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2030 Global Agenda and Africa's Agenda 2063

SUB-THEME 1

Implementing Education and Lifelong Learning for Sustainable Development

Synthesis Paper

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Synthesis Paper

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ABREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACEI	Association for Childhood Education International
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AFD	Agence Française de Développement/French Agency for Development
AfDB	African Development Bank
AFIDEP	African Institute for Development Policy
AFRIQAN	African Quality Assurance Network
AQRM	African Quality Rating Mechanism
ASR	Accelerated School Readiness
AUC	African Union Commission
BEAR	Better Education for Africa
CAF	Comité d'Attribution des Financements (Funding Allocation Committee)
CCI	Character and Creative Initiative
CDMZ	Creative Digital Media Zambia
CEART	Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEDEFOP	Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CEPF	Commonwealth Education Policy Framework
CESA	Continental Education Strategy for Africa
CONFEMEN	Conference of the Ministers of Education of the French-speaking Countries
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSS	Common Core Skills
CCCC	Chiedza Child Care Centre, Zimbabwe
ECACP	Early Childhood Advancement Certificate Program
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
EFA	Education for All
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FTS	Federal Teachers' Scheme, Nigeria

GEMR	Global Education Monitoring Report
GGA	Global Guidelines Assessment
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GPF	Global Peace Foundation
GPI	Gender Parity Index
WGNFE	ADEA Working Group on Non-Formal Education
GRP	Gender Responsive Pedagogy
IBE	UNESCO International Bureau of Education
ICQN	Inter-Country Quality Node
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IIZ/DVV	International Co-operation of the German Adult Education Association
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISP	Individualised Support Plan
ITT	UNESCO International Task Force on Teachers
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
LCIP	Learner-Centred and Interactive Pedagogy
MDGs	Millenium Development Goals
METFP	Ministère de l'Enseignement Technique et de Formation Professionnelle, Côte d'Ivoire
NMET	National Monitoring and Evaluation Team, Nigeria
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSSSE	New Senior Secondary School Education
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OMEP	World Organization for Early Childhood Education
OSSAP	Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on MDGs, Nigeria
PASEC	Programme d'analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la CONFEMEN
PEFOP	Plateforme d'experts en formation professionnelle
PID	Person with Intellectual Disability
PPPs	Public-private Partnerships
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
RAFPRO	Réseau africain des institutions et fonds de formation professionnelle
RCPS	Rwanda Career Planning System

REC	Regional Economic Community or Communities
RPL	Recognising/Accrediting Prior Learning
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SFA	Success for Africa
SMT	Science, Mathematics and Technology
SNE	Special Needs Education
SRGBV	School Related Gender-Based Violence
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TTISSA	Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education Training
TVSD	Technical and Vocational Skills Development
UIL	UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNEVOC	UNESCO-International Centre for Technical and Vocational and Training
WCHE	UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education
WEF	World Education Forum
WGBLM	ADEA Working Group on Books and Learning Material
WGEMPS	ADEA Working Group on Education Management and Support
WGHE	ADEA Working Group on Higher Education
ZEDP	Zanzibar Education Development Program

1.0. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Africa Regional Report on the Sustainable Development Goals (UNECA, 2015) identifies *improvements in education quality* as key sustainable development priority in four of Africa's five sub-regions – Eastern, Central, Southern and Western. Fittingly, the first sub-theme for the 2017 Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) Triennale, situated within the Triennale's main theme: *Revitalizing education towards the 2030 Global Agenda and the 2063 African Agenda,* focuses on *establishing Quality Education and Lifelong Learning for All for Sustainable Development.* Essentially, the 2017 Triennale intends to explore innovative solutions to challenges that could hinder Africa's continental aspiration: "to r*eorient Africa's education and training systems to meet the knowledge, competencies, skills, innovation and creativity required to nurture African core values and promote sustainable development at the national, sub-regional and continental levels"* (CESA 16-25).

Sub-theme 1 provides a broad and cross-cutting framework for critical intellectual conversation, consensus building, renewed political commitment and advocacy concerning the current meagre attention to and inadequate accountability for real learning, the absence of functional teaching models, insufficient learning resources (Neumann, 2012)and the waning commitment to gender equality and equity goals. The recurrence of these issues, particularly on Africa's education dialogue platforms, indicates Africa's inability to overturn what Moumouni (1968) described as a crisis in African education: deterioration of the quality of teaching due to the poor training of teachers and huge class sizes, non-mastery of the language of instruction by teachers, lack of teaching and learning resources, high drop-out rates at all educational levels, lack of coherence and coordination between the curricula of the different levels, limited options at secondary level, governments' neglect of technical education and vocational training (TVET),as well as the limited funding and resources for the development of higher education. ADEA understands that these issues, if not addressed, can diminish the capacity of African education to play the key roles of driving development and contributing to the achievement of the other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Driven by the critical strategic principle of continuity in order to meaningfully address the unresolved challenges of the immediate past, anticipation and foresight with regard to current and emerging challenges, the objective of the ADEA 2017 Triennale is defined to a large extent by both the 2008 (Maputo, Mozambique) and 2012 (Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso) Triennales, which emphasised, among other key imperatives, knowledge building, competencies, common core skills (CCS), key messages and lessons, and the building of concrete pathways to inclusive, quality, equitable and relevant education systems.

SDG 4 and all its targets dictate that all persons, at every stage of their lives should have opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to fulfil their aspirations and contribute to their societies (UNESCO, 2015). SDG 4 reemphasises the Belém Framework for Action, reaffirms the four pillars of learning, as recommended by the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, namely: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together. Furthermore, it obligates all nations to provide opportunities and resources to enable all individuals to develop their potential[1] (UNESCO, 2015 p.8). For Nafukho (2016, p.18), lifelong learning is a basic human right, and every effort should be made to engage everyone in society in some form

[1] http://en.unesco.org/world-education-forum-2015/5-key-themes/lifelong-learning

of learning. A number of scholars agree that Lifelong education is the provision or use of both formal and informal learning opportunities throughout people's lives in order to foster the continuous development and improvement of the knowledge and skills needed for employment and personal fulfilment. The Delors Commission's report defines learning more precisely as a continuous process of increasing and adapting knowledge and skills, improving individuals' judgement and capacity for action, and increasing the learners' awareness of themselves and their environment, as well as empowering them to play central roles at work and in the community at large.[2]

This report is a synthesis of contributions by educationists, education researchers, international agencies, and NGOs towards the Quality and Life-long learning sub-theme of the 2017 Triennale. The process of collating contributions to the synthesis commenced with a 'Call for Abstracts', which elicited 45 contributions from all the continent's five regions and across the world. Out of the 45 submissions, forty-three were invited to develop full papers, and eleven of these were invited to present their draft papers/outlines at the sub-regional consultative meeting for Sub-theme 1 held in Nairobi in August 2016. After the Nairobi consultation, twenty-six contributions were received. Full/completed papers drawn from that pool are included in this document. Contributions are based on studies, analyses of consultations or meetings and case reports on results of tested or developing innovations, and are bringing about paradigm shifts and learning in order to boost efforts to develop education and training for sustainable development. For that reason, the synthesis highlights evidence-based key lessons and messages that suggest potential pathways towards tackling the challenges that hinder Africa's education systems from providing quality education and opportunities for lifelong learning. The report aims to trigger dialogue among and firm commitments by African government leaders, educational administrators, policy-makers, teachers, practitioners, education implementing agencies, NGOs, and communities, among others, on more holistic policies, strategic planning and effective interventions that would significantly improve the inclusiveness, quality and relevance of education and lifelong learning opportunities for all in Africa.

Coming after ADEA's hugely successful 2008 and 2012 Triennales, the 2017 Triennale will provide a platform for education stakeholders to engage in forward-looking, relevant and concrete solution-driven policy dialogue and exchange of evidence-/results-based knowledge and cognate experiences, successful practices and innovations that address all forms of exclusion and marginalization, disparities and inequalities in access, participation and learning outcomes across educational systems and learning contexts – formal, informal and non-formal – and provide transformative models that are potentially replicable in other African countries or regions in order to accelerate the attainment of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2025, Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and Africa's Agenda 2063 goals.

2.0. OVERVIEW: LEVEL OF INTEREST OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO ADEA TRIENNALE SUB-THEME 1

In order to assess the specific levels of interest and relevance of contributions to the 2017 Triennale objective, particularly Sub-theme 1, in line with SDG 4 guiding framework, it is important to review each SDG 4 target against the trend for each target. SDG 4 prescribes clear and relevant policy and strategic directions, which capture the driving principle of continuity, with the key challenges of

[2] *Report to UNESCO of the International Commission chaired by Jacques Delors entitled "Learning: The Treasure Within". (2nd edition, 1999) UNESCO*

meeting the unmet targets of the Education for All Goals and the education targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

4.1: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys receive equal treatment by going through the full cycle of free and quality primary and secondary education, leading to a genuinely useful learning, and 4.2: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to development activities and early childhood care and quality preschool education which prepare them for primary education. Both targets attracted considerable interest, as shown by the submissions on comparative case study projects, for example, ECD policy and provision led by the WGECD, and the projects by Global Partnership for Education (GPE); the Koranic schools and national curriculum reform and integration across African societies, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa addressed by the ADEA Working Group on Non-formal Education (WGNFE). One of the two contributions on early childhood care and quality preschool education highlights the importance of anchoring investment in early childhood care and education (ECCE) and addressing early learning outcomes in sector plans for coordination and efficient mobilization and utilization of domestic and external resources, while on the other hand, showcasing good practices arising from ECCE interventions.

4.3: By 2030, ensure that all women and men have equal access to quality technical, vocational or tertiary education, including post-graduate education at an affordable cost and under the same conditions. TVET attracted the most interest and contributions, highlighting the benefits of providing vocational skills for out- of- school youth, creating opportunities for women and youth to acquire skills for the health sector for insertion in agriculture, advancing female students' participation in technical education, improving young women's economic empowerment in conflict/post conflict situations, and addressing youth qualification in formal and non-formal contexts of learning. TVET for employment and entrepreneurship attracted the highest interest, with contributions touching on comprehensive structural reform to enhance the quality and relevance of TVET education and training by incorporating transferable skills (TS) in the curriculum and creating a paradigm shift from TVET to technical vocational skills development (TVSD); better training of teachers; boosting infrastructure and engaging employers and enterprises for the creation of jobs and the integration of graduates. Higher education attracted little attention although the Working Group on Higher Education (WGHE) recently held a series of Five Webinars and circulated the outcome of the online questionnaire consultation, which attracted some interesting responses.

4.4: By 2030, significantly increase the number of young people and adults with skills, in particular, technical and vocational skills necessary for employment, access to decent jobs and entrepreneurship. As noted for Target 4.3, a few contributions explored case studies of access, quality and equity for education and lifelong learning and livelihoods through entrepreneurial skills development.

4.5: By 2030, eliminate gender inequalities in education and ensure equal access for vulnerable people, including people with disabilities and indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situation at all levels of education and vocational training. A limited number of contributions by Burundi on basic education transformations, and FAWE's project in several African countries, focused on influencing public policies and or providing innovative models for out-of-school children and youth, education systems in conflict and post conflict situations; and the educationally challenged and other disadvantaged groups in some African countries. Contributions were particularly relevant and instructive for meeting this target by 2030.

4.6: By 2030, ensure that all young people and a considerable proportion of adults, men and women know how to read, write and count. There was very little interest in the critical foundational literacy, transferable core literacy and soft skills sets that are most needed by youth and adult, particularly women and girls, and in the construction of literate environments. One relevant contribution by the Working Group on Non-Formal (WGNFE) was on literacy and the specific role of ICT in the promotion of quality education and lifelong learning outcomes.

4.7: By 2030, ensure that all school children acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for the promotion of sustainable development lifestyles, particularly through education for sustainable development and lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and contribution to the culture of sustainable development. While the thematic contents would appear to fall under another sub-theme, they are, nonetheless, of critical cross-cutting interest to Sub-theme 1. There were a few contributions on the critical issue of Value-based Education (VBE) and the related area of personality development for success, including career guidance, which covered the contents of Target 4.7. They highlight the essential other side of the education equation: knowledge, skills and academic and vocational achievement on the one hand, and value, character- and citizenship-based education on the other.

4.a: Ensure the establishment of schools that are suitable for children, people with disabilities, for both men and women or adapt existing schools for this purpose and provide an effective learning environment that is reliable, devoid of violence and accessible to all. There were a few contributions of case studies and country project profiles on school readiness for ECD and primary education, disadvantaged children and children with intellectual disabilities (ID), and on the enhancement of the prospects of mainstreaming, and/or productive engagement in employment or self-employment/livelihood practices.

4.b: By 2020, significantly increase the number of scholarships offered at the global level to developing countries for studies, in particular to least developed countries, small Island developing States and to countries in Africa, to finance the continuation of higher studies, including vocational education, ICT, technical and science courses and engineering studies in developed countries and other developing countries. There were two significant contributions to the transformative impact of scholarships for secondary school girls, through FAWE's holistic system approach, which affects not only the beneficiaries but the school context, and community of stakeholders; and CAMFED's successful practice of meeting direct and indirect costs of public schools girls in Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

4.c: By 2030, significantly increase the number of qualified teachers, especially through international cooperation for the training of teachers in developing countries, particularly in least developed countries and small Island developing States. Only a few contributions focused on the teacher issue, particularly capacity development, methodology of classroom practice to improve learning outcomes, and educational planners and administrators. Until the major and timely contribution by the African Union Commission, very little attention was given to the perennial challenges of poor attraction and recruitment, status enhancement, motivation and retention of teachers. Beyond the existing normative instruments such as the Joint ILO/UNESCO's recommendations concerning the status of teachers, and the recommendations of CEART, an arbitration body, the

global focus is now on teacher motivation, and the contribution of UNESCO's International Task Force on Teachers (ITT) in light of the outcomes of the recent International Policy Dialogue Forum on teacher motivation held in Cambodia in December 2016, should be of particular interest to the deliberations and strategic next steps to be adopted by the 2017 Triennale.

3.0. EDUCATION QUALITY AND LIFELONG LEARNING WITHIN THE PERSPECTIVES OF THE POST-2015 AGENDA

In 2015, the then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon made a very profound statement concerning the first step to lifelong learning when he stated that people of all ages deserve access to the appropriate context and opportunity to learn to read, write and count. "When we give them that opportunity, we will create more productive, stable and secure societies for all,"[3] he said. The Africa Regional Report on the Sustainable Development Goals (UNECA, 2015) reiterated the Secretary-General's statement by emphasising that access to quality education does not only provide children, youth and adults with the knowledge and skills to be active citizens and to fulfil themselves as individuals, but that literacy contributes directly to poverty reduction. ADEA, in its Medium-Term Strategic Plan 2013-2017 vision for Africa, rightly argues that scientific and technological skills are essential to Africa's sustainable development, and advocates for strategies to reposition science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) throughout the entire education and training system as a sure way to promote of innovation and accelerate Africa's growth and development . Furthermore, the strong evidence continually reiterated particularly in The EFA Global Monitoring Reports on "Literacy for life" support the view that literacy and literacies matter (UNESCO-EFA, 2006) more than ever in the 21st century.

The UNECA Report, however, disclosed that even though most African countries have increased primary enrolment rates, some above 90 per cent, challenges still remain, particularly with regards to the quality of education and learning outcomes, as well as provision of opportunities for universal learning. To address these challenges, Africa initiated and joined various post-2015 education discourses, especially focusing on prioritizing integrated planning in order to bring about coherence of policies and implementation, and actions focused on enhancing learning to shape knowledge, values and attitudes, targeting all learners of all ages and across educational levels and contexts, including basic and multiple literacies, adult and non-formal education. However, absence of political will compounded by inadequate financial backing, has impeded the discourse on education of good quality and the transformative impact of education, in many cases, from moving beyond words. These deficiencies in education systems continue to manifest in inadequate investment priority to education infrastructure, disjointed strategic planning and low commitment to the reformation of education curricula.

3.1 Quality education - Conceptual and policy frameworks

The concepts of education and quality education have been rethought and redefined in line with the evolving understanding of the interrelatedness of knowledge, competencies and skills, including personal, social and life-skills and values that should characterize and influence teaching and learning in the varying contexts of education. As a result, the current discourse on quality now incorporates inclusion and equity – as distinct from equality. For example, the theme of sustainable development within the Global Education Agenda 2030 has been comprehensively redefined by both the British Commonwealth through the Commonwealth Education Policy Framework document

[3] http://www.libraryforall.org/blog/2015/9/25/why-education-is-so-important-to-the-sustainable-development-goals

entitled "Universal Quality Education Standards,'' that aims to enable the Sustainable Development Goals/2030 Agenda, and the French-speaking Commonwealth (La Francophonie). The expanded, integrated and holistic redefinition of the agenda should henceforth guide the vision of all stakeholders, particularly policy designers, educational planners, teachers and school heads, educational administrators, quality assurance/assessment and evaluation agencies, target beneficiaries/learners, curriculum experts, legislators, the media, communities and parents, as well as the analytic work of the 2017 Triennale.

More importantly, the Francophone definition shares an African regional perspective on the concept and processes of delivering quality education as well as the needed for paradigm shifts that should determine the continent's strategic pathway out of the woods, particularly in the post-2015 decades (Ndoye et al., 2014). Thematic indicators include: student-centered, inclusive, holistic and equitable quality and relevance-driven education systems in all contexts; quality assurance and monitoring and evaluation structures and mechanisms; and teacher capacity development and status enhancement, motivation and retention; and child-/learner- friendly, healthy and safe environments. The second core indicator and pathway to successful learning outcomes involves enhanced, efficient and effective and sustainable financing of education systems, including stakeholder mobilization for extra-budgetary finances and other resources; the free education issue and the sensitization of parents on cost-sharing; public policy engagement and increased funding of education; decentralized governance and partnership building. The outcome document is the Strategic Framework that has relevance and areas of convergence, which has also been highlighted in the GMR 2015 on EFA from 2000 to 2015, as well as current 2030, 2025 and 2063 agendas.

UNICEF adds other dimensions to the indicators of quality education, notably, issues of exclusion and inequities, which require education systems to consider uninhibited education opportunities to all earners to develop to their full potential. The core enablers of such opportunities include: curricula content and instructional materials that are relevant and sensitive to both boys and girls, learning and teaching processes that also include gender-friendly classroom organization, instructional techniques and assessment, and learning environments that provide physical and psychosocial safety and security inside and outside the classroom[4]. Schilder (2011) and others caution that care must be taken to ensure that while analyzing the quality of education, important variables such as gender, disability and other forms of marginalization are not overlooked.

3.2. Financing quality education and lifelong learning

Underlying the conceptual and process indicators of quality education is the crucial need for enhanced, efficient and effective sustainable financing of education systems, including the free public education interventions, stakeholder mobilization for extra-budgetary finances and other resources; sensitization of parents on cost-sharing; decentralized governance and sustainable partnership and network building. In most African countries, perennially poor or grossly inadequate education funding remains a major challenge to the delivery of quality education and the extension of lifelong learning opportunities for all. Both the Oslo Summit on Education (July 2015) and the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa, July 2015) as well as the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2015 (CESA 16-25) affirm that full realization of the Education 2030 agenda requires sustained, innovative and well-targeted financing, especially in those countries

[4] *United Nations Children's Fund (May 2008) Promoting Gender Equality through UNICEF-Supported Programming in Basic Education: Operational Guidance. New York: Programme Division UNICEF*

farthest from achieving quality education for all at all levels, and in emergency situations. While the financing crises are global, resource dependent, low income and least developing countries, most of which are in Africa, have made only superficial progress toward increased enrolments and far less so in terms of quality. Against that backdrop, resolutions of the Addis Ababa Conference encouraged countries to set nationally appropriate funding targets for education.

In his lead contribution, "*Making the Case for Quality Education and Lifelong Learning for Sustainable Development in Africa*," Nafukho (2016) alludes to reducing the education financing and investment challenge, which may require governments to engage with and mobilize individuals and organizations to fund education, for instance, through tax reforms that provide them interesting tax incentives and rebates. It also means inviting parents, communities and the private sector to share the cost of delivering public sector quality education and lifelong learning, which is rather controversial since public education system is generally seen as free public good, even though private providers of education and their stakeholders – mainly fee-paying parents – hardly worry about cost. The contribution urges governments to encourage organizations such as UNESCO, UNICEF, ADEA, FAWE, and the Institute for International Co-operation of the German Adult Education Association (IIZ/DVV) to continue their funding of quality and lifelong learning programs in Africa. A major global actor and ADEA partner, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), has set a very good example in helping developing nations to meet the challenges of inadequate funding of education. GPE has invested over USD 100 million in technical and financial support to strengthen ECCE analysis, policies and strategies, providing grants to finance ECCE programs, and capacity development and knowledge sharing on effective and good practices for ECCE policies and programs (GPE, 2016). The contribution by the GPE to Sub-theme 1 highlights the underlying issues and problems that UNESCO, ADEA and the World Bank seek to address, especially "investment by donors and partner countries toward the Africa's 2063 Agenda and SDG 2030."

A third critical dimension of education financing to support learning and quality outcomes is the provision of scholarships to bright children and youth from disadvantaged families and backgrounds. Such interventions or support have been provided by governments, philanthropists, NGOs/Foundations, International partners, the organized private sector (OPS), etc. In the framework of the 2030 Agenda, specifically the expected outcome for SDG4.b is as follows*: By 2020, significantly increase the number of scholarships offered at the global level to developing countries for studies, in particular to least developed countries, small Island developing States and to countries in Africa, to finance the continuation of higher studies, including vocational education, ICT, technical and science courses and engineering studies in developed countries and other developing countries.* A case study contribution by the Forum for African Women Educationists (FAWE) is a good and replicable example of how scholarships have helped the immediate beneficiaries and how the lessons learned have enabled the adoption of a holistic and systemic approach to multiplying the impact of such scholarships on the school environment and the host communities, while also integrating good governance measures and transparency through community stewardship of resources. The following extract speaks to the key lessons that could guide prospective initiatives:

> Financing component covers not only school fees, transportation costs and a stipend, but also caters for scholastic materials and comfort kits – a menstrual management sanitation and hygiene pack to promote school attendance even during menstruation. The second feature isempowerment training through life skills and sexual and reproductive health is to ensure scholars acquire self-confidence and become goal oriented, resulting in improved completion and academic performance rates for girls. The third feature is the strengthening of

> partnerships with community and promotion of a gender-responsive school environment where positive gender relations enable learners to transition through the education system without inhibition (FAWE, 2016, p.4).

Furthermore, it clearly shows that In order to ensure transparency and accountability as a crucial factor of sustainability and good governance; an endemic challenge to expected educational quality and outcomes, FAWE set up a multi-stakeholder engagement platform including the active involvement of the focal stakeholders - "the most vulnerable scholars, who often have neither access to information nor a voice on forums where such decisions are made" (p. 4). The FAWE report further explains that "students are identified, selected and their eligibility authenticated by committees comprising community members and religious leaders, school head teachers and Ministry of Education officials'' (p.4). The lessons and recommendations are instructive for replication by African education providers.

Financing is a critical enabler and complements the other enablers such as quality and relevant curriculum, innovative and creative and motivated teachers, appropriate pedagogy or andragogy, materials and technologies and assessment or evaluation. Increasingly, critical alternative strategies to the financing of education for both formal and non-formal and out-of-school target groups have been adopted in some of the neediest developing countries, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region and sub-Saharan Africa. For the Asia-Pacific region, UNESCO-Bangkok describes the major challenges and key messages and lessons based on successful practices that are of particular relevance to the deliberations and outcome strategies of the 2017 Triennale:

> Given the impact of education on individuals, societies and economies, there is great urgency for governments to provide alternative interventions for these children to receive basic education outside the conventional school system. Flexible learning strategies have been an effective vehicle in equipping out-of-school children with foundational literacy and numeracy skills, as well as life competencies for the 21st century. However, in spite of their strong potential to achieve EFA goals, the disconcerting reality is that education programs for disadvantaged children have been chronically underfunded across the Asia-Pacific region. This stems from a range of different causes, including non-formal education's poor societal image, decreasing foreign aid to education and governments' tendency to prioritize other subsectors that are perceived to be more important, such as primary and higher education. In recent years, innovative financing for development has not necessarily created new financial mechanisms but rather creatively leveraged existing funding and revenue streams to produce impactful outcomes. Having proven to be highly successful in health and other sectors, innovative financing strategies may effectively supplement traditional sources of education funding, such as government resources and official development assistance (UNESCO Bangkok, 2015, p.2)

However, some current trends in innovative financing practices highlighted for the Asia-Pacific include: mandatory dues that come from corporate social responsibility (CRS); extractive industries taxation, SIN Taxes from lotteries, alcohol and tobacco (product-specific), and Education Impact Bonds (or debt conversion development bond). Perhaps the biggest lesson to be learned is that sub-Saharan Africa (including resource endowed countries such as Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Sudan) has some of the most disadvantaged populations of the world. Ironically, these countries hold the earth's richest array of natural and mineral resources, which, if judiciously exploited and managed could conveniently finance most if not all

public sector expenditures on education across the formal and non-formal sub-sectors. The World Education Blog agrees:

> Maximizing the income from natural resources such as oil and minerals could provide an education to 86% out-of-school children and 42% of out-of-school adolescents in 17 developing countries, according to calculations by the EFA Global Monitoring Report team. Our new policy paper, "Turning the 'resource curse' into a blessing for education", shows that these 17 countries could make huge progress on closing remaining education gaps before 2015 by managing their resource revenues better and devoting a significant share to send all children to school (2013, p. 1).

UNESCO describes one of the most striking paradoxes that plague resource-endowed but economically challenged African countries as having experienced ''slower economic growth than resource-poor countries, (and) many are far from reaching the Education for All (EFA) goals and other development targets''(UNESCO-EFA, 2013, p.1). Nonetheless, it is important and instructive to highlight the example of how Nigeria decided to leverage its own resources to complement and outperform the Debt Relief Gains (DRG) project financing focused on an innovation called the Federal Teachers' Scheme (FTS); and an aggressive national teacher and institutional capacity building implemented between 2005 and 2012. The final report reiterated the significant success of the project when the government decided to take complete ownership and look inwards for project-related resources:

> Pervasive discontent with the responses of global partners and the desire to strengthen the sustainability of achievements to date has spurred the OSSAP-MDGs to domesticate most of the (original) goals, setting targets higher than those agreed internationally. In the case of goal 8, the failure of developed nations to transfer technology and boost development aid to Nigeria has provoked a look inwards, with a view to forming a country-level partnership for development between government and the private sector (NMET, 2009, p.7).

The overriding factor of success and the key lesson of any innovative sources of education financing would largely depend on the extent to which "innovative financing for education initiatives has generated additional resources for disadvantaged children and youth; . . . delivered concrete results; [and] strengthened country ownership of the education development process" (UNESCO Bangkok, 2015, p.23).

3.3. Coordinating policy, planning and implementation

The World Education Forum (WEF) 2015 Incheon Declaration places national education ministries in the driving seat of implementation of the education SDG and all its related targets, with the added requirement for a 'whole of government' approach to education and support of all stakeholders, including non-state actors – stressing the need for stronger leadership, coordination and synergy within governments as regards education development and its integration into wider socio-economic development frameworks (WEF, 2015). Here too, technical and financial support to produce good quality and nationally owned education sector plans is the foundation of GPE's operational model. At the country level, GPE strengthens comprehensive and inclusive education sector planning and policy implementation through the provision of education sector plan development grants (up to US$500,000) and education sector program implementation grants (up to US$100 million) to finance the implementation of education projects. The GPE-supported education sector plans, in particular, inform the ECCE policies and strategies for national education reform, and serve as a powerful tool

for the coordination of partnerships and for the mobilization of additional domestic and external resources. They have become a critical instrument for governments to signal to all potential investors that their education subsector policies are credible, sustainable, and worthy of investment.

GPE's operational model enables collaborative support to low and lower middle income countries to strengthen their education sector planning and delivery. While developing country governments take the lead in planning and are accountable for delivery, GPE enables inclusion of non-government stakeholders, works to strengthen technical capacity, finances needs analysis, and leverages coordinated use of the talent and resources of development partners. When a developing country lacks sufficient financing to develop or implement its education plan, GPE can provide financial support for improved education planning, policy development, monitoring and financing, as well as help fund implementation of education plans (Proulx & Solano, 2016, p. 2).

4.0. TOWARDS ENHANCED QUALITY EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING FOR ALL

The global shift of paradigm from access to quality has put learning outcomes firmly on the political agenda of the global community. The learning outcome paradigm calls for the consideration of student outcomes, improvement of assessment practices, and the refocusing of institutional missions onto student learning. CEDEFOP (2009) defines learning outcomes as what a learner knows, understands and is able to do after completion of learning, through a collection of useful processes and tools that can be applied in diverse ways in different policy, teaching and learning settings[5]. The 2016 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) recognizes the importance of good quality and equitable education and learning in support of social change, as well as the role of education as a cross-cutting means of advancing the 2030 Agenda[6] and Africa's Agenda 2063. Quality requires establishing learning-friendly schools and institutions; increasing the number of teachers and enhancing their quality through comprehensive policies that address issues of recruitment, training, retention, professional development, evaluation, employment and teaching conditions as well as the status of teachers, through increased national capacity. The report, however, draws attention to the remarkable gaps existing between the current state of world education and the educational goals to be achieved by 2030, particularly in relation to educational attainment between females and males, rural and urban, the rich and poor, within and between countries. (UNESCO, 2015).

4.1. Quality of learners

A commitment to fulfilment of the right to education entails that education is available to all, without discrimination. This underscores an active commitment to reaching out to traditionally marginalized, groups, notably the poor, girls, working children, children affected by conflict, children with disabilities, and those with nomadic lifestyles.[7] Efforts towards this commitment have translated to increasing attention to inclusive education, particularly within the international intellectual and advocacy forum of UNESCO. The contribution by the Chiedza Child Care Centre (CCCC) project in Zimbabwe, which targets vulnerable 9- to 15-year-old out-of-school boys and girls who had not enrolled in school by age 9 or have been out of school for at least a year, is an excellent example of a non-formal innovation providing transition to formal schooling for out-of-school children. This

[5] *European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2009: The shift to learning outcomes Policies and practices in Europe. Luxembourg: Luxembourg. European Union*

[6] *ShareAlike 3.0 IGO (CC-BY-SA 3.0 IGO) license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/bysa/3.0/igo/)*

[7] *http://educateachild.org/explore/barriers-to-education/quality*

initiative complements the Zimbabwe government's education goal of increasing access to quality education through the provision of alternative pathways outlined in its National Non-Formal Education Policy. Successfully piloted as a *Study Group* in 9 centres, the intervention has benefited 341 children (180 girls) since 2010 and is being replicated in 25 other districts, with more than 140 children reintegrated into the formal school system. The program is a viable option for children to complete secondary school and be equipped for productive activities. However, it requires equipping teachers with appropriate skills to use the Study Group pedagogical approach, including teaching Special Needs Learners (CCCC, 2016).

For learners to benefit from quality education, they must be in a state of physical, mental and psychological readiness to learn, and have a network of support from their families and communities. Considerable policy focus and conversations around the issue of quality of learning outcomes seem to attribute learning outcomes more to quality teaching than to quality learning. This perception is founded on the presumption that the improvement of teaching is a key element in improving student learning. Yet, understood better knowledge of how learners learn would lead to better teaching. Studies have proved that learner achievement increases when the learner takes the initiative to develop deeper understanding and ability to transfer knowledge across disciplines and situations.

A second key factor in quality learner profile and learning process is the role of libraries and library infrastructure. Two notable contributions illustrate the urgent need for a sustainable reading culture in schools and institutions, the community and homes. The United Nation's advocacy strategy has highlighted how "libraries can drive progress across the Sustainable Development Goals(MDGs), which has inspired the contribution by the ADEA Working Group on Books and Learning Materials" (WGBLM) (Nyariki, 2016) developing a textbook distribution model for Africa drawing on the national experience of Kenya. The broader message is that books, modern library infrastructure, full complement of appropriate technologies, multimedia community learning resource have crucial roles to play in shaping the quality of the learner and learning outcomes, as well as meeting all 17 SGDs. More significantly, the contribution of the Ministry of Education of Costa Rica provides an instructive insight into how strategic political will and matching budgetary appropriation by the government transformed the huge deficit in the quantity and quality of school libraries into learning resource centre in rural, urban and remote areas of Costa Rica (Gairaud, 2016). Costa Rica's comprehensive reform of the library and library infrastructure development strategy began with the inclusion of libraries in the 2011-2014 National Development Plan, during which 35% of the nation's school libraries were transformed into Learning Resource Centres, and targeting another 35% in the 2015-2018 plan period. The lessons are clearly instructive for adopting strong, committed political will and matching budgetary appropriation that can transform the state of school libraries, as in Costa Rica, from "quiet places, with old collections closed in stands, where kids and teenager only had access to the books through a librarian...forgotten places in a dark location at (elementary) school and high school...sometimes the punish (ment) place for the bad student" (Gairaud, p.1).

A third factor that can determine the quality of the learner involves the type, nature and process of educational assessment and monitoring provision that exist to guide the objective, equitable and transparent outcomes of quality learning, particularly at the foundational/ basic education level. The 2014 PASEC report presents an illuminating insight into the poor state of learner quality in literacy, numeracy and life or social skills (PASEC, 2014, 2015). The most significant aspect in the PASEC 2014 report is that it is based on the structured feed- back mechanism/reporting of learner performance, particularly for parents and policy makers to understand, which is the performance scale for

describing and interpreting learning competencies in mathematics and language of instruction(French) in primary schools in Francophone countries . It involves statistical distribution of performances with regard to levels 1-4, minimum pupil score, and the percentage distribution of pupils across the set scale levels. The learner's progress and challenges are, therefore, made more readily appreciated by inquiring stakeholders, including the school's learner support unit where they exist.

More importantly, the key lessons that need to be learned have serious implications for total systemic reform of primary education. They are drawn from the findings of a systems or school- based research culture, including continuous monitoring and assessment, and underscore the urgent need for a systematic and action-research intervention from outside actors, as well as increasingly empowering teachers to be action-researchers.

- ''A majority of pupils do not display the competencies expected in primary school. For some countries (in the PASEC zone} the situation is alarming'' (p.11).
- ''Performance at the end of primary is unsatisfactory, mirroring that displayed at the beginning of the cycle'' (p.15).
- "The countries with the best early primary performance are also those where national scores for late primary are the highest, overall" (p.17).
- ''The performance gap between girls and boys is relatively modest in early primary, but tend to widen at the end of the cycle in several countries'' (p.17).
- "In general, in early primary, teachers are less qualified and experienced than in late primary" (p.19).
- "Teachers have an unfavourable opinion of school curricula and of their working conditions" (p.20).

A fourth critical factor of quality learning is the medium of instruction and the evidence-based conclusion that learners, in particular those in early and basic education, literacy and non-formal education, are most enabled when they receive instruction in their mother tongue or indigenous language they understand. Learners have the fundamental right to relevant and meaningful knowledge, information and skills. The first landmark empirical evidence from the celebrated Six-year Ife project (Nigeria) in the 1970s has been corroborated by numerous case studies reflected in the UNESCO Global Monitoring Report since 2002. Specifically, the contribution by the UNESCO–Dakar team (Diawara, Glanze & Siap, 2016) addresses the literacy and mother-tongue factor of learner quality through the promotion of multilingual education and training of teachers, particularly in Francophone countries. The summary statement that the 2107 Triennale should give particular attention to this important question: With all the overwhelming evidence on the role of mother tongue in effective understanding and learning outcomes, why are most African governments not promoting and supporting the use of the mother tongue or indigenous languages particularly in basic education?

4.2. Quality Processes and Teachers

Processes, including pedagogies, are a frequently overlooked aspect of quality. Yet, much learning, especially communication and "soft" skills, is a function of processes as much as content. In addition, the method of transmission of knowledge, skills and values is as important a part of curriculum as the content because the process is part of "what" is learned (Educate, 2016). Beginning with the ECD

level, GPE's evidence-based experience provides the key lesson for a much stronger public policy on early childhood education and the lifelong implications of the ECD processes that the learner is put through. As it is now clearly acknowledged:

> The first 2,000 days in a child's life – from birth to the transition to primary school – present a unique opportunity to establish strong foundations for virtually every domain of development (e.g., language, socio-emotional, physical, and cognitive). What happens during these early years establishes the building blocks for educational and economic success that last throughout a lifetime (Proulx & Solano, 2016, p.4).

The processes that enable the attainment of meaningful teaching and learning outcomes are entrusted essentially to teachers and quality assurance and administrative personnel. The productivity of 21st Century teachers is closely linked to their creativity, innovativeness, reflective and critical thinking skills and capacities, which include technology literacy and the use of appropriate technologies for teaching and learning. This is one of the reasons that inspired the contribution on Creative *Digital Media Zambia* (CDMZ) that highlighted the innovation of training digital media experts who will work with education experts and teachers on the production of educational resources for use in schools and in non-formal education (Mahony, 2016). Another major obstacle facing teachers today is an apparent lack of gender skills for instruction. Yet, because teachers are central to the teaching and learning processes, their understanding and awareness of gender responsiveness is central to the effective participation of the girls and boys in learning processes. FAWE's Gender Responsive Pedagogy model specifically focuses creating gender responsive academic environments by exploring the various ways of making the teaching and learning processes respond to the specific needs of girls and boys. The GRP model contributes to the ongoing debate on how to improve quality in the provision of education, because what happens in the teaching and learning processes in the classroom is critical to the quality of education, and because true quality cannot be achieved without addressing the gender dimension (Mlama, 2005).

Quality teachers are vital, yet their availability, competence, status and motivation are amongst the most challenging quality input for education systems at all levels. While there is no dispute about the key role that teachers play in the quest for quality and equity education and lifelong learning for sustainable development at all levels and contexts of learning, their status and interests are often over looked. The general trend in Africa is that even where policies on teacher recruitment, deployment, compensation and continuous professional development exist, teacher retention in most African countries is often affected by poor conditions of work whose implementation, is dependent on a culture of social dialogue, which remains largely confrontational (AU, 2014). Opportunely, the high level of commitment to teacher quality and status and motivation was obtained at the 2015 World Education Forum held in Incheon, South Korea, provides a strong basis for future dialogue. Stakeholders included African education policy makers who also committed to ensuring that their teachers are motivated: "We will ensure that teachers and educators are empowered, adequately recruited, well-trained, professionally qualified, motivated and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems'' (WEF, 2015, p. 1). A model on national action to promote teacher pedagogical quality and productivity is provided by the government of Eritrea through the contribution on the Eritrea Innovative Project (Posti-Ahokas et al., 2016) on the extensive scale up of the quality of teacher educators. The project sought to enable the understanding of the basic principles and practice of school-based inclusive, learner-centred and interactive pedagogy by teacher and the eventual application of these principles in the classroom. With technical assistance from Finland, the project responds to prevalent gaps between existing government policy, principles

of learner-centred and interactive pedagogy (LCIP) and actual teaching and learning practices in the classroom, by ensuring appropriate training of teachers, and also facilitating quality assurance by the inspectorate/quality assurance unit. Among other outcomes, the Eritrean project recorded "increased motivation of beneficiaries – the teacher educator college staff for the significant change in pedagogical practices using the LCIP approaches; and an enhanced culture for professional development" (p. 1).

Establishing a culture of policy dialogue is crucial because, among other advantages, it promotes continuous teachers' professional development to adapt, for example, to application of technology to innovate and improves practice. It also promotes access to professional support, facilities and materials as basic requirements for teaching, job satisfaction and productivity, and the retention of teachers. At the continental level, the remaining challenges include the harmonization of national qualification frameworks, the building of training capacity, teacher migration/brain drain and the dire shortage of mathematics, science, engineering and technology teachers whose supply is about half the needed demand (UNESCO, 2015). It is most relevant that the UNESCO International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, in collaboration with the Kingdom of Cambodia, share with the ADEA 2017 Triennale the outcomes of the 9th International Policy Dialogue Forum on teacher motivation as a priority in the governance, management and the training of teachers from the initial stage of their career, and throughout. The ADEA 2017 Triennale provides a timely forum for securing commitments by African governments and stakeholders to this very critical issue and success factor of quality education and lifelong learning championed by the global arbitrator – the ILO/UNESCO Joint Committee of Experts – on the application of the recommendation of the Status of Teaching Personnel (CEART). For example, at its 12th session held in June 2015, it noted with concern that the practice of social dialogue on the teacher issue was still very limited.

Added to this has been the daunting challenges that face any potential progress on the issue, particularly in view of the global financial crisis, which "continues to weaken social dialogue, even in countries with a long history of collective bargaining such as in Europe, where well-established social dialogue institutions have been seriously weakened and/or suspended, with a negative impact on teachers' status and working conditions'' (UNESCO/ILO CEART, 2015, p. 9). The practice of social dialogue is perhaps associated more with public education institutions rather than with private education systems, and "in many countries the increasing privatization of education has also led to disparities in teacher qualification requirements and working conditions and loss of job security..."(p. 9). Furthermore, systemic teacher recruitment and equitable deployment; standards, certification, code of conduct, qualifications frameworks; teachers' participation in policy decision making; teacher salary and other incentives; and deliberate attention to inclusive and equitable approaches to teacher management are fundamental issues (UNESCO-ITT, 2016) for the 2017 Triennale deliberations and outcome strategies. A holistic strategic view of the teacher issue has recently been addressed by teacher education scholars(Kirk & Dembele,2013, pp. 1-21; Kirk & Winthrop,2013, pp. 121-139; Owhotu, 2015), global organizations (UNESCO-UIS, 2013,2015) and dedicated regional teacher education initiatives such as UNESCO's Teacher Training Initiative for sub-Saharan Africa-TTISSA-(UNESCO/Capacity Trust & Pendium, 2009) whose evidence-based findings lead to the general conclusion that in terms of internationally agreed education goals and quality teacher frameworks, Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, has a long way to go to address the looming crisis of grossly inadequate teacher supply, motivation (both extrinsic and intrinsic) and retention and their serious implications for attaining the targets of the 2030, 2025 and 2063 Agendas.

The African Union Commission's study on the teacher issue provides a major evidence-based impetus to the 2017 deliberations and the next strategic steps towards the 2030 and 2063. The Union's leadership role, convening powers and policy dialogue mechanism hold very strong potential for enhanced advocacy and educational transformation through the application of relevant normative instruments by its Member States in order to resolutely meet the lingering educational challenges. The continent-wide study, duly validated, covers the following 12 critical areas and issues:

- presence and profile of teachers by country;
- teacher recruitment;
- qualifications and training;
- content of requirements;
- in-service training/professional development;
- in-service training /professional development;
- content for in-service programs;
- salary and benefits;
- evaluation and career development;
- sources of information for teachers' performance evaluation;
- performance assessment mechanisms; and
- opportunities and conditions for promotion of teachers (African Union Commission, 2016).

As the report states, the contribution was motivated by the centrality of teachers' role in achieving development goals for the continent as articulated in the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25) and Agenda 2063.

Agenda 2063 envisions "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena. To achieve this vision, a well-motivated teacher who is mandated with the provision of skills, knowledge and orientation of its citizens for the Africa we want is a primary requirement'' (p. 6). With respect to the findings, lessons and recommendations, it is important to state that the first daunting global, regional and national challenge Africa faces is how to attract prospective teachers into the profession? What the available statistics clearly show ,among other problems, is that those in service are not only poorly motivated but are ageing , leaving , and retiring sooner than later. According to the AU study "in one country through interview, it was revealed that the teaching profession was an ageing and dying profession. All the teachers would retire in 10 years' time as the profession has not attracted young teachers. This is an important statistic not known to the mentioned ministry of education" (p. 12). Perhaps the most critical elements of the study are the conclusions and recommendation that stakeholders at the 2017 Triennale should be aiming to build into their national action plan for teacher recruitment, training and development, status enhancement, motivation and retention. The relevant general and specific recommendations are presented at the end of this synthesis report.

4.3. Quality of contents

Content defines the knowledge, information sets, hard and soft skills and life skills, and values that a learner is expected to acquire are a well-understood component of quality, yet much of what is taught and learned today may not be highly relevant to learners. A quality education cannot dismiss the critical facts and information that are important for constructing knowledge and acquiring skills, including the role of communities as key providers and "interpreters" of content as it is turned into knowledge (Appleton, 2015). Contributions to this target highlighted the core value and moral contents that should be taught in all contexts of learning: informal, formal education and learning situations, such as the home, neighbourhood, community, including via print an electronic mass media, particularly the dominant social media that have such an overwhelming influence on adolescents and young adults across social classes all over the world. Value-based education (VBE) is recognized as one of the strongest pillars of Africa's lifelong, life-wide humanistic development.

The 2012 Ouagadougou Triennale's recommendations for common-core skills for every leaner were later approved by the African Union's Assembly of African Heads of State held in Ethiopia in January 2013, as a demonstration of the continent's political will and commitment to ADEA's Strategic Policy Framework for the implementation of ''reforms to promote critical knowledge, skills and qualifications for Africa's sustainable development'' (ADEA, 2013, p. 3). Another recommendation of the 2012 Triennale for the integration of indigenous knowledge and know-how was addressed in the contribution by the ADEA Working Group on Non-Formal Education (WGNFE), with the goal of introducing a paradigm shift in education contents and thereby improving school-community relations through the mainstreaming of local and indigenous bodies of knowledge, know-how and value systems (ADEA WGNFE, 2016c). The specific recommendation of the 2012 Triennale was that ''Africa should have a fundamental rethink of education in Africa, introduce paradigm shifts ,design curricula that are anchored in local reality, as well as be made more sensitive to local educational needs in order to change the uncomplimentary impressions that the globalized world has of Africa and Africans''. The study proposes for adoption by African countries an innovative model driven by the identified need to align curriculum, teaching and learning to local realities, ensure quality, relevance and strong school-community partnership in order to generate a new model/innovative approach including Africanizing the curriculum /delivery systems. However, the innovation and proposed implementation strategy duly endorsed by ADEA and its Steering Committee face challenges of general adoption and implementation by African stakeholders. It is important to highlight the challenges, lessons and proposed roadmap for its eventual implementation:

- Design and adoption of a concrete, applicable and sustainable framework for the innovation;
- Identification of an appropriate communication strategy to generate acceptance of the innovative model by educational institutions in African countries;
- Establishment of a national and regional qualification framework that would transcends schools of thoughts and nations;
- Establishment of a sound professional working relationship between educators in the formal education sector and the local custodian of local and indigenous knowledge and know-how.

In addressing these challenges, two recommendations are noteworthy:

- African school systems should develop a dynamic symbiotic relationship with, on the one hand, local, indigenous knowledge and know-how that have been transmitted from generation to

generation and, on the other hand, the values, knowledge base and know-how introduced by external education systems from Western or Middle Eastern countries.

- Introduce legislation to address the need and obligation of African education systems to give priority to indigenous knowledge and know-how.

The following seven-point roadmap being proposed for adoption and implementation by African countries are very important and should be part of the 2017 Triennale deliberations and the outcome strategies:

- Develop a common contractual charter of values;
- Develop a national, sub-regional and regional policy document;
- Identify methods and tools and monitoring mechanism to be shared among countries;
- Indentify sectors and job opportunities and jobs that enhance growth and value addition;
- Organize a regional seminar to share information and experiences, and validate the indigenous-based development template for Africa; and
- Publish the results of the integration of indigenous knowledge and know-how in African education systems, particularly case studies on innovative practices in Francophone countries.

ADEA WGNFE's contribution (ADEA WGNFE, 2016a) presents a big picture characterized by the required paradigm shift towards sustainable development in Africa that has major implications for basic education system. It emphasizes the urgent need for critical CCS contents such as literacy, cognitive, appropriate life and social skills, as well basic work skills to be acquired by all children, youth and adults, through formal, non-formal and informal means, within a wider framework of life-wide and lifelong learning (p. 7). However, the successful acquisition of CCS requires a holistic and integrated approach, whereby effective teaching methodologies, teaching-learning materials, assessment, and professional support must be aligned with a skills-based curriculum. As the 2012 Triennale had recommended, CCS should be better and holistically defined with the involvement of every level and stratum of the population, as well as ''work towards a collaborative inter-country framework for CCS development, drawing on lessons from many experiences" (ADEA, 2013, p. 8). Notable specific directions were also provided by the 2012 Triennale for African countries to leverage towards the 2015 timeline for EFA and MDGs. Initiatives to implement CCS school-based projects in some African countries (The Gambia, Mali and Rwanda) through the Basic Education for Africa Program (BEAP) brought about comprehensive curriculum review in collaboration with UNESCO, Dakar and UNESCO-IBE and GIZ. However, "there is not much information as to how countries have incorporated life skills (education) into the curriculum for basic education and how successful this has been'' (Hoppers & Yekhlef, 2012, pp. 23 and 30). It is important to note that life skills education(LSE) is an integral component of the global CCS discourse on policy and practice of quality and relevant curriculum reform, teaching and learning outcomes, which UNICEF has been actively supporting all over the world, and providing essential feedback through its monitoring and evaluation mechanism. UNICEF's recent evaluation of LSE in 70 countries speaks to the crucial importance of LSE in the expanded view of quality contents of basic education and beyond (UNICEF, 2012). Critical as LSE may be, the inherent challenge that remain to be met is the finding that "life skills tend to be defined in many different ways and thus takes on different forms depending on overall social context and life situation" (p. 30). It is clear that this conceptual uncertainty needs to be addressed as a priority strategic tool.

The major contributions of the Working Group's study (ADEA WGNFE, 2016a) relate to ways of closing the significant gaps and lapses in CCS delivery in formal education systems and the need for the formal system to embrace the proposed innovation. Common core skills frameworks do exist. However, for the formal education system, they do not take cognisance of the successes/achievements with existing common core skills framework in the non-formal system. More importantly, the formal education system has, paradoxically, been unable to implement the Common Core Skills Framework in a holistic and integrated way. The study therefore provides a bridging solution through the development of a conceptual and methodological approach that has led to the development of a Matrix applicable to the formal, non-formal and informal subsectors. Specific elements of the Matrix include skills, attitudes and aptitudes that every African learner should acquire in order to be able to, on the one hand, responds to their own needs and expectations and those of their societies. On the other hand, they would be able to preserve their individuality, uniqueness and citizenship as children, youth and adults. In line with the continental outreach of ADEA's objective, the proposed Matrix would be promoted for adoption by African countries as a reference framework for a full and functional understanding of CCS, particularly in the following curriculum areas: language, multilingual or bilingual education, and communication, mathematics, and natural and social sciences.

Equally significant is the fact that, beyond disciplinary curricula, the Matrix prescribes:

(a) Core principles of inter-disciplinary approach that promotes an integrated structure for knowledge acquisition and construction, as against the prevailing practice of seeing the disciplines as fragmented or isolated bodies of knowledge and skills;

(b) Linking theory, reality and practice;

(c) Adoption of a variety of pedagogies such as REFLECT and TYLAY'S approach, which provides concrete responses to learning needs in the various contexts based on societal values and vision.

It is important to note that, while the final expected outcomes are promising, the major challenge is getting the Matrix finalized, validated and adopted or adapted by African national education systems. It is, admittedly, a complex innovation because it has significant implications for potential paradigm shifts across the curricula in the formal, non-formal and informal contexts of learning and teaching across borders (ADEA WGNFE, 2016 a).

The contribution of the Kenya Women Research Network on value-based education has a strong link of continuity with the post 2012 Triennale goals, and seeks to reinforce through empirical evidence the priority need for a paradigm shift across all contexts of learning and for sustainable livelihoods and development. The extensive country-wide investigation of "meanings and practices of value-based education describes and addresses the situation in Kenyan schools, which, like most, if not all, school systems across Africa, are grappling with the issues and challenges of integrating value-education in the school curriculum. The key objective is to positively influence or shape attitudes and behaviours of learners as crucial traits for meaningful and successful lifelong learning, and for the preservation of shared African cultural values and identities. It is generally agreed that examination-centred systems do not promote serious value-based education, and undesirable, unethical behaviours are usually traceable to the challenges of developing a culture of common values and ethics in and through school (Wamahiu et al., 2015, p. vi). The major contribution of the study is the provision of a set of exploitable knowledge, skills and understandings, and pedagogical and

experiential practices for learners and teachers. Teachers are not immune to value or culture or ethnic biases or stereotyping of others. The fact is that there is a lack of empirical evidence exploring what value-based education means, the extent to which they have been integrated in the formal educational practices, and their relevance to the primary education sub-sector''(p. iv). Four findings/key lessons are of critical importance for the development of the humanistic contents of a holistic quality education framework. First, all schools transmit values (some of which may be negative) to children (p. xi). Second, having progressive national legislation and policies are critical but insufficient for the implementation of a value-based education. Third, although well intentioned, interventions meant to promote children's participation, rights and leadership skills may have the opposite effect (p. xiii). Fourth, quantity does not synonymous with quality or even a prerequisite to its achievement (p. xiv).

In light of the key lessons, several important recommendations are made on value-based education, particularly the strong need to: i) adopt a whole-school approach to value-based education, which promotes well organized and seamless teaching and learning of positive values that are also reflected in the school ethos and culture; ii) integrate the four core humanistic and universal values of Respect, Tolerance, Equality (and Equity) and Peace into the curriculum at all levels of the education system, including early childhood education and teacher education and training; iii) adopt comprehensive education reform that, at a minimum, would scrap the KCPE (Kenya Certificate of Primary Education), replacing it with a system of assessment that moves away from the narrow focus on regurgitating facts to recognition of the learning needs of the whole-child, respects rights of the child, and that is age appropriate and value-friendly; iv) build the capacities of teachers as the acknowledged catalyst and change agent focusing on their pedagogical skills and changing their mind set , values environment, values content, pedagogy of values, continuous assessment and feedback through in-service training; v) intensify parental education and community sensitization through partnership with civil society and faith-based organizations on value-based education that emphasizes the four core values; and vi) adopt experiential learning methodologies for value-based education in the four core values (Wamahui, 2016).

The contribution by Success for Africa (SFA) focuses on another dimension of values-education and soft skills development in all learners for lifelong and life-wide learning and survival. It shares the assumption that western life-styles have negatively affected the propagation of Africa's traditional values. However, the proposed advocacy and training material, published in book form, highlights the need for education systems to adopt its program on self-empowerment and self-application as core elements of educating for a culture of sustainable peace in African schools. It aligns its vision, mission, thematic orientation and expected outcomes very closely to the pre-existing and global framework of the Global Peace Foundation (GPF) whose Character and Creative Initiative (CCI) has done extensive work in school systems in an attempt "to craft pedagogies and supportive structures that foster development of positive, ethical pro-social inclinations and competencies in youth, including strengthening their academic focus and achievement" (Wanjala, 2016, p. 10). Both initiatives emphasize a common affective and humanistic goal. Even if their contents vary, they are, nonetheless, complementary perspectives.

With regard to the hard evidence, the CCI program in Kenyan schools is said to have "proved that the induction of character and best practices created a patent positive impact in the overall school culture, proving that moulding of character reduced vice, improved students' academic achievement/ performance, their overall outlook to life and a reduction of social problem such as violence, bullying

and substance abuse" (p. 14). In contrast, the Success for Africa manual is a career guidance and counselling document aimed at sensitizing, educating and training the youth on the law of personal success-adapted for Africa Concept – the Iosafa concept (p .9) in order to "strengthen their attitudes to enable them... to operate from different mental paradigms. Specifically, SFA suggests that what students in impoverished regions need are not more academic contents or skills, but rather the life-skills that would enable them to improve their financial prospects and wellbeing. These include financial literacy and entrepreneurial skills; health maintenance and management skills; and administrative capabilities such as team work, problem solving, and project management that include the creation, care and management of natural environment as well" (p. 14). More importantly, the implementation of SFA model in the school system raises challenges of official acceptance and practicability: i) How possible would it be to introduce the curriculum integration or infusion model of the SFA into heavily examination-centred and structured education systems all over Africa? ii) Second, systems in which extra-curricular activities of school clubs, associations and societies are not part of the assessment system and are limited to an hour or two per week or even a month? iii) How would the challenges of institution-based support (space, essential learning materials and facilities) for attaining the specific objectives of school club activities be overcome? Above all, SFA's proposed week-long time-table would require a system parallel system to the regular school timetable, which may not be approved by school authorities, teachers, parents and learners, and, above all, the supervising ministry, in the case of public education institutions.

Career guidance is at the heart of learner support in school systems, particularly in secondary and higher education. It aims to provide essential personal and academic guidance, to orientate and facilitate student learning, as well as a seamless progress towards desirable vocational or professional careers, with lifelong implications for appropriate manpower to drive sustainable social and economic development in all its ramifications. One important contribution is the case study of the design and implementation of a localized education planning and career guidance program in Rwanda, a post-conflict environment. The project was piloted to "drive economic prosperity and development that promotes lifelong learning and provides hope for the future for Rwandan students and families and share what next for education and career guidance in Rwanda, as well as all of Africa" (KUDER, 2014, p. 2). The outcomes of the successful project for Rwanda are notable. The career guidance system is in 90 Rwandan schools, with over 15,000 students in the Rwandan Career Planning System (RCPS), and plans for replication across the country. The project utilizes "mobile labs" equipped with IT infrastructure, including Wi-Fi connectivity, tablets and laptops. An official statement of the Ministry of Education cited below acknowledged the validity and national significance of the project: "Why do we need to have this career within the education system? In order to have kids not being disappointed at the end of their educational journey, we need to prepare them earlier . . . so that after graduation they will be doing something they love doing most, and in so doing, it will increase productivity, and definitely spur economic growth and development" (p. 1). The project clearly demonstrates that the crucial importance of career guidance as a crucial learner support service, with wide-ranging implications for quality, equity and relevance of education systems and for manpower development for sustainable socio-economic growth and development in line with the 2030, 2025 and 2063 Agendas. African education systems, from basic to higher education, would be able to maximize the talents and potential of learning populations and harness same for personal, community and national development.

4.4. Confronting gender inequalities

The longstanding challenges of gender inequality and inequity have received extensive global, continental and national attention, particularly through extant Declaration of Human Rights, Conventions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and UNESCO, and the two Global Priorities – The Africa and Gender Equality, including the range of on-going related flagship programs, and projects in line with the Organization's Medium Term Strategy 2014-2021. Many African governments are signatories to the Rio+20 Consensus Document, 2012, which emphasizes that gender equality and women's empowerment should be at the forefront of the sustainable development agenda. At continental level, gender equality efforts received urgent priority attention when, in 2015, the CESA 16-25 assigned its 3rd pillar as 'Gender equality and sensitivity throughout the education and training systems', and the 5th Strategic Objective as 'Accelerate processes leading to gender parity and equity.' This commitment gives impetus to continental efforts towards the gender equality goal in education. Africa, as part of the global community, is expected to move its focus from enrolling girls and boys in school in equal numbers to ensuring that girls complete secondary education with the skills they need for healthy and productive livelihoods. This requires advancing the "second generation" girls' education priorities, including access – ensuring that girls can attend and complete primary and secondary school – and making schools safe and girl-friendly, improving learning quality, as well as supporting transitions to higher education and local leadership development[8] . This will also require cultivating local country leaders to champion this work at the grassroots level.

In the last decade, sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) countries have recorded remarkable progress towards meeting the Education for All (EFA) goal of Universal Primary Education (UPE), with nearly as many girls as boys completing primary school. However, the inability of most SSA countries' to meet the goal of eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education makes their EFA achievement rather skewed. The main factor impeding the attainment of the gender equality goal is the failure to arrest dropout rates for girls, especially beyond primary school. While overall, primary school enrolment trends to still favour boys over girls, in some countries, boys are marginally losing access to primary schooling, with more girls enrolled than boys in Congo, Mauritania, Senegal and Tanzania (GMR, 2015). In subsequent education cycles, girls begin to increasingly drop out of school more rapidly than boys, resulting in levels of gender disparity skewed in favour of males at secondary and tertiary level. Various studies identify child marriage as a major form of gender-based violence that continues to undermine girls' rights to education, with direct negative impact on their education, health and social status. Women and girls with disabilities endure a combination of gender-based and disability-based violence, which pose direct threats to their human rights.

The UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), a multi-stakeholder partnership that has been working to promote gender equality through policy advocacy and support to governments and other development actors to enable them to deliver on the gender and education-related Sustainable Development Goals, focuses on improving the quality and availability of girls' education and contributing to the empowerment of girls and women through transformative education. The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) and Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED), both members of the UNGEI network, have supported ministries of education in Africa in the promotion of gender equity and equality in education systems. Through advocacy, research evidence and good practice models, they

[8] *Raising the Global Ambition for Girls' Education. Rebecca Winthrop and Eileen McGivney, Brookings Institution, December 2014. http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2014/12/05-raising-global-ambition-girls-education-winthrop-mcgivney*

are influencing education policies, practices and attitudes to be responsive to girls' education needs and also monitoring the implementation of policies designed to foster gender equity.

The CAMFED study (2016) contributes innovations that address, not only exclusion on account of gender, but also marginalization on account of economic disadvantage and disabilities ranging from mild, moderate or severe difficulties related to sight, hearing and mobility, to comprehension and memory. Its targeted interventions support access and learning, remove financial barriers by covering direct and indirect costs of schooling for girls who are identified as needing support, support community-led initiatives to improve girls' schooling, train teacher mentors and staff and parents to improve educational quality, develop and distribute low cost educational resources, and enable young female school graduates to take on a leadership role as 'Learner Guides' in their local schools to provide mentoring and deliver a life skills curriculum. CAMFED has provided support to 40,219 marginalized girls across 201 secondary schools in Tanzania. CAMFED's focus on promoting more inclusive education environments together with its support of Learner Guide (who are female secondary school graduates from marginalized backgrounds, many of whom had previously been supported by CAMFED (CAMFED International, 2016).

The case study on girls' education in Kenya advocates for a gender-friendly primary school governance system that incorporates: a) parents and community sensitization on the value of girls' education; b) girls' safety and security through provision of boarding facilities and sanitary towels; c) guidance and counselling; d) school feeding programs; e) the enforcement of laws to curb child labour and promote girls' right to education; f) the increase of capitation grants and the abolition of school levies; and g) the provision of basic learning materials. The prevalence of gender-based violence (SRGBV) in educational settings, which is known to be a serious threat to girls' access, completion and success at school, has concerned the global working group on school-related gender-based violence. Working with educators and other stakeholders, the network of actors is focusing efforts on addressing SRGBV through research, advocacy, and programming. However, while there is progress in documenting the incidence, nature and scope of SRGBV, the evidence base remains fragmented, and opportunities for the exchange of experience and joint initiatives are limited. The *Good Neighbours,* Malawi's girls' education strategy, has been addressing these challenges through sex education and instruction on child rights and on the prevention of child marriage. It trains girls to assert their rights, and sensitizes community members, through the *Good Sisters'* program on the protection of child rights and prevention of child marriage. Interventions to empower girls with life skills and knowledge on menstrual management, child rights and reproductive health, as well as mentoring, have led to increases in attendance rates, self-reliance, and ultimately to girls' active participation in learning.

The key lessons drawn from the experience are that: a) targeted interventions should support access and learning for those most in need; b] pedagogical reform should include the development of attitudes and behaviours that boost learning. In addition, other related lessons drawn from evidence-based experiences and practices are particularly instructive for the 2017 Triennale. The summary statement/overview of the gender challenge in 2015 is that "the lack of progress in literacy among adult women is especially stark: in 2015 an estimated 481 million women, 15 years and over, lack basic literacy skills, 64% of the total number of those who are illiterate, a percentage virtually unchanged since 2000.The analyses and key messages in Gender and EFA 2000–2015 deserve careful scrutiny as the world embarks on a universal, integrated and even more ambitious sustainable development agenda in the years to come'' (UNESCO-EFA, 2015a). The slow and uneven progress is

particularly telling in sub-Saharan Africa, and the key message reiterated by the global community in Dakar in 2000 still rings true:

> Gender-based discrimination remains one of the most intractable constraints to realizing the right to education. Without overcoming this obstacle, Education for All cannot be achieved. Girls are a majority among out-of-school children and youth, although in an increasing number of countries boys are at a disadvantage. Even though the education of girls and women has a powerful trans-generational effect and is a key determinant of social development and women's empowerment, limited progress has been made in increasing girls' participation in basic education (UNESCO-EFA 2015b, p.7).

4.5. Including 'the excluded'

Inclusive education is a fundamental concept for the recognition, promotion and enforcement of fundamental human rights of all, which include educational opportunity and the attainment of human, social, cultural and economic development goals-national, regional and global. Yet, in most countries, the many benefits of education are disproportionately distributed, with those falling in the marginalized bracket far less likely to reap them. Inequality in access to quality education is especially visible among people with disabilities, populations in remote and socially excluded localities, girls and women living in highly patriarchal societies, the poor, and people living in conflict and post-conflict zones. Inclusive education is specifically anchored on the several rights frameworks such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948; UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, 1960; UN Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; National (domesticated) Child Rights Act, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006.

Several contributions highlight dimensions of policy, practices, challenges and key messages and lessons that characterize various shared country experiences, particularly the negative effect of social stigma that parents and children living with disabilities endure, and the marginalization of children in Koranic schools, particularly in the Sahelo-Saharan Belt. The contribution by ADEA WGNFE (2016b) address the need for a comprehensive system reform that incorporates the inclusion of the millions of out of school children and youth in the Koranic schools. Koranic schools have been the centre of communal spiritual life with the coming of Islam through trans-Saharan trade route over centuries ago and witnessed the establishment of higher education institutions of Islamic scholarship in Timbuktu and the Kanem Borno Empire. However, with the sweeping influence of western type education, globally agreed education goals (EFA, MDGs) and the prevalence of foreign value system and structures, Koranic education is seen to add little or no value to current social, economic, scientific and technological development. However, the WGNFE study highlights a reversal of the trend, as clearly shown by the continuous spike in enrolment levels in Koranic schools and centers across the Sahel-Saharan belt – a direct consequence of the failure of the countries studied to meet EFA/MDG goals of universal access and enrolment of all school age children within their Universal Primary Education programs. In other words, the unmet need for universal access has made the Koranic schools even more attractive today. E Millions of children of schools age in the Sahel –Saharan Belt enrol in these schools every year. The Working Group, however, proposes that Koranic school systems must move beyond numbers towards a holistic upgrade in quality and comparability of contents, methodologies, teachers' qualification and status, vocational transition, and governance. Against this background, the study seeks to provide concrete answers to the following questions related to the need for a paradigm shift across national boundaries:

- Under what conditions could Koranic education and the state-run education system co-exist?
- When will the state take responsibility for Koranic schools on an equal footing with the formal school system?
- What is the true place of Koranic schools in Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal?
- What are the major challenges that the Koranic education system face today?
- What future does the government have in store for the Koranic school system?

The key recommendations of the study addressed to all stakeholders are significant for comprehensive reform of the Koranic school system, and need to be part of the deliberations and outcome strategies at the 2017 Triennale towards meeting the SDG 4 targets:

- Undertake a comprehensive review of the organization, curriculum and programmes of Koranic schools in the countries studies and beyond;
- Significantly improve the training, quality and remunerations of Koranic teachers;
- Mobilize funds to support and sustain the Koranic education system spread across the Sahelo-Saharan Belt;
- Motivate learners and support parents whose children are learning in the centres;
- Resolutely tackle the erroneous perception of Koranic schools as dangerous places that give rise to radical ideas and violent extremism, and substandard learning environments;
- Focus on employability of graduates of the Koranic system;
- Take into account the prevalence of poverty throughout the zones where Koranic centres abound;
- Learn lessons from the experiences and models of other Muslim countries that have surmounted the types of challenges that the countries in the Sahelo-Saharan Belt face today;
- Encourage parents to closely monitor their children's learning and progress, form parent-teacher associations, take part in cost-sharing, and monitor teacher quality and the smooth running of the centres in line with existing regulations governing private education in their respective countries;
- Motivate the Islamic movements to establish certification framework for the recognition of the status of Koranic teachers (ADEA WGNFE, 2016b).

An earlier study on the Koranic school system in Kenya had highlighted similar concerns, but it also noted that the country's Koranic system is more structured, enjoys a fairly enlightened community engagement and has the potential to progressively meet the basic education, MDGs and sustainable development, including vocational orientations (Ministry of Education/ADEA-WGEMPS, 2012). Another useful comparative insight into the Koranic school reform initiative is provided by the TSANGAYA experience in reforming the curriculum of the Almajari/Koranic schools in Northern Nigeria to facilitate the integration of secular subjects (English language, mathematics, science and social sciences) in to the religious curriculum to the learners with a full range of basic quality education (Moser, 2015, p. 1). With over 10.5 million out-of-school Nigerian children (6million of whom are girls) the highest in the world – is the Federal and state governments, with the support of partners such as UNICEF, are leveraging the popularity of Koranic schools. One important lesson from the Nigerian initiative is that "the popularity of Koranic schools in northern Nigeria, particularly

in rural and poor communities, makes them a strong potential ally in efforts to expand access to basic education for disadvantaged children... The integration of Koranic schools has been successful in attracting girls to school in Muslim communities where there is resistance to Western education... but there is clearly still a lot of work to be done." However, to the lack of basic infrastructure and facilities remain a challenge. Moser (2015) offers an example: "Schools like the one Mr. Idris runs lack almost everything – toilet facilities, well-trained teachers, and the walls and ceilings that would enable them to remain open in the rainy season" (p. 1).

Special Needs Education (SNE) is another important dimension of the inclusion and human rights imperative in Sub-theme 1. SNE attracted important contributions from the Zambian NGO Sani Foundation the ITHEMBA Foundation in Tanzania and public sector initiatives in the Republic of Benin. Sani Foundation's contribution to the Triennale reiterates the systematic exclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities (PIDs) from all aspects of life from an early age, thereby inhibiting them from leading a meaningful life. These thoughts are echoed by Inclusion International (2006): "PIDs experience social exclusion on a much greater scale than persons with other disabilities and this experience is intensified within contexts of poverty such as those on the African continent." (This is partly due to limited research on the capabilities of persons with intellectual disabilities and the dearth of advocacy by and for PIDs. Mainstream education provisions do not amount to full inclusion, as they are largely unsupported and incapable of responding to individual pupils' needs. Besides, parents are often reluctant to send their children to mainstream schools that generally offer poor quality ID services and fail to address stigma. The Sani Foundation has, since 2013, worked towards facilitating the full inclusion of both rural and urban-located persons with intellectual disabilities (PIDs) into all areas of Zambian society. What is particularly relevant to the discourse and SNE strategy is the set of lessons that can be drawn from the Foundation's implementation of its program: The key aspects include: the design of a holistic and relevant work-based program; successful provision of education and training based on an Individualised Support Plan (ISP), leading to work readiness; capacity building for teachers and job coaches in individualized social and job skills training; establishment of a coalition to create a larger and more unified voice of advocates for ID and a platform of learning and sharing on best practices and lessons; building of a network of employers for persons with ID; and growing a strong network of volunteers and prominent individuals who champion the overall goal of social acceptance and inclusion (Sani Foundation, p. 16).

The contribution from the Republic of Benin also bemoans government's inadequate provision of education to children with disabilities, notably, their exclusion from the rights and privileges enjoyed by other children (Hountondji et al., 2016). Benin's innovation, therefore, focuses on social integration of persons with disabilities at the end of education and training in a Special Needs Education institutional environment. Even in the face of the reticence of parents and heavy psychological burden resulting from social marginalization and community stigma, Benin chose to mainstream public policy approach rather than separate institutional provision for inclusion in education and development of children with disabilities. The initiative involves creating relevant structures within the ministry of education for mainstreaming and special education; regular sensitization of the communities on the progress of the beneficiaries, as well as the activities undertaken by the relevant units; training of teachers; ministry official; development of modules/material on mainstreaming; capacity building of special education institutions and development of a special plan of action for the education of the educationally challenged, which is articulated in the draft National policy on the mainstreaming and protection of the handicapped under consideration by the government. In this national experience, the following categories of handicapped learners drawn from 9 communities

were involved: motor deficient, deafness, hard- of- hearing, deaf and deaf; cerebral and paraplegic, but excluded the severely handicapped who need a separate provision. Subsequently, private and public initiatives were launched to provide access to mainstream, and at least 300 handicapped children supported and mainstreaming extended to secondary education. The significant outcomes of this experience are as follows: breaking the taboo and stigma associated with the handicapped in the community; successful mobilization of private and public initiatives and interventions; creating a public policy multi-sectoral organizational strategy and partnership; continuously sensitizing and community ownership; and supporting special needs learners for the sustenance of mainstreaming and enabling legislative framework. However, beyond the immediate and short term results obtained, sustenance of the mainstreaming provision proved to be a huge challenge. Long term expected results were elusive due to the absence of an integrated policy on education.

The contribution of the ITHEMBA Belgian Foundation provides a complementary and very useful insight into how the principle of 'give and take' in partnership with the Tanzanian education authorities can produce replicable intervention strategies that benefit, not just the target group of special needs learners, but the whole formal primary school system (De Bock, 2016).The goal is not to mainstream the learners (as in the case of the Republic of Benin), but to: provide equitable development for them within the same public primary school environment by mobilizing stakeholders to set up a SNE Unit in the school; "drastically improve" the school's infrastructure; make school facilities disability-friendly by creating specially designed classrooms, playgrounds, and spaces for special learners; train the teaching staff on SNE concepts and teaching and learning methods with the support of external actors, "working closely with national and international qualified volunteers... who brought much needed expertise and new initiatives to the SNE Unit" (p. 2)The project has significantly impacted and influenced communities and stakeholders, leading to public authorities' approval and creation of the SNE Unit. Learners are exposed to a relevant curriculum and extra-curricular activities and experiences such as cooking, gardening, drumming, and the arts adapted to the SNE Unit. The Tanzania SNE Unit has a major goal to create an SNE-centered certification framework to meet the equity benchmarks for special learners, thus offering special needs learner's equitable chances of success in the National Primary School Leaving Certificate exams, the pathway to having their efforts, progress, achievements and experiences validated by a national certificate. The three case studies highlight the need for the adaptation of traditional learning to the needs of children with mental impairment or other severe disabilities NGOs aim to reach those who need support most – first the learners, and then the teachers working SNE establishments or mainstream schools that adapt to the needs of CSEN through the acquisition of new skills and appropriate learning methods. Besides the 'classical classroom' activities, such initiatives provide guidance on how to stimulate the interests and abilities of children (De Bock, 2016).

The interventions of the Zimbabwean NGO Chiedza Child Care Centre(CCCC) target vulnerable, disadvantaged and marginalized Zimbabwean boys and girls aged 9 to 15, who had not attended school by age 9 or have been out of school for at least a year'' (p. 1). It is yet another example of the kind of positive transformation that could be replicable in other African countries. Working as a study group since 2010, CCCC complements the government's National Non-Formal Education Policy, which promotes "alternative pathways to increase access and quality education in Zimbabwe located in 9 centres and reaching 341 young people of which 180 are girls" (Chiwaka, 2016, p.1). The successful project was further piloted in 25 other districts, with impressive results – some 140 children were reintegrated into the formal school system – which "influenced the review of the Non-formal Education Policy to include a component of out-of-school primary children" (p. 2). There are

three notable lessons from the project. First, it is a viable option for children to complete secondary school and be ready for employment or other productive activities and consequently delay marriages. Second, teacher education systems should prepare teachers with appropriate skills to enable them teach children in non-formal education as part of their curriculum for a more inclusive perspective on the desired quality and versatility of the next generation of teachers. Third, the program is financially sustainable because in the non-formal education, the organization uses a block grant where all the services are shared, and cost an affordable average of USD 60 a year to maintain an out-of-school learner, whereas it costs USD 195 a year for a child in formal education (Chiwaka, 2016, p.2).

Another insight into the practice of inclusion of out-of-school children reveals that the Republic of Benin places high priority on second chance non-formal education alternatives for out-of-school children to access training and greater opportunity to get a recognized qualification and be self-employed. Through state intervention, an increasing number of qualified young persons are joining the labour market (Hountondji, 2016). The key lessons are that second chance opportunities supported by the government and the private sector are very successful and replicable because they create more qualified, vocationally engaged and self-fulfilled young men and women. Furthermore, many young people who graduate from the formal education institutions and who are looking for qualifications that lead to self-employment often take advantage of non-formal education training. In terms of national development goals, this second chance opportunity is having a positive impact on the society from the social, financial, economic and human resource perspectives (Hountondji et al., 2016).

4.6. Delivering quality early child development and basic education for all children

Global Monitoring Reports since 2002 have highlighted the positive outcomes of preparing early learners to transit seamlessly to the elementary or primary education stream. Yet some African countries have been slow to acknowledge the great potential early childhood care and education presents for education systems – a systematic way to more consciously and meaningfully influence children's social skills, basic values and attitudes, including neutralizing gender stereotypes before they become a set of unconscious way of thinking and behaving. The UNICEF publication, *Building Better Brains: New Frontiers in Early Childhood Development* (2014) tenders a strong argument in favour of national investment in ECD policy development and the proper implementation and enforcement of policy. The publication reiterates that early intervention provides answers to nearly all challenges that justified the formulation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Inclusion of SDG target 4.2: *to ensure that generations of children have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education,* therefore gives impetus to recent efforts to prioritize the development of national inter-sectoral early childhood development (ECD) policies in sub-Saharan Africa. Contributions to SDG 4.2 target are contingent on the need to develop workable ECD policy and action plans to provide equal access, equality and equity to all children, particularly in rural and remote areas of African countries.

The World Organization for Early Childhood Education(OMEP) described as the oldest and largest international non-governmental and non-profit organization, is devoted to all aspects of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and champions the cause and fundamental rights (access and quality concerning all aspects of early care education and development) of all children in more than 70 countries, and works in collaboration with UNESCO,UNICEF, and other organizations with similar

aims" (OMEP, 2016) The second global organization, the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI), has developed strategies to meet the expected targets of SDG 4. In line with its mission, "to promote innovative solutions to education challenges and inspire action that creates positive, sustainable futures for children and youth worldwide'', ACEI has adopted a global strategy of "expand(ing) diplomatic interactions to advance education, promoting skills children need for a 21st century life, and transforming today's education into education for tomorrow" (ACEI, 2016). However, the persisting challenges that early childhood faces even today has led to the launch of an important publication entitled *Global Guidelines for Education and Care* (Global Guidelines). It was developed "to provide a global framework for ensuring that young children around the world receive appropriate and quality care, education, and development services. The framework was developed in 1999 by a group of more than 80 international early care and education experts from 27 countries during a forum sponsored by ACEI and OMEP. A key contribution of the Global Guidelines framework has been to inform the initial development of the Global Guidelines Assessment" (ACEI, 2016).

In most countries, there has been notable progress in the effort to address the fragmentation and gaps in existing ECD policies, laws, and programs and strengthen public education systems to reach and meet the needs of younger children (UNESCO-EFA, 2015). It has been shown that "since 2002, the Global Partnership has invested over USD 100 million in technical and financial support to strengthen ECCE analysis, policies and strategies; grants to finance ECCE programs; and capacity development and knowledge sharing on effective and good practices for ECCE policies and programs. Financial and technical support from development partners, including UNICEF, the World Bank and UNESCO, has helped 23 out of 47 countries to adopt national ECD policies, while another 13 countries have policies under development or drafted, but not yet approved (Vargas-Baron & Schipper, 2012). In Zambia, GPE is working with the government to explore alternative strategies that focus on strengthening the partnerships with private sector, faith based organizations and communities, in the effort to open up access to ECCE. The ECCE policy includes the strategy of partnering with private sector and with communities in ECCE provision. The mechanics of how these partnerships will work with. Notwithstanding, the proliferation of national ECD policies in sub-Saharan Africa in the last decade has not translated into an assurance that children's holistic needs are met, nor has it improved institutional arrangements to support implementation and enforcement.

The contribution by UNESCO Regional Bureau (UNESCO Abuja, 2016) is on investigating schools' readiness for children in the West and Central African region, is considered an essential first step to helping countries place more emphasis and invest more in the foundational levels of a child's informal-home-based and formal ECD-based preparation for a lifetime of education, learning and citizenship. The study will lead to greater focus on the policy framework for the implementation leading to realization of internationally agreed SDG target 4.2 and country-specific ECD goals that exist in most African countries. Implementation remains a considerable challenge, particularly in the selected countries – Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo. The concept schools' readiness opens up to a critical systemic perspective on the role and function of pre-primary/ECD centers or schools as the bridge builders and transition enablers for children as they take their first steps into the complex world of open-ended interactions, learning and development beyond the comfort zone of the home and family. It is a quality and equity construct and is justified and essential more than ever before in light of the mushrooming and commercialization of ECD schools, centres, play groups in several countries, including Nigeria. It is therefore recognized that the assessment of school's readiness for children and its assessment "will contribute to produce evidence –based knowledge and understanding of existing education frameworks and policies with regard to the teaching and

learning conditions in the early years of primary school" (UNESCO Abuja, 2016). The EFA Global Monitoring Report 2015 states that, while pre-primary enrolment in the SSA region rose by almost two and half times between 1999 and 2012, the average gross enrolment ratio (GER) in 2012 went up to only 20%, and and all in all only seven countries in SSA achieved a gross enrolment ratio of 80% or more in pre-primary education, with disparities between countries ranging from less than 2% in Mali to around 100% in Ghana, Mauritius and Seychelles. A post-EFA international recommendation for at least one year of compulsory pre-primary education is intended to enable the realization of Universal pre-primary education. However, the GPE contribution indicates that funding for ECCE has not kept pace with enrolment growth, and so the poorest and most marginalized children – who have the most to gain from good quality ECCE programs – are frequently left out. In many countries, cost is still a major reason for low access to ECCE programs (UNESCO, 2015). Furthermore, rural/urban and wealthy/poor inequalities within countries reduce chances of attending pre-primary school for children from marginalized population groups (GPE, 2016). In Zanzibar, for example, despite a government education policy (2006) providing two years of free early childhood education (baby class, kindergarten [KG] 1, KG2), the high concentration of pre-primary schools in the less populated urban areas compared to rural areas, where 69% of the population resides, has resulted in enrolment in early childhood care and education services of only 14% of children aged 4 to 6 (Mundy, Proulx & Solano, 2016, p. 14).

Other contributions to the ECD discourse share the basic concern that, although this age group is globally accepted as the critical stage development, there is inadequate policy, curriculum development, teacher training, learning materials, emotional well-being and health-care to accommodate the cognitive and psycho-social development necessary for successful learning for this age group (UNESCO Abuja 2016). This concern is echoed by the GPE, which states that expanding access is not simply a matter of costs; pre-primary schooling needs to be made appealing to parents and children (GPE, 2016). The critical role parents and teachers should play at this stage "is also of concern and very little is done to marshal the contributions of these important stakeholders'' (UNESCO Abuja, 2016, p. 1). In Uzbekistan, GPE, in partnership with the Ministry of Public Education, World Bank and UNICEF, is financing the development and implementation of communication campaigns to focus on the critical role of parents, as children's first teachers, in providing stimulating early childhood environments and promoting learning in the home. Similarly, Moldova has put the spotlight on ECCE through a public awareness campaign, "Help the Child to Become a Great Personality", using television programs, documentary films and posters targeting parents, guardians, pregnant women, teachers, and community and local leaders.[9] GPE's support also aims to enhance teachers' quality, curriculum and infrastructures, the main determinants of quality education. Countries suffering from the chronic problem of insufficient trained ECD teachers fail to raise the quality of ECD education. While countries like Ethiopia recorded an increase in percentage of trained pre-primary teachers from 63% to nearly 86% between 1999 and 2010, the proportion of trained teachers in some other countries has shrunk. Zanzibar, on the other hand, has neither formal curriculum for preschools nor formal preschool teacher training colleges. Existing training is provided by private institutions.

As part of a larger teacher and school effectiveness program, GPE offers a certification program, the Early Childhood Advancement Certificate Program (ECACP), which provides in-service teachers with critical knowledge, skills, and practice through a distance learning platform administered through

[9] http://www.prescolar.md.

their district in-service Teacher Centres using audio, video and print materials. In collaboration with the World Bank, GPE is also supporting Uganda's rollout of an ECCE teacher education certificate program, the revision of the ECCE policy and guidelines and a costed plan of existing models of ECCE delivery. Financial and technical support provided to Zanzibar, for instance, supports the implementation of education policy objectives outlined in the Zanzibar Education Development Program (ZEDP), which includes expanding access to pre-primary education. Key aspects of the project were the establishment of 120 *TuchezeTujifunze*[10] ECD (TUTU) centres, based on Interactive Audio Instruction (IAI), in areas with poor access to pre-primary education (North B and Mkoani districts), and training a cadre of preschool and early grade educators (formal and non-formal) to teach literacy, math, and life skills. IAI is an interactive child-friendly teaching and learning pedagogy that promotes quality learning that is inclusive, playful, active, and engaging. An impact study for TUTU conducted in Nov 2009 identified that TUTU was improving pupil test scores (p.14). Equally, GPE seeks to address the existing challenge that, while there is evidence of progress in 12 developing country partners (including Ghana which has attained pre-primary rates of over 50 per cent), more support is needed in countries in fragile and in conflict situations'' where governments and families are unable to provide ECCE opportunities for young children. In the northern states of Nigeria children have little or no access to pre-primary education because of insurgent activities and attacks on schools, and GPE is providing technical and $7.65 million in financial support to improve teaching and learning materials in pre-primary schools and promote parent and guardian engagement in early childhood in five northern states. The bottom line is that, with increased funding to replicate the Ghana strategy of abolishing school fees at pre-primary level or South Africa's provision of one year of pre-primary education in existing primary schools, most SSA countries would increase enrolments and realize the universal pre-primary education goal in Africa's Agenda 2063 and SDG 2030 (Proulx & Solano, 2016).

The various contributions synthesised herein are highly relevant to the ministerial discourse on ECD/ECCE. In that regard, governments need to first acknowledge that early childhood development can contribute to solving the learning crisis in Africa and decide how early learning can be instrumental in and a key factor to achieving the 2063/2030 education goals. The next step for governments to adopt and scale up ECD/ECCD best practices that have impacted on access, equity and quality. A scalable intervention worth considering is the Ethiopia non-formal model supported by UNICEF, which offers a practical solution for countries that have low financial capacity to make universal pre-primary education possible. The Accelerated School Readiness (ASR) intervention is an alternative approach to strengthening primary school preparation and addressing the lack of adequate access to preschool education and the high cost of preschools for rural children. The 150-hour program offers an immediate and low-cost alternative pre-literacy and pre-numeracy for children entering Grade 1 without preschool attendance. Offered through local schools using existing infrastructure and teachers with low-cost learning materials, such as early childhood education kits, teacher resource books, and student activity sheets/workbooks for approximately 40 days of the program, it presents an immediate and low cost solution. An initial evaluation of the school readiness program discovered significant cognitive gains in children, and a 50% increase in the number of children entering Grade 1 with minimum levels of school readiness in the project area[11] . A number of key lessons emerged from the implementation of the program. First, a lack of resources, mainly governmental, is a major barrier to putting into action the policies outlined in National ECD Plans.

[10] *TuchezeTujifunze, translates as "Let's Play, Let's Learn" and is a name used locally to refer to the IAI programs.*

[11] *http://www.educationinnovations.org/program/accelerated-school-readiness*

Second, without inclusive policy dialogue and mutual accountability, it is difficult to lay the foundations for a sustainable ECCE sector. Third, to reach the most vulnerable children and achieve universal early learning, countries need to explore creative and innovative options.

4.7. The Education-Training Continuum and the TVET/TVSD nexus

Significant numbers of young people find themselves jobless or excluded from the labour market at the end of the education cycle. While many unemployed young people possess job qualifications, yet have no immediate access to the world of work, many others are on the street, having dropped out of formal education without entry qualifications to enable them transition into training institutions (UNESCO-EFA, 2015). A World Bank Report of 2015 entitled "Out-of-School Youth in Sub-Saharan Africa" (Inoue et al., 2015), proclaims daunting economic and social prospects for close to 45 million out-of-school youths in sub-Saharan Africa, projecting that within the next decade when this cohort becomes the core of the labour market, they will face an uncertain future without work and life skills[12]. The exclusion of young people does not only pose a threat to countries' socio-political stability, but should be viewed primarily from the standpoint that their absence deprives countries of a dynamic labour force and limits their economic growth opportunities at a time when governments are seeking to develop medium and long-term economic development strategies (ADEA, 2016). Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is defined by UNESCO as "those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupation in various sectors of economic life . . . . TVET equips people not only with vocational skills, but with a broad range of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are now recognized as indispensable for meaningful participation in work and life...'' (UNESCO-Delhi, 2016, p. 1), Furthermore, the urgent need for TVET teachers and trainers was given the strongest emphasis in the Shanghai Consensus document (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2012) as part of UNESCO action in the 2014-2021 Medium Term Strategy. The Shanghai Consensus in its recommendations recalled, among other normative instruments relating to the various conventions on TVET, the recommendations and "outcomes of the 2012 Triennale of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA)," (p. 1). In light of the post-2015 education agenda, several recommendations were made at the Shanghai meeting, including the need for governments, TVET stakeholders in UNESCO Member States to take meaningful actions to: enhance relevance; expand access and improve quality and develop pathways; provide the quantitative and qualitative evidence base for policy formulation; strengthen governance and expand partnerships; increase investment in TVET and diversify financing; and advocate for TVET(UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2012).

Current discourse on the flaws in African TVET systems evolve around the relevance and quality of training, particularly with regards to TVET teachers' generally inadequate pedagogical and technological qualifications, expansion (especially in the formal context that has not been significant enough to absorb youth progressing normally into TVET as well as the huge numbers of school drop-outs) and current TVET enrolment rates that range from as low as l per cent in some countries to about 36 per cent in others. Other notable issues are the low involvement of the private sector and youth enterprise and its implications for the employability of graduates, the absence in most countries of formalized internal or institution-based quality audit strategies, and the general absence of standards and norms and the resultant inability to develop credible and enforceable accreditation

[12] *Inoue, et all. 2015. Out-of-School Youth in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Policy Perspective. Directions in Development. Washington, DC: World Bank. doi:10.1596/978-1-4648*

systems. In fact, the TVET of most countries is deeply rooted in the traditional apprenticeship systems predating the advent of western and colonial domination, and even worse, the widespread and critical lack of relevant higher education qualifications for a competitive job market. Over all, the TVET system in Africa has been failing to meet its primary objective of reducing unemployment. ADEA created the Inter-Country Quality Node on Technical and Vocational Skills Development (ICQN/TVSD) in 2010 to advocate for creation of education and training systems that are responsive to African nations' economic and social development needs, and more importantly, to help African governments address this deficiency. Against this background, the contribution by ICQN/TVSD to the 2017 Sub-theme 1 illustrates the urgent need for Africa to enable a sustainable paradigm shift from TVET to TVSD across countries in line with the recommendation of the 2012 Triennale.

The ICQN/TVSD study is justified by two major issues and key lessons of youth development: that training vast numbers of young people is a challenge Africa must meet . . .; and failing to train vast numbers of young people will be a major threat for the continent because . . . youth employment and the contribution of young people to sustainable economic and social development . . . have become a major security issue" because "greater numbers of young people being excluded from the world of work, in particular in Sahel countries, is partly if not primarily responsible for violent situations and consequent radicalisation(ADEA-ICQN/TVSD,2016, p. 1). More importantly, the implementation of the relevant recommendation of the 2012 Triennale by the ICQN/TVSD witnessed the holding of regional seminars in 2013 with the experts' seminar on National Qualification Framework(NQF); in 2014 with the Experts' seminar and Ministerial Conference on Youth Employment in Africa; in 2015 with the Kigali Ministerial Conference on promoting skills and competencies acquisition by trainers and entrepreneurs; and in 2016 with the seminar on promoting the education-training continuum.

The 2014 Experts' seminar and Ministerial conference highlighted two main sets of important findings: that the social and economic exclusion of young people is undeniable and closely linked to the strong evidence that in all countries "high numbers of young people are excluded from the world of work", and that "Africa must offer its young people a new social deal, otherwise a generation will lose out, with serious repercussions,'', which, in economic terms, betrays "a short-sighted perception of the factors that really drive development," as well as the problem of an under esteemed and underfunded TVET/TVSD (p.2). The second important finding is that the "ICQN/TVSD has focused on a number of priority areas of action initiated by the countries," and on the three main courses of action adopted for the period 2014 - 2017:

- *Course of action 1 (2015)*: invest in better skills for entrepreneurs and trainers;
- *Course of action 2 (2016)*: achieve a continuum between education and training. The lack of continuum between education and training is a major cause of exclusion of young people, given that those who leave the school system without a recognized level of achievement end up outside the system, with no training opportunity for the job market. The country reports show that there are hitherto unexplored pathways between education and training.
- *Course of action 3 (2017)*: design and implement inter-country schemes and systems for helping young people into employment.

The 2105 Kigali Ministerial Conference on promoting skills and competencies acquisition by trainers and entrepreneurs brought together 17 countries and a dozen ministers revealed that, with no exceptions, the acquisition of skills and competencies by trainers and entrepreneurs is never a national TVET priority, and that the acquisition of skills by trainers and entrepreneurs is too frequently

a question of "who should we recruit, at which level, for which position?" The outcome document of the Kigali Conference, a "compendium of country experiences," includes useful information on innovative schemes in different countries, a desk survey and lessons learned from the country reports. The 2016 Seminar on Promoting the Education/Training Continuum, held in October 2016, issued a publication entitled 'The Education-Training Continuum'. The concept of education continuum first seeks to establish a paradigm shift from TVET to TVSD .The shift from TVET to TVSD, a paradigm shift to bring about a new education-training continuum, is an attempt to address the criticism of limited focus rather than a holistic approach to TVET. "It has many major limitations such as (and among other things): it only trains a tiny proportion of African young people in secondary education (5%), it trains them poorly because its content/programmes are too theoretical and out of date, failing to meet the needs of the labour market; it is expensive, as recurrent costs are high because of the need to constantly open new training centres and acquire expensive equipment which must be continually renewed" (ADEA-ICQN/TVSD, 2016, p. 12).

Based on the analysis of the NQFs of the 13 participating countries, the 2016 Seminar highlighted the existing policy and systemic gaps that need to be addressed by partner countries, particularly the following critical aspects:

- the specification of NQFs' objectives "by each country, including types of qualifications, pathways to be developed so as to promote geographical mobility or intersect oral mobility";
- the type of institutional, legislative and regulatory qualification frameworks ultimately chosen;
- the type of management system chosen, especially where several departments share; responsibility for education and qualifications;
- the promotion of vocational training in order to counter its negative image; and
- the rationale and process for developing sub-regional frameworks (p. 2).

On the other hand, TVSD is conceived as "more holistic, diverse and inclusive than TVET, which is more formal and similar to school: the reality of skills acquisition in Africa, where the informal sector predominates, requires a paradigm shift from the formal TVET system based on school towards the holistic and inclusive TVSD system." Within the continent, only South Africa is mentioned as having been working on a continuum NQF framework in the wake of the fall of Apartheid, "integrating education and training into a unified structure of recognised qualifications" (p. 19).

There is a universal belief that the true assets in today's workplaces include the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to respond effectively to changes and to problem solving. Young people entering this first phase of adulthood need to be able to communicate with clarity, be creative in their approach to problem-solving, understand how to find and utilize information, and motivate themselves to engage in work that will lead to the ability to thrive in an employment landscape that is constantly shifting (Jenkins et al.) [13] However, a number of publications fault the weak link between education and training in Africa, to which the high and increasing number of out- of- school youth on the street is attributed. A prospective solution is located in the education-training continuum concept, whose principle lies in the need to restructure and redefine education content in order to restore the essential nexus between formal academic education, on the one hand, and the acquisition of life skills and know-how that can help young people integrate their societies, and the world of work, on the

[13] http://www.knowledgeworks.org/sites/default/files/u1/teacher-conditions.pdf

other hand. According to ADEA, the key elements of the continuum concept include the purpose of the educational action which should ultimately help the individual integrate into society and the world of work; the diversity of the places where skills, know-how and knowledge, which should be acquired (schools, training centres, traditional crafts workshops, etc.); and the need to link the different sub-sectors into a coherent whole. The experience of the African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP) in Kenya, Rwanda and Nigeria provides solutions to this education-training disconnect through its focus on incorporating Transferable Skills (TS) in curriculum for secondary education and TVET institutions, so as to promote seamless transition from secondary to TVET institutions. The work of AFIDEP has resulted in a New Senior Secondary School Education (NSSSE) Curriculum that introduced 34 technical subjects and trades in Nigeria's senior secondary school curriculum. Its Akazi Kanoze (AK) project in Rwanda informed the inclusion of work readiness and entrepreneurship modules in the secondary school curriculum. The Community and Progress - Youth Empowerment Initiative (CAP YEI) introduced skills training for out-of-school youths, using the Basic Employability Skill Training (BEST) model and competency based curriculum for TVET institutions in Kenya.

Within the current discourse on skills development, ADEA proposes a new paradigm that entails shifting from TVET to Technical Vocational Skills Development (TVSD), stressing that the limiting TVET system would now become a component of the wide-ranging TVSD system. Both ILO and UNESCO describe TVSD as competencies that can be acquired either through structured training in public or private TVET schools and centres, or through practical experience on the job or work-place training in the formal sector and through informal apprenticeship, or both called 'dual' training, involving a combination of work-place and institution-based training. ADEA adds to this description in its definition of TVSD: "The acquisition of practical competencies, know-how and attitudes necessary to perform a trade or occupation in the labour market. Such skills can be acquired either through formal public or private schools, institutions or centres, informal traditional apprenticeships or non-formal semi-structured training". Lefebvre's (2016) contribution on out-of-school youth and the role of non-formal entrepreneurship gives credence to the TVSD concept, especially as it alludes to the need to re-orient informal apprenticeship. Lefebvre (2016) brings to light the broader implications of youth entrepreneurship programs on disadvantaged young people who have lost access to traditional systems of empowerment and socialization and have fewer and fewer adult reference points in their lives. It draws attention to the importance of focusing on ways in which youth themselves conceptualize their participation in these programs, and the potential impact of such programs on their lives and livelihoods.

The national qualifications framework (NQF), which creates pathways between different types of training and education in the formal, non-formal and informal sectors, underpins the TVSD system. Implemented together with the mechanism for Recognising/accrediting prior learning, experience and skills (RPL) within formal or informal training (traditional or new apprenticeships), which makes it possible to help people with proven expertise but without formal basic education, to find work through training and apprenticeship, TVSD could be the key to youth employment, self-employment, entrepreneurship and sustainable livelihoods. Walther (2016) explains the opportunities afforded by RPL within the TVSD context: It grants a greater number of people in the informal sector access to both training opportunities and the formal basic education they have missed out on, or have failed to complete for various reasons. These opportunities entail: a) teaching all those who have dropped out of school or forgotten what they learnt at school, including how to read and write; b) improving the level of education of the under-educated; c) giving all people access to a minimum set of core skills and knowledge (ADEA, OECD); d) organizing management training to help develop a fiscal and social

regulatory process; and e) train people to do their job better, thereby increasing the quality of their outputs/products and services and boosting their incomes.

Increasing the quality of individuals' outputs/products and services and boosting their income was the primary motivation behind the FAWE/DANIDA project on economic empowerment of girls in post conflict countries (Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Somalia). The case study provides a successful and replicable model for addressing the economic marginalization of girls and women. It underscores the development imperative of providing economic empowerment to out-of-school girls and young women, both in conflict and peace time, as a strategy for creating more equal and just societies and increasing and diversifying the labour market force. Community advocacy and mobilization campaigns led by female and male gender equality champions, coupled with the institutionalization of the FAWE Gender Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) to enhance institution's responsiveness to girls and women's education needs, resulted in the empowerment of 894 out-of-school young women being with social and economic skills through TVET and entrepreneurial skills training. While raising capacities of the once despondent girls and women and their ability to contribute to self, community and national development was the key outcome of the project, triggering renewed interest to continue upgrading their education was an important contribution to the lifelong learning goal. However, FAWE learnt that, without strong political will to transform national policy on TVET and related curriculum, TVET institutions and training practices will continue failing to respond satisfactorily to the needs of female learners.

The Continental Strategy on TVET outlines a framework for the mitigation of challenges linked to TVET governance arrangements and institutional mechanisms, which a) take into account the enlarged scope of TVET and promotes a paradigm shift in TVET; b) promote curriculum that is responsive to both job market needs and acquisition of basic skills that are adaptable for learning new technologies; c) develop a harmonized system of skills recognition; and d) track and monitor TVET delivery (AUC, 2014). Among development partners already working within this prescribed framework is the government of the Republic of Korea, through its US$10 million investment in the Better Education for Africa (BEAR) project supporting five SADC countries (Botswana, DR Congo, Malawi, Namibia and Zambia) to improve the TVET sector. Working within the nations' development priority sectors, the BEAR project is boosting the contribution of TVET to sustainable national development by helping to reshape TVET systems to make them more relevant to the needs of the labour market. With its comprehensive, structured approach, this project is working to update curricula, better train teachers, boost infrastructure and engage employers and enterprises in helping TVET to focus on specific sectors carefully chosen for their job creation potential. It aims to increase give young people access to quality TVET. The ultimate aim of the project is to help promote better TVET systems and to give young people better chances of finding jobs. Beyond supporting curriculum development and labour market analysis, addressing the urgent need for better access to quality TVET, especially by young people, the BEAR is aiming at the broader, more long-term goal of developing national capacities for leading TVET reforms and supporting the implementation of sectoral programs through public and private partnerships (PPPs). A current follow-up initiative, the V-CODE project (Vocational Education Competence Development), was launched in July 2016 to "support the sustainability of outcomes derived from BEAR project…., assure the sustainability of outcomes derived from BEAR project, and to expand the positive effects in a broader spectrum of TVET such as supporting the building up of a national qualification system, constructing a productive national TVET system and modeling the most effective TVET practices in the SADC region"(Korean Ministry of Education, 2016, p. 2).

It is becoming clear that technical and professional skills training systems need to be re-oriented from supply-driven to demand-driven. The achievement of this aspiration requires strengthening the relationship between training and the labour market and addressing the supply of qualified training personnel and developing programs that are based on target skills of the labour market. The impetus provided by the United Nations High Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth has inspired scholars to explore the potential of developing Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) within a multi-sector framework through creation of decent jobs in the health sector, especially for women and youth. The contribution by Fisher and Holmes proposes an inter-sectoral approach of SDG 3 on health and SDG 4 on education in order to unleash the potential of TVET for health occupations as a strategy for employment, economic growth and social equity, and to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as a whole. Such synergies would bring about participatory governance and institutional mechanism imperative to accountability between ministries responsible for health and education and other relevant stakeholders. The contribution from Madagascar also brings to the fore the role of TVET in Agriculture and sustainable livelihoods. It discusses the prioritization of agriculture as the largest potential solution to youth unemployment and food security, and explores ways the sector can attract apprentices with higher levels of education to careers in agriculture. The study, argues, however, that to overcome the generally negative attitudes amongst the youth towards careers in agriculture, exposed to agriculture from childhood is essential. Furthermore, there should be harmonization of agricultural training activities/programs for youth through: a) multi-stakeholder agreed national qualification framework; b) provision of agricultural zones for settlement and exploitation, and easy access to land; c) integration of commercialization and transformation of agricultural produce in the value chain; d) management of collective migration and social and organizational mechanisms; and e) government support through the inter-sectoral framework for policy and implementation in partnership with the private sector (FeKana, 2016; Institut des Régions Chaudes, 2016).

The link between failure of public infrastructure and the opportunities it offers trainees in TVET institutions to have hands-on experience that prepares them for the world of work, has been seen as a critical dimension for TVET to work in African countries. A study by Wallis (2016) focused on infrastructures such as "water pipes, roads and electricity reticulation that have serious consequences for human development, poverty alleviation and economic growth". In parts of South Africa, "infrastructure failure is negating the impact of the development undertaken to date". More importantly, the assumption of the project is that "addressing maintenance backlogs would generate extensive opportunities for job creation and skills development. But ways have to be found to make it happen", which, in turn, inspired a model for skills exchange and job creation ("social exchange" model), which has been successfully piloted with promising results, among them:

- maintenance of selected infrastructure, and returning it to service – particularly addressing the poor state of schools' water and sanitation facilities which has too often deprived learners, especially girl learners, of regular access to the classroom; and
- job creation, and skills development of (mostly) rural people, providing them with opportunities to obtain skills suitable for employment and opportunities for lifelong learning – and, if they have sufficient enterprise and drive, the opportunity to be developed as micro-entrepreneurs in their own right (Wall, 2016, p. 1).

The critical link between quality learning outcomes and appropriate teaching infrastructure has been clearly shown in this study to be a function of the process of content delivery. The key lessons from this contribution are that: a) there is an urgent need for all education and training institutions to bridge the huge gap between theory and hands-on practice and the world of work, entrepreneurship or self-employment; b) successful partnerships are best built with local public authorities, while ensuring that the design, planning and maintenance services engaging the trainees are also "locally led and delivered locally", thereby "creating jobs, and enabling transfer of workplace skills, and retain income – all within the communities served".

The serious challenge of inadequate or inexistent public sector funding of TVET has been the focus of attention in recent years. The contribution by Cote d'Ivoire's Ministry of State/Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs and Vocational Training, in collaboration with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the French Development Agency (AFD) and the Network of African Network of Training Institutions and Funds for Vocational Training (RAFPRO), focuses on the outcome of an Inter-country Seminar on the Financing of Vocational Training held in Abidjan in December 2015. The seminar's specific aims were to:

- disseminate the results of the ADEA/AFD study on the French-, Portuguese- and English-speaking continent;
- add to the information already gathered from the Funds;
- clarify the strategy for supporting the Funds and improve the effectiveness and relevance of their action, and to enable them to participate more actively in the delivery of training and skills development policies in their countries;
- strengthen inter-fund cooperation activities, particularly within the framework of RAFPRO (Walther & Uhder, 2015, p. 8).

Furthermore, the Abidjan seminar provided an opportunity for a debate on how well financial resources collected from companies are allocated, and the proportion of funding that should be spent on skills development in the informal sector, as well as the way in which the various Funds are encouraged to participate in the equity aspect of their missions. The following key conclusions emerged from the discussions and hold very important implications for the 2017 Triennale deliberations and strategy going forward. Specifically, it was agreed that the Funds:

> "should support skills development in the informal sector; must focus on strengthening companies' competitiveness and training the workforce, their core missions; should be developing pre-employment training; must support the development of apprenticeship and dual training schemes, and should give priority to skills training schemes which really prepare people for employment. With regard to its coverage and outreach on the Continent, participants unanimously endorsed the request that the Network-RAFPRO be enlarged to other country Funds, including non-French-speaking Funds in particular "because the Funds surveyed are an integral part of sub-regional areas which, like ECOWAS, bring together French-, English- and even Portuguese-speaking countries" (Walther & Uhder, 2015, p. 21).

Furthermore, the commitment by AFD and SDC to support the ICQN/TVSD and RAFPRO post- seminar activity is indicative of the significant success and priority importance of the event. The two organizations would be prepared to make funds available as from 2016 to support the creation of working groups within RAFPRO to exchange good practices. As from 2017, they would be willing to

provide financial support for RAFPRO and its members in conjunction with other organizations with which RAFPRO should identify common ground, in particular ADEA's ICQN//TVSD, the PEFOP vocational training platform of experts, or the SAR agricultural training network (Walther & Uhder, 2015, p. 22).

To ensure the sustainability of the initiative, the following recommendations are highly relevant to the participating Funds and institutions and to the 2017 Triennale deliberations and outcome strategies:

- support increased productivity and competitiveness of businesses through the development of a skilled workforce;
- be responsible for financing, developing and rolling out pre-employment schemes, in particular apprenticeships, ensuring that they meet labour market needs in line with efforts being made by public authorities;
- take care to develop the skills of entrepreneurs and employees in small and very small businesses including those in the informal sector;
- draw up medium-term strategic development plans which incorporate results-oriented operational action plans;
- manage the whole process for financing and implementing training unemployment schemes using a quality-based approach; and
- take into account new training needs, in particular those of agricultural and rural areas, giving close consideration to local development issues (Walther & Uhder, 2015, p.22).

4.8. Developing the Higher Education sector

The crucial role of higher education – in leading national and regional strategies to bring about educational reform, innovation and transformation – has received increasing global, regional and national attention since UNESCO's landmark World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE) held in Paris in 1998. The Conference Declaration contains 17 Articles, which provide a new vision and mission for higher education in the 21st Century through its Framework for Priority Action for Change and Development of Higher Education (UNESCO, 1998). The Articles addressed critical issues, among them: equity and access; enhancing participation and promoting the role of women; long term orientation based on relevance; strengthening cooperation with the world of work; analysing and anticipating societal needs; systematically take into account trends in the world of work and in the scientific, technological and economic sectors; qualitative evaluation; potential and challenge of technology; financing of higher education as a public service; strong knowledge and know-how across borders and continents; from brain drain to brain gain; and the importance of partnerships and alliances (UNESCO, 1998, pp. 5-16). With the adoption of the SDGs, higher education institutions are expected to be key/lead stakeholders and actors in meeting all the 17 SDGs based on their disciplinary diversity and their role as unique repositories of the intellectual, professional and technical expertise and capacities that should provide creative and innovative solutions for sustainable reform and transformations across development sectors. As Mohamedbhai (2016, p.1) states in the influential higher education network publication, 'University World News', that "higher education institutions are now better poised to contribute to the SDGs," in view of their wide acceptance and renewed vision and mission, and their engagement and contribution to internationally agreed goals of the United Nations system such as UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development 2004-20014 led by UNESCO. Most relevant to the mission of delivering quality higher education and lifelong learning is the fact

that the 17 SDGs "cover a very wide range of specific areas such as agriculture, health, gender equality, water and sanitation, energy, industry and innovation, infrastructure, etc., and under almost all of them, higher education institutions can make a positive contribution, whether in teaching, research, community engagement or advisory services" (Mohamedbhai, 2015, p.1).

However, three critical lessons that need to guide manpower and governance strategies to enhance the continued contribution of higher education to the SDGs including SDG 4 are outlined below:

- Lack of a coordinated institutional approach to deal with the challenges of sustainable development;
- Staff not having been trained to transform curricula and pedagogy towards a sustainable development perspective; and
- Difficulty in removing academic disciplinary boundaries, which prevent complex sustainable development challenges being addressed (Mohamedbhai, 2015).

The specific contribution of the ADEA Working Group on Higher Education (WGHE) is based on the outcome of its series of successful Webinars and online questionnaire survey on higher education organized in 2016, covering the Triennale theme and the 4 subthemes. The survey consisted of 22 online and 2 offline sets of questionnaire responses by participants in 18 countries (16 African and 1 each from the USA and France). Sub-theme 1 attracted only 10 contributions (ADEA circular, 2016). Perhaps, more relevant to Sub-theme 1 are the challenges related to the financing or funding of higher education, access and quality assurance, among others, as entrenched in the 17 Articles of the WCHE 1998 Declaration, and in line with the new vision and the expected contributions of higher education to the EFA, MDGs and the SDGs, particularly SDG 4. The main objectives of two of the Webinars are as follows:

The third Webinar set out to explore:

a) the historical antecedents to the current model of funding higher education system in Africa;
b) the predominant funding scenarios in the system and their merits and demerits;
c) the impact of the current funding system on the quality of higher education; and
d) the creative models of sustainably funding the system (ADEA-WGHE, 2016a).

The inadequate financing of public higher education is seen as a major and urgent challenge in the foreseeable future, including the 2030 Agenda and the need more than ever before for innovative and creative ways of funding public sector higher education. It is important to recall the study by *The UNESCO-ADEA Task Force on Higher Education in Africa* , which outlines three major objectives:

(i) to present the fundamental financial problems faced by tertiary education in Africa under the pressure of a growing demand and the scarcity of public resources and the consequences of this trend on deteriorating quality;
(ii) to analyze and compare the current funding policies in Sub-Saharan African countries to provide directions for improvement; and
(iii) to examine the alternatives to the status quo and the policy tools to diversify resources and to allocate resources based on performance (UNESCO/ADEA, 2009).

The report provides a comprehensive range of recommendations that are highly relevant to the ongoing challenges that African higher education faces and within the different the agendas and timelines for addressing them. The challenges and recommended pathways to solutions are not very new and continue to be cited as the urgent imperative. A recent survey on funding in higher education (Teferra, 2013, pp.19-51) reiterates the key lesson that "Africa deprives requisite funding to its higher education sector at its own peril. The competitive global world that deploys knowledge and innovation as its currency warrants investing –and strategically managing – the funding of African higher education".

The fourth Webinar on Revitalizing Research and Innovation to Address Continental Challenges and Promote Global Competitiveness in Africa had three objectives:

a) identifying major challenges in promoting research and innovation in Africa;

b) exploring innovative ways of revitalizing research to promote global competitiveness; and

c) discussing best practices for research and innovation in Africa.

Of particular relevance to the Triennale discourse are the following online questionnaire items under Sub-theme 1:

3.1 What transformation should be implemented by 2030 in the African systems of education in order to guarantee education for all?

3.2 What innovation should be implemented, and how, in order to significantly increase the number of young people and adults with skills, in particular technical and vocational skills necessary for employment and securing decent work and entrepreneurship?

3.3 What major challenges are African countries going to face in the implementation of policies designed to achieve these goals?

3.4 How can they rise above such challenges?).

3.5 What lessons learned from the EFA/MDGs movement can assist in the successful implementation of these goals? (ADEA WGHE, 2016b).

Online questionnaire responses for Sub-theme 1 were rather uneven in terms of completion rate per item. Nonetheless, the trend can be seen from a few such responses by participants in Cameroon, Ethiopia, and France. The anticipated major challenges identified include producing to scale well trained and committed professionals particularly for literacy: adult education, lifelong learning as well as educational leadership; lack of financial resources and capacity to properly use existing resources, and poor public political will and commitment by stakeholders (Ethiopia); poor manpower in education and training, and effective social transformation; propagation and effective practice of education for sustainable development at all levels and contexts of learning, and adequate and sustainable financing of education (Cameroon); and infrastructure transport and digital and meaningful national budgetary appropriation as a priority (France). With respect to the lessons as pathways to change and transformation elicited by questionnaire items 3.4 and 3.5, a few are relevant to the discourse: Quality education is the most important issue while strong political will is a crucial success factor as is the need to work with and harness the strengths and commitments of all stakeholders (Tanzania); quality teacher education and training programs and availability of instructional materials; culture of teachers as action researchers as well as community

engagement; and creating inclusive education environments, practice-oriented education, and school-university-industry linkage/continuum (Ethiopia). With regard to the envisaged innovations that should be considered for possible implementation in other African countries, a number of concrete mostly evidence-based examples, presented in the various contributions reviewed in this synthesis report, provide pathways for consideration at the 2017 Triennale.

As a lead actor, WGHE, through its online consultation, has interrogated itself and participants critically on all subsectors of priority interest to Sub-theme 1, ranging from "broadening the opportunities for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)at the secondary and higher education levels; strengthening the linkages between the labour market and the education and training system; elimination of gender inequalities in the area of education and provision of equal access to vulnerable persons, including people with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations at all levels of education and vocational training and the perceived roles of ,and the urgent need to take advantage of the potential of ICT to achieve quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all" (ADEA WGHE, 2016b).

A major consequence of inadequate investment has been limited transition to higher education, in most African countries. Even though the move to restructure and revitalize higher education in Africa since 2006 has resulted in notable expansion, including increased private providers and the sector recording increased learner access, key challenges are still impeding real growth. Aside from the slow momentum, the sector continues to grapple with the challenges of very limited supply to meet the growing demand for access; the limited number of research, innovation and development-oriented institutions; inadequate financing to higher education and bursaries for vulnerable learners; inequity in access with low enrolment for women, rural populations, people living with disabilities and other vulnerable groups as well as disproportionate figures of female in favour of 'soft' sciences (CESA 16-25). Milestones met in improving the quality and supply of higher education include a continental consensus on quality mechanisms, such as the African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM) and the African Quality Assurance Network (AFRIQAN), which are making steady progress towards improving quality in higher education. The Revised Arusha Convention on the harmonization of degrees, grades, diplomas and other qualifications in the Africa region has been one of the vehicles through which these improvements are being achieved. The challenges reviewed in this synthesis, notably, inadequate to grossly inadequate financial provision for Basic education, TVET and the Non formal sector, will guide higher education institutions in meeting their renewed vision and mission. African countries need to continue expanding the opportunity for continued participation of the private sector in providing higher education while having firm regulatory and quality assurance control over private institutions. For the Nigerian federal public sector, the Education Tax Act 1999 was superseded by Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TET Fund) Act 2011 – an innovation that has proved its worth in raising tax based resources for the sustenance of teaching, research and learning resources and infrastructure in Nigeria in order to continually improve tertiary education to international standards (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2011). African countries might have important lessons to learn from the Nigerian example.

4.9. ICTs in Literacy, education and lifelong learning

No nation, including the poorest, has been able to escape or ignore the ICT revolution as a vector and catalyst for building knowledge, information and skills driven societies and economies. The education sector is particularly concerned with the understanding, appreciation, identification, acquisition,

curriculum reform and effective use of appropriate ICTs to facilitate and impact education data, planning, administration, teaching, learning and research, to mention a few areas of application. In recent years, UNESCO, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the World Bank have supported projects on the use of ICTs in school systems and higher education. For example, UNESCO's teacher capacity development initiatives resulted in the launch of the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers. The Framework "emphasizes that it is not enough for teachers to have ICT skills and be able to teach them to their students. Teachers need to be able to help the students become collaborative, problem-solving, creative learners through using ICT so they will be effective citizens and members of the workforce''(UNESCO, 2011, p. 1). This issue is of particular interest to E-9 member countries – the 9 most populous countries, including Egypt and Nigeria – with high illiteracy rates. However, the challenges have been considerable for African countries. Anita Dighe has aptly characterized the state of ICTs in literacy programs in Africa by the end of the UN Decade of Literacy 2004-2014; notably that ''most countries do not use ICTs in literacy programs, nor have they formulated policies for integration of ICTs in adult literacy programs,'' while most countries have problems with regard to financial resources and lack of technological infrastructure'' (Dighe, not dated, pp.187-198).

The UIL states that literacy is recognized as the foundation for lifelong learning and development. The contribution by the ADEA WGNFE (2016d) on the use of ICT in the promotion of literacy in the Sahel region is therefore most relevant, as it focuses on current situation, innovative projects and potential pathways. Notably, the study is based on the initiative of UNESCO Dakar Bureau and ADEA to undertake a situation analysis of the role and use of information and communication technologies in the promotion and delivery of literacy for lifelong learning in several countries in the Sahelo-Saharan zone, notably Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger and Senegal. It is also inspired by the urgent need to tackle the unmet goals of EFA and the MDG on Universal Primary Education. More importantly, illiteracy levels in the sub-Saharan belt remains among the highest in the world. Several serious threats to the prospect of literacy development and the effective use of ICT in literacy development for lifelong learning were identified, and are closely linked to the prevailing socio-political, human resource, funding and infrastructural inadequacies in the countries studied. Any strategies to neutralize these threats should first address the prevailing situation. Essentially, the study suggests that elimination of illiteracy would be done at two main levels where the challenges are most felt. On the one hand, the problem of insufficient mastery of basic literacy (reading, writing, and numeracy) and of digital tools, is worsened by the rapidity of growth and innovations taking place in the ICT sector. On the other hand, the low human resource base and technical incapacity, the poor infrastructure, insufficient or ineffective quality assurance and evaluation mechanisms, poor project management capacity, inadequate and irregular electricity supply, poor coverage of ICT networks in the Sahel zone, are all impeding the establishment of viable ICT projects and programs on literacy and lifelong learning.

Equally significant are the findings relating to socio-economic challenges, which include widespread poverty in the Sahel zone, disparity in incomes and revenues, wide difference in governments' budgetary allocations to literacy and ICT, low level of education of the populace, persistent political instability and conflicts in the zone, and the non-existent role for indigenous cultures in enhancing the ICT revolution in the English, French and Arab speaking zones (p. 3).

The key lessons and recommendations for successful integration and use of ICT for literacy and lifelong learning are highlighted for the 2017 deliberations and outcome strategies towards 2030 and beyond, are listed below:

- Launch a wide ranging survey /situation analysis of the usage and applications of ICTs/mass media for independent learning by the populations in the zone, including local radios, television, cinema, mobile telephone in order to highlight and propagate the most promising and effective practices;
- Create a better integration of ICT in the existing initiatives, programs and projects rather than use ICT as a separate entity;
- Pay great attention to human capacity development in order to provide a critical mass of ICT experts capable of designing, manage and implement projects;
- Facilitate and promote universal or mass access to the internet by developing and implementing mass access to internet starting from the school systems, including teacher training centres;
- Promote linguistic and cultural diversity reflecting the reality of the Sahel zone through the intelligent and adaptive use of ICT for literacy and lifelong learning;
- Establish effective coordination mechanism in order to promote visionary, strategic governance structure that are capable of bringing about the required change in the use of ICT in literacy delivery (p.4), and ICT literacy (ADEA WGNFE,2016d).

5.0. CONCLUSIONS

The concepts of *quality education and lifelong learning for all* imply striving commitment to equitable education – all should access education, and derive benefits from the experiences and opportunities education offers. The synthesis has presented a wide range of case studies, country and regional experiences and good replicable or adaptable practices that hold considerable promise for informing the deliberations and outcome strategies of the Triennale towards the transformative reforms Africa urgently needs to tackle the many challenges constraining the quality of its education provision and delivery. The education sector, more than any other, must now be responsive to the social and economic development needs of the various countries that have failed to meet the EFA and MDGs by the 2016 timeline. Furthermore, quality concept, when analyzed and explained according to educational processes, implies that the system becomes more effective in ensuring learner preparedness to access and transition without inhibition through the education cycle. This entails each level of the education continuum providing values, knowledge and skills relevant to the formation of the foundation for the next level. Quality also interrogates the nature of learning: what the learner learns, the circumstances under which it is learnt. This points to the responsiveness of the learning environment and teachers' pedagogy to the needs of various groups of learners – people with disabilities, girls and women, the chronically ill, the rural poor, etc. Based on the hard data provided annually by UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), the unrealized outcome recommendations of the 2008 Maputo and 2012 Ouagadougou Triennales, and the telling evaluation report in the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2015, among others, African education has a considerable amount of work to do to be able to put and sustain on track ECD and Basic education, secondary education, youth and adult literacy and non-formal education, higher education and technical and vocational education. Their impacts on youth employment self-employment and entrepreneurship would be profound for beneficiaries and the country concerned. Finally, the wisdom that doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results is the golden lesson that African education systems

must be willing to learn. Africa needs to move from words or plans to concrete innovative and creative action.

6.0. RECOMMENDATIONS

This synthesis has presented the relevant recommendations made by contributors under the respective themes, and are therefore not reproduced in the following section. The following general and specific recommendations are of crucial relevance to the Triennale deliberations and the outcome strategies.

1) The 2016 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM Report) establishes the importance of good quality and equitable education and learning in supporting social change. However, with the exception of learning outcome indicators, there is need to develop equity and inclusion-related indicators for monitoring quality of education for all.

2) Education statistics in sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries show that, generally, girls and women continue to lag behind boys men in all education indicators, particularly beyond the primary cycle, and specifically in science, mathematics and technology (SMT) education. African countries should move from enrolling girls and boys in school in equal numbers to advancing the 'second generation' girls' education priorities, including ensuring that girls can attend and complete primary and secondary school, make schools safer and more secure, improving the quality of learning for girls, supporting girls' transition to higher education and employment, and cultivating local country leaders to champion this work at the grassroots level.

3) The Burundi success story in the holistic and evidence-based transformation of primary to basic education should be adopted as a model for all countries struggling to reform their basic education systems, particularly those in post-conflict reconstruction and development.

4) Quality and lifelong education for all entails including the excluded. African countries should take deliberate steps to invest in equity considerations to ensure quality education is accessible to vulnerable and marginalized groups, especially people with disabilities.

5) Technical and professional skills training systems need to be re-oriented from supply-driven to demand-driven. The Continental TVET Strategy should aim to strengthen the relations between training and the labour market, linking curricula of training programs to countries' most compelling manpower needs in order to avoid critical manpower gaps in the midst of unemployed graduates with skills that are not relevant to labour market demand.

6) There is need to solidify existing links between the concepts of lifelong learning, the paradigm shift from TVET to TVSD and the education-training continuum. The AUC and ADEA need to undertake work to develop a framework for the implementation of this linkage.

7) There are concerns that evolving political and governance conditions in Africa constrain the delivery of education of good quality and ultimately weaken the transformative impact of education. African leaders should make good governance and peace an integral part of the discourse on quality education and lifelong learning.

8) Most public institutions lack adequate financing to transform learning environments and practices. Education funding therefore needs to be both adequate and predictable to ensure the provision of good quality education, especially to marginalized groups.

9) In light of the perennial teacher challenges of poor attraction and recruitment, poor status enhancement, motivation and retention of teachers, ADEA should vigorously promote a strong and sustained commitment on the part of African governments and all stakeholders to apply the ILO/UNESCO's recommendations on the status of teachers (1966), as well as the recommendations of the global arbitration body – the ILO/UNESCO joint Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning the status of teachers (CEART).

10) The outcome document of the recent International Policy Dialogue Forum on teacher motivation held in Cambodia in December 2016 is of particular interest. The global key strategy and expected results should be given serious attention by all stakeholders during and after the 2017 Triennale.

11) Drawing rich lessons from the Costa Rica case study, the development of modern libraries and library infrastructure should be an integral component of the education strategy, supported by adequate budgetary appropriation in national development plans for education.

12) Financing of education, particularly for the critical foundational and youth employment oriented subsectors – basic, literacy adult and non-formal education and TVET/TVSD – should be given urgent national priority matched with regular and sustainable budgetary appropriations.

13) The Koranic school systems should reformed in order to establish basic minimum standards with mainstream public basic education through the integration of secular and academic and life skills contents that provide transition to gainful employment or self-employment for graduates.

The following recommendations contained in the continental study on teacher issues by the African Union Commission are reproduced here and should be a central theme during the Ministerial round table deliberations in Dakar, and as part of the outcome strategy on teachers. Several countries have teacher development policies, but the situation remains daunting and deserves a final push to avoid the grim consequences that lie ahead for quality education and lifelong learning for sustainable development.

1. General

   a. The AU/RECs and Member States will prepare a teacher mobility protocol managed by the African Union with a view to set up a 'teachers without borders' force.

   b. Member States will ensure that their governments take responsibility for teachers in all learning centres, including private schools.

2. Teacher Training

   a. The AU/RECs will establish continental professional standards for teachers which can be adapted by countries as guiding principles for teacher management to foster teacher motivation and professionalism.

   b. Member States will enforce a basic academic degree/diploma as the minimum entry requirement into the teaching profession.

   c. Member States will redesign the training of teachers to include induction and mentoring during the pre-service and in-service period.

   d. Member States will systematically review (5-year period) teacher training curriculum based on Monitoring and Evaluation returns.

e. The AU/RECs and Member States will harmonize initial preparation courses for ALL teachers prior to specialization (a common foundation course for all learning levels).

f. The AU/RECs and Member States will establish schools of education for continuous professional development as a policy for teachers in all member states.

g. Member States will introduce administrative academic qualifications for teachers who will take up school leadership and management duties.

h. The AU/RECs will develop country specific roadmaps towards the professionalization of the teaching force.

i. Member States will develop a systematic program to upgrade and phase out primary teacher certificate awards in favour of post graduate diploma and graduate certificates.

3. Living and working conditions

a. The AU/RECs will enhance their teacher specific observatory responsibilities.

b. Member States will develop a teacher regulatory body to oversee and manage teacher affairs.

c. The AU/RECs and Member States will explicitly display pathways for teachers' growth within the profession and these pathways will be clearly articulated based on professional standards.

d. Member States will develop clear modalities to recognize and reward teachers according to their workloads.

e. Member States will provide both monetary and non-monetary benefits for hard to staff areas and subjects.

f. Member States will develop a teacher housing strategy that supports ownership of houses and allowances.

g. Member States will develop policies and mechanisms for teachers to access credit facilities.

h. Member States will upgrade the current medical allowance provided to teachers to a medical insurance scheme cover (African Union, 2106, p. 79).

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