CONFINTEA VII Regional Preparatory

Conference for Africa

Priorities, challenges and recommendations

Design: Christiane Marwecki

Report on the CONFINTEA VII Regional Preparatory Meetings

19 May, 2 June, 21 June and 23 June 2021

1.
Introduction

In preparation of the seventh International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VII), scheduled to take place in Morocco in 2022, the UNESCO Regional Offices in Sub-Saharan Africa and the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) organized four virtual subregional conferences to identify and discuss key priorities related to adult learning and education (ALE) in the region. CONFINTEA VII will adopt a new framework of action to guide the international development of ALE and support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The subregional conferences constituted a platform to deal with questions, trends and challenges related to ALE in the different subregions; to identify innovative practices; and to develop recommendations for innovative strategies to renew ALE policies and practices in the run-up to CONFINTEA VII.

The subregional conferences were held in 2021 and organized by the UNESCO Regional Offices in Abuja (19 May, representing eight countries in West Africa), Dakar (2 June, representing seven countries in West Africa/Sahel), Harare/Nairobi (21 June, representing 19 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa) and Yaoundé (23 June, representing ten countries in Central Africa). More than 800 individuals participated in the conferences, including the heads and senior government officials of 44 national ministries of education, ALE stakeholders (non-governmental organizations, national and regional education movements, universities, the private sector, technical and financial partners), and UNESCO/UIL partners and staff.

UIL expresses its sincere gratitude to the UNESCO Regional Offices in Abuja, Dakar, Harare, Nairobi and Yaoundé for co-organizing the four subregional conferences in preparation of the Seventh International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VII), and for preparing the reports. We furthermore thank DVV International for its contribution to implementing these meetings.

The present document is based on the reports from the four subregional conferences. It highlights the characteristics of and challenges facing lifelong learning and ALE in the Africa region, and uses these to put forward recommendations of relevance to CONFINTEA VII.

2.
Background, context and regional characteristics

Sub-Saharan Africa covers an area of 23,852,823 km^2 (World Bank 2022a) with a population of 1.136 billion (World Bank 2022b).

The region has experienced renewed dynamism since the early 2000s. It has regularly experienced annual growth in GDP of between three and five per cent (World Bank 2022c). It has also seen an increase in the average standard of living, a decline in infant mortality and an increase in the rate of schooling, although progress varies from one country to another. Since 2000, the region has experienced the fastest rate of population growth in the world (Tabutin and Schoumaker, 2020). From 2000 to 2017, Africa's population increased by 58 per cent compared to a 19 per cent increase worldwide.

However, while recent reports on the region have pointed to a number of significant and ongoing improvements in the region, they have also highlighted policy shortcomings, spatial and social inequalities, and persistent poverty (UN/ECA, 2017; UNDP, 2019). Economically and socially, the region's average national income per capita is far below that of other regions and its buying power is decreasing: in 2017, for example, per capita income in Africa was 43 per cent lower than in South Asia, compared to 12 per cent in 2000 (Tatubin and Schoumaker, 2020, p. 8).

When measured according to the human development index (HDI), strong inequalities remain. In 2016, 36 countries in the region (of a total of 44) were categorized as having a low HDI (UN/ECA, 2017).

Poverty remains a major challenge in sub-Saharan Africa (Beegle et al., 2016), with a rate of growth that rarely exceeds five per cent and an average GDP of €1,721 per capita. This is exacerbated by the region's rapid population growth, recurrent political instability, climate change and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. All of these phenomena in turn have a negative impact on ALE in the region, and lead to moderate or poor educational outcomes (UIL, 2017).

3.
Current situation of ALE in the region

Given that the promise to 'leave no one behind' (LNOB) is central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its goals (UNSDG, 2022), it is crucial to promote lifelong learning in sub-Saharan Africa, with a particular focus on young people and adults, and on marginalized and/or vulnerable groups. Illiteracy, low levels of education and a lack of lifelong learning opportunities across the region are strongly linked to low productivity, low incomes and poor health, particularly in combination with latent conflicts and insecurity linked to terror, migration and other human and environmental factors.

While adult illiteracy has decreased since CONFINTEA VI in 2009, it has done so at a much slower rate compared to other parts of the world. Indeed, although the global literacy rate rose to 86 per cent in 2016 (UIS, 2017, p. 1), the overall literacy rate in Sub-Saharan Africa was well below this world average, at an estimated 65 per cent (ibid., p. 7). Of the world's population of 770 million illiterate young people and adults (aged 15 and over), 153 million are in Africa and two thirds of them are women (World Bank, 2022d).

Low levels of education and poor living standards remain the main challenges to human development in Africa. As regards ALE, the situation varies among the continent's subregions: the percentage of individuals who can read and write ranges from 45 per cent in West Africa, to between 64 and 68 per cent in Central and East Africa, and 81 per cent in Southern Africa (AU, 2016). Percentages similarly vary between countries (ibid.). This situation is further aggravated by other factors, such as insecurity, migration (including internal migration) and demographic change, all of which have a considerable impact on education systems in general, and on the provision of ALE in particular.

In the countries of the **Sahel region**, young people and women continue to be particularly affected by illiteracy and its corollaries. A report on a current study by UIL notes that the average literacy rate of young people (aged 15–24) in the Sahel region is just 56.95 per cent, compared to an average of 76.58 per cent for sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, and 91.67 per cent worldwide (UIL, 2020). Girls are considerably under-educated, which results in a much lower literacy rate for women (32.5 per cent) than for men (51 per cent) (ibid.).

West Africa similarly suffers from a low rate of literacy among its population. In 2017, just 44 per cent of adults over 15 years of age were literate compared to an average of 61 per cent across Africa as a whole (Tatubin and Schoumaker, 2020). Most countries in the region have, however, made significant

progress in terms of ALE policy since 2018, particularly with regard to establishing concrete plans that foster greater stakeholder participation in policy-making. Notable regional cooperation efforts are under way, including collaborations with entities such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) to integrate local languages into youth and ALE programmes. Further initiatives include the reinforcement of literacy programmes, the integration and use of digital technology in education, and the introduction of skills training for school drop-outs through 'second chance' education programmes. In this context, Ghana has established a new agency, the Complementary Education Agency, to promote ALE as a means of enabling its citizens to participate fully in the country's economic development. At the regional level, however, much remains to be done in order to address the challenges facing the informal education subsector, particularly with regard to improving strategies and policies in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis in a region already affected by poverty, insecurity and cross-border migration.

In **Central Africa**, five countries have adult literacy rates higher than the African average of around 60 percent: Cameroon (68 per cent), Gabon (71 per cent), Sao Tome and Principe (79 per cent), Congo (83 per cent) and Equatorial Guinea (87 per cent). Meanwhile, the Central African Republic (CAR) has an average literacy rate of just 49 per cent (with men's literacy rate being double that of women). Chad is one of the four least literate countries on the continent with a literacy rate of less than 30 per cent and a very marked disparity between literacy rates for men (41 per cent) and women (13 per cent) (UIS, 2022). Nonetheless, since CONFINTEA VI (2009), Central Africa has seen significant developments in ALE in terms of policies, strategies, governance and participation, both with respect to lifelong learning initiatives and in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These developments include:

- the adoption of laws and the creation/validation of policies in favour of ALE;

- the alignment of policies and strategies to SDG4, Target 4.6: 'By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy' (UN, 2015);

- the development and implementation of (successful) training and literacy programmes for young adults and women;

- the recruitment and training of supervisory and training staff;

- an increase in the number of learners and literate people.

As regards funding, although Central Africa is composed of countries with abundant natural resources, some do not prioritize ALE. As a result, overall budgetary expenditure on education/ALE among this group of countries is currently low, constituting less than 20 per cent of internal state resources (UIL, 2016).

In **Eastern and Southern Africa**, literacy rates exceed 90 per cent in South Africa, and 70 per cent in some poorer and less stable countries such as Eritrea and Zimbabwe. The gender gap remains high at 25 per cent on average.[1] In terms of resource distribution, most countries allocate less than two per cent of their education budgets to ALE. This situation has been worsened by COVID-19, which has brought programmes to a virtual standstill as ALE resources are reallocated to online courses in formal schools and to health responses to the pandemic. Despite an increase in literacy rates across the subregion, ALE still needs more support to generate the necessary outcomes and impact. More remains to be done to implement relevant legislation and develop national qualification frameworks. At the same time, real progress is being made across the countries of the subregion with regard to stakeholder participation, capacity-building, inter-ministerial cooperation, decentralization, civil society involvement, and monitoring and evaluation, and a number of outstanding examples of good practice can be identified. With regard to HIV/AIDS in the region, a number of countries have developed ALE learning materials to educate people about the virus. Countries such as Kenya, Malawi and Uganda, meanwhile, ensure that national stakeholders are involved at all stages of the ALE planning and programming process. Malawi and Mozambique have integrated local languages into ALE, while Malawi, Namibia and Zimbabwe have made digital literacy integral to their ALE strategies following the COVID-19 crisis.

4.
Changes in ALE due to the COVID-19 pandemic

COVID-19 has affected every country in sub-Saharan Africa and has had a significant impact on ALE as the region has refocused its resources and attention on combatting the pandemic.

In the West African **Sahel**, COVID-19 has brought additional challenges to countries already weakened by chronic vulnerabilities. These challenges include:

- resuming programmes and reopening classrooms, particularly in light of ongoing security crises;[2]

- adjusting policies and approaches to take account of information and communication technology (ICT) innovations, such as e-learning courses;

- allocating sufficient resources to post-COVID-19 ALE in countries whose already fragile economies have been further weakened by the pandemic.

In **West Africa**, the COVID-19 crisis has required a paradigm shift and an overhaul of education in order to establish innovative strategies to support fragile education systems affected by:

- the closure of programmes and learning centres, and a drop in enrolment rates due to lockdowns and social distancing requirements;

- the redirection of funding towards combatting the pandemic;

- a loss of jobs and the dispersion of staff and work materials, etc.

To counter the negative impact of COVID-19, innovative practices to adapt and improve ALE have been implemented. In particular, ICT innovations have been integrated through distance learning measures and online provision accessible via cell phones, etc. However, the availability and cost of equipment, electricity and internet connectivity have hindered progress, especially in rural and cross-border areas.

---

1   This trend is confirmed by the 5th Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE 5); however, the precise data cannot be referenced here as the report will not be published until CONFINTEA VII.

2   In some countries of the central Sahel, ALE programmes have been more severely disrupted by ongoing security crises than by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In **Central Africa**, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the many difficulties faced by countries in the subregion. The pandemic has affected the education sector in a variety of ways, forcing many learning centres to close their doors, thus interrupting the provision of training and education. To stay afloat, many programmes have turned to digital technologies; in addition, countries have sought to introduce further innovations. These include:

- digitizing learning content for distance learning courses;

- implementing a family literacy system;

- mobilizing modest (material and financial) resources to ensure the continuity of ALE programmes.

Formal education and ALE in countries in **Eastern and Southern Africa** have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. ALE has suffered the most, due to the fact that the little funding it received prior to the crisis has been redirected to the formal sector. As a result, programmes and centres have been forced to close, teaching training provision has been cut, suitable teaching materials are unavailable, and classroom learning has completely stopped. This has led to the realization that alternative modes of delivery are needed. Thus, the potential of digital technology is increasingly being explored for ALE programmes, despite the fact that the sub-region faces many of the same difficulties as Central Africa in this regard. Innovations being developed in the formal school system, such as local intranet and offline access to learning content, will be extended to ALE learners to benefit marginalized and hard-to-reach populations.

5.
Key priorities, achievements and challenges in ALE

Priorities

The countries of the **Sahel** have identified the following as priorities for the future of ALE:

- The creation or revitalization of fundraising structures for ALE, such as the Literacy and Non-Formal Education Fund (LNEF) or the National Fund for Literacy and Non-Formal Education in Burkina Faso (FONAENF).

- The establishment of a harmonized evaluation and certification system for non-formal education and learning.

- The development of resilient programmes that incorporate ICT and distance learning components.

- The fast-tracking of regulations pertaining to ALE educators/professionals and the certification process through the recognition, validation and accreditation (RVA) of prior learning.

- The dissemination of good ALE practices from civil society organizations.

- The fostering of innovative approaches to ALE that integrate basic skills acquisition and vocational training, and combine traditional forms of adult education with digital pedagogy, as a means of reducing illiteracy, enabling the economic integration of youth, empowering women, promoting citizenship and consolidating the peace process, and thus achieving effective, multisectoral and sustainable interventions within a lifelong learning perspective.

West Africa has noted the following priorities:

- Improved funding for ALE.

- Increased partnerships for more funding and support.

- Capacity-building for ALE staff.

- The development of ICT to expand ALE in all countries and contexts.

- The provision of platforms to share experiences and good practices relating to ALE.

- High-level political commitment to ALE.

- The coordination of agency and partner support for targeted ALE interventions.

- The introduction of initiatives to combine literacy learning with the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills.

Central Africa has identified the following priorities:

- The establishment of ALE programmes that favour women and vulnerable people, in the spirit of SDG4 and the *Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025* (CESA, 2016).

- A substantial increase in ALE funding from governments, the private sector and third-party donors.

- The establishment and/or expansion of staff qualification frameworks.

- The strengthening of existing evaluation and data management systems.

- The adoption of the 'Action Research: Measuring Literacy Programme Participants' Learning Outcomes' approach (RAAMA II) as a means of improving programme quality.

- The development of programmes to bridge formal and non-formal education.

- The introduction of measures to strengthen ALE programmes through the integration of ICT.

- The production of sufficient teaching materials (manuals, guides, etc.).

- The implementation of a communication plan for the development of the ALE subsector.

Countries in **Eastern and Southern African** have pinpointed the following priorities for ALE policy and practice:

- Increased budgetary allocation to ALE (totalling at least three per cent of the education budget) to improve access and ensure the sustainability of interventions.

- The integration of viable economic activities into ALE to enable adult learners to develop entrepreneurship skills and combat poverty.

- The integration of modules on climate change, gender equality, entrepreneurship, etc.

- The development of partnerships between governments and the private sector to manage the ALE value chain (e.g. reduce internet costs, establish community learning centres, introduce incentives and motivations in the form of prizes or other types of rewards, etc.).

Achievements and challenges

Significant ALE policy innovations have been developed in the **Sahel** since CONFINTEA VI took place in 2009. Senegal has implemented the decentralized National Youth and Adult Education Programme (NYAEP) to optimize governance. Cabo Verde, meanwhile, has introduced legislation to regulate the certification of ALE qualifications, and has scaled up distance learning. Throughout the subregion, country-led approaches to ALE aim to plan, initiate and accredit learning in specific contexts and in line with national priorities. Many ALE policies are conducted in partnership between the state and civil society and, in the case of countries such as Senegal, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad, through decentralization and outsourcing strategies known as 'faire-faire' or 'learning by doing'. In Cabo Verde, Mali and Burkina Faso, post-literacy initiatives and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) provision are in place to meet the qualification and certification needs of ALE. However, concerns remain due to widespread poverty across the subregion, exacerbated by severe economic crises, instability and insecurity, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on all areas of ALE. The main challenges faced by the Sahel comprise:

1. financing ALE, which constitutes a major hurdle for all countries in spite of additional contributions from partners (the share of the education budget allocated to ALE does not generally exceed one per cent in most countries in the subregion);

2. generating quality data, providing adequate training and human resources, and aligning ALE policies and strategies with innovative new technologies;

3. introducing legal frameworks that support SDG4 and the achievement of Target 4.6 through the RVA of non-formal learning, and the coordinated planning and implementation of policies and programmes;

4. reaching vulnerable target populations to ensure that 'no one is left behind';

5. improving the quality of ALE through ICT, while measuring learning outcomes effectively and ensuring that ALE stakeholders receive appropriate training and certification.

As regards achievements and challenges pertaining to ALE in **West Africa**, the subregion reports that progress has been made since CONFINTEA VI, particularly with respect to policies and practices, including the integration of ICT into ALE provision. It also reports that COVID-19 has had a major impact on ALE, and notes a number of innovative practices designed to mitigate this. Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone have increased ALE opportunities for marginalized groups including inernally displaced persons (IDPs), nomads, out-of-school children, rural populations and people with disabilities. Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea and Togo have given prominence to citizenship education in their programmes, while Benin has developed a long-term resource mobilization plan. Ghana has extended its literacy programmes in 15 Ghanaian languages, including English. In common with its counterparts across the continent, the subregion notes that all of its constituent countries have faced the recurrent challenge of low funding for ALE. Among the main challenges identified is the need to strengthen regional cooperation, including partnerships with entities such as ECOWAS and ACALAN, and to coordinate support with other partners, as well as to integrate local languages into learning programmes for young people and adults.

Other challenges include:

- a lack of more resilient training programmes, especially in times of health crisis such as the Covid-19 pandemic;

- low diversification of training programmes and provision;

- insufficient data management capacity and poor coordination of ALE interventions of state and non-state actors;

- the need to integrate digital technologies into literacy programmes;

- inadequate infrastructure and learning materials for the expansion of literacy delivery.

Since CONFINTEA VI, countries in **Central Africa** have undertaken numerous initiatives to achieve the objectives laid down in the Belém Framework for Action. These include:

- the adoption of laws and the formulation/validation of policies in favour of ALE;

- the alignment of policies and strategies with SDG4, Target 4.6;

- the successful implementation of training and basic literacy programmes for young adults and women, and a reduction in illiteracy rates;

- the harmonization of ALE/non-formal education programmes with statistical data production;

- the development, updating/improvement of methodological learning tools;

- the mobilization of material and financial resources for ALE.

The main challenges faced in the subregion pertain to political will, and to the alignment of existing policies, strategies and programmes with SDG4, Target 4.6. It is also essential that education budgets in general, and ALE budgets in particular, be increased, as the latter are limited or even non-existent in some countries (e.g. CAR). The subregion further identified a lack of human capital as the primary reason for an ongoing mismatch between supply and demand for ALE.

The subregional conference for **Eastern and Southern Africa** identified ALE achievements and challenges in countries across the subregion. Achievements comprised:

- progress made in ALE during a particularly difficult period;

- the alignment of ALE activities with target-oriented policies and programmes;

- strong advocacy for ALE as the key to building meaningful partnerships;

- increased participation of civil society and the private sector in ALE activities.

Challenges included:

- insufficient public funding for ALE;

- insufficient staff training and learning materials;

- the need to expand the notion of ALE to include citizenship education, education for sustainable development, health education, etc.

6.
Recommendations

In light of the priorities, achievements and challenges identified above, the following recommendations are made.

Policy

Build high-level political commitment for sound, policy-driven ALE with relevant actions supported by substantial budgets, including:

- the creation/strengthening of inter-ministerial forums, structures involving all stakeholders (parliamentarians, governments, universities, civil society organizations and the private sector) in the elaboration and definition of ALE policies in all sectors according to the mode that best suits their circumstances and their adult learning needs;

- the dissemination of ALE achievements and impacts in areas of national growth and development interest (economic, social, political, cultural, technological, environmental, etc.) so that these results can be used as a point of reference to advocate for greater mobilization and support;

- measures to update/strengthen legislation to create a legal framework for ALE educators and professionals.

Governance

Increase local government accountability in governance, monitoring and oversight for a more inclusive decentralization of ALE programme management, including funding approvals and certification, by:

- strengthening the capacity and leadership of local governments to ensure the continuity of programmes, even in emergency situations (natural disasters, epidemics, conflicts);

- introducing legislation to optimize local governance (in terms of stakeholder participation, regulatory provisions, coordination, and monitoring and evaluation) to ensure the full involvement of local governments in ALE implementation;

- assuring appropriate stakeholder representation and participation in policy and programme development to ensure democratic governance and responsiveness to the needs of all learners, especially the most disadvantaged.

Financing

1. Take bold steps at the government and international community levels in order to generate and mobilize the resources needed for ALE (in line with the agreements laid down in the 2015 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action)[3] by:

- substantially and effectively increasing public spending on ALE (raising the budget allocated to non-formal education/ALE subsector to at least three per cent of the national education budget) and private sector participation in the form of various taxes;

- building national capacity for policy formulation, and for the implementation and monitoring of literacy programmes;

- enabling inter-ministerial coordination, partnerships, cost-sharing, and the implementation of resource mobilization strategies in all ministries involved and among the various ALE stakeholders;

- carrying out specific fundraising activities and institutionalizing the mobilization of national resources and management structures for ALE (FONAENF, the National Educational Resource Centre for Literacy and Non-Formal Education – CNRE/AENF, etc.);

- ensuring transparency in the allocation and use of resources to reflect the priorities that have been set according to the results;

- developing proposals for funding options and cooperations with the agencies charged with implementing SDG 4/Education 2030 (UNESCO, Global Partnership for Education, etc.) and broader partners to convince decision-makers to prioritize budget allocations for ALE.

2. Develop and implement new and meaningful alternative financing mechanisms (to mitigate the burden on public resources) linking civil society, the private sector and third-party donors with the objective of revitalizing ALE financing by:

- initiating (ten-year) strategic and investment plans in the ALE sector at the continental, regional and national levels, developed in a participatory and collaborative manner;[4]

---

3   See UNESCO, 2016.
4   Cf. AU, 2016.

- increasing resource mobilization through the development of business models for the sustainable financing of education, especially literacy programmes;

- mobilizing public-private partnerships;

- seeking contributions from development partners.

Participation, equity and inclusion

1. Seek alternative and significant innovations to bring together partners from civil society, the private sector and third-party donors through (regional and national) diplomatic, legislative and consultation frameworks, forums and platforms.

2. Promote women's access to and participation in ALE, and increase inclusion and equal access among vulnerable target populations so that 'no one is left behind' by:

- developing specific actions (projects) to boost participation among specific groups (migrants, refugees, people with disabilities, prisoners, etc.);

- carrying out national and regional efforts dedicated to the implementation of equitable, inclusive and high-quality education programmes and strategies for all, with a focus on disadvantaged and vulnerable populations (e.g. women/girls, youth, migrants, refugees, hard-to-reach groups).

Quality

1. Ensure the effective implementation of adult learning and education policies and programmes through periodic monitoring and evaluation based on:

- mechanisms and/or structures that use appropriate criteria and quality standards, subject to periodic review;

- appropriate measures to give substance to the results of monitoring and evaluation;

- timely, reliable, and valid disaggregated data collection/analysis and sharing of effective and innovative monitoring and evaluation practices;

- an assessment of the effectiveness of programmes that determines the extent to which these programmes meet the desired objectives and expected results.

2. Strengthen and update, at the national level, legislation for the creation of a legal framework for ALE educators and professionals for the professionalization of teachers by:

- formulating and developing policies and legislation for the RVA of non-formal learning;

- adopting a reference framework for the RVA of non-formal learning;

- structuring and increasing training and capacity-building provision for ALE stakeholders.

3. Carry out a sector analysis of national education systems (for countries that have not yet done so) in order to revitalize national education policy through innovative strategies, plans and programmes developed in closer alignment with SDG4.

4. Respond to the urgent and differentiated demands for new and diversified skills that have emerged with the development of technology and the economy, by aligning national ALE strategies and policies with programmatic actions such as:

- systematically integrating a holistic, cross-sectoral, lifelong and life-wide learning perspective into national programmes;

- addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups, especially out-of-school youth, women and girls, and displaced populations.

5. Produce and make available ALE evidence by:

- developing reliable data management systems (e.g. using the RAMAA II approach);

- creating a capacity-building repository for staff focusing on monitoring and evaluation;

- involve state authorities in collecting data (evidence and disaggregated data) for the purposes of advocacy, policy formulation and the negotiation of programme funding;

- strengthening robust data collection and the analysis of ALE's positive impact on society, the economy, individual health and social cohesion.

6.   Take advantage of modern and mobile technologies by:

•   developing and conducting resilient programmes that integrate ICTs and are capable of being delivered remotely in crisis and emergency situations;

•   leveraging digital technologies in traditional or blended learning approaches in order to expand access to learning for marginalized or remote communities, and to improve learning outcomes;

•   developing a repository of ICT skills, methodologies and training programmes for ALE facilitators and trainers.

Impact of COVID-19

1.   Learn from and capitalize on the experiences of African countries facing chronic vulnerabilities due to recurrent and persistent health crises.

2.   Adjust ALE policies and approaches to COVID-19 by incorporating ICT innovations, such as adaptive distance learning.

3.   Anticipate the effects of resource reallocation (often to the disadvantage of post-COVID-19 ALE) in national economies weakened by the pandemic.

4.   Develop a policy of increased resilience to the combined effects of COVID-19, security crises in Africa and their impacts on ALE.

References

African Union (AU). 2016. *Continental education strategy for Africa 2016-2025 (CESA 16-25)*.
https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/29958-doc-cesa_-_english-v9.pdf [Accessed 7 January 2022].

Beegle, K., Christiaensen, L., Dabalen, A. and Gaddis I. 2016. *Overview: Poverty in a rising Africa*. Washington DC, World Bank. https://
www.un.org/africarenewal/sites/www.un.org.africarenewal/files/Poverty%20in%20a%20Rising%20Africa%20Overview.pdf
[Accessed 7 January 2022].

Tatubin, D. and Schoumaker, B. 2020. The demography of sub-Saharan Africa in the 21st century. Transformations since 2000,
outlook to 2050. *Population*, Vol. 75, Nos 2–3, pp. 169–295.
https://www.ined.fr/fichier/rte/General/Publications/Population/2020/populationeng-2020-2-3-tabutinetal-chronique-
africaine.pdf [Accessed 7 January 2022].

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). 2016. *Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and
Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education
and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.*
https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000245656_eng [Accessed 10 January 2022].

UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL). 2020. *UIL launches study on literacy in the Sahel region.*
https://uil.unesco.org/literacy/uil-launches-study-literacy-sahel-region [Accessed 7 January 2022].

————. 2017. CONFINTEA VI Mid-term review 2017. *Progress, challenges and opportunities: The status of adult learning and education.*
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002597/259707E.pdf [Accessed 7 January 2022].

————. 2016. *3rd Global Report on Adult Learning and Education: The impact of adult learning and education on health
and well-being, employment and the labour market, and social, civic and community life.*
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002459/245913e.pdf [Accessed 10 January 2022].

UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). 2022. *UIS.Stat.* http://data.uis.unesco.org/ [Accessed 21 January 2022].

————. 2017. *Literacy rates continue to rise from one generation to the next*. Fact Sheet No. 45, FS/2017/LIT/45.
http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/fs45-literacy-rates-continue-rise-generation-to-next-en-2017_0.pdf
[Accessed 7 January 2022].

United Nations (UN). 2015. *Sustainable Development Goal 4: Target 4.6.*
https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4 [Accessed 7 January 2022].

United Nations/Economic Commission for Africa (UN/ECA). 2017. Economic report on Africa 2017: Urbanization and
industrialization for Africa's transformation.
https://repository.uneca.org/bitstream/handle/10855/23723/b11837172.pdf [Accessed 7 January 2022].

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2019. *Human development report 2019. Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond
today: Inequalities in human development in the 21st century.*
http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2019.pdf [Accessed 7 January 2022].

United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG). 2022. *Leave no one behind.*
https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values/leave-no-one-behind [Accessed 7 January 2022].

World Bank. 2022a. *Land area (sq. km) – Sub-Saharan Africa.*
    https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/AG.LND.TOTL.K2?locations=ZG [Accessed 7 January 2022].

––––. 2022b. *Population, total – Sub-Saharan Africa.*
    https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=ZG [Accessed 7 January 2022].

––––. 2022c. GDP growth (annual %) – Sub-Saharan Africa. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=ZG
    [Accessed 7 January 2022].

––––. 2022d. *Literacy rate, adult total (% of people ages 15 and above).*
    https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS [Accessed 21 January 2022].

––––. 2017. *Annual Report 2017.*
    https://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/908481507403754670/Annual-Report-2017-WBG.pdf [Accessed 7 January 2022].