



# NEWSLETTER

*Quarter 3, 2020*



## Preamble

Welcome to GESCI's Third Quarter 2020 Newsletter on ICT integration in Education and Training, activities, events, research and resources. As coordinator of the African Union's ICT integration Cluster for the **Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA)**, we seek to promote catalytic and innovative approaches in this sector. A key element of this work will be working with national, regional and local education authorities together with schools to promote ICT-based teacher professional development, developing and aligning open educational resources to national curricular standards and supporting the development of EdTech applications that allow for independent, autonomous and consistent teaching and student learning. As our participating schools in Kenya, Tanzania and in Côte d'Ivoire closed in March, GESCI reoriented its African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) towards building local community - wide supports and approaches to the teaching and learning experience in schools and to enabling learning continuity between face-to-face and remote teaching and learning. This newsletter gives details on some of these activities.

## GESCI Activities

### July - September

#### **School Visits for Assessment post COVID19 – Tanzania**

Our African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) programme activities resumed in August once the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Tanzania re-opened schools following closure due to #COVID19. The project team conducted school visits, supporting teachers and students in implementing skills acquired in the first module of training on Knowledge Creation. *For further information contact: [joyce.msolla@gesci.org](mailto:joyce.msolla@gesci.org)*

#### **Working with Principals and School Based Project Coordinators (SBCs)- Kenya**

The ADSI Kenya team held successful meetings and working sessions with heads of schools from 80 secondary schools implementing the project. The virtual meetings involved training the School-based Coordinators (SBCs) on effective online/remote teaching as well as navigating the GESCI managed [students remote learning resources platform](#). The principals were enthusiastic to offer planned virtual supports to their teachers and to organise materials for remote learning by their students. Teacher-supported learning continued to study while schools remain closed since their closure in March, 2020 due to #COVID19. *For further information contact: [esther.wachira@gesci.org](mailto:esther.wachira@gesci.org)*

#### **Virtual Training for Trainers – Tanzania**

The GESCI Education Specialist conducted a virtual training for the African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) programme team in Tanzania ahead of the *School Leaders and Teachers Training Initiative*. In promoting wider community, interest involvement and support, this training provided skills to the team to map out strategies of engagement with heads of schools, schools' Boards of Management personnel, parental and community organisations. The programme included reviewing the Digital Schools of Distinction implementation progress and submission of evidences from schools; Identifying issues and challenges to achieving the implementation of the ADSI project at school level and reviewing the second Module of the Knowledge Creation cycle. *For further information contact: [elizabeth.mbasu@gesci.org](mailto:elizabeth.mbasu@gesci.org)*

#### **Digital Schools of Distinction Training and Awards – Tanzania**

GESCI, in partnership with The Ministry of Education Science and Technology in Tanzania and the President's Office - Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG), awarded 40 secondary schools in Pwani and Morogoro regions for successfully implementing the e-confident stage in the [Digital Schools of Distinction Development Pathway](#). Heads of schools were also awarded for providing strategic

leadership in the implementation of the programme. *For further information contact: [joyce.msolla@gesci.org](mailto:joyce.msolla@gesci.org)*

### **GESCI Participates in Regional Educational Learning Initiative (RELI) Kenya virtual Convening**

GESCI attended the 2020 RELI Kenya Country Convening. During the event, we participated in discussions on ensuring learning during Covid19 and outlined our work in supporting inclusion and incorporating 21st century skills in teaching and learning as elements in the implementation of our African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) programme in Kenya. #RELI brings together 73 organizations in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo working towards collective impact through shared learning. *For further information contact: [samuel.otieno@gesci.org](mailto:samuel.otieno@gesci.org)*

### **GESCI facilitates virtual workshop with National Curriculum Development Centre NCDC- Uganda**

GESCI, in partnership with NCDC Uganda, facilitated a workshop on development of the evaluation guide for digital education materials for Uganda. GESCI shared insights on the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK) framework which focuses on the knowledge and skills required by a teacher for effective pedagogical practice in a technology-enhanced learning environments. In passing, it is worth remembering that the TPCK model, developed by educational researchers Mishra and Kohler (2006), was designed around the idea that content (*what* you teach) and pedagogy (*how* you teach) must be the basis for any technology that a teacher plans to use in the classroom to enhance learning. GESCI has successfully implemented the African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) programme in Kenya, Tanzania and Cote d'Ivoire using this and other frameworks. *For further information contact: [esther.wachira@gesci.org](mailto:esther.wachira@gesci.org)*

### **GESCI facilitates third phase of training for teachers in Tanzania- Morogoro**

The ADSI project team conducted training for over 200 secondary school teachers drawn from 5 districts in Morogoro region Tanzania. This training marks the final module of training under the Knowledge Creation cycle where teachers developing content which learners can interact with freely in both in-school and out – of- school situations. It incorporates necessary assessment and evaluation features. *For further information contact: [joyce.msolla@gesci.org](mailto:joyce.msolla@gesci.org)*

### **AU CESA Inter Cluster Coordination Meeting**

The African Union Commission Education Division organized a virtual CESA Inter-Cluster Coordination Meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to revitalize clusters and reinforce their roles in the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) implementation. The meeting also provided ground for a stock-take of how the clusters are responding and contributing to CESA implementation and agreed on 2020-2021 priorities, deliverables, and ways of working. GESCI is the lead agency for the cluster on ICT integration in education and training and will take a lead on the AU's DOTSS and Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa. GESCI is also a member of the following CESA Clusters – STEM, Teacher Training & TVET and Skills. *For further information contact: [angela.arnott@gesci.org](mailto:angela.arnott@gesci.org)*

### **African Union CESA Education Planning Cluster Meeting**

GESCI participated in a virtual meeting of the Education Planning Cluster of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25) coordinated by the Association for Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). The meeting brought together cluster members to review the draft education workplan and sub-clusters promoting the African Union Digital Transformation Strategy, worked on criteria for membership and leads of clusters and defined a strategy for launching Cluster with members and attracting new and suitable members. *For further information contact: [angela.arnott@gesci.org](mailto:angela.arnott@gesci.org)*

### **GESCI Participates in Regional Educational Learning Initiative (RELI) Tanzania Convening- Dodoma, Tanzania**

GESCI attended the RELI Tanzania Country Convening. During the event, we highlighted milestones achieved in teacher professional development, inclusion and incorporating 21st century skills in teaching

and learning through the implementation of our African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) programme in Tanzania. [#RELI](#) brings together 73 organizations in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo working towards collective impact through shared learning. *For further information contact: [ramadhani.matimbwa@gesci.org](mailto:ramadhani.matimbwa@gesci.org)*

### **Selection of Subject Matter Experts for the PAUWES Mini Grid, Digitalization and Entrepreneurship (MDE) programme**

GESCI, in collaboration with the Pan African University Institute of Water and Energy Sciences (PAUWES), facilitated interview processes for subject matter experts for the PAUWES-MDE programme. The select team has been trained by GESCI's Education Specialist and has started working on creating e-content for the ***Energy Production/Generation and Storage for Mini-Micro Grid, Design, Planning, and Operation of Mini/microgrids, Business Model and Finance of Mini/microgrids, Mini-grid Policy Regulation and standards, ICT Infrastructure in Smart Grid, Advanced Power Electronics Applications, Internet of Things and Coding for Mini-grids and Data Management and Smart Grid Analytics subjects of the postgraduate programme.*** *For further information contact: [elizabeth.mbasu@gesci.org](mailto:elizabeth.mbasu@gesci.org)*

### **Worldbank Project Support**

GESCI, in collaboration with other partners, contributed to the development of the draft "Digital Skills Country Action Plan" for Ethiopia. GESCI brings forth learning from implementation of its [Digital Creative Media](#) Program which reached out to youth aged between 19 – 29 years in Kenya. GESCI has been working with the World Bank over past months. This includes co-facilitation of workshops with the World Bank Team along with Global Team of consultants in three countries as well as providing virtual support. It is expected that this initiative will resume subsequent to the COVID- crisis. *For further information contact: [senthil.kumar@gesci.org](mailto:senthil.kumar@gesci.org)*

### **African Union Forum on Safe Schools**

GESCI participated in the African Union Forum on Continuous Learning and Safe Reopening of Schools in Africa. Conducted virtually, the forum was aimed at providing a platform for Education Experts in AU Member States to exchange lessons on continuous learning and safe reopening of schools during the Covid 19 global pandemic. The forum brought together around 200 participants and GESCI's Head of Partnerships chaired the session on implementation of online learning with internet. *For further information contact: [angela.arnott@gesci.org](mailto:angela.arnott@gesci.org)*

## **Events – Past and Upcoming**

### **July - September**

#### **World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Virtual Forum 2020**

This year's virtual edition of the WSIS Forum garnered a lot of interest and excitement across the world – with a cumulative attendance of around **12,000**. In the sessions organized high-level officials, academics, government officials, ICTs experts, private sector, United Nations, youth, business, and civil society leaders engaged in addressing issues on ICTs for development. **Over 770 key speakers** participated throughout the weeks in more than **130 virtual sessions** organized by WSIS stakeholders. Participants joined from over **150 countries** around the world; with 35% login in from Asia and Australasia, 21% from Africa, 18% from Western Europe, 17% from the Americas, and 9% from the region of Eastern Europe and Northern Asia. *Visit: <https://bit.ly/2SRxMcu>*

## **mEducation Alliance Play Every Day Event**

**Play Every Day** was the largest virtual event of the mEducation Alliance on **Play and Technology for Lifelong Learning**. This excellent and engaging event attracted **782 registrants** to hear from an amazing line-up of **80+ presenters** from more than **25 countries** highlighting a range of tech and non-tech play-based interventions for formal and non-formal educational settings. Presenters were competitively selected from both our Symposia and [COVID-19 EdTech idea pitch](#) call submissions, many of whom touched on the need for and contributions of play and games in the EdTech response to worldwide COVID-19 school closures. *Visit:* [https://www.meducationalliance.org/?page\\_id=1193](https://www.meducationalliance.org/?page_id=1193)

## **Education Disrupted, Education Reimagined Part III**

For the third part in the *Education Disrupted, Education Reimagined* convening series, the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) in partnership with Salzburg Global Seminar, brought together key stakeholders from education systems around the world in a networked learning community to examine the implications of the COVID-19 crisis on the 21<sup>st</sup> century school leadership paradigm. Speakers and participants engaged in discussions aimed at reimagining the mechanisms and approaches to responding to a fast-changing, uncertain world with resilient school systems and future-prepared school leaders. They also looked at, more practically, what type of leadership approaches have and haven't worked during the 6 months of crisis and considered what leadership characteristics are required of 21<sup>st</sup> century school leaders and educators. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/34itmAH>

## **24th European conference on AI**

The 24th European conference on AI, sponsored by FundingBox, gathered over 80 scientific sessions, 60 workshops and 6 social activities. The conference provided a platform for disruptive AI startups to participate in Pitch Competitions and discussions with experts on what challenges Europe is facing with respect to AI. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/2EPHHAO>

## **Education During COVID19 and Beyond: The Global Education Coalition in action**

The Global Education Coalition (GEC) showcases how collective commitment and multilateralism can offer an innovative framework for intervention generating new ways to leverage expertise and resources not usually available. Taking stock of lessons learned since the outbreak of the COVID-19, the side event focuses on the priority actions to recover and transform education systems and the way the GEC can contribute to the ongoing crisis. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/34iYtfJ>

## **October – December**

### **UNESCO World Teachers' Day**

**5<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020.** In 2020, World Teachers' Day celebrated teachers with the theme “**Teachers: Leading in crisis, reimagining the future**”. The day provides the occasion to celebrate the teaching profession worldwide, take stock of achievements, and draw attention to the voices of teachers, who are at the heart of efforts to attain the global education target of leaving no one behind. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly added to the challenges faced by already over-extended education systems throughout the world. It is no exaggeration to say that the world is at a crossroads and, now more than ever, we must work with teachers to protect the right to education and guide it into the unfolding landscape brought about by the pandemic. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/3n8uxvh>

### **Educaid.be Digital Conference 2020**

**15<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020.** The 2020 Educaid.be Digital conference contributes to the understanding of inclusive education; of the barriers impeding its delivery; of the perspectives, strategies and approaches for achieving it; and of the good and inspirational practices already in place. The conference also marks the official launch in Belgium of the 2020 UNESCO GEM report Inclusion and Education. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/2GouV84>

### Global

#### **UNICEF Report: Accelerating results for children with technology and digital innovation**

This report highlights examples of country-level COVID-19 response initiatives employing digital innovation and T4D approaches, in support of both its humanitarian action and development programmes. It further demonstrates how the scale-up of T4D's strategic integration in programming and digital innovations has allowed UNICEF to support programme partners in closing gaps to meet children's needs, often under complex environments, and in line with existing national systems. These initiatives span UNICEF programmes worldwide and help address children's health, nutrition, education, protection, access to water, sanitation and hygiene, and inclusion. *Visit:* <https://uni.cf/3nupNA>

### Africa

#### **Mastercard Foundation Report: Rethinking Secondary Education Systems**

The Mastercard Foundation released the report, "*Secondary Education in Africa: Preparing Youth for the Future of Work.*" The report findings indicate that changes in the nature of work are placing a premium on skills that help young people be adaptable, resilient, and creative problem solvers. Secondary education that provides relevant skills to young workers will help improve productivity, particularly in the informal sector, and will play an important role in driving long-term economic growth and reducing poverty in Africa. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/3427vPA>

#### **Impact of COVID-19 on Africa's Education**

The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) undertook two rapid mapping assessments between March and June 2020, of the status of learning in African countries amid the COVID-19 pandemic to provide better support to Ministries of Education as well as facilitate peer learning between countries. The status report from twelve African countries highlighted some working strategies and best practices, and at the same time exposed gaps that exacerbate exclusion and inequalities in remote education. In view of the evolving situation and considering that some countries have reopened or are planning to reopen schools and learning institutions, ADEA, through a virtual forum informed the participants on the latest efforts and strategies adopted by African Ministries of Education and areas that have not been addressed adequately. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/3jow12f>

### Countries

#### **Tanzania**

##### **Schools Re-Opened**

The government in Tanzania ordered schools to be re-opened after a three months closure due to COVID19. Tanzania is the first East African Nation to re-open schools. Tanzania's Health Ministry issued a strict guideline to help students to protect themselves from the COVID-19. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/3ikwMrY>

#### **Kenya**

##### **Teachers back in school ahead of school re-opening**

The Ministry of Education Science and Technology asked teachers to report back to school as it plans for gradual re-opening of learning institutions after 6 months long closure due to the corona virus pandemic.

There is an expected phased re-opening where learners in grade 4 and class 8 in primary school level and form 4 at secondary school level reported to school on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2020. *Visit:* <https://www.education.go.ke/>

## **Sudan**

### **The coronavirus pandemic forces schools to innovate**

Unprecedented education challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic call for innovative solutions. And this is exactly the approach Sudan is taking with the support of an US\$11 million COVID-19 accelerated grant from GPE, which will target all public schools including 257 schools for internally displaced persons (IDP). The grant will benefit approximately 5.4 million school children at the basic education level through distance learning programs and facilitate training for 33,000 teachers on distance learning methods. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/2Gw5i56>

## **Vacancies, Awards & Other Opportunities**

### **Global Partnership for Education (GPE) approves over US\$400 million for education to keep children learning through the COVID-19 (coronavirus) crisis**

GPE has approved grants totaling [US\\$381 million](#) to help 47 countries respond to coronavirus-related school closures and ensure children are continuing to learn during the pandemic. A further \$20 million is being provided to a joint initiative managed by UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank, that will ensure regional and global efficiencies and knowledge sharing. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/3qJhJrz>

### **Launching the African Scholarships Hub**

Over **\$750 million** is invested annually in scholarships for students in sub-Saharan Africa. The African Scholarships Hub supports students to access these opportunities. This hub has been inspired through research at Education Sub Saharan Africa (ESSA) on scholarships. We have spoken and worked with students, scholars, investors, universities and governments. *Visit:* <https://africanscholarshipclub.org/>

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**Newsletter information sources include:** African Countries and Ministry of Education websites, University World News, SADC, UNESCO, GPE, Funds for NGOs, RUFORUM Newsletter, ELA News portal, 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, WISE, FAWE, AllAfrica, Millenium@Edu and general sources. The comments expressed in this newsletter are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of GESCI or those GESCI represents. No responsibility is therefore taken for the veracity of the information provided.

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**GESCI's African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) is a partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, Canada.**

