



Association for the
Development of
Education in
Africa

ECOWAS countries meet to draw a framework for monitoring the development of education management information systems

ADEA's Working Group on Education Management and Policy Support plays key role in ECOWAS meeting hosted by Burkina Faso

Ouagadougou, 24 March 2011. Yesterday, March 23, 2011, Hon. Minister Mrs. Odile Bonkougou, Minister of Education and Literacy of Burkina Faso, officially opened the "ECOWAS Technical Committee on Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) Norms and Standards Development", which is taking place in Ouagadougou, March 23-25, 2011.

The purpose of the meeting, which is organized by the ECOWAS Secretariat, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and ADEA's Working Group on Education Management and Policy Support (WGEMPS), is to draft minimum EMIS norms and standards for the ECOWAS region that will guide countries in developing, improving and maintaining comprehensive and sustainable EMIS.

Expected outcomes of the meeting, which ends tomorrow, is a draft document outlining norms and standards, an institutional framework and agreements for EMIS in the ECOWAS region.

Regional Economic Communities' (RECs') critical role for supporting AU's Second Decade of Education for Africa Plan of Action has been acknowledged at several high-level meetings. RECs are instrumental for articulating the region's vision and mission statement, and, with respect to these, the region's education strategic objectives. In the area of EMIS, their role is crucial for building the competencies and resources for EMIS and for monitoring AU's Second Decade of Education Plan of Action.

In her opening speech, Mrs. Bonkougou stressed the importance of developing Africa's human capital. "Africa's sustainable development must be based first and foremost on the development of human capital, as the main pillar for overcoming the development lag" she said. She continued by stating the need for "relevant and reliable statistical data in order to inform decision makers and to guide policies aimed at reaching objectives set by national education sector plans, AU's Second Decade of Education and other frameworks such as EFA and MDGs". She reminded

participants of the blatant lack of relevant statistics for the evaluation of AU's First Decade of Education (1997-2006), which prompted the AU to implement the Observatory of Education resting on the Pan-African Institute for Education and Development (IPED) based in Kinshasa and the International Center for the Education for Girls and Women in Africa (CIEFFA) based in Ouagadougou.

Professor Abdoulaye Maga, Director for Education, Sciences and Technology for ECOWAS highlighted the Commission's firm stance as regards the development of EMIS in the region and informed participants that in 2010 ECOWAS had facilitated the holding of two previous meetings on EMIS in Togo and in Liberia.

Grégoire Mboya, representing the African Development Bank (AfDB), stressed the critical role of education for economic and social development, which AfDB strives for, and the importance of having quality education statistics, which are a priority for AfDB's Statistics Division.

Elizabeth Ouedraogo, Director of CIEFFA, reminded participants that gender was one of the nine priority areas of the AU's Second Decade of Education. She informed participants that CIEFFA was in the process of piloting new gender indicators and that these would be published soon.

The Executive Secretary of ADEA, Ahlin Byll-Cataria, congratulated the partnership between the African Union, ECOWAS, the African Development Bank and CIEFFA, which have joined efforts for the development of strong EMIS systems in the region.

ADEA's Working Group on Education Management and Policy Support (WGEMPS) is AU's key technical partner for the implementation of its regional EMIS strategy. Within each Regional Economic Community (REC), this includes the assessment of EMIS capacities in Member States, the development of a capacity development strategy, the definition of norms and standards to be approved by the Ministers Education and the implementation of capacity building activities. The AU's EMIS strategy is currently being carried out in the SADC (Southern African Development Community), CEEAC (Community of Central African States) and ECOWAS regions.

The ECOWAS meeting taking place this week in Ouagadougou is attended by six countries: Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal.

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