



INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY

**2019
TRANSFORMING
EDUCATION**

Concept Note

Theme: Preparing Youth for Future of Work

Background

Setting the sails for transforming education in Africa will signal a future of promise for 65% of the African population. It is estimated that by 2050 Africa's young population, i.e., those aged between 0 and 24 years old, will increase by nearly 50 percent. In 2050, the continent will have the largest number of young people, making up nearly twice the young population of South Asia and Southeast Asia, East Asia, and Oceania.

Education is a fundamental human right. It is also a vital tool for achieving the Agenda 2030 development goals as well as the Africa 2063 aspirations. Sustainable Development Goal 4 emphasises the need for inclusive quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. This is because quality education gives young people the skills, knowledge, competences and values to help them to break cycles of poverty, discrimination, social and gender inequality. They are empowered to make positive changes, overturn oppressive gender norms and promote equality. This benefits individuals, families and communities. Health, nutrition and life expectancy improve. Educated girls tend to delay marriage, have fewer but healthier children and contribute more financially. Quality education includes comprehensive sexuality education, informs young people about citizenship and climate change, and helps to safeguard them in conflict and disaster situations.¹

As young people are set to represent an important share of the continent's population, the World Bank report on, "*The Skills Balancing Act in Sub-Saharan Africa: Investing in Skills for Productivity, Inclusivity, and Adaptability*" warns against the risks that can arise if the young population is not given the opportunities needed to improve their lives. The report cites the risks of insecurity, instability, and mass migration; however, it praises young people as the innovators, leaders, and workers of the future, stressing the importance of investing into young people's health and education in order to unlock productivity and innovation, thus reducing poverty.

Rationale

Despite significant gains in educational attainment, Africa's students/youth are not acquiring the foundational skills they need to succeed in the modern workforce, according to the World Bank report.

¹ <https://planinternational.sharepoint.com/sites/planetapps/Programmes/thematic-work/IQE/Documents/Plan-IQE-Summary%20%28Narrative%20in%20a%20pages%29.pdf>

With the fourth Industrial revolution taking shape, Girls and young women already at risk of being left behind have higher odds of being further marginalized by facing a growing wage gap or leaving the labor market due to not only the lack of access to but inclusive quality education approaches that encompasses their unique contexts and needs.

In fact, the Mckinsey 2019 report on the future of women at work², states that in the automation age, women face new challenges overlaid on long-established ones. Technology adoption especially with the introduction of Artificial Intelligence (AI) could displace millions from their jobs; many others will need to change the way they work. Globally, 40 million to 160 million women may need to transition between occupations by 2030, often into higher-skilled roles. Men and women need to be skilled, mobile, and tech-savvy in the automation age, but women face pervasive barriers. Concerted and creative new solutions are needed to enable women to move forward.

There are numerous innovations around the world that are making an enormous difference in bridging the skills to market gap. These, however, do not translate to the systemic change needed to solve the global unemployment crisis. While there is growing evidence around which educational strategies improve skills acquisition and labor market match, we know much less about how to translate this into improved policies and practices at scale.

It is with this in mind that Plan International Regional Hub, Plan RESA Country Offices, African Youth Commission, Africa Youth Trust, Office of the African Union Envoy on Youth and International Organisation of Employers will jointly convene a webinar dubbed, ***Preparing Youth for Future of Work***.

In this webinar, we will seek to:

1. Spotlight Young 'Education Transformers' innovations across the region
2. Highlight partnership opportunities between youth-led networks, governments, AU/UN agencies and other education stakeholders to transform education
3. Provide a platform for African youth to voice their demands to policy makers as well as highlight their roles and contributions in transforming education to Prepare Youth for Future of Work.

The webinar will be preceded by a Twitter chat in a moderated panel to highlight the importance of transforming education in preparing the young men and women in Africa for the Future of Work.

This webinar will take place on 12th August 2019 at 12noon EAT.

As a key stakeholder, your participation and contribution in both the pre-Twitter chat and the webinar will be very valuable.

To confirm participation, kindly send in your response to elsie.masava@plan-international.org by Wednesday 7th August 2019.

² www.mckinsey.com/mgi