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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE
CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF
EDUCATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION (COMEDAF V)
ABUJA, NIGERIA
23-27 APRIL 2012**

AU/ MIN/EDUC/REPORT (I)

**REPORT
OF THE MEETING OF MINISTERS**

REPORT OF THE COMEDAF V MEETING OF MINISTERS

Introduction

1. The Fifth Ordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF V) took place in Abuja, Nigeria from 23-27 April 2012. The aim of the Conference was to discuss progress made in the implementation of the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa (POA), consider the mid-term evaluation report, and follow up on decisions of COMEDAF IV. The conference began with the meeting of Senior Officials from 23-24 April 2012, and the meeting of Pan African Conference on Teacher Development (PACTED) from 25-26 April 2012.

The Ministers made recommendations to be considered by the July 2012 Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union.

In attendance

2. Ministers from the following Member States participated in the meeting: the Republics of Algeria, Angola, Burkina Faso, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Central Africa, Chad, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Countries represented by senior officials only: Benin, Djibouti, Egypt, Mauritius, Namibia, Niger, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) and Senegal.

Three Regional Economic Communities (RECs) were present: Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CENSAD).

The following partner agencies attended the meeting as Observers: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Association of African Universities (AAU), Commonwealth Secretariat, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), African Council for Distance Education (ACDE), Pan African Teachers' Center (PATC), Conference des Ministres de l'Éducation des Pays Ayant le Français en Partage (CONFEMEN), Centre for Mathematics and Technology Education in Africa (CEMASTE), Strengthening of Mathematics and Science Education Project (SMASE), International Task Force for Teachers on EFA, African Virtual University (AVU).

Civil society organisations were also present: Africa Network Campaign on Education For All (ANCEFA), Education International (EI) and PEN International.

The following specialised institutions of the African Union was represented: Centre International des Filles et des Femmes en Afrique (CIEFFA), Pan African Parliament.

ITEM 1: Opening Session

The Master of Ceremonies welcomed participants and invited dignitaries to make opening remarks dignitaries.

3. The Honourable Minister of State for Education, Nigeria Chief (Barr) Ezenwo Nyesom Wike, welcomed participants and expressed his appreciation for the contribution of AUC and other key partners for making the hosing of COMEDAF V in Nigeria a reality, He noted that the conference provided golden opportunity to come together under a common goal to generate new perspectives for successful implementation of the education agenda in Africa. He assured participants that the Federal Government of Nigeria will support the outcomes of the conference to enable the Member States achieve their national and continental goals.
4. H. E. Prof. Jean-Pierre Ezin, the AU Commissioner for Human Resources Science and Technology welcomed participants of COMEDAF V on behalf of the AUC's Chair Person and on his behalf. He noted that human capital development is number one priority for Africa and the Second Decade for Education of Africa - Plan of Action emphasizes higher education as one major focus area. He pointed out that the Pan African University project and the development of scholarship scheme to facilitate student mobility are pertinent initiatives that need substantial funding for their sustainability.
5. H.E Mrs Hadija Youssouf Alim, Minister of Education, Republic of Cameroon, Outgoing COMEDAF IV Rapporteur, noted that progress has been observed on the implementation of POA, She thanked AUC, UNESCO, UNICEF, ADEA and other key partners for their support given to the development of education in Africa.
6. Honourable Minister of Education, Federal Republic of Nigeria, COMEDAF V Host, Prof. (Mrs.) Ruqayyatu Ahmed Rufa'i extended her warm welcome to participants of COMEDAF V in Abuja. She outlined the key initiatives and policies of the Nigerian education sector. She gave assurance of the support of the Nigerian government in providing the necessary logistics and equipment for the Institute of Pan African University hosted by Nigeria. Finally she wished a fruitful and productive session.
7. Hon. Calist Mwatela, Assistant Minister of Education of Kenya, Outgoing Chair COMEDAF IV, presented his handing-over report of COMEDAF IV. He outlined the

key achievements and encountered challenges in each of the eight priority areas of the POA at the continental level. He also gave brief overview of Kenya's progress on the accomplishment of the POA. Finally he made some recommendations for enhanced implementation of the POA in the coming years, emphasizing that the use of ICT was imperative for attaining success in education.

8. H.E, Mr Alhaji Isa Bello Sali, Head of Civil Service of the Federation, on behalf of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, H.E Dr Goodluck Jonathan warmly welcomed all the participants to COMEDAF V. He noted that one major objective of the conference was to review progress made in implementation of the POA and urged for workable recommendations. He assured participants the commitment of the Nigerian Government to the development of education in Africa and the success of COMEDAF in the coming years.
9. Dr Ben B. Ibe, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Education, Nigeria gave a vote of thanks. He thanked the AU Commission and all the officers in the Federal Ministry of Education for organising COMEDAF V. He also thanked the Ministry of Education, Kenya (out going chair of COMEDAF) for effectively managing the leadership since COMEDAF IV. He appreciated honourable Ministers and other key stakeholders including representative of the Civil Societies for their active participation. Finally, he expressed his gratitude to the press for their attendance in the conference.

ITEM 2: Election of Bureau

10. The Chair of COMEDAF IV invited the Representative of the Legal Counsel of the AU Commission to explain the procedures to be followed for setting up the new Bureau of COMEDAF V. Mr Adewale Iyanda explained the need to select one representative from each of the five AU regions and outlined the consultations that had taken place in the meeting of senior officials of COMEDAF V.
11. After due consultation, the Meeting elected the following Bureau:

i. Chair	-	West Africa : Nigeria
ii. 1 st Vice Chair	-	Central Africa : Cameroon
iii. 2 nd Vice Chair	-	Southern Africa : Angola
iv. 3 rd Vice Chair	-	North Africa : Algeria
v. Rapporteur	-	East Africa: Kenya
12. Hon. Calist Mwatela, Assistant Minister of Education, Republic of Kenya, outgoing COMEDAF IV Chair, handed over the chairmanship of COMEDAF V to H.E. Prof. (Mrs.) Ruqayyatu Ahmed Rufa'l, Minister of Education, Federal Republic of Nigeria.

ITEM 3: Presentation and Adoption of the Agenda and Programme of Work

13. The Agenda and Programme of Work were adopted by the Fifth Ordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF V), with slight amendments.

ITEM 4: Discussion of Handing Over Report from Chair of COMEDAF IV

14. Discussions were invited on the Handing Over Report from Kenya. The following issues were raised during the discussion:

- i. Concern was expressed on the procedures and mechanisms used to allocate Space Science to the southern region. It was noted that there is need for further consultation and dialogue between SADC and AUC to resolve this issue.
- ii. It was proposed to consider 'Adult Literacy & Non-Formal Education' as priority area nine; ICT as priority area ten and Quality as Priority eleven, in the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa. However, it was explained that all these are already in the POA, and the need is to ensure that they are implemented.
- iii. It was noted that the Africa-India Institute of Education Planning and Administration based in Burundi needs to be promoted through the resource mobilization of member states.

The handing over report was adopted with the above amendments.

ITEM 5: Consideration of Report of meeting of Senior Officials of COMEDAF V

15. Prof. Crispus Kiamba, representing Kenya, Rapporteur of COMEDAF V, presented the report of the Senior officials in full detail. The following issues were raised:

- i. The question of low attendance to COMEDAF meetings was extensively discussed and a number of factors responsible were identified including delays in communication, language barriers, postponement of meetings, poor knowledge of COMEDAF, among others.
- ii. There is need to be more specific about type of resources needed in the recommendations of senior officials

16. In response, it was mentioned that there was need to develop a communication strategy, and to also use other avenues such as the Civil Society to take the initiative of enhancing the visibility of COMEDAF

17. H.E the Commissioner of HRST informed the meeting that modalities must be created to have member states provide funding for education initiatives at the AUC, as presently most funding was from development partners and it was insufficient.

He further requested the AfDB to ask the respective host countries and RECs of PAU Institutes to commit funds for the PAU.

18. The Report was adopted with minor amendments

ITEM 6: Presentation of Report of PACTED II

19. The report of PACTED II was presented by Dr Eyana Kpemissi Amana, Representative of the Republic of Togo, on behalf of H.E. Minister of Basic, Secondary Education and Literacy, Republic of Togo. The following issues were raised during the discussion:

- i. It was noted that PACTED is not an autonomous body, but a sub-committee that reports to COMEDAF. PACTED should be considered as a process whereby partners support the implementation of the roadmap and jointly monitor its implementation with the AUC.
- ii. It was proposed to identify strategic partners for PACTED each year in order to effectively mobilize financial resources for undertaking this structure
- iii. It was suggested to formally endorse the road map of PACTED I.

Finally, the report of PACTED II was adopted.

ITEM 7: Guest presentations

a) A Bank Policy & Strategy in Higher Education

20. The Representative of the AfDB outlined the Bank's Policy & Strategy in Higher Education and Science and Technology Strategy (HEST), which includes three pillars (i) strengthening infrastructure; (ii) establishing centers of excellence; and (iii) linking HEST to the productive sectors of the economy. He underlined that they were working on another strategy on Human Development and whose objective is to identify critical areas for better investment in human capital as part of the inclusive growth agenda. He also presented the New Education Model in Africa (NEMA) which aims at driving the Bank's work in Education. They are:

- i. Develop ICT-based education models
- ii. Link education systems with the labor market
- iii. Increase Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) to help RMCs tap into the experience, knowledge and financial leverage of the private sector to develop cutting edge learning environments
- iv. Develop critical thinking
- v. Use participatory approaches in decision making
- vi. Ensure that all programs are evidence-based and have a strong results focus on quality and learning outcomes.

b) Report on round Table of Civil Society Organisations

21. Mrs. Jennifer Chiwela, ANCEFA Board Chairperson, presented the report the roundtable of Civil Society Organisations (CSO) held on the 25th April, whose theme was: "Taking Stock of Africa's Education Vision and Thinking Ahead". Recommendations included the need to develop strategic partnerships with CSO's; prioritize Early Childhood Care and Education, literacy, non-formal education and inclusive education; promote teacher professional development, quality and equity in education; enhance domestic financing and good management and broad-based consultations for post 2015 agenda.

Check Portuguese and french**c) PEN International**

22. Mr Abdul-Rahman Harruna Attah, Secretary General, PEN Africa Network gave some insight on how PEN International and the PEN Africa Network hope to set up a partnership with the African Union Commission. Proposals included among others building ongoing collaboration with the African Union, contributing to grassroots expertise in writing, education, provision of libraries and promotion of culture.

d) Presentation on "Does Africa Need Higher Education and Research in Social Sciences?"

23. Prof Bouadijo from the EBENA Institute gave a presentation on the need for social sciences research. He emphasised the significance of having Africa-led research particularly on African history in order to correct the distortions created by western social scientists, who had little or no appreciation for African values. He informed the meeting that the EBENA Institute was in the process of compiling a book on Africa's history.

24. In the ensuing discussions, the following points were raised:

- i. it is important to build the capacity of the African state to drive the education agenda, using structures such as networks and thematic hubs to address the social sciences domains for Africa in a holistic manner
- ii. The AfDB was urged to fast track its funding of education activities for Africa, in light of paucity of funds.
- iii. The crucial role of civil of civil society was emphasised as they often operate at grassroot level and help communities to understand and participate more reflectively in governance and development. They also play a crucial role in information sharing, capacity building and advocacy. However the lines of authority between government and CSOs have to be respected

- iv. Non-formal education and literacy are continental challenges and should be addressed.
- v. The current Chair of COMEDAF V, Nigeria, was requested to ask His Excellency the president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to make a case for continued focus on Education beyond the MDG's in the summit of Heads of State and Government scheduled for July 2012

ITEM 8: Presentation and Discussion on Equity and Quality in basic Education

25. Dr Nicolas Alapui, Director UNICEF, explained that UNICEF in collaboration with the COMEDAF V chair had organised a session to consult and strategise why and how UNICEF can most effectively support the POA as the world rapidly moves towards 2015 and beyond. Three Member States were invited to make presentations in turn, on relevant programme activities carried out in collaboration with UNICEF, as examples of innovative ways ensuring inclusive education.
26. The Kenyan Assistant Minister of Education, Mr. Callist Mwatela, said that the Kenyan government launched their first talent academy in 2010. The focus of the academies is on identifying and helping young people develop their skills through intensive training while also providing them with remedial education in the basics of literacy, numeracy, science, information and communications technology and other key life skills. The seventeen academies are linked to the private sector. The talent centres offer a learning alternative for youth in and out of school. The ministries of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports and Culture and National Heritage, along with the Kenya Secondary Schools Heads association collaborate in supporting the program.
27. Deputy minister for Education of Mozambique Prof Leda Hugo spoke about the children friendly school initiative in Mozambique which started in 2006 and is being implemented through multi-sectoral approach in 800 primary schools benefiting 460,000 students in basic education. The annual internal evaluation of the initiative indicate that the initiative has contributed to increased enrolment particularly girl participation, reduction of drop-out rates, improved access to psycho-social support and increased police and community support to prevent violence and sexual abuse. The impact evaluation currently taking place will show the way forward to a sustainable transition and expansion of the initiative
28. Prof Ruqayyatu Rufa'i, the Hon. Minister of Education, Nigeria made a presentation on Teacher Trainee Scholarship Award Scheme (FTTSS) Strategy For Gender Equity In Education In Nigeria. She mentioned that in Nigeria, there is progress towards meeting MDGs and EFA goals, but between the regions, and between boys and girls and the different social economic strata, remarkable disparities still exist. She outlined the major causes of this inequality in Basic Education to include lack of female teachers in primary schools to counsel and mentor primary school

girls; and parents and communities are demotivated in letting girls attend schools without female teachers. She concluded that the programme is now a model for female teacher trainee programmes in the country and is increasing equity in distribution of female teachers to rural areas;

ITEM 9: Presentation on an update on the pedagogical use of the General History of Africa

29. The Deputy Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education of the republic Zimbabwe Hon. L.A. Tapela gave a presentation on the pedagogical use of the General History of Africa (GHA), saying that its aim was to help motivate History Education in Africa by highlighting the common heritage of African people and through this, promote regional understanding, integration and peace. He told of the UNESCO General Conference resolution in 2011 on mobilisation of partners, financial resources and PPP's for the project. He also mentioned meetings held in the process of the development of pedagogical materials for schools.
30. The following issues were raised during the discussions concerning the above items 8 and 9.

- There is need to ensure widest dissemination of the recommendations of the ADEA Triennale and urge Member States to implement them; more focus more on Adult Literacy and Non-Formal Education
- i. The project on the pedagogical use of the General History of African has encountered funding problems. Member States are requested for financial support.
 - ii. There is need for increased focus on quality and equity of education. Transnational programmes of student assessment at regional and continental level were suggested as mechanisms to improve quality of school education in Africa.
 - iii. Special education for people with disabilities and marginalized students should also be given due consideration.

ITEM 10: Date and venue of COMEDAF VI meeting

31. As it was turn of Central Africa to host COMEDAF, Cameroon offered to host COMEDAF VI in 2014, and this was accepted by the meeting.

ITEM 11: Any other business

32. Participants were informed that ADEA Steering Committee meeting will be held from 8 – 11 May 2012 in Tunis.

33. Participants were also informed that an open call to Member States would be launched, for hosting the PAU Rectorate. The host country will be selected on competitive basis. A progress report will be submitted to the AU Summit of January 2013.

ITEM 11: Presentation and adoption of the Report and Recommendations of the Fourth Ordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union, COMEDAF V

34. The report was presented by the COMEDAF V Rapporteur and adopted as amended.

ITEM 12: Closing remarks

35. The Minister of Education, Nigeria thanked all participants for their participation in this meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Fifth Ordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF V) took place in Abuja, Nigeria from 23-27 April 2012. The aim of the Conference was to discuss progress made in the implementation of the Plan of action for the Second decade of education for Africa (POA), consider the mid-term evaluation report, and follow up on decisions of COMEDAF IV. The conference began with the meeting of Senior Officials from 23-24 April 2012, and the meeting on Teacher Development (PACTED) from 25- 26 April 2012.

The Ministers made recommendations to be considered by the July 2012 Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, as follows..

We, the Ministers of Education of the African Union:

1. Call upon the AUC in collaboration with RECs to oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation of the midterm evaluation of the second decade of education (attached), in order to ensure acceleration of achievement of agreed goals
2. Call upon RECs and Member States to identify champions and institutions that have demonstrated excellence in specific areas of the Plan of Action, so that they provide exemplars, promote the implementation of the POA and increase its visibility.
3. Urge Member States and RECs to ensure that they attend COMEDAF meetings and be more diligent in providing education monitoring reports to the observatory.
4. Call on Member States to establish a seed fund for all AUC education and training programmes such as Mwalimu Nyerere Scholarship Scheme, Pan African University, TVET centers, Teacher Development, Youth Empowerment
5. Invite AUC, RECs and Member States to promote and strengthen Public and Private Partnerships in Africa for Education and entrepreneurship, especially in the area of TVET.
6. Call upon RECs and Member States to ensure that applications of students for 2012 -2013 for the Pan African University are disseminated to all stakeholders.
7. Request again RECs to strengthen their education desks and strive to attend COMEDAF and other education meetings and send regular reports to the Commission.
8. Call upon RECs and Member States to enhance multi-sectoral collaboration in view of the fact that education is key to development and provision of human resources in every sector. This should release more resources for this key sector.

9. Call upon Civil Society Organisations to promote, publicise and implement the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa.
10. Request the AUC to set up two committees on Higher Education and TVET including formal and non-formal education; and request the committees and PACTED to report to the next COMEDAF Bureau meeting.
11. Call on Member States to set up a fund to contribute towards Pedagogical use of the General History of Africa and request the Government of Libya not to withdraw funding to the Pedagogical use of the General History of Africa project, and urge all other Member States to contribute to the project
12. Endorse the implementation of the Pan African University and its Act of Establishment
13. Endorse the recommendations of PACTED II and urge their implementation