Memorandum of the Young people in Africa on the occasion of the Pan African High-level Conference on Education (PACE) held at Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi (25th - 27th April 2018)

'Young People as Catalysts of Inclusive Education in Africa'

Esteemed delegates, as you are aware, in the year 2015 the world adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to inform global development for the subsequent 15 years (2015-2030). Goal 4 recognizes education as a central pillar to development in general and as such, fundamental and integral to the achievement of all the other SDGs.

Closer home, the Africa Agenda 2063 and the the Continental Strategy for Education in Africa (CESA) 2016-2025 reiterate the importance of education in the Continental development agenda.

As highlighted by young African delegates in their solidarity statement at the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Financing Conference in Dakar-Senegal, February 2018, young people 'are not simply beneficiaries of education. We are partners in creating a better world. Youth do not need to be given a voice. We already have one. What we need is the platform of education for which our voices can be heard.' The Pan-African Conference on Education (PACE 2018) is such a platform to begin with, in promoting meaningful 'dialogue' between young people, education policy makers at national and regional levels and to promote systematic engagement of young people in education reforms in Africa.

From 23rd to 24th April 2018, young people from across Africa met here in Nairobi prior to the PACE meeting to dialogue on the inclusion of voices of young people in the Continent's education agenda. This forum drew participation from Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Mali, Benin, Ghana, Liberia, Senegal, Niger and Burkina Faso.

Based on the dialogue over the two days, we as the representative of the youth in Africa urge you to consider our recommendations in your deliberations towards the final declaration of PACE 2018.

Inclusive and gender transformative education in Africa

We recognize the dialogue on inclusion and gender-responsive systems to consist of girls, boys, adolescents, persons with disabilities (PWDs), refugees, internally displaced and migrant children and youth among other marginalized groups of children and youth.

We therefore recommend that governments:

- Develop and implement gender-responsive and gender-sensitive laws, policies, programs, guidelines and by-laws to facilitate the entry, re-entry, sustenance and completion of education for girls, PWDs and other marginalized groups at all levels of learning.
- Create and implement curricula that empowers young people with life skills, and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) courses to empower girls and boys by harnessing their skills, capabilities and creativity.

Integrated education in conflict and post-conflict societies in Africa

We recognize the adverse effects that conflicts have had on the education agenda across the Continent. Indeed education systems and structures have been known to take years to recover in post conflict societies.

As such we recommend that governments:

- Develop and implement policies and strategies to facilitate inclusive education for internally displaced children and refugees.
- Promote conflict preventive strategies, civic and peace programs especially targeting young people in conflict prone areas.

Leveraging technology and strengthening information systems in advancement of education goals

Noting the important role that Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) plays in the promotion of education, we recommend that governments:

- Intensify capacity building both at the preservice and in-service training for teachers to effectively deliver on relevant ICT training for the 21st Century
- Commit to funding youth-led research, innovation of ICT in education and promote access to ICT platforms for young people.

Gender-related violence and promoting gender equality in education

Noting that gender related violence and promoting gender equality in education is key in Africa's agenda, we recommend that governments:

- Commit to domesticate and implement the Gender Equality Strategy for the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (GES for CESA-2016-2025) in education systems.

- Guarantee inclusion of young people, youth networks & existing structures in the formulation, implementation,revied and evaluation of education strategies, policies, legislation and budgets

- Put in place measures to strengthen reporting, monitoring & psychosocial empowerment for girls and young women in education

Financing Education in Africa

In recognition of the fact that the education agenda requires substantial financial commitments, we recommend that Governments:

- Continue to increase their expenditure on education to attain 20% or more of their national budgets with a fixed percentage dedicated to gender equality, young marginalized groups and young people in emergency situations.
- Deliver on their financial commitments to education, including those made at the GPE Financing for Education Conference in February 2018 in Dakar, Senegal.
- Improve spending efficiency through better teacher allocation, capacity development, training and remuneration.

In conclusion, Governments alone cannot address the education agenda for the continent. Governments should work collaboratively; identifying and engaging with an array of stakeholders including young people to monitor progress and generate evidence. Governments should facilitate this by publishing annual education progress reports and engage young people in structured national mechanisms to directly contribute to the development and implementation of the education agenda.

This memorandum is a consolidation of the voices of young people resulting from the PACE 2018 Pre-conference held at the Kenya School of Monetary Studies, Nairobi (23rd-24th April 2018) as organized by Plan International; Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE); United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and USAID. Participants were drawn from Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Mali, Benin, Ghana, Liberia, Senegal, Niger and Burkina Faso.