

**DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION****Press Release N° 080/2018****A Consultation and Experience Sharing Workshop between the Sahel and the Horn of Africa on Peace-building and the Prevention of Violent Extremism through Education kicked off at the AU Headquarters****Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, May 22, 2018:**

The Consultation and Experience Sharing Workshop between the Sahel and the Horn of Africa on Peace-building and the Prevention of Violent Extremism through Education kicked off today at the

African Union Headquarters. The workshop is organized by the African Union Commission (AUC) in collaboration with UNESCO-International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA).

The main objectives of the Consultation are to:

- i. To sensitize the Sahel countries on the project objectives, strategies and priorities;
- ii. To share experience of the peace-building project in the Horn of African;
- iii. To develop project actions to empower youth for peace and resilience building and PVE in Sahel countries through teacher development;
- iv. To identify specific potential risks that might undermine implementation at country level and devise appropriate strategies in view of its mitigation.

Representing H.E. Professor Sarah M.E. Anyang Agbor the Commissioner for Human Resource Science and Technology (HRST) at the African Union (AU), Dr. Beatrice Njenga, Head of Education Division expressed her gratitude to the Government of Japan to support this great endeavor and noted



that Aspiration 4 of the Agenda 2063 emphasizes that “a culture of peace and tolerance shall be nurtured in Africa’s children and youth through peace education”. Dr. Beatrice Njenga said that the consultation has value in completing and advancing the efforts of the AU and it is a unique opportunity to leverage and realize demographic dividends.

Dr. Beatrice Njenga noted that the quest for peace is reflected in sectoral frameworks, including the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA), which calls for peace education and safeguarding education in times of emergency, and ensuring safe teaching and learning environments. The education system is one of the most powerful instruments for building sustainable peace. Through education learners can develop peaceful dispositions and mind-sets, while building conflict avoidance and management skills. She emphasized the need for teachers’ training and concluded by affirming that education is key for Africa we want.

H.E. Mr. Shinichi Saida, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to African Union and IGAD expressed his satisfaction with the work done by UNESCO-IICBA in the peace-building project for the Horn of Africa in 2017 and said that Government of Japan has committed 500,000 USD to extending the project to the Sahel Region. He further added that the project intends to formulate teaching materials working closely with the Ministry of Education, universities, and teacher training institutions in each Sahel country and to send selected teachers to Japan for further training in collaboration with universities in Japan. He concluded by welcoming the participation of the AU as a partner in the project and further added that AU's input is needed to make the project successful.

UNESCO-IICBA Director Dr Yumiko Yokozeki, addressed the opening ceremony meeting on the involvement of the UNESCO-IICBA with the Government of Japan in the “Youth Empowerment for Peace and Resilience Building and Prevention of Violent Extremism in Sahel Countries through Teacher Development” project agreement which was signed on 6th March 2018. The main objectives of the project are peace and resilience building for youth through teacher development, and creating an opportunity for youth to embrace peace values and prevent extremisms through education and teacher development.

Dr Yumiko Yokozeki noted that the Sahel countries are affected by natural disasters and ongoing conflicts, and that is why the project targets Sahel countries including: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan and cross border areas.

Ms. Victoria Ibiwoye, Youth Representative of the SDG4 Steering Committee, represented the voices and ideas of young people at the workshop. She commended the AU and UNESCO-IICBA for ensuring that youth have a seat at the table, and appealed that now is the time to fully harness young people for their creativity and resilience in solving peace and countering violent extremism.

The main outcomes of the two day consultation will be:

- Participants shared possible areas of interventions and joint activities in relation to the project;
- Participants developed youth intervention plan for the project;
- Sahel and Horn of Africa countries developed national action points and follow up plans.

Participants from Uganda, South Sudan, Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia shared their experiences on peace building activities that have been carried out in their countries at the national level through the peace-building project implemented in 2017. The

presentations highlighted mechanisms for supporting peace building through education including: engaging students in peace planning, formation of peace clubs, promotion of safe schools and training of pre-service teachers in delivery of peace education.

Tomorrow, participants from Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal will present on their action points to implement the project for youth empowerment and peace and resilience building in 2018.

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