ADEA and partners strengthen Leadership Capacity in Early Childhood Education and Development in Africa

Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), 8th July 2019. The Inter-Country Quality Node on Early Childhood Development (ICQN-ECD) of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) organized the first Leadership Capacity Building Workshop on Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) to contribute to the implementation of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025 (CESA 16-25) and strengthen ECED policy development.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) supported the workshop that was held from 24th to 26th June 2019 in Flic-en-Flac (Mauritius), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research of Mauritius, the African Union Commission (AUC), and the African Early Childhood Network (AfECN).

The meeting themed "*Making it 2030 and contributing to Africa's Agenda 2063*'' saw the participation of around 60 early childhood experts from African Ministries of Education, development cooperation partners, academia, civil society organizations as well as representatives from Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

To this end, the participatory approach during the 3-day workshop generated intense discussions around three key policy support mechanisms, namely the early years workforce development and training, the institutionalization of a data-driven ECED system for measurement of early learning and the establishment of an online graduate ECED leadership programme for sustainable capacity building. A framework for action for effective implementation of quality ECD programmes as well as the strengthening of network practitioners leading to the setting up of a professional learning community in ECD are also part of the expected outcomes of the workshop. As a follow up action, participants committed to pursue the work on the development of tools that will be proposed to the countries after validation. Amongst them, the monitoring of the implementation of quality ECED programs and country use of the Consortium on Pre-Primary Data and Measurement in Africa (CDMDA) tool designed to strengthen the knowledge and capacity of integrated early childhood data-based systems for improving the quality, the workforce and the achievements of children.

Albert Nsengiyumva, Executive Secretary of ADEA in his opening remarks emphasized the pivotal role of ECD and the implementation of the ADEA Strategic Plan 2018-2022 as a means to support member countries in transforming their education and training systems. He also expressed the strong commitment of ADEA to the outcomes of the meeting.

Hon. Leela Devi Dookun Luchoomun, Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research of Mauritius stressed the importance of CESA 16-25 as a strong lever to advance the ECD agenda. In addition, she outlined the evolution of the ICQN-ECD from its official launch in Kigali 2015 to the co-chairing of the African Union's CESA ECED Cluster in 2018. She ended her address by "*urging participants to come up with tools and standards that will assist member countries in furthering their implementation process at the national level and develop a regional framework that can be widely disseminated across Africa''*.

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The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) is a forum for policy dialogue. It is a partnership bringing together African policymakers in charge of education, science and technology; development partners; researchers and education technical experts. ADEA contributes to the empowerment of African countries to develop quality education and training systems that respond to the countries' emergent needs and drive social and economic transformation sustainably. www.adeanet.org