



Ushirika wa Maendeleo ya Elimu Barani Afrika  
الرابطة لأجل تطوير التربية في إفريقيا  
Association for the Development of Education in Africa  
Association pour le développement de l'éducation en Afrique  
Associação para o Desenvolvimento da Educação em África

## **Call for Proposals: ADEA Evaluation and Mid-Term Review of Strategic Medium Term Plan (SMTP)**

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### **Introduction and Background**

The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) is a forum for policy dialogue and for promoting innovative policies and practices in education. Its Secretariat is hosted by the African Development Bank. Since its inception in 1988, it has grown from a donor-driven platform for coordinating development aid to a vibrant network of African education and training ministries, bilateral and multilateral development agencies, researchers, educational experts, and technical partners from Africa and around the world. ADEA's vision is to create "high-quality African education and training geared towards the promotion of critical skills for accelerated and sustainable development in Africa". To achieve this vision, ADEA provides a unique forum for evidence-based policy dialogue on African education and training issues. Its mission is to "serve as an open and flexible pan-African organization that informs and facilitates the transformation of education and training to drive Africa's accelerated and sustainable development". ADEA acts as a catalyst in promoting innovative policies and practices through the pooling of ideas, experiences, learning and knowledge and thus contributes to the development of equitable and high-quality education through concerted efforts by African Governments and their partners.

ADEA's first 5-year Strategic Medium-Term Plan (SMTP) ended in 2012 and its successor is the new SMTP (2013-2017). It was inspired by three independent but inter-related events, namely, the 2010 independent evaluation of ADEA, the recommendations of the 2012 Triennale and the transition to a new vision. The first driver is the 2010 independent evaluation which urged ADEA to review its mandate in order "to better reflect the evolving needs of key constituencies and the context within which it operates". It further recommended that ADEA should strengthen its communication potential and "put in place a comprehensive performance management system focused on ensuring that outcome-level data is available for both monitoring and evaluation purposes."

A second driver of the SMTP was the outcome of the 2012 Triennale. The major concern at the 2012 Triennale was that Africa would not live up to its perceived potential unless it could educate and train a critical mass of its youthful population so as to better their own lives and to enhance their potential to contribute to the social-economic transformation of their communities, countries and the region. The Triennale not only brought a renewed interest in education and training but also successfully helped to highlight the strong link between education & training and sustainable development. More importantly, it provoked the challenge of how to address key policy and strategic reforms necessary to make a paradigm shift in education and training in Africa. The 2013-2017 SMTP was ADEA's response to the challenge.

Finally, ADEA's new vision statement directly reflects the recommendations of the Triennale and the Strategic Policy Framework endorsed by the African Heads of State in January 2013 in Addis Ababa. ADEA's new vision is to "*high-quality African education and training geared towards the promotion of critical skills for accelerated and sustainable development in Africa*". The importance of the vision lies in the fact that it guided the development of the Strategic Plan. The SMTP's Strategic Objectives (SOs) articulate high-level results that ADEA aims to achieve because they will synergistically culminate in the realization of its vision.

ADEA has embarked on a transformation process which began with the Visioning process that resulted in the development of a new five-year SMTP. This was followed by a Design stage that involved the determination of the operational changes needed to establish an effective, efficient organization capable of achieving the objectives set within the SMTP. A comprehensive organizational audit was subsequently undertaken and its recommendations are being implemented. The structure of the Secretariat has changed, a new Executive Secretary has been recruited and new staff members have been brought on board. A new Communications Strategy has also been crafted and approved by the ADEA Steering Committee.

In spite of the transformation process ADEA faces a number of critical challenges. The global and continental development agendas pose a challenge for ADEA. As a pan-African organization and major player in education, it will be under pressure to contribute to providing leadership in transforming education systems for sustainable development in Africa. A related challenge is the need to clearly demonstrate the vital role of policy dialogue in achieving long-term transformation. Furthermore, the needs and expectations of ADEA's constituencies are changing and there is increasing demand for the organization to support policy implementation and produce concrete results at the country level. To meet this demand ADEA would face the challenge require change its mandate.

ADEA's major implementing component has been the Working Groups. Some of the groups are currently being transformed into Inter-Country Quality Nodes (ICQNs).The transition poses the challenge of how to ensure that ADEA's activities continue to have impact on the stakeholders and also continue to be relevant, coherent and in support of the vision and strategic objectives of the organization.

ADEA has been experiencing financial difficulties since 2013 and that poses the critical challenge about its sustainability. Emerging global priorities are becoming more dominant than education on donors' agendas. The situation poses the question of ownership of the organization. After funding ADEA for more than two decades, some donors believe that it is time for African countries to take responsibility for funding ADEA, if they consider the organization to be relevant and useful to the continent.

ADEA Global Charter, Outreach and Brochure articulate ADEA's governance structure. They also provide information about the Association's coordinating and implementing entities (Secretariat, Working Groups and Inter-Country Quality Nodes) as well as the spheres of its activities.

## **Rationale for ADEA Evaluation and Mid-Term Review of SMTP**

The Development Grant Facility (DGF) stipulates that ADEA should conduct an independent evaluation of the organization every five years to assess its performance and impact in terms of continued efficiency, financial viability, effectiveness and relevance to education transformation in Africa. Two independent evaluations have previously been carried out in 2005 and 2010. The current evaluation is in line with

existing practice. More importantly, the current evaluation is necessary given the emerging global (2030 Sustainable Development Goals) and continental (Africa Agenda 2063) development frameworks, shifting emphasis from funding sectors and projects by donors, and the dwindling financial annual income of the organization. Regarding the five-year Strategic Medium-Term Plan for the period 2013-2017 the ADEA Steering Committee recognized the need for the Strategic Plan to remain coherent with and relevant to the post-2015 global development frameworks. It therefore decided that a mid-term review should be conducted to assess the implementation and continued relevance of its strategic objectives. Besides, the review of the last SMTP was part of the evaluation of ADEA in 2010. The review will also provide useful input to the preparation of the 2016 Triennale.

## **Objectives of the ADEA Evaluation and SMTP Review**

The SMTP (2013-2017) has defined five Strategic Objectives (SOs) that will guide ADEA's operation during a five-year period. It encompasses Strategic Initiatives (SIs) from which key programmatic activities will be derived. ADEA's annual work plans are derived from the SOs and SIs. ADEA Secretariat is required to develop performance measurement tools that will allow the Association to assess and measure progress over time. The five Strategic Objectives are the following and are fundamental to the evaluation of ADEA and the mid-term review of the SMTP:

1. *Contribute to advancing policies, strategies, practices, and programs that promote critical knowledge, skills, and qualifications.*
2. *Promote African-led education and training solutions to address national and regional needs*
3. *Foster greater utilization of relevant ICT to accelerate the transformation of education and training approaches and outcomes*
4. *Leverage a diverse, sustainable partner network*
5. *Strengthen organizational capacity and effectiveness*

The objectives of the evaluation of ADEA are therefore to:

- Review ADEA's progress in responding to the recommendations of the 2010 evaluation;
- Assess ADEA's continued relevance to African Governments as a foremost forum for policy dialogue on education in Africa and also determine what strategic change or shift in mandate is necessary, given current global and continental dynamics.
- Considering the changing paradigm of development agencies and donors, growing emphasis on results and de-emphasis on funding sectors and projects directly, assess ADEA's current financing model and recommend viable options for ADEA's financial sustainability. Assess the relevance and effectiveness of ADEA Working Groups (WG) as the professional arms of ADEA.
- Assess the relevance and effectiveness of the ICQNs and its relation to the ADEA Secretariat, its autonomy under the Ministries of Education and its complementarity to the Working Groups;
- Assess ADEA's current legal structure vis a vis its vision and mandate, and advice whether ADEA should remain fluid as a Forum for Policy dialogue or co-opted under an existing Pan-African institution and the implications thereof;

- Assess the readiness of member countries to take full ownership of ADEA and the transitioning of financial support from funding agencies to full ownership of ADEA by member countries and make recommendations to this effect
- Assess progress towards achieving the strategic objectives and identify factors that have facilitated or hindered the implementation process;
- Determine the continued relevance of the Strategic Objectives in light of post 2015 global development agenda – Africa Agenda 2063 and 2030 Sustainable Development Goals; and
- Determine changes and resources that would be necessary for effective execution of the SMTP during the remaining half of the plan’s implementation life span, and make appropriate recommendations.
- Make recommendations on the future of ADEA as deemed appropriate.

## **Scope of the Assignment**

The Evaluation of ADEA would be undertaken by an international consulting firm that is recruited through a competitive bidding process. The evaluation should not be a mere post-mortem of the past five years; it should take a strategic view of ADEA’s future effectiveness, relevance and sustainability. The successful firm will be required therefore to undertake the following tasks:

- Review and provide an update on the extent to which the ADEA Secretariat has responded to the various recommendations in the report of the independent evaluation of the organization in 2010.
- Determine the organization’s effectiveness and relevance to African governments in the advancement of transformation of education in Africa given the continental dynamics in education.
- Identify possible implications on ADEA’s financial viability of donors’ paradigm shift from funding sectors and projects, and propose options for continued financial viability;
- Determine options for facilitating and accelerating the implementation of ADEA’s SMTP;
- Make appropriate recommendations on each finding. It will be helpful to define the problem, prove supporting evidence and ensure corresponding recommendations.

## **Research Questions**

The following questions are intended to provide guidance to the consultants within the framework of the broad objectives.

### **Financial viability**

- To what extent has ADEA succeeded in raising financial resources commensurate with its objectives, and from what sources (e.g., World Bank, bilateral donors, foundations, member countries etc.)?
- Given the fact that in the next two years donors may no longer fund sectors and projects directly what options are available to ensure ADEA’s financial viability as a critical player in education development in Africa?
- To what extent is ADEA’s ability to show concrete results in terms of outcomes tied to donor funding and if so what change in mandate is necessary?
- To what degree is ADEA financially sustainable in the medium term of continued donor commitment and increased contributions of African Ministries of Education?

- To what extent can ADEA continue to remain fluid and what is the added value of maintaining the structure as is vis a vis being absorbed by a Pan African Institution for its long term sustainability?

### **Relevance (based on the purpose, objectives and activities of ADEA)**

- To what extent is the Strategic Medium-Term Plan of ADEA responding to the main challenges of educational transformation in Africa?
- To what extent are the activities conducted by ADEA regarded as relevant at the country and agency levels, and what is the value addition? How are African ministries of education demonstrating ownership of ADEA activities?
- Assess the relevance and effect of technical assistance provided by ADEA to ministries and other regional and sub-regional entities (AUC, RECS, etc.)
- How relevant are the tools/instruments and inputs produced by ADEA to respond to the requests by African ministries of education and training?
- To what extent has ADEA formed strategic partnerships to carry out its mission effectively and efficiently?

### **Effectiveness and efficiency**

- How effective have ADEA WGs and ICQNs been in providing technical assistance and contributing to educational development in their respective thematic areas?
- How effective have been ADEA's programs in bringing about reforms in the key skills and competency areas identified by the 2012 Triennale (Common core skills, TVSD and STI/STEM)? Are current operational procedures effective for planning, reporting and monitoring activities at the country level?
- Given national specificities in terms of the enabling factors and hindrances, how are the WG's and ICQNs faring in attaining their objectives?
- What is the cost-efficiency of ADEA?

### **Implementation of SMTP (2013-2017)**

- To what extent has the SMTP been successfully translated into implementable operational plans and budgets?
- What changes are needed in order to better align with recent changes in the education sector – Agenda 2063 of the AU and the SDGs?
- What factors and constraints have affected SMTP implementation - technical, managerial, organizational, institutional? What resources have been provided to meet the goal and objectives of the SMTP?

## **Methodology**

The reliability and validity of the findings and recommendations of the consultants will largely depend on the quality of data collected during the review process. The review will adopt a consultative and participatory approach. Therefore, the consultants would need to obtain data from different sources which will include, among others, the following:

- Desk or document review;
- Meeting with the Executive Committee;

- Meeting with the Coordinating Task Force comprised of representatives the African Ministries of Education, Development Agencies, a strategic partner and ADEA Secretariat;
- One-on-one interviews with key stakeholders;
- Meeting with ADEA Secretariat;
- Meeting with representatives of the host institution
- Meeting with representatives of the African Union HRST Division
- Focus Group Discussions with Working Groups, ICQNs and selected network members;
- Field visits to a relevant sample of African countries and partners involved in SMTP implementation; and
- Any other ADEA constituent.

## Expected Deliverables

The MTR should lead to the improvement of the SMTP implementation and pave the way for improved delivery for the remaining plan duration. It should propose realistic actions required to improve project and program design, implementation arrangements and/or institutional linkages in order to effectively and sustainably support ADEA in its bid to contribute to the qualitative transformation of Africa's education and training systems through the introduction of critical skills and competencies. Furthermore, the outcome of ADEA evaluation should strengthen the organization for greater performance, effectiveness and financial sustainability. The consultants will be required to provide the following deliverables:

- **An inception report** within 3 days of the commencement of the assignment. It will clearly outline the tasks or activities they will undertake as well as the corresponding timelines, provided in a Gantt chart. It will provide an evaluation matrix which will provide a “road map” and guide the consultants in the design of the evaluation framework, data collection and analysis of inter-relationships among the variables. It will also include a format for the final report. The report, which will be presented by consultants at the Steering Committee meeting in December 2015 for review.
- **A draft report** of evidence-based findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. It will be submitted to the Coordinating Task Force for review and feedback to the consultants. ADEA Secretariat will also provide its comments at this stage to the Coordinating Task Force and the consultants. The Coordinating Task Force will oversee the recruitment of the consultant by the ADEA Secretariat.
- **A presentation of the revised report** focusing essentially on findings and recommendations at a session of the Executive Committee. The presentation will have taken into account the comments of the ADEA Secretariat and the Coordination Task Force.
- **Finalization and Submission of final report.** Following the feedback of the Executive Committee, the consultants will finalize and submit the final report to the Steering Committee.

## Criteria for selection of Consulting Firm

The following criteria will be used in the selection of a high-quality consulting firm for the assignment:

- **Qualifications and experience of key personnel:** The consultants for this assignment must have a minimum of a Master’s degree in education, social sciences, organizational development or related disciplines, plus at least 10 years of work experience in such fields as education development; strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation; proven competence in program design, monitoring and evaluation; and outcome/impact assessment. They must have had experience working in Africa. Proven record of having successfully handled similar assignments is essential.
- **Communication Skills:** The consultants must be bilingual in English and French. Excellent written and verbal communication skills, and strong team and interpersonal relations skills are vital for the assignment.
- **Methodology:** They must demonstrate a clear understanding of the assignment, innovativeness, team organization and research capability.

## Timeframe and Duration of Assignment

The duration of the assignment will be for almost five months. The consultants are expected to commence work on 5 December 2015 and complete the assignment by 30 April 2016. The evaluation results will be submitted to the Executive Committee and following their feedback the report would be finalized and submitted by the consultants to the Steering Committee.

### Implementation Timelines: October 2015-April 2016

No.	Activity	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April
1.	Announcement for invitation of proposals in ADEA Website	30						
2.	Submission of proposals by consulting firms		13					
3.	Selection of a consulting firm for the evaluation		20					
4.	Presentation of inception report			5				
4.	Submission of first draft report of the Coordinating Task Force and ADEA Secretariat for comments and review						21	
5.	Presentation of revised draft report to the Executive Committee							15
6.	Finalization and submission of final evaluation report to Steering Committee							29

## Submission of Proposals

Technical and financial proposals should reach [adea-applications@afdb.org](mailto:adea-applications@afdb.org) no later than **13<sup>th</sup> November 2015**.