

Regional Capacity building workshop on alignment between curriculum, teacher training and learning assessments

Dates: 25-27 July 2018

Venue: Dar es Salaam, Tanzania¹

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 education². According to UIS, this learning crisis could threaten progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)³.

Limited access to education, school drop-out 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 and UNICEF.

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 More information regarding the venue will be communicated to all no later than end June 2018

² UIS FactSheet n. 46., p.7, 2017; <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/fs46-more-than-half-children-not-learning-en-2017.pdf>

³ *Ibid*

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

The present regional workshop is the 4th regional event organized by the TALENT. It is funded by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) under its Assessment for Learning (A4L) programme.

Rationale: « Aligning teaching and learning components to achieve better learning outcomes »

The proposed regional workshop addresses the issue of poor education quality from a system alignment perspective (system alignment refers here to the extent to which learning assessment, learning goals, standards, curriculum and pre- and in- service teacher training are all aligned and concur to form a coherent system⁴ that foster effective learning).

The rationale for this workshop stems from the findings of the regional needs assessment workshop held in December 2017 with delegates from a set of 17 sub-Saharan African countries and about 15 regional and international development agencies including major learning assessment initiatives. The workshop identified lack of adequate system alignment as a major deterrent to education quality and a main driver of poor learning outcomes⁵.

Indeed, most countries in the SSA region have started curriculum reform in the recent years, however learning outcomes have not improved in the way it was expected. A vast body of research including from the UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE) indicates that this shortcoming is due to a large extent to the fact that curriculum reform was not necessarily accompanied by relevant reforms in teacher training and/or review of learning assessment⁶. This finding was further confirmed in the data collected by the TALENT across 21 SSA countries in 2017⁷. A large proportion indicated that teachers lack adequate training and support to carry out the various learning assessment tasks (diagnostic, formative or summative assessments) included in the curriculum.

Equally, although learning assessments (school-based, examinations and large-scale) have become more prevalent in SSA countries, they tend to focus on exams, cover only limited domains of the curriculum and generate data whose use to support learning is limited. Most countries have yet to put in place robust learning assessment systems through which "the policies, structures, practices and tools for generating and using information on student learning

⁴ Adapted from "Clarke, Marguerite. 2012. What Matters Most for Student Assessment Systems: A Framework Paper. Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) student assessment working paper no. 1. World Bank, Washington, DC"

⁵ Report of the Regional Workshop on National Learning Assessment Systems in sub-Saharan Africa: Knowledge sharing and needs assessment can be downloaded at <http://education2030-africa.org/index.php/en/atelier-6122018-en>

⁶ Marope, Griffin, Gallagher - IBE (2018);

⁷ Survey results will be published in fall 2018, preliminary results are available at http://education2030-africa.org/images/talent/atelier061217/Results_of_Survey_on_Learning_Assessments.pdf

and achievement»⁸ are used to inform effective policies that lead to improved learning outcomes.

Understanding the extent to which all components of the system are aligned or not will help policy makers in charge of learning assessment, teacher education and curriculum development to refine and/or recalibrate different components of the curriculum, assessment and teacher education in order to improve the support provided to students to achieve the learning goals set by education policies.

Workshop objectives and expected outcomes:

The regional capacity-building workshop on alignment between curriculum, teacher training and learning assessments aims to enhance the capacities of national delegates to address alignment issues in national learning assessment system.

By the end of the workshop, delegates from participating countries (national heads for curriculum, teacher training and learning assessments) will be able to:

1. Identify the main weaknesses in their respective learning assessment system (at basic and/or secondary education levels),
2. Learn from best practices in learning assessment system alignment with curriculum and teacher training
3. Develop a national work plan to improve the alignment of the learning assessment system in their country
4. Network with a group of practitioners, experts and education cooperation institutions with experience and expertise to share

Workshop audience and methodology

The workshop is intended for national teams - composed of the heads of curriculum, teacher training and learning assessments - from sub-Saharan African countries, as well as development agencies active in Local Education Groups in the same countries.

The three-day workshop will be delivered through plenary presentations, group discussions and hands-on activity sessions. Participants will be required to undertake preparatory work for the workshop, actively participate in the three days of the workshop and complete additional work at a distance within one month of the end of the workshop. This distance work is a key component of capacity building and will help participants further develop competences in system alignment.

A team of experts from UNESCO and the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) will facilitate the workshop.

The workshop will have simultaneous interpretation in English, French and Portuguese. Therefore, all participants are expected to participate actively.

⁸ Clarke, Marguerite. 2012. What Matters Most for Student Assessment Systems: A Framework Paper. Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) student assessment working paper no. 1. World Bank, Washington, DC

Logistics :

The workshop shall take place in Dar Es Salaam (venue will be confirmed shortly) from **25 to 27 July 2018**.

Each national team will be composed of at least the three national heads described above (i.e. the national heads of curriculum, teacher education and learning assessment) and possibly a representative of the education sector lead partner.

The workshop organizers will sponsor the participation of up to three national officials from 12 of GPE's Developing Country Partners (DCPs) in the region. Sponsored countries that so wish may sponsor other participants at their own expense. A maximum of five additional countries may also take part in the workshop, with their own funding or with the support of their Local Education Group. Education sector lead partners from all participating countries may also participate on a self-financed basis.

The sponsorship offered by the organizers includes airfare (economy class), accommodation and meals.

For any additional information about the workshop logistics, please contact the TALENT Secretariat Team: v.djioze@unesco.org; d.ruscelli@unesco.org and j.perez-campos@unesco.org.

Draft Agenda

Day	Session Title	Content	Objectives
Day 1 – Morning	Laying the foundations	TALENT introduction	Set out the objective of the workshop; Put system alignment into the context of SDG4 and CESA 16-25
		Curriculum, pedagogy, teacher training, learning, learning assessment : articulations and alignment	Build common understanding of key concept and processes relevant for system alignment
		Global mapping of current issues related to curriculum, teaching, learning and learning assessment	Understanding current issues and challenges to address the learning crisis
Day1 – Afternoon	Learning from best practices in system alignment in SSA and other regions	Case study reviews in Alignment between curriculum and teaching	Identifying common trends, challenges and best practices and stimulate Inquiry and

		<p>Review of case studies on alignment between curriculum and learning assessments</p> <p>Case study reviews Alignment between teaching and learning assessments</p>	dialogue among participants
Day 2- Morning	Group Work in Strategies, tools and actors	Hands on activities by groups of countries or practitioners on issues relevant to the audience (collected prior to the workshop)	Putting participants in an active learning situation; Familiarize them with approaches and tools; stimulate Inquiry and dialogue among participants
Day 2- Afternoon	Group work (ctd) Wrap-up of Group work Plenary presentations of the improvement plans developed	... Experience sharing among participants
Day 2 - Evening	Social gathering	Tbd	Networking among participants
Day 3 - Morning	Group work on national workplan/roadmap for strengthening learning assessment system alignment	Group work to develop national roadmaps	-Identification of Interventions needed to ensure system alignment and timelines; -Assessment of needs for the required interventions;
Day 3- Afternoon	Wrap-up of Group work on national roadmaps Workshop evaluation Closing ceremony	Plenary presentation and discussion of roadmaps Closing speech from the organizers	Experience sharing among participants

Kindly note that each participants will be invited to complete additional work at a distance within one month of the end of the workshop. This distance work is a key component of capacity building and will help participants further develop competences in system alignment.