UNESCO Supports Development of Literacy Assessment Framework For Kenya National Adult Literacy Survey II

UNESCO in collaboration with the Ministry of Education-Department of Adult and Continuing Education conducted from 7 to 11 November 2016 a week long activity comprising of bilateral meetings and a 3-day workshop geared towards the development of a literacy assessment framework that will provide the scope and guidelines in the forthcoming national adult literacy survey; which will be the 2nd survey in Kenya after the initial one conducted in 2006.

The bilateral meetings and workshop drew participation from the KNALS II national steering committee and the national technical working group that draws its membership from the Ministry of Education, development partners, universities, the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO and the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.

The meeting highlighted the main scope and coverage of the survey in the light of literacy, numeracy, security, employability, health, environment, civic education, values and ethics, social-cultural interaction and ICT. The survey should be inclusive in the targeting to include: minority groups, informal settlements, nomadic groups and persons living with disabilities and persons in detention centers/prisons.

As reiterated in the meetings and in the workshop, data plays a key role in informing policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and reporting. Currently, there is an identified gap in the area of adult literacy in Kenya as the data available relates to the survey carried out in 2006. Thus there is need to obtain up to date data that shall guide in the identification of policy and management gaps in the adult and continuing education and hence aligning to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - leaving no one behind.
UNOPS rehabilitates the oneUN Compound in Burundi

On 24 October 2016, UNOPS delegations from the Nairobi and Burundi offices attended the inauguration ceremony of the rehabilitated One UN compound in Bujumbura. The ceremony was attended by over 300 delegates comprising of representatives from the Government of Burundi and UN agencies.

The ceremony was opened by Mr. Paolo Lembo, the UN Resident Coordinator, who emphasized the fact that UNDP is celebrating 42 years of cooperation in Burundi where their priority areas include peace building, early recovery, respect for democratic values and human rights, rule of law, amongst others. Additionally, Mr. Lembo reiterated the fact that Burundi still needs a great deal of support from the United Nations from the current stage of peace building to sustainable development.

Additionally, the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Cooperation, Joseph Bangurambona, added that the Burundian government commitment demonstrates its willingness to continue and even strengthen the decade's long fruitful cooperation they have had with development partners in Burundi.

UNDP contracted UNOPS to rehabilitate the existing infrastructure and to construct additional buildings and facilities within the current oneUN property; all for the benefit of those who live and work there. The project was valued at USD 3,014,567. As part of the project, a new visitor centre was built; five existing residential houses were rehabilitated and one converted into a safe haven. UNOPS played a major supervisory role in this project and provided quality assurance and delivery as per the technical specifications, design and set international standards.

Prior to rehabilitation and construction works undertaken by UNOPS, the compound comprised of dilapidated buildings that were about 15 to 20 years old. This project will benefit about 90 personnel from UNDP and UNDSS, and is open to accommodating more personnel from various agencies.

Empowering Women through Gender-sensitive Public Procurement

Emmy Choge is a wife, a mother of four and an entrepreneur for the past 5 years. She runs a curio shop in city market, Nairobi, owns a stall at the Maasai market, supplies computer accessories, stationary and also hires out tents for events/functions.

After getting married, Emmy was determined not to stay idle at home. She started a small grocery shop in her village in Uasin-Gishu County in Kenya. The shop was doing well but Emmy wanted to do something bigger. She had always wanted to work for a government institution which was not forthcoming. She decided to take up an offer to manage her aunt's curio and crafts business in Nairobi.

The aunt’s offer was a blessing in disguise as it was a good starting platform for her to learn about the curio and crafts business. By 2011, she had gained enough experience to venture on her own. She registered a business as a sole proprietor and opened a shop selling Curios, beads and Kikois at the city market in Nairobi.

Just like any typical startup, starting off
was not easy and her biggest challenge was finding capital to launch her business. Getting a loan from the banks was hard as she did not meet the lending criteria. She was left with the option of using her personal savings and additional support from her husband.

In early 2014, Emmy was introduced to the Joyful Women’s Organization (JOYWO), an organization that empowers women through knowledge sharing and encourages them to save and borrow against their savings for income generating projects. Emmy’s encounter with JOYWO was another blessing. She decided to join the organization and is currently a member of Noble Sisters Group, serving as the group secretary.

In June 2014, she was invited to attend a two-day training on how to access government procurement opportunities (popularly known as AGPO), organized by JOYWO with support from UN Women, Kenya Office.

“This training was my turning point in life” says Emmy. During the training, I learnt for the first time about the 30 percent quota on government tenders that was reserved for women, youth and persons living with disability. I also learnt that one can approach government offices freely to ask for business and that anyone can do business with the government provided you meet the requirements. I was keen to work with government as an employee but this was an opportunity to do business so immediately after the workshop, I set out to work and started to organize all the necessary papers that I needed.” she said.

She went ahead to share the knowledge gained with her own son and his university friends and encouraged them to register businesses and apply for tenders under the youth category.

In 2015, Emmy won her first government tender worth KES 226,000 (US$2260) for the supply and delivery of stationary and computer accessories to the Ministry of Trade. Soon after this, she won a second tender worth KES 30,000 (US$300), this time, from the Ministry of Agriculture for tent hire services.

Emmy’s message to other women is; Women should wake up, step out of the box and do business with the Government, AGPO is real and it is doable. “The two tenders I won changed my life, I am now confident to walk into a government office and I am also able to pay fees for my daughter who is studying a business degree at a University in Nairobi”.

Empowering women through public procurement

UN Women under its Women’s Economic Empowerment programme supports Access to Public Procurement Opportunities (AGPO). The initiative targets – on one hand, women-owned businesses to submit successful tenders for government contracts and, - on the other hand government supply chain managers to apply the AGPO legislation. To date, in collaboration with key partners, UN Women has supported practical trainings for over 1500 women vendors in Nairobi, Uasin-Gishu and Turkana Counties and plans to extend the trainings to other Counties in the Country. Find out more about UN Women’s initiative: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLcpRKnvP7c&feature=youtu.be
Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) Gold Status for UNOPS

For the second consecutive year, UNOPS has retained its Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) Gold status in Sustainable Procurement. In 2015 our score was 93 out of a possible 100 and in 2016 we bettered the score with a high of 97. This is a significant achievement for UNOPS as we continue to be only the UN organization to receive this recognition, and one of only four organizations globally to have achieved this level of recognition.

CIPS corporate certification is an in-depth assessment process that measures an organization’s procurement function against world-class standards in five dimensions. These five dimensions are essential facets of all organizations, no matter what their function, objectives or location.

The whole process is designed to ensure that organizations’ are operating efficiently and effectively, and can drive constant improvement. UNOPS country offices were recognized as having achieved this level of excellence, which measurably proves UNOPS proficiency in delivering world class projects.

Leaving No One Behind to Reduce Disaster Mortality in Kenya

Floods and earthquake contribute to the highest numbers of disaster mortality in the world, with chances of women and children more likely to die when compared to men. This statistical data was announced during the National Symposium for DRR, a multi-stakeholder forum was held in Nanyuki Laikipia County as part of the International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR), commemorated on the 13th October annually. The event’s purpose was to celebrate how communities around the world are working towards reducing their exposure to disasters and raising awareness about the importance of managing the risks that they face.
This year’s Symposium was organized under the theme; “STEP UP TO REDUCE DISASTER MORTALITY IN KENYA” based on the first target for Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SF DRR). The 2016 edition marks the launch of a new, seven-year campaign focused on the seven targets of the Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030.

The International Day for DRR provided an opportunity for Kenya to join the global community in celebrating the work and efforts of various stakeholders in managing disaster risks globally whilst the DRR Symposium provides a forum for DRR stakeholders to share knowledge and experience, learn from each other, document some of the best practices, review challenges, opportunities and recommend measures to strengthen DRM in Kenya.

The event saw participation drawn from various DRR stakeholders from the National and County level including: Governor Laikipia County, Hon. Joshua Irungu; County Commissioner, Laikipia County Mr. Chege Mwangi; Deputy Governor Baringo County, Hon Mathew Tuitoek; Member of the National Assembly for Isiolo County, Hon. Tiyah Galgalo, GOK staff, World Bank representative, UN Agencies, private sector, INGOs, academia and community representative. The Women Representative and Member of Parliament for Isiolo, Hon Tiyah Galgalo, briefed the participants on the current status of the DRM bill that she is supporting as a Private Member’s bill. From her brief, highlighting that the bill has been published and is awaiting presentation to Finance and Administration & Security committees.

The World Bank unveiled plans for a KSh. 15 billion funding facility towards DRR in the country. This facility is being made available to countries that have recently moved to low middle level income status such as Kenya. However, to access such funding, the countries needs to put in place the necessary legal frameworks i.e. the pending Disaster Risk Management (DRM) policy. Laikipia County Governor Hon. Joshua Irungu expressed commitment to support the policy and to also mobilize the Council of Governors to support it.

During the two-day national symposium, a range of papers were presented showing how both natural and human induced disasters have contributed to global mortality with significant impacts on the poor, particularly women. UN Women presented a paper on the linkages between gender and disaster mortality. “Women and children are 14 times more likely to die from disasters when compared to men. In other words, there is a direct linkage between gender and disaster mortality.” Ms. Beatrice Teya, UN Women Disaster Risk Reduction and Humanitarian specialist pointed out.

At the end of the two-day symposium, a communique was produced highlighting major issues that the participants would like the government to focus on in order to address some of disaster challenges in the country. The communique resolves to:

1. Request the National and County Governments to speedily expedite the process of having the Disaster Risk Management Policy and Bill enactment in parliaments;
2. Urge the National and County Governments to institute and strengthen measures to reduce disaster mortality from key hazards;
3. Request the National and County Governments to strengthen coordination and implementation of disaster risk reduction activities to enhance community resilience at all levels;
4. Call upon the private sector to proactively engage and support government efforts to ensure risk sensitive investments and risk informed infrastructural planning;
5. Call on the Government to partner with academia and research institutions to do evidence based research and provide information on impacts of disasters on country’s economy;
6. Request all stakeholders to take innovative approaches including use of technology to address disaster risk management challenges;
7. Consider involvement of communities especially youth, women and people with disabilities in resilience building.

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**Kenya Represented at the 4th Conference on Technical Cooperation and Capacity Building for Border Management in Bangkok, Thailand**

The Director of Immigration Services under the Ministry of Interior and Coordination, Maj. Gen. (Rtd) Dr. Gordon Kihalangwa represented the Republic of Kenya at the 4th Conference on Technical Cooperation and Capacity Building for Border Management, hosted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Asia Pacific Smart Card Association (APSCA).

The conference was held at the Centara Grand & Bangkok Convention Centre at Central World, Thailand from the 9th to 11th November 2016.

The conference was hosted under the theme of “Integration Registration Systems at Borders with National Identity Management” and sought to develop innovative approaches to link the registration of personnel crossing at borders with national/regional registration processes to promote a “One Person – One Identity” approach.

In recognition of this aim, the conference brought together private sector companies and government representatives mainly from the Asia-Pacific region responsible for border and identity management, immigration as well as international and regional organizations.

This allowed for a shared dialogue around how identity management can be best adapted to the rapidly changing migration realities and new crossborder mobility patterns on the ground. As part of its mandate, IOM directed discussions in line with the development and adoption of innovative and durable procedures that would promote efficient, safe and dignified border management solutions.

During the conference, Kenya’s Dr. Kihalangwa presented on immigration topics within the context of transnational crime. Topics covered included definitions of transnational crime, threats and vulnerabilities that ultimately contribute to transnational crime, as well as the long-term effects of it. He also spoke about Kenya’s law enforcement infrastructure and the experience and challenges the country has faced in countering transnational crime.

In this context, he drew upon the
management of immigration across Kenya's five shared borders with South Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania and Somalia. The unstable nature of some of these states, as well as the influx of up to half a million refugees within Kenya's borders has posed unique challenges to effective border control in the country.

The conference was both timely and of great importance for the nation, as Kenya moves forward in introducing the e-passport system and the adoption of new technologies.

IOM, in partnership with the Department of Immigration Services, has been implementing an immigration and border management project in Kenya since March 2016, with funding from the Government of Japan.

The project is aimed at strengthening Kenya’s capacity to manage borders through trainings, workshops, the provision of necessary equipment (such as patrol vehicles, document examination machines, computers and office furniture), installation of facial recognition technology, as well as the updating of the nation's immigration border procedures and operations manual.

Private sector stepped it up for gender equality by committing to Women Empowerment Principles (WEPs) on 27th October, in Nairobi. 16 companies represented by managers and directors attended the forum that focused on mainstreaming gender in the corporate sector in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

“One of the lessons learned from the unfinished business of the MDGs is that if we have to make women's rights and empowerment a reality” said Ms Karin Fueg, UN Women Kenya Deputy Director.

Research shows that companies headed by women perform better if women are better represented on the corporate boards and management.

According to McKinsey & Company’s report; ‘Women Matter Africa’, companies with a greater number of women in leadership positions tend to manage risks better, relate better with customers, openness to new perspective, collaboration and inclusive and strength in ethics and fairness.

The recent U.N. Development Program’s 2016 Africa Human Development Report argues that economic and social discrimination against women is costing Africa more than $100 billion a year. The report notes sub-Saharan Africa pays a very high price
for maintaining discriminatory gender policies. It estimates total economic losses due to gender inequality in the labor market in 2014 cost the region $105 billion, or six percent of its Gross Domestic Product.

Yet progress in women leadership is slow despite this evidence.

“The SDGs call for a fundamental shift; a paradigm shift in doing business altogether to ensure that structural inequalities are addressed, the gender gap is closed and most importantly opportunities for economic growth are fully embraced for the benefit of all” said Ms Karin Fueg.

Embracing the Women

Empowerment Principles

WEPs serve as a comprehensive tool that businesses can use to shape gender inclusive strategies and thus help to achieve the new SDGs set forth in the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. UN Women in Kenya has been promoting WEPs since 2014.

“I am happy to mention that in a relatively short span of time, we have over 20 companies that have signed to these Principles and are now a part of a global list of over 1157 companies all over the world that have signed to the WEPs” said Ms Banu Khan, UN Women Kenya Women Economic Empowerment Programme Analyst. South Africa leads with having 50 companies signed to the WEPs.

Three companies that have signed to the WEPs shared initiatives of what they are doing in implementing the WEPs.

Safaricom being the first company to sign up to the WEPs, have a “Women in Technology” programme that seeks to help increase number of women in technology in the company from the current 10%. Safaricom has also set up child care centers, breastfeeding centers and have in-house doctors. This allows working mothers strike a balance between work and being parents.

Eastern African Gulf African bank has set up, Anisa, a women’s account that helps women access finance. Nairobi Securities Exchange organizes dialogue platform with companies with an aim of promoting diversity in the board room.

The McKinsey research report also recommends that for organizations to achieve gender balance, the organizations need to make gender diversity a top board and CEO priority. Represented by their CEOs, three companies: Divine Schools (a training company on events management and flower decoration); City Scape (a company that deals in commercial cleaning services) and Arabian Cuisine Restaurant signed up to the WEPs.

The signatories to the WEPs have agreed to meet regularly for knowledge and good practices exchange. For my information in how to sign up to the WEPs or be invited to the regular meetings contact: Banu Khan, Women Economic Empowerment Program Analyst: banu.khan@unwomen.org

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Maasai Moran Representative addressing participants. Photo by Newton Kanhema, UNIC Nairobi

Maasai Morans entertaining guests. Photo by Newton Kanhema, UNIC Nairobi

Ms. Zainab welcomes Cabinet Secretary, Gender, Hon. Sicily Kariuki. Photo by Newton Kanhema, UNIC Nairobi

One of the girls graduating. Photo by Newton Kanhema, UNIC Nairobi

One of the Ex-Cutters addressing guests after denouncing the cut. Photo by Newton, UNIC Nairobi

Some of the girls who graduated after going through alternative rite of passage. Photo by Newton Kanhema, UNIC Nairobi

One of the Ex-Cutters after declaring no more cutting. Photo by Newton Kanhema, UNIC Nairobi

Girls demonstrating showing their support against Female Genital Mutilation. Photo by Newton Kanhema, UNIC Nairobi
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9. Advances democracy, assisting many countries a year with their elections
10. Promotes maternal health, saving the lives of millions of women a year

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