

Republic of Rwanda



Ministry of Education



African Union

## Press Release

For immediate release

### **Bureau of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF VI) met on 8 February 2015 in Kigali, Rwanda to discuss the African position on the global post-2015 Education programme**

The Bureau of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF VI) held an extraordinary session in Kigali, Rwanda on the 8th of February 2015. This meeting was called to ensure the contribution of COMEDAF to the African position on the global post-2015 Education Programme. UNESCO's meeting for Ministers of Education in Sub-Saharan Africa was held at the same venue from 9th to 11th February 2015. The African Union Commission was keen to ensure that the outcome of the UNESCO meeting will represent all Africa geographically and politically. The COMEDAF VI session was open to all the Ministers of Education who were present in Kigali and was therefore a preparatory meeting with the following objectives that aimed to provide the continental perspective on education development, taking into account the AU Summit Decisions on the COMEDAF VI report, the Common African Position and Agenda 2063. The session also aimed at enabling these critical decisions and perspectives to be taken on board in the discussions, and also contribute to the development of the post-2015 Education Strategy for Africa.

Countries represented by their Ministers of Education included the following: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Cape Verde, Eritrea, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritius, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sao Tome & Principal, Senegal. Other Member States of the African Union were also represented by their senior officials. They are Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Central African Republic, Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, Zambia, and Zanzibar.

The following partners were also present: UNESCO, ADEA, CONFEMEN, PASEC, CEMASTEIA, FAWE, and ANCEFA.

Participants agreed on the importance of having Africa speaking as one. The primary issues discussed focused on the following areas:

- i. The need for a clear agenda for science education in schools. Science and Technology should be looked at from both the perspective of the teacher and the learner.
- ii. Involving school children in discussing agenda 2063 publicize it widely and focus on efficiently implementable actions.
- iii. Ensure expertise in Member States; harmonize educational systems in African countries and exchange of experiences among member states.
- iv. Include marginalized children in program development.
- v. Improve the tools used for the evaluation processes in order to get a full picture of the status of education in Africa and acquire robust statistics considered as a pre-requisite for good governance.
- vi. Redefine basic education and the difficulty of assessing lifelong learning as being distinct from technical and vocational training.
- vii. Indigenous knowledge should be promoted and the importance of using existing knowledge systems
- viii. The importance of teachers passing on values and skills to students.
- ix. The EFA assessment could be used for the entire African continent and inform the post-2015 themes, with an emphasis on science and technology.
- x. Prevent pregnancy in schools to improve the completion rate for girls.
- xi. Address the problems related to the Talibé child and introduce formal strategy for Koranic schools.
- xii. Strengthen the role of the teacher as counsellor or facilitator in the learning process.
- xiii. Promote the use of distance education with the existing technological resources in our country.

Cape Verde requested to become a partner of the Pan-African University in the area of Marine Sciences. Niger will review its learning system for nomads, the type of service to be provided and the importance of harmonizing the different education systems inherited from colonization.

In conclusion and after discussions and exchanges among delegations, the meeting agreed on the following essential elements for reflection in view of developing a continental strategy for post-2015 education:

- The necessity of recording all contributions, success stories, needs and challenges and ensure that they are considered when developing a continental strategy for post-2015 Education;
- The need to redefine the role of schools in an evolving world, so as to avoid or reduce adverse effects of new and emerging developments;
- The need to redefine basic education as completion of secondary level in order to ensure significant levels of functional skills for life and career choices for decent work; and strengthen the safety nets for children against child labour, child marriage and reversal into illiteracy;
- The challenge of the so-called fragile African States' ability to respond effectively and efficiently to different commitments in Education;
- As expensive as quality education may seem, Africa is paying a much higher price for lack of education. This implies the necessity of investing in education;
- The need for Africa to include African values in its pedagogical approaches so as to strengthen the spirit of African citizenship and Pan-Africanism among young people;
- The urgency for Africa to establish a harmonized Education Management Information System;
- The need to build African ability to adequately evaluate education and to compile credible and sustainable data that inform actions and interventions in education;
- The promotion of Africa's diversity and culture as a wealth and pride of generations;
- Realizing the role of parliamentarians in education to enact appropriate legislations and push for the adoption of adequate national budgets to support the implementation of international commitments in favor of education and African development.

The African Ministers presents committed to endorsing the EFA evaluation conducted by UNESCO, which is also consistent with the mid-term evaluation of the Second Decade of Education for Africa undertaken in 2011. The Ministers agreed to consider all EFA related joint efforts made as the final evaluation of the Second Decade of Education for Africa.

Finally, all ministers of education of the member states of the African Union and all stakeholders working in the field of education were invited to engage in the process from

Kigali to Incheon, Korea and to New York during the United Nations General Assembly for the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals Post 2015. They will express the views of a united Africa, according to the Common African Position and the African Agenda 2063. The AU Commission was invited, in collaboration with the Bureau of COMEDAF VI, to synthesize the EFA evaluation of North Africa with that of sub-Saharan Africa. This will complete the key aspects left out of the report and to move forward in the development of the continental education strategy 2016-2025.

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