Evaluation of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA)

Final Report –
Volume I

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Executive Summary

Universalia is pleased to present this report on the Evaluation of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) to the ADEA Secretariat.

The evaluation was conducted between mid-September and December 2010 and covered a five-year period from the 2005 evaluation to mid-2010.

The purposes of the evaluation were to: review ADEA's progress in responding to the recommendations of the 2005 evaluation; assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance of ADEA and ADEA Working Groups (WG); carry out a mid-term review of the 2008-2012 Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) and assess the coherence of ADEA activities vis-à-vis the MTSP and the Action Plan of the African Union (AU) Second Decade of Education; compare ADEA with similar organizations; and make recommendations for the future of ADEA.

Methodology

Based on an approved evaluation matrix, the evaluation methodology included document reviews, interviews and focus groups, an online survey, and cross-organizational comparisons.

Document review of ADEA documents included strategic planning documents, corporate procedures and guidelines, reports, workplans and budgets of the Secretariat and working groups, minutes of governing bodies, publications, and website content. External sources of data, consulted for validation and comparison, included strategic documents from the African Union and donor agencies, operational budgets from similar organizations, studies related to educational development in Africa, and organizational documents from similar network-like structures.

Interviews (both face-to-face and by phone) of stakeholders Interviews were guided by semi-structured protocols adapted to each stakeholder group.

Online Survey of members of the 11 WG Steering Committees to collect data on the contributions of WGs. Of the 70 respondents who received the survey, 41 completed it.

Limitations – ADEA has limited documented evidence of outcomes due to the lack of systematic data collection; to overcome this limitation the Evaluation Team consulted expert and senior level stakeholders with substantive knowledge of ADEA's overall performance. Difficulties in reaching high ranking senior officials delayed the evaluation, and interviews with five of the six ministers who are part of the Executive Committee were eventually conducted by telephone, which limited the opportunities to probe emerging issues.

Conclusions

ADEA is recognized as a pan-African organization that is relevant to African educational leaders, ministries of education, donors, and partners and seems poised to become a continental voice for educational development in Africa.

In the last five years, ADEA has evolved from a donor-led organization based in Paris to an African-led initiative based in Africa. It has relocated the Secretariat to the African Development Bank (AfDB) in Tunis, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the African Union, and created and strengthened linkages to African educational leaders and a wide range of partners at the national and regional level.

ADEA has had a challenging agenda and has made some major accomplishments since 2005. It has undergone a formal change in leadership and its governing structure has provided the guidance necessary for its development. It has implemented the key recommendations of the 2005 evaluation, and is on track to achieving the strategic objectives of the 2008-2012 Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP). ADEA's 11

working groups (WGs) are generally perceived as being effective in providing technical assistance and contributing to the educational development of Africa in their respective thematic areas. The hosting arrangement with AfDB has improved ADEA's financial and administrative management. ADEA is efficiently managed, has introduced an Executive Committee to assume fiduciary responsibility and administrative oversight, and has integrated results-based management tools to improve planning and monitoring.

The evolving context within which ADEA operates also presents some challenges. The most critical is the need to more clearly demonstrate the essential role that policy dialogue plays in achieving long term development change. For ADEA this means improving the ability of the association and its working groups to better communicate and report on outcomes and contributions to longer term results. Donor contributions to ADEA have fluctuated widely over the years and may diminish in response to the global economic context and the growing demand for more tangible results. When coupled with increasing budgetary restrictions and the rising demand for demonstrable results, ADEA's financial viability appears to be increasingly at risk. ADEA's outreach across the continent also means that its constituencies are increasingly expecting ADEA to do more, in more countries and in more languages, at a time when competition for scarce resources is increasing. While ADEA has taken steps to develop a knowledge management strategy and has strengthened its outreach by increasing dedicated resources for communication, stakeholders do not clearly understand its purpose or functions.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are provided to assist ADEA as it moves ahead with its ongoing efforts to strengthen its outreach, consolidate its achievements, and improve its performance.

Recommendation 1: **The Steering Committee should review ADEA's mandate and make changes as required to better reflect the evolving needs of key constituencies and the context within which it operates.**

ADEA's core mandate to provide a forum for policy dialogue remains relevant, and its strategy is consistent with development initiatives such as the AU's Plan of Education, the Millennium Development Goals, and the Education for All initiative (EFA). However, the needs and expectations of ADEA's constituencies are changing and there is increasing demand from donors and ministries for ADEA to support policy implementation and capacity development at the country level. These areas are outside the scope of ADEA's original mandate. If it moves into these areas informally (i.e., without a formal change in its mandate), ADEA runs the risk that stakeholders will have increasingly divergent expectations and opinions on ADEA's performance.

Recommendation 2: **The Secretariat, in collaboration with members of the Steering Committee and the Bureau of Ministers, should clarify ADEA's approach to being a pan-African organisation.**

ADEA has strengthened its presence and relevance in Africa, is committed to the continental and regional integration of the African education sector (a strategic objective of the MTSP), and is now considering how to increase its presence in Lusophone and Arabic-speaking countries by increasing the number of languages within which it operates. Yet, ADEA's strategy for increasing African ownership and leadership and the geographic scope of its commitment towards continental integration is not clear. What are the implications of Africanization in terms of ADEA membership, governance and operational structures, and costs?

Recommendation 3: **The Secretariat and Steering Committee should explore all possibilities to expand and diversify ADEA's sources of income and ensure its financial viability.**

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In its continuing efforts to expand and diversify its sources of income, ADEA should consider all avenues and possibilities. This might include, for example, exploring the potential benefits of alternative business models such as the decentralized model used by SEAMEO and the potential long-term benefits (and operational costs) of establishing a legal structure in the form of a not-for-profit organization.

ADEA's financing strategies (and business model) should be consistent with its programmatic strategy and should strengthen African ownership of the work of the Association by demonstrating the willingness of African institutions to shoulder some of the costs of ADEA's valued services. Even if the amount is only symbolic, investors are more likely to support the Association if they see that African stakeholders are convinced of the need to support ADEA.

Recommendation 4: **The Secretariat should clarify the roles and responsibilities of various functional units within ADEA to strengthen their individual added value within the scope of the Association's programme.**

ADEA delivers its programme through a broad mix of components and activities, including biennials, sub-regional ministerial meetings and conferences, Inter-Country Quality Nodes (ICQNs), and intra-Africa exchanges. While these activities increase ADEA's outreach and are generally appreciated by stakeholders, they may also inadvertently limit the relevance, coherence and contributions of ADEA's functional units.

ADEA should:

- consider the potential value of using focal points to strengthen ADEA linkages and outreach at the sub-regional level where ministries are most active

- monitor the relevance of WGs and their performance at the outcome level

- support components that have shown success, such as the Inter-Country Quality Nodes

- terminate support for components that are no longer active or used (e.g., ad hoc groups).

While the roles and responsibilities of ADEA's various bodies should be considered in light of the operational model that ADEA chooses to pursue, other models and approaches that are worth considering include:

- SEAMEO –which focuses its work on research and manages its activities through independent country-led research facilities,

- The Council of Canadian Ministers – which investigates issues of concern through ad hoc committees and a non-permanent structure supported by a relatively small secretariat.

Recommendation 5: **The Secretariat should put in place a comprehensive performance management system focused on ensuring that outcome-level data is available for both monitoring and evaluation purposes.**

Since 2005, ADEA has made tremendous progress in improving performance management. The MTSP is structured around a limited set of objectives, and the planning, monitoring and reporting of the Secretariat and WGs provide better indications of progress within any given year. However, evidence of longer-term results is inadequate due to the absence of clearly defined outcome-level results. To improve its ability to monitor and evaluate results and report to its key constituencies, ADEA should develop outcome-level results that are linked to its strategic objectives and that are specific, measurable, achievable, results-based and time-bound.

Recommendation 6: **ADEA should continue ongoing efforts to strengthen its communication potential.**

Communicating the results of complex policy deliberations across a continent, to multiple stakeholders in multiple languages and with less than perfect communication technologies, is a major challenge.

Donor and ministry respondents require more information on ADEA results and contributions to educational development in Africa, and would like more accessible WG technical briefs and/or summaries to inform policy discussions and decisions. Ministry respondents feel that ADEA is poorly known at the country level and not sufficiently known or recognized in regional and sub-regional conferences where ministers are most active. Members of WG steering committees perceive that communications from the Secretariat are inadequate both internally and externally.

ADEA does not manage its communication or knowledge contributions as well as it could. One improvement that could be undertaken without significant cost implications is ensuring that annual reports indicate how output level results contribute to longer term change. Other changes that would require some investments include: making the website easier to navigate, reviving the newsletter or upgrading bulletins to provide current information, using focal points or ICQNs to make ADEA better known at the local level, and dedicating some resources to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity to support linkages with WGs, ministries, and institutional partners (e.g., WGCOMED was often singled out as a key instrument by which ADEA could increase its outreach).

S o m m a i r e   e x é c u t i f

Universalia est heureux de présenter son rapport de l'Évaluation de l'Association pour le développement de l'éducation en Afrique (ADEA) au Secrétariat de l'ADEA.

L'évaluation a été effectuée entre la mi-septembre et le mois de décembre 2010 et portait sur une période de cinq ans, depuis l'évaluation de 2005 jusqu'au milieu de l'année 2010.

Les objectifs de l'évaluation étaient d'examiner les progrès de l'ADEA suite aux recommandations faites dans l'évaluation de 2005; d'évaluer l'efficacité, l'efficience et la pertinence de l'ADEA et de ses groupes de travail (GT); d'effectuer un examen de mi-parcours pour le Plan stratégique à moyen terme (PSMT) 2008-2012 et d'évaluer la cohérence des activités de l'ADEA avec le PSMT et le Plan d'action de la deuxième décennie de l'éducation de l'Union africaine (UA); de comparer l'ADEA avec des organisations similaires et de faire des recommandations pour l'avenir de l'ADEA.

Méthodologie

Reposant sur une grille d'évaluation préalablement approuvée, la méthodologie d'évaluation comprenait une étude des documents, des entrevues et des groupes de discussion, un sondage en ligne et des comparaisons entre organisations.

L'étude des documents de l'ADEA incluait les documents de planification stratégique, les processus et directives de l'Association, les rapports, les plans de travail et les budgets du Secrétariat et des groupes de travail, les comptes rendus des organes directeurs, les publications et le contenu du site Web. Des sources extérieures ont également été consultées, pour valider et comparer les données, dont des documents stratégiques de l'Union africaine et des organismes donateurs, les budgets de fonctionnement d'organisations similaires, des études sur le développement de l'éducation en Afrique et des documents organisationnels d'autres structures similaires apparentées à des réseaux.

Les entrevues (en personne et par téléphone) avec des personnes concernées ont été menées au moyen de protocoles semi-structurés adaptés pour chacun des groupes d'intervenants

Le sondage en ligne auprès des membres des comités directeurs des 11 GT a permis de collecter des données sur les contributions des GT. Sur les 70 personnes qui ont reçu le sondage, 41 y ont répondu.

Limites – L'ADEA n'a que peu de documents montrant ses résultats, n'ayant pas de système de collecte systématique des données sur les effets de ses interventions. Pour surmonter ce problème, l'équipe d'évaluation a consulté des spécialistes connaissant bien la performance générale de l'ADEA. L'évaluation a été retardée par les difficultés rencontrées pour joindre certains des membres du comité exécutif et on a fini par faire par téléphone cinq des six entrevues avec les ministres faisant partie du comité exécutif, ce qui a limité les possibilités de poser des questions sur les enjeux qui se dessinent actuellement.

Conclusions

L'ADEA est reconnue comme étant une organisation panafricaine pertinente du point de vue des chefs de file du secteur de l'éducation, des ministres de l'éducation et des partenaires et elle semble bien partie pour devenir une voix africaine pour le développement de l'éducation sur tout le continent.

Au cours des cinq dernières années, l'ADEA a évolué. Elle est devenue une initiative africaine basée en Afrique. Son secrétariat a déménagé pour s'installer avec la Banque africaine de développement (BAfD) à Tunis, l'ADEA a signé un protocole d'entente avec l'Union africaine et tissé ou renforcé des liens avec tout un éventail de partenaires aux niveaux national et international.

L'ADEA avait un programme difficile et a fait des choses importantes depuis 2005. Elle a entrepris un changement formel de direction et sa structure de gouvernance a fourni les orientations nécessaires à son développement. Elle a mis en œuvre les principales recommandations formulées dans le rapport d'évaluation de 2005 et est bien partie pour atteindre les objectifs stratégiques fixés dans le Plan stratégique à moyen terme (PSMT). Les 11 groupes de travail de l'ADEA sont généralement jugés efficaces pour ce qui est d'apporter une assistante technique et de contribuer au développement de l'éducation en Afrique dans leurs domaines thématiques respectifs. L'hébergement au sein de la BAfD a contribué à la meilleure gestion financière et administrative de l'Association. Cette dernière est bien gérée et a mis en place un comité exécutif qui assume la responsabilité fiduciaire et la supervision administrative et dispose d'instruments de gestion axés sur les résultats et intégrés pour améliorer la planification et le suivi.

Le contexte changeant dans lequel travaille l'ADEA présente également certains défis. Le principal est la nécessité de démontrer plus clairement le rôle essentiel du dialogue sur les politiques si l'on veut parvenir à un changement durable du développement. Pour l'ADEA, cela signifie l'amélioration de sa capacité et de celle de ses groupes de travail à mieux communiquer et à rendre compte de leurs résultats et de leurs contributions aux résultats à plus long terme. Les contributions des bailleurs de fonds à l'ADEA ont beaucoup varié au fil des ans et pourraient diminuer sous l'effet du contexte économique mondial et de la demande grandissante pour des résultats tangibles. Si l'on ajoute à cela des restrictions budgétaires croissantes, la viabilité financière de l'ADEA semble de plus en plus menacée. Du fait qu'elle étend à présent son champ d'action à l'ensemble du continent, ses membres attendent de plus en plus d'elle qu'elle fasse davantage, dans plus de pays et dans plus de langues alors même que la concurrence pour des ressources restreintes devient de plus en plus intense. Si l'ADEA a pris certaines mesures pour élaborer une stratégie de gestion des connaissances et a renforcé son influence en consacrant de plus en plus de ressources aux communications, les parties concernées ne comprennent cependant pas clairement sa raison d'être et ses fonctions.

Recommandations

Les recommandations suivantes sont formulées dans le but d'aider l'ADEA à progresser dans ses efforts pour renforcer son influence, consolider ce qu'elle a accompli et améliorer sa performance.

Recommandation 1 : **Le Comité directeur devrait revoir la mission de l'ADEA et apporter les changements nécessaires pour mieux refléter les nouveaux besoins des principaux membres et le contexte dans lequel ils travaillent.**

L'aspect central de la mission de l'ADEA, qui est de fournir une tribune où discuter des politiques, demeure pertinent, et sa stratégie est conforme aux initiatives gouvernementales comme le Plan de l'UA pour l'éducation, les objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement et l'initiative Éducation pour tous. Toutefois, les besoins et les attentes des membres de l'ADEA évoluent et, de plus en plus, les bailleurs de fonds et les ministères demandent que l'ADEA appuie la mise en œuvre des politiques et le développement des capacités au niveau des pays. Ces domaines d'intervention ne font pas partie de la mission d'origine de l'ADEA. Si l'Association intervient informellement dans ces domaines, sans que sa mission ne soit officiellement modifiée, elle court le risque d'être confrontée à des attentes et des opinions de plus en plus divergentes de la part des parties concernées quant à sa performance.

Recommandation 2 : **Le Secrétariat, en collaboration avec les membres du Comité directeur et le Bureau des ministres, devrait préciser l'approche de l'ADEA pour devenir une organisation panafricaine.**

L'ADEA a renforcé sa présence et sa pertinence en Afrique, l'intégration continentale et régionale du secteur africain de l'éducation lui tient à cœur (l'un des objectifs stratégiques du PSMT) et elle réfléchit à présent aux moyens de renforcer sa présence dans les pays où l'on parle portugais ou arabe en augmentant le nombre des langues dans lesquelles elle travaille. Pourtant, la stratégie de l'ADEA pour accroître l'appropriation et le leadership africains ainsi que son champ géographique d'action pour l'intégration continentale n'est pas claire. Quelles sont les implications de l'africanisation en termes des membres, de la gouvernance et des structures opérationnelles de l'ADEA?

Recommandation 3 : **Le Secrétariat et le Comité directeur devraient étudier les possibilités d'élargir et de diversifier les sources de revenus de l'ADEA et assurer sa viabilité financière.**

Dans ses efforts continus pour élargir et diversifier ses sources de revenus, l'ADEA ne devrait négliger aucune piste et aucune possibilité. Elle devrait par exemple envisager les avantages potentiels de modèles de gestion alternatifs comme le modèle décentralisé qu'utilise l'OMEASE et les avantages que pourrait avoir à long terme la création d'une structure légale de type organisation sans but lucratif.

Les stratégies de financement de l'ADEA (et son modèle de gestion) devraient être compatibles avec sa stratégie de programmation et renforcer l'appropriation africaine du travail de l'Association en montrant que les institutions africaines sont d'accord pour assumer certains des coûts des services précieux fournis par l'ADEA. Même s'il s'agit de sommes symboliques, il est plus probable que les investisseurs appuient l'Association s'ils voient que les intervenants africains sont convaincus de la nécessité d'appuyer l'ADEA.

Recommandation 4 : **Le Secrétariat devrait préciser les rôles et les responsabilités des différentes unités fonctionnelles au sein de l'ADEA afin d'accroître la valeur ajoutée de chacune d'entre elles au sein du programme de l'Association.**

L'ADEA offre ses programmes par le biais de toutes sortes de volets et d'activités, y compris des biennales, des réunions et des conférences des ministres au niveau infrarégional, de pôles de qualité inter-pays (PQIP) et d'échanges en Afrique. Si ces activités contribuent à accroître l'influence de l'ADEA et sont généralement appréciées par les parties concernées, elles pourraient aussi, par inadvertance, limiter la pertinence, la cohérence et les contributions des unités fonctionnelles de l'Association.

L'ADEA devrait :

- considérer les avantages potentiels du recours à des grands axes pour renforcer les liens de l'Association et son influence au niveau infrarégional, là où les ministres sont les plus actifs

- faire un suivi sur la pertinence des GT et leur performance en termes de résultats

- soutenir les composantes qui obtiennent de bons résultats, comme les pôles de qualité inter-pays

- cesser d'apporter son soutien à des composantes qui ne sont plus actives ou utilisées (les groupes ad-hoc, par exemple)

Si les rôles et les responsabilités des différents organismes de l'ADEA devraient être étudiés à la lumière du modèle opérationnel qu'elle choisira, d'autres modèles et approches valent la peine d'être envisagés, comme :

- l'OMEASE – qui met l'accent sur la recherche et dont les activités sont gérées par des établissements de recherche indépendants au niveau des pays

- le Conseil des ministres du Canada – qui étudie des questions d'intérêt par l'intermédiaire de comités ad hoc et d'une structure non permanente appuyée par un secrétariat relativement restreint.

Recommandation 5 : **Le Secrétariat devrait mettre en place un système complet de gestion du rendement qui s'occuperait principalement de veiller à ce que des données sur les résultats soient disponibles pour permettre le suivi et l'évaluation.**

Depuis 2005, l'ADEA a fait des progrès considérables pour ce qui est d'améliorer la gestion du rendement. Le PSMT est organisé autour d'une série restreinte d'objectifs et la planification, le suivi et la préparation de rapports par le Secrétariat et les GT donnent de meilleures indications sur les progrès pendant une année précise. Cependant, les preuves de résultats à long terme ne sont pas satisfaisantes du fait du manque de définition claire des résultats en termes d'effet. Pour qu'il soit davantage possible de faire un suivi et une évaluation de ces résultats et d'en rendre compte aux principaux membres, l'ADEA devrait définir des résultats en termes d'effet qui soient liés à ses objectifs stratégiques en plus d'être spécifiques, mesurables, axés sur les résultats et assortis d'un calendrier.

Recommandation 6 : **L'ADEA devrait poursuivre ses efforts continus pour renforcer son potentiel en matière de communications.**

Communiquer les résultats de délibérations complexes sur les politiques à de multiples parties concernées à l'échelle d'un continent, dans plusieurs langues et avec des technologies de communication laissant parfois à désirer n'est pas chose facile.

Les bailleurs de fonds et les interlocuteurs ministériels ont besoin de plus d'information sur les résultats de l'ADEA et sur ses contributions au développement de l'éducation en Afrique et ils aimeraient que les mémoires techniques et les résumés des GT soient plus aisément accessibles pour que l'on puisse en tenir compte dans les discussions et les décisions en ce qui concerne les politiques. Les interlocuteurs ministériels ont le sentiment que l'ADEA est mal connue au niveau des pays et insuffisamment connue ou reconnue dans les conférences régionales ou infrarégionales où interviennent principalement les ministres. Selon les membres des comités directeurs des GT, les communications du Secrétariat, tant internes qu'externes, laissent à désirer.

L'ADEA pourrait mieux gérer ses communications et le partage de ses connaissances. Une amélioration qui ne nécessiterait pas de grosses dépenses consisterait à faire en sorte que soient décrits dans les rapports annuels la façon dont les résultats en termes d'effet contribuent au changement à long terme. D'autres changements nécessiteraient des investissements, comme par exemple l'amélioration de la navigabilité du site Web, la reprise de la publication du bulletin d'information qui a été abandonné ou la préparation de bulletins plus complets pour fournir de l'information d'actualité en se servant des grands axes des PQIP pour mieux faire connaître l'ADEA au niveau local ou encore consacrer des ressources au renforcement de la capacité du Secrétariat à soutenir les liens avec les GT, les ministères et les partenaires institutionnels (comme GT-COMED qui a souvent été cité comme un instrument important pour accroître l'influence de l'ADEA).

Acronyms

ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AfDB	African Development Bank
AU	African Union
BREDA	Bureau régional pour l'Éducation en Afrique
COMEDAF	Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union
CONFEMEN	Conférence des ministres de l'éducation ayant le français en partage
CONFINTEA	International Conference on Adult Education
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development, UK
EC	European Community
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
EPDF	Education Program Development Fund
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HR	Human Resources
ICQN	Inter-Country Quality Nodes
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTSP	Medium-Term Strategic Plan
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OSISA	Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa
OSSREA	Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa
RBM	Results Based Management
REC	Regional Economic Communities
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community

Acronyms

SEAMEO	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVSD	Technical and Vocational Skills Development
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
WG	Working Group
WGCOMED	Working Group on Communication for Education and Development

C o n t e n t s

Exhibits

Appendices

1. Introduction

Universalia is pleased to present this Draft report of the Evaluation of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) to the ADEA Secretariat.

This evaluation had the following objectives:

- To review ADEA's progress in responding to the recommendations of the 2005 evaluation;

- To assess ADEA's effectiveness ,efficiency, and relevance – which includes how ADEA has adapted to the context of educational development in Africa (the African Union's political role, the roles of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and international development partners, and individual country policies) and the ownership of ADEA by African ministries of education;

- To assess the relevance and effectiveness of ADEA Working Groups (WG) as the professional arms of ADEA;

- To carry out a mid-term review of the 2008-2012 Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP);

- To assess the coherence of ADEA activities vis-à-vis the 2008-2012 MTSP and the Action Plan of the AU Second Decade of Education;

- To compare ADEA with similar organizations in terms of structure, effectiveness, and financing; and

- To make recommendations for the future of ADEA.

The evaluation was conducted between mid-September and early December 2010 and covers a five-year period from the 2005 Evaluation to the end of ADEA's second quarter in 2010.

The evaluation consists of two distinct Volumes. The present document, Volume I, is the main synthesis report and is organized as follows:

- After this introduction, chapter 2 presents the methodology for the evaluation

- Chapter 3 presents the context within which ADEA operates

- Chapter 4 highlights the key performance issues identified as part of the evaluation

- Chapter 5 discusses the factors affecting the performance

- Chapter 6 presents the Conclusion and the Recommendations

Volume II includes all the Appendices relevant to this evaluation. The Terms of Reference (ToRs) for this evaluation are presented in Volume II, Appendix I.

2. Methodology

The Challenge of Evaluating Networks

The growing realization that no single actor, no matter how effective, is capable of tackling today's social problems has spurred international interest and investment in networking and networks as organizing strategies and structures for creating social change. African governments, donors, and development practitioners are all interested in finding ways to more rapidly improve the quantity and quality of education in Africa. While pooling knowledge, resources and expertise within a network such as ADEA can provide valued benefits that are not achievable by individual member organizations alone, there is the need to demonstrate and report on the results of such work – and thus a growing appetite for monitoring and evaluation of networks. Networks are complex organizations and measuring their performance is more complicated than evaluating single organizations. While a number of methods, tools and metrics have been proposed, developed, and piloted in response to this demand, the field is still young in theory and even more so in practice. The methodology for this review drew from lessons from monitoring and evaluation work that have proven fruitful and that have been shared across the field.

Overall Approach

The methodology for evaluating ADEA was based on the evaluation matrix and key questions presented in the Evaluation Workplan approved by the ADEA Secretariat in October 2010 (see Volume II, Appendix II). Four inter-related methodologies were used to capture data for the evaluation: (i) document reviews; (ii) interviews and focus groups; (iii) an online survey; and (iv) cross-organizational comparisons.

The reliability of the study design was ensured through the use of standardized instruments, compliance with standard practices in evaluation, and data triangulation. Collected data was organized thematically and compared to alternative sources (e.g., interviews, online survey and document analysis) to assess the consistency of emerging findings and issues. The convergence of multiple sources of information (documents, interviews, and online survey), the use of qualitative and quantitative data analysis, and congruence in the responses received from both internal and external stakeholders gives us confidence in the validity of the findings presented.

The instruments developed for data collection (i.e., interview protocols and survey instruments) are presented in Volume II, Appendix III.

Data Collection

Data collection methods used in this study included document review, interviews, and a survey.

Document Review

This evaluation was informed by an extensive review of documented evidence from both ADEA and external sources.

1) The Evaluation Team reviewed numerous ADEA documents, including strategic planning documents, corporate procedures and guidelines, reports on activities, workplans and budgets of the Secretariat and WGs, minutes of meetings of ADEA's governing bodies, official publications, communication tools, and website contents of ADEA and WGs where applicable.

2) External sources of data were used by the Evaluation Team to validate emerging trends and issues affecting the work of ADEA and to provide an objective means of comparison where applicable. These included strategic documents from partnering organizations (e.g., the African Union (AU)) and donor agencies, operational budgets from similar organizations, studies and press releases related to educational development in Africa, and organizational documents from similar network-like structures.

Footnotes are used throughout the report to identify the sources of documented evidence referenced in the findings of this study. Appendix IV of Volume II provides the bibliography reviewed for this consultancy.

Interviews

This evaluation relied heavily on interviews (both face-to-face and by phone) to obtain qualitative information on the questions outlined in the evaluation matrix. Interviews were guided by semi-structured protocols adapted to each audience (stakeholder group). A complete list of stakeholders consulted in the course of this assessment is provided in Volume II, Appendix V.

Online Survey

The Evaluation Team developed an online survey to solicit information from members of the eleven WG Steering Committees. The questionnaire was made available in both French and English and was designed to collect specific information on the contributions of WGs towards the relevance and effectiveness of ADEA as a whole. Of the 70 respondents who received the survey (not including failed deliveries due to faulty or changed email addresses), 41 completed surveys were received. Full survey results are listed in Volume II, Appendix VI.

Data Analysis

The Evaluation Team used three methods of analysis to inform the results of this evaluation:

- Descriptive analysis was used to assess the context within which ADEA operates and how this changed in recent years. Descriptive analysis was also used to characterize the objectives and expected results of the MTSP, as well as the management and governance structures of the Association.

- Content analysis was used to classify collected data and to identify and validate emerging issues and trends via further analysis of relevant documents or for use as probing issues in the course of interview sessions.

- Quantitative analysis was applied to financial data and aggregated survey responses. Quantitative data are presented in charts and tables that illustrate trends, such as ADEA's major cost-breakdowns, donor contributions, etc. Document and interview data were used to explain quantitative data where possible.

Limitations

The Evaluation Team faced a number of challenges. First, it is difficult to evaluate the impact of any network, and in the case of ADEA there was limited documented evidence of outcome achievement.

The second limitation is the lack of systematic data available from the various working groups and from the Secretariat. ADEA has done good work in putting together a strategy and workplan that include specific outputs and outcomes. Workplan reports are also an important improvement. However, there remains a limitation in systematic data collection particularly at the outcome level. To address this issue, the Evaluation Team took a targeted approach to data collection and consulted a purposeful sample of expert and senior level stakeholders who would be most likely to have substantive knowledge of ADEA's overall performance. Likewise, contributions from WGs were assessed in terms of their aggregated effects on ADEA rather than their individual contribution to results.

Third, obtaining key stakeholder input took more time and effort than anticipated, primarily due to difficulties in reaching high ranking senior officials and stakeholders. Interviews with five of the six Ministers who are part of the Executive Committee were conducted only in early December. Phone interviews are inherently less dynamic than in-person interviews and offer fewer opportunities (especially when connections are less than clear) for productive exchange of ideas or to further probe emerging issues.

And finally fourth, because of the history of ADEA (which evolved from DAE - a donor-driven forum – to ADEA – an association recognized by the African Union and Ministers of Education as being the prime organization addressing the development of education and training at the policy level) and the nature (network-like organization) of ADEA, the evaluation team found that expectations regarding the nature and purpose of ADEA and of this evaluation in particular, tended to vary between the various groups consulted. The team found that regardless of the objectives ADEA set for itself, views of what counts as evidence of effectiveness, efficiency and relevance tended to vary across stakeholder groups.

3. The Context within which ADEA Operates

The performance of ADEA is closely tied to the environment within which it operates. This chapter provides a review of the external context for education, the internal context and changes in ADEA, and the implications of these contexts for ADEA.

External Context

Global Context for Education

Tremendous strides have been made in focusing attention on the importance of education for all, which recognizes a direct link between improving human capital and development in all areas of society, and in the growing recognition of the need for strong and supportive educational frameworks that address the needs of developing countries in particular.

The Education for All (EFA) 2000 Assessment produced a detailed analysis of the state of basic education around the world. The 'World Education Forum (26-28 April 2000, Dakar, Senegal) adopted the 'Dakar Framework for Action Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments' to facilitate the achievement of quality education for all by 2015 and included a pledge from donor countries and institutions that "no country seriously committed to basic education will be thwarted in the achievement of this goal by lack of resources".

Africa continues to struggle to achieve the six EFA goals set out in Dakar (see sidebar) due to natural and human-made disasters, increased debt burden, poor governance, the impact of HIV/AIDS, and armed conflict. Beyond these impeding factors is the fundamental task of convincing African ministers, governments and citizens that investing in education is important for almost all major issues facing the economy (such as healthcare, agriculture, and the environment). Despite such challenges, there remains a strong political commitment to education in Africa.

> **EFA Goals**
>
> Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children
>
> Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality
>
> Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs
>
> Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults
>
> Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality
>
> Improving every aspect of the quality of education, and ensuring their excellence so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills

Educational Development in Africa

In Africa today, challenges remain in terms of the quality of education, shortage of teachers (numbers and quality), access to education in fragile states, traditional challenges related to girl education, and ongoing issues with poor infrastructure. However, by channelling aid towards the most pressing education problems – as per the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) and the priorities of the international development community – tremendous improvements have been made in providing access to early education in Africa. Now many countries are faced with problems of access to and quality of education at both the secondary and tertiary levels.

In its Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa, the AU identified quality assurance as a key focus area, and with support of the World Bank, is developing an African Higher Education Quality Rating System. An African system to measure and compare performance of higher education institutions is regarded as important in facilitating professional mobility in Africa for employment.

> *"Il y a présentement en Afrique une forte demande pour la scolarisation qui découle directement du fait qu'il y a de plus en plus d'enfants dans nos écoles. Notre problème est que l'efficacité et la pertinence de l'éducation reçue demeurent inadéquates. Nous n'avons pas su développer une approche globale, une réflexion qui permettrait de considérer le système éducatif dans son ensemble. Nous devons aujourd'hui faire face à des problèmes criants en matière de formation des enseignants, l'amélioration de la qualité de l'enseignement, et la pertinence de celle-ci vis-à-vis de nos besoins en main d'œuvre. On doit impérativement réfléchir au global"* – African Minister of Education

> *"We are still far from meeting our 2015 targets, quality remains an ongoing challenge, along with teacher training, and functioning of our overall educational system (Minister)*

Given the tremendous differences in cultural, social, political and economic realities of the various African States, one-third of which are considered fragile, each country or region needs an educational system and approach that is congruent with the contextual realities it faces. This requires ongoing support of pan-African institutions such as the AU and the African Development Bank (AfDB) and leadership and commitment from African Ministries of Education. High turnover of senior leadership in education ministries presents both challenges and opportunities.

Africa has not yet appropriated its own educational development. As it is now, there is no African education, but only what has been left by the Portuguese, the French, and the British. The *Global Monitoring Report on Education for All* (UNESCO, 2004) underlined the fact that worldwide the choice of the language of instruction and language policy in schools is critical for effective learning. There is an increasing desire to develop African education in African languages, and ADEA has promoted the use of mother-tongue instruction and bilingual education in schools and the use ofAfrican languages as at school and at work.

Donor Context

Emerging global priorities, such as climate change and peace and security, are becoming dominant on donor agendas; as donor resources are being diverted to other areas, education is competing with an increasing number of other sectors. At the same time, donor governments are under increasing pressure to justify the funding they provide to development initiatives. They are less able to do this with initiatives that have limited demonstrable results, particularly at the country level. ADEA's work focuses primarily on policy dialogue and, although donors understand the importance of such dialogue, they are pressed to fund more concrete activities.

Various international conventions and agreements about aid effectiveness (such as the Paris Declaration, MDGs, and EFA) have encouraged national governments and donor agencies to coordinate their efforts towards specific goals and ensure that basic education in Africa is a coordinated priority. While this is positive and is seen to be generating results, it also means that it is more difficult to obtain funding for initiatives such as policy dialogue, which are seen as less direct.

Finally, there is the growing potential for donor fatigue. After funding ADEA for more than two decades, some donors believe that it is time for African countries to fund initiatives like ADEA, if they consider the initiative important.

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Internal Context

Over the past five years, ADEA has gone through a number of important changes that had a direct bearing on its performance. Within a relatively short time span, ADEA went from a donor-led organization to one owned by Africa for Africans. The Secretariat was relocated from the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) in Paris to the AfDB in Tunis, a move that resulted in changes in both professional and support staff. To better guide its work and increase its overall effectiveness, relevance and efficiency, ADEA adopted the MTSP that brought greater clarity of purpose but also increased result expectations (in some cases differing).

Along with the adoption of the MTSP, ADEA made efforts to harmonize the activities of WGs with the objectives of ADEA's Secretariat in the form of dedicated workplans, which should enhance ADEA's ability to report on results achieved. While the legal status of the Association has not changed (ADEA is administered as an AfDB Project), the scope of its endeavours has grown. From a pre-2008 focus on Sub-Saharan Africa to a more continental vision (with concomitant implications for operational languages and differing educational concerns), ADEA now seems poised to become a continental voice for educational development. Exhibit 3.1 presents milestones in ADEA's evolution since 2005.

Exhibit 3.1   ADEA's Evolution in Relation to Global and African Trends in Education

Trends in international development	African Educational Context	ADEA Milestones
2005 Paris Declaration	Ghana Accra Action Plan AU drafts a Plan of Action on education for the second decade (2006-2015). It includes eight areas of focus (including ECD, which was added as the 8th priority area of focus in 2010) and a matrix of activities for implementing the plan.	**Between 2005 and 2010** • Quality in education continues to be a primary thematic focus (the 2003 and 2006 Biennales focused on improving quality). Implementing a culture of quality within educational systems in Africa is seen as a key goal. • The ADEA Secretariat moves to Africa; it is now based in Tunis within the AfDB • Memorandum of Understanding is signed with the African Union • The ADEA and Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF) bureaus of Ministers are merged • 7th Biennale 'More and Better Education. What Makes Effective Learning in Schools and in Literacy and Early Childhood Development Programs? (2006, Libreville, Gabon) • 8th Biennale 'Beyond Primary Education: Challenges and Approaches to Expanding Learning Opportunities (2008, Maputo, Mozambique) • ADEA launches its first Medium-Term Strategic Plan (2008-2012)

Implications for ADEA

The evolving context for education has some positive implications for ADEA and also presents some challenges. On the positive side, ADEA is increasingly being recognized as a pan-African organization that is able to bring together all the major players of the continent on the theme of education, such as AfDB and the AU. This provides opportunities for ADEA to become more coherent in its actions.

The more critical challenges posed by the evolving context within which ADEA operates revolve around the need to more clearly demonstrate the essential role that policy dialogue plays in achieving long term change. However, in addition to the importance of articulate its work in terms of measurable results, the consequent effects of ADEA's outreach means that it will likewise have to do more, in more countries and in more languages, at a time when competition for scarce resources is increasingly pitching education against other agendas and development priorities.

4. Performance Issues

4.1 Relevance

This chapter examines ADEA's relevance to its changing internal and external environments. We use concepts such as alignment, stakeholder satisfaction, adaptability and so forth as proxies for assessing the relevance of ADEA. The specific issues considered in this section are as follows:

1) The extent to which ADEA is relevant to its key stakeholders;

2) The extent to which ADEA is able to maintain its relevance over time;

3) The extent to which ADEA's mission and vision adequately capture the key educational and developmental challenges of Africa; and

4) The extent to which ADEA has been successful in maintaining its comparative advantage.

Finding 1: **ADEA is regarded by all stakeholders consulted as relevant to the needs of educational policy dialogue in Africa. Consultations suggest that its ability to convene senior educational stakeholders around policy issues is its most relevant and important service.**

ADEA's mandate (see sidebar) remains relevant. In all categories of stakeholders interviewed, ADEA is seen as the premier forum for innovative policy dialogue and senior-level knowledge sharing in educational development in Africa. It is seen as having a demonstrated capacity in bringing together representatives from a range of stakeholders (ministries of education, donors, technical experts) to discuss emerging issues, challenges and opportunities and share lessons learned on issues that affect the development of education in Africa.

> **ADEA's Mandate**
>
> ADEA is first and foremost a forum for policy dialogue on education policies. It acts as a catalyst for promising policies and practices through the pooling of ideas, experience, lessons learned and knowledge. One of its major objectives is to encourage exchanges and reinforce links between ministries of education and development agencies.

Stakeholders associate the value of ADEA with its open format design and the support its technical WGs provide to help address specific problems and issues in a wide range of thematic areas. It is most often described as a "convenor" that offers a "flexible and informal platform for innovative policy dialogue."

> **Stakeholder perception of ADEA's niche**
>
> ADEA's ability to convene leaders from Africa and the broader international community to discuss policy issues relevant to the development of African education.

The Evaluation Team's interviews with Senior Educational Ministry Officials and donors suggest an ongoing need for a forum for ministers to discuss policy issues, share experiences, and strengthen their capacities. Some ministers cited ADEA as a critical partner in the development of their respective ministries and educational policies. As such, the rationale for ADEA remains strong.

ADEA's work is regarded as relevant to a broad network of actors and wide range of issues.

- Both donors and education ministers credit ADEA (particularly its working groups) for being proactive, timely, and ahead of the curve in addressing emerging issues (e.g., donors cited ADEA efforts linked to peace education, HIV/AIDS, girl education, and non-formal education).

- Some donors, such as the European Community (EC), view ADEA as a strategic partner with strong roots in the African context to help them leverage influence at the country, regional and institutional level (e.g., such as helping to strengthen AU's capacity)

- The AU sees ADEA as a credible body that serves a key leadership function within the broader African educational development context. Its privileged access to the donor community is likewise considered to be an asset.

- Results of the WG survey are congruent with this overall appreciation – nearly 87 percent agreed or strongly agreed that their WG priorities were aligned to the needs of African stakeholders.

> **Stakeholder perceptions of ADEA's Relevance**
>
> ADEA is seen as:
>
> - A Pan African network able to convene/mobilize power at the most senior levels to deal with key educational development issues
>
> - Providing a trust-building environment where senior policy makers are able to share knowledge and experiences, discuss educational concerns, obtain support, and strengthen individual and collective social capital
>
> - An arena for professional researchers, practitioners, and senior policy makers to discuss ideas, generate knowledge and provide "best evidence to senior officials in education"
>
> - An organization that is passionately committed to making purposeful contributions to education for all (built on distinct needs and interest), as well as partnering with organizations such as the AU and UNESCO[1]
>
> - A credible lever for policy dialogue
>
> - A voice to the donor community contributing to the development of an African educational system

Finding 2: **Although ADEA's work responds to the needs and interests of its constituencies, many stakeholders consulted would like ADEA to go further in follow-up and implementation of the policy outputs and technical advice it provides.**

While recognizing that ADEA's work is primarily upstream (i.e., policy), donors and ministers alike would like ADEA to be more proactive in following through on the processes it supports (e.g., policy change and capacity development). Despite giving ADEA high marks for relevance, most stakeholders interviewed were quick to add a few caveats to their overall assessments.

- Ministries of Education – Many ministry respondents noted that their needs extend well beyond the confines of ADEA Biennales and ministerial meetings. Ministers would consider ADEA even more relevant if it provided some support for implementation.

- Some Ministers noted the lack of clarity regarding the difference between ADEA and the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF) – including some respondents who are members of the COMEDAF Bureau of Ministers

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[1] The basic education program in Africa is a UNESCO Breda initiative that would not have been possible without the Maputo Biennale organized by ADEA, which helped establish ECCE.

- Donors considered ADEA's lack of tangible results in policy change to be problematic in terms of their assessment of ADEA's relevance and their financial commitments. Some donors who withdrew their funding from ADEA felt that the link between ADEA's contributions to policy dialogue and subsequent policy change needed to be stronger, more specific, and more accessible. Showing how technical input (publications, articles, toolkits) and forums (e.g., Biennials and regional conferences) affect policy change remains a challenge.

In our view, it seems that some stakeholders forget that ADEA was created as policy forum, not a policy implementation organization. Nevertheless, unless ADEA is able to demonstrate its value in addressing the needs of its key stakeholders, the competition for scarce resources and the strengthening of other potential players[2] could prove detrimental to the Association's medium to long term future.

Finding 3: **ADEA's mission, MTSP are aligned with the major educational development challenges in Africa and the objectives of the AU and international development initiatives such as the MDGs and EFA. However, stakeholders raised concerns that ADEA's broad objectives make it difficult to establish causal links and measure outcomes.**

According to Strategic Objective 1 in the MTSP, ADEA is devoted to developing "a shared understanding of coordinated and effective action on the part of the stakeholders mainly responsible for tackling the major challenges facing educational development in Africa."[3]

The 2008 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between ADEA and the AU represents a concerted attempt to coordinate efforts between pan-African institutions devoted to educational development.[4] An assessment of the MoU suggests that it recognizes and legitimates ADEA's unique ability to create and foster dialogue between a host of partners at both the regional and sub-regional level. A primary mutual goal highlighted in the MoU is to develop programs aimed at attaining the EFA[5] goals as well as the MDGs,[6] which ADEA pursues through the research conducted by its Working Groups and through the exchange of ideas between educational ministers, researchers, and practitioners in its Bi/Triennial meetings and regional conferences and workshops.

ADEA's mission and objectives are also aligned with the MDGs and EFA. Notably, ADEA established an ad hoc Working Group on Quality of Education in 2002 to support the efforts of African countries striving to meet the EFA goal of basic education for all,[7] and the Working Group on Communication for Education and Development (WGCOMED) developed an strategy that included developing curriculum training modules and national workshops in several countries to assist journalists reporting on education.[8]

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[2] The 2008 Strategic Framework lists over 95 different African-based bodies involved in the development of education in Africa at the regional and sub-regional levels.

[3] ADEA Strategic Framework, p. 33, 2008

[4] Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission of the African Union (AUC) and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), 2008

[5] http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all/background/jomtien_declaration.shtml

[6] http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/

[7] http://www.adeanet.org/adeaPortal/action/presentationGroupe?method=getPresentationGroupe&id=16

[8] http://www.adea-comed.org/etude/COMED_EFA_strategy.pdf

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ADEA and the AU recognize eight priority areas of cooperation drawn from the Second Decade of Education for Africa. These are gender and culture, the observatory of education policies and education management information systems (EMIS), teacher's professional development, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, curriculum and teaching/learning materials, quality management and early childhood development, which was added as the eight priority area at the Mombasa COMEDAF meeting.[9] ADEA's WGs have provided numerous outputs that respond to these priority areas as they relate to African education.

ADEA's coordinated focus underlines its desire and ability to align its goals with those of other influential international and pan-African agencies devoted to educational development and change. However, stakeholders question the broad scope of ADEA's goals. Both education ministries and donor representatives acknowledged that the MTSP captured Africa's key challenges but they were not convinced that it was sufficiently focused to direct the Association's work towards productive ends. They applauded ADEA's comprehensive strategic objectives, but also highlighted their concerns regarding the measurability of such objectives and the Association's subsequent ability to infer causation of results achieved. Establishing clearer causal linkages between its key strengths or assets and result expectations would, in their view, enhance ADEA's relevance.

Finding 4: ADEA's relocation to Africa has strengthened the perceived relevance of the Association in Africa and has increased opportunities for pan-African linkages.

Stakeholder perceptions on the impact of ADEA's relocation to Tunis from Paris were generally positive. While some regarded the change to be an important step – both symbolically and practically – towards the realignment of ADEA as an Afrocentric institution, others thought that it is still too early to draw any useful conclusions regarding the move and some even suggested ADEA's location was relatively unimportant.

However, according to ADEA staff and Ministers interviewed, the move to Tunis has enhanced ADEA's sense of self-identity and connection with the issues it hopes to affect. Senior Secretariat staff observed that there are now more opportunities to meet and connect with people across the continent and increased opportunities for dialogue with Arab states, which has generated hope for the establishment of a truly continental vision of African education. Exchanges with the AfDB appear to be leading to a more fruitful relationship than was possible under the previous hosting arrangement, especially in creating mutually beneficial linkages such as the relationship that is developing between ADEA and AfDB's Communication Team. At the same time, ADEA staff commented that the move to Tunis has also lessened ADEA's ability to maintain as strong a relationship with long time partners such as UNESCO and collaboration with esteemed suppliers such as its publisher L'Harmattan in Paris who had a very good network of universities in Africa for their publications.

Finding 5: While African ownership of ADEA is increasing and is manifested through the involvement of key ministers in ADEA initiatives, the Africanization of ADEA is a long-term process that has yet to be achieved.

In the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, country ownership is central to the effectiveness of all development initiatives. Country ownership of responsibility for education is one of the key principles underlying ADEA's philosophy.

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[9] MoU, page 2

The role of African Ministers of Education in ADEA initiatives is increasing and is evidence of their pivotal role in the leadership of the Association. Ministerial cooperation and collaboration is most evident in ministerial meetings and conferences and the recent inter-country quality nodes (ICQN).

Ministerial meetings, which address issues flagged by the Bureau of Ministers for follow-up, are credited with providing a non-formal setting for ministers to discuss high-level concerns that affect the work of their ministries. The ADEA conference for African Ministers of Finance and Education, held in Tunis in 2009, was hailed by respondents as a major success and milestone in affirming the role African countries play in strengthening national support for education and promoting the notion of seeing education as an investment rather than an expense.

Similarly, inter-country quality nodes bring together representatives of education ministries from different countries to address common national priorities that are part of their respective programming efforts. The Peace Education Node is a particularly revealing case in point of the success that can be achieved via collaborative efforts.

Nevertheless, the Africanization of ADEA is a long-term process. First, ADEA is still quite dependent on the financial support of donors and continues to be seen by some constituents as a donor-driven organization. Several respondents questioned whether African countries truly own ADEA and see it as relevant to their needs. They noted for example that if countries truly considered ADEA as useful, they would pay their annual dues and would also be willing to make more substantial contributions in addition to their annual dues.

Second, members of the Bureau of Ministers and donor representatives expressed concern about how ministries can be encouraged to assume greater ownership and control over the Association than at present. While these respondents recognize that this is a longer term process, punctuated by significant steps such as ADEA's move to Tunis, there are no explicit references, activities, or efforts in the 2008 MTSP that support this important process, nor is there any indication that such efforts are being considered by ADEA's governing bodies or as major issue to be addressed at the upcoming Triennial or in other local or regional forums. As one member of the Bureau of Ministers pointed out, the Bureau has a key role to play in strengthening ownership of ADEA, but the Bureau's agenda is very full and they lack the time to follow through on previous commitments. Some respondents also reported that the high turnover of ministers adds to the complexity of coordinating joint efforts of this nature.

Concluding Observations

The need for policy forums in which senior African educational leaders and donors can freely discuss emerging issues and ongoing challenges relevant to educational development in Africa remains high. ADEA has been and continues to be the "the forum of choice", when African Educational Leaders want to engage in significant policy discussions about education in Africa.

ADEA is generally considered unique in its capacity to bring together African educational leaders, donor representatives, and technical experts to discuss the issues that most affect Africa's educational development. Interviews with all stakeholder groups suggest that the need for a policy network of senior educational leaders continues to be relevant to African Ministries of Education and partnering organizations. In general, interviewees suggest that ADEA serves a key role in providing a mechanism for high level policy dialogue in Africa. Furthermore, our analysis of data suggests that the objectives of ADEA's 2008-2012 MTSP are relevant to the needs of Africa and consistent with the Association's institutional commitments to the AU, the MDGs, and the objectives of the EFA initiative.

Donors consider the work of the Association relevant to the needs of African stakeholders and indeed to their own underlying interests. They generally recognize that policy dialogue is crucial to policy change, but the long-term nature of such change is becoming increasingly difficult to fund in the face of growing economic austerity and the desire for attributed outcome-level results. A growing segment of ADEA's donors are reassessing their commitments with a more restricted set of criteria.

4.2 Effectiveness

Effectiveness relates to the extent to which stated objectives are being met. Typically, organizations develop various sets of objectives that alternatively reflect the mandate, mission, strategy or plan that is used to organize action, thus coinciding with different levels of commitment (organizational versus operational), change (e.g., long versus short term results) and budgetary constraints.

Our assessment of ADEA's effectiveness was guided by the following considerations. As emphasized in its mandate and mission statement, we understand that the primary function of ADEA is to serve as a forum for policy dialogue. Its fundamental asset is that of providing leverage to its constituencies in an informal setting that allows stakeholders to engage one another, share best practices, access knowledge resources and develop the trust and commitment needed for political action. By operating at the apex of change, ADEA contributes to Africa's educational development by strengthening leadership capacity and by creating the conditions that support collective action on the issues that confront African states. Its interventions are at the system-level and its contributions are fundamentally process-oriented. As such, our assessment of ADEA's effectiveness is based on the extent to which it successfully supports the achievement of long-term results, such as those articulated in the objectives of its 2008-2012 MSTP. And because such results are inherently complex and often unfold over long time periods, causal inferences suggesting the attribution of results to ADEA only are carefully avoided.

In analyzing the extent to which ADEA's work contributes to the achievement of its mission ("to act as a catalyst of innovative policies and practices for change in education in Africa"), this section focuses on the following issues:

1) The extent to which the objectives of the 2008-2012 MTSP are being reached;

2) The extent to which ADEA is contributing to the priorities of the AU 2nd Decade of Education, and other global priorities such as Education for All and the MDGs;

3) The degree to which core activities, such as the Biennial Meetings, are contributing to the achievement of ADEA´s goals, especially in terms of policy dialogue and knowledge dissemination; and

4) Whether WGs are effective at providing technical assistance and contributing to educational development in their respective thematic areas.

Finding 6: Despite some data limitations, our analysis suggests that ADEA is mostly successful in achieving the Strategic Objectives of the 2008-2012 MTSP, with notable contributions at both the output and outcome levels.

Evidence drawn from documented sources and stakeholder input suggests that ADEA is mostly successful in achieving the Strategic Objectives of the 2008-2012 MTSP, or is on track to doing so. As detailed in the tables of collated results below (see Exhibits 4.1 to 4.5 below), ADEA (including its Working Groups) has made substantive contributions at both the output and outcome levels. Results of our investigation confirm the widely shared but mostly intuitive sense that ADEA is generally effective in producing results with relatively limited means. And because ADEA's achievements have historically been poorly tracked and communicated, our review likewise helps to dispel some of the apprehension expressed by many of the Association's financial partners regarding its ability to affect longer-term change.

Analysis of ADEA's work and its subsequent ability to achieve stated objectives was conducted using the revised Results Framework (dated December 15th, 2009) developed by members of the Steering Committee, the Secretariat and WG coordinators. Building on the same objectives, the framework offers a greatly simplified tool for monitoring progress made in the five strategic areas outlined in ADEA's 2008-2012 plan. While the tables of results presented below largely speak for itself, our analysis of ADEA's achievements warrants several explanatory elements.

First, the TORs to this evaluation limit the scope of analysis to achievements incurred since the adoption of the 2008-2012 program. However, given the broad similarities between ADEA's previous and current programming efforts (see Exhibit 4.1 below), and reference made within the TORs to account for progress made since the last evaluation in 2005, the results highlighted in our review draws on evidence dated between 2005 and 2010 inclusively.

Second, results achieved by ADEA are not consistently documented nor are they always clearly articulated. As captured in the Annual Reports on Activities, (i) the exact nature of stated achievements are often ambiguous; (ii) linkages between activities, outputs and outcomes are largely unspecified; and (iii) a fair number of planned activities or outputs appear to be unfulfilled in any given year[10]. Further, no attempt has of yet been made to report the Association's achievements against the revised framework. And because the latter relies on indicators that bear very little resemblance to the original set of measures, the evaluation team found it easier to rely almost exclusively on public sources of information – including materials contained in websites, newsletters, bulletins, and news briefs of both ADEA and its WGs – to gain a general overview of ADEA's performance. Activity reports were used to corroborate information and catalogue these more coherently. Readers should nevertheless be cautioned that the results presented herein were collected for the sake of generating a broad overview of the Association's major accomplishment (between 2005 and 2010). The tables therefore should neither be considered exhaustive nor definitive.

Finally, some of the terminology used in the revised framework is misleading and core elements needed to support the logic of the instrument are missing. Presently, the framework is composed of two columns that integrate ADEA's strategic objectives (in the first) and a set of performance indicators (labelled "Results Framework" in the second column). The crucial element missing from this combination is a clear reference to the results that ought to flow from the achievement of the said objective. Consequently, expectations for each of the strategic objectives are unclear, both in terms of what defines success (i.e., result statement) and the logic that supports the use of the revised performance indicators. Furthermore, application of the said indicators revealed potential limitations in terms of reliability and validity.

Although most of the revisions should provide a useful foundation for measuring progress towards programmatic objectives, some were found to be inconsistent with the level of change they purport to measure or the purpose of the objective itself. For instance, evidence applicable to some indicators (e.g., 1-1 on the number of contributions to policy/frameworks at national, regional and agency levels) appear to the equally applicable to several other indicators (e.g., 1-2; 2-1 and 3-1, dealing respectively with the number of conferences on policy issues; the number of significant contributions to AU 2nd decade of education; the number of new or revised policy initiatives). Similarly, the level of change inferred by Indicator 3-1 does not appear to be supported by the stated purpose of Strategic Objective 3. As articulated in the objective, ADEA aims to "produce knowledge and lessons drawn from successful experiences" to "strengthen policy and build reform capacity". However, the indicator (3-1) specifically concerns itself with the number of new or revised policy initiatives. In other words, the indicator implies a level of change that is not supported by the wording of the objective.

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[10] Instances where outputs are not implemented are most often attributed to such factors as consultant unavailability, efforts to dovetail planned meetings with subsequent fora; and lack of funding or timely disbursement.

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Taken together, these observations suggest that the tables of results presented herein should be considered for indicative purposes only. While a more thorough analysis by ADEA would likely yield in a more comprehensive account of results achieved and a more exact appreciation of their distribution across the various performance indicators, the table of results compiled by the evaluation team nevertheless provides an overview of ADEA's effectiveness that is sorely missing from existing reports.

Exhibit 4.1   Objectives Developed by ADEA between 2005 and 2010.

Goals 2005-2007[11]	Strategic Objectives 2008-2010
To strengthen policy dialogue to promote the reforms necessary to overcome obstacles to developing education in Africa;	SO 1: To encourage the development and shared understanding of coordinated and effective action on the part of the stakeholders mainly responsible for tackling the major challenges facing educational development in Africa.
To reinforce regional and sub-regional cooperation on education by promoting intra-African exchanges and partnerships and capacity-building;	SO 2: To contribute to the achievement of objectives concerning continental and regional integration within the education sector, as defined by the African Union and its NEPAD program through the Plan of Action of the Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2011) and the Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action.
To strengthen analytical work and help educators fully assimilate lessons learned so as to ensure African leadership on policy issues;	
To capitalize on and disseminate the knowledge and information accumulated through ADEA activities;	SO 3: To produce knowledge and lessons drawn from successful experiences in areas that are critical to the qualitative transformation of education in Africa, in order to strengthen policy and build reform capacity.
To improve working conditions at the Secretariat so as to enhance its ability to act as a server for the ADEA network; and	SO 4: To disseminate as widely as possible the messages and the results accumulated by ADEA through policy dialogue, analytical research and exchange, in order to support the sharing of knowledge, inter-learning and capacity building.
To contribute to innovative thinking and approaches, to the production of action-oriented knowledge, to improve the coordination and effectiveness of outside resources, and to build African capacities for consolidation and ownership of educational policies and reform.	SO 5: To improve the ADEA's performance in the areas of management, planning, evaluation and accountability, while reinforcing institutional capacity and organizational mechanisms.

Results Achieved

The first objective points to the need for coordinated action on the part of those responsible for tackling the major challenges of educational development in Africa (see Exhibit 4.2 below). Documented sources of evidence suggest that ADEA has been successful in organizing conferences on key policy issues, either at the regional or continental level. Moreover, many of the 20+ international events hosted by ADEA, during the past five years, have resulted in longer-term commitments (e.g., conferences on early childhood education, peace education or the integration of African languages and culture) or generated important precedents that stand to have long term effects on the way senior policy leaders think about and organize action on Africa's educational development (e.g., the joint ministerial conference on finance and education). Similarly, ADEA has demonstrated its ability to develop effectual partnerships that support its intended objectives.[12]

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[11] Source: Sub-section 1.5 (page 3) of the 2006 Report on Activities.

[12] Results for indicator 3-1 (number of new partnerships/networks created or established) do not include the myriad relationships fostered by working groups within the last few years.

Through its institutional partnership with the African Union and its integration to COMEDAF, ADEA is increasingly attracting the attention of international development agencies, such as USAID and European Commission, who see the Association as a point of leverage for exercising influence over the AU. And as representatives of the AU likewise contended, ADEA's key strength lies in its capacity to bring together a wide range of stakeholders with varied interests to discuss issues relevant to Africa's educational development, help showcase African leadership on educational matters, create networks of experts and effectively serve as a policy driver. Many of the examples cited under this objective are relevant to other areas of the framework.

Exhibit 4.2   Results for Strategic Objective 1

SO 1: To encourage the development and shared understanding of coordinated and effective action on the part of the stakeholders mainly responsible for tackling the major challenges facing educational development in Africa.

1-1. Number and type of ADEA contributions to policy/framework at national, regional and agency levels

Post-Primary Education in Africa: Challenges and Approaches for Expanding Learning Opportunities in Africa. Synthesis prepared for and lessons learned from the 2008 ADEA Biennial on Education in Africa (Maputo, Mozambique, May 5-9, 2008)

Inter-Country Quality Nodes (ICQN)

Education as an agency for fostering peace: Integration and Partnerships, ADEA Regional Workshop of the Inter-Country Quality Node (ICQN) on Peace Education. At the end of the conference, 7 African countries, represented by their respective Ministries of Education, pledged to "transform their education systems into real examples of and forces for peace, conflict prevention and resolution, and the construction of national unity."
(Mombasa, Kenya, September14-16, 2009).

TVSD tracks as factors of qualification, workforce integration, and economic and social development – Launch Conference of the ADEA inter-country Quality Node (ICQN) on technical and vocational skills development (TVSD) (Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, 19-21 July , 2010)

Other

Africa Education Journalism Award. As part of its general effort towards improving education in Africa ADEA launched an award that recognizes the best articles on education published in the African press. This competition is organized by ADEA and its Working Group on Communication for Education and Development (WGCOMED), which promotes the use of communication in support of education in Africa.

Peer Reviews: The Working group on Education Sector Analysis (WGESA) has promoted participatory education sector analysis as a tool for more appropriate educational planning. It has conducted reviews of sector analyses in a number of countries (Mozambique, Burkina Faso, Lesotho, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia) and has facilitated peer reviews in Mauritius, Gabon and Nigeria between 2006 and 2008.

1-2. Number of pan-African / regional conferences on key policy themes or issues hosted or co-hosted by ADEA

ADEA:

7th Biennale (2006) "More and Better Education. What Makes Effective Learning in Schools and in Literacy and Early Childhood Development Programs" (Libreville, Gabon)

8th Biennale (2008) '"Beyond Primary Education: Challenges and Approaches to Expanding Learning Opportunities" (Maputo, Mozambique)

Sustaining the Education and Economic Momentum in Africa amidst the Current Global Financial Crisis – First ever Pan-African conference of African Ministers of Finance and Education, organized by ADEA in collaboration with the AfDB and the World Bank (Tunis, Tunisia, July, 2009)

ADEA-BREDA Open Education Initiative. ADEA, in collaboration with BREDA/UNESCO, the Francophone Digital Campus (CNF) and the WG on Open and Distance Learning launched an ambitious digital program to achieve universal primary schooling of good quality in Africa by 2015 via the use of information and communication technology in education (ICTE) (February 2010, Dakar Senegal).

International Conference on School Fee Abolition: Planning for Quality and Financial Sustainability. Organized by ADEA, UNICEF and the World Bank. Ministers of education and of finance from the 23 countries attending the conference commit to

SO 1: To encourage the development and shared understanding of coordinated and effective action on the part of the stakeholders mainly responsible for tackling the major challenges facing educational development in Africa.

attaining universal primary education by 2015, and end exclusion from access to education for financial reasons (June, 2007, in Bamako, Mali).

UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE)+10: "New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research for Societal Change and Development"(Paris, France). As part of the conference, ADEA, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, UNESCO, AAU, the World Bank, and other partners organized a Africa Roundtable plenary focused on Africa,

"Towards an African Higher Education and Research Space" which attracted over 1,500 participants including ministers, senior officials, institutional leaders, private sector and development partners. (Date?)

Technical and Sub-regional Ministerial Meetings and Conferences

Critical Skills in Education for Sustainable Development in Africa –Perspectives from Finland. ADEA seminar in Finland organized in collaboration with the University of Tampere Department of Education and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (October 2010, Tempere, Finland).

African Conference on the Integration of African Languages and Cultures into Education – Conference jointly organized by ADEA, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) and the Ministry of Basic Education and Literacy of Burkina Faso (20-22 January 2010, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso)

West Africa Workshop on EMIS. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), along with the Working Groups on Education Management and Policy Support (WGEMPS) and Non-Formal Education (WGNFE), held a workshop for member states and development partners, to develop more cohesive, coherent Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) in West Africa. This was the first time EMIS representatives from ECOWAS member states were able to come together to share their challenges and discuss a regional roadmap to building capacity and meeting COMEDAF reporting requirements (16-18 June 2010 in Lome, Togo)

CONFEMEN conference on curriculum reform. Organized by the CONFEMEN, OIF, ADEA and UNESCO-BREDA. (5-9 July 2010, Brazzaville, Congo)

Conference on Multi-Grade Teaching, organized by the Working Group on the Teaching Profession (WGTP), the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), and the Commonwealth Secretariat. (March 22-24, 2010, Wellington, South Africa).

Ministerial Meeting on Peace Education: Following the October 2009 ministerial meeting co-organized by the Kenyan Ministry of Education and ADEA in Mombasa, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) held two sessions of its Mediator Training for Peace course for senior officials in various fields, such as formal and non-formal education, justice, and childhood protection. At the request of the Ministry of Education of the DRC, ADEA helped trigger this initiative by facilitating collaboration between the DRC and the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA), which is sponsoring this Congolese program (February and April 2010).

"Bamako + 5 for Anglophone Countries" Conference on Contractual Teachers –Co-organized by ADEA, the World Bank, Education International and the Ministry of Education of Mali (Bamako, Mali, October 27-29, 2009)

Ministerial Seminar on Education for Rural People in Africa. Conference organized by ADEA involving the participation of Ministers of Education, Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries of eleven countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The conference resulted in a joint declaration and commitment to improve inter-ministerial cooperation to achieve Education for All goals (September 7-9, 2005, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia)

The Fourth African Regional Conference on Early Childhood Development, co-organized by ADEA, the Working Group on Early Childhood Development (WGECD) and the government of Senegal, with financial and technical support from many development cooperation organizations (Dakar, Sénégal, November 10-13, 2009)

Right to Education. Sub-regional workshop jointly organized by the Association pour la Promotion de l'Education Non Formelle (APENF) and the Working Group on Non-Formal Education (WGNFE), with support from the office of the Swiss Cooperation in Burkina Faso and the Working Group on Education Management and Policy Support (WGMPS). The workshop led to the operationalization of an observatory designed to monitor the effectiveness of the right to education. (November 24 -27, 2009, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso).

The Digital Summer School. Organized by ADEA in collaboration with Global Digital Solidarity Fund (DSF) (Hammamet, Tunisia, August 25-28, 2008).

Conference on School Fee Abolition. In collaboration with UNICEF, the World Bank and the Malian Ministry of Education, ADEA organized, the International conference on the abolition of school fees: planning quality and financial sustainability. Twenty-three countries were represented, of which 18 were African. (June 19-22, 2007)

Education Sector Responses to HIV and AIDS: Learning from Good Practices in Africa. Document reviewing the background

SO 1: To encourage the development and shared understanding of coordinated and effective action on the part of the stakeholders mainly responsible for tackling the major challenges facing educational development in Africa.

and the proceedings of the Africa regional workshop on HIV and AIDS, organized by the Commonwealth Secretariat and ADEA (September 12-14, 2006 in Johannesburg, South Africa).

Third African International Conference on Early Childhood Development Accra-Ghana May 30-June 3, 2005.

1-3. Number and diversity of different types of networks/partnerships developed or contributed to, by ADEA

ADEA's web site identifies 23 partner agencies located in or operating in Africa. Since 2005, ADEA has successfully created or maintained partnerships with such organizations as the African Union, COMEDAF, the AfDB, UNESCO and its Regional Offices in Africa, and many others listed on its web site.

More recent partnership developments include:

South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) . ADEA is in the process of signing an MOU with the South African Broadcasting Corporation (June 2010) for coverage of all major events and conferences organized or co-organized by ADEA and other communication endeavors (see details below under 4-1).

USAID and other American partners. As part of the Africa Regional Education Workshop on "Quality education for all: Strengthening the new agenda" (6-9 June 2010, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania), ADEA met with USAID officials who are interested in creating stronger ties with the Association. ADEA, with its close partnership with the African Union and the Second Decade of Education, is seen as a strategic asset.

The Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa (OSISA) has joined ADEA as a member of its Steering Committee and leader of the Working Group on Communication for Education and Development (WGCOMED) (April-May, 2010).

Mission to the Republic of Korea. In January, 2010, ADEA signed a memorandum of understanding with the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI), as part of ADEA is already facilitating discussions between KEDI and the Ministers of Education of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia. An MoU with the University of Seoul was subsequently signed in May 2010,

Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA). In September 2009, ADEA and OSSREA explored partnership opportunities and agreed to share publications and databases, as well as best practices on disseminating publications, administrating grant award programs, and connecting research to policy development and decision making.

Private Sector. ADEA approached Private Investors for Africa (PIA) and the Conférence des chambres consulaires africaines et francophone (SPCCAF), that are either making contributions to the Triennale or involved in work that will feed into the Triennale. This scores a first for ADEA in the area of collaboration with the private sector ADEA will also be organizing a consultation of the private sector for the Triennale. **Other Ongoing Efforts**: ADEA is actively seeking out new partners that can enrich the policy dialogue within ADEA. In 2009 alone, the Secretariat has approached the following countries: Brazil, China, India, Portugal, South Korea, Spain, and Malaysia. Multilateral organizations such as ALESCO and ISESCO have also been approached. The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation has expressed interest in ADEA's work and has taken part in part in meetings at the Steering Committee.

The second objective specifically addresses ADEA's institutional commitments to the African Union and its Plan of Action of the Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2011). Evidence gathered for this section clearly suggests that ADEA is successfully fulfilling its agreement with the AU and its subsequent commitments to the broader objectives of the MDGs and the EFA initiative. While evidence of ADEA's contributions to the AU has been uncovered for all seven of the priorities listed in its memorandum of understanding with the Union, our review of the Association's work would suggests that the depth and scope of its actual contributions are undoubtedly greater. However, given the absence of clearly labelled reporting data, dedicated monitoring reports or concise summaries of results achieved, such an investigation is difficult to pursue. Moreover, as observed in other instances, the exact nature of the seven priorities listed under the MOU between ADEA and the AU is not specified in any of the documents consulted, thus making it even harder to decipher whether results are applicable or not.

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Exhibit 4.3   Results Associated with Strategic Objective 2

SO 2: To contribute to the achievement of objectives concerning continental and regional integration within the education sector, as defined by the African Union and its NEPAD program through the Plan of Action of the Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2011) and the Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action.

2-1. Number of activities led / supported by ADEA and its WGs making a significant contribution to the AU 2nd Decade of Education for Africa

7 Priorities as Outlined in the MoU with the AU:

1) Gender and Culture:

Fostering Participation and Achievement of African Girls and Women in Science and Technology. Capacity-building training workshop on the teaching of Science, Mathematics, Engineering and Technology so as to improve gender equality. Organized by UNESCO Bamako Cluster Office, the ADEA WG on Higher Education, the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI)-Africa, and the National Universities Commission of Nigeria as a follow-up to the First International Conference on Girls and Women in Science and Technology in Africa (Bamako, Mali, July 13-15, 2009).

A Toolkit for Mainstreaming Gender in Higher Education in Africa. Developed by the ADEA WG on Higher Education, in collaboration with the Association of Africa Universities (2006). The toolkit, which comprises ten modules and a literature review, provides practical guidelines on how to initiate a gender-mainstreaming program and establish helpful processes.

Communication support to the Second Decade Education Plan of Action. WGCOMED developed a communication Strategy and Journalists training workshop related to the Conference on the Integration of African Languages and Cultures into Education

AU Protocol on Culture. WGEMPS developed and presented a concept paper on benchmarking cultural statistics. Because the statistical tools and indicators for culture-based data lack coherence, WGEMPS stressed the need to pilot some key cultural indicators in the SADC region and aim at a common methodology for obtaining internationally comparable statistics (2009).

2) Observatory of education policies and education management information systems (EMIS):

Observatory of Education Policy and Education Management Information Systems. System established by ADEA's WG on Education Management and Policy Support, in collaboration with the AU to help monitor AU's Second Decade of Education Plan of Action.

Education Statistics SADC Code of Practice. EMIS Norms and Standards for SADC Ministries of Education, Prepared by ADEA Working Group on Education Policy Support, March 2009

AU Observatory training workshops. Workshops facilitated by the WGEMPS on education management information systems (EMIS). Participants learned to use an ADEA-customized database known as the AU Outlook on Education, and agreed upon the process of obtaining the selected set of AU indicators to report at the upcoming Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF IV) (August, 2009). Additional input of the WGEMPS include

- Development of an indicator template that countries must use to input the national and UIS indicator data required for COMEDAF.
- Assistance to countries in web-based uploading of their 2006 national indicator data on education to the AU Observatory through the development of a remote-located database on the Observatory website. WGEMPS has also produced a concept paper on a web-enabled AU Observatory site.
- Shifting the AU Outlook on Education database to a more updated version of the DevInfo software in order to enhance simultaneous access by multiple users, ensure compatibility with Microsoft Windows Vista, and allow countries access to additional functionality.

EMIS Assessment Report on the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Produced by ADEA Working Group on Education and Policy Support, 2008

3) Teacher's Professional Development

Professional Development of Contractual Teachers: Adoption of a Policy Framework for government integration of professional development and support to non-civil servant teachers in Francophone countries, following the 2004 conference in Bamako on contractual teachers. The conference brought together representatives of teacher trade unions, parent associations, Ministries of Education, Ministries of Finance and Ministries of the Civil Service from eleven African countries. Countries attending the follow-up workshop organized in Dakar in 2007 made progress in developing two frameworks to be used by francophone countries: one for the training and professional development of contractual teachers; another related to career plans and issues of promotion, social

> SO 2: To contribute to the achievement of objectives concerning continental and regional integration within the education sector, as defined by the African Union and its NEPAD program through the Plan of Action of the Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2011) and the Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action.

protection, rights and obligations for contractual teachers.

Teacher Management and Support (TMS). Since 1993, the Teaching Profession Working Group has been engaged in a program that aims to produce and implement country action plans to address key issues related to teacher management and professional support. Meetings are convened on a yearly basis with senior ministry of education officials to sensitize them to prevailing issues and problems affecting the teaching profession.

Professional Development of Teachers: Between 1998 and 2005, the WG on the Teaching Profession developed a series of resource materials to support the professional development of staff in response to management and professional training needs identified by Ministries of Education. The modules, which include training resources for head-teachers, school inspectors and multi-grade teaching, have since been used throughout Africa countries and also in Caribbean countries.

4) Higher Education

Strategic Planning and HIV/AIDS. The WG on Higher Education has successfully engaged the vast majority of African universities to develop strategic plans for improving educational outcomes. And in order to deal with the consequent problems of HIV/AIDS more effectively, the WGHE has also introduced a tool kit on HIV/AIDS specifically designed to address the problems faced by higher education institutions throughout Africa.

The Effects of Massification on Higher Education in Africa, by Goolam Mohamedbhai, Working Group on Higher Education and the Associaiton of African Universities, 2008

 Directory of African Higher Education Institutions Responding to the Threat of HIV/AIDS, Working Group on Higher Education, 2006

5) Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Conference of the ADEA inter-country Quality Node (ICQN) on technical and vocational skills development (TVSD). TVSD tracks as factors of qualification, workforce integration, and economic and social development. Organized by the Ministry of Technical Education and Professional Training of Côte d'Ivoire in collaboration with ADEA, the conference served as a forum for sharing experiences, thoughts and analysis concerning TVSD. Delegates from some 23 African states, agency representatives and educational experts attended the conference (July 19-21, 2010 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire).

6) Curriculum and Teaching/Learning Materials

African book development series by the WG on Books and Learning Materials on key issues such as *The Cost Effectiveness of Publishing Educational Materials in African Languages*

7) Quality Management

Seminar on the implementation of the AU Second Decade of Education in Africa – The Secretariat took advantage of a workshop on the preparation of the ADEA integrated Program and Budget for 2010 to invite the African Union as an integral member in defining the 2010 activities and more particularly those related to the implementation of the AU Second Decade. The workshop was purposively organized in Addis Ababa in September 2009 to ensure that key officials and officers of the AU Commission could participate.

Indicators and Templates for Monitoring the African Union's Plan of Action for the Second Decade: WGEMPS facilitated consultation and training with some 43 countries and produced a data dictionary of definitions, methodology and interpretations.

The third strategic objective builds on ADEA's ongoing efforts to strengthen policy and educational reform capacity in Africa. To this end, the objective underscores the need to produce knowledge and draw lessons learned in areas critical to the qualitative transformation of education in the continent. Our interpretation of the objective's intended purpose is thus more closely aligned with its original meaning (as presented in the 2007 version of the performance framework) than what the revised performance indicator suggests. While the absence of a clear result statement makes it difficult to determine the exact value that ought to be measured, a more direct translation of the objective's intended outcome would argue the need to at least consider the introduction of intermediate steps in the measurement of progress towards policy reform.

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Knowledge contributions by ADEA and its working groups that stand to inform policy debates and strengthen reform capacity are considerable. The technical input of working groups greatly exceeds the evaluation team's modest effort to account for some of these contributions. But more importantly, what the preliminary results of Exhibit 4.4 clearly indicate is just how much of ADEA's work actually contributes to policy reform, including at the national, regional and institutional levels. This analysis of available data clearly corroborates the view held by all interviewed Ministers of education that the work and knowledge contributions of ADEA are essential for driving educational reform in Africa. With few credible sources of evidence to turn to in order to gain a more enlightened perspective on any given issue, African stakeholders were unanimous in their assertion that ADEA plays a key role in terms of facilitating (e.g., policy dialogue, coaching, peer reviews) and informing (e.g., the provision of technical knowledge, lessons learned and country-level experience) policy reforms that support improved educational outcomes. ADEA is believed to be unique in this capacity.

Exhibit 4.4   Results Associated with Strategic Objective 3

SO 3: To produce knowledge and lessons drawn from successful experiences in areas critical to the qualitative transformation of education in Africa, in order to strengthen policy and build reform capacity.

3-1. Number and nature of new or revised policy initiatives based on lessons learned from successful experiences supported by ADEA[13]

Launch of the Education Research Award (ERA), which seeks not only to reward excellence in education research in Africa, but also to strengthen the link between African education research and African education policy-making (2010)

SADC Ministers Adopt EMIS. SADC Ministers responsible for Education and Training adopt and agree to implement the recommendations on education management information systems proposed by the Technical Committee on EMIS (TCE), on the bases of research conducted by the Working Group on Education Management and Policy Support (WGEMPS) (Kinshasa, DRC, March 15-19, 2010).

Outcomes of the 4th African International Conference on Early Childhood Development, on the theme "From Policy to Action: Expanding Investment in ECD for Sustainable Development" (held in Dakar, Senegal in November 2009) include:

- The African Union made ECD the eighth priority area of the Plan of Action of the Second Decade of Education for Africa.

- At the request of the President of Senegal, the heads of state of the African Union plan a special summit on ECD in 2011.

- Sub-regional processes for policy dialogue and exchanges of experience and expertise have emerged, notably in Mauritius, which is a center of excellence for ECD in Africa.

- Since 2005, 19 African countries have adopted an ECD policy.

Namibia's Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP). Comprehensive sector-wide reform programme of Namibia's education system initiated in 2007. Affecting everything from early childhood to vocational, tertiary and life-long learning, the purpose of the reforms is to enhance contributions to the attainment of strategic national development goals, and facilitate the transition to a knowledge based economy.

Policy Guide – developed and adopted at the African Conference on the Integration of the African Languages and Cultures (Ouagadougou on 20-22 January 2010)

African Languages: ADEA's research, policy dialogue and advocacy work related to the use of African languages in African education systems has influenced Ministers of Education and has had a bearing on AU's Second Decade of Education Plan of Action (2006-2015). As a result of ADEA's work in this area some countries such as Burkina Faso and Mozambique have implemented the use of mother-tongue instruction and bilingual education in their schools.

Early Childhood Education: Development of a strategic framework for early childhood development in Africa (2006-2010), based on outcomes of the 2005 Accra conference, the 2006 ADEA Biennale and recommendations from 2007 EFA Global

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[13] The evidence provided under this heading alternatively points to effectual changes in ministerial policies or knowledge contributions that are clearly intended to affect policy outcomes.

SO 3: To produce knowledge and lessons drawn from successful experiences in areas critical to the qualitative transformation of education in Africa, in order to strengthen policy and build reform capacity.

Monitoring Report on Early Childhood care and Education (ECCE).

Contract Teachers: Adoption of a two policy frameworks for non-civil servant teachers: one for the training and professional development of contractual teachers; another related to career plans and issues of promotion, social protection, and rights and obligations of contractual teachers.

Non-formal Education: ADEA's WGNFE has facilitated the creation of country WGs, some of which have become key actors in countries such as Burkina Faso where Non-Formal Education has been integrated at the policy level and is financed by the government.

Coaching: one on one coaching support to the minister of education of the Democratic Republic of Congo, by ADEA's former Executive Secretary Mr. Mamadou Ndoye, provides a clear case in point of how informal discussions can yield profound change. One on one coaching support was instrumental in building the capacity of the Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Professional Education. As a result, the Ministry was able to devise a strategic plan, strengthen the effectiveness of educational programming in a war ravaged country, and allow for the re-establishment of a sound educational system grounded in best practice and continuous improvement.

Peace Education: A ministerial conference convened by ADEA in 2004 (Mombasa, Kenya) resulted in 21 countries signing a Declaration affirming their will to use education systems to build peace and to prevent and resolve conflicts through education. The Mombasa Declaration eventually led to the creation of the Inter-Country Quality Node on Peace Education.

Distance Learning: ADEA's WG on Distance Education and Open Learning (WGDEOL) published a series of documents taking stock of and disseminating best practices on DEOL in Africa. WGDEOL is currently setting up a Quality Assurance framework for ODL institutions.

Book and Learning Materials: ADEA's WG on Books and Learning Materials (WGBLM) has encouraged governments across Africa to make books and book production exempt from taxing. It has actively promoted the liberalization of the book sector by encouraging Ministries of Education to work more closely with national publishers and has facilitated agreement between APNET (African Publishers' network) and PABA (Pan African Booksellers' Association) on their complementary roles in publishing and bookselling in Africa.

The fourth strategic objective of ADEA's performance framework concerns itself with the dissemination of knowledge resources, including technical contributions, lessons learned, and the shared experiences of its constituencies. Our cursory overview of ADEA's overall production and the multiple means of dissemination it uses to convey the results of its policy deliberations, research findings and accumulated experiences suggest that ADEA uses an appropriately diversified range of tools to maximise its outreach. In most settings, the use of such a diversified range of communication instruments would likely secure one's potential returns on investment. However, Africa is big, the needs of its constituencies are substantial and the available means of communication or cross-fertilization are imperfect.

As such, the most often raised critique of the Association – consistently underscored by all stakeholder groups, including donors, ministers, partners and even members of the working groups – is that ADEA's outreach potential remains insufficient, which in turn underscores the need to improve the effectiveness of its communication efforts. For their part, ministers argued that the work of ADEA was insufficiently known across the whole of Africa. Beyond the relatively restricted circle of countries that have historically maintained strong ties to the Association, ministers contended that ADEA – including the work it does and the technical assistance it provides – is poorly known and insufficiently capitalized. While the high turnover rate of ministers certainly explains some of the communication woes ADEA has to grapple with, it does not fully account for the widespread perception that the dissemination of the Association's work is inadequate[14].

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[14] For further analysis of ADEA's communication function and the challenges it faces, please refer to the factors affecting performance in Section 5 of this report.

Exhibit 4.5   Results Associated with Strategic Objective 4

SO 4: To disseminate as widely as possible the messages and the results accumulated by ADEA through policy dialogue, analytical research and exchange, in order to support the sharing of knowledge, inter-country learning and capacity building.

4-1. Number and diversity/type/quality of different media used by ADEA to disseminate results of activities in which it was involved

Biennial Meeting Publications:

- **Beyond Primary Education: Challenges and Approaches for Expanding Learning Opportunities in Africa (2009).** Proceedings of the 2008 Biennale (Maputo, Mozambique, May 5-9, 2008)

- **Post-Primary Education in Africa: Challenges and Approaches for Expanding Learning Opportunities in Africa (2009).** Synthesis prepared for and lessons learned from the 2008 ADEA Biennale on Education in Africa (Maputo, Mozambique, 2008)

- **What Makes Effective Learning in African Literacy Programs? Post-Primary Education in Africa Challenges and Approaches for Expanding Learning Opportunities (2009).** Synthesis prepared for and lessons learned from the ADEA 2006 Biennale on Education in Africa (Libreville, Gabon, March 27-31, 2006)

- **More and Better Education. What Makes Effective Learning in Schools and in Literacy and Early Childhood Development Programs? (2006)** Proceedings of the ADEA Biennial Meeting (Libreville Gabon, March 27- 31, 2006)

- **What We Know About Effective Early Childhood Development Programs in Africa (2008).** Synthesis of lessons learned from ADEA's 2006 Biennale and other recent research, studies, and meetings on ECD. ADEA Secretariat and ADEA WG on ECD.

Other publications produced by the ADEA Secretariat: 18 other publications including case studies of promising African experiences in education and reports of meetings were produced between 2005 and 2010.

Working Group Publications: ADEA WGs have collectively published more than 50 titles (including books, reports, toolkits, conference proceedings, etc) between 2005 and 2010.

Audio-Visual Productions: ADEA produced, co-produced or sponsored the production of 6 documentaries to showcase lessons learned during the 2006 Biennale.

Media Relations. ADEA has given increased emphasis to its relations with the press in recent years. Media coverage of its major conferences and meetings is systematically organized. Press conferences and briefings are organized and press releases are produced and disseminated to a growing list of media contacts in Africa and in other regions. In 2010, ADEA approached major media organizations (SABC, PANA, Africable, Africa N°1, Channel Africa, Mail and Guardian, etc) with a view of building a long term partnerships.

ADEA is in the process of signing an MOU with the South African Broadcasting Corporation (June 2010) for coverage of all major events and conferences organized or co-organized by ADEA; the development of an ADEA/ Channel Africa radio project; capacity building of journalists; participation in ADEA's Africa Education Journalism Award; and participation in other ADEA/WGCOMED activities related to media and communication.

Journalism Award: The Africa Education Journalism Award, managed by the Secretariat, recognizes the best published articles on education produced by African journalists. It has spurred interest for education journalism and, thanks to a capacity building component (study tour) it is contributing to developing a growing network of talented journalists who excel in the reporting of education. Most winners have either been promoted within their media organization or offered more interesting jobs. Some winning newspapers have created education sections and supplements.

Journalism reporting: ADEA's increased emphasis given to press relations and systematic organization of media coverage in recent years is paying off. This is reinforced by the capacity building efforts of ADEA's Working Group on Communication for Education and Development (WGCOMED), which offers training workshops to journalists alongside major conferences. Media relations and capacity building efforts are therefore contributing to building a growing network of journalists specialized in educational reporting, who are able to promote public debates on crucial education issues. WGCOMED has also developed a toolkit for journalists and communication officers in ministries of education to better communicate and promote African educational issues, and in doing so, contribute effectively in meeting the developmental needs of Africa.

Information Bulletin: ADEA produces a bi-monthly bulletin showcasing its outputs and activities. Since their reintroduction – after several months of interruption when the Secretariat transferred to Tunis – the scope and depth of the Bulletins have

> SO 4: To disseminate as widely as possible the messages and the results accumulated by ADEA through policy dialogue, analytical research and exchange, in order to support the sharing of knowledge, inter-country learning and capacity building.

consistently improved.

Exhibitions: The African Union Commission has requested ADEA organize exhibitions during its COMEDAF meetings. ADEA organized exhibitions at 3 COMEDAF meetings:
- At the 2006 COMEDAFII extraordinary meeting held in Maputo, Mozambique, which launched the Second Decade of Education for Africa, the ADEA Secretariat and APNET organized an exhibit on teaching and learning materials (Maputo, Mozambique, September 4-8, 2006).
- At the 2007 COMEDAF III meeting held in Johannesburg, South Africa, ADEA supported the AU to organize en exhibition on teaching and learning materials in maths and sciences (Johannesburg, South Africa, August 6-10, 2007).
- At COMEDAF IV, ADEA's Working Group on Higher Education was again tasked by y the AUC to organize and exhibit highlighting successful Higher Education initiatives in collaboration with the Ministry of Education of Kenya, as part of efforts to assess progress made in the implementation of the higher education priority areas of the Plan of Action for the 2nd Decade of Education (November 22-26, 2009 in Mombasa, Kenya).

WEB: According to Web statistics, the two most downloaded documents are the ADEA Strategic Medium Term Plan and the ADEA Catalogue of publications. In a period of two weeks in 2010, there were 3,393 page loads of the ADEA site. The highest number of visitors (11.09%) were from France. The Secretariat has invested heavily in 2009 and 2010 to improve the website's navigability, interface and information updating.

4-2. Number of articles and reports highlighted by the media on ADEA activities.

The number of articles produced on ADEA activities varies depending on the event but typically between 20 and 50 articles are published, when media coverage of an activity is organized. For the Conference on the integration For the conference on languages and culture for instance, which took place in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, over 50 articles were produced, in addition to TV (local and regional) and radio broadcasts.

4-3. Number of mentions of ADEA activities and productions in Partners' research and policy documents

Not documented

Finally, the fifth strategic objective relates to the Association's institutional commitment to strengthening its performance management capacity at the programme (i.e., planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting) and organizational levels (i.e., structure, financing, accountability, inter-institutional linkages, etc.). Accordingly, the issues of concern highlighted by the selected performance indicators are all covered in greater depth elsewhere in this report. Nevertheless, according to provided indicators, ADEA appears to be on track towards the achievement of the stated objective. ADEA has continued its efforts to maintain the efficiency of the Secretariat and the viability of its programme. The careful management of available resources and substantial in-kind contributions that go into the delivery of its program suggest that ADEA is attentive to cost overruns and works diligently to maximise the returns on its investments. Currently, ADEA is investigating how it could improve its programming efficiency further still via the introduction of time sheets and fixed budget allocations. With respect to working groups (WGs), their numbers and aggregated productivity have remained relatively stable over the past five years.

However, according to audited reports, the combined rate of disbursements for all WGs has essentially hovered in the 60% range between 2006 and 2009. Moreover, groups vary greatly in their ability to secure external resources and achieve planned results. Ad hoc WGs no longer appear to be functional but remain listed in ADEA's website.[15] The capacity of WGs and the Secretariat to attract financial partners has yielded mixed results over the past several years. And for their part, Ministries of Education contribution to ADEA has been modest. Despite a core group of committed and supportive ministers, payment of annual membership dues has not increased since 2005. It should be noted that ADEA does not have its own legal status and that this prevents Ministries of Education from making contributions to ADEA.

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[15] For a more detailed analysis of the performance of working groups, see Finding 8 on WG performance.

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What is undoubtedly more striking about this strategic objective and the performance indicators that were developed to support its implementation is that none of the indicators actually try to measure what the objective is essentially about. Indicators are not aligned with ongoing efforts to improve performance management capacity in terms of planning, monitoring and evaluation. Further, they do no measure progress made relative to the strengthening of organizational capacity and the development of mechanisms or tools that support the achievement of mid to long term results.

Exhibit 4.6   Results Associated with Strategic Objective 5

SO 5: To improve the ADEA's performance in the areas of management, planning, evaluation and accountability, while reinforcing institutional capacity and organizational mechanisms.

5-1.Responsiveness/efficiency/cost-effectiveness of the Secretariat in organizing ADEA activities

To be detailed elsewhere – (See Findings on Efficiency)

5-2. Number of well-functioning/productive WGs (See Finding on WGs)

9 Working Groups:

- Books and Learning Materials
- Communication for Education and development (COMED)
- Distance Education and Open Learning
- Early Childhood Development
- Education Management and Policy Support
- Higher Education
- Mathematics and Science
- Non-Formal Education
- The Teaching Profession

4 Ad-Hoc Working Groups:

- HIV /AIDS and Education
- Policy Dialogue
- Post-Primary Education
- Quality of Education

5-3. Capacity of WGs to attract resources (See Section on Financial Viability)

Aside from resources obtained through ADEA, nearly half of the working group survey respondents (48.6%) indicated that their WG was able to attract additional sources of funding. This does not include in-kind contributions derived from WG hosting arrangements nor the volunteer contributions of their members.

5-4. Number of development agencies supporting politically, technically and financially ADEA (See Section on Financial Viability)

ADEA currently lists 19 international development agencies as active members and contributors to the Association, including private corporations (e.g., SOFRECO). More recently, ADEA has approached a number of new potential donors, including Korean institutions, China, India and foundations (See text in Exhibit 4.5) OSISA became a member of the ADEA Steering Committee in 2009. MoUs have been signed with Korea (KEDI and Seoul University) and Korea is contributing to the financing of ADEA's African Research Award.

5-5. Number of African Ministries of Education contributing actively to ADEA (See Section on Financial Viability)

ADEA's website lists 88 different Ministries of Education (54 countries in all) as members of the Association. Of these, little more than 20 Ministries provide annual contributions to the association on a more or less regular basis. Eleven Ministers of Education (who are ADEA Steering Committee members) actively participate in the elaboration and execution,of ADEA's program. Countries currently represented in the ADEA Steering Committee are the following: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Libya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Republic of Congo and Tunisia, as host country of ADEA.

5-6. Number of associated international and regional organizations that politically, technically and financially contribute to ADEA (See Sections on Efficiency and Financial Viability)

SO 5: To improve the ADEA's performance in the areas of management, planning, evaluation and accountability, while reinforcing institutional capacity and organizational mechanisms.

ADEA is hosted by the African Development Bank since 2008, . As other members of the ADE Steering Copmmittee it pays annual membership fees and restricted contributions to a specific programs. Under the current arrangement, AfDB provides administrative, financial, informatics and printing services to ADEA, which ADEA pays for (8% of expenditures of the general program). It should be mentioned that many more African based agencies and ministries provide in-kind contributions that are essential for the delivery of ADEA's work. These are documented in the evaluation report (see sections on Efficiency and Financial Viability).

Final Observations

Overall, the evaluation team uncovered a wealth evidence to support the claim that ADEA is effective in its capacity to achieve results at the output and outcome levels, and is on track to achieving planned objectives. Moreover, ADEA is achieving results in an environment that is decidedly challenging and at a scale that few other organizations of its size can match. As one respondent summed it up, "They are the pace setter."

Yet, whether or not such results constitute sufficient evidence to warrant the support of its investors is an issue that this evaluation cannot address. Interview responses from donor representatives reveal that the expectations of the international donor community are becoming increasingly at odds with the mandate and mission of the Association and the harsh realities of the context within which it operates. Amongst other things, donors argue that the connexion between ADEA's outputs and outcomes (i.e., policy take-up) remains difficult to assert. However, achieving long-term results in economies marred by numerous shortcomings relative to resources, internal capacity and procedural efficiency can only be described as challenging. Even in fully developed political economies, changes in policies, shifts in funding priorities or the development of negotiated agreements can take years to unfold, if not a complete change of government. Yet, ADEA's ability to spearhead such high level changes in much more difficult settings and within the lifespan of a relatively short programming cycle is nothing short of noteworthy. Achieving, affecting or contributing to institutional change at any level constitutes a significant challenge.[16] As one senior Secretariat member commented, "the impacts of policy dialogue will always be difficult to see, because such changes simply take time."

For their part, ministers were inclined to nuance their assessment of ADEA's effectiveness by pointing to the need for greater involvement at the country level. As ministers serving in countries challenged by various structural and financial difficulties, evaluation respondents argued that they and their colleagues seldom have the means or capacity to follow through on ADEA-related commitments, lessons learned or technical inputs. For many, the gap that lies between policy deliberation and implementation is simply too wide to bridge with the tools and resources they dispose of.

To its credit, ADEA has consistently countered that the work of the Association should be regarded as a contributing factor and not a causal one per se. Readers should recall that ADEA was initially instituted as a platform for policy dialogue. It was established to help bridge the divide between key educational decision makers in Africa and the international development community. As such, it was intended to improve educational outcomes by creating a unique forum where donor agencies and African Ministries of Education could engage one another, flag emerging issues, discuss areas of mutual cooperation, and find durable solutions. The idea was to support policy change, not implement it. If broad agreement now exists on the need to shift the focus of ADEA towards implementation – an agency tasked with the transformation

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[16] See North, D. (1990). Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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of African educational policies – then its mandate, mission, strategic objectives and internal resource capacity should likewise be changed to better reflect this new orientation.

Finding 7: ADEA's core activities are generally appreciated and seen as an important "value added" by its various constituencies. However, interviewees expressed mixed views regarding the Biennales, which in turn suggests opportunities for improvement.

The successful delivery of ADEA's programme relies on a wide range of activities. These include, but are not limited to, the biennales, ministerial meetings and conferences, ICQNs and intra-African exchanges (see adjacent textbox). Overall, evaluation respondents maintained a positive impression of the value added of each of these activities. Because they complement each other and are attuned to the needs of specific communities of interests, they are broadly regarded as essential components to the Association's work.

The sub-regional meetings and conferences, ICQNs and inter-country exchange initiatives were especially appreciated for their flexibility and greater specificity. As evidenced by their repeated reference in activity reports and the result tables provided under the previous finding, regional activities tend to be easier and less costly to organize, they allow organizing countries to exercise greater

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Secretariat Sponsored Activities

Biennales: Biennales represent the high point of the activities and life of the Association. The main objective of the meetings is to encourage and sustain frank and open discussions between African ministers of education, development agencies, and other education professionals.

Sub-regional Ministerial Meetings and Conferences: In response to needs expressed by the Bureau of African Ministers, ADEA organizes technical or sub-regional ministerial meetings on topics of common interest in order to foster greater cooperation between countries. ADEA organizes also major ministerial conferences on emerging themes on education.

Inter-Country Quality Nodes (ICQNs): The inter-country quality nodes serve as catalysts for the accumulation of information on innovative educational experiences in Africa and for the implementation of the lessons that each country or group of countries draws from those experiences to improve their own programs.

Intra-African Exchanges: Designed to promote the cross-fertilization of creative responses developed in Africa for specific problems facing education, the program of Intra-African Exchanges includes study visits, exchanges of expertise, and commissioned papers that describe successful experiences in education in Africa.

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input and ownership, provide more political exposure, and have historically led to a greater number of political commitments. As such, regional and national activities are believed to constitute a crucial contribution to the achievement of ADEA's goals and if anything, they should be further encouraged and supported by the Secretariat and the donor community.

Biennales on the hand attracted mixed responses from most stakeholders. While the general impression was overtly positive, nearly everyone spoken to either alluded to areas for improvement or commented on issues that weaken the potential role and contribution of the Biennales to ADEA's programme. Members of the working groups tended to view the value added of the biennials in positive terms. For instance, more than two thirds of respondents (71%) agreed to some extent that past biennial meetings provided an effective platform for showcasing the contributions of their respective WGs. And when probed on the major benefits that their WGs derive from the Biennial meetings, the reoccurring themes highlighted by survey respondents essentially centered on networking, the opportunity to showcase one's work, engage in advocacy-related initiatives with ministers and donors alike, share knowledge and experiences, and learn from others.

Donors and ministers both appreciated and criticised the Biennales for very similar reasons. First and foremost, the informal nature of the meetings was broadly applauded. Removal of the veil of distinctions allows participants to engage one another in a frank and open manor, creating a more dynamic environment that recognizes everyone's capacity to contribute to a discussion or policy debate, irrespective of their status or title. The Biennale play a crucial role in reconciling the many different sub-sectors that are linked to education, and provide a much needed platform where a broad range of actors can engage each other in a productive policy dialogue, share knowledge and lessons learned, and advocate for changes that further Africa's educational development. One donor added that meetings hosted by ADEA tend to be much better organized than those hosted by comparable UN agencies.

However, the Biennales are also accused of being a heavy-handed process whose results are not always capitalized. In contrast to sub-regional events, many argued that Biennial meetings tended to result in broad declarations that are inadequately focused to aid uptake and implementation at the country level. Moreover, outcomes of policy discussions tend to remain vague. Consequently, even though Biennial meetings offer what one donor referred to as "un véritable bouillon de culture", ADEA's capacity to extract the essence of this "culture of ideas" is not always up to the task. And yet, even when the messages are clear and real opportunities exist to sustain the outcomes of such meetings, the political will to follow through, as one minister observed, is not always shared.

Finding 8: WGs are generally perceived as being effective in providing technical assistance and contributing to the educational development of Africa in their respective thematic areas. However, donors and ministers expressed differing opinions regarding the overall ability of WGs to achieve stated outputs and outcomes.

Overall, working groups are playing the role that is expected from ADEA stakeholders. Although some groups have had to deal with various internal difficulties over the past 5 years (e.g., leadership problems or poor hosting arrangements), the majority of WGs were able to make notable contributions to the achievement of ADEA's strategic objectives. As evidenced in the Tables of Results presented under Finding 6 above, WGs have generally been effective in terms of providing technical assistance and contributing to African educational development. Responses to the WG survey largely reflected these perceptions.

When members of WG steering committees were asked to assess the extent to which individual WGs were (i) meeting their respective objectives, (ii) producing outputs that were broadly disseminated; or (iii) contributing to a shared understanding of the major challenges facing Africa, a little over two thirds (2/3) of survey respondents (66, 65 and 67% respectively) tended to rate the performance of their respective WGs relatively high on a scale of 1 to 5, indicating that they either agreed or strongly agreed with the statements. However, when asked to assess their performance in terms of the extent to which their WG was (i) contributing to a better regional /

Selected Examples of Technical Assistance/ Contributions Cited in WG Survey
"Multigrade Teacher training provided at regional level" … and "integrated by various MoE" including "Botswana" and "Namibia"
"WGHE technical assistance to university networks including the Association of African Universities, REESAO, AU Commission, and Regional Economic Communities.
"COMED involved in training education journalists and Ministry of Education officials"
"Development of the SADC Norms and Standards for EMIS" / "EMIS assistance to MOE in Ghana… and … Zanzibar"
"Formulation d'une politique intégrée dans deux pays"
"ADEA ECDWG supported Tanzania ECD Network conduct a baseline survey of ECD service providers"
"Workshops on tools for teacher development in West Africa"
"HIV/AIDS Tool Kit now being used by institutions of higher learning throughout the continent"
"Policy dialogue" leading multilateral "framework on Contract Teachers"

continental integration of the education sector, (ii) producing knowledge/lessons learned in critical areas, or (iii) providing contributions that affected educational policy, affirmative responses fell below the 2/3 majority to 57% and (2x) 60% respectively. While responses remained positive overall, they nevertheless point to the fact that on any given issue, at least a third or more of respondents either disagreed or had mixed views on the actual contributions of WGs. This may in part help answer why several survey respondents indicated that their own WGs have neither been very active nor specifically involved in providing technical assistance in recent years. The adjacent Text Box highlights some of the contributions noted by WG survey respondents.

Interviews with donor representatives, Ministries of Education and partnering organizations largely support the perceptions of WG survey respondents. In a nutshell, the general view is that they are producing valuable work that supports the decision-making needs of African governments at the national and regional levels. However, the majority of ministers spoken to cautioned that the responsiveness of WGs to specific country and/or regional needs could be improved further still. But as ministers were apt to point out, the problem is not necessarily tied to the individual efforts of the WGs. Specifically, their concern lies in the fact that the WGs, and in particular their contributions to African educational development and role in providing technical assistance, are simply not well known. There is, in their opinion, a general lack of awareness of what the WGs are, what do and what they can offer at the country or regional-level.

Consequently, the use of WG technical assistance and their respective contributions could be improved further still if more effort was placed into communicating the work of the Association (i.e., improve outreach).[17]

While on the surface donor representatives felt that WGs were making valuable contributions, many observed that the link between outputs produced and outcomes achieved was less clear. Moreover, donors raised a number of additional concerns that only help to cast further doubt on the performance of WGs, including: a seemingly generalized inability to spend allotted budgets; unclear functioning; activity reports that are difficult to read through; and an overly technical focus that tends to blur implications for policy. While not disputing the validity of donor concerns, our own analysis of available data indicates that the contributions of WGs are probably greater than what appearances may otherwise suggest.

As illustrated in the Tables of Results presented in Finding 6 above, WGs are indeed contributing to Africa's educational development and successfully doing so in wide range of topics at both the output and outcome levels. Moreover, the relatively modest rate of funding utilization is in large part attributable to the disbursement contingencies of funding agencies themselves and should not be construed as ineffectual programming efforts by WGs. Conditionalities such as the review of yearly audit and activity reports or reliance on differing calendar years and administrative requirements affect WG activities by limiting the availability of funds at any given point in time. While previous arrangements with UNESCO gave ADEA some flexibility for accessing funds in advance of anticipated disbursements, treasury rules with the AfDB prevent such temporary overdraft of available funds. Finally, as a network organization, ADEA works closely with a broad range of partners, which means that planned activities can sometimes be delayed or changed due to shifting agendas and priorities of partnering organizations and institutions.

Nevertheless, our analysis also corroborates many of the concerns expressed by donors. In most instances however, these can be related to a the unequal performance of WGs and the continued need to further improve the ability of the Association as a whole and the WGs in particular to better communicate and more effectively report on their contributions to longer term results

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[17] For further analysis on the issues that limit effectiveness, see Section 7 on Factors Affecting Performance.

Finding 9:   Overall, ADEA has implemented the key recommendations of the 2005 evaluation.

In spite of the tumultuous environment within which ADEA operated, the organisation managed to implement the majority of the recommendations made in the 2005 evaluation. ADEA staff and management made concerted efforts to incorporate the recommendations from last evaluation including developing a strategy, partnering with key African institutions, moving locations and managing operations during and after the move to Tunis. Exhibit 4.7 presents progress made in the implementation of the 2005 evaluation's recommendations.

Exhibit 4.7   Degree of implementation of the 2005 evaluation's recommendations.

Recommendations	Degree of implementation	Comments
The Steering Committee should clarify what type of organisational structure is most appropriate for ADEA's future development.	Being discussed	Our discussions with ADEA Senior Managers indicated that the structure issue is part of the ongoing discussions of ADEA. However, no specific decision to change the present structure has been made.
The Steering Committee should revisit its mode of operation in order to address important matters such as management oversight, decision-making, ownership and fiduciary responsibility.	Completed	An Executive Committee was created to provide operational oversight over the affairs of the Association, including management, fiduciary responsibilities, and operational decision-making capacities / authority.
In order to provide a greater sense of direction and focus, the Steering Committee, should ensure the development of a strategic plan and business plan to operationalize ADEA's vision, set clear expectations and monitor progress towards results.	Significant progress	MTSP developed in 2007 and implemented in 2008 Results Framework Revised in December 2009 with clearer performance indicators. Monitoring effectiveness remains an issue A viable business plan remains to be developed.
The Secretarial should be strengthened both in terms of its analytical contributions and logistical oversight functions. Resources attributed to the Secretariat should be commensurate with the expectations of ADEA's constituency.	Unchanged	Despite the additions of a knowledge management officer and budget and finance specialist (Sabine), the Secretariat's staffing complement, relative to its outreach capacity and specific programming needs has not changed.
The Steering Committee, with the support of IIEP, should modify its human resource procedures in order to regularize the status of Secretariat staff.	Adressed	The original issues that motivated the recommendation have changed with the transfer of ADEA to AfDB. However, the status of Secretariat staff remains an issue and though negotiations are underway to resolve concerns associated with grade recognition and compensation.
Over the course of the next year (2006), the Steering Committee should plan for the succession of Executive Secretary.	Completed	Jean-Marie Byll-Cataria assumed leadership of ADEA, successfully succeeding Mr. Mamadou Ndoye in a period marked by numerous changes in the evolution of the Association.
The Steering Committee, in collaboration with the Secretariat, should develop policy guidelines to improve dissemination of ADEA's work.	Partly done	Efforts have been made to improve the website, and to improve the quality of ADEA written documentation Communication, and in particular dissemination of learning remains ADEA's weakest link
The Steering Committee should carry out a feasibility study for the relocation of the Secretariat and a detailed cost-benefit analysis of the current arrangements with IIEP.	Completed	In 2007, the Secretariat was relocated to Tunisia under the auspices of the African Development Bank.

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4.3 Efficiency

Efficiency refers to how well ADEA uses its resources to meet its objectives. In this section we review ADEA's efficiency as perceived by stakeholders and through an analysis of budget items. Specifically, the major issues addressed in this section are summarized as follows:

1) The extent to which resource use by ADEA and its individual components is efficient.

2) The extent to which ADEA's activities offer a reasonable return.

3) The extent to which ADEA is perceived as being cost-effective.

4) What the major cost breakdowns of ADEA's work consist of.

Finding 10: Stakeholder feedback and budget data indicate that ADEA is a relatively lean organization that carefully manages administrative costs. Given ADEA's attention to programming efficiency and the substantial amount of in-kind contributions needed for its delivery, the return on investment regarding ADEA's activities appears reasonable.

Organizational efficiency is commonly defined in terms of cost per unit of output and measurement is made in terms of whether aggregated outputs represent a reasonable return on investment (Lusthaus et al., 2002). As noted above in the section on effectiveness, ADEA produces a wide range of outputs. Also, as documented in its annual reports to the Steering Committee and ongoing efforts to improve programme management (i.e. Strategic Objective 5), ADEA is also steadily increasing its capacity to keep track of related costs.

A network organization often is hampered by significant overhead costs. In ADEA's case, travel, multilingualism, communication[18] and so forth are significant cost drivers. Since 2005, Secretariat and overhead charges (i.e., administrative costing arrangements with host institution) have remained below 25% of the Association's annual budget (see Exhibit 4.8 below). In our experience with network organizations this is quite typical. ADEA maintains a relatively lean organizational structure with a bare minimum staffing arrangement consisting of only a handful of senior managers and operational or administrative staff (see text box Secretariat staffing). The efficient use of available resources is further supported by the AfDB, which provides essential accounting, reporting and HR services. If such services were to be borne by ADEA itself, administrative overhead costs would assuredly be much greater.

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Secretariat Staffing Arrangements

-Executive Secretary
-2 Educational Program Managers
-1 Communications Manager
-1 Publications Specialist
-1 Knowledge Management Specialist
-1 Budget and Financial Manager
-1 Administrator
-5 Support Staff
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The modest costing structure of the Secretariat is reiterated at the level of the working groups. While the latter receive the lion's share of general programming contributions (an average of 45% between 2005 and 2010 – see Exhibit 4.8), evidence provided by the Secretariat suggest that allocated resources are principally used to support relevant programming efforts. Although the tabulation of WG operating costs has only recently begun – implemented as part of 2011 program and budget – our preliminary analysis shows that overhead expenses account ranges from 15 to 25% of total WG costs. Still, no two WGs are alike. In response to their respective commitments and work programs, hosting arrangements, and geographic scope, the operating costs of WGs tend to differ in terms of their individual payroll expenses (e.g., number of experts hired – a direct programming cost and administrative staffing requirements), operating costs (e.g., the provision of in-kind housing arrangements versus monthly rent payments), and travel / communication expenses within and between regions. Most WGs rely on a compensated

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[18] Some communication expenses are program related—others are overhead.

coordinator and assistant to maintain core administrative functions. WG Steering Committees consisting of mostly volunteering experts are used to set strategic directions and ensure programming accountability.

Financial oversight of all WG-related disbursements is bounded by the strict rules and procedures of the AfDB. For WGs, the implications of the AfDB's control mechanisms are many: (i) contribution agreements for specific expenses are signed between ADEA and its WGs on the bases of approved annual programs and budgets; (ii) funds are disbursed in tranches on the basis of documented expenses; and (iii) on a monthly basis, WGs are required to produce a financial report with all expense receipts, which must first be validated and approved by the Secretariat before being submitted to the financial control of the AfDB. As a result, funding appropriations are subject to ongoing management oversight as opposed to year-end or quarterly accounting procedures common to most organizations. Finally, all ADEA related expenses are subject to an annual external audit. The use of such reports by many of ADEA's financial partners for the approval of yearly contributions provides an additional incentive for the careful and efficient management of available resources.

Given such safeguards for ensuring that WGs manage their financial resources as efficiently as possible, it is somewhat surprising to observe that little over half of WG survey respondents (54%) felt that resources were in fact managed efficiently. While only 15% of survey respondents actually believed that resources were not efficiently managed, 31% of respondents were either unsure (11% neither agreed nor disagreed) or simply did not know (20%) if this was indeed the case or not. These results suggests that WG steering committees are probably not as well briefed as they should on the financial management of their respective WGs and that more should be done to further financial oversight and improve programming efficiencies so that remaining resources may be put to more productive uses.

Exhibit 4.8   Table of annual income and cost distribution between 2005 and 2010

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Average	Percentage
Income								
Restricted Funds	4,995,277	2,048,064	3,998,097	2,060,563	2,466,851	3,985,700	3,259,092	**47%**
Unrestricted Funds	1,510,690	1,349,081	3,157,826	3,154,884	4,457,169	4,288,153	2,986,301	**43%**
Total Contributions	6,505,967	3,397,145	7,155,826	5,215,441	6,924,020	8,273,853	6,245,375	**90%**
Other Sources	172,208	154,793	101,660	275,225	178,130	3,342,634	704,108	**10%**
Total Income	**6,678,175**	**3,551,938**	**7,257,619**	**5,490,672**	**7,102,150**	**11,616,487**	**6,949,507**	100%
Expenditures								
Programming	1,475,547	1,337,298	1,364,063	1,903,691	1,603,673	3,320,142	1,834,069	**28%**
Secretariat	977,967	1,046,566	1,042,162	1,325,848	1,364,642	2,150,000	1,317,864	**20%**
Support to Working Groups	3,294,621	2,416,034	2,986,512	2,338,581	2,781,178	3,985,700	2,967,104	**45%**
Overhead	295,351	237,016	239,374	311,067	238,297	437,611	293,119	**4%**
Transfer to Reserve	-	503,691	539,273	39,790	59,622	59,622	200,333	**3%**
Total Expenditures	**6,043,486**	**5,540,605**	**6,171,384**	**5,918,977**	**6,057,812**	**10,083,453**	**6,635,953**	100%
Total Reserve	2,192,599	1,114,858	2,941,969	2,799,060	3,902,027	3,980,314	**2,821,805**	
Balance	634,689	(1,988,667)	1,086,235	(428,305)	1,044,338	1,533,034	**313,554**	

NOTES:

All figures are in $US Dollars

Estimates for 2010 drawn from approved program and budget - all other figures taken from audit reports

Other Sources of Income principally consist of carry-over from the previous financial year

Secretariat expenditures include personnel, missions, equiment/maintenance, and Chair since 2010

Overhead costs refer to the IIEP/AfDB administration charge

Transfer to Reserve is a due diligence requirement consisting of a security for severance pay and liquidation of ADEA in case of dissolution

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Further to ongoing efforts to maintain internal programming efficiencies, achievement of ADEA's work programme would be nearly impossible were it not for the wide range of in-kind support it receives from partnering organizations, educational experts and ministerial bodies. For instance, Burkina Faso plays a leading role in supporting the work of the WG on non-formal education; Mauritius supports the WG on Distance Education and Open Learning; Kenya helped to establish and now supports the inter-country Quality Node on Peace Education and also plays host to the WG on Math and Science, South Africa supports the WG on Books and Learning; Côte d'Ivoire hosts the ICQN on technical and vocational skills development; and many others serve on Steering Committees or provide in-kind support in the form of technical experts to assist the work of WGs, focal points or nodes. As important in this respect are the contributions emanating from partnering agencies and organizations based in Africa and elsewhere that either host or lead working group efforts such as the AU which is hosting the WG on Higher Education. The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Africa (BREDA) hosts the WG on Early Childhood Development and plays an active role in supporting the WG on Open Learning and Distance Education; READ International hosts the Working Group on Books and Learning Materials and the West African News-Media and Development Center hosts the WG on Communication for Education and Development. While the evidence used to draw this preliminary account of in-kind contributions was derived from available documentation, ADEA does not yet document such support itself, nor does it use any quantifiable means of approximating its overall value. Nevertheless, given ADEA's relatively large number of outputs and evidence of results achieved at the outcome level (see previous section on Effectiveness), modest overhead to expenditure ratio and the substantial amount of in-kind contributions needed to support its work, ADEA appears to be an efficiently managed organization.

Finding 11: Anecdotal data suggest that ADEA's ability to affect change at the policy level harbours significant leverage with respect to both increased outcomes and decreased costs for those willing to invest in Africa's educational development. Unfortunately, the data available to this review was insufficient to develop a more thorough analysis of ADEA's cost-effectiveness.

By operating at the apex of African educational systems, ADEA's potential leverage is significant. Its ability to affect decisions at the policy level harbours the potential to yield the highest possible order of change. And the cost-effectiveness of system-level change can be significant. However, demonstrating value for money represents a complex undertaking and the requisite data to support such inferences can be costly or difficult to obtain. So although organizations often feel compelled to demonstrate the cost-effectiveness of their respective contributions, seldom will they have access to the data required for carrying out such assessments.

Demonstrating value for money at the outcome level implies an ability to compare the relative cost of a given change of policy or behaviour with its consequent payoff. The problem that arises with cost-effective analysis in organizations such ADEA is that changes at the policy level are seldom attributable to a single point source and achievement of such results can unfold over a relatively long period of time. Nevertheless, building ministerial capacities to execute their work more effectively, generating agreements on key priority areas, and providing a dynamic environment where ministers can openly discuss emerging issues or engage with others to find durable solutions to the problems they face are all indicative measures of ADEA's effectiveness. According to interviewed ministries of education, a proximate means of validating ADEA's cost-effectiveness undoubtedly rests in the uniqueness of its programming efforts, which make the Association the only organization of its kind to offer a forum for policy dialogue on Africa's educational development. By providing a venue where the international community and key African representatives can jointly discuss and address emerging educational issues, ADEA provides a framework for collective action that leverages substantial economies of scale and drastically reduce the high search and information costs that would otherwise prevail if everyone pursued independent strategies.

Given the difficult circumstances within which ADEA works, its ability to operate at the apex of change, and its demonstrated capacity to affect behaviours and institutions over time, ADEA's work can be broadly regarded as being cost-effective. Saving lives through HIV education, preventing wars via peace education, providing equal access for girl-child education, and aligning educational opportunities with the socioeconomic needs of Africa are but some examples of changes that can yield tremendous opportunities. Current efforts to improve performance management should help strengthen linkages between investments made and results achieved.

Finding 12: Despite ADEA's modest overhead cost structure and ongoing attention to efficiency, the evaluation identified a number of outstanding issues that risk increasing the relative costs of ADEA's contributions over the mid to long term.

Most of the opportunities that stand to increase ADEA's leverage also have the potential to increase related transaction costs. Among some of the more compelling cost drivers that ADEA will need to address, as it moves forward with its efforts to broaden its outreach to the whole of Africa, are the issues of operating in multiple languages, strengthening the Association's ability to communicate more effectively to an increasingly diverse and widespread audience and the means used to ensure allocative efficiency.

Communication – To increase its outreach and improve existing levels of communication, ADEA is working on ways to develop an appropriate balance between personal and virtual forms of interaction. Both have pros and cons. While face-to-face interaction can be costly to organize, in-person communication is often deemed crucial for building the trust and reciprocity that can lead to mutually productive relationships. On the other hand, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) can drastically reduce the cost of communication but can hardly be said to substitute itself for the synergy that naturally emerges from prolonged face-to-face interaction. Indeed, as any experienced individual might observe, informal networking opportunities and hallway discussions are as important if not more in helping to advance a cause or issue and generating stakeholder buy-in than the more formal venue for which individuals may have gathered. ICT is less conducive to developing the norms of trust and reciprocity that face-to-face interaction can more readily produce. Moreover, broadband internet access is problematic in many African regions and is most usefully adapted for issue specific discussions within a limited timeframe.

Related to the issue of balance between in-person interaction and reliance on ICT is the problem of strengthening communication ties between ADEA and country-level stakeholders. How can ADEA increase its presence on the ground without substantially increasing its organizational footprint or overhead to programming ratio? While there is a consensus amongst ministerial stakeholders that ADEA needs to do more to shore up its presence at the country level and develop more effective outreach and communication tools, there are currently no strategies in place to deal with this problem. Whether existing resources could be more efficiently allocated to increase ADEA's presence and influence throughout Africa (e.g., focal points and WGs) has yet to receive the attention it deserves.

Finally related to the issue of communication is the important matter of travel costs, especially in such a large continent as Africa, where travel is not only costly but also problematic even for countries within the same region. Given the demand observed during the course of this evaluation for increased outreach on the part of ADEA, travel costs stand to seriously impede the Association's capacity to meet the emergent needs of its constituencies especially with respect to the demand for greater presence at the country and regional level. ADEA will inevitably need to investigate alternative strategies for overcoming this important cost barrier.

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Language – One of the cost drivers of international organizations is working in multiple languages. To date, ADEA has primarily operated in both French and English. However, in a bid to better represent the interests of its broadening constituencies and support its commitment to developing a continent-wide approach, ADEA recently decided to operate in four languages (English, French, Portuguese and Arabic). While this will invariably increase ADEA's transaction costs, it remains unclear how it plans to actually achieve such a multilingual status. Maintaining allocative efficiency in a multilingual setting can be challenging. As it moves to become more "African relevant", ADEA will inevitably be confronted with additional cost factors. At present, the Association does not have a strategy for addressing such emerging concerns.

Allocation of resources – Since 2005, WGs have received 45% of ADEA's total income on an annual basis. Financial data drawn from the last five years show that resources are not distributed equally amongst existing WGs (i.e., some groups receive more than others). While it is known that resource allocations are tied to the 2008-2012 mid-term strategic plan, the exact nature of this allocative process remains unclear, as do the criteria for determining the amount of resources that each receives. At issue is whether allocated resources are clearly aligned with ADEA's mission and support those activities that stand to further ADEA's influence or leverage policy change. On average, annual rates of disbursements by WGs rarely exceed 70% of allocated resources. And yet, other than the annual Steering Committee meeting, there appears to be no clear process for vetting and approving annual WG workplans. When Ministers and donors were asked how they set priority areas for WG contributions, answers invariably reverted to the lack of time or appropriate means for pursuing such issues within the framework of either the Bureau of Ministers or the Steering Committee itself. When combined with the lack of clarity regarding progress towards change, the issue of whether resources are allocated along well defined efficiency standards or the clear strategic input of key decision-makers remains difficult to say.

4.4 Financial Viability

Financial viability concerns itself with ADEA's ability to maintain its long-term financial health. In this section we explore ADEA's sustainability in the mid and long term. The key issues addressed in this section are summarized as follows:

1) The extent to which ADEA is successful in raising financial resources in alignment with its stated objectives;

2) Whether ADEA's business model appears to be reasonably sustainable over the mid to long-term future;

3) The extent to which ADEA's programming efforts are affected, positively or negatively, by existing and emerging sources of funding;

4) Whether ADEA has succeeded in diversifying its pool of donors and maintaining the commitment of existing financial partners;

5) The extent to which African ministries of education are willing and able to fund ADEA.

Finding 13: ADEA has generally been successful in raising the income it needed to support the implementation of its programme. However, donor priorities appear to be shifting and the sustainability of ADEA's business model seems more at risk than at earlier times in its history.

ADEA's approach to funding its work (i.e., its business model) is, in general, to seek out financial support from foreign donors. As a result, most of ADEA's funding is derived from the support of international donor agencies and multilateral organizations such as the World Bank and AfDB. While overall funding commitments have edged slightly upwards since 2005, ADEA's long term financial viability appears to be more at risk today than at any other time in its history. For even though the Association has been successful in raising financial resources in alignment with its stated objectives and securing a greater share of unrestricted sources of funding (see Exhibit 4.10 below), increasing donor pressure to demonstrate results at the outcome level now threaten the its viability with conditionalities that may be difficult to substantiate within the current annual funding cycle.

Interviews with ADEA's financial partners point to serious concerns regarding the medium to long-term prospects of ongoing donor support. As emphasized in a number of recent agreements (e.g., Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action), the international development community has taken a decisive shift over the last several years in favour of more direct bilateral support and demonstrable results. Nowadays, the need to demonstrate change undergirds most funding commitments. For organizations involved in system-level change however, this trend is worrisome. Change at the policy level can take years to ferment and seldom will it be possible for any one group to claim its attribution.

Exhibit 4.9 Trends in Contributions & Expenditures from 1992 to 2009 (Source: ADEA 2009 Activity Report)[19]

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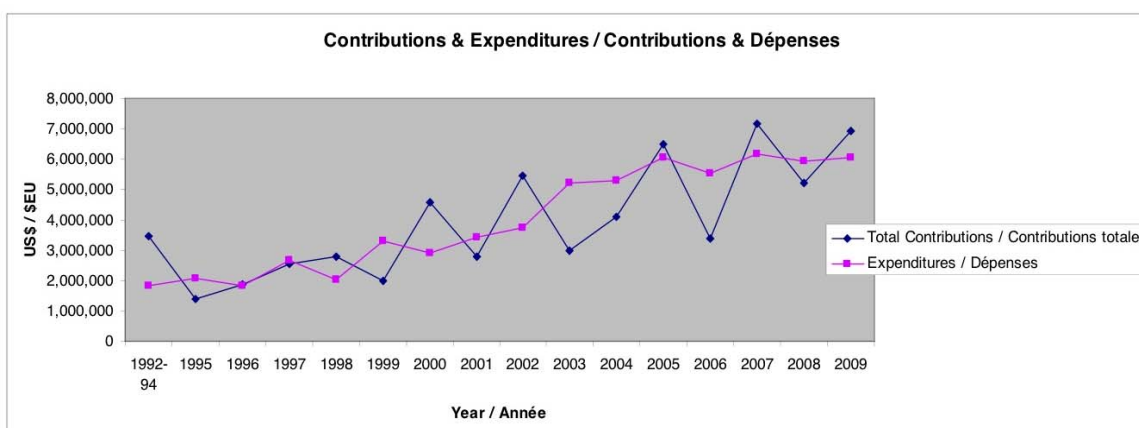
[19] Lower income figures for 2006 and 2008 can be explained by the fact that annual contributions had not been received in the calendar year, but in the following year. The level of contributions has been constantly increasing over the past years.

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Exhibit 4.10 Trends in Restricted vs. Unrestricted Donor Contributions to ADEA[20] (Source: ADEA 2009 Activity Report)
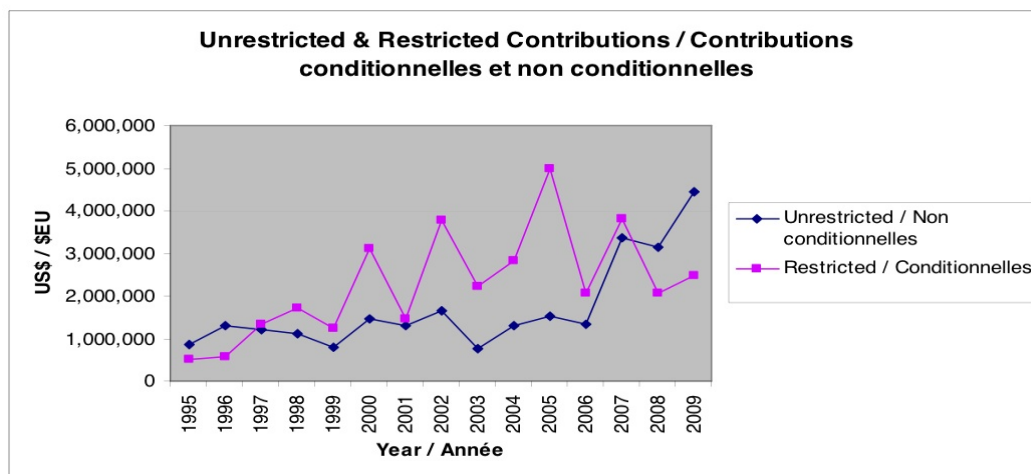
To counter this pattern and secure its financial future, ADEA has begun to engage with new prospective donors countries (e.g. Korea), Foundations and the private sector.[21] Although this business model has successfully served ADEA's needs in the past, our initial assessment of this approach suggests the need for caution. In general, we find that successful business models are those that try to link client demand for products and services with funding requirements. In ADEA's case, the business model is driven by a third party structure that is willing to pay (up to a certain point) for the products and services demanded by its core clients, namely African Ministries of Education. The problem is that "third parties" are notoriously fickle and often motivated to substitute their own priorities for those of the targeted beneficiaries. And in an environment where the priorities of the international donor community appear to be increasingly at odds with efforts to derive system-level change, "third party" pressure can be expected to affect the investment priorities of organizations such as ADEA. Consequently, current efforts to replace outgoing donors may be viable course of action for meeting the Association's short term needs but might not be appropriate for addressing its longer-term requirements.

Finding 14: Donor contributions to ADEA have fluctuated widely over the years and will likely diminish in the mid to long-term future in response to the global economic context and the growing demand for more tangible results. As a result, more attention is being paid to new donors and new approaches.

As observed earlier, overall donor contributions to ADEA have increased slightly between 2005 and 2009 (from $ 6,505,967 to $ 6,924,020 USD). However, much of this progress occurred in the midst of significant yearly variation in total funding commitments. According to our analysis of available financial data, the Association's most important donors between 2006 and 2009 (see Exhibit 4.11 below) consisted of CIDA, the Netherlands, the World Bank and Africa Region Education Program Development Fund

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[20] The rise of unrestricted core funding is consistent with ongoing trends towards more direct forms of bilateral support. Put differently, it suggests increasing donor confidence in ADEA's ability to allocate resources efficiently and in alignment with its stated objectives.

[21] ADEA plans to invite foundations (e.g., the Wise Foundation of Qatar) and the private sector (e.g., multinational corporations associated with Private Investors for Africa or members of the Conférence permanente des chambres consulaires africaines francophones) to contribute to the discussions that will be used to inform the Triennial, thus providing a doorway for investigating areas of potential collaboration and financial partnerships in support of ADEA's work.

(EPDF), Irish Aid and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. Of the 31 donors solicited by ADEA during this period, only nine contributed every year, nine contributed on three of the four years, and six donors contributed only once.

Exhibit 4.11 Total funding by donors, 2006-2009
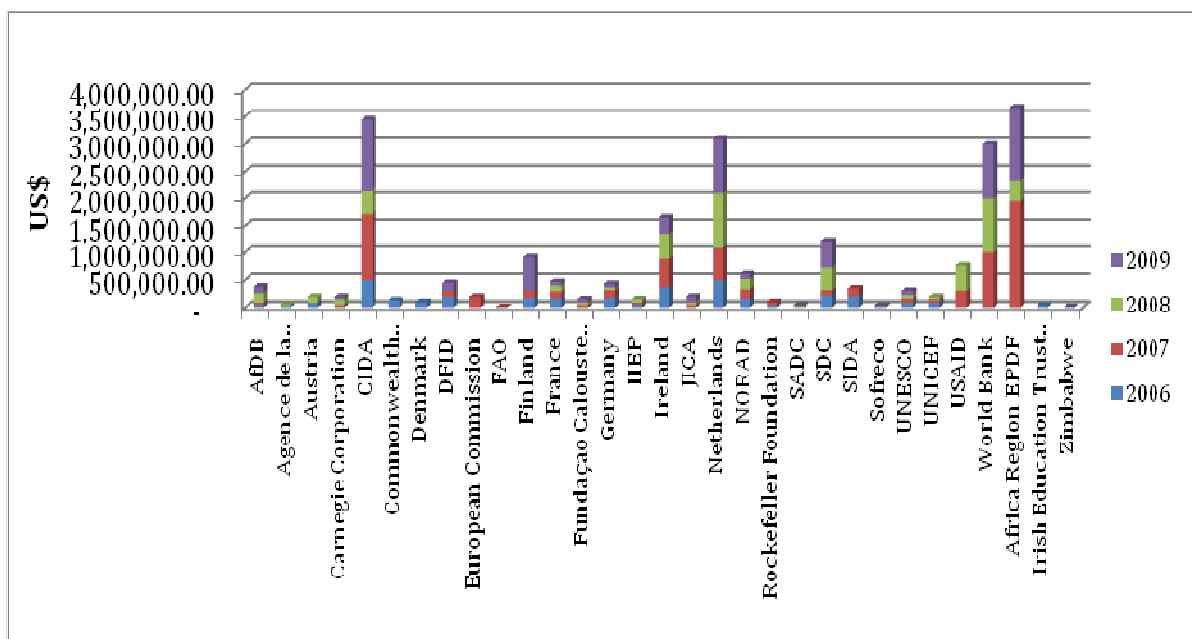
Until now, ADEA has been mostly successful in maintaining the trust and confidence of the donor community. However, in a climate of economic austerity, marked by rising demands for investment-linked results, donors appear to be increasingly inclined to reassess their rationale for supporting ADEA. This is likely to affect donor contribution to the Association over the mid to long-term future. Inevitably, donor representatives argue, if ADEA plans to maintain current funding commitments and increase the pool of potential supporters, it will need to better demonstrate its achievements and highlight its comparative value.

Since 2005, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) have all withdrawn their funding to ADEA and others are actively planning to reduce their support. Representatives from the World Bank, for instance, indicated that its annual contribution to ADEA is slated to decrease from its current $1 million to $100,000 between 2011 and 2015 due to internal shifts in World Bank's priorities. In discussing these events, some donor representatives speculated on the worrisome nature of such loses, even suggesting that they "undermine the credibility of ADEA" and "seriously weaken its position".

> We do not have the means of assessing the value for money; it is not possible, at present, for ADEA to report against well-defined criteria; attribution of results is likewise difficult. Our aid budget is being cut and unless we can prove the practical value of our investment in ADEA, this will likely be cut as well. – Donor representative

The "shadow of departures", as one stakeholder put it, and the subsequent difficulty of recruiting new donor support have shaken the confidence of those that remain. And according to both current and past donor representatives, the reason for discontinuing financial support appears to be a unanimous concern: agency support for organizations like ADEA and for policy dialogue in general is becoming increasingly difficult to secure. When coupled with the increasing budgetary restrictions and the rising demand for demonstrable results, ADEA's financial viability appears to be increasingly at risk.

Interviews with ADEA senior managers point to an acute awareness of the situation. As discussed previously, efforts to mobilize and diversify ADEA's sources of income are well underway, with such countries as Korea and China, as well as philanthropic foundations and the private sector. For now, it is premature to say what the results of this campaign will be but it does offer a convenient solution to a complex and longer-term problem. And in the absence of any shared willingness on the part of African stakeholders to pick-up some of the costs for maintaining ADEA (see Finding 15 below), alternatives to this strategy appear to be somewhat limited at this point in time.

> Although our education department sees the value of ADEA, there is less of an appetite for meetings and justification for such expenses is getting increasingly difficult to make. – Donor representative

Nevertheless, recent funding trends (see Exhibit 4.12 below) point to an increasing confidence in ADEA's ability to allocate resources efficiently. As shown below, unrestricted donor contributions (e.g. "Additional Funding") has grown consistently over the past five years, thus granting ADEA the discretionary authority and flexibility it needs to better coordinate internal resource use and address its programming requirements as required.

Exhibit 4.12 Resources / Allocations to ADEA Funding Categories for 2006 to 2009 (Source: ADEA Activity Reports)
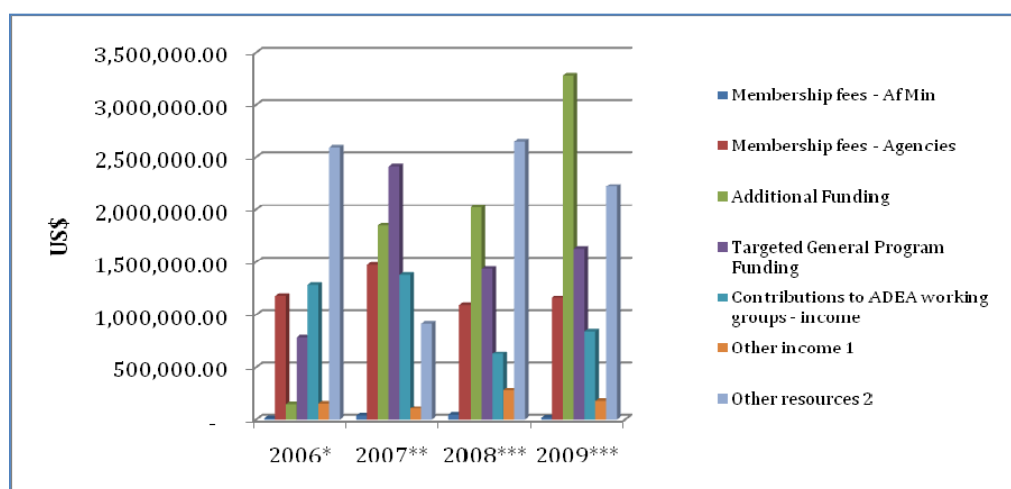
Membership fees for African Ministries of Education are set at a minimum of USD $2,500. Payment of such dues varies considerably on yearly basis. As noted in Section 7.14 of the 2009 Steering Committee report, less than half (22 in the example cited) of the 53 eligible countries actually submit annual contributions to ADEA, and few are those that consistently remit their dues year after year.

Membership fees for Donor Agencies Annual membership fee for funding agencies is set at a minimum of USD50,000. A number of agencies contribute USD100,000. In addition, agencies contribute to the basket with an additional (non-restricted) contribution.

Additional Funding consist of unrestricted donor contributions and form part of the total basket funds that are available to ADEA. CIDA, Ireland and the Netherlands are the leading contributors to this type of funding.

Targeted General Program Funding consist of dedicated resources reserved for general or targeted program activities only, and not for use by WGs.

Contributions to Working Groups consist of targeted resource allocations provided to WGs. Allocated resources may be dedicated to specific WGs, target a selected number of groups or shared equally amongst all active WGs. The World Bank and the Africa Region EPDF significantly contribute to ADEA working groups.

Other Income 1 includes recovery of staff costs, reimbursement of other services; publications sales; other income; bank interest; gain on currency exchanges; and currency exchange adjustment.

Other Income 2 includes savings on prior year's obligations; carry-over from previous year; adjustments from previous year; and provision for ULOs (unliquidated obligations)

Finding 15: While there is general agreement amongst Ministries of education that more should be done to ensure that countries pay their annual membership fees to ADEA, the idea that country members should assume a greater share of the Association's operational and programming costs was viewed as unrealistic by most ministers. However, showing ownership is key to financial viability.

African Ministers of Education are significantly involved in driving ADEA's agenda and processes on educational issues, but have not taken responsibility for the provisioning costs associated with the maintenance of ADEA. For the most part, the collection of dues from member countries is problematic.

Few countries have ever been motivated to make additional financial contributions and ADEA continues to rely heavily on donor support for its survival. While many member countries provide in-kind support that is crucial to the delivery of ADEA's work (see Finding 10 above), such contributions are not sufficient to ensure the survival of ADEA.

Membership dues for countries are set at US $2,500 per year and even if all 53 potential country participants paid their dues, it would yield only $132,500 annually. While membership dues appear to be more symbolic than anything else, it remains that in any given year, only 22 or so countries are ever solicited for their annual contributions and of these, only a handful have shown themselves to be consistent in the remittance of their dues. Between 2006 and 2009, little more than half of ADEA member countries paid their membership dues on an annual basis.[22] The reasons for such a poor showing do not rest with the countries alone – the Association as a whole also bears some of the responsibility. Readers should recall that ADEA began as a donors group committed to improving educational outcomes in Africa. As such, it never actively sought to develop a sense of institutional ownership at the country level.

As emphasised in numerous instances already, all donors expressed concerns regarding the Association's reliance on the international community to support the provisioning costs of ADEA and the consequent imbalance this has created between country beneficiaries and those that bear its maintenance costs. Pointing to the relatively timid appropriation of ADEA by African stakeholders, ministry representatives tended to accept the idea that individual country contributions could potentially be increased slightly and that more ought to be done to get delinquent member countries to pay their annual dues (see adjacent text box).

« *Nous devons augmenter nos contributions respectives de $2500/année, une somme dérisoire lorsque l'on calcul le coût versus les bénéfices. L'Afrique doit augmenter sa part. L'ADEA nécessite une plus grande marge de manouvre. Il s'agit d'une structure unique et l'indépendance de cette structure doit être comprise par tous les partenaires.* » - Response from an African Minister of Education.

However, the vast majority of interviewed African representatives, including members of the AU and Ministries of Education, were of the opinion that any additional funding commitments would greatly exceed their available means. In this regard, they argued that ADEA was created as an international body – a convening platform for policy dialogue between donors committed to improving educational outcomes in Africa and African ministries of education. And since most African Ministries of Education are partly or wholly dependent on official development assistance to support their own initiatives at the country level, the idea of an "African-financed" ADEA makes little if any sense to most African stakeholders.

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[22] According to the Evaluation Team's analysis of available data, Mauritius is the only country that has consistently paid its membership fees between 2006 to 2009 inclusively, and only five countries (Botswana, Mozambique, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of South Africa, Republic of Togo) paid dues for at least three years.

In the end however, the financing issue – according to many respondents from all sides of the debate – is essentially an ideological problem and most encourage ADEA to reflect on how it can better advocate to all its members the need to maintain and even increase their respective contributions. However, both donor and AU respondents noted that there is no mechanism in place to enforce member compliance and that the current honour system is not working – either in the collection of annual dues or in obtaining additional contributions from member countries.

The basic problem that ADEA now faces is akin to the classic dilemma associated with the production of public goods. As a resource that is non-substractable and yet accessible to all, users of the services provided by ADEA face strong incentives to withhold or limit their respective contributions and effectively free ride on contributions of others. The solution therefore lies in developing a business model that more closely link the demand side of ADEA with the supply side. In other words, if African states see ADEA as a key mechanism for ensuring the effectiveness of country-led education policies, then they should also be prepared to shoulder some of the costs associated with the provision of such services. The point here is that ADEA needs to do more, not only in trying to obtain "third party funding" but also to develop a business model that demonstrates that African Ministries are willing to buy ADEA's products and services. While ADEA's leadership has some ideas about how it might be able to address some of these issues (see adjacent box text), its strategy for increasing both the participation of African countries within the Steering Committee and a greater share of financial commitments from African stakeholders remains to be tested. In the opinion of the evaluators such a strategy, if agreed to by ministers, would be another clear indication of their support for ADEA and its work.

Strengthening African Commitment and Financial Support to ADEA

ADEA plans to invite African nations with a stable economic outlook to join the Steering Committee along the same terms and conditions as its current financial partners (i.e., annual contribution equal to $50,000 USD). If successful, the strategy should help strengthen African ownership and commitment over ADEA

5. Factors Affecting Performance

In the preceding section, ADEA's overall performance was considered in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and financial viability. The picture that is emerging from this analysis is positive with some areas of concern that will need to be considered in the near to midterm future. This section considers the actual factors that help explain our assessment of ADEA's performance. The issues addressed herein are linked to ADEA's organisational capacity (Lusthaus et al., 2002) and are structured along the following thematic areas: (i) Strategic leadership; (ii) Organisational structure; (iii) Financial management; (iv) Program management; (v) Partnerships; and (vi) Organisational processes.

5.1 Strategic Leadership

Finding 16: The strategic leadership capacity of ADEA has been instrumental in setting directions managing change and supporting the achievement of results.

Strategic leadership deals with the extent to which ADEA is effective at setting directions, developing thorough plans, marshalling support for its work, managing the development of its resources, ensuring tasks are done, and managing its culture towards mutually productive ends. Evidence drawn from collated data suggests that ADEA has done outstanding work on all of these fronts.

Over the past five years, ADEA has reinforced its comparative advantage within the African educational development context by developing an ambitious program and set of strategic objectives that bridge the interests of a wide range stakeholders and establish a clear directional focus for addressing the major challenges facing African education development. And to its credit, it has successfully done so in the midst of major changes in the life of the organization, including the relocation of the Secretariat from Paris to Tunis, the formal transfer of senior leadership, and major shift in its programming structure towards greater accountability. Throughout, ADEA has remained remarkably focused on achieving its mission. It has delivered results at the output and outcome levels that largely exceed the expectations voiced by donor representatives and based on the Association's current standing relative to its perceived relevance and strategic niche, it appears to be uniquely positioned to affect even greater influence over the educational development of Africa.

> "ADEA gives the right environment to work. There is good leadership from the Executive Secretary who is flexible, humane, and supportive."
>
> (WG coordinator)

5.2 Organisational Structure

5.2.1 Governance

Finding 17: ADEA's governing structure has effectively served the Association and provided the guidance necessary for its development. However, the continued push towards the Africanization of ADEA will require greater involvement of senior educational leaders. This is a key challenge for the future of ADEA.

The governance function of ADEA is widely regarded as being adequate for supporting its needs. The ability of ADEA's governing bodies (e.g., Steering Committee and Bureau of Ministers) to provide strategic oversight, set firm directions, keep track of the changing context, and address emerging issues have successfully served the Association up to now. However, the historical context within which ADEA was created and the framework of association that leant meaning to the actions of the donor community and African Ministries of Education appears to be changing. In short, the concerns raised during this evaluation suggest that value proposition that has until now supported ADEA's mission and mandate may no longer

be appropriate or sufficient to address the changing expectations of its key constituencies. Regardless of the direction that ADEA will actually follow in the mid to long-term future, the paramount governance issue that the Association must now grapple with is who will drive this change. If African leaders are to have a stronger voice in setting the directions that will best serve their interests and create enabling conditions that compel donors to become active partners of a dynamic process, then they will likewise need to demonstrate greater ownership over the issues that concern them most and a willingness to assume far greater leadership responsibilities. How to give Africa a greater voice in setting ADEA's strategic priorities and in driving change, especially in the context of high turnover rates within African ministries of education and mute responses to past invitations to assume key leadership functions within ADEA is nothing short of a significant challenge.[23]

ADEA has recently undertaken an impressive number of changes that have yet to be fully consolidated. Between 2005-2010, ADEA has (i) transferred the Secretariat from Paris to Tunis, (ii) developed and adopted an ambitious work program (2008-2012 MTSP), (iii) undergone a formal change of leadership, (iv) introduced an Executive Committee to assume fiduciary responsibility and administrative oversight, and (v) integrated results-based management tools leading to the development of annual workplans and an explicit efforts to monitor results. Moreover, the withdrawal of important donor support during this period effectively forced ADEA to seek out additional sources of funding to maintain its financial viability and capacity to deliver its programme. Taken together, these elements point to a governance and operational structure that has shown itself to be both flexible and strong. Though the shift from a donor-driven governance system to an African-led initiative has begun to occur, the paradigm change that was set in motion with the Secretariat's move to Africa has been slow to progress.

In the wake of this ongoing transformation and the uncertain outcomes that await its subsequent development is the more immediate concern of reassessing the soundness of ADEA's value proposition in the wake of shifting stakeholder priorities. As the principle agents tasked with governing the affairs of the Association, the Steering Committee and Bureau of Ministers ultimately hold responsibility for guiding its work and ensuring that linkages between ADEA's mandate, mission, programme and result expectations are clearly articulated. However, when asked how the Bureau of Ministers or the Steering Committee set priorities, flag emerging issues or discuss areas of concern, responses from ministers and donor representatives tended to be evasive: "there are so many things to do", "our agenda is set-up in advance", "we seldom have the time to discuss such issues", or "meetings can be very time consuming and not always productive." Moreover, several donors expressed concern regarding the adequacy of the Steering Committee for meeting the long-term strategic needs of ADEA, which they viewed as being overrepresented by administrators and managers instead of more strategic thinking people and specialists.

For MoE however, the issues that need to be grappled with are those that relate to continuity and representation. While some ministers benefit from enough stability to maintain their respective commitments to the work ADEA, high turnover rates and the challenge of finding skilled representatives remain problematic concerns. As a result, the Bureau appears to be somewhat less effective in terms of driving the strategy and development of ADEA relative to the key issues that concern ministers. This calls for possibly rethinking the role that permanent secretaries or other senior educational leaders might play in the governance as well as programmatic policy of ADEA.

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[23] A case in point regarding the difficulty of fermenting strong African responses to the call for greater ownership over the future of ADEA is the recent struggle to find a suitable candidate to serve as Chair of the Association, a position that was ultimately taken-up by the very able Mr. Dzingai Mutumbuka, only because no one else wanted to assume such responsibilities.

5.2.2 Operating Structure

Finding 18: ADEA's operating structure is comparable to other international network-like organizations and it is engaging in practices that should improve its operations and alignment with the needs of the MTSP. However, efforts to standardize procedures and re-structure program components need to be balanced with the Secretariat's modest capacity. The role and contribution of focal points remain unclear and difficult to measure.

Adoption of the 2008-2012 MTSP and the subsequent integration of results-based management tools linked to workplanning, monitoring and reporting have helped to strengthen coordination within the Association. In doing so, ADEA developed a core structural element that now serves as a valuable anchor for its network-like structure and means of ensuring greater accountability. However, attempts to improve management oversight and exact greater control over organizational processes have likewise exposed the inherent limitations of the Secretariat's capacity. The MTSP remains relatively broad in scope (built around five major strategic objectives) and in the absence of more professional support within the Secretariat or formal decision-making mechanisms to set priorities and strategically focus its work, resources are bound to be overdrawn and some issues will inevitably be ignored.

According to many stakeholders, one of ADEA's key assets lies in its streamlined horizontal structure. While some senior members of the Secretariat argue that such a structure helps create a more collaborative working environment and prevent the development of counterproductive tensions, the Secretariat's small size and modest resource capacity also implies that it can become quickly overstretched. Ongoing efforts to standardize procedures (e.g., operating manuals, programming procedures, Human resources (HR) and finances) and increase the Association's language capacity (to include Portuguese and Arabic) were viewed positively by nearly everyone spoken to, but as

> **SEAMEO – A Different Approach to Developing a Network-like Operating Structure**
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> In contrast to the model developed by ADEA, SEAMEO pursued the idea of organizational decentralization to its logical end and created a network of independent centres of excellence bounded by a common Charter. Each Centre is underwritten by its respective host country, which in turn provides its host with a valuable research facility that attracts both scholars and investors. While each Centre is linked to the organizational structure of the Ministry of Education to which it is affiliated, the Centres are designed to service the needs of all regional member states. Hence, even though ministries play a key role in driving the agenda of the Centres that are housed under their auspices, they also have an inherent interest in maintaining the relevance and viability of their Centres by supporting the needs of member states.
>
> The SEAMEO Secretariat is responsible for upholding the Charter and for executing the decisions of its governing Council. It coordinates activities and joint events between the Centres, raises and manages funds, organizes meetings and conferences, acts as convening platform for discussing policy issues and serves as a conduit between Council and the Centres. The Secretariat is supported by a staffing complement of nearly 30 individuals, including four programming officers and three senior managers (director and deputy directors).
>
> While the SEAMEO model provides an interesting alternative for developing a sustainable network-like structure, the transferability of such experiences to the African context and ADEA in particular entails a number of limitations that warrant further analysis. The basic lesson for ADEA is that developing a sustainable operational structure for Africa that likewise supports its core business and unique assets requires experimentation and careful consideration of the limits and possibilities of the theory of change that underpins its unique character and strategic niche.

several donor representatives and members of the Secretariat pointed out, such initiatives could easily outpace the Association's flexibility and in the process, render it too bureaucratic and unresponsive to changes in its external and internal environments. This, as one Secretariat staff pointed out, could be particularly problematic for an organization that prides itself on informality. Overburdening ADEA in systems could negatively affect its ability to create trust-building environments, strengthen institutional ties and communication efforts, and facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences.

In other instances however, decisions to maintain a lean architecture are pursued in the absence of any definitive data on costs and benefits. A case in point is the recommendation of the Steering Committee that there be no head of department for Finance and Administration . This was recommended because of the different way finances and administration are managed at the AfDB (as compared to IIEP) and because it was felt that there was a need to strengthen the Secretariat with more bodies to do the work , which it was felt would be more useful than appointing a Finance and Administrative Manager. Some members of the Secretariat observed however that they were unclear what the implied costs and benefits of any additional layer would be. Further, the distinction between the finance and accounting services that the AfDB provides and the role of the Secretariat's finance and budget officer is not entirely clear. Adopting some means of piloting operational tools and management procedures that require low upfront investments could prove helpful for assessing the benefits of some standardization efforts. Likewise, more should be done to assess the positive experiences of other organisations such as the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) (see text box in this finding).

While ADEA has made efforts to clarify the roles and responsibilities of core components, improve coordination of both operational and governance structures, and strengthen communication and reporting (e.g., lines of authority), several donors and ministers noted that ADEA's overall structure and functioning remained largely unclear to them. Specifically, evaluation respondents were of the opinion that ADEA's operational structure, relative to the specific contributions that each segment or component brings to the Association, could be better communicated and more clearly exposed. To this end, linkages between countries and focal points were seen as particularly problematic. The role, function and contribution of focal points remain unclear and their overall effectiveness and usefulness are difficult to measure. While in principle focal points were intended to serve as a bridge between ADEA and Ministers at the country level – receiving information from either constituencies and dispatching it to the most appropriate audience – their effectiveness was considered variable by Ministers of Education that were interviewed and those donors that had some knowledge of their expected role. The utility of focal points appears to be more evident in cases where they are appointed by the ministry in consultation with ADEA, as opposed to when ministries take decisions unilaterally or when focal points also serve the interests of other organizations.

Finally, the move from Biennial Meetings to the newly adopted format of Triennial Meetings was essentially motivated by the costs associated with planning, organizing and delivering such large scale events – especially for a relatively small unit such as the ADEA Secretariat – and the need for more time to implement the recommendations and findings of the Biennales/ Triennials. Distancing these continental events would provide more time for preparation, allow organizers to strengthen the proposed program, reduce transaction costs and improve rates of participation and attendance. However, the link between such large-scale events and ADEA's newly adopted four year programming cycle is unclear. As suggested by this brief analysis, biennials and now triennials are expensive fairs and setting up such events stands to increasingly consume the time, energy and focus of its main protagonists (i.e., the Secretariat). The problem we see emerging is that overall responsibility for the planning, development and implementation of subsequent medium term strategic plans also falls upon the same people. Though the 2011 Triennial follows closely the planned renewal of the programme in 2012, and is expected to play a key role in defining the priorities and objectives of the next programming cycle, the two will inevitably become out of synch in the future.

To get around such problematic circumstances and strengthen the coherence between programming and large conferences that mobilize all key constituencies, some organizations have found it useful to specifically link the two. For instance, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) ties the delivery and adoption of its programme to the four year Congress cycle that brings together all of its key stakeholders to discuss emerging issues and set the Union's priorities for the next four years. Given the mixed reactions that biennials attracted in this review, such that the fundamental purpose of the biennials was either unclear or insufficiently grounded, and the subsequent need to invest time and resources into the development of four year programming cycles, better coordination between these two fundamental

components of ADEA would appear to be in the Association's interests. Moreover, furthering the coherence between these large scale meetings and the adoption of ADEA's programme could also be used to leverage a greater show of ownership by African Ministries of Education – not only in terms of more active involvement in the life of the Association but also in terms of follow-through at the country level.

5.2.3 Working Groups

Finding 19: The process of harmonizing WG structural arrangements and coordination functions appears to be progressing reasonably well. However, more needs to be done.

There is, at present, a concerted effort within ADEA to fully integrate WGs within the folds of the Association, to improve overall coherence in terms of planning and implementation. Efforts to improve the structural alignment of WGs are generally perceived to be progressing well but the view of key stakeholders and WG survey respondents were mixed in regards to the adequacy of existing levels of achievement. External stakeholders observed that there continues to be a lack of uniformity across WGs (e.g., hosting arrangements, external donor support, coordinator status and privileges, etc.) and both ministers and donors agreed that more could be done to align the contributions of WGs with ADEA's programme and the AU's agenda. These issues are seen as problematic.

> Working Groups provide ADEA with a unique perspective on specific issues. They undertake exploratory work and examine ways to improve the performance in their specific domain. Although the Working Groups are all structured and managed in a different way they all carry out research, capacity building, advocacy and networking activities.
>
> *From ADEA pamphlet*

For the most part, WGs evolved in response to their individual hosting arrangements and the willingness of international donors to support their work. Until recently, the continuation and/or development of WGs were characterized by past and present donor representatives as being only partially conditioned by actual needs, levels of performance or linkages to clear result expectations. Adoption of the 2008 MTSP and in particular the June 2007 Recommendations on the Future of WGs have largely changed this earlier paradigm.[24] However, as stated above, the degree of progress made in the harmonization of WG performances and their structural alignment to ADEA attracted mixed responses. This finding deals with these perceptions and alternatively addresses the factors associated with the structural arrangements of WGs (e.g., hosting arrangements and linkages to ADEA or others), leadership functions (e.g., coordination), and implementation (e.g., membership participation).

Structural Arrangements

Structural considerations associated with hosting and funding arrangements as well as inter-institutional linkages between WGs and with the ADEA Secretariat are believed to affect the performance of WGs in a number of ways. According to the results of the WG survey, little more than half of respondents (52%) tended to agree with the proposition that arrangements between their WG and host institution provide enabling conditions for the implementation of their respective activities. However, over a third (34%) of those who responded to the same question either did not know or were unsure what the actual contributions of their hosting institution were. This is understandable, given that members of WG steering committees may not necessarily be aware of the role played by their respective host institutions. But whether or not these results point to more fundamental issues relative to institutional support or internal communications is unclear based on available evidence. Finally, less than a handful of survey comments were directed at hosting arrangements, mostly highlighting issues relevant to joint activities, financial and in-kind support, or host stability.

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[24] Ad hoc WGs were reportedly introduced as a way to deal with demands for ongoing support.

WG Survey Responses on the Need for Greater Decentralization of WG Authority and Responsibility

Do not try to centralize control of WGs. Let the WGs regulate their own work based on an agreed vision and annual action plans. Monitor results, not processes.

Strengthen the WGs to be independent with resource both human and financial to be able to specifically focus on their specific objectives

They need to become independent entities (but with a remaining ADEA linkage) so they really become African agents of change

Effective and supportive hosting arrangements are crucial to the development of working groups. And in an increasingly austere economic environment, hosting arrangements may provide a reasonable path towards the creation of structurally independent but programmatically linked research nodes or centers of excellence, as called for by several survey respondents and used by other network-based organizations such as SEAMEO (see relevant text box in this finding). Regardless of the motives underlying the development of stronger ties between hosting organizations and WGs, attention ought to be given to the maintenance of clear lines of accountability for the achievement programmatic objectives. While recognizing that the physical location of some WGs can substantially raise transactions costs, situations leading to the establishment of cooperative agreements with other centers or organizations should be done in the interest of strengthening outreach and programmatic efficiency only. The risk of creating multiple lines of accountability and leadership can negatively affect WG performance, as one survey respondent observed with respect to his own WG, and ADEA's overall programmatic interests.

With respect to the perceived adequacy of the relationship between WGs and the ADEA Secretariat, survey responses were mixed but positive overall. As such, more than three quarters of respondents (78%) viewed the ADEA Secretariat as a strategic partner, but when asked whether their WG was adequately supported by the Secretariat, only 63% of respondents answered

positively. Where linkages were thought to be weakest was in terms of communication with only 55% of respondents answering favourably.[25] Survey comments largely supported these responses. Notwithstanding the two positive comments that were made on the issue of Secretariat support, survey respondents felt that communication with the Secretariat and its responsiveness to the WGs could be improved. But in line with what several donors and ministers argued, some of the comments made also referenced the need to strengthen the Secretariat in order to improve its responsiveness and capacity to support the development of WGs.

Finally, our review of available documents uncovered numerous instances of cooperative efforts amongst the WGs themselves. Whereas WGs were once regarded as having evolved and developed independently of one another, evidence suggests that things are changing. For example, the WG on Early Childhood Development collaborated with the WG on Education

Selected WG Survey Quotes: Areas for Improving Linkages between WGs and the ADEA Secretariat

"Sometimes communication between the Secretariat and our WG is not as effective in terms of quick response or that responsive"

"Reduce the number and scope of activities carried out by the Secretariat, in order for the Secretariat staff, especially the program and finance staff to have more time to facilitate the work of the WGs which are gradually losing their steam"

"Communication / responsiveness from the secretariat can improve"

"More support from ADEA Secretariat"

"A stronger and more dedicated Secretariat with a more effective participation of focal points from the member states"

"The ADEA Secretariat has allowed the WG to continue in this beleaguered state. I would like to see the Secretariat take a more decisive role in solving problems in WGs"

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[25] As in previous instances, the weaker survey results for Secretariat-WG linkages were offset by a fairly large number of respondents (nearly a third) who indicated that they either did not know or were undecided, thus reflecting the fact that were probably not privy to such information.

Management and Policy Support for the development of indicators on early childhood, and again with the WG on Non-Formal Education on the issue of early childhood-mothers' education and parents' education. There were also synergies with the WG on Higher Education at the 6th International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) that was held in December of 2009. Similarly, the WG on Higher Education has, in recent years, solicited the input of WGs on Mathematics and Science, Communication and Teaching Profession. The WG on Education Management has also worked with the WG on Higher Education to help Zimbabwe develop instruments to collect and analyze data. Such synergies should be actively encouraged by the Secretariat and Steering Committee.

Leadership

As summarised by one participant to the Coordinator Focus Group Session, conducted by Universalia during the inception mission to this evaluation, "coordination is at the center. WGs are as good as the coordinators and degree of funding they obtain." Responses to the WG Survey on issues relating to coordination were again positive but cautious. Accordingly, 67% of respondents felt that WGs were effectively chaired and 61% believed that communication between WG members and their respective coordinators was effective. Key to good WG leadership, according to several respondents who underscored the contributions of their coordinator, are experience and credible expertise in the field, an ability to forge strong relationships amongst group members and thorough preparation for meetings. And while several respondents indicated that more effective and open leadership was needed in their specific situations, others pointed to the need to better support coordinators (see Text Box on Improving Coordination Function).

According to interviewed stakeholders who were more familiar with the internal dynamics of WGs (as past or present members or coordinators), the general impression was that WGs were doing good work under difficult circumstances. Coordinating an ambitious work program within a loosely organized and mostly volunteer group of experts is no small feat. Nevertheless, several donors raised the issue of coordinator entitlements, which, they argue, remains a key stumbling block to the harmonization and integration of WGs. The problem of entitlements emerged as a result of variable arrangements between host institutions and designated WG coordinators (on issues such as salaries, pensions and severance pay). While a Task Force assigned by the Executive Committee in 2009 to look into these problematic contractual issues was not able to find probable solutions due to the complexity of the underlying issues, the Executive Secretary observed during the 31st Session of the Steering Committee that a number of steps were being taken to resolve this urgent matter.

> **Selected WG Survey Quotes: Areas for Improving Coordination Function**
>
> *"In addition to setting objectives, we need strong leadership to achieve them"*
>
> *"The chairing of the WG has been affected by the rotation of Permanent Secretaries in Ministries of Education."*
>
> *"The Coordinator has too much to do. There is need to shed some weight to other officers"*
>
> *"Better coordination and follow-up between the …coordinator and the Secretariat"*
>
> *The WG has been run as a one-person shop. The Coordinator is taking decisions in the name of the group without any consultation with members. There is mistrust between the coordinator and members of the working group. We need a new coordinator."*
>
> *"Need to define the qualities and qualifications of the coordinator… someone who has credibility and integrity…in Africa"*

The significance of progress made since then on the harmonization of WGs and coordinator contractual arrangements in particular remains unclear. But according to some donors, the fundamental issues remain largely unresolved. For their part, some ministers pointed to the need to make WGs more dynamic by changing key actors every now and then. Training WG coordinators was likewise considered to be a potentially useful tool towards more effective leadership. To this end, the updating of the Procedure manual for WGs should provide a good first step.

Implementation

Lastly, the need for committed and knowledgeable individuals working collaboratively towards a common purpose was a key unexpected result of the WG survey. The positive trend, which was noted earlier on WG cooperation (see Structural Arrangements above) helps underscore the value of survey comments regarding the need to pay greater attention to the members. Without core groups of dedicated professionals who actively volunteer their time and energy to support the performance of WGs, the accomplishments of ADEA would be much diminished. As our experience with volunteer based research shows, the cohesiveness and consequent performance of epistemic communities tend to be tied not only to the group's leadership but perhaps more importantly, the group's commitment to a common cause, the existence or development of shared norms of trust and reciprocity, and the use of participatory or consensus-based decision-making processes. Further, even when there is a strong internal fit of competencies and commitment, the contexts within which WGs operate will often exercise a decisive influence on the relative performances of WGs.

As suggested by the comments presented in the adjacent text box, many of the key strengths supporting WG performance were tied to the commitment of its members, their technical skills and teamwork. Several respondents suggested that more should be done to strengthen the work of member at the regional level, provide training and further involvement of WG Steering Committee members in the activities and management of WG members. Of related interest to these concerns is how WG members are actually selected. Although 62% of survey respondents agreed to some extent with the proposition that the guidelines for selecting WG members were sufficiently well defined, a few respondents observed that these were either absent or arbitrarily applied (e.g., selection conducted by host institution or a Ministry of Education as opposed to a peer review processes).

Selected Survey Responses on Key Internal Strengths

"Excellent and committed members on Steering Committee"

"L'engagement de son noyau"

"It is transparent and consultative"

"Good leadership and teamwork"

"Technical skills of members"

"High level of commitment on the part of its members"

5.3 Financial Management

Finding 20: The management and control of ADEA finances was adequately transferred and remains well managed.

Two issues are worth noting with respect to the financial management of ADEA. First, the Association is in the process of becoming fully integrated within the AfDB SAP system. While just a small piece of a large organization, the SAP system creates a financial database system that will support any of the financial transaction requirements of donors or funders. Similarly, the system has both internal and external audit oversight. The use of such a system is a major savings for ADEA.

The second issue is more micro in terms of ADEA's official financial oversight but a major step in its ongoing efforts to improve accountability for the use of funding commitments and achievement of result. For functional and administrative reasons, ADEA officially relies on a line budgeting system to plan and report on its use of financial resources. Informally however, it has been working to develop a more accurate understanding of the costs of its activities, with the intent of strengthening planning efforts and improve existing operational efficiencies. Such efforts are aligned with best practice and constitute an important skill set for improving organizational performance. Ongoing efforts to improve the Association's ability to cost its work will ultimately enhance the soundness of its program – relative to the means at its disposal – and help it devise innovative strategies in the event of foreseeable shortfalls.

Finding 21: The hosting arrangement with AfDB has improved ADEA's financial and administrative management.

The move from IIEP to AfDB has had its ups and downs. On the positive side the integration into AfDB's SAP system (discussed above) has improved the management of financial resources and has resulted in audit reviews that are considered timelier. Compared with previous arrangements with IIEP, AfDB's oversight has reduced ADEA's transaction costs and sped-up reporting time. One issue to be worked out is the audits of hosting institutions. Since WG funds are sent to the hosting institutions responsible for allocating resources in accordance with ADEA's instructions, hosting institutions are therefore liable to the same auditing requirements as ADEA itself. The audit regime for host institutions is currently being developed by ADEA and the AfDB in collaboration with WG hosts. It has to be stressed that all WG expenditures are included in the annual external audit done via AfDB.

AfDB has also incorporated ADEA into its HR systems. This has had some difficulties. Despite an overall positive integration within the AfDB, contractual arrangements for Secretariat staff had not been duly negotiated prior to the transition from Paris to Tunis. In the week before the relocation of the Secretariat was to take place it was discovered that official staff titles had been lowered by several grades as a result of the hurried negotiation and the fact that UN organizations and the AfDB have different grading systems. While last minute negotiations allowed staff to retain their original entitlements (i.e., salary, pension plan and other employee benefits), grade levels were not adjusted. As a result, Secretariat staff under AfDB rules were not entitled to be considered for annual or performance based salary increases because their earnings already exceeded their official titles. Remedial measures involving the revision of job descriptions have been carried out.

Such issues are relatively common and although they may be troublesome to address, they remain short-term concern. The AfDB has also assisted ADEA with finding editors and printing companies that could support its communication and publication needs. And since AfDB also provides travel insurance to all payroll staff, the Secretariat, WG coordinators and members of their committees have since been encouraged to make all their travel arrangements through the AfDB. Overall, ADEA's relationship with the AfDB has so far yielded important benefits for the Association, including cost savings and valuable organizational support.

5.4 Program Management

Finding 22: ADEA has made significant progress in terms of aligning its work towards the achievement of its strategic objectives and the use of workplans to guide the annual programming efforts of individual components. However, result expectations for each of the strategic objectives have yet to be fully clarified.

ADEA has greatly improved its performance management capacity since 2005 and is on track for developing the tools and processes it will need to fully track and monitor progress towards planned outputs. Since the adoption of the 2008-2012 MTSP, ADEA and its working groups have been rigorous in documenting results achieved at the output level, but more will need to be done to monitor and report on results achieved at the outcome level. The adoption of a revised 'results framework' in December 2009 should help clarify ADEA's contributions. Notwithstanding these important developments and subsequent progress towards the achievement of the fifth strategic objective (dealing with performance management), a number of factors continue to limit ADEA's capacity to effectively plan, monitor and report on its work.

Interviewed stakeholders broadly considered the 2008-2012 MTSP to be a significant achievement and a major step towards improved planning, monitoring and reporting. The Association is commended by its key constituencies for streamlining the number of objectives and for aligning its work and the activities of the WGs in particular to the 2008-2012 MTSP. Workplans are now used by all of ADEA's components to guide annual contributions and the same instrument is used for monitoring purposes. However, donors were largely of the opinion that the 2008 strategic plan is too large and cumbersome to provide a meaningful plan of action. In their opinion, ADEA needed to develop a smarter set of indicators so that it could better manage and measure progress towards results. This led to the December 2009 revisions of the strategic framework, an improvement that only partially answers the original aspirations that led to its development.

The issue is that current workplans are insufficient for managing towards longer-term results because they are not tied to strategic performance frameworks that would allow them to do so. Put differently, it is impossible to tell, on the basis of available information, what ADEA and its individual WGs are actually working towards in the mid to long-term future. No answer is given to the proverbial question of "what are they trying to achieve," which is problematic. In the absence of clear results statements, it is impossible to measure progress because the direction of such efforts and the standard by which success ought to be determined are simply unclear. Granted, the 2007 Strategic Performance Framework contained an initial set of outcome statements, but the instrument itself was later dropped in favour of the more streamlined framework that was developed by members of the Steering Committee in 2009. Moreover, the earlier set of outcomes were seldom clear in terms of the actual changes they purported to measure (e.g., change expectations relative to behaviours and/or institutions), results for each of the five strategic objectives were difficult to differentiate and the revised set of indicators (e.g., December 15, 2009 version) appear to be unrelated to these earlier result aspirations.

These reflections were largely corroborated by WG survey results. When asked whether their individual WG relied on a workplan to guide the implementation of its activities, over 81% of respondents confirmed that this was being done to some extent. But when asked whether their WG uses a performance management framework to guide its work, only 39% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that this was being done. However, we doubt the validity of these results for two reasons. First, documented evidence shows that workplans are now being developed by all WGs, and second, none of the WGs currently use strategic frameworks to guide their long-term development. The 20% or so of respondents who either did not know or answered negatively to the issue of workplan use may have done so to underscore the point that workplans were not necessarily used to guide implementation and the 39% who that affirmed performance management frameworks were used may have simply confused workplans for these higher level instruments. Nevertheless, things are beginning to shift. As illustrated in the adjacent text box, some WGs are taking things into their own hands and forging ahead with the development of more clearly laid out priorities and results. We suspect that others will follow suit as it becomes increasingly evident that a workplan without a strategic plan does not serve their interests well.

> *RBM was embraced by ADEA following the adoption of the Medium-Term Strategic Plan. However, specific WGs need to set up [a] similar organizational and working environment so as to allow the full adoption PMF tools. In this regard, the WGTP is developing its own Strategic Plan to ensure fully alignment with the global ADEA frameworks.*
>
> Working Group Survey Respondent.

In the absence of clearly stated results statements, reliance on a set of strategic objectives can only go so far. Not only does it hamper monitoring and reporting efforts, it also renders planning difficult if not inconsequential. In fact, a cursory overview of WG workplans reveals that there is no consistency in the way WGs interpret the strategic objectives of the

> *Because of the problems of the last 24 months or so, the WG is now on autopilot without a clear radar to guide it. This needs to be fixed urgently. Some of us members will soon have to make a decision as to whether it is worthwhile to continue participating.*
>
> WG Survey Respondent on the issue of workplanning.

2008-2012 MTSP, and result expectations (at the outcome level) are seldom linked to longer term changes in the behaviour of targeted beneficiaries or in the policies and institutions of specific countries or regions. With mounting pressure from all sides to better demonstrate results, this is a crucial area for ADEA to invest in. Clarifications at this level should help ADEA better communicate its work and achievements, while allowing its constituencies to more clearly appreciate the direction and focus of its contributions.

Finding 23: Efforts to monitor and report on ADEA contributions have greatly improved over the past five years. Yet, the quality of monitoring reports is variable and beyond the fulfillment of requirements to key constituencies, the use of monitoring data remains unclear.

Introduction of the 2008-2012 MTSP greatly enhanced ADEA's capacity to report on its work. In contrast to more recent reports, those submitted prior to 2008 tended to be loosely configured and the relationship between objectives and annual contributions were often difficult to establish. In this sense, the adoption of the 2008 strategic framework marks a clear point of departure for the Association. As in the case of workplanning discussed above, WGs have likewise committed themselves to monitoring and reporting on their work with greater levels of accuracy than before. However, much remains to be done in terms of developing a culture of learning within ADEA that sees monitoring and reporting as crucial instruments for ongoing performance improvement, not simply as an obligation to donors.

According to WG survey results, 81% of WG steering committee members agreed to some extent that their own WG reported on its activities on an annual basis. However, when asked whether their WG monitors its activities, affirmative responses dropped to 63%, whereas use of monitoring result to improve delivery of planned outputs and outcomes was believed to be case by only 52% of respondents. Compared to other areas, monitoring and reporting attracted only limited comments. Some underscored the fact that "monitoring and reporting have no relevance to what happens next", that more needs to be done to "strengthen monitoring and evaluation capacity" or that "planning [has been] ad hoc for past 2-3 years [with] no monitoring of plans." Our own review of annual reports by ADEA and those of the WGs helped to highlight the fact that despite being a step in the right direction, they are nevertheless difficult to consult. The capacity of WGs to clearly articulate their individual contributions varied widely. Linkages between strategic objectives and results achieved at the output level are seldom clear, how the myriad of outputs achieved coalesce to support any given longer term result is unspecified, the exact nature of specific contributions are difficult to discern[26] and the take home message for any one set of results (linked to a specific strategic objective) is never synthesized. Hence, our general impression of current monitoring and reporting efforts largely supports the views of donor representatives and those of ministers who found the reports cumbersome to navigate through and insufficiently clear in terms of what the vast array of completed activities and outputs produced actually contribute to.

The revised 'results framework' introduced in December of 2009 should help clarify the nature of ADEA's contributions. However, as discussed in the Effectiveness section of this report, the indicators used in the revised instrument do not always appear to be linked to the intended meaning of the strategic objectives and clear results statements have yet to be developed for any of the objectives, thus making it nearly impossible to succinctly report on progress achieved. In a context where the exigencies of demonstrable results underpin the motives of most development agencies, the absence of clearly stated results underserves the interests of the Association by allowing anyone to set the standard by which ADEA ought to be judged. In sum, ADEA's performance management capacity has greatly improved since 2005 and the information produced by the current set of planning and reporting tools is much more thorough and useful for guiding decision-making needs. However, much more could be done at relatively little cost. Developing strategic results statements are a crucial first step in this direction. Additional training in results-based management

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[26] As observed in the Section on Effectiveness, the evaluation could not rely on annual reports alone to collate the tables of results that were developed for the purposes of this report.

would likewise prove useful for synthesizing accomplishments still further and bringing planning and reporting to a higher level of abstraction.

As such, linkages between monitoring, evaluation, learning and future planning are not as clear as could be. How WGs use activity reports or whether they used them at all to refine their workplans and support their own performance management needs are important questions that ought to attract the attention of ADEA and WG coordinators. Internally, ADEA does not have the resources or capacity to provide effective performance management oversight and challenge individual WGs to produce clear and more concise reports. And given the international pressure to more clearly demonstrate its achievements, this is seen by the evaluation team as a major impediment towards improved communication of its work and accomplishments.

Finally, it is clear that ADEA has consistently demonstrated its willingness to learn from past experiences and improve its ongoing performance. The humility of its senior staff and the responsiveness of its Steering Committee to changes that can ameliorate its effectiveness, efficiency and relevance represent some its strongest assets. These observations give us confidence in ADEA's ability to seize the results of evaluative inquiry and to consistently correct its path along an iterative continuum. The last crucial step towards the closure of the planning, monitoring and evaluation cycle lies in the full integration of these processes within the management oversight of the Association. Periodic evaluations of individual WGs (as recommended in the 2007 review of WGs) and assessments of important components such as the upcoming Triennial would prove useful to strengthening ADEA's performance.

5.5 Partnerships

Finding 24: The institutional linkages fostered by ADEA since 2005 have strengthened the Association's leverage within the context of Africa's educational development and its overall strategic value with respect to the interests of the international development community.

The delivery of ADEA's work and its consequent capacity to exert influence on matters related to Africa's educational development are all heavily dependent upon the Association's institutional partnerships. By contributing to the development of working groups, supporting maintenance costs, providing in-kind contributions or co-sponsoring various policy initiatives, partners play a crucial role in the achievement of ADEA's mission and strategic objectives.

Efforts made within the last five years to strengthen ADEA's inter-institutional linkages have resulted in a number of significant developments. First and foremost amongst newly established linkages is the MOU that was signed between the AU Commission and ADEA in 2008. The partnership with the AU was commended by the majority of interviewed respondents who saw in this accord an affirmation of ADEA's key leadership role in the context of Africa's educational development. And because of its long-standing relationship with the international donor community, development agencies (e.g., United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the EC) view ADEA's relationship to the AU as strategic for strengthening their own ties to the Union. Through its accord with the AU and later integration with the COMEDAF Bureau of Ministers, ADEA has effectively gained the legitimacy it needed to expand its horizons beyond the sub-Saharan region and further strengthen its credibility in the eyes of its constituencies.

Representatives the AU likewise confirmed the reciprocal nature of the ADEA-AU partnership. ADEA's experience and proven capacity to foster policy dialogue across a broad range of stakeholders along with its privileged relationship to the donor community are seen as critical assets for achieving the objectives of the AU's Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education and a means of representing the Union's interests to the broader development community. The AU hopes that its partnership with ADEA will help support its bid to become the premier African institution.

With its move to Tunisia, ADEA has entered into a hosting arrangement with the AfDB that is widely regarded as a crucial step in its so-called Africanization process. By doing so, it has established firm linkages with the only African international financial institution. The continental perspective of the AfDB is credited by senior Secretariat staff for affirming ADEA's own vision on the need for a more inclusive approach to its work. While discussions related to formal institutional commitments are being considered at more senior levels, some AfDB experts have begun to collaborate with WGs (e.g., communication and educational statistics) and opportunities for organizing or hosting joint events (e.g., workshops, conferences, meetings) are actively being discussed. Other recent partnership agreements with African-based organizations include the Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa (OSISA), the Inter-University Council for East Africa, and the Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA).

In addition, ADEA has also engaged potential partners from outside of Africa to strengthen its policy dialogue and accrue differing perspectives that could enrich its repertoire of solutions to the complex problem of educational development. In 2009 alone, the Secretariat established communications with Brazil, China, India, Malaysia, Portugal, South Korea and Spain; approached multilateral organizations such as ALESCO and ISESCO; and invited foundations such as the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to become more involved in its work. Currently, ADEA's web site identifies 23 different partners with whom the Association collaborates with at various levels.

Finding 25: Since the last evaluation, ADEA has made inroads in terms of developing mutually beneficial institutional partnerships with key African organizations. However, it has invested little time or resources to cultivate stronger linkages with the sub-regional organizations where MoE are most active. To this end, focal points could play a more strategic role to strengthen ADEA's outreach capacity.

The move to Tunis has strengthened ADEA's capacity and leverage in multiple ways. The AfDB, which now plays host to ADEA, is amongst other things the only pan African organization focusing on development. This provides a window for the Association to showcase its value proposition in a wide range of sectors, which is in turn helping to create synergies between core components of the Bank and ADEA.

Similarly, ADEA's partnership with the AU has been beneficial to both parties. Aside from increasing ADEA's leverage and providing greater opportunities to engage with countries outside of its traditional sub-Saharan stronghold, the AU partnership provides real hope for establishing a truly continental vision and a more systemic approach to African education. Adoption of a common Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa by the AU, ADEA, UNESCO and the World Bank is seen as a crucial first step in this direction. Correspondingly, some donors view ADEA as a strategic investment for leveraging greater influence on the work of the AU and the coherence of educational priorities.

While all of these accomplishments are detailed in greater length elsewhere in this report, potential areas for the development of mutually beneficial linkages are numerous. From communications to technical cooperation and various levels of in-kind contributions, additional avenues for building synergies with relevant organizations, agencies and government departments appear limitless. And like other areas of its work, it would be helpful for senior management to develop a strategy to support its relationship-building activities. However, building on the most often raised critic, which is poor communication and outreach, MoE argue that ADEA should invest more time and effort into building linkages at the regional and sub-regional levels. Because, in the opinion of every minister spoken to, ADEA is insufficiently known across Africa, it needs to find ways to strengthen its presence at the country and regional level, and become more visible to the whole of governments and not just the MoE. In this sense, the role and function of focal points could be redefined to support such ends.

As one minister suggested, focal points could play a much more constructive role and provide a crucial link between ministries and between these and ADEA to support knowledge sharing and liaising. Further, ministers highlighted the particular value of regional and sub-regional structures such as the Conférence des ministres de l'éducation nationale (CONFEMEN) and Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). Contrary to what gets discussed at supra-regional assemblies such as the Biennials, the commitments made in most regional conferences are binding. Improving its presence and participation in regional fora would not only improve outreach, it would also increase its leverage and capacity to affect change. However, ADEA's current compliment of staff would be insufficient to support such efforts.

5.6 Processes

Finding 26: Knowledge sharing, communication and outreach represent important ongoing challenges to ADEA's performance.

Communication touches on all aspects of organizational performance and is arguably the most difficult part of any network-based organization. Answering the needs and interests of wide variety of stakeholders can be challenging under any circumstances, but trying to do so in a network setting where problems tend to be structural imbedded within the very fabric of the organization is no small feat. Communication challenges are part and parcel of any collaborative effort where two or more individuals are required to cooperate in order to achieve more favourable joint outcomes.

While the reasons invoked by the different stakeholder groups who part in this evaluation differed somewhat, partners, donor representatives and education ministries uniformly underscored communication as a major area of concern. This is seen as particularly problematic for an organization that depends as heavily as ADEA does on communicative means and the dissemination of relevant knowledge to affect change. Donors observed that access to and the usability of WG contributions remains poor. Both internally and externally, technical briefs from WGs are seldom translated into key lessons for decision-making purposes or succinctly summarized to inform policy discussions and decisions (e.g., within the Steering Committee or during Biennials). But even more important in terms of maintaining donor commitment is the issue of communicating performance. In spite of a largely implicit recognition that ADEA is an effective catalyst for policy dialogue and knowledge dissemination, most argue that the Association has so far fallen short of being able to convincingly communicate results achieved – especially at the outcome level – and how it contributes to educational development in Africa in particular. Evaluation respondents observed that communication is an indispensable yet insufficiently developed asset within ADEA, which in turn unnecessarily weakens its message.

For their part, MoE observed that ADEA is poorly known across Africa. Not enough is being done to make itself known at the country level and unless someone at the ministry level or a minister from a neighbouring country introduces you to ADEA, newly appointed ministers are unlikely to know of its existence and value added. As mentioned in the preceding findings, ADEA is insufficiently present in regional or sub-regional conferences where ministers are most active, outreach from the Secretariat is insufficient, and WGs contributions are not being used or solicited to their fullest potential because more often than not, their work and contributions simply go unnoticed. The problem, they say, is further compounded by the combined effects of notoriously high turnover rates within Ministries of Education and an admittedly poor effort by some ministries to actually seek out technical support on key policy issues. As one minister aptly pointed out, "les ministres ne savent pas toujours ce qu'ils veulent ou ce dont ils ont besoin. Par conséquent, les ministres doivent être harcelés".

However, as donors also observed, ADEA's communication woes are not limited to its outreach potential but also include the need for clearer understanding of its functioning. As one minister put it, "les ministres devraient être mieux renseignés sur le fonctionnement de l'ADEA et ses structures opérationnelles". In short, the Association's limited ability to convincingly communicate, market and package its contributions to the educational development community of Africa are widely perceived as being an important impediments to its development and performance.

Members of WG steering committees also underscored what they perceived to be either the Secretariat's weak communication capacity or inadequate effort to respond to their needs. As one respondent boldly summarized, "communications from the Secretariat are completely absent, even to Steering Committee Members." Yet, even internally, WGs also struggle with communication difficulties as some of the comments by survey respondents suggest: "The WG should be more intervenient with the members to let them know frequently about what's going on" and there is a need for "Improved and frequent communications with 1) WG Steering Committee, 2) ECD Focal Points, and 3) AU leaders."

To this end, ADEA has taken steps to develop communication and knowledge management strategies, but more will need to be done to strengthen outreach to key constituencies and promote access to its knowledge contributions. At issue is the fact that ADEA quite simply does not manage its knowledge contributions as well as it could, nor does it brand and market its work to its advantage. However, changing such circumstances need not affect ADEA's bottom line too significantly. As mentioned throughout this report, many of the things ADEA can do to increase its leverage have limited cost implications. Most notably, annual reports on activities could be rendered clearer by emphasizing how output level results contribute to longer term change. Other changes may require a small investment that should be balanced with the potential for longer term payoffs. Examples include (i) the need to for a more user friendly website that is easier to navigate across; (ii) changes to the role and functions of focal points or the introduction of dedicated inter-country nodes (as one minister suggested) to make ADEA better known and more present at the local level; (iii) revive the now defunct newsletter or upgrade the current bulletins to make these a more comprehensive source of information; and (iv) strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat with dedicated resources to support linkages with working groups, MoE and inter-institutional partners. The WGCOMED was often singled out as a key instrument by which ADEA could increase its outreach.

Operating in a continent as large and diverse as Africa constitutes an enormous challenge. Add to this the requirements of communicating the results of complex policy deliberations in multiple languages with less than perfect communication technologies and the task at hand may soon appear overwhelming. The first steps in resolving such dilemmas inevitably lie in understanding the situation at hand and developing a strategy to tackle the communication challenges ADEA now faces.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Given the important number of changes undertaken by ADEA since 2005 and the subsequent challenges it has had to face in the intervening years, this evaluation finds that ADEA has done well in terms of achieving the performance expectations that it had set for itself and those of its key constituencies. During the five-year period considered by this evaluation, ADEA has moved to Africa and is now administratively linked to the AfDB – the only pan-African development agency – and further integrated within the folds of the African Union as the premier body responsible for the pursuance of a continental approach to educational development. To this end, ADEA has (i) created and strengthened linkages to a wide range of partners at the national and regional level; (ii) it has developed an ambitious mid-term strategic plan, which it has subsequently operationalized through workplans and clearer monitoring and reporting framework; (iii) it has implemented the recommendations of the 2005 evaluation; and (iv) facilitated a successful transition of its leadership. In any organizational setting, these represent major accomplishments and ADEA should be commended for successfully carrying out such a challenging agenda.

However, like in any other organization, ADEA continues to face a number of important challenges. Building on the findings presented in this report, this section presents the key recommendations that ought to be considered as ADEA pushes forward with its ongoing efforts to strengthen its outreach, consolidate its achievements, and improve its performance.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: **The Steering Committee should review ADEA's mandate and make changes as required to better reflect the evolving needs of key constituencies and the context within which it operates.**

This recommendation relates to findings 2 and 3.

The context within which ADEA operates in today has changed considerably since its establishment in 1988. Historically, the need for policy dialogue was foremost linked to investor needs but as the findings of this report show , policy dialogue alone may no longer be sufficient to support ADEA's 'raison d'être.' The evaluation found that policy dialogue remains relevant but more should be done to demonstrate results and support implementation at the country level. Consequently, ADEA now finds itself at a crossroad and it needs to make a decision as to whether it remains focused on policy dialogue only or adapts its constituting principles to the shifting needs and priorities of its changing environment and constituencies. This is a key strategic change.

Despite broad concurrence with ADEA's core mandate (forum for policy dialogue), alignment of its work to the major educational challenges facing Africa and coherence of its strategy to all relevant development initiatives (including the AU's Plan of Education, MDGs and EFA), the expectations of ADEA's core constituencies are changing. Consequently, ADEA appears to be increasingly at risk of mandate "creep", whereby an organization moves into areas other than those articulated within the scope of its original mandate. This is normal and is part and parcel of the dynamics of change within any vibrant organization. If left unexamined however, informal changes in the appreciation of an organization's mandate can lead to increasingly divergent sets of opinions on the latter's relative performance. As such, we recommend that the Steering Committee, in collaboration with the Bureau of Ministers and the Secretariat reconsider ADEA's value proposition relative to the changing expectations and shifting contextual variables highlighted throughout this report.

Recommendation 2:   The Secretariat, in collaboration with members of the Steering Committee and the Bureau of Ministers, should clarify ADEA's approach to being a pan-African organisation.

This recommendation relates to findings 4, 5, 12, 15, 17, and 18.

Within the past five years, ADEA has initiated a number of changes to shift the leadership structure of the Association from what was essentially a donor-driven organization to one that is increasingly being recognized as African-led initiative. In doing so, ADEA has successfully strengthened the perceived relevance of the Association in Africa and further increased the involvement of key African educational leaders at multiple levels of interaction. Moreover, ADEA has taken significant steps towards strengthening its presence in Africa by transferring the Secretariat to the AfDB and chartering a key agreement with the African Union. As a result, ADEA has specifically committed itself to contribute to the continental and regional integration of the African education sector (second strategic objective of the MTSP) and serious consideration is now being given to the need to diversify the number of languages within which it operates, strengthen ties to the Arab-speaking community of North Africa and further its presence within Lusophone countries.

Yet, the overall scope of ADEA's approach to becoming a pan-African organization along with its intended and unintended consequences remains unclear. What is the Association's underlying strategy for increasing African leadership and the geographic scope of its commitment towards continental integration? What are the implications of its africanization in terms of its membership, governance and operational structures, and long term financing relative to the demand for greater African ownership over the provisioning costs associated with the maintenance of ADEA?

As ADEA prepares itself to revise its MTSP (for implementation in 2012), this is an opportune time to consider the accomplishments made relative to its approach to becoming a more pan-African organization and provide a more structured basis to the furtherance of this core shift in the strategic and operational focus of the Association. Existing and potential repercussions on the operating structure of the Association will need to be thoroughly examined.

Recommendation 3:   The Secretariat and Steering Committee should explore all possibilities to expand and diversify ADEA's sources of income and ensure its financial viability.

This recommendation relates to findings 5, 13 and 14.

Until now, ADEA's business model for maintaining the Association's financial viability has principally relied on donor-centered approach. However, results of this study suggest that for different reasons, reliance on donor-driven financing strategy may no longer be sufficient nor necessarily within the best interest of the Association. To address the concerns expressed in this report relative to the longer term commitment of ADEA's core donors and the implications of a donor-driven business model, ADEA should continue its efforts to expand and diversify its sources of income.

In considering alternate means of generating the resources it requires for supporting its work, ADEA should fully consider all available avenues and possibilities, including the development and trial of alternative approaches to structuring its work (e.g., graduation / decentralization of WGs and increased country ownership over core components of ADEA). Due consideration should likewise be given to the potential benefits of alternative business models such as the operating structure used by SEAMEO and the potential long-term benefits (and operational costs) of establishing a legal structure in the form of a not-for-profit organization.

Regardless of the individual financing strategies ADEA decides to implement, its underlying business model should nevertheless be consistent with its programmatic strategy and the need to strengthen African ownership over the work of the Association. To this end, ADEA may wish to formalize its overall approach within the framework of a coherent outreach strategy and business model that supports the expansion and diversification of funding sources, in addition to highlighting the demonstrated willingness of African institutions to shoulder some of the costs associated with the provision of valued services. For, even if the amount is symbolic, external investors are far more likely to support the Association if they see that African stakeholders are themselves convinced of the need to support ADEA.

Recommendation 4: **The Secretariat should clarify the roles and responsibilities of various functional units within ADEA to strengthen their individual added value within the scope of the Association's programme.**

This recommendation relates to findings 7, 19, 24, 25, and 26.

ADEA delivers its programme through a relatively broad mix of components and activities. By channelling its contributions through such diverse means, the Association can potentially increase its outreach capacity but it may also inadvertently maintain less effective functional units. Hence, as part of ADEA's ongoing efforts to improve its organizational efficiency and effectiveness, the Secretariat should re-examine the functional contributions of individual units to strengthen the operational relevance and coherence of its operating structure relative to its programmatic requirements.

Currently, the value added of ADEA's core activities attracted some mixed responses and questions were raised regarding the aggregate effectiveness of WGs and overall progress made in terms of the cohesiveness of their operational structures. And although ADEA has made significant progress in terms of strengthening institutional linkages at the continental and international levels, it has been less successful in building furthering parnertship development and indeed strengthening its presence at the local and regional levels, including its communication potential. Taken together, these findings suggest a need to not only better align existing resources but more importantly, to review the allocative efficiency of the Association current operating structure in to determine where potential weaknesses may lie and devise alternative roles and responsibilities or reallocate resources as needed to further ADEA's performance.

Pursuant to these objectives, ADEA may wish to consider the actual and potential value of focal points and devised alternative arrangements to strengthen potential contributions at the field level. The relative performance of WGs should be monitored more carefully for results at the outcome level and the underlying relevance of their individual contributions should likewise be followed more closely. Components that seem to achieve a relatively high degree of success, such the Inter-Country Quality Nodes, should be encouraged, whereas those that that seem no longer active or used (e.g., ad hoc groups) should be terminated.

In the end however, clarification of the roles and responsibilities of ADEA's operating structure should be considered in the light of the operational model that ADEA chooses to pursue. As we looked at different approaches, we found wide range experiences, some of which are transferable to the needs of the Association with many others that are not. Whereas SEAMEO effectively focuses its work on research and essentially manages the overall scope of its undertaking through a set of independent country-led research facilities, other groups, such as the Council of Canadian Ministers consists of a non-permanent structure supported by a relatively small secretariat. Whereas host countries and affiliated research centers are the principle drivers of SEAMEO's contributions, the ministers themselves are key decision-makers in the Council of Ministers and effectively determine the terms and conditions of the ad hoc committees charged with the investigating issue specific concerns relevant to the assembly of ministers. Other models and approaches exist, but ultimately, the decision to borrow or learn from other experiences rests with ADEA.

Recommendation 5: **The Secretariat should put in place a comprehensive performance management system focused on ensuring that outcome-level data is available for both monitoring and evaluation purposes.**

This recommendation relates to findings 6, 7, 8, 22 and 23.

Since 2005, ADEA has made tremendous progress relative to the development and implementation of a comprehensive performance management strategy. In addition to devising a MTSP structured around a limited set of objectives, ADEA has successfully introduced workplanning, monitoring and reporting both at the level of the Secretariat and individual working groups, thus providing a far clearer indication of progress made within any given year. However, the measurement of long term results remains partial and in the absence of any clearly defined set of expectations at the outcome level, efforts to improve the monitoring and reporting of such contributions are unlikely to change significantly.

In order to strengthen ADEA's performance management system and improve the Association's accountability to key constituencies, the Secretariat, in collaboration with members of the Steering Committee, should develop clear result expectations at the outcome level in order to strengthen its ability to monitor and evaluate results achievement. Result expectations should be clearly linked to ADEA's strategic objectives and allow for the development of specific, measurable, achievable, results-based and time-bound ('smart') indicators.

Recommendation 6: **ADEA should continue ongoing efforts to strengthen its communication potential.**

This recommendation relates to finding 26.

ADEA has done tremendous work over the past several years to strengthen its overall outreach and increase communication potential. In doing so, it has invested a lot energy and resources to devise a more comprehensive approach built around (i) the development of communication and knowledge management strategies; (ii) the promotion of more effective communication of educational issues across the whole of Africa (WGCOMED); (iii) the use of varied communication media (e.g., publications, radio broadcasts, conferences, journalism awards); and dedicated resources at the level of the Secretariat (including a communications officer and a knowledge management expert). Yet, perceptions of the overall effectiveness of existing measures suggest that these remain insufficient for task at hand. In response, the Secretariat should consider how it could potentially increase its leverage and strengthen its communication capacity via a more strategic use of available resources such as focal points.

Appendix I List of Findings

Finding 1:   ADEA is regarded by all stakeholders consulted as relevant to the needs of educational policy dialogue in Africa. Consultations suggest that its ability to convene senior educational stakeholders around policy issues is its most relevant and important service.

Finding 2:   Although ADEA's work responds to the needs and interests of its constituencies, many stakeholders consulted would like ADEA to go further in follow-up and implementation of the policy outputs and technical advice it provides.

Finding 3:   ADEA's mission, MTSP are aligned with the major educational development challenges in Africa and the objectives of the AU and international development initiatives such as the MDGs and EFA. However, stakeholders raised concerns that ADEA's broad objectives make it difficult to establish causal links and measure outcomes.

Finding 4:   ADEA's relocation to Africa has strengthened the perceived relevance of the Association in Africa and has increased opportunities for pan-African linkages.

Finding 5:   While African ownership of ADEA is increasing and is manifested through the involvement of key ministers in ADEA initiatives, the Africanization of ADEA is a long-term process that has yet to be achieved.

Finding 6:   Despite some data limitations, our analysis suggests that ADEA is mostly successful in achieving the Strategic Objectives of the 2008-2012 MTSP, with notable contributions at both the output and outcome levels.

Finding 7:   ADEA's core activities are generally appreciated and seen as an important "value added" by its various constituencies. However, interviewees expressed mixed views regarding the Biennales, which in turn suggests opportunities for improvement.

Finding 8:   WGs are generally perceived as being effective in providing technical assistance and contributing to the educational development of Africa in their respective thematic areas. However, donors and ministers expressed differing opinions regarding the overall ability of WGs to achieve stated outputs and outcomes.

Finding 9:   Overall, ADEA has implemented the key recommendations of the 2005 evaluation.

Finding 10: Stakeholder feedback and budget data indicate that ADEA is a relatively lean organization that carefully manages administrative costs. Given ADEA's attention to programming efficiency and the substantial amount of in-kind contributions needed for its delivery, the return on investment regarding ADEA's activities appears reasonable.

Finding 11: Anecdotal data suggest that ADEA's ability to affect change at the policy level harbours significant leverage with respect to both increased outcomes and decreased costs for those willing to invest in Africa's educational development. Unfortunately, the data available to this review was insufficient to develop a more thorough analysis of ADEA's cost-effectiveness.

Finding 12: Despite ADEA's modest overhead cost structure and ongoing attention to efficiency, the evaluation identified a number of outstanding issues that risk increasing the relative costs of ADEA's contributions over the mid to long term.

Finding 13: ADEA has generally been successful in raising the income it needed to support the implementation of its programme. However, donor priorities appear to be shifting and the sustainability of ADEA's business model seems more at risk than at earlier times in its history.

Finding 14: Donor contributions to ADEA have fluctuated widely over the years and will likely diminish in the mid to long-term future in response to the global economic context and the growing demand for more tangible results. As a result, more attention is being paid to new donors and new approaches.

Finding 15: While there is general agreement amongst Ministries of education that more should be done to ensure that countries pay their annual membership fees to ADEA, the idea that country members should assume a greater share of the Association's operational and programming costs was viewed as unrealistic by most ministers. However, showing ownership is key to financial viability.

Finding 16: The strategic leadership capacity of ADEA has been instrumental in setting directions managing change and supporting the achievement of results.

Finding 17: ADEA's governing structure has effectively served the Association and provided the guidance necessary for its development. However, the continued push towards the Africanization of ADEA will require greater involvement of senior educational leaders. This is a key challenge for the future of ADEA.

Finding 18: ADEA's operating structure is comparable to other international network-like organizations and it is engaging in practices that should improve its operations and alignment with the needs of the MTSP. However, efforts to standardize procedures and re-structure program components need to be balanced with the Secretariat's modest capacity. The role and contribution of focal points remain unclear and difficult to measure.

Finding 19: The process of harmonizing WG structural arrangements and coordination functions appears to be progressing reasonably well. However, more needs to be done

Finding 20: The management and control of ADEA finances was adequately transferred and remains well managed.

Finding 21: The hosting arrangement with AfDB has improved ADEA's financial and administrative management.

Finding 22: ADEA has made significant progress in terms of aligning its work towards the achievement of its strategic objectives and the use of workplans to guide the annual programming efforts of individual components. However, result expectations for each of the strategic objectives have yet to be fully clarified.

Finding 23: Efforts to monitor and report on ADEA contributions have greatly improved over the past five years. Yet, the quality of monitoring reports is variable and beyond the fulfillment of requirements to key constituencies, the use of monitoring data remains unclear.

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Finding 24: The institutional linkages fostered by ADEA since 2005 have strengthened the Association's leverage within the context of Africa's educational development and its overall strategic value with respect to the interests of the international development commnity.

Finding 25: Since the last evaluation, ADEA has made inroads in terms of developing mutually beneficial institutional partnerships with key African organizations. However, it has invested little time or resources to cultivate stronger linkages with the sub-regional organizations where MoE are most active. To this end, focal points could play a more strategic role to strengthen ADEA's outreach capacity.

Finding 26: Knowledge sharing, communication and outreach represent important ongoing challenges to ADEA's performance.