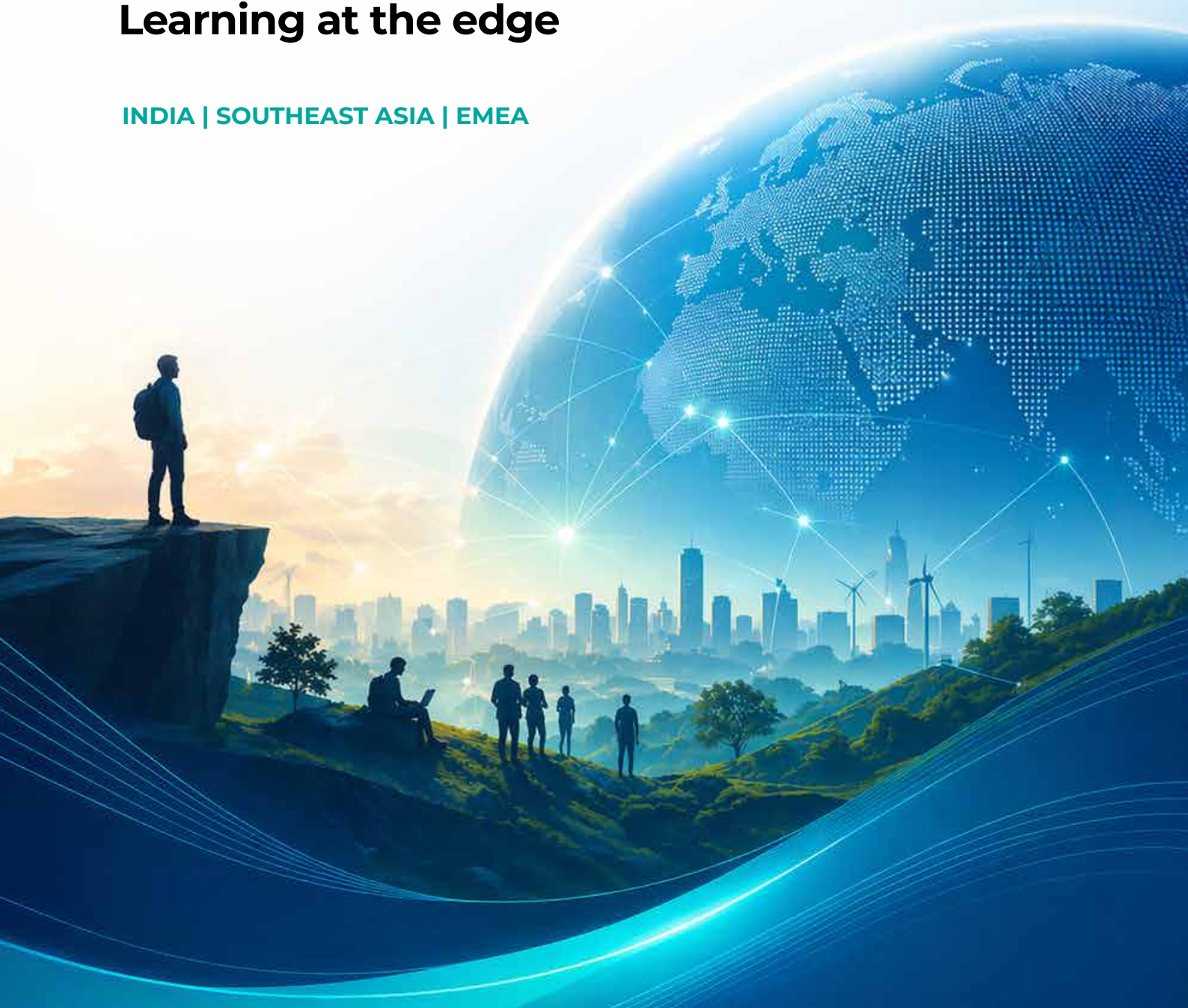


# Global Learning & Skilling Report 2026

Learning at the edge

INDIA | SOUTHEAST ASIA | EMEA



# Decoding the edge

The ETHRWorld Global Learning & Skilling Report 2026, now in its third edition, arrives at a defining moment for the future of work. The 2025 edition captured the rapid expansion of digital learning ecosystems, as organisations scaled reskilling initiatives, strengthened leadership pipelines, and began integrating AI into learning experiences. Yet, it also revealed a fundamental disconnect—while learning access and activity increased significantly, the ability to translate these efforts into measurable skills, workforce readiness, and business impact remained limited.

This year's theme, "Learning at the Edge," reflects a structural shift in how organisations must approach capability building. Learning is no longer anchored within formal programmes or centralised systems; it is moving to the edge of the enterprise—where skills are applied in real time, where AI augments decision-making, and where work itself is continuously evolving.

In this environment, the challenge is no longer about delivering more

learning, but about building the intelligence to understand, map, and deploy skills dynamically. This report examines how organisations are responding to this shift, through their investments in L&D, alignment with business objectives, development of skills architectures, adoption of AI across the learning value chain, and readiness for the hybrid workforce of human and AI talent.

Drawing on insights from organisations across India, the Middle East and Africa (MEA), and Southeast Asia (SEA), the report provides a comparative perspective on how different markets are navigating this transition. The findings point to a clear pattern: while intent, investment, and experimentation are accelerating, execution maturity and system integration remain uneven.

As learning, skills, and work converge, the mandate for organisations is becoming sharper—not just to enable learning, but to ensure it operates at the edge, directly shaping workforce capability, agility, and sustained business performance.

# Foreword

In the  
AI era,  
learning  
must move  
from  
activity to  
impact



**DAVE  
ULRICH**

**Rensis Likert Professor  
Emeritus at the Ross School  
of Business, University of  
Michigan, and a partner at  
The RBL Group**

The conversation on learning and skills has never been more urgent—or more misunderstood. For too long, organisations have treated learning as an activity rather than an outcome, a function rather than a driver of value. But the evidence from decades of theory, research, and practice is clear: building individual competence and institutionalizing organization capabilities is not about programmes—it is about results. It is about the value created for all stakeholders including employees and business inside and customers, investors, communities, and employees outside the organisation.

The Global Learning and Skilling report 2026 comes at a pivotal moment. As organisations navigate digital acceleration, AI disruption, and shifting workforce expectations, the question is no longer whether to invest in learning, but how learning ensures that human capability (talent, leadership, organization, and HR function) delivers stakeholder value.

Progress in any discipline—including HR and learning—emerges at the intersection of three forces: insight

(what happens), evidence (why something happens), and application (how to change what happens).. The most effective organisations do not choose between theory , research, and practice; by integrating the three, new insights emerge.

What stands out in this report is its focus on capability as a system—not a set of isolated interventions. Learning is most powerful when it is embedded in the flow of work, aligned to strategic priorities, and measured by the value it creates outside the organisation, not just within it. This “outside-in” logic, moving from strategic HR to stakeholder HR, turns activity into from impact.

We are also seeing a fundamental shift in the role of learning leaders. They are no longer programme designers; they are architects of human capability. This requires rethinking skills not as static inventories, but as dynamic portfolios that evolve with business needs. It also requires moving beyond content delivery to enabling judgement, adaptability, and decision-making—competencies that increasingly complement digital and AI efforts.

However, many organisations are still early in this journey. Investments in platforms, content libraries, and skills taxonomies often outpace clarity on the outcomes they are meant to deliver. Without a clear line of sight to value, learning risks becoming more efficient—but not more effective.

The opportunity, therefore, is not just to do more learning, but to do better learning—learning that is anchored in stakeholder value through innovative ideas, informed by evidence, and translated into personal actions and organization processes.

This report by ETHRWorld contributes meaningfully to that agenda. It brings together perspectives across regions and maturity levels, offering both a realistic view of where organisations stand and a practical lens on what needs to change. More importantly, it reinforces a simple but powerful idea: Learning is not just about learning, it is about human capability to deliver stakeholder value. The organisations that internalise this will not only keep pace with change—they will shape the future by creating it today.

# Expert Column

## The New Capability Continuum: From Skilling to Deployment Velocity



**LAKSHMI  
CHANDRASEKHARAN**

**Senior Managing Director and CHRO,  
Accenture in India**

Today, organisations have invested heavily in skilling, but the real challenge they face is not access or uptake - it is whether learning translates into meaningful business outcomes. Skills create value only when they are applied at work and aligned to enterprise priorities. This requires a shift from fragmented learning interventions to an integrated capability model.

Organisations need to build a capability continuum anchored in business demand—connecting hiring, skilling, deployment, internal mobility, rewards, and career progression through a common skills proficiency lens. When these elements operate together, learning evolves from an activity to a driver of measurable business outcomes.

At the center of this shift is visibility. Enterprises need sharper, more integrated understanding of existing capabilities, emerging skill needs,

and future demand signals. Early visibility helps identify gaps faster, enables targeted development and thereby accelerates deployment, unlocking internal mobility at scale.

However, capability creation cannot be shaped by business priorities alone. It must also reflect individual aspiration. The most effective learning ecosystems bring together three dimensions: skills, business demand, and aspirations. When these converge, learning becomes not only more relevant and contextual to the organisation, but also more aligned with the value it holds for the individual.

Equally important is rethinking where learning happens. Increasingly, work itself is becoming the classroom. A timely nudge, contextual guidance, mentoring support, or real-time insight delivered in the flow of work often creates greater impact than learning consumed in isolation.

This is where advanced AI—and increasingly, agentic AI—will

fundamentally reshape capability building, at scale. AI can embed continuous, just-in-time learning into everyday work through simulations, scenario-based problem solving, and contextual recommendations tailored to specific roles and business environments. Importantly, AI-enabled personalisation can shape learning around the learner's role, aspirations, pace, and organisational context.

Finally, organisations must rethink how success is measured. Training hours and completion rates are insufficient indicators of impact. What matters are outcomes—specifically deployment velocity: how quickly organisations can meet demand for certain capabilities by deploying talent from within, thereby creating business value.

The new capability continuum is intentional, connected, and outcome driven. That is how learning earns its stripes—not as an activity, but as a driver of growth.

# The Editor's Lens

When business priorities shift or new capabilities are required, leaders are asking a fundamental question: Are we truly building the skills we need?

There is a growing realization across organisations today—one that is not always voiced, but increasingly felt. Learning is happening everywhere. But its impact is not always visible where it matters most.

Over the past decade, organisations have invested heavily in building learning ecosystems that are scalable, digital, and continuous. Access is no longer the constraint. And yet, when business priorities shift or new capabilities are required, many leaders are still left asking a more fundamental question: Are we truly building the skills we need?

The ETHRWorld Global Learning & Skilling Report 2026 arrives at this moment of reflection. Its findings point to a clear pattern. While learning activity has expanded, its translation into measurable capability remains uneven. Nearly 55% of organisations still lack



**YASMIN  
TAJ**

Editor - Features, ETHRWorld

centralised visibility into workforce skills, making it difficult to fully understand what capabilities exist and where the gaps lie. At the same time, while AI adoption in learning has crossed 60% in areas like content creation, its role in shaping deeper workforce capability remains limited.

The result is a disconnect that many organisations are beginning to experience more acutely. Learning is active but not always aligned, skills are developing but not always visible and investments are increasing but not always translating into readiness.

As the nature of work becomes more dynamic—reshaped by AI, evolving roles, and continuous change—this gap becomes more consequential. Capability can no longer be assumed. It must be continuously understood, developed, and applied in context.

This is where the idea of “Learning at the Edge” becomes particularly relevant. The edge represents a shift in how learning is experienced and valued. It is where learning moves closer to the flow of work—embedded within decisions, informed by real-time needs, and

directly linked to outcomes. It is where knowledge is applied, not just acquired. Where capability becomes visible.

For organisations, this demands a change in focus. It is no longer sufficient to expand access to learning. The priority must now be to build a clearer understanding of skills—how they are developed, how they evolve, and how they translate into performance.

This is not just about investment, but about alignment. The organisations that will navigate this shift successfully will be those that move towards greater skills intelligence—developing the ability to map capabilities more accurately, connect learning more closely to business needs, and deploy talent with greater confidence.

Because ultimately, the value of learning is not defined by how much is delivered but by how effectively it translates into capability, when and where it matters most.

# The Snapshot

**Learning has scaled. Capability has not kept pace.**

The challenge is no longer access. It is impact.

## KEY INSIGHTS



**52%**

allocate <5%  
budget to L&D



**55%**

lack skills  
visibility



**65% vs 22%**

AI adoption vs  
advanced usage



**46%**

have <20%  
internal mobility

## WHAT'S HAPPENING



Learning at scale



High activity



AI for efficiency



Fragmented skills

## THE CORE GAP



## WHAT'S MISSING



Capability at scale



Measurable outcomes



AI for decisions



Unified visibility

## WHAT THIS MEANS



Learning is active  
but not aligned



Skills are developing  
but not visible



Capability is  
inconsistent across  
the workforce

## THE SHIFT



From: Learning → Skills Intelligence



Programs → Capabilities



Content → Outcomes



Activity → Impact



Static roles → Dynamic skills

## LEARNING AT THE EDGE



Learning moves  
into workflows



Happens in  
real-time decisions



Measured through  
performance

## BOTTOM LINE



*Competitive advantage will not come from how much organisations learn—but from how effectively they turn learning into capability at the edge.*

# Regional Snapshot: Learning & Skills Maturity

## THE BIG PICTURE



Across India, MEA, and SEA, organisations are moving in the same direction—but at very different speeds. While intent and investment are rising across regions, the ability to translate learning into capability is uneven. The divide is not in ambition. It is in execution.

## AT A GLANCE



**India** leads in AI adoption and experimentation, but lacks system maturity



**SEA** shows the strongest execution, with higher internal mobility and integration



**MEA** remains early-stage, with gaps in investment and skills visibility

## MATURITY INDEX

DIMENSION	INDIA	MEA	SEA
Investment Maturity	● Medium	● Low	● Medium-High
Skills Systems	● Medium	● Low	● Medium
AI Integration	● High	● Low	● Medium-High
Workforce Integration	● Medium	● Low	● High

## REGIONAL POSITIONING

REGION	POSITIONING	WHAT'S WORKING	WHAT'S MISSING
India	High Momentum	✓ AI adoption, leadership intent	⚠ Skills systems, integration
MEA	Early Stage	✓ Growing awareness	⚠ Investment, structured frameworks
SEA	Execution Ready	✓ Workforce integration, mobility	⚠ Scaling consistency

## WHAT THIS MEANS



**India** is building fast—but needs stronger systems to sustain progress



**MEA** needs foundational investment before scaling transformation



**SEA** is closest to linking learning with business outcomes—but must scale consistently

## Insight 1

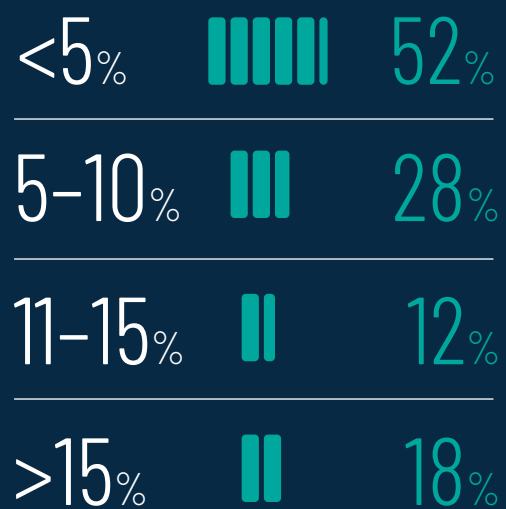
# The L&D investment paradox

Learning and Development has steadily gained strategic visibility within organisations, but this recognition is not yet reflected in how it is funded. Most organisations are attempting to drive workforce transformation, reskilling, and AI-readiness while operating within constrained L&D budgets. This creates a structural imbalance—where expectations from learning are expanding, but the resources required to deliver measurable impact remain limited. The result is a widening execution gap, where intent is strong, but outcomes struggle to scale.

- Over 50% of organisations allocate less than 5% of their total budget to L&D
- Only 18% invest more than 15%, indicating limited high-maturity commitment
- A significant 40% remain within the 5–10% range, reflecting cautious investment behavior

Regional patterns reveal differing stages of maturity in how organisations approach L&D investment. India reflects a high-growth mindset, with organisations showing strong intent

### Investment Trend 2026-2027



#### Budget Allocation












#### % of organisations

despite operating within lower budget brackets. In contrast, the MEA demonstrates more conservative investment behavior, often limiting the pace of transformation. SEA, however, stands

out with a higher proportion of organisations investing above 15%, indicating a more established link between learning investment and business outcomes.

## Regional Comparative Analysis

*By Investment Maturity*

Region	Investment Trend	Interpretation
 India	 Low current allocation, high intent	 Organisations are early-stage but aggressive in future planning
 MEA	 Conservative allocation patterns	 Budget constraints and slower transformation cycles
 SEA	 Higher allocation (>15% segment)	 More mature investment approach aligned to outcomes



**Dominic Keogh-Peters**  
Group CHRO at Galadari Brothers Group

The biggest shift in how organisations approach learning today is the move from learning as an event to capability as a system. Historically, organisations invested heavily in training programmes, but often without embedding them into how work actually gets done. Today, leading organisations are redesigning learning to sit inside the operating model—linking skills directly to strategy, performance, and real business outcomes. This means moving beyond content consumption to capability creation: learning in the flow of work, manager-led development, and clear accountability for applying new skills. The organisations that will win are those that treat capability building not as an HR initiative, but as a core business discipline—engineered, measured, and continuously refined.

## Insight 2

# Alignment and ROI: The broken link

Organisations today are investing in learning with clear expectations of business impact—but the connection between the two remains inconsistent. While L&D is increasingly positioned as a strategic function, its ability to demonstrate measurable outcomes is still evolving. In many cases, learning initiatives are aligned in intent, but not in execution, with limited mechanisms to track how they translate into capability, performance, or business results.

This creates a credibility gap. Without clear alignment to business objectives and confidence in ROI, learning risks being seen as a support function rather than a driver of transformation. The challenge is no longer about delivering learning—it is about proving that it works.

- Only 28% of organisations report strong alignment between learning and business objectives
- Nearly 26% indicate weak or unclear alignment, highlighting structural disconnects
- Just 24% express high confidence in L&D ROI, reflecting limited outcome visibility

The regional data highlights a clear divide in how organisations connect

### Alignment with business objectives



28%

**Strongly aligned**



46%

**Moderately aligned**



26%

**Weak / unclear**

### ROI Confidence



24%

**High**



48%

**Moderate**



28%













**Low**

learning to outcomes. India demonstrates relatively stronger alignment with business priorities, but struggles with consistent measurement of impact. In MEA, both alignment and ROI confidence remain low, pointing to early-stage maturity in linking learning to

business performance. Southeast Asia (SEA), however, shows more progress, with organisations better positioned to connect learning initiatives to measurable outcomes—reflecting more integrated systems and clearer accountability.

## Regional Comparative Analysis

### Alignment & ROI Maturity

Region	Alignment Level	ROI Confidence	Interpretation
 India	 Moderate-High	 Moderate	 Strong intent, but measurement systems still evolving
 MEA	 Low	 Low	 Limited alignment and weak ROI frameworks
 SEA	 Moderate-High	 Moderate-High	 Better integration of learning with business outcomes



**Sonia Kulkarni**  
CHRO,  
Ingram Micro

Change is happening fast, and organisations must reskill, redesign, and meet the moment—or be at risk of falling behind. The workforce today is evolving fast. New technologies, shifting customer expectations, and emerging business priorities require organisations to adapt quickly. Yet becoming a future-ready workforce doesn't demand large budgets or major restructuring. It requires clarity, consistency, and a strategy that helps employees build the new skills needed to support future business needs. Future-ready workforce can be shaped by aligning business strategy with skill development supported by AI and right talent development models.

## Insight 3

# Skills visibility: The core bottleneck

Organisations today are investing in learning, experimenting with AI, and prioritizing workforce transformation—but all of it is constrained by a more fundamental limitation: they do not have a clear view of their own skills.

Skills exist across the enterprise, but they are often fragmented, inconsistently defined, and difficult to track. Without a unified skills architecture or real-time visibility, organisations are forced to rely on assumptions rather than data when making workforce decisions.

This lack of visibility becomes a bottleneck. It limits internal mobility, slows down workforce planning, and makes it harder to respond to emerging skill gaps. More importantly, it prevents organisations from fully leveraging the capabilities they already have. In many cases, the issue is not a shortage of skills—but the inability to see and deploy them effectively.

- Nearly 55% of organisations report no centralised visibility into workforce skills
- Only 16% have enterprise-wide skills frameworks, indicating limited maturity
- Just ~20% operate dynamic or real-time skills systems, restricting agility







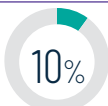







Regional trends highlight varying levels of maturity in skills visibility. India shows progress, with emerging efforts to build enterprise-wide frameworks, but systems remain fragmented. MEA faces the most significant challenge, with a majority of organisations lacking visibility into

workforce skills and limited adoption of structured frameworks. Southeast Asia (SEA) demonstrates relatively stronger maturity, with higher adoption of enterprise-level systems, enabling better workforce planning and internal mobility.

## Regional Comparative Analysis

### Skills Visibility by Region

Region	No Skills Visibility	Enterprise Skills Systems	Interpretation
 India	 48%	 18%	 Growing momentum, but fragmented systems
 MEA	 62%	 10%	 Low visibility and early-stage maturity
 SEA	 42%	 24%	 Relatively stronger systems and visibility



**Peck  
Kem Low**

CHRO & Advisor at  
the Public Service  
Division,  
Singapore

One of the most critical changes organisations can make to build a future-ready, skills-driven workforce is to embrace job fractionisation and job redesign, alongside competency-based, bespoke remuneration. As roles evolve and become more fluid, breaking jobs down into specific tasks and types of skill sets that allows organisations to tap into diverse talent pools and enable greater agility. Redesigning work around competencies rather than static job descriptions not only fuels innovation but also aligns talent with emerging business needs. When organisations reward individuals based on their unique mix of skills and contributions, it drives both engagement and adaptability. By taking these bold steps, organisations can position themselves to thrive in an ever-shifting business landscape.

## Insight 4

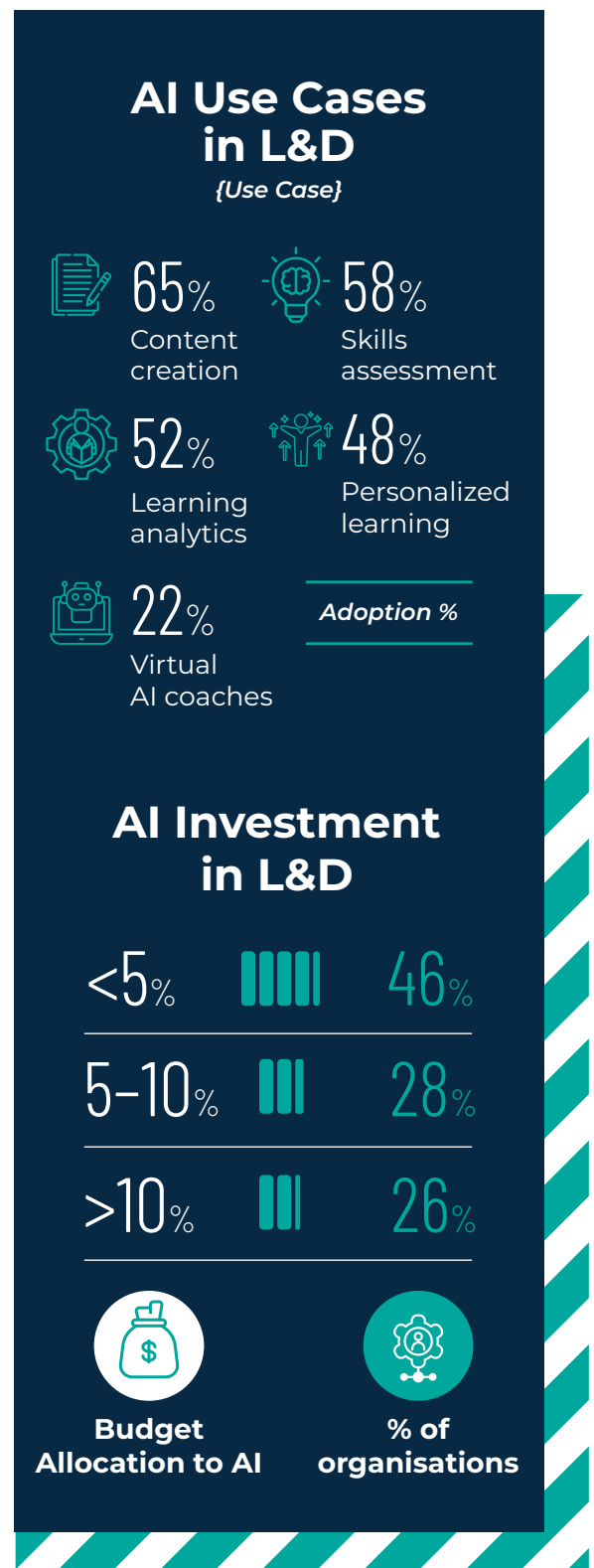
# AI in L&D: High adoption, low impact

AI has rapidly entered the learning landscape, with organisations across regions experimenting with its potential to enhance efficiency and scale. From content creation to personalised learning pathways, adoption is accelerating and becoming increasingly mainstream.

However, the depth of impact remains limited. In most cases, AI is being applied to optimize existing learning processes rather than fundamentally transform how capability is built or deployed. The focus remains on improving speed, reducing effort, and enhancing user experience—rather than enabling deeper skills intelligence or driving workforce decisions.

This creates a gap between adoption and impact. While organisations are quick to experiment, fewer are integrating AI into core systems that influence capability building, workforce planning, or internal mobility. As a result, AI in L&D is progressing—but not yet at a level where it can reshape outcomes.

- 65% of organisations use AI for content creation, making it the most common use case
- Only 22% have adopted AI-driven virtual coaches, indicating limited advanced applications
- Nearly 46% allocate less than 5% of their budget to AI in L&D, constraining impact















Regional patterns show a clear difference in how AI is being approached. India leads in experimentation, with organisations actively exploring AI across multiple use cases, particularly in content and analytics. MEA remains at an earlier stage, with limited and inconsistent

adoption. SEA, however, demonstrates a more structured approach, with organisations beginning to integrate AI more systematically into learning ecosystems and linking it more closely to outcomes.

## Regional Comparative Analysis

### AI Adoption & Maturity

Region	Adoption Trend	Maturity Level	Interpretation
 India	 High experimentation	 Moderate	 Strong early adoption, focused on content and analytics
 MEA	 Limited adoption	 Low	 Inconsistent use and slower integration
 SEA	 Structured adoption	 Medium-High	 More integrated and outcome-focused implementation



**Neeti Kumar**

Head of People,  
Tide (India)

Learning is no longer defined by programmes, but by how seamlessly it integrates into the flow of work—personalised, continuous, and increasingly driven by AI and skills-based models. While access and flexibility have improved, the real challenge remains unchanged: translating learning into measurable capability. Too often, it becomes a passive, ‘tick-box’ exercise, disconnected from business context. The shift to self-directed learning has increased ownership, but not always accountability. To drive real impact, organisations must anchor learning in application—linking it to performance, progression, and real work outcomes. Ultimately, learning’s value will be judged not by participation, but by its ability to build capability and deliver results.

## Insight 5

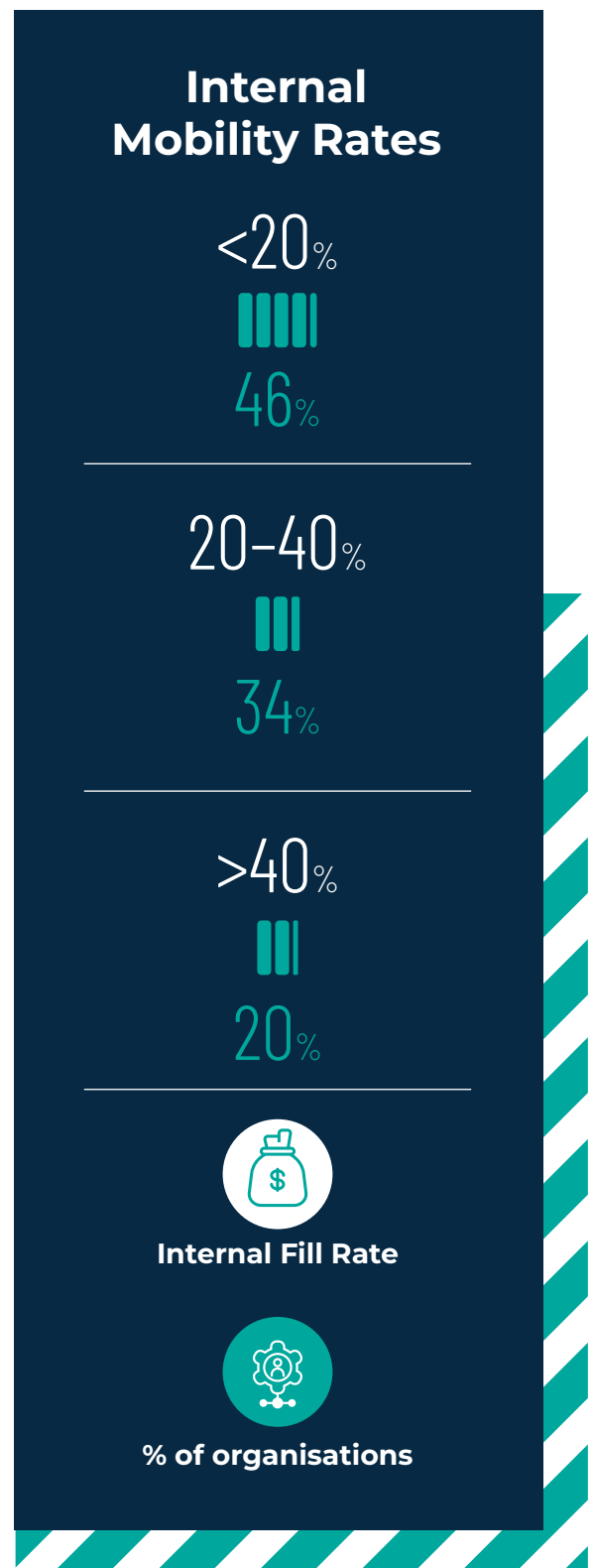
# The internal mobility challenge

Internal mobility is increasingly positioned as a strategic lever for organisations seeking agility, retention, and faster response to changing skill demands. In principle, the ability to redeploy talent internally should reduce hiring costs, shorten time-to-productivity, and unlock existing capability.

In practice, it remains underutilised. The challenge is not a lack of intent, but a lack of visibility and alignment. Without a clear understanding of workforce skills, organisations struggle to match talent to opportunities effectively. Roles continue to be filled based on availability or external hiring rather than a dynamic view of internal capability.

As a result, internal mobility operates below its potential. What should be a system for unlocking talent becomes a fragmented process—limited in scale, inconsistent in execution, and often disconnected from learning and skills data.

- 46% of organisations have internal mobility rates below 20%, indicating limited talent movement
- Only 20% achieve mobility rates above 40%, reflecting a small group with mature systems
- Regions with stronger skills visibility show higher internal mobility outcomes, reinforcing the link












The regional comparison highlights a clear relationship between skills maturity and mobility outcomes. SEA, with relatively stronger skills systems, demonstrates the highest levels of internal mobility—indicating a more effective ability to match talent to opportunity. India shows

moderate mobility, reflecting growing momentum but continued fragmentation in skills visibility. In MEA, lower mobility rates point to structural challenges, where limited visibility into workforce capability restricts internal redeployment.

## Regional Comparative Analysis

### Internal Mobility by Region

Region	Avg Mobility Rate	Interpretation
 India	 ~55%	 Stronger systems enabling internal talent movement
 MEA	 ~45%	 Moderate mobility with improving capability alignment
 SEA	 ~30%	 Limited mobility due to low skills visibility



**Maria Rajesh**

Chief Human Resources Officer,  
Embassy Developments Limited

Learning has decisively shifted from an HR-led activity to a business-critical lever, but most organisations are still not operationalising that shift effectively. While there is strong momentum toward AI-enabled, digital-first, and modular learning, the real gap is execution—specifically, the inability to tie learning investments to measurable performance outcomes. In many cases, learning remains disconnected from workflows, with limited opportunities for real-time application. More critically, the human enablers—manager ownership, coaching, and psychological safety—are inconsistent, weakening behaviour change. What’s needed now is discipline: embedding learning into performance systems, mandating application through real work, and holding leaders accountable for capability outcomes. Without this, learning will scale in volume, but not in impact.

# Conclusion

Organisations have made significant progress in building learning ecosystems, but that progress is no longer enough. The challenge has moved beyond access, platforms, and content—to capability itself. Across regions, skills remain fragmented, learning is not consistently aligned to outcomes, and AI—while widely adopted—is yet to fundamentally reshape how capability is built or deployed. What emerges is not a lack of effort, but a system that is active without being fully effective.

The shift ahead is decisive. Competitive advantage will belong to organisations that can bring clarity to capability—those that can see skills accurately, apply them in context, and evolve them as work changes. This is what it means to operate at the edge: not doing more, but doing what matters with precision. Because ultimately, the question is no longer whether organisations are learning, but whether they are getting better in ways that can be measured, applied, and relied upon.

## Recommendations



**Build a unified skills architecture:** Create a centralised, enterprise-wide view of skills to eliminate fragmentation. Without clear visibility, organisations cannot effectively plan, deploy, or scale capability.



**Shift from learning metrics to capability outcomes:** Redefine success by measuring what people can do, not just what they complete. Move beyond activity-based metrics to link learning directly with performance and business impact.



**Integrate AI into workforce decisions:** Leverage AI beyond content creation to map skills, predict gaps, and enable smarter talent decisions. The real value of AI lies in improving how capability is built and deployed.



**Embed learning into the flow of work:** Design learning experiences that are contextual, real-time, and embedded within workflows. Capability is built most effectively when learning happens alongside execution.



**Unlock internal mobility through skills:** Use skills data to match talent with opportunities dynamically. Strengthening internal mobility reduces hiring dependency and ensures better utilisation of existing capability.



**Strengthen leadership ownership of capability:** Position capability building as a business priority, not just an L&D initiative. Leadership alignment is critical to drive accountability and sustained impact.



**Shefali Rai**  
Chief Human  
Resources Officer,  
InMobi and Glance

Agility is critical in an AI-first, skills-driven world, where success depends on adaptability—not just strength. Organisations must balance structure with experimentation by enabling contextual learning, reducing friction, and creating space for self-driven growth in a fail-fast environment, while using ambiguity to build judgment, confidence, and adaptability.

Learning is shifting from program-led training to outcome-driven, continuous development embedded in the flow of work. In an “omni-learning” environment, employees learn across formats and moments, making learning more personalised, contextual, and role-specific. The focus is now on building skills that drive performance, requiring flexible, accessible ecosystems aligned to real business outcomes rather than episodic programs.



**Rahul Maitra**  
Senior Vice President -  
Human Resources,  
Amneal  
Pharmaceuticals



**Reem Algasim**  
Head of Human  
Resources,  
Airbus

Organisations are shifting from “learning as an activity” to “skills as a currency,” with AI enabling real-time skill visibility and personalised development. However, impact remains limited when learning is disconnected from work—true transformation happens when it’s embedded into workflows and tied directly to business outcomes.



**Praveen Purohit**  
Deputy -  
Group CHRO,  
Vedanta Group

One critical change organisations must make to build a future-ready, skills-driven workforce is to link all actions to the business outcome that can deliver value in terms of volume, cost or best practices. The world is becoming more and more dynamic like never before with changes emerging at blink, therefore the need to upskill with new technologies and way of working can give an outstanding edge. Keep benchmarking with the best and learn for personal and professional development. Digital and AI can critically give you wings.

Organisations are embedding learning into the flow of work, shifting focus from programme completion to real capability and business outcomes. With skills evolving rapidly, learning is becoming continuous, contextual, and applied directly through work, projects, and decisions.

This shift is pushing companies to build always-on capability systems, where reskilling, cross-skilling, and internal mobility are driven by visible, actionable skills data—making learning a core lever for adapting to constant change.



**Arun Rao**  
CHRO,  
Birlasoft



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The ETHRWorld Global Learning & Skilling Report 2026 is based on insights from L&D and HR leaders, industry experts, and organisational research across India, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia.

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# Contributors & Acknowledgements

This report is the result of extensive research, expert analysis, and a deep commitment to uncovering the trends that will shape the workplaces of tomorrow. A collaborative effort by industry leaders, researchers, and creative minds, it brings together data-driven insights and strategic foresight to help organisations navigate the evolving world of work.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the 150 HR and L&D leaders and industry experts across India, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia who contributed their valuable insights. Your perspectives have been instrumental in shaping this report and providing a roadmap for the future of work.

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