

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

### ADEA 2025 Triennale



"Strengthening the resilience of Africa's educational systems"

### **CONCEPT NOTE**

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### **Table of Contents**

| 1. Introduction   | 3  |
|---|----|
| Objectives & Expected Outcomes  | 4  |
| Theme and Sub-themes  | 4  |
| 2. Background, Initiatives, and Issues  | 5  |
| Sub-Theme 1. Reimagining Financing for Education in Africa, Including Implications Du to Shifts in the Global Funding Landscape   |    |
| Sub-Theme 2. Improving Foundational Learning – Progress and Challenges Since FLEX 2024  | 8  |
| Sub-Theme 3. Transforming Secondary Education and Ensuring Sustainable Financing and Best Practices for Technical and Vocational Skills Development Using Innovative Partnerships – What Works?   | 9  |
| Sub-Theme 4. Repositioning Higher Education and Scientific Research Through<br>Sustainable and Innovative Financing, Enhancing the Value and Relevance of Research<br>and Promoting Skills Mobility Across Africa in Alignment with the African Continental<br>Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) |    |
| Sub-Theme 5. Using Evidence and Digital Technology in Education to Bring Every<br>Learner Onboard – Hits and Misses   | 14 |
| Sub-Theme 6. From Policies to Systems and Processes: Tracking Scaled and Sustained Learning and Skilling in Africa's Educational Systems  |    |
| Sub-Theme 7. Innovative and Sustainable Approaches in School Leadership, Teacher<br>Preparation, and Continuing Professional Development in the Decade of Education for<br>Africa   | 18 |
| Sub-Theme 8. Gender, Equity, Inclusion, and Climate Adaptation: Moving Together<br>Through Innovation and Scale in Education  | 20 |
| 3. Structure and Format   | 22 |

### **1. Introduction**

The ADEA Triennale on Education is one of Africa's premier high-level forums for political dialogue, peer learning, and the exchange of knowledge and impactful experiences in education. It brings together African policymakers, educators, development partners, and researchers to reflect on critical themes shaping the transformation of education systems for sustainable social and economic development across the continent. The Triennale aims to, among others: (1) Celebrate progress and successes: Showcase efforts and achievements in building resilient, equitable, inclusive, and relevant education systems across Africa. (2) Take stock of challenges: Reflect on persistent bottlenecks, emerging issues, and opportunities related to foundational learning, skills development, financing, and innovation. (3) Facilitate dialogue: Enable learning and exchanges between countries and partners, with an emphasis on innovative approaches, leadership, and accountability mechanisms. (4) Chart a collective path forward: Agree on priority actions to accelerate the transformation of Africa's education and training systems.

The 2025 Triennale builds on the legacy of the previous three held in Ouagadougou (2012),<sup>1</sup> Dakar (2017),<sup>2</sup> and Mauritius (2022).<sup>3</sup> This year's edition takes stock of the progress made since 2022 and explores the implications of recent continent-wide developments. These include the designation of 2024 as the Year of Education for Africa by the African Union (AU), and the adoption of 2025–2034 as the Decade of Accelerated Education by the AU's Fifth Specialized Technical Committee on Education, Science and Technology (STC-EST5).

Crucial strategic frameworks adopted during this period – such as the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2025–2034 (CESA 25-34), the African Continental Technical and Vocational Education and Training Strategy (CTVET 25-34), and the Science, Technology, and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA 2034) – will shape the discussions and priorities of this Triennale.

High-level education convenings that have taken place since the last Triennale will also inform the discourse, including:

- AU Heads of State and Government Summits
- The 2024 Abuja EdTech Conference and Ministerial Forum by the Mastercard Foundation's CITL
- The Inaugural East African Community Regional Education Conference in Arusha (2024)
- The African Foundational Learning Exchange (FLEX) in Freetown (2023) and Kigali (2024), where Ministers committed to ending learning poverty by 2035
- The 2024 AU Education Conference in Nouakchott, Mauritania

The framing of the 2025 Triennale is guided by ADEA's vision of "a high-quality education and training system for accelerated sustainable development in Africa," and its overarching goal to "empower African countries to transform schooling into meaningful learning." This is supported by ADEA's globally connected partnerships, a skilled Secretariat, and the country-led Inter-Country Quality Nodes (ICQNs).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Promoting critical knowledge, skills and qualifications for sustainable development in Africa.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Revitalizing education towards the 2030 Global Agenda and Africa's Agenda 2063.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Reflecting on COVID-19 impact on Africa's education, & building resilience for skills development.

Accordingly, the Triennale will focus on Africa's key education priorities, as reflected in the ADEA Strategic Plan 2024–2028, including improving foundational learning, remodeling technical and vocational skills development (TVSD) alongside secondary education, advancing higher education and research through harmonized quality assurance and cross-border mobility, and strengthening education systems' resilience, anchored in three cross-cutting enablers: evidence-informed decision-making through quality education and skills data, leveraging EdTech for access and improved learning outcomes, and promoting equity and inclusion, especially for vulnerable populations.

### **Objectives & Expected Outcomes**

The overall goal of the 2025 ADEA Triennale is to take stock, learn, share experiences, and commit to develop drivers and conditions for resilient educational system. Specifically, the event aims to:

- Reflect on the progress and challenges in strengthening Africa's educational systems towards ending learning poverty by the end of the decade.
- Promote the sharing of knowledge and experience around practical and innovative solutions in specific areas as guided by the Triennale's sub-themes.
- Interrogate, validate, and adopt new/emerging trends in evidence, good practices and innovations that support the rebuilding of the future workforce in Africa through education and training.
- Build consensus, commitment, and partnerships among the Ministries and other educational stakeholders in Africa and beyond for continued implementation and scaling of successful education reforms

The expectation is greater clarity and understanding of successful reforms in Africa's educational systems since 2022; shared knowledge, experiences, good practices, and solutions in Africa's education; fostered partnerships for policy and strategy development and implementation; and a binding policy-level outcome framework.

### Theme and Sub-themes

# Proposed Theme: "Strengthening the resilience of Africa's educational systems: Advancing towards ending learning poverty by 2035 with a well-educated and skilled workforce for the continent and beyond."

To operationalize this theme, the 2025 Triennale proposes eight interconnected sub-themes:

- 1. **Reimagining Financing for Education in Africa**, Including Implications Due to Shifts in the Global Funding Landscape.
- 2. Improving foundational learning Progress and challenges since FLEX 2024
- **3. Transforming Secondary Education and Ensuring Sustainable Financing and Best Practices for TVSD<sup>4</sup>** Using Innovative Partnerships – What Works?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Technical and Vocational Skills Development

- 4. **Repositioning higher education and scientific research** through sustainable financing, research relevance, and skills mobility aligned with the AfCFTA
- 5. Using evidence and digital technology to bring every learner onboard hits and misses
- 6. **From policies to systems and processes** The value of quality education and skills data in tracking scaled and sustained learning outcomes
- 7. Innovative and sustainable approaches in school leadership, teacher preparation, and continuing professional development in the Decade of Education for Africa
- 8. Gender, Equity, Inclusion, and Climate Adaptation: Moving Together Through Innovation and Scale in Education

### 2. Background, Initiatives, and Issues

A comparative overview of key milestones in Africa's economic history alongside global economic developments reveals significant transformations. From the flourishing trade empires of the pre-1500s – contrasted with the dominance of European feudal economies and Indian Ocean trade – to the "Africa rising" narrative of the 2000s, the past decade highlights the continent's growth in EdTech and FinTech. This growth is supported by frameworks such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), though it occurs amidst challenges like climate change, debt, political instability, and youth unemployment.

Global economies are still recovering from disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, shifts in aid and supply chains, and the ongoing digital transformation (including the rise of AI). Simultaneously, the global shift towards green energy and the decoupling from fossil fuels is accelerating.

What does education and skills development have to do with all this – and why does it matter for Africa? The answer lies in three dimensions: foundational learning, youth, employment, and resilience.

Africa has the youngest population globally, with over 60% under the age of 25. Youth unemployment and underemployment remain high due to a persistent mismatch between educational outcomes and labor market demands. Nevertheless, skills development initiatives – such as coding bootcamps and entrepreneurship incubators – are gaining momentum across urban centers.

Over the last decade, primary gross enrollment rates have improved, with many countries exceeding 90%. However, completion rates remain low due to dropouts and grade repetition. Secondary school enrollment, especially for girls, has also increased, though rural and marginalized communities still face access barriers. Tertiary education enrollments have more than doubled in several countries, driven by population growth and expanded access.

In terms of literacy and learning outcomes, adult literacy has improved but remains a major challenge, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, where the average adult literacy rate is around 67%. Learning poverty (defined as the inability to read and understand a simple text by age 10) affects approximately 87% of children in the region (World Bank, 2023). Many students lack foundational skills despite being in school.

Progress in digital and technical skills acquisition has been uneven. Although digital learning surged during the COVID-19 pandemic, infrastructure gaps – such as limited internet access,

insufficient devices, and unreliable electricity – continue to hinder many learners. Investment in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is growing to address youth unemployment and skills mismatches, and some countries are integrating entrepreneurship and soft skills into curricula.

Gender and inclusion efforts have also seen progress. Gender parity in primary and lower secondary education has improved, though disparities persist at higher levels. Girls and women still face barriers such as early marriage, pregnancy, and cultural norms. Support for learners with disabilities and refugees has increased but remains underfunded.

Recent shifts in external funding for health and education, coupled with long-standing challenges around financing and accountability, are driving a re-evaluation of education financing models. Public spending on education remains below the recommended 20% of government budgets in many countries. There is still heavy reliance on external aid, particularly in conflict-affected areas.

As more African countries shift towards competency-based curricula and labor-market-relevant education, the time is ripe for a "rebirth" in social sector investments – particularly in education, health, and agriculture – while harnessing modern technologies like AI.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the importance of resilient systems. Africa's education sector was among the hardest hit, with many policy responses being reactive rather than proactive. The crisis highlighted the need for early warning systems powered by predictive models. With a predominantly young population, Africa cannot afford to neglect its youth. An unskilled youth population represents a major risk, while a skilled youth population is a tremendous asset – offering long-term benefits to the continent and the world.

The theme of the ADEA 2025 Triennale – **"Strengthening the resilience of Africa's educational systems: advancing towards ending learning poverty by 2035 with a well-educated and skilled workforce for the continent and beyond"** – is timely. Discussions under this theme will spotlight successes in Africa's education systems, identify areas for improvement, and explore how to optimize resource use, promote accountability, and foster African leadership and partnerships. The foregoing reflects each of the seven supporting sub-themes.

# Sub-Theme 1. Reimagining Financing for Education in Africa, Including Implications Due to Shifts in the Global Funding Landscape

African countries spent on average, 4.6% of their GDP on public education in 2019 according to GEMR and ADEA (2022). This is just meeting global benchmark of 4–6% of GDP or 15–20% of total public expenditure. Primary education has the largest share at 2% of GDP and 44% of total education spending and secondary education at 1.5% and 34% respectively. The World Bank (2022) estimates that tertiary education accounts for 1.1% of GDP and 22.6% of total public spending on education, with high per-student costs. Investment in pre-primary education is extremely low, averaging only 0.1% of GDP. Many African countries spend less than 2% of education budgets on ECE (UNICEF, 2021). There is also the issue of allocation compared to disbursements, with the latter depicting the reality.

Actionable and strategic ideas to help African countries go beyond the bare minimum in financing education includes having a better link of education financing to economic growth – making the argument for increased spending on education more 'economic' than social, a strategic

investment in Africa's demographic advantage (the youth). It also means increasing domestic resource mobilization through progressive tax reforms, aggressively combating Illicit financial flows, improving efficiency and accountability, broadening the tax base by, for example, digitizing tax collection systems, and looking at natural resource revenue allocation. Strengthening regional collaboration, intentionally engaging the private sector and philanthropy, and embracing data-driven financing are also key.

Africa must also rethink its stand on leveraging external financing. Recent reductions in Official Development Assistance (ODA) for education and skills development across Africa have had profound and multifaceted impacts. These cuts are exacerbating existing challenges in access, equity, and learning quality, and they threaten long-term socio-economic progress on the continent.

The United States government's decision to end funding for a wide range of USAID-supported programs – including those in health, education, and skills development – has thrown many initiatives into uncertainty. This move has had a ripple effect across sectors and countries, creating an unprecedented situation for education and skills development in Africa. However, trends in ODA suggest that such a shift was increasingly likely. A recent World Bank blog, curated by the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report, highlights the chronic challenge of meeting the longstanding UN target for ODA – 0.7% of gross national income (GNI). As of five years ago, only six of the 30 members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) met this target. Today, average ODA spending among OECD donors remains stagnant at around 0.35% of GNI, with further reductions on the horizon.

According to a 2025 report by the European Training Foundation, USAID disruptions have affected education and skills development programs in 58 countries. Of the 396 education-specific programs impacted, more than one-third were in sub-Saharan Africa (153 programs), with another 72 in North Africa and the Middle East. Vulnerable groups – including girls, refugees, and marginalized communities – are likely to suffer the most in the short term. Long-term consequences may include regression on SDG 4 and continental education frameworks such as CESA and the Continental TVET Strategy. These setbacks could lead to higher dropout rates, wider gender gaps, rising youth unemployment, and workforce unpreparedness, potentially fueling economic instability and geopolitical shifts.

The GEM Report (2025) notes that while the U.S. action is particularly abrupt, it mirrors broader trends among other donor countries. The UK, for instance, reduced its ODA from 0.7% to 0.5% of GNI in 2021, with further cuts to 0.3% by 2027. The Netherlands plans to reduce its ODA from 0.62% in 2024 to 0.44% in 2029. Belgium will slash aid by 25% over five years, and Switzerland is cutting \$363 million from its 2026–28 bilateral and multilateral development cooperation budget, including for education. These cuts have tangible consequences: aid to education in Chad and Liberia is expected to be halved, while Madagascar and Mali will see a one-third reduction. Ethiopia, Rwanda, and the DRC are facing aid reductions of \$33 million, \$35 million, and \$51 million respectively. In total, education spending in Liberia and Somalia is expected to fall by 23% and 45%, respectively.

#### Africa's Response: A Resilience Imperative

This crisis was foreshadowed in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which exposed deep vulnerabilities in Africa's education systems. One of the key takeaways was the urgent need for early warning systems and long-term resilience strategies in education planning.

There are now encouraging signs of a shift in the global partner ecosystem. The Gates Foundation has been working with ADEA and the Human Capital Africa (HCA) to engage policymakers on reimagining education financing for foundational learning. During the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the African Foundational Learning Ministerial Forum, member states shared perspectives and emerging initiatives designed to respond to the new funding landscape. Ministers collectively agreed on the need for a government-led initiative that places African countries at the forefront of efforts to deliver on national and continental education commitments – including the goal of ending learning poverty by 2035.

Concurrently, the African Development Bank (AfDB) has been exploring how innovations such as AI can be used for domestic resource mobilization. This includes leveraging digital platforms and data systems to improve tax collection, broaden the revenue base, and prioritize investment in key social sectors. Additional discussions have focused on and innovative financing mechanisms with public-private partnerships at country level, as part of leveraging private philanthropy.

The discussions under this sub-theme at the ADEA 2025 Triennale provide a watershed moment for African education policymakers. This is a pivotal opportunity to make bold, strategic moves toward sustainable, self-reliant education financing – and it is one that Africa should not miss.

## Sub-Theme 2. Improving Foundational Learning – Progress and Challenges Since FLEX 2024

The year 2024 marked a pivotal moment for foundational learning in Africa, with two landmark pronouncements elevating it to the top of the continent's development agenda. First, at the Africa Foundational Learning Ministerial Conference (FLEX 2024) held in Kigali, Rwanda, in November, African Ministers of Education committed to ending learning poverty by 2035 (ADEA, 2025). The Ministers also endorsed the African Union's (AU) call for a "Decade of Education", aimed at addressing the continent's deepening learning crisis. This was followed by a second major declaration at the AU Continental Conference on Education, Youth, and Employability, held in Mauritania in December 2024, which reaffirmed the commitment to eradicate learning poverty by 2035. The Mauritanian Declaration was subsequently endorsed at the AU Summit in February 2025.

Foundational learning – which includes early childhood education and development (ECED), literacy and numeracy skills, socio-emotional competencies, values, and well-being – has also been prioritized, spanning three of the six strategic pillars of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 26–35).

Considering these developments, it is essential to track the implementation of the Kigali Declaration to Action, which outlined five priority actions endorsed by the Ministers:

- Enhancing regional collaboration to promote knowledge-sharing and foster innovation in foundational learning.
- Adapting, integrating, and scaling evidence-based approaches to improve foundational learning outcomes.
- Strengthening data systems, assessments, accountability, and evidence use to guide decision-making.

- Ensuring intentional and efficient use of domestic resources, with a focus on costeffective, scalable interventions.
- Aligning and coordinating partner initiatives at the country level to avoid duplication and maximize the impact of resources.

To support this process, ADEA has collaborated with Human Capital Africa (HCA) and national technical focal points to develop a set of indicators to monitor FLEX 2024 outcomes. A meeting is scheduled for Nairobi (24-25 June) to refine the indicator framework for use by countries ahead of the Triennale.

Momentum has also built around the operationalization of the Nouakchott Declaration through the "End Learning Poverty Campaign", which is being rolled out at the country level. The first launch took place in Zambia in April 2025, with additional launches planned for Namibia (11–12 June), Malawi (16 June), Zimbabwe (25 June), Nigeria (9 July), and Botswana (14 July). These national campaigns aim to localize foundational learning priorities and catalyze multisectoral action. A two-day validation workshop on scalable practices for ending learning poverty is scheduled for the last week of July 2025. This will be followed by a side event at PACTED 2025 in early October, focusing on the critical role of teachers in advancing foundational learning, and will set the stage for the ADEA 2025 Triennale to be held in Ghana from 29–31 October.

Efforts are underway to develop a Common African Assessment Framework for Foundational Learning, as endorsed by Ministers at their Specialised Technical Committee (STC) meeting in 2023. This framework is expected to enhance comparability, benchmarking, and targeted interventions across the continent.

To amplify these efforts, the Africa Foundational Learning Champion continues to use various platforms to raise awareness and mobilize political will. There is also a push to ensure coherent messaging around foundational learning, bringing together governments, partners, civil society, and communities under a unified vision. A recent FCDO-facilitated roundtable on foundational learning, held on 22 May 2025 on the sidelines of the Education World Forum in London, brought together Ministers from South Africa, Ghana, Zambia, Malawi, and others. They emphasized the urgent need for deeper collaboration in the face of severe fiscal constraints and competing priorities. The consensus was clear: failure is not an option. Without decisive action, Africa risks a much higher price – lost human potential, deepening inequality, and a widening global skills gap.

This sub-theme is as foundational as its name implies. The ADEA 2025 Triennale offers an important platform to assess progress since Kigali and Nouakchott, identify gaps, and accelerate collective action to end learning poverty in Africa.

# Sub-Theme 3. Transforming Secondary Education and Ensuring Sustainable Financing and Best Practices for Technical and Vocational Skills Development Using Innovative Partnerships – What Works?

Between 2020 and 2040, the number of young Africans completing upper secondary or tertiary education is projected to more than double, from 103 million to 240 million (AUC & OECD, 2024). This demographic shift underscores the urgent need for technology-driven, scalable strategies that prepare young people for future work – particularly in sustainable sectors such as precision agriculture, biotechnology, and the green, digital, blue, and orange economies (AU CTVET Strategy 2025–2034). Meeting this demand calls for the transformation of education and training

systems, particularly through secondary education, and rethinking financing for technical and vocational skills development (TVSD) while being cognizant of the importance of indigenous knowledge.

The link between secondary education and TVET in equipping youth with relevant, 21st-century skills is well-articulated in four of the six strategic pillars of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 26–35). The Continental TVET Strategy for Africa (2025–2034) outlines four priority pillars: policy, governance, and finance; quality and inclusion; partnerships, knowledge sharing, and linkages with the productive sector; and institutional development, technology, and innovation, including digital and green transformation of systems and curricula. These strategies are supported by robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks designed to track country-level domestication and impact. However, limited national capacity – both financial and human – poses a significant barrier to their full domestication and implementation. The African Union and its partners have established implementation frameworks for multi-stakeholder partnerships at national, regional, and continental levels.

### The secondary education/ TVSD nexus

Countries are increasingly recognizing TVSD as a viable and respected career pathway. In response, some are integrating vocational subjects into secondary education, helping students explore career options early while equipping those who transition directly to the labor market with practical, employable skills. This also serves to enhance career guidance, reduce the stigma around vocational paths, and expand pathways to decent work.

But transforming secondary education in Africa to adequately prepare youth for the future requires a holistic approach that addresses several interconnected areas. Competency-based education (CBE) promotes practical and participatory teaching/ learning methods and emphasizes skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, communication, collaboration, self-efficacy, learning to learn, and digital literacy. Successful implementation of the competency-based curriculum (CBC) requires significant awareness among stakeholders and dealing with challenges of large class sizes, inadequate infrastructure, and difficulties in standardizing assessment for a personalized learning approach. In CBC, teachers move from being "transmitters of knowledge" to "enablers" and facilitators, actively involved in supervising and guiding learners. They therefore need a deep understanding of CBC principles, a positive attitude towards the new approach, and the skills to implement it effectively. This includes training in learner-centered methods and digital literacy. Continuous in-service training and support systems are vital in effectively preparing teachers for CBC implementation.

Significant repetition and dropout rates often occur during the transition from primary to junior secondary and within the secondary cycle in Africa. Improving transitions calls for diversifying post-primary structures to provide more varied learning pathways that respond better to the continent's economic and social realities. Developing robust support mechanisms, including guidance counseling and mentorship programs, can also address the emotional, social, and academic challenges students face during transitions. Ensuring a smooth progression of learning and skill development from primary to secondary and beyond, minimizing the disconnect between different educational levels, is also key.

### Alternative pathways to academic and the world of work

Not all students are suited for traditional academic pathways to university. Alternative pathways are crucial for inclusion and for meeting the diverse needs of the economy. Key strategies include

strengthening TVSD programs to provide practical and market-relevant skills, fostering partnerships with industries to also promote off-campus training and teaching models (done within the industry), developing and expanding non-formal education programs for out-of-school youth and offering pathways back to formal education or direct entry into the workforce, creating more opportunities for hands-on learning through apprenticeships and internships, bridging the gap between education and employment, integrating entrepreneurship skills into the curriculum and providing support for young people to start their own businesses, and offering targeted programs in digital skills, coding, and other tech-related areas to prepare youth for the digital economy.

To prepare Africa's youth better for the future world of work, secondary education curricula need to strongly align with the demands of the future job market, informed by labor market analyses and industry needs. It is also important to foster stronger collaborations between educational institutions, industry, government, and civil society, and provide effective career guidance and counseling services for students to explore different pathways and make informed decisions. By addressing these interconnected areas comprehensively, African countries can truly transform their secondary education systems to empower their youth with the competencies, skills, and mindsets needed to thrive in the future world of work.

### Contextual domestication and the value of indigenous knowledge

A central challenge remains the contextual domestication of the continental strategy – ensuring national strategies adapt the broad AU framework to their unique circumstances, while also advancing priorities such as recognition of prior learning and training; social inclusion and gender equity; digital and green transformation; and productive sector engagement in curriculum design and delivery. To overcome this, countries are encouraged to build on existing partnerships and successful models, adopt a flexible approach to innovation, and re-examine domestic resource mobilization strategies for financing skills development. There are notable initiatives that support the establishment of TVET Centres of Excellence, promote blended learning approaches, and facilitate cross-country knowledge exchange. They include ILO's SKILL-UP Ghana project, GIZ's STEP Programme in Ethiopia, Commonwealth of Learning's Skills for Work (SfW) in Nigeria, Zambia, and Kenya, and AUDA-NEPAD's Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA).

Integrating Africa's rich indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) into its educational frameworks is a strategic necessity for fostering sustainable growth across the continent's blue, green, and orange economies. IKS offers context-specific, resilient, and culturally relevant solutions that, when combined with modern education and technology, can unlock significant economic potential, create jobs, and enhance livelihoods. Furthermore, this approach promotes environmental stewardship, cultural preservation, and contributes to the decolonization of educational systems. By bridging traditional wisdom with contemporary learning, Africa can cultivate a workforce equipped to drive inclusive and sustainable development. Effective integration of IKS into African education requires a multi-faceted approach encompassing curriculum reform, innovative pedagogical methods, robust teacher training, and genuine community partnerships. It also necessitates designing educational programs that combine traditional ecological knowledge and cultural practices with modern technological, business, and digital skills to empower IKS holders to participate in and lead sustainable ventures.

This sub-theme at the ADEA 2025 Triennale will explore the extent to which innovative efforts are transforming the TVSD landscape in Africa with a greater nexus with a transformed secondary education. It will also highlight what works, identify scalable practices, and discuss the future of

secondary education as a driver of inclusive growth, decent work, and economic transformation on the continent.

### Sub-Theme 4. Repositioning Higher Education and Scientific Research Through Sustainable and Innovative Financing, Enhancing the Value and Relevance of Research, and Promoting Skills Mobility Across Africa in Alignment with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

The implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) presents a unique opportunity to reposition higher education and scientific research as central pillars of Africa's socio-economic transformation. While AfCFTA is primarily an economic framework aimed at boosting intra-African trade and integration, its ripple effects on education – particularly higher education – are substantial, creating both opportunities and challenges.

### **Opportunities for Higher Education Under AfCFTA**

AfCFTA encourages increased academic mobility across the continent, facilitating the freer movement of students, faculty, and researchers. This opens new avenues for regional diversity in African universities through greater intra-African student enrollment, and cross-border collaboration on large-scale, multi-country research and innovation projects. It also encourages the harmonization of academic standards, driven by the growing importance of instruments like the African Qualifications Framework (ACQF) and African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM).

In tandem, universities are being called upon to align curricula with the skills demands of the AfCFTA-driven labor market, including competencies in entrepreneurship, trade law, digital technologies, and intercultural communication. Joint degree programs, faculty exchanges, and collaborative teaching models can also promote continental integration and institutional partnerships. This is in addition to embracing the off-campus training and teaching model within the industry and evaluating its effectiveness.

#### **Challenges to Effective Integration**

Despite these promising developments, the road to full realization of AfCFTA's potential in higher education has structural barriers, key among them being the regulatory divergence among member states in accreditation, quality assurance, and recognition of qualifications. Infrastructure and funding gaps, particularly for under-resourced institutions, limit their ability to fully participate. Language and cultural barriers also complicate academic harmonization and student/faculty mobility. There is also the risk of brain drain, with skilled academics and students gravitating toward better-resourced universities, potentially leaving behind a gap in capacity in lower-income countries.

To mitigate these challenges, there is an urgent need to develop continental frameworks for mutual recognition of academic and professional qualifications, supported by policy alignment across education ministries. This should go together with investments in digital learning platforms, entrepreneurship hubs, and public-private partnerships that align educational offerings with AfCFTA's economic goals.

### Making Research More Valuable, Transcending Education Sub-Sectors, and Aligned with Continental Priorities

AfCFTA can catalyze a shift in African universities toward applied, policy-relevant, and interdisciplinary research. There is growing demand for homegrown knowledge in areas such as regional trade and economic integration, industrialization and entrepreneurship, digital and green transitions, and sustainable development.

Such a shift would allow universities to move beyond theoretical output toward research that directly informs policy and development programming. There are also opportunities to pool resources, create regional innovation platforms, and increase support from pan-African bodies like the African Union, African Academy of Sciences, and AfDB.

Evidence from research outputs in higher education institutions need to feed into the decision making at the other sub-sectors of Africa's education. This promotes the relevance of such evidence. To strengthen this connection, strategies need to be put in place that connects university leaders with those of TVET, secondary, primary, and early childhood education sub-sectors to get a better understanding of their needs and therefore focus the research accordingly.

### Facilitating Skills Mobility Across the Continent and the Imperative for Sustainable and Innovative Financing

Skills mobility is a critical pillar of AfCFTA. With harmonized qualifications and more open borders, higher education institutions must ensure graduates are equipped with transferable, cross-border competencies such as digital literacy, multilingualism, intercultural fluency and regional labor market knowledge. This could unlock faculty and researcher mobility, joint academic appointments, and continental talent pipelines in priority sectors such as health, digital finance, and climate technology. However, disparities in education systems and institutional capacity must be addressed to ensure mobility is equitable and does not exacerbate inequality across regions.

Sustainable financing remains a key barrier – and a major enabler – of higher education transformation. AfCFTA opens new avenues for innovative financing, including trade-related funding streams, diaspora and private sector investments, cross-border public-private partnerships, and blended financing models that combine government, business, and development finance. Regional innovation funds and trade-linked scholarships can help expand access and equity, particularly for rural and under-resourced institutions. Universities may also benefit from tapping into multilateral development banks (e.g., AfDB) and trade facilitation funds to support programs in research, innovation, and entrepreneurship. However, care must be taken to avoid overreliance on donor-driven agendas, ensuring funding aligns with national and local priorities.

AfCFTA presents a historic opportunity to reposition African higher education: to become more innovative, better funded, more responsive to labor market needs, and more deeply integrated across borders. This sub-theme will explore how to translate these opportunities into tangible action – through contextualized experiences, partnerships, and scalable practices – to ensure that Africa's higher education systems become true engines of economic transformation and inclusive development.

# Sub-Theme 5. Using Evidence and Digital Technology in Education to Bring Every Learner Onboard – Hits and Misses

To ensure that no learner is left behind, African countries are increasingly turning to evidencebased strategies and digital technologies to expand access, enhance learning outcomes, and promote inclusive education. However, while progress is evident, significant gaps and challenges remain. This sub-theme will explore successful response initiatives and identify critical bottlenecks and risks – the hits and the misses – in the journey toward equitable digital transformation in education.

### Leveraging Data and Evidence for Inclusive Decision-Making

A foundational step in digital transformation is the availability and use of reliable, disaggregated data to inform education policy and planning. Governments can benefit from:

- National and regional education dashboards tracking enrollment, attendance, learning outcomes, and equity indicators (e.g., gender, disability, region).
- Utilization of learning assessments such as PASEC and SEACMEQ to identify gaps and drive targeted interventions.
- Evidence-to-action platforms to translate research into practice and inform adaptive policy reform.

Strengthening institutional capacity for data analytics and establishing a common assessment framework across countries will support more targeted and efficient decision-making.

### **Expanding Digital Infrastructure and Access & Providing Accessible and Inclusive EdTech Solutions**

Multiple government and partner-supported initiatives are ongoing to build robust digital infrastructure, especially in rural and underserved communities. They include broadband connectivity investments through public-private partnerships, solar-powered devices and offline content servers to ensure functionality in off-grid schools, and local language and inclusive content to improve usability and understanding for all learners. These interventions improve digital access and equity, but sustaining and scaling them will require ongoing investment and policy support.

Ensuring that digital learning platforms are inclusive by design is critical. Innovative strategies include embracing assistive technologies such as screen readers, text-to-speech tools, and accessible interfaces for learners with disabilities. Others are gender-responsive platforms that consider digital safety for girls and address barriers like harassment and literacy gaps, and multilingual platforms tailored to local languages and cultural contexts. These innovations have demonstrated strong potential but require deliberate policy action and investment to ensure they reach the most marginalized.

### **Teacher Training and Peer Support Networks & Multi-Sector Partnerships and Innovation Hubs**

Teachers remain the linchpin of successful EdTech integration. Three priority areas for effective teacher preparation are digital pedagogy training (embedded in both pre-service and in-service

programs), communities of practice (where educators can share content, tools, and strategies), and real-time feedback mechanisms (that empower teachers to adapt instruction based on student needs). Efforts to equip teachers with the right skills and tools must go together with incentives, mentorship, and technical support systems.

Collaboration across sectors has catalyzed many EdTech breakthroughs in Africa. Tech hubs and startups are co-developing low-cost, context-relevant learning tools. The media is partnering with telecoms to deliver education via SMS, TV, and radio, particularly in low-connectivity areas. There are also open-source platforms and shared repositories enabling affordable scalability. Such partnerships must be strategically nurtured to deliver solutions at scale while maintaining quality and inclusivity.

## Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptive Learning (MEAL) & Policy and Financing Reforms

Enhancing Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptive Learning (MEAL) requires adaptive learning systems that rely on continuous data feedback and iterative design. Examples include mobile platforms for real-time feedback from learners, parents, and teachers. It is desirable to pilot-test innovations before scaling, and refining based on evidence. Scalable models that are flexible, responsive, and informed by rigorous M&E helps to strengthen MEAL. Building capacity for MEAL is crucial to avoid failed pilots and ensure interventions are data-driven and sustainable.

For digital transformation to be sustainable, governments must enact enabling policies and financing frameworks. This entails having national digital education strategies that are embedded in education sector plans, and promoting blended financing models using domestic budgets, donor grants, and private sector contributions. Long-term infrastructure maintenance and capacity-building programs are also key.

Aligning digital programs with national priorities ensures that interventions are not only impactful but also scalable and resilient.

### Risks and Challenges: Where Are the Misses?

Despite progress, several persistent risks threaten to stall or reverse digital gains if not strategically mitigated. The table below provides examples of such risks, the challenge they bring and proposed mitigation measures.

| Ris | sk                           | Challenge  | Mitigation  |
|-----|------------------------------|--|---|
| 1.  | Digital Divide               | Unequal access to electricity, internet, and devices.                  | Invest in solar-powered devices, offline content, subsidized data plans, and rural broadband initiatives.                               |
| 2.  | Low Digital<br>Literacy      | Limited skills among<br>learners, teachers, and<br>parents.            | Embed digital skills in curricula, provide teacher training, and launch community-based digital literacy campaigns.                     |
| 3.  | Inadequate<br>Infrastructure | Weak ICT systems,<br>maintenance issues,<br>and hardware<br>shortages. | Use hybrid learning models (radio/TV/print),<br>establish regional ICT support hubs, and finance<br>maintenance and technical training. |

| 4. | Poor Data Quality<br>& Ethical<br>Concerns                  | Inaccurate or biased<br>data, weak analytics,<br>and privacy risks. | Strengthen EMIS, enforce data protection laws, train education officials, and promote open-source analytics tools.                    |
|----|---|---|---|
| 5. | Algorithmic Bias<br>and Inequitable<br>Data Systems         | Data-driven tools reinforcing inequalities.                         | Build equity indicators into data systems, ensure inclusive governance, and regularly audit digital tools for bias.                   |
| 6. | Exclusion Based<br>on Language,<br>Gender, or<br>Disability | EdTech platforms that exclude marginalized learners.                | Design culturally relevant, multilingual, and<br>universally accessible platforms; prioritize safe<br>digital environments for girls. |
| 7. | Sustainability and<br>Scalability of<br>Innovations         | Short-term pilots and fragmented funding.                           | Align innovations with sector plans, use existing delivery channels (e.g., radio, WhatsApp), and build domestic financing models.     |

In conclusion, while digital technology and evidence-based approaches hold immense promise, they must be guided by inclusive design, equitable access, and robust accountability systems. This sub-theme will highlight successful practices, expose gaps, and propose actionable solutions for bringing every learner on board – ensuring digital transformation delivers learning for all.

# Sub-Theme 6. From Policies to Systems and Processes: Tracking Scaled and Sustained Learning and Skilling in Africa's Educational Systems

Across Africa, many education policies are well-articulated and ambitious. However, the persistent challenge lies in translating policy intent into action – from the national level down to classrooms, communities, and learners. This sub-theme explores how to bridge the gap between policy rhetoric and implementation reality, focusing on mechanisms that drive scaled, sustained, and measurable learning and skilling outcomes.

#### From Policy to Practice: A Multi-Layered Transformation

Effective education transformation requires that policies evolve into systems – comprising data infrastructure, institutions, and digital platforms – which in turn shape processes such as teaching, assessment, and reporting. Ultimately, these systems and processes must translate into measurable outcomes in foundational learning, employability, and innovation.

#### 1. Embedding Data for Decision-Making and Tracking

Robust, actionable data is a cornerstone of translating policies into outcomes. Key actions in realizing this include developing systematic M&E frameworks aligned with national education sector plans, investing in dashboards and analytics tools that deliver real-time insights from national to school levels, building feedback loops where data informs curriculum design, teacher training, and resource distribution, and embedding disaggregated, high-frequency data into planning and management, enabling adaptive and targeted interventions.

#### 2. Decentralizing Ownership and Accountability

Moving beyond centralized policymaking, implementation must be locally owned and accountable. This means empowering local education offices, school leaders, and communities with access to localized data and the autonomy to act on it. Other practices include linking

funding and incentives to performance indicators like learning progression, skills development, and school improvement and encouraging bottom-up accountability mechanisms, where data transparency drives citizen oversight and participation. Decentralization strengthens local agency and ensures that reforms are responsive to contextual needs.

### 3. Institutionalizing Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Skilling and learning cannot remain sporadic, or project based. They must be systemic and sustained. Best practices include integration of mandatory micro-credentialing, in-service training, and teacher CPD into national policies. It is also important to support peer-learning networks and digital CPD platforms that make ongoing development scalable. Leveraging public-private partnerships, especially with EdTech providers, also helps to provide context-relevant teacher training and digital tools. Institutionalizing CPD ensures that teacher capacity building becomes a continuous, embedded process.

### 4. Aligning Policies with Clear Implementation Processes

To move from intention to execution, policy must be broken down into operational guidelines and process maps. They include: (1) Creating standard operating procedures (SOPs) for key functions like curriculum delivery, formative assessment, and learner tracking. (2) Developing implementation toolkits for sub-national levels, including district and school levels, tailored to different contexts. (3) Codifying methods to assess 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies, deploying competency-based curricula, and tracking skilling pathways. Such operational clarity supports consistency, replicability, and scalability across regions.

### 5. Leveraging Technology for Scalability and Interoperability

Technology is key to amplifying impact and ensuring that policies reach the last mile. To facilitate this, key actions include promoting the use of AI, mobile apps, and open data platforms to enhance learning, especially in remote or underserved regions. A second solution is to invest in interoperable digital systems that link education data to labor market, skills, and innovation systems. Finaly, the development of platforms that support cross-border learning collaboration across the continent should be encouraged. Technology enables efficient scaling of reforms while improving coordination across sectors.

#### 6. Strengthening Cross-Sectoral Partnerships and Institutional Resilience

Sustained learning and skilling require multi-stakeholder collaboration and long-term system resilience. Actions include aligning education reforms with labor markets, industry, civil society, and development partners, establishing independent oversight bodies, such as education commissions or observatories, to monitor continuity and quality, and codifying key reforms into laws or national development strategies to insulate progress from political and funding shifts. Institutional resilience ensures that reforms survive beyond political cycles and donor funding windows.

#### Looking Forward: Learning from What Works

This sub-theme will highlight successful examples of translating national education policies into localized implementation frameworks; building systems and processes that have demonstrated sustained impact on learning and skilling; and innovations in data systems, teacher development, and cross-sectoral collaboration that are ripe for scaling and contextual

adaptation. The focus will be on what it takes to make education transformation real and lasting – not just in plans and policies, but in classrooms, communities, and careers.

### Sub-Theme 7. Innovative and Sustainable Approaches in School Leadership, Teacher Preparation, and Continuing Professional Development in the Decade of Education for Africa

In 2024, African leaders declared a Decade of Education, a bold and visionary step towards a continent-wide education transformation. Realizing the ambition of this Decade requires innovative and sustainable approaches, particularly in the areas of school leadership, teacher preparation, and continuing professional development (CPD). These elements form the backbone of quality education and are instrumental in ensuring that gains are not only achieved but sustained and scaled.

### Transformative School Leadership: Vision, Data, and Sustainability

Innovative school leadership drives change by shaping school culture, guiding the use of resources, and improving student outcomes. Four key approaches stand out: (1) Distributed Leadership Models: Empowering teachers, parents, and communities to participate in school decision-making enhances relevance, local ownership, and shared responsibility. (2) Data-Driven Decision-Making: Integrating technology and analytics supports real-time insights into student progress, teacher performance, and resource management, enabling evidence-based planning. (3) Instructional Leadership: School leaders should prioritize classroom quality by conducting regular observations, offering feedback, and supporting teachers in applying effective pedagogy. (4) Sustainability through Leadership: Promoting green school practices such as solar energy, rainwater harvesting, and environmental education reflects a commitment to cost efficiency and ecological responsibility.

While strengthening school and distributed leadership within decentralized systems is key to driving sustainable improvements in education, and decentralization exists across many African countries, sub-national structures often lack real autonomy and capacity. Empowering district officials, headteachers, and communities through targeted leadership development and shared decision-making can enhance accountability, local ownership, and equitable learning outcomes. Unpacking this area and exploring practical solutions and commitments will be valuable at the Triennale.

#### Innovative Teacher Preparation: Building a Future-Ready Workforce

Addressing Africa's evolving educational needs starts with rethinking how teachers are prepared. Key practices include blended pre-service training that combines in-person and digital platforms to expand access to teacher education, especially for remote and underserved communities. Embracing competency-based training also helps to align teacher preparation with practical classroom skills, including digital literacy, inclusive pedagogy, and classroom management. A third aspect is culturally responsive pedagogy. Teachers needs to be prepared to use local languages, histories, and values, promoting engagement, identity, and learner relevance. There is need to embrace public-private collaboration by engaging NGOs, universities, and EdTech firms to enhance the reach, quality, and contextualization of teacher training. Finally, beyond the motivation, well-being, accountability, governments need to professionalize the teacher and the teaching profession.

### Sustained Professional Development: CPD for Lifelong Impact

Effective CPD is continuous, contextualized, and embedded in daily practice. This calls for the following:

- *Microlearning & Mobile CPD:* Offers bite-sized, on-demand training via mobile phones and SMS, tailored to teachers in low-resource environments.
- *Peer Learning Communities:* Foster collaborative learning, mentorship, and the exchange of best practices among teachers.
- *Instructional Coaching*: Moves beyond one-off workshops to provide ongoing, jobembedded professional support through coaching and mentoring.
- *Impact-Driven CPD*: Uses feedback and evidence to adapt CPD programs, ensuring they are effective in improving student learning outcomes.

### Cross-Cutting Enablers for Sustainability and Scale & Emerging Models and Scalable Innovations

To amplify and sustain innovations, several enabling conditions must be in place. First is the policy and financing. Governments must align policies with long-term goals, prioritize education financing, and support the scaling of proven innovations. The second enabler is technology integration, which entails leveraging affordable and fit-for-purpose EdTech to improve teaching, assessment, and school management systems. Lastly, community engagement is key. Involving parents, local leaders, and communities reinforces education as a shared societal priority, thereby improving accountability and relevance.

There are promising initiatives already advancing these principles across Africa. They include the African Centre for School Leadership and Leaders in Teaching (Mastercard Foundation), the LEAP Programme in South Africa (Public Investment Corporation & BRIDGE Innovation), SABER School Leadership Toolkit (World Bank: Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia), African Teacher Education Network (AfTEN), T-TEL (Transforming Teacher Education and Learning in Ghana), and UNESCO IICBA and VVOB's professional development models. These initiatives mark a shift from one-size-fits-all approaches to localized, data-informed, tech-enabled, and community-driven strategies. They represent models that can be contextualized, scaled, and adapted across the continent. At the same time, there is a need to consider pedagogical models that help to deal with large classes, a regular feature in many African countries, because existing models are for small classes. It is therefore important to explore effective ways of delivering and improving learning in situation of large classes.

The Decade of Education for Africa presents a pivotal opportunity to invest in systems that are resilient, inclusive, and future-ready. Strong school leadership, innovative teacher preparation, and sustained professional development create a multiplier effect – driving equity, improving learning outcomes, and equipping Africa's youth with the skills to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This sub-theme will surface and analyze promising models that demonstrate sustainability, innovation, and impact, providing evidence and inspiration for African countries seeking to transform their education systems at scale.

# Sub-Theme 8. Gender, Equity, Inclusion, and Climate Adaptation: Moving Together Through Innovation and Scale in Education

The road to the promotion of gender, equity, and inclusion in Africa's has been long and winding, with smooth stretches and some steep areas. This sub-theme looks at what African Governments are doing (or have done), reflect on the gaps, and explore what can be done differently in terms of innovative strategies.

### What is Working

At present, many countries have gender-inclusive education policies and legal reforms (e.g., Ghana's Affirmative Action Bill, Kenya's Free Primary Education with equity provisions). FAWE is working with countries to implement the Gender-Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) framework – a teaching approach that integrates gender sensitivity into lesson planning, teaching methods, and classroom management. Through the framework, teachers are trained to use inclusive language, encourage equal participation, and address gender stereotypes, resulting in increased girls' retention and participation. The African Union (AU), through CIEFFA and the Gender at the Centre Initiative (GCI), has provided high-level advocacy and platforms for tracking progress. Countries such as Kenya and Ghana have national policies and school-level practices that integrate children with disabilities into mainstream schools. Practices include accessible infrastructure, assistive technology, individualized education plans (IEPs), and teacher training, resulting in improved enrollment and retention of children with disabilities.

There are ongoing programs that provide second-chance education for girls, for example in Nigeria (North-East) and Mali. These are accelerated learning programmes for adolescent girls affected by conflict or early marriage, implemented by UNICEF's Girls for Girls programme, UNGEI, and local NGOs. The initiative has seen the reintegration of thousands of girls into formal education or vocational training, improving economic empowerment and reducing vulnerability to violence. Home-grown school feeding programmes are also in several African counties. The School Meals & Sanitation Programs in Ethiopia and Zambia are helping to keep girls in school through the provision of school meals, menstrual hygiene products, and separate sanitation facilities for girls. Implemented by WFP, Save the Children, and local education authorities, the initiative has increased girls' attendance and performance, especially during menstruation, and improved overall school enrollment.

Uganda has one of the largest education in refugee and host community initiative. It is an integrated education program where refugee children learn alongside host communities. With support from partners such as UNHCR and Education Cannot Wait, the initiative promotes inclusion, social cohesion, and peaceful coexistence between communities. Other positives include data-driven planning through increased investments in EMIS and gender-disaggregated data to inform better planning, and targeted programs such as conditional cash transfers for girls (e.g., in Nigeria), sanitary kits and WASH facilities (Zambia, Ethiopia), and safe school initiatives in post-conflict states.

African countries are responding to climate adaptation through their education systems in various ways, including through policy and institutional support, curriculum development and integration, research, teacher training and capacity building, technology and innovation, community-based and informal education, and partnerships. Regarding policy and institutional support, countries like Ethiopia and Rwanda are embedding climate resilience in national education strategies. the African Union and UNESCO are also supporting frameworks for

integrating climate education across the continent. For the curriculum development and integration, there are climate-focused curriculum in countries like Kenya, South Africa, and Nigeria, who are integrating climate change education into science, geography, and agriculture subjects at the primary and secondary levels. Indigenous knowledge integration is also ongoing with educational programs incorporating traditional environmental knowledge (e.g., sustainable farming, water conservation) into school curricula. Countries have also embraced Green TVET through programmes that equip students with practical green skills like solar panel installation, sustainable agriculture, and eco-construction.

### Where Are the Gaps and What Can Be Done Differently?

A key gap is in implementation weakness. Strong policies exist but often lack proper funding, teacher training, and monitoring systems. Persistent stereotypes and cultural practices – such as child marriage and prioritizing boys' education – continue to hinder progress. There is also inadequate focus on intersectionality, with efforts often overlooking learners with disabilities, refugees, ethnic minorities, and mobile communities. With the urban-rural divide, remote areas suffer most from lack of female teachers, poor infrastructure, and security issues.

Countries need to mainstream GEI into all education policies and budgets, thus making gender and inclusion central to every education sector plan and policy. There is value in investing in the last mile, prioritizing rural, displaced, and underserved learners through community learning centers, mobile schools, and accessible digital tools. Strengthen school governance with community voice and support female teachers and leaders by providing incentives, scholarships, and leadership programs to increase women educators in underserved communities. On climate adaptation, develop climate-focused curricula in primary and secondary schools, which integrate localized climate education into national curricula (e.g. drought resilience in Sahel, flood management in West Africa. Also develop community climate literacy programs and embrace indigenous knowledge and climate resilience education by documenting and teaching indigenous ecological knowledge (e.g. traditional weather forecasting, herbal soil treatment), and blending science and tradition in climate adaptation education programs.

Other innovative strategies to consider:

- *Gender-Responsive EdTech Platforms:* Develop mobile-based tools tailored to girls' schedules and learning contexts, especially in rural settings.
- "Safe to Learn" Certification: A system that rewards schools for meeting safety, gender, and inclusion standards.
- Inclusion Hubs in Teacher Colleges: Use innovation labs and immersive training (e.g., VR simulations) to train teachers on inclusive education.
- *Digital IDs* + *Learning Wallets:* Track student attendance and entitlements, especially for refugees and nomadic children.
- *Gender Equality Scorecards:* Link funding and accountability to actual GEI outcomes, not just commitments.
- *TVET for Climate Resilience:* Specialize in climate-smart agriculture, renewable energy systems, water management, and green construction.

- University Innovation Hubs and Research Centers: Create climate innovation labs at universities to foster local solutions (e.g. drought-tolerant crops, micro-irrigation).
- *Education for Women and Girls:* Expand climate leadership training for girls, especially in pastoralist and farming communities.

African governments have made important strides in promoting gender, equity, and inclusion in education. However, the current pace and scale of implementation are not enough. What's needed now is a shift – from treating GEI as an 'add-on' to embedding it as a core standard of quality and justice in every national education system. This is one of the aspects this sub-theme will interrogate.

### **3. Structure and Format**

The 2025 ADEA Triennale will span five days and include a mix of high-level policy dialogues, technical sessions, country and partner roundtables, and side events. The format will foster peer learning, innovation sharing, and collaborative problem-solving.

### Approach and format

In the run-up to the main event, ADEA will engage with countries and key partners on the theme and sub-themes, with as view to co-create the content and identify the co-leads and supporting partners in the process. This will be done through bilateral as well as stakeholder consultation virtual meetings on the different themes.

The Triennale will be held over three days in a hybrid arrangement comprising in-person and virtual sessions. The first day will be dedicated to partners meetings and the launch of the exhibitions, while the second and third days will be for the main event's official opening and policy-level engagements in plenary (for a shared understanding of the main theme and providing policy guidance) and breakout sessions (these provide space and time for in-depth discussions on the four sub-themes) whose outcome summaries will be presented in plenary for consideration and adoption. The host country, ADEA, and key partners will mount exhibitions on the Triennale theme.

**Participants:** About 800 participants (500 in person and at least 300 virtual) are expected to grace the event, representing policymakers, development partners, private sector, civil society, the academia, and other key stakeholders in education in Africa and beyond.

Date and Venue: 29<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025, Accra, Ghana.

ADEA Secretariat, June 2025