

Relevance of post-basic education to the changing realities of youth in sub-Saharan Africa: Exploring the perspectives of young people

Terms of Reference for the preparation of case studies

1) Research Overview

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), 30% of youth in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) are illiterate (UIS, 2015), and the World Bank reports that most out-of-school youth in the region drop out before secondary education (World Bank, 2015). Sub-Saharan Africa is the region with the lowest participation in secondary education. Only half of the population are enrolled in lower secondary education and the proportion drops to one third of the population at the upper secondary level, which is half of the world average. There were 64.8 million out-of-school adolescents at school-year ending in 2013, of which one third were in sub-Saharan Africa.

Given the potential for youth to lead and shape the world, current educational patterns compel a better understanding of youth characteristics and of the gap that often exists between youth realities and aspirations, and the nature of educational provision.

The study ‘**Relevance of post-basic education to the changing realities of youth in sub-Saharan Africa: Exploring the perspectives of young people**’ therefore aims to assess the relevance of educational provision for youth (15-24 years of age) in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially in pursuit of the Education 2030 agenda, which calls for building education and learning systems that promote inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all by means of society-wide participation and through all channels - formal, non-formal and informal settings.

The research study is jointly coordinated between UNESCO’s Section for Partnerships, Cooperation and Research and the Dakar Regional Office and conducted in collaboration with all the UNESCO regional offices in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The results aims to contribute to more responsive policies to the issue of youth disengagement from education and the ensuing consequences in skills shortages, low employment prospects, and general well-being.

UNESCO is hiring consultants, group of consultants or entities (here called ‘contractors’) to conduct one case study in West and East Africa, focusing on the subjective dimension of youth demand for learning opportunities.

These terms of reference intend to outline the following main areas that contractors will consider in preparing the case study proposals and conducting the case study (methodology, report structure, presentation of findings, referencing and timeline) as well as application modalities.

2) Scope of the case studies

In the framework of the research study ‘**Relevance of post-basic education to the changing realities of youth in sub-Saharan Africa: Exploring the perspectives of young people**’, the contractor is expected to conduct one case study in East Africa (5 countries out of 13) and two

case studies in West Africa (**total 5 countries** from Dakar office [7 countries¹] and Abuja office [8 countries²]) according to UNESCO Regional Offices grouping of countries and in compliance to the Terms of Reference. The countries will be selected in agreement with UNESCO research team.

The case studies will:

- Focus on the subjective dimension of youth demand for learning opportunities (motivations, aspirations, and perceptions of relevance of existing education/training provision...), covering to the extent possible all the guiding questions in the annex.
- Examine the interplay between supply and demand-side factors that may explain the causes of non-take up of formal and non-formal education and training opportunities among youth.
- Envisage new approaches to education and skills development that capitalize on the full potential of all learning settings, recognizing the importance of learning that continues beyond formal education and training systems and that relevant competencies are also developed through self-learning, on the job training or through other experiences beyond formal education and training.
- Review existing studies that address the status of the educational challenges in post-basic education, effectiveness of policies and programmes to respond to these challenges.
- Explore the learners' point of view relative to the degree of responsiveness of education and training opportunities to their aspiration and their needs.

3) Case studies Methodology

Data gathered from literature review, survey, focus-group discussions (FGDs) or any other appropriate means will be compiled and analyzed to develop the case study report. Learners' points of view relative to the degree of responsiveness of education and training opportunities to their aspiration and their needs shall be explored and analysed.

The report will also include recommended actions and strategies based on existing good practices for Governments and other relevant actors of provision of post-basic education. This could serve as a basis for suggesting a way forward towards the development of a national and regional strategy to achieve the improvement of the post-basic provision. This part can address issues related to policy development, capacity building, service delivery, resource mobilization, partnership development and sustainability.

4) Case study report structure

The final case study report will be a comprehensive, analytical review in French or English with no more than 30 pages excluding bibliography and annexes (single-spaced, Times New Roman, Size 12 Font), consisting of:

1. **Executive Summary** (2-3 pages): A broad overview of the post-basic education systems covered in the case study and selected experiences that improved educational relevance;

¹ Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and the Gambia

² Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Togo

An overview of the findings from desk review and analysis of relevant studies on the youth demand for education and training opportunities; A summary of highlights of the case study; A set of options and recommendations for policy makers, managers and development partners.

2. **Introduction/overview:** summary of the issue, essential facts and figures and presentation of the following chapters/sections (2 pages).
3. **Context and key issues** in the group of countries or geographical area for post-basic education (2 pages)
4. **Research methodology and limitations** (1 page)
5. **Research findings** (based on desk review and data collected through surveys, interviews and/or FGDs): Analysis of the reasons of non-take up of education by youth; analysis of youth's needs and aspirations; their perceptions as regards the relevance of education and training (20 pages)
6. **Options and/or recommendations** to address the causes of non-participation in education and training, including improving the relevance of post-basic learning policies and systems in the group of countries or the geographical area covered in the case study (2 pages).
7. **Bibliography**
8. **Annexes** (list of individuals/institutions interviewed/consulted/surveyed, summary of methodologies employed, copy of questionnaires and interview questions, etc.).

5) Time frame and expected deliverables

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| By 20 January 2017: | Submission for validation by the UNESCO research team of a detailed data collection and analysis plan including the scope of the study, the methodology (document review, semi-structured interviews, focus discussion groups and surveys – including online-, as well as any other methods), relevant details and justification on collection methods and sampling as well as any questionnaire, guiding questions |
| By 28 February 2017: | Submission of data collected |
| By 31 March 2017: | Submission of draft paper |
| By 20 April 2017: | Submission of the final paper |

6) Qualifications

- Be an individual consultant, a group of consultants (with necessary coordination and appointment of a lead consultant) or entity (university, research institute, think tank, consulting firm, etc.) active in the area of education
- Proven experience in research study on youth and education in Sub Saharan Africa, including in data collection methods through surveys, focus group discussions, interviews, etc.
- Proficiency in French or English
- Knowledge of main national languages of the targeted group of countries/geographical area is an asset
- Excellent analytical and report writing skills

7) How to apply

Please submit a short case study proposal (no more than 7 pages) accompanied by a CV, as well as previous similar research to the relevant UNESCO Regional Office Staff by December 20, 2016 to: Ms. Akemi Yonemura (a.yonemura@unesco.org), cc: Catherine Collin (c.collin@unesco.org)

The case study proposal should include the following informations:

- Justification on the candidate's assets for this assignment
- Targeted scope (name of the country/group of countries/geographical area) among the five UNESCO grouping (table 1)
- Methodology and planning: data collection, analysis and reporting
- Composition of the case study team members
- Expected fees and other related costs
- At least two references

Please contact Akemi Yonemura (a.yonemura@unesco.org) for any further information.

Annex: Indicative guiding questions for case studies

1. Profile of youth
 - a. Who are those adolescents not in school and what are they doing?
 - b. What are the major causes of non-take up of formal and non-formal education and training opportunities among the youth?
 - c. What are their life prospects and dreams?
2. Youth's point of view on knowledge and skills for Education 2030
 - a. What are youth's demands for and expectations from education and training (motivations, aspirations, and needs for learning opportunities)?
 - b. What are youth's perceptions as regards barriers to pursuing education and training (relevance of education, financial, economic and/or cultural obstacles, future job opportunities, etc.)?
 - c. What policies and programmes exist to respond to learners' demands? What are the good practices and effective policies and programmes to respond to these demands, particularly in pursuit of the Education 2030 agenda?
3. Options and suggestions for policy consideration
 - a. What are the good practices and opportunities to address youth's demand for education in countries covered by the case study?
 - b. How can we strengthen the link among formal and non-formal education and training, and the world of work and society, including second-chance programmes, partnerships with industry and community service that may respond to learners' demands?