

# Eepad invests in education

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The Algerian education system will soon benefit from a large ICT facility being provided by the country's private Internet Service Provider (ISP) Eepad, the general manager of the ISP, Nouri Harzallah, recently announced.

Harzallah said the facility is being provided through a partnership with Algerie Telecom, the country's public telecoms operator.

He said he hopes that the facility will enable the country's education sector to catch up with developments in the telecommunications field in general.

Eepad, adds Harzallah, has set up a new strategy based on two main objectives. First, it will continue to develop its ADSL Assila network in all the 48 districts (wilayas) of the country to reach one million subscribers by 2010 and secondly to establish consistent e-learning platforms for 500,000 students and increase that to one million.

Harzallah has also called for more Algerian content on the local websites which is currently lacking and said that can only be achieved when there is a consistent content policy on the ground.

He decried the fact that Algeria is ranked 97th in the area of ICT accessibility by the ITU and the whole country has only 5000 web sites; most of them being hosted abroad while the DZ. domain is hosting a mere one thousand addresses.

According to Harzallah, there is total disaffection with the DZ. domain and currently caters for only 5 ISPs compared to the 100 ISPs registered in 1999.

He said "What is amazing about the current situation is that ISPs have almost no interconnection between them and this is again not very helpful as a motivating indicator to develop ICT content and for education and knowledge."

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