

Report

Tenth Meeting of the Regional Coordination Group on SDG4-Education 2030 in West and Central Africa (RCG4-WCA)

Reported by the Secretariat (UNESCO-Dakar)

Date : 26 September 2018

Location : UNESCO, Dakar

Time : 15h00 - 17h30

List of organization members represented:

The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers of French-speaking Countries (CONFESJES), The Conference of Ministers of Education of French-Speaking Countries (CONFEMEN), Institut de la Francophonie pour l'éducation et la formation (IFEFF), Réseau pour l'excellence de l'enseignement supérieur en Afrique de l'Ouest (REESAO), Save the Children and UNESCO Dakar.

Online: Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) and UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).

Objectives of the meeting

The meeting sought to discuss:

1. The renewal of the Steering team
2. The links between global and regional SDG4 coordination
3. The terms of reference for a task team on "Learning to Live Together Sustainably"
4. The regional launch of the 2019 Global Education Monitoring report

1. Introduction

Members were welcomed by Gwang-Chol Chang, Chair of the RCG4-WCA. Participants in attendance were introduced and the agenda was adopted.

2. The Last Steering Team Meeting

A summary of the topics discussed at the September 24th Steering team meeting was presented, including: the functionalities of the plenary group and the task teams; the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee meeting on September 12-13 in Paris; and the Regional Launch of the 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR). Details are available in the corresponding sections of this report.

The Secretariat presented a brief on the functionality of the Steering team and task teams (see annex). During the Steering team meeting it was suggested that the Secretariat contact the directors of the "inactive" organizations so new focal points can be assigned.

3. Brief Presentations on Task Teams Activities

Each task team¹ lead presented a brief overview of their recent activities.

1. GENIE (Lead: Save the Children)

- The mid-year review of the action plan is completed, and the team is on track with the planned advocacy and capacity building work. Support to countries and the exchanges with other task teams must be accelerated.
- GENIE will need help in communicating with Local Education Groups (LEG). The team also wishes to meet with SYSTeam.
- The team actively participated in three important meetings: the regional Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the [United Nations Girls' Education Initiative](#) (UNGEI) workshop on gender-responsive sector planning (May), the African Union (AU) workshop on girls outside the school system (June), the UNICEF, UNESCO and Plan International on a school-related gender based violence (SRGBV) workshop (June).
- With the “Pôle de Dakar” the team organized a meeting to support the integration of gender and inclusion in sector analysis and planning. The team is planning a follow-up meeting before the end of the year.

2. TALENT (Lead: UNESCO)

- The team launched the [Optimizing Assessment for All Initiative \(OAA\)](#) and a mini-study during a workshop in Dakar on July 16-17. Nine countries participating in the workshop agreed on a common definition for the skills the study will touch upon.
- TALENT prepared a webinar to support countries that have already collected data as part of the OAA mini-study.
- Concerning the quality of national learning assessment system, a workshop on alignment between curriculum, teacher education and learning assessment, including capacity building and online training for teachers, took place in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania from July 25 to 27. Following the meeting, the countries are currently completing online training, three of the four modules should be finished in October.
- The work plan of the group has been completed.
- On October 5th, for World Teachers' Day, TALENT will launch an online [advocacy paper](#) prepared by the group, there will be a discussion on the concurrent AU's [“Innovating Education in Africa Expo.”](#)
- There will be a second workshop on tool coding for the OAA mini-study scheduled for November, data collection in October and publication in 2019.
- The next bimonthly meeting of the TALENT Steering Team will take place in October.
- There will be a regional capacity-building workshop on the reporting, dissemination and effective use of large-scale learning assessments from November 27 to 30 in Dakar.
- TALENT will launch the second phase of OAA in three countries on the development of learning assessment tools for 21st century cross-cutting skills assessment. The GPE financially supports 21st century skills. The study in 2019 will cover a more in-depth analysis of three countries.
- TALENT is continuing to improve its platform.

TALENT was asked how they received funding from the GPE considering that the funding should be allocated to countries. TALENT indicated that a funding window was available for the assessment of learning.

¹Representatives from the SYSTeam, Early Childhood Education and Higher Education task teams were absent.

The Secretariat will contact the GPE and share information on additional funding opportunities.

3. TVET (lead: AfDB)

- No meeting was held in 2018. UNESCO's TVET lead will contact the African Development Bank (AfDB) to reactivate the task team and finalize the TOR among members.

4. Higher Education (lead: CAMES)

The Chair asked CAMES to send information and updates. At the last Steering team meeting, CAMES was asked to work with the [Association of African Universities](#) (AAU) to strengthen partnerships in higher education and research, particularly in English-speaking countries.

4. Discussion on the Steering Team

The Secretariat presented the results of the forum discussion that was launched on the platform from August to mid September. Responses to the five forum questions are summarized in the annex.

The renewal of the Steering team was discussed. In particular, it was requested that the Secretariat send the meeting reports before the plenary meetings.

Members suggested the following points:

- The Steering team establish its own TOR
- Civil society organizations and other constituencies should consult each other to determine the organization that will represent them on the Steering team. This would ensure that decisions made on behalf of constituencies would be representative of their interests.
- The AU should become a permanent member of the Steering team, in order to strengthen the links between the group and the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) and the AU. It was also suggested to ask the AU if they wish or have the capacity to co-chair the Steering team, or if they prefer to delegate the responsibility to ADEA.

It was noted that some focal points cannot make decisions at meetings without consulting with their organization first. The Chair invited the Secretariat to develop a proposal to be circulated among members for approval.

5. SDG4 Global Coordination : global-regional linkages

The President presented the major points from the [meeting](#) of the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee in Paris on 12 and 13 September 2018 and the implications for the RCG4-WCA:

- The Steering Committee representation consists of three countries, representing each region, as well as a regional organization and a civil society organization. It was decided to add a fourth country to current representatives: for Africa the representation is currently Kenya, South Africa and Angola. There is currently no country representing West or Central Africa.
- The AU and ADEA reported on the challenges and progress on CESA.
- The 2019 High Level Political Forum (HLPF): in 2019, SDG4 is included in several SDGs to be reviewed. In preparation for the HLPF, Steering Committee working groups will prepare reports, which will be central to discussions at the forum.
- [Global Education Meeting](#) (GEM) to be held from 3 to 5 December 2018 in Belgium: There will be a ministerial and technical component. The technical component will focus on SDG4, with the ministerial component focusing on inclusion/equity, refugees and migration, teaching and learning and a fourth theme to be determined. There will be parallel sessions on approximately

18 topics, some topics are still open for participation. Contact details and information will be shared for those who wish to apply to participate in the GEM. Member organizations are invited to see how they can contribute.

- Strengthening the promotion and visibility of the Steering Committee and the Education 2030 Agenda: there was discussion on the promotion of the theme of Education within the United Nations in New York, the establishment of youth groups and a group of “friends of SDG4” to promote it, the use of virtual platforms and other advocacy tools.

A [summary](#) of the Paris meeting was made available to the group by email and on the platform.

About the [Nairobi Declaration and Call for Action on Education](#), the Chair indicated:

- The Nairobi Declaration is very relevant and its recommendations are very strong, but there is no serious follow-up. It remains to be seen at what level ADEA uses this Declaration as a guide. The Chair asked if there could be a follow-up committee to analyze the recommendations and see what types of actions could be put in place.
- Although the theme of partnership mechanisms at the continental and regional levels have been included for discussion and recommendation at the Pan-African High-level Conference on Education (PACE), the sessions planned for this purpose could not be conducted in such a way as to produce useful decisions and recommendations for the clear formulation of a coordination mechanism in Africa. It is proposed to have this discussion with the AU in Addis Ababa.

ADEA added that their organization plays an important role and they implement all the Nairobi recommendations. Several documents are being drafted and will be shared: on the motivation of teachers, and on evaluation frameworks. A meeting is planned, bringing together 20 countries, including 10 French-speaking countries, and 10 English-speaking countries, to see how to implement the AU’s 2063 Agenda and the AU’s CESA.

It is indicated that PACE was precisely planned to discuss the converging points between CESA and SDG 4. The Nairobi Declaration therefore summarizes the converging points. We must therefore ensure that we move forward with its recommendations.

The Chair recounted the AU's plan to establish a web platform for the exchange of information and experiences on education. The *Education 2030 in Africa* platform has already been established and was presented to them to see if they can use it. ADEA and its representative are invited to share the platform with members of its organization for comments. The current platform does not belong to UNESCO, it belongs to Africa and all RCG4-WCA members, and it aims to cover the continent.

6. Discussion on the “Learning to Live Together Sustainably” task team

At a previous meeting discussed covered how to link a new task team to CESA's "Peace and Education" cluster, led by Save the Children. The task team could have been linked to Education in Emergencies (EiE), but this would confine the team to the context of emergencies or conflicts and would therefore limit its scope. The GRC4-AOC would like to go beyond emergency education and establish a work team that is linked to the SDGs.

The Secretariat has prepared [TORs](#) for the creation of a new task team on "Learning to Live Together Sustainably" that aligns with SDG4.7. The team could start with the prevention of violent extremism and climate change. Members are asked if they have any comments on the concept note sent to them or if any members would like to become members, the lead or the co-lead.

- If ADEA has time, they will join Save the Children so as to contribute their vision.

- Save the Children has indicated that they cannot be responsible for the team, as this theme requires different expertise.
- IFEF indicated that the TOR is a good basis and has agreed to be part of this team. Maimouna Sissoko Touré will be the IFEF representative in this context. They added that the themes can be seen at the level of education curriculum, which should be considered while developing content at each level, which is a very important dimension for IFEF.

Save the Children indicated that there could be links with TALENT in this case since there will be a need to develop curriculum on "Learning to Live Together Sustainably" and to train teachers.

A "Learning to Live Together Sustainably" website is being created by UNESCO and IFEF. This platform can be used as a tool to facilitate the work of this task team.

It is proposed that the Secretariat send an email to see who wishes to participate or take on the role of lead/co-lead of the task team.

7. Planning for the Regional Launch of the 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR): Migration and Displacement

This year's [GEMR](#) theme is Migration and Displacement and the official launch date is November 20, 2018.

The Secretariat presented a [plan for the launch](#), it is proposed to hold a forum discussion and a press conference with:

- Presence of a GEMR representative, since the GEMR team is already sending key messages,
- Presence of regional journalists or presentation of data and statistics on the region.

It is also proposed that the launch coincide with a social media and email campaign, including an engagement with the LEGs.

A small task team could be established to work on the launch. In particular the teams working on the theme of migration, Save the Children will put it in touch with specialists in the field. This will require support from each member of the plenary group to determine the most relevant key messages and statistics at the country level for each country.

These pieces of the plan do not necessarily have to be done all on November 20, the timeline will depend on the schedule and the interest of the members. The Secretary stressed that this launch could be an approach for collaboration between the group and the LEGs, with whom it is essential to strengthen linkages. This proposal requires feedback and support from members therefore the Secretariat will circulate the proposal to members for comments and to establish a task force.

8. Members' update and conclusion

Due to time constraints, the Chair proposed that members send activities that they wish to share in the report. Documents on the platform will be made public rather than having to access them with a code and password.

The Secretariat explained that it plans to organize a meeting on communication and LEGs in October since there seems to be a strong interest among members to work with the LEGs.

In order to draft an annual activity report, a questionnaire template will be sent to each task team to collect information. The Secretariat will follow up with task team leads to see if the proposed template is appropriate.

The Chair asked whether the frequency of the plenary meetings was too often. The members responded that the frequency of quarterly meetings was reasonable.

The Chair proposed that the next plenary meeting take the form of an **annual retreat on December 13th** in a peaceful location.

Annex 1: Briefing by the Secretariat on the functioning of the RCG4-WCA Plenary Group and Task Teams - Major points

1. Plenary group

- The plenary group was established on 19 May 2016 and currently consists of 26 members. Some are now considered inactive since some focal points have not been designated or have not participated in the meetings.
- The platform is not widely used, but the Secretariat will try to understand how to make adjustments to the platform to improve its use at a meeting with members on communication, scheduled for October 2018.
- The group did not organize any joint events this year, but there was a lot of mobilization of members behind the planning of the Pan-African High-Level Conference on Education (PACE 2018).

2. Task Teams

- There are six work teams, some of them are very active, some have their own communication system and mailing lists. Others, on the other hand, are very inactive or do not share information within the plenary group or with the Secretariat.
- The Secretariat would like to see work plans better shared with other members in order to facilitate collaboration among them.
- More interaction via the Education 2030 platform is desired by members and work teams. This is a tool for everyone, which will allow teams to increase their visibility and share their successes.
- A meeting will be scheduled in October on communication between the work teams, the group and the Local Education Groups, which could allow the work teams to provide support at the national level, an objective for the RCG4-WCA since its creation.
- More information will be reported by the leads of all work teams in order to develop an annual activity report.

Annex 2: Summary of the Forum on Steering Team Renewal

Below are the responses received from members in the forum:

1. Is the current functioning of the RCG4-WCA steering team appropriate?

- To improve the functioning of the steering team, it is necessary to update the TORs and expand the part concerning the steering team in order to better define its tasks.
- Send the reports of the steering team in advance of the plenary meeting.

2. Should the steering team be maintained in terms of composition (5 members, including the President - UNESCO, one UN organization, one civil society organization, and two multilateral organizations)? If not, what changes does your organization suggest?

- Add actors who are currently absent, such as the private sector, youth, economic communities (rotation between ECOWAS and ECCAS) and organizations representing teachers.
- Add the African Union as a permanent member.
- Adopt a model that is similar to that of the ODD-Education 2030 Steering Committee with the constituents represented in the region and the Member States.

3. How should the representation of the steering team be determined? The current representation is ANCEFA, CAMES, CONFEMEN, FAWA, UNESCO, UNICEF.

- Letting each organization determine its willingness to participate as a member of the steering team according to their motivation.
- Let the constituents talk about it among themselves in order to make a decision
- Establish a two-year term.
- When there is not a representation that corresponds to the composition already determined, the plenary group must vote.

4. Do you propose any changes to the RCG4-WCA TORs on the role and work of the steering team? Specify which ones.

- TORs should require that members of the steering team consult with their constituents (even if done informally) before making a decision.
- Add a quorum to make a decision by the Steering team.

5. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

- Use the member space of the web platform to prepare the meetings.
- Choose dates for meetings, three times a year, (instead of ad hoc meetings) to facilitate planning on the part of the steering team members.
- Establish together amongst members a working code (on the commitment required, the type of answers and feedback expected and how much time is needed to make decisions or provide answers).