

Regional Capacity building workshop on Effective reporting, dissemination and use of Large-scale learning assessments.

Date: 27-30 November 2018

Venue: Savana Hotel (Dakar, Senegal)

Terms of Reference

Background:

Learning is one of the key challenges facing sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in achieving Sustainable Development Goal No. 4 (SDG4) on Education 2030 and the African Union Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 2016-2015 Targets.

Recent data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) indicate that Sub-Saharan Africa has the single largest number – 202 million – of children and adolescents who are not learning. Estimates based on past trends suggest that across the region, nearly nine out of ten kids between the ages of about 6 and 14 will not meet minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics by the time they are of age to complete primary and lower secondary education¹. According to UIS, this learning crisis could threaten progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)².

Limited access to education, school dropout and educational quality problems, which mean that about 50 per cent of children and adolescents attending school do not acquire the minimum skills expected at their level, are just a few examples that are leading to the learning crisis in the region.

Against this worrying trend, the Regional Coordination Group on SDG4-Education 2030 set up the Teaching and Learning Educators' Network for Transformation (TALENT) in June 2016 as a Task Team to serve as the coordination platform of stakeholders engaged in regional programmes to address the learning crisis. TALENT is coordinated by UNESCO with the support of a Steering Group, composed at this stage, of, ADEA-NALA, ANCEFA, CONFEMEN and its PASEC Programme, REESAO, UNICEF and the UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP) pole de Dakar.

Since its creation, TALENT has focused its activities on learning assessment systems as key processes to support learning and orient education quality reform and Teacher standards and professionalization pathways in order to improve teachers' capacity to support learning. TALENT does not intend to replace the many specialized organizations working in sub-Saharan Africa countries, but rather to bring them together in a collaboration framework in order to

¹ UIS FactSheet n. 46., p.7, 2017;

² *Ibid*

improve the synergy and complementarity of their interventions and share knowledge and experience.

The present regional workshop is the seventh regional event organized by the TALENT. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) funds it under its Assessment for Learning (A4L) programme.

Rationale: Ensuring effective reporting, dissemination and use of Large-scale learning assessments to inform education policy and practice

Quality learning assessments are designed to produce credible information to i) certify and validate learning, ii) provide a factual basis for policy development, iii) ensure accountability for results, and iv) inform teaching and learning practices³.

Learning assessment systems comprise different kinds of assessments that yield information at individual, institutional or system levels - for teachers and students, planners, policy-makers and other stakeholders. Such systems can help learners to learn, teachers to improve instruction, planners to decide on resource allocations (for schools or other), as well as policy-makers and governments to address system inefficiencies or evaluate education.

This workshop will focus on systemic or large-scale assessments, whether national or cross-national. These assessments are different from national examinations in that they do not aim to certify knowledge to select or promote students within the education system. While large-scale learning assessments can be census-based, most are sample-based and intended to assess the learning levels of a target population (grade(s) or age/age-range) within the system, and to explain why some perform better. In this sense, these assessments provide a good measure of the equity and quality of an education system and are a key source of information for policy-makers committed to achieving the SDG4 and CESA 16-25 targets.

About 40% of countries in sub-Saharan Africa have engaged in cross-national learning assessment programmes (e.g. PASEC and SEACMEQ⁴), and /or international assessments such as PIRLS, PISA for Development and TIMSS⁵. In addition, at least half have conducted a national learning assessment⁶. In recent years, under the auspices of the People's Action for Learning (PAL) Network⁷, citizen-led assessments have been conducted in some countries of sub-Saharan Africa to capture the learning levels of all children – including those who are not enrolled in school, those who attend non-formal/community schools, those who are schooled at home and those who are enrolled in formal schools but who do not attend regularly.

³ UNESCO (2017). *Learning assessment at UNESCO: Ensuring effective and relevant learning for all*.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0026/002603/260325E.pdf>

⁴ PASEC stands for *Programme d'analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la Confemen*. It covers Francophone countries. SEACMEQ stands for the *Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality*.

⁵ Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). PISA-D is an enhanced version of the *Programme for International Student Assessment* tailored to middle- and low-income countries.

⁶ UIS Information Paper no. 26, January 2016

⁷ The People's Action for Learning Network.

Despite the large body of data on learning outcomes generated by these assessments, there is little indication that the insights generated through these programmes have translated into concrete action by policy-makers. This is evidenced by the low levels of learning which persist in the region, where 60% of school-children do not acquire minimum skills in language and math at the end of primary education (UNESCO, 2015⁸). Yet, there is a vast body of research in how learning assessments can improve policies and practices. Strong political will to use assessment as means to support improved learning outcomes for all is an important driver, however, strengthening the capacity of technical staff to gather evidence on the state of learning outcomes and effectively communicate it to policy-makers is a first important step.

Indeed, when carried out effectively, reporting and disseminating the results of large-scale evaluations helps communities and decision-makers to better interpret and use assessment data to review their education policy in order to achieve better learning outcomes for all learners. Similarly, when the use of assessment data is optimal, staff in charge of conducting assessments, educators and decision-makers are encouraged to review on an ongoing basis their learning assessment strategy in order to generate the data they needed to inform educational policy decisions and to improve the quality and equity of the education system.

Strengthening national capacities to report, disseminate and use the results of large-scale evaluations is therefore of great importance to improve the effectiveness of education systems.

The objectives of the capacity-building workshop:

By the end of the workshop, delegates from participating countries (officials from national large-scale assessment as well as the education sector planning units) will:

- have a clear understanding of the components of the quality and relevance of large-scale assessment and their respective roles in this regard;
- learn from effective practices in the use of large-scale assessments in education policy and planning process;
- develop a draft strategy to improve the reporting, dissemination and use of large-scale assessments data;
- be connected to a network of peers and experts from other countries involved in conducting or using the results of large-scale assessment.

Workshop audience and methodology

The workshop is intended for national teams composed of Heads of large-scale assessment and planning units from sub-Saharan African countries, as well as development agencies active in Local Education Groups.

The four-day workshop will be delivered in plenary presentations, group discussions and hands-on activities. Participants will be required to undertake some preparatory work for the workshop and actively participate in the four days of the workshop.

UNESCO will convene a team of experts to facilitate the workshop.

⁸ Global Education Monitoring Report, 2015 edition

Logistics :

The workshop shall take place in Dakar (venue to be confirmed) from 27 to 30 November 2018. It will be simultaneously translated in English and French.

Each national team shall be composed of at least two national representatives as described above (i.e. the national heads for large-scale assessments and education planning) and possibly a representative of the education sector development partners lead.

The workshop organizers will sponsor the participation of two national officials from 12 Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Developing Country Partner (DCPs) in the region. The list of beneficiaries is communicated to the participants concerned, with a copy to relevant UNESCO National Commissions. The sponsorship includes airfare (economy class), accommodation and meals.

Self-sponsored participants can contact the TALENT Secretariat Team for more information about participation costs (v.djioze@unesco.org; d.ruscelli@unesco.org)

Draft Agenda:

	Session Title	Facilitators + resource persons
Day 1		
8h30-9h	Participants registration	UNESCO-Dakar
9h-9h30	Introduction to the TALENT and the workshop	Valérie Djioze-Gallet (UNESCO, TALENT Secretariat)
9h30-10h	Introduction of participants	Davide Ruscelli (UNESCO, TALENT Secretariat)
10h-10h30	<i>Group photo and coffee break</i>	
10h30-11h30	Introduction on the measurement of learning within the framework of SDG-4 and Agenda 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Gwang-Chol Chang (UNESCO)▪ Esther Care (Brookings Institution)
11h30-13h	Knowledge sharing: Group discussions on countries' experience in <u>reporting, disseminating and using</u> learning assessment results at national and sub-national levels for policy and practice	UNESCO
13h-14h15	<i>Lunch break</i>	
14h15-15h30	Reporting of group discussions: Presentation by each group of the strengths and challenges identified and their expectations for the workshop	UNESCO
15h30-16h	Trends and perspectives in data reporting, dissemination and use for policy and practice in Africa: Findings from research and cross country analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Sally Robertson (ACER)▪ Hilaire Hounkpodote (PASEC)
16h-16h15	<i>Coffee break</i>	

16h15-17h15	Trends and perspectives in data reporting, dissemination and use for policy and practice in Africa: ctd.	
18h00-20h00	<i>Social gathering</i>	
	Day 2	
9h-10h30	Reporting and disseminating effectively large-scale assessment results to a variety of stakeholders	Sally Robertson (ACER)
10h30-11h	<i>Coffee break</i>	Sally Robertson (ACER)
11h-12h30	Hands on activity 1: Developing a dissemination strategy and creating dissemination products for a specific target audience	
12h30-13h30	<i>Lunch-break</i>	
13h30 – 15h30	Hands on activity 1(continued): finalization of dissemination strategy and dissemination products for a specific target audience	
15h30-16h	<i>Coffee-break</i>	
16h-17h30	Wrap-up of Group work: Sharing of dissemination strategies and products	
Day 3		
8h30-10h	Knowledge-sharing/hands on activity : Harnessing ICT for dissemination of learning assessment results	Maya Prince (UNESCO)
10h-10h30	<i>Coffee- break</i>	
10h30-12h30	Learning from promising practices in ensuring effective use of Large-scale learning assessment data for education policy and practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Satya Brink (Expert)▪ Patrick Nkengne Nkengne, et Marcelo Souto, (UNESCO-IIEP/Pôle de Dakar)
12h30-13h30	<i>Lunch break</i>	
13h30-15h	Hands on activities in the use of large-scale learning assessment data to design more equitable and inclusive Learning policies	
15h-15h30	<i>Coffee- break</i>	
15h30 - 17h30	Hands on activities (continued) in the use of large-scale learning assessment data to design more equitable and inclusive Learning policies	
Day 4		
9h-9h30	News from TALENT Partners	UNESCO-IIEP/Pôle de Dakar
9h30-11h00	Hands on activities (continued): Using learning assessment data to design more equitable and inclusive Learning policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Satya Brink (Expert)▪ Patrick Nkengne Nkengne, et Marcelo Souto, (UNESCO-IIEP/Pôle de Dakar)
11h00-11h30	<i>Coffee break</i>	
11h30-12h45	Wrap-up of Group work: Sharing of group work on the use of assessment result in policy and practice	
12h45-14h00	<i>Lunch break</i>	

14h-15h	Plenary discussion of next steps : Roadmaps for enhancing reporting, dissemination and use of learning assessment results in participating countries	Valérie Djioze-Gallet & Davide Ruscelli
15h-15h30	Workshop evaluation	(UNESCO, Secrétariat du TALENT)
15h30-16h	Closing ceremony	UNESCO-Dakar