



RCG4-WCA

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**Task Team on Teaching and Learning: TALENT**

**(Teaching and Learning Educators' Network for Transformation)**

**Terms of reference**

**November 2017**

**BACKGROUND**

The 2015 World Education Forum posited that Dakar Framework for Action has resulted in tremendous progress in access to education including in a vast majority of Sub-Saharan countries. The same is less true when it comes to quality of education.

The global learning crisis was documented in the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR)<sup>1</sup> and figures show it is more widespread in sub-Saharan Africa. The region is home to 17 out of the 21 countries, for which data is available, where more than half the children were not learning the basics. Several learning assessment surveys (e.g. EGRA, EGMA, PASEC, SACMEQ) conducted across the region have confirmed this further. Moreover, disparities in learning outcomes suggest that the factors of marginalization of certain groups have not only failed to be mitigated through education but in fact have been further compounded by other factors.

Today, a vast body of evidence supports that effective teaching and classroom interactions are one of the most critical input for student learning. The training and professional development needs of teaching personnel are receiving increased attention and the supply of qualified teachers has been retained as an important mean to implement SDG 4 - Education 2030 agenda. Relatedly, learning measurement surveys, including those led by citizens and communities, are spreading in the SSA region.

While policymakers, researchers, practitioners and communities recognize the importance of such initiatives, they voice concerns as to the relevance of teacher preparation to support learning and the weak impact of learning test results on education policy, teacher preparation and support, as well as pedagogical approaches. Moreover, in countries where national-level student testing have become customary, educators and communities are also concerned that excessive testing may cause education provision to be skewed towards undesirable side effects including teaching to the test rather than preparing learners for the multiple skills they need in a globalized and ever-changing society.

**RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES**

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO, 2013

In recognition of these concerns and the need to foster effective strategies to improve learning, the UNESCO Regional Office in Dakar proposes to facilitate a cross-country platform for networking and knowledge sharing on teaching and learning by establishing a regional network: the Teaching and Learning Educators' Network for Transformation (TALENT), with a view to serve as a forum for:

- Exchanging experience, expertise and knowledge on interventions (at national or regional level) in areas of teaching and learning improvement in sub-Saharan African countries.
- Promoting research and knowledge generation on those issues to inform policy change
- Capacity development as needs arise

Sub-Saharan African countries have a wide range of perspectives and experiences. They also have a strong potential to learn from each other and to work together to improve the way teachers' practices and student learning outcomes are monitored and inform the design of educational policies and strategies, teacher training and professional support as well as curriculum reviews. Experience sharing and networking also contribute to regional integration as promoted by African Union Agenda 2063 and the Continental Education Strategy in Africa (CESA) 2016- 2025.

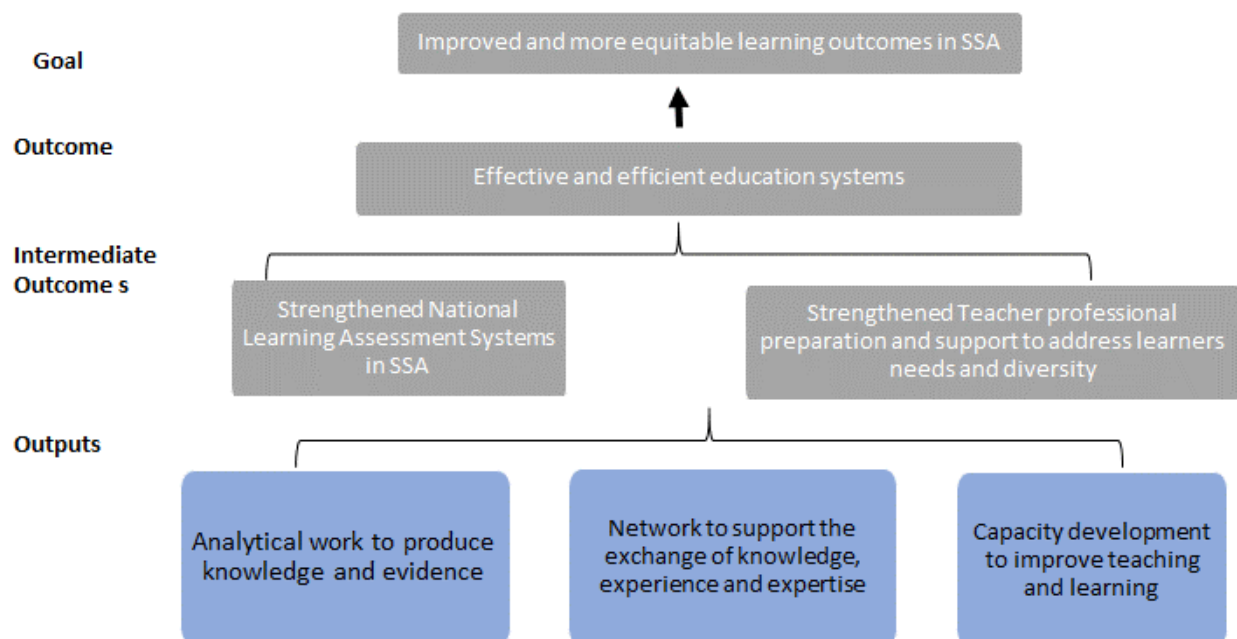
#### SCOPE OF THE NETWORK

TALENT is established to serve as a thematic platform (or Task Team under West and Central Africa Regional Coordination Group for SDG4) to support the implementation of SDG4/Education 2030 Framework for Action. Its activities will focus on research, knowledge sharing and capacity building.

Its focus area is teaching and learning, paying particular attention to alignment of curriculum (including pedagogy, assessment and teacher training) as well as issues related to institutional environment to support effective learning, in line with the needs of 21st century learners in sub-Saharan Africa.

The creation TALENT is based on a theory of change in which the improvement of teaching and learning in all countries of the region is based on three key levers: documentation of good practices and interventions with high payoff, national capacities and networking of countries to enable South-South and North-South cooperation. Essentially, the theory (see Figure 1 below) posit that through a combination of interventions aiming to enable (i) regular sharing of experiences and best practices in teaching and learning among countries and institutions of the region, (ii) analytical work on critical areas to produce evidence to inform policy (iii) the improvement of institutions' capacities to design and implement better teaching and learning strategies, the network will strengthen the education systems of the region to better ensure the acquisition of foundational, specialized and transversal skills by learners.

Figure 1: Theory of Change of the TALENT



## MANAGEMENT

UNESCO Office in Dakar will act as Secretariat of the Network and its primary function will be to facilitate and help coordinate the work of the network and manage its membership based on consultation with the Steering Group.

The Network Secretariat will also assist in circulating related information and documents through the setting up of a network website, maintain regular contact with all network members and serve as Secretariat to the Steering Group.

The First Transitional steering Group was composed of founding members<sup>2</sup> and was officially introduced to the attendees of the TALENT inaugural meeting held in Dakar on 24 October 2016.

A new Steering Group was established on October 2017 for a two-year term. It is currently composed of ADEA-NALA, ANCEFA, CONFEMEN and PASEC, REESAO, UNICEF and UNESCO (including IIEP-Pole de Dakar and UIS). It should welcome two more members in 2018.

The steering group meets on a bimonthly basis to prepare the work plan of the network, share, monitor and review expected outputs. It will hold a network meeting in October 2019 to renew its membership.

## MEMBERSHIP

The Network targets national institutions in charge of teaching and learning assessment in Sub-Saharan Africa. It may also open to other institutions and organizations, based on the following criteria:

<sup>2</sup> ANCEFA, UNESCO, UNICEF, CONFEMEN (including PASEC), REESAO

- Mandate of the institution/organization/association strongly linked to quality of education, specifically assessment, curriculum and/or pedagogy;
- Track record of activities in the countries covered;
- Track record of activities linked to teacher training or monitoring of the quality of education;
- Approval by a simple majority of the Steering Group ;

Application for membership of the TALENT should be received in writing at the Secretariat of the TALENT, at [v.djioze@unesco.org](mailto:v.djioze@unesco.org)

Current membership is as follows :

Lead	UNESCO (Dakar Office)
Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ADEA-NALA (Network for African Learning Assessment- Association for the Development of Education in Africa)</li> <li>- Africa Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA)</li> <li>- ANCEFA (Africa Network Campaign on Education For All)</li> <li>- CONFEMEN (Conference of Ministers of Education of French-Speaking Countries)</li> <li>- REESAO (Network for Excellence in Higher Education in West Africa)</li> <li>- UNICEF/WCARO (UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office)</li> <li>- UNESCO family units (including UNESCO regional Offices in Sub Saharan Africa and specialized institutes such as the IIEP/Pole de Dakar<sup>3</sup>, UIS<sup>4</sup> and IICBA<sup>5</sup> )</li> <li>- National institutions in charge of learning assessment and teacher training in 28 SSA countries</li> </ul>

#### RESULTS MATRIX OF THE TALENT FOR 2016-2017

Intermediate outcomes	Activities	Status	Partners
<b>Strengthened Teacher professional preparation and support to address learners needs and diversity</b>	1. Expert Meeting on the professionalization of Basic Education Teachers	1. Done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TALENT steering group members with collaboration of: ECOWAS, Education international, AFTRA, UNESCO-IICBA, UNESCO-IIEP Pôle de Dakar, Africa Union, GPE/A4L, OIF/AUF/IFADEM,</li> </ul>
	2. Regional capacity building Workshop on teacher professionalization in West and Central Africa	2. Done	
		3. Underway	

<sup>3</sup> Dakar branch of the UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning

<sup>4</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics

<sup>5</sup> UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA)

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Policy Guidance Framework and Tools for BE teachers professionalization in W and C Africa</li> <li>4. Agreement with stakeholders on regional leadership for coordination and information sharing on Teacher Issues</li> <li>5. Quality assurance and accreditation of teacher training</li> <li>6. Resource portal on teaching, learning and barriers to learning</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Done</li> <li>5. Not started</li> <li>6. underway</li> </ol>	International Task Force on Teachers
<b>Strengthening learning assessment systems</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Regional survey of learning assessment systems</li> <li>2. Regional Workshop on learning assessment systems</li> <li>3. Regional mapping study of learning assessment systems</li> <li>4. Regional review of the impact of learning assessments on learning</li> <li>5. 2 Policy briefs on learning assessment systems</li> <li>6. Enhancing knowledge on 21<sup>st</sup> century skills for African youth research programme</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. started in June 2017 and still on going</li> <li>2. Done (6-8 December 2017)</li> <li>3. Not started</li> <li>4. Not started</li> <li>5. Not started</li> <li>6. Regional study on Cultural levers to support learning in Africa done</li> </ol>	- TALENT Steering group members, with collaboration from : GPE, OCDE/PISA-D, IEA, ELAN, PASEC, SEACMEQ, Brookings Institution