for AI adoption.
  - The impact of upskilling on SME success and long-term growth.
  - Main challenges facing BRIC countries.

- ✓ **Wrap-up and Closing Remarks** – *10 min*
  Description: A summary of the key takeaways from the webinar, followed by closing remarks. Information on the next webinar of the series, to be held in April 2025.