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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

CONTINENTAL EDUCATION STRATEGY FOR AFRICA (CESA 16-25)

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT CLUSTER TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

21st-22nd March 2019

Port Louis, Mauritius

Concept Note



ADEA Inter-country Quality Node
Early Childhood Development

Background

The Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25) was developed as a strategic intervention for the realisation of the African Union's vision for education as articulated in Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. CESA's mission is to "reorient Africa's education and training systems to meet the knowledge, competencies, skills innovation and creativity required to nurture African core values and promote sustainable development at the national, sub-regional and continental levels".

Agenda 2063 calls for universal access to quality early childhood, primary and secondary education, ensuring that no child is left behind, and that the potential of every child is nurtured. CESA16-25 identifies pre-primary education as a neglected sub-sector that deserves special attention. It clearly states that Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) is the pillar for future learning and identifies it as the next frontier if Africa is to realize sustained quality education and training.

To implement the continental framework, the African Union Commission has adopted as Implementation Platform, a Coalition of stakeholders covering all thematic areas in education and training as identified in the CESA Strategic Objectives.

Clustering under thematic areas has been identified as an effective tool for enhancing coordination and strengthening partnerships around common themes. This ensures greater alignment and harmony among stakeholders and facilitates the identification and deployment of synergies in the attainment of the CESA strategic objectives. As at January 2019, twelve Thematic Clusters have been launched and more are upcoming.

The Cluster on Early Childhood Education and Development was officially launched on 4th September 2018. The African Early Childhood Network was appointed as the Cluster Coordinator, while Mauritius which is also the Coordinator of the Inter Country Quality Node on Early Childhood Education, was appointed as the Co-Chair of the Cluster. The African Union Commission chairs all the CESA Thematic Clusters.

The Thematic Cluster for ECED thus serves as an essential lever to amplify the work of all key stakeholders in the attainment of the CESA objectives for early childhood. Affirming the need for intensified action towards strengthened foundations for early learning and development, the Cluster is committed towards coordinated action to accelerate progress. The ECED Cluster therefore seeks to achieve the following six outcomes:

1. Enhanced policy, advocacy and communication
2. Intensified action to improve equitable access to quality ECED programmes and services
3. Improved quality of ECED systems, programmes and services
4. Enhanced governance and accountability
5. Enhanced research generation, documentation and dissemination

6. Strengthened partnership and collaboration across all key stakeholders including state and non-state actors.

To support the achievement of the Cluster objectives, members who were present during the launch agreed on the formation of six working groups. These working groups would bring together Cluster member organizations and Member States interested in specific sub themes to work collectively and undertake specific tasks and activities towards the achievement of overall Cluster objectives. It was also agreed that for efficient co-ordination, a Technical Committee comprising of the working group Chairs, Member States, RECS and partner organisations would be formed in the next meeting.

The meeting will be co-hosted on behalf of the African Union Commission by the Mauritius Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research, in collaboration with the African Early Childhood Network (AfECN).

Invited participants include Member States, RECs, CSO's, Academia and other partner agencies working in ECED.

Objectives of the meeting

The objectives of the meeting are to:

1. Establish a Technical Committee with clear TORs;
2. Develop a 2019-20 work plan with priorities, activities and expected outcomes;
3. Share experiences and updates on ECED in Member States;
4. Renew commitment from partners and members of the ECED Cluster.

Expected outcomes of the Technical Committee Meeting

The meeting is expected to yield the following deliverables:

1. Technical Committee formed;
2. A work plan of key ECED activities to be undertaken under each of the six outcomes of the ECED Cluster over the next 2-3 years developed;
3. Strengthened partnerships and commitment.