

PARTICIPANT REPORT

AU SECOND EDUCATION DECADE PLAN MID TERM EVALUATION REPORT VALIDATION MEETING MAURITIUS, 23-25, NOVEMBER 2011

1.0. Introduction

- This report gives a brief on the key activities and outcomes of the validation meeting for the report of the midterm evaluation of the implementation of the African union Second Decade Plan of action (2006-2015). The meeting took place in Mauritius at La Plantation Hotel from 23 to 25 November 2011, and was organized by the African Union HRST Department in collaboration with UNICEF, Republic of Mauritius and Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA).
- The objective of the meeting was to validate the consultant's report on the evaluation, whose purpose was "to assess progress and inform the strategy for the second half of the Decade, to ensure that the goals of the Decade are met". The outcome of the evaluation was designed to be "a revised approach where necessary; and new catalytic interventions to accelerate the attainment of the decade goals".
- Participants at the meeting included representatives of AU member states, representatives from AU, RECs, international AU partners, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). There were three Civil Society participants all representing ANCEFA. They included Mr. Limbani Nsapato, ANCEFA Policy and Advocacy Manager; Mr. Uhuru Dempers from ANCEFA member coalition in Namibia and Mr. Alebachew Mekonnen from ANCEFA member national coalition in Ethiopia.

2.0. Key Activities in Mauritius

- Official opening on 23rd November 2011. The meeting was officially opened by H.E Prof. Rajeshwar Jeetah, Minister of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology.
- Presentation of the draft evaluation report by the consultant in plenary. The report focused on progress made in the eight thematic areas for the Second Decade plan: Gender and Culture, Education Management and Information Systems (EMIS), Teacher Development, Tertiary Education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Curriculum and Teaching and Learning materials, Quality Management and Early Childhood Development (ECD).
- Comments on the report by participants in plenary, thematic discussions in groups and in plenary on methodology and content of the report.
- Key issues discussed:
 - The methodology was affected by poor response rate especially from countries (only 11 AU member states responded) and partners agencies, use of outdated data (2006-2008), and unrealistic objectives (especially obj. 3). This methodological challenge led to a lot of gaps in the report.
 - Poor representation of member states in the meeting was registered as an issue of concern (only 4 countries had government representatives including Mauritius, Ethiopia, Ghana and Kenya). This triggered participant questions on whether member states are committed to the plan, or whether AU communicated enough about the meeting.
 - Most countries have not aligned their education strategies to the AU Education decade plan, and activities being implemented in country are more coincidental than a sign that they are implementing the plan.

Progress of Implementation of the Second Decade

- With regard to progress more success is noted about EMIS development, regional flagship projects like Pan African University, progress in teacher training and recruitment programs; however there are concerns about gender and culture, quality management, higher education expansion, and ECD. On ECD it was noted that while the pillar was added in 2009, no action matrix has been incorporated yet, but efforts have been made by AU and ADEA to draft one.
- The report needs to balance examples and case studies across the region based on both geographical and language groups. There seemed to be a bias on English speaking countries.
- The capacity of AU and RECs to coordinate and monitor implementation of the Second Decade plan is compromised by shortage of staff and inadequate financial and technical resources.

- Civil society initiatives in education on the continent have not been acknowledged: e.g. advocacy for an end to gender based violence, CSO role in ECD provision, budget tracking, gender budgeting analysis and education financing campaigns.
- Just like members states, CSOs need to align their activities with priorities in the Second Decade plan for more effective monitoring and advocacy in the second phase of implementation of the plan.
- **Side meetings:** ANCEFA held side meetings with ADEA (Thematic Lead for ECD, Higher Education), UNICEF Addis Representative, Pan African Parliament Reps, SADC Representative, and Executive Director for AU Observatory. ANCEFA needs to collaborate more with these organizations.

3.0. Meeting Outcomes

- Input made by participants to beef up missing information for the report. Feedback however still being expected until the end of first week of December 2011.
- Civil society presents enriched the discussions during the meeting. The report is expected to contain information about civil society role in advocacy, monitoring and implementation of the AU Second Decade plan of Action.
- Enhanced ANCEFA relationship with the AU HRST Department, and new networking opportunities established through contacts with ADEA, UNICEF AU Liaison Office, SADC, Pan African Parliament, and AU Observatory.

4.0. Follow up Issues

- Limbani to coordinate further contributions into the draft evaluation report with Alebachew and Uhuru by Tuesday 6th December 2011, and submit to AU consultant on Wednesday, 7th December, 2011.
- Find out from AU about and lobby ANCEFA participation in the Pan African University launch slated for 13th December 2011, in Addis
- ANCEFA to push for the MOU with AU as a key strategy for meaningful contributions into the second half of the implementation of the Second Decade (2012-15).
- CSO Caucus in Addis on 6th December to develop strategies that can be used at national and international levels, for monitoring and advocacy for AU strategy in Africa, including input into the COMEDAF V in March 2012 in Abuja.
- Follow up with Gorgui on ANCEFA SADC partnership introductory letter expected to have been submitted in 2009, to revamp the collaboration discussions.
- Appointment with UNICEF AU Liaison officer in Addis, and facilitate further email discussions with ADEA, Pan African Parliament and AU Observatory on future collaborations on AU activities.

5.0. Conclusion

- The midterm evaluation shows that a lot of advocacy needs to be done to ensure successful implementation of the second decade by 2015.
- Although participants did not complete validating exercise of the report, it is notable that the input made and additions to be submitted following the meeting will go a long way in improving the content and quality of the report ahead of COMEDAF V in 2012 in Abuja where education ministers will be updated on outcomes. CSOs need to strategize for increased monitoring, advocacy and implementation of the plan of action in the second phase.
- There is also need for stakeholders to start debate on priorities for post 2015, in order to develop policy actions to improve education access and quality on the continent.

Report prepared by Limbani Nsapato, ANCEFA, November 2011.