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GESCI Newsletter

Issue 3 , 2019

Welcome to our 2019 Quarter 3 newsletter where GESCI seeks to keep you informed of its activities related to ICT integration in education,forthcoming events, training and research related to Education Policy, Planning and Management across the African Continent as well as global.

This newsletter is specifically addressed at education personnel in the Ministries of Education,dealing with policy and planning,training institutions and development partners among others.

1. GESCI ACTIVITIES

GESCI presents at IGAD Member States Meeting on Education for Refugees Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

*4th – 6th July, 2019 .*The 5th meeting of experts of member states in charge of Education on the implementation of the Djibouti Declaration on Education for Refugees, Returnees and Host Communities was organized by IGAD. This meeting aimed at assessing the progress and status of the Djibouti Declaration (DD) and Plan of Action in next 2-5 years; share national education response plans of member states; identify challenges and funding and generate recommendations for the 3rd Conference of IGAD education ministers scheduled for December 2019. GESCI made a presentation on digital skills for youth through its African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI). ADSI is an innovative ICT in Education model seeking to transform secondary schools into Digital Schools of Distinction where ICT is fully integrated in teaching and learning. The Ministry of Education Uganda requested to explore the model during a bilateral meeting with GESCI. *For further information contact:* angela.arnott@gesci.org

Regional Education and Learning Initiative (RELI) Regional Summit 2019 Entebbe, Uganda

*9th-12th July, 2019.*This Summit is an annual convening that brings together member organizations, policymakers and other development partners to review progress made by different organizations in terms of education as well plan for the subsequent year. During the summit, GESCI was identified as a strong partner in the 21C Skills space, with widest geographical coverage and physical presence among cluster members. In addition, it also identifies as having good internal MERL Capacity and social capital in the policy space. This saw the , GESCI Monitoring Evaluation Research and Learning (MERL) Specialist elected as the Country Lead for the Values and Life-skills (incorporating 21C skills) thematic cluster. Following GESCI's presence in Tanzania led to its election as the Lead

GESCI attends the 15th World Conference on "Intellectual Capital for Communities" - Paris, France

11th -12th July, 2019 . Organized by the European Chair on Intellectual Capital, the University of Paris-Sud and UNESCO's Intergovernmental Information for All Programme (IFAP), the conference will discuss: Artificial intelligence and the next generation of skills: What will be the impact of digital and artificial intelligence on jobs and professional qualifications? GESCI was invited to participate in the session on Education and Jobs in a world of AI where its African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) model was explored. *For further information contact:* jerome.morrissey@gesci.org

Policy Dialogue Forum on Secondary Education in Africa – Johannesburg, South Africa

Participants at the policy dialogue forum
Image/ADEA

29th - 30th July, 2019. The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and the Ministry of Basic Education of South Africa, with the support of the MasterCard Foundation, co-hosted this High-Level Annual Policy Dialogue Forum on Secondary Education in Africa. GESCI presented on its African Digital Schools Initiative which seeks to transform secondary schools into Digital Schools of Distinction.The forum seeks to share understanding of mechanisms for leveraging secondary education to better empower African youths to contribute effectively to the socio-economic transformation of their respective countries. The Forum provided an opportunity for review and discussion on the findings and recommendations of the Mastercard Foundation report, "***Secondary Education in Africa: Preparing Youth for the Future of Work***." *For further information contact:* angela.arnott@gesci.org

## Transforming Energy Access- Learning Partnership- (TEA-LP) – Nairobi , Kenya

6th – 9th August 2019. TEA-LP is funded by the UK Department for International Development and aims to support universities to develop multidisciplinary Masters level curricula with a view to bridge existing skills gaps in Sub-Saharan Africa's rapidly-growing renewable energy access sector. This was the first partner workshop whose objective was to introduce the partners to each other and to the project team; to develop a better understanding of the energy access sector and its capacity needs; to develop a shared understanding of an outcomes driven curriculum design and Teaching- Learning-Assessment Plan; to offer an opportunity for the partners to refine their initial curriculum development plans; to start building a community of practice for capacity building in clean energy access; to discuss other funding opportunities and to contribute to the research agenda of the project. GESCI is a partner of Pan African University Institute of Water and Energy Sciences (PAUWES) in the Transforming Energy Access -Learning Partnership (TEA-LP). GESCI's role is to provide the entrepreneurial component of the course. *For further information contact:* angela.arnott@gesci.org

Participants at the TEA-LP workshop in Nairobi.

ADSI School wins second place at Young Scientists Kenya Science and Technology (YSK) Exhibition- Nairobi, Kenya
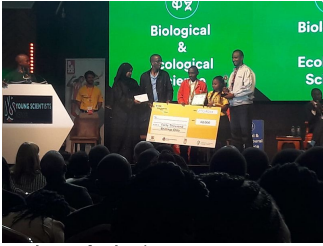
Students of Salvation Army Joytown Secondary School receive a cheque of KES 40,000 from YSK Organisers. Image/GESCI

7th – 9th August 2019. Salvation Army Joytown Secondary School, an ADSI school, won 2nd place in this prestigious competition under the category of Biological and Ecological Sciences with their project on *"Extracting Limonene from Orange Peels."* Additionally **10 secondary schools implementing GESCI's African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) Programme were shortlisted from over 300 applications to presented their projects for the** Young Scientists competition. This is a unique platform in East Africa, for young people from across Kenyan counties to demonstrate their innovation and showcase their scientific talents, encouraging youth to develop projects that seek practical solutions to the problems we face within the society. *For further information contact: christine.akello@gesci.org*

Harnessing the Power of ICT to Transform Education Systems - Gaborone, Botswana

19th August 2019. The purpose of this AU Expo pre-event was to present Mastercard Foundation 's Centre for ICT in Africa. The event brought together Ministers of Education and 30 other agencies and partners. The Centre will: support entrepreneurs to test and validate their innovation. Will develop a series of test schools in countries for feedback, establish best practice and what works in challenge areas identified in stakeholders, explore scaling up of Ed Tech solutions and serve as a neutral convener. During the ministerial round table, GESCI CEO , as a panel member with Ministers on ICT integration and later made a presentation on its African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) project as part of the Edtech demonstrations. *For further information contact: angela.arnott@gesci.org*

Innovating Education in Africa Expo 2019- Gaborone, Botswana

The Innovating Education in Africa Expo brings together 40 of the best education innovations from Africa to exhibit their Innovations. The event was being organised by the African Union Commission in partnership with the Government of the Republic of Botswana and Partners. These included Mastercard Foundation, GIZ, VMware, UNICEF, African Development Bank (AfDB), ONE Campaign, Ashoka, Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), Global e-Schools and Communities Initiative (GeSCI), Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), UNESCO Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (UNESCO-IICBA), Association of African Universities (AAU), AfriLabs, and Save the Children International. The ones highlighted in yellow never arrived at the conference. GESCI Presented it's African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) during the session on **"Enhancing the teaching and learning experience."** GESCI CEO Jerome Morrissey moderated sessions and was among the panel of judges assessing the innovations. During the parallel session on **Enhancing Access and Inclusion,** **PAUWES in Partnership with GESCI** presented the Entrepreneurship Incubator Curriculum: PAUWES MDE (Mini-grid, Digitalisation and Entrepreneurship) Online Postgraduates Program which was initiated in July 2019 under the TEA-LP programme with University of Cape Town, South Africa. The final day was focused on the awarding of the prizes to the top innovators. Ms Wakesho Nyaboke (Kenya), Hadithi Hadithi! – a reading app – was awarded $40,000 as second prize winner and Ms Susannah Farr (South Africa), Peer2Peer Systemic Scale – won first prize of $50,000. Next year's AU Innovating Education in Africa Expo will be held in Rwanda. *For further information contact: angela.arnott@gesci.org*

GESCI CEO Jerome Morrissey addressing participants during a plenary session at the Expo. Image/AUC

UNHCR Coordination Meeting on Education for Refugees - Nairobi, Kenya

27th August, 2019. This meeting was convened to discuss coordination, and national updates on developments among partners active in refugee hosting areas in Kenya. The main goal is to mainstream refugee issues in the existing education forums. However, meetings will be held to provide updates on policy issues, and to collectively work on specific issues together. It was noted that the latest version of national education plan does not include any mention of refugees and the national policy on refugees has yet to be passed. . *For further information contact: jerome.morrissey@gesci.org*

Joint Education Trust (JET) Meeting- Johannesburg, South Africa

27th August 2019. GESCI held a meeting with JET to discuss possible ways of collaboration in particular the Global Partnership in Education (GPE) KIX Learning Partnership Hub as well as GPE Strengthening Education Systems: Teaching and Learning Theme.JET is running Empela – a blended e-learning programme that seeks to support teacher development by providing weekly e-tutorials aligned to the national curriculum. This would be a useful comparator of GESCI's 140 secondary schools implementing the African Digital Skills Initiative (ADSI) in deriving the global goods, step-wise implementation guide, etc for the KIX Global Strengthening of Education Systems: the Teaching and Learning call. *For further information contact:angela.arnott@gesci.org*

Edupac EMIS Model with Microsoft- Johannesburg, South Africa

29th August 2019. Microsoft facilitated a presentation of the Edupac Education Management Information System (EMIS), which is based on the Namibian Ministry of Education system and used in some private schools and in some individual districts in South Africa. The system provides real-time education data at a number of management levels and to other Ministries. It includes administrative learner and guardian management; educator training, deployment, and management; academic management with e-learning integration; textbook management; stock and asset planning and management; and budgetary and monetary management. GESCI will share details of the model with the members of the CESA ICT in education cluster. *For further information contact: angela.arnott@gesci.org*

Digital Schools of Distinction workshops in Nyamira, Kiambu & Narok - Kenya

60 secondary schools drawn from 3 counties in Kenya were awarded e-Confident status under the African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) programme being implemented in the County. The programme leads schools through 4 stages of whole school digitization from e-Initial to e-Enabled to e-Confident and, finally, to e-Mature. When the participating schools reach e-Mature stage, they will be classified as *Digital Schools of Distinction.* The school principals received certification in recognition of their lead roles in supporting their teachers to utilize and integrate digital technologies in their teaching. The programme has the enthusiastic support of the county education authorities, the Teachers Service Commission as well as the schools' boards of managements and parents' associations. A similar event will take place in Taita Taveta County. The African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) Programme is funded by Mastercard Foundation, Canada. *For further information contact: esther.wachira@gesci.org*

School management team from Rungiri Secondary School in Kenya receive their e-Confident Award. Image/GESCI

Annual Joint Education Sector Review- Working Session for Tanzania - Dodoma, Tanzania

23rd -25th September 2019. The Ministry of Education Science and Technology in Tanzania organized a three-day review of the education sector with various partners, including GESCI, implementing education programmes in Tanzania.GESCI held meetings with officials and provided a brief on the progress of implementation of the African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) Programme in Pwani and Morogoro regions. *For further information contact: jerome.morrissey@gesci.org*

On-going Mid Term Review for the ADSI Programme in Kenya, Tanzania and Cotè d'Ivoire

June- September 2019. The Mastercard Foundation began the mid-term review of the African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI). Field visits conducted across all the project regions in Kenya and Tanzania. External evaluators and GESCI MERL Specialists held interviews with Government officials, school leaders, teachers, parents representatives and students to collect data and feedback on progress achieved by the African Digital Schools Initiative in these countries. The missions also involved visits to partner organizations namely; Morogoro Teachers training college in Tanzania; The Centre teacher training colleges, The Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Africa (*CEMASTEA*), University of Nairobi, College of Information and communication Technology, University of Dar es Salaam. The focus is not only on the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of this innovation but also on processes that need to be in place for greater sustainability and scaling up the initiative more widely. Cote d'Ivoire phase was concluded in September. *For further information contact: samuel.otieno@gesci.org*

The 9th Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning- Edinburgh, Scotland

9th -12th September, 2019. The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) has partnered with The Open University to co-host the Forum and celebrate the 30 and 50 years of our respective commitment to quality education and lifelong learning. GESCI's Education Specialist presented on the status of engagement with the Commonwealth of Learning on implementing a teacher futures project in Tanzania. *For further information contact: elizabeth.mbasu@gesci.org.*

EMIS Training for Ministries of Education of Sierra Leone

GESCI facilitated the training of government officials from the Ministries of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and Technical and Higher Education over a two-week period in Cape Town South Africa. The first week focused on EMIS and the second week the group split between GIS and M&E training with a focus on applications for their sector contexts. *For further information contact: angela.arnott@gesci.org*

Participants at the EMIS training Image/GESCI

2. EVENTS- PAST & UPCOMING

African Development Bank, African Institute for Mathematical Sciences Next Einstein Initiative sign MOU to strengthen capacity in mathematics and science across the continent - Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

The African Development Bank and the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences Next Einstein Initiative (AIMS-NEI), signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen education, training and research in mathematical sciences in Africa. The partnership sets the framework for collaboration between the two institutions on enhanced mathematical research and innovation in key areas of the continent's development challenges. It will also facilitate the design and implementation of new projects and programs and further cooperation in events related to science and technology. *Visit:* www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/

ADEA holds workshop on the African Education Fund

The Director of Human Capital, Youth and Skills Development, AfDB, the Head of Education Division, African Union Commission and the Executive Secretary endorsed a new African Education Fund for ADEA in a consultative forum held in Abidjan. The Minister of National Education & Technical Vocational and Education Training (TVET) of Côte d'Ivoire noted that the fund is about African ownership, continuity, and gaining control of long-term sustainability for education and training systems in Africa. *Visit: bit.ly/2uQ0r4R*

The Second Meeting of the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework / OER Network –Kigali, Rwanda

The meeting brought together participants representing over 13 institutions in 12 countries (Djibouti, Egypt, Kenya, Lebanon Mozambique, Nigeria, Philippines, Rwanda, South Africa, Tunisie Turkey and Uganda), as well as representatives of the Rwanda Education Board ICT Department. The ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (ICT CFT) In the framework of this project, Ministries of Education and/or Teacher Training Institutions and/or Higher Education institutions from over 10 UNESCO Member States have developed training courses in that have been consolidated on the ISKME ICT CFT harnessing OER Hub available at https://www.oercommons.org/hubs/UNESCO. *For further information contact: Zeynep Varoglu at z.varoglu@unesco.org*

African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) workshop

The initiative of the African Union (AU) to establish the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) is underpinned by Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, The African Union (AU) and its Member States have decided to equip the continent with the necessary conditions and mechanisms to facilitate mobility and transparency of skills and qualifications, in support of the AU Agenda 2063, through ongoing initiatives in harmonisation of education, development of common standards and quality frameworks, and the Addis Ababa Convention for mutual recognition of degrees and certificates. The African Continental Free Trade requires recognition of academic qualifications. *Visit: http://bit.ly/2lzKq2r*

African Union Teacher Prize and Validation Workshop for Teacher Professional Guidelines

21– 23 October 2019. The African Union (AU) Commission in collaboration with stakeholders in education will hold the 1st ever AU teacher award; the technical, stakeholder review and validation of key teacher development guidelines and framework for qualifications and teacher mobility. *For further Information contact: StephensC@africa-union.org; with copy to OwusuM@africa-union.org.*

e-Learning Africa 2019 – 14th International Conference & Exhibition on ICT for Education, Training and Skills Development, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

23 – 25 October 2019. e-Learning Africa is the leading pan-African conference and exhibition on ICT for Education, Training & Skills Development. The three- day event offers participants the opportunity to develop multinational and cross-industry contacts and partnerships, as well as to enhance their knowledge and skills. Over 13 consecutive years, eLearning Africa has hosted 17,278 participants from 100+ different countries around the world, with over 80% coming from the African continent. More than 3,530 speakers have addressed the conference about every aspect of technology supported learning, training and skills development. *For further information contact:* info@elearning-africa.com

2019 AfriLabs Annual Gathering

28- 30 October 2019. Afrilabs has partnered with the Division of Human Resources and Youth Development in the Department of Human Resource, Science and Technology (HRST) within African Union Commission to host the 2019 AfriLabs Annual Gathering. This edition of the Afrilabs Annual Gathering themed '***Connect: Towards an Integrated Innovation Ecosystem***' will focus on building collaborative and sustainable systems and creating synergies that will pave the way for the African innovation ecosystem to thrive, and contribute to the social and economic development of the African continent. This collaboration is part of a broader agreement with the HRST Department to support the '***1 Million by 2021***' Initiative, which seeks to implement tangible interventions in the key areas of Education, Employment, Entrepreneurship and Engagement (4Es), and aims to reach at least 1 million youth by 2021.*Visit:* https://www.afrilabs.com/

African Women in Technology Conference (AWTC) 2019

9th November 2019. The AWTC hosted by Akirachix, inspires the next generation of women in STEM and a platform for them to speak up. The Africa Women in Tech Conference (AWTC) by AkiraChix is the largest gathering of women in tech in Africa whose main objectives are: To Create opportunities and tools that allow women to grow, learn and develop across the tech industry, to expose women to emerging technologies to increase capacity and knowledge,to provide a safe space for networking leading to increased mentorship as well as strengthen our collective and diverse voices and to showcase women innovators and honor contributions made by women in the tech community.The event will be held at Radisson Blue Hotel in UpperHill ,Nairobi, Kenya.*To get tickets visit:* http://bit.ly/AWTC19TICKETS

2019 African Universities Week

11-15 November 2019. The Association of African Universities is inviting all Higher Education Institutions across the continent to celebrate the 2019 African Universities Week, **"Towards a Peaceful and Secure Africa through Quality Higher Education"**. It seeks to bring to the fore, the critical role that African higher education institutions and stakeholders need to play to foster peaceful environments towards promoting development and the attainment of the "Africa we want" by 2063. https://www.uew.edu.gh/announcements/aau-calls-higher-education-institutions

-celebrate-african-universities%E2%80%99-week

African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA) International Conference – Nairobi, Kenya

18 - 20 November 2019. The African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA), in partnership with University of Nairobi, will host an international conference and workshops under the theme "Africa and the Fourth Industrial Revolution: Defining a Role for Research Universities". Interested persons are invited to express their interest in making relevant presentations by sending abstracts of their planned presentations, following the brief and guidelines. http://arua.org.za/wp-content/uploads/Call-for-Papers-for-ARUA-International-Conference-2019.pdf

3. EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT NEWS

GLOBAL: Educating girls and women: an essential brick in building a more peaceful and sustainable world

How can education advance the status of women and girls worldwide and work towards preventing conflicts, protect the most vulnerable populations and transform societies? This question was at the heart of discussions in Geneva during the Graduate Women International (GWI) 33rd Triennial, Centenary Celebration and One-Day Conference, which was held at the University of Geneva on 25-28 July, 2019. The theme of the year, "**Peace through Education**", reflects the recognition of education, in particular education of women and girls, as the cornerstone of peaceful, just and sustainable societies. *Visit:*
https://en.unesco.org/news/educating-girls-and-women-essential-brick-building-more-peaceful-and-sustainable-world

AFRICA: Regional incubators to tap research potential of academics

Four of the 24 university-based World Bank Africa Centres of Excellence (ACEs) have been selected as sites for the establishment of regional incubation centres for East and Southern Africa aimed at fostering university-industry links and providing graduate students and faculty with a platform from which to commercialise their research. The centres, based in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania, will each receive a US$250,000 from the World Bank as seed funding geared towards turning research findings and innovations into tangible and impactful products and services for the socio-economic development of society in the key areas of industry, agriculture, health, and education/applied statistics. Their establishment is intended to bring academia and industry closer together. The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), a regional facilitation unit for the World Bank-supported Eastern and Southern Africa Higher Education Centres of Excellence (ACE II) Project, selected the four centres from among the 15 that applied. *Visit: www.universityworldnews.com*

COUNTRIES

Kenya: IIEP supports dissemination of Kenya's Education Sector Disaster Management Policy

IIEP-UNESCO, alongside partners, supported the Kenyan Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), to disseminate the country's Education Disaster Management Policy in Turkana County. The three-day workshop, held in Lodwar, brought together representatives from the education sector, and related fields, from all seven sub-counties. At the end of the workshop, the participants had established an Education Disaster Management Committee for Turkana County – a key element of the policy aimed at improving disaster risk management in all counties in Kenya. *Visit: http://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/iiep-supports-dissemination-kenyas-education-sector-disaster-management-policy-5034*

Algeria: IncubMe Algeria ready to introduce "Ecalio"

"Ecalio" aims to strengthen and improve the dialogue between parents and the teaching body in schools in order to ensure the success of the children's academic achievements. This is an initiative between IncubMe and the private school directory in Algeria. To learn more, contact IncubMe via *contact@incubme.com*

Guinea: Flipped Classroom in Guinea's Teacher Training

At a Teacher Training College in N'Zérékoré, a forested mountainous region in south-eastern Guinea, students are learning in a solar-powered media room. For the beginning of a lesson, the education-sciences lecturer prepares a Kahoot Quiz (https://kahoot.it/) to test the prospective teachers' comprehension of the video tutorial that they were supposed to have studied in preparation. The students connect their own mobile phones to the college's internal network, open the application and off they go with the quiz. *Visit: https://ela-newsportal.com*

4. NETWORKING AND RESOURCES

New Initiative launched to Support Human Capital Development through Education in Africa

The World Bank and the Government of Japan have jointly announced a new Africa-focused initiative during the seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in Yokohama. Together with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DfID), the World Bank is developing a policy dashboard focused on giving governments in low- and middle- income countries a better understanding of what's going on in their education systems at the school and system level in basic education, so they can make, and track the impact of, real-time policy decisions at the national level. *Visit:*
https://news.fundsforngos.org/africa/new-initiative-launched-to-support-human-capital-development-through-education-in-africa/

Beyond Commitments: How countries are implementing SDG4

This is a special publication on the occasion of the 2019 High-level Political Forum, prepared by the Global Education Monitoring Report team under the auspices of the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee.
https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000369008/PDF/

Principles designed to help digital development practitioners integrate established best practices into technology-enabled programs

With the advent of accessible digital technology more than a decade ago, international development organizations began seeking new ways of including digital tools in their programming for improved outcomes. These efforts were initially quite successful; significant advancements occurred in various sectors such as health and agriculture, more communities around the globe were connected, and underserved populations were reached in a way that had not been possible before. However, some digitally enabled programs failed – and quite often that failure was for reasons that were both predictable and preventable. https://digitalprinciples.org/

AU Teacher Mobility framework

The African Union (AU) is developing a continental teacher qualification framework and a protocol to ensure teacher mobility in Africa in what will culminate in a "teachers without borders" workforce. The continental body is also working on standardised training and is putting in place measures to strengthen science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) training and teaching. The initiative is being undertaken as part of the teacher development programme that has been prioritised as part of the AU's Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25). The programme is taking into consideration recommendations that came out of a study on teacher training, working and living conditions commissioned by the AU and carried out in 54 member states with funding from the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa. https://www.universityworldnews.com

Leadership Training for University Dons

A four-year leadership training programme aimed at vice-chancellors, principals and deans of 54 African universities has proved popular among university leaders and a third phase is planned, according to its organisers. Participants of the Capacity Strengthening Programme for Leadership in African Universities, funded by the Mastercard Foundation and implemented jointly by the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) and the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), said the training had helped them to reflect more deeply on their characteristics and effectiveness as leaders. https://www.universityworldnews.com

$251 Million Package to support Women Entrepreneurs in Africa

French President and G7 leaders has approved a package totalling $251 million in support of the African Development Bank's AFAWA initiative to support women entrepreneurs in Africa. The risk-sharing mechanism used by AFAWA (Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa) is a practical approach to international commitments. It is a direct response to the demand by women to ease access to financing, specifically on the need to establish a financing mechanism for women's economic empowerment, adopted during a summit of African heads of state in 2015 and assigned to the African Development Bank for implementation. Currently, women operate over 40% of SMEs in Africa, but there is a financing gap of $42 billion between male and female entrepreneurs. *Visit: https://news.fundsforngos.org/africa/251-million-package-to-support-women-entrepreneurs-in-africa/*

Artificial Intelligence for Sustainable Development Report

This study examines innovative ways of supporting the application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to achieve sustainable development of intelligent buildings. Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) #4 is Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The study found that green building materials were the main aspect of green architecture in use and prefabricated system of construction was the main aspect of Lean construction technique in use in Lagos. *Visit: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000370308*

The Alladin Programme

Alladin Learning Solutions offers a blended program designed to incorporate interactive and practical activities for the Early Years learning environment. Resource Boxes costing $14.00 are distributed to educators containing low cost materials that are easy to replicate and source. Each box contains 15 different activities, geared towards teaching concepts and skills necessary for fundamental literacy and numeracy. The boxes are distributed every quarter over the course of a calendar year. This allows educators to build a meaningful resource base with over 50 items to practically teach children important skills and knowledge required for Early Years Development. The boxes contain a manual and an online link giving an explanation for each activity and how to use in the classroom. In addition to the manual, there are video tutorials of each activity offering practical demonstrations and applications of the activities. In addition an online database on a USB Flash stick of pre-downloaded content is provided with the boxes. This enables educators to source a variety of Early Years Development material without the need for data or Internet connectivity. *For further information contact:* Kimberleigh Bodley at *kimbabodley13@gmail.com*

GPE Gender Responsive Planning

Education transforms lives. It is the surest investment to break down social and economic differences between people, unravel inequalities based on gender and accelerate progress towards the entire vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Yet, despite the world's commitment to ensure every child completes 12 years of quality education, in low-income countries only 4% of the poorest finish upper secondary school, falling to 2% among marginalized girls. Sustainable Development Goal 4, inclusive and equitable quality education for all, is about much more than education access. It calls for education policies to look beyond gender parity in school enrollment in order to **put gender equality at the heart of education** through gender-sensitive plans and policies. Gender-responsive education sector planning is an essential tool for advancing gender equality in and through education.*Visit:* https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/gender-responsive-education-sector-planning-

pathway-gender-equality-education

Newsletter information sources include:

African Countries' and Ministry of Education websites, University World News, SADC, UNESCO,GPE,Funds for NGOs,RUFORUM Newsletter,ELA Newsportal,ADEA, CESA Journal, UIS, IRIN News, World Bank, All Africa Global Media, Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA), Association of African Universities (AAU),IIEP, IICBA, OSISA, African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF),SciDev.net, Pambazuka Newsletter, FAWE and general sources.

GESCI's African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) is funded by Mastercard Foundation, Canada.