

Report Fifth Plenary Meeting of the Regional Coordination Group on SDG4-Education 2030 for West and Central Africa (RCG4-WCA)

Reported by the Secretariat (UNESCO-Dakar)

Location: UNESCO-Dakar, Dakar

Date: 06 April 2017

Time : 11h00 – 13h30

Background

The Regional Coordination Group on SDG4-Education 2030 for West and Central Africa (RCG4-WCA) was established on 19 May 2016, bringing together the regional representations of United Nations agencies and other multilateral and civil society organizations active in educational development in West and Central African countries to support the national implementation of SDG4-Education 2030. The group was established as a regional platform for dialogue, exchange of good practices, communication and advocacy, and for joint regional technical backstopping, capacity development, monitoring and evaluation and resource mobilization for support to national education development in the light of SDG4.

Meeting objectives

The objective of the meeting was to review the activities of the Plenary Group and the Task Teams since the last meeting in December 2016, as well as discussing the work plan and making decisions for implementation.

Participants¹

In attendance at this meeting were regional representatives from a number of UN as well as multilateral organizations and civil society: African Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA), Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'enseignement supérieur (CAMES), Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), IIEP-Pôle de Dakar, UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), Réseau pour l'excellence de l'enseignement supérieur en Afrique de l'Ouest (REESAO), Save the Children, UNESCO-Dakar and UNICEF WCARO. The Global Partnership for Education and the African Union attended remotely the beginning of the meeting².

Introduction

The meeting of the RCG4-WCA began with presentation of the participants and adoption of the Agenda.

Group members' activities in line with the RCG4-WCA key functions

Attendees were then invited to present their organization's activities in line with the key functions of the group since the last meeting of the RCG4-WCA on 8 of December 2016³.

¹ Participants are listed in annex

² Connection problems prevented both organizations from participating in all discussions

³ Detail in annex

Task Teams

Attendees were reminded that the terms of reference of the task teams should be aligned with the guidance note and be structured around the following working modalities: analytical work & tool development, knowledge management, country support and capacity development.

1. Education Systems' Strengthening (lead : UNESCO Dakar, co-lead : UNICEF WCARO)

- ADEA and AFDB asked to integrate this task team
- The main activities undertaken by the task team include:
 - The ongoing development of a handbook on results-based planning for education and in the light of SDG4-Education 2030
 - Development of guidelines for countries on the integration of SDG4 into education plans. A first technical dialogue workshop was held in Mali in March, the results of which will help to refine the guide.
 - Participation in the organization of a webinar with the GPE in June on the national implementation of the SDG4-Education 2030.
- Concerning the drafting of an annual regional report on educational situation in the light of the SDG4 contained in the team's work plan, questions arisen on its content and scope. It would be relevant to cover all Sub-Saharan Africa, which also applies to the other productions planned by the team.

2. Teaching and Learning: Educator's Network for Transformation (TALENT) (lead : UNESCO)

- New members have joined TALENT since last meeting, including GPE and ADEA-NALA.
- TALENT expects to extend to East and Southern Africa.
- TALENT's work plan is being finalized.
- The team is working on a project to establish professionalization standards for teachers in West and Central Africa. ECOWAS pointed out that it wished these standards to be on the agenda of its next Council of Ministers. CAMES offered to support the validation phase of these standards in Central Africa.
- Concerning the learning assessments, the collection of information on country-level evaluation mechanisms as well as the identification of key partners is ongoing
- In response to a participant's question, the TALENT task team confirmed that it is not only interested in assessing knowledge, but also in assessing skills, values and attitudes. It will also organize a workshop to promote the integration of skills in curricula.
- Research efforts on cultural levers and the African vision of education, namely the promotion of social and cultural skills that are not necessarily included in curricula, is in progress at UNESCO.

3. Gender equality and inclusive education (lead : Save the Children)

- New Terms of Reference in line with the guidance note and a results framework were finalized in January
- The team is continuing to develop the policy brief on girls' education in West and Central Africa, which is expected to be finalized by July 2017. The team is looking for timely opportunities to launch this note. The high-level meeting on child marriage to be held in November was suggested to that extent. Any other suggestion from members is welcome.
- The second activity of the team involves identifying all actors in the field of inclusive education in West and Central Africa in order to highlight possible overlaps and gaps. This exercise should be completed by the end of April.
- AFDB expressed interest in joining the task team

4. Peace, citizenship and sustainable development education

- UNICEF announced that it would not be able to ensure the lead of this team.
- On the suggestion of one of the members, the Secretariat will explore the possibility for the ADEA Inter-Country Quality Node on Peace Education to lead the team. After which, if no lead is found, the proposed team will be removed from RCG4.

5. Early childhood Education

- UNICEF confirmed its commitment as lead of the Task Team. A proposal for terms of reference will be prepared in collaboration with the UNESCO Regional Office in Abuja.

6. Post-basic education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

- RESEAO, which initially proposed to be the lead of the team, only wishes to be a member. AFDB has expressed interest in the theme, and it has been suggested that the Secretariat asks them to take the lead.
- African Union and AFDB expressed interest in joining this task team

7. Higher education

- CAMES is finalizing the Terms of Reference and will send them by the end of April to the Secretariat for dissemination to members. According to the schedule, a launching workshop will be organized in June. In the meantime, CAMES will send out a call for members and partners to demonstrate their interest in participating in this team. AFDB already expressed interest in it
- The terms of reference will be translated into English by the Secretariat

Additional subjects addressed:

- Regional Working Group on Emergency Education (EiE), led by UNICEF and Plan International: Discussion focused on integrating the EiE Working Group into the GRC4-WCA as a task team. As new terms of reference for the EiE group are currently being drafted, it is timely to initiate a dialogue on the modalities of collaboration / integration. Save the Children offered to contact the group.
- The question of including the issue of language of instruction within the Task Team "Gender equality and inclusive education" was raised, or alternatively addressing it through TALENT or transversally. After discussion about possible modalities, the group proposed that the TALENT team would cover it. The conference on Languages and Development organized in November 2017 in Dakar will be an opportunity to get involved in this theme
- ECOWAS, UNOWAS and CODESRIA are participating in a study on the continuity of education for children displaced in conflict, which could be integrated eventually into the work plan of one of the teams. The representative of CODESRIA will keep the group informed.

Plenary Group Activities

Web platform⁴

- A status update was made on the progress of the URL change. Effective migration of content is planned for the month of April; Members will be informed and invited to promote the platform and improve its visibility through various measures.
- To ensure continuity, UNESCO initially covers website maintenance and costs. Nevertheless, the need for members' contribution to the design, management and feeding of the platform was reminded.
- An intranet area for members to be accessed through a login will be created and functional as soon as the site is migrated. The task teams will also have a specific space. It was recalled that the updating of the list of focal points and substitutes is essential to create logins.
- The idea of publishing a list of experts is set aside for the time being.
- Members are requested to send to the Secretariat publications satisfying the three criteria proposed on 23/2, revised and validated by the group: (i) content already published on group member's website or another organization, or from reliable websites in the field of education (ii) content linked to SDG4 and education-related targets of other SDGs, and (iii) relevant content for the West and Central African region.

⁴ As the participants received the report of the meeting of the select committee on the web platform (23 February), only a quick account of the latest developments was presented.

- The modification of the title for the web platform was accepted as follows:
 - EDUCATION 2030 en Afrique - Plateforme d'échange d'informations et d'expériences
 - EDUCATION 2030 in Africa - Information and experience sharing platform
- Members supported an upgrade of the logo, to be also the logo of the RCG4, as part of the development of a visual identity for the group. FAWE announced that it would explore opportunities for contribution.
- Technical discussions will continue in a smaller group. Members are invited to submit their comments and suggestions on the platform's tree structure and content at any time

Communication materials

- A brochure for the presentation of RCG4-WCA was developed by the Secretariat for its dissemination at the ADEA Triennale
- Group members find it useful to further develop the brochure
- It was suggested to add the logo of the member organizations and to improve the design, while keeping the format simple. FAWE will also explore the possibility of supporting the improvement of the brochure.

ADEA Triennale Side Event⁵

- The panel discussion on the "Regional Partnership in Support of ED2030 and CESA 16-25" organized by the RCG4-WCA on 14 March 2017 was an opportunity to highlight the links between the SDG4 and CESA 16-25 (African Union's Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025) and the need to work in synergy for the implementation of the two agendas. At the end of this panel, the AU expressed interest in being involved in different task teams
- Taking into account the thematic clusters of the Regional Coordination Mechanism of the United Nations⁶ system is essential in order to avoid duplication.

Extending the group to Eastern and Southern Africa

- At the Triennale and following the event organized by the RCG4-WCA, it was suggested to extend the scope of the Group to Eastern and Southern Africa for it to cover the whole of the Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Several reasons were mentioned, including the fact that the Eastern and Southern Africa group is not yet active. Moreover, some members of the RCG4-WCA have a scope that goes beyond West and Central Africa and some RCG4-WCA activities already cover all regions
- Members' views differ on this proposal :

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some member organizations of the RCG4-WCA are continental in scope, it would avoid them having to "duplicate" their efforts • It would ensure coherence between the activities of the two regions • It contributes to strengthening the links between the SDG4-Education 2030 and the CESA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In terms of "marketing", expansion could increase the difficulty of attracting funding to the WCA region • Technical, logistical and communication problems (language, remote meetings) • Need to reconsider governance and leadership and increase human and financial resources

⁵ See attached event report.

⁶ The Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) of the United Nations system operating in Africa is a mechanism to improve the coherence of the United Nations system, coordination, cooperation at the regional and sub-regional levels in order to "head together in common vision" in supporting the African Union (AU) and its NEPAD program

- In conclusion, the organizations agreed on the principle of exploring the possibility of extending the Group. CODESRIA has committed to prepare policy questions that will be considered by a small committee to develop proposals for submission to members for decision in plenary. Members covering only the WCA region will consult with their colleagues in East and Southern Africa. The theme will also be on the next meeting of the steering group's agenda.

Contribution of members to the work of the Secretariat

It was recalled that the contribution of members in kind or in cash is essential to ensure the proper functioning of the Group. This can take various forms, such as hosting meetings, supporting the web portal or taking over a task team. A list has been shared with the members and will be sent again by the Secretariat to make a decision on the matter.

Next steps

- The next Plenary meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 6 July**
- The steering team is expected to meet on **Thursday 18 May** (to be confirmed).
- The work plan will be updated following the meeting and shared with members
- The launch of the new web platform will take place in mid-April

ANNEX

1. List of participants

		SURNAME, First name	Function	Organization	Contact
TASK TEAMS AND GROUP MEMBERS					
1	Ms	ANNE Houraye Mamadou	Programme Coordinator	FAWE	HMamadou-Anne@fawe.org
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5	Ms	DJIOZE-GALLET Valérie	Education Specialist	UNESCO	v.djioze@unesco.org
6	Mr.	NDAYE Sossé	Teacher/researcher at UCAD	REESAO	sosse.ndiaye@ucad.edu.sn
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10	Mr.	REUGE Nicolas	Education Regional Advisor	UNICEF	nreuge@unicef.com +221778199153
11	Mr.	SARR Mamadou	Comité de Pilotage PSDC	CAMES	mamadou2.sarr@ucad.edu.sn +221775068636
12	Mr.	SEGUIAGBETO Koffi	Education Policy Analyst	IIEP/Pôle de Dakar/UNESCO	k.segniagbeto@unesco.org +221777180541
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14	Ms	VERSLUYS Eline	Education Coordinator	Save the Children WCARO	Eline.Versluys@savethechildren.org
OTHER PARTICIPANTS					
1	Mr.	BADINI CONFALONIERI Stefano	intern	UNESCO	s.badini-confalonieri@unesco.org
2	Mr.	GUEYE Babacar	IT Manager	UNESCO	b.gueye@unesco.org
3	Ms	HOULMANN Laetitia	Education Consultant	UNESCO	l.houlmann@unesco.org
4	Ms	LE GUEN Julie	intern	UNESCO	j.le-guen@unesco.org

2. List of member organizations' activities

Global Partnership for Education

- The December Board meeting approved 4 round grant application pipeline. 12 countries from the WCA region are within the 2017-2018 pipeline:
 - May 2017: Liberia
 - Sept 2017: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde (Cape Verde)
 - Nov 2017: Chad, Guinea Bissau
 - March 2018: Mali, Togo
 - Sept 2018: Sao Tome and Principe

(Application months are indicative, as things may shift according to in-country planning processes)

- GPE participated to the ADEA Triennale, specifically Alice Albright, CEO of the GPE Secretariat deliver keynote address to a Ministerial Roundtable on 'Quality Education for All', alongside the Deputy Minister of Liberia, the only representative on the panel from the region. GPE presented its analytical paper on Early Childhood Education (ECE), and participated as a panelist to the UNESCO-Dakar/RCG4 side event on -Regional partnership in support of Education 2030 and CESA 16-25'.
- The GPE Board of Directors at their March 1 meeting in Washington, DC approved a new Financing and Funding Framework (FFF) that will give the partnership more and better tools to strengthen education systems and leverage the capabilities, expertise and resources of our partners. The FFF includes a revised eligibility and allocation approach (GPE support is now available to 89 low- and lower middle-income countries, home to almost 80% of the world's out of school children) and new ways of raising and channeling funding. Here's a two pager explaining the FFF and more detail is available in the Board papers
- GPE Secretariat has been engaging with TALENT and NALA on strengthening learning assessment systems in Africa
- GPE has launched a new design for its webpage, which involved improved architecture for the country pages, results stories and thematic focus
- A policy brief on teaching and learning is currently under development
- Thinking is underway to develop guidelines for Local Education Group, the process is in its early stages at the conceptual phase.
- Work continues to finalise domestic financing guidelines for LEGs

Save the Children

- Programs for improving access to quality education in 9 countries in WCA, with a focus on girls education, learning to read, ECCD and EiE.
- Participation in the ADEA Triennale with a stand to present Save the Children's approaches and do advocacy
- Adoption of "Emergent Literacy and Math" as global Save the Children for teaching the basics in reading and math for children aged 3 to 6
- International Women's Day :
 - Launch of 'Minimum Standards for Mainstreaming Gender Equality' (in organizations and projects)
 - SC Senegal: presentation of " Inclusive education, a factor for women's empowerment" during the conference of female teachers of Louga

UNESCO

UNESCO's work in education is structured around five cluster areas, which do all contribute to the implementation to SDG4-Education 2030:

- Sector wide policy and planning
- Teaching and learning
- Learning to live together
- Skills for life and the world of work
- HIV and health education

In particular, UNESCO provides support to countries in alignment with coordination mechanisms such as UNCTs and is currently developing guidelines to accompany countries in the integration of SDG4-Education 2030 in sector planning processes.