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NEWSLETTER

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[HTTPS://OER-STUDENTRESOURCES.GESCI.ORG/](https://oer-studentresources.gesci.org/)

Preamble

The advent of the pandemic has seriously disrupted the education of young people at all levels. In March, schools were closed in several African countries and many have to remain closed. While this has halted implementation of innovative programmes in school systems, it has focused a bright spotlight on the need to provide supports and opportunities to enable learning to continue at home and in out - of- school environments. Digital technology is central to making this happen. Effective remote learning demands new teacher/mentor/learner relationships and high- quality curriculum-relevant learning materials. Most importantly, access must be equitable through low cost devices with an emphasis on offline learning resources. Since March this year, GESCI's joint activities with its partners strongly focus on these prerequisites to delivering successful remote learning which maintains learner participation. This newsletter gives detail on these activities.

GESCI Activities

April- June

GESCI's COVID19 Response

As a result of the COVID -19 crisis, innovative approaches to build recovery and resilience into GESCI activities were explored. Having completed a joint document, African Digital Schools'(ADSI) Institutionalization in 2020, country managers and their teams examined options to support their schools, learners and teachers off and online. The following strategies were developed and put into action:

GESCI COVID19 Response Kenya

- The virtual support was extended to Principals, ADSI School Based Coordinators and Teachers on use of Digital Learning Resources to facilitate the distance-based learning during the Covid19 pandemic
- Knowledge Creation resources were organized into a digital library for access between the counties. The learning resources further customized to address the learning crisis during Covid19
- Student-centered open education content for Form 1 to Form 4 subjects was revised and uploaded into the portal; <https://oer-studentsresources.gesci.org>.
- Coding presentations/webinar footage was revised and disseminated via YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3cylT2c>

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GESCI COVID19 Response in Tanzania

- Teachers were provided with online support for the Knowledge Creation Phase of the *African Digital Schools Initiative* (ADSI) Programme training.
- Coordination was initiated with Ministry of Education Science & Technology, President of the Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG) and education stakeholders relating to COVID-19 response in education and finding ways to join hands at regional and national levels
- The best performing teachers were identified from ADSI programme and invited to support an ADSI e-resources development initiative for student centered learning which reaches out to learners both online or offline. Five teachers have accepted to work remotely to prepare resources including lessons to address a response to COVID 19 with support from the Tanzanian ADSI Project team.
- Teachers' interviews carried out and shared among the ADSI teachers and beyond to motivate and share inputs for managing the learning crisis during Covid19 pandemic.

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GESCI COVID19 Response in Cote d'Ivoire

- A steering committee was set up with the key officials of Ministries of Education, two school Principals and the GESCI Deputy Country Project Manager. In addition, the operational team constituted the technical team of the DIRECTION DES TRANSMISSIONS ET DES SYSTEMES D'INFORMATION (DTSI) Department of Ministry of Education and Ecole Numériques d'Excellence Africaine (ENEA) School Based Coordinators. The agile team is closely working with the schools to build a model and addressing the learning challenges during this covid 19 pandemic
- Using the Digital Schools of Distinction road map and whole school approach to integrate ICTs in learning, an e-learning platform was developed by using Google Classroom. The model implemented in 2 schools are being used as an example and successful implementation of some contextualized key elements the Roadmap.
- The skills acquired throughout the ENEA project have enabled some schools to have an appropriate response to this health crisis and also advising other schools.
- Raise and promote the awareness of the educational community on the on-going e-learning initiative and creation of a collection of contextualized digital educational resources. Quality control process led by the ENEA School Based Coordinators, making sure an agreed teaching schedule is followed and resources produced are in conformity with Côte d'Ivoire curriculum. The lesson plans produced by the Teachers during Technology Literacy and Knowledge Deepening cycle is now populated into the Open Education Resources platform at; <https://oer.gesci.org/oers.php>
- The Google classroom and Google suite packages implemented in the model schools to build learning is documented for analysis and recommendation to other schools.
- Launch of the French Community of Practice has enabled ENEA programme teachers to collaborate and share their experience to address the learning crisis during this health crisis: <https://www.leadership4sd.org/new/dashboard.dz>

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COVID 19 Response: GESCI's Community of Practice

In 2016, GESCI launched the Leadership Network for sustainable Development (LN4SD) to ensure continuity of communication and collaboration among the ALICT/LATIC alumni. The LN4SD has played a pivotal role in ensuring policy and decision makers, researchers and key actors share knowledge to stimulate collective leadership capacities. We expanded the network by extending it to teachers who are participating in the African Digital Schools Initiative from Kenya, Tanzania and Côte d'Ivoire to share various practices that enhance 21st century skills while teaching STEM and other subjects. At this time, when the world is dealing with the effects of the pandemic, the Community of Practice is one platform where leaders, industry players, teachers are able to access, share and discuss ways to enable governments and institutions to manage the adverse effects caused by COVID19. *For further information contact: elizabeth.mbasu@gesci.org*

Transforming Energy Access – Learning Partnership (TEA-LP) Initiative

This initiative comprises 8 universities across Africa supported by the DFID funded Low Carbon Energy for Development Network among others. The initiative is poised to develop and deliver energy access multidisciplinary post graduate degree programs. The context of energy access refers to access to affordable, clean and reliable energy services for households and enterprises in developing countries. Through TEA - LP initiative, the Pan African University Institute of Water and Energy Sciences (PAUWES), and GESCI, (PAUWES – GESCI) are developing “Mini-grid Digitization Entrepreneurship Program” (PAUWES – MDE), a postgraduate Entrepreneurship Incubator Curriculum. Like the other universities, PAUWES – MDE program is in its 4th stage of curriculum design. The GESCI Education Specialist reviewed the program overview including program learning outcomes. The program consists of 11 courses. For each course, hard skills learning outcomes were developed. On average, each course has 3 hard skills learning outcomes. In line with hard skills learning outcomes, soft/generic/transferable skills learning outcomes for each course were also developed. *For further information contact: elizabeth.mbasu@gesci.org*

World Bank Digital Skills response

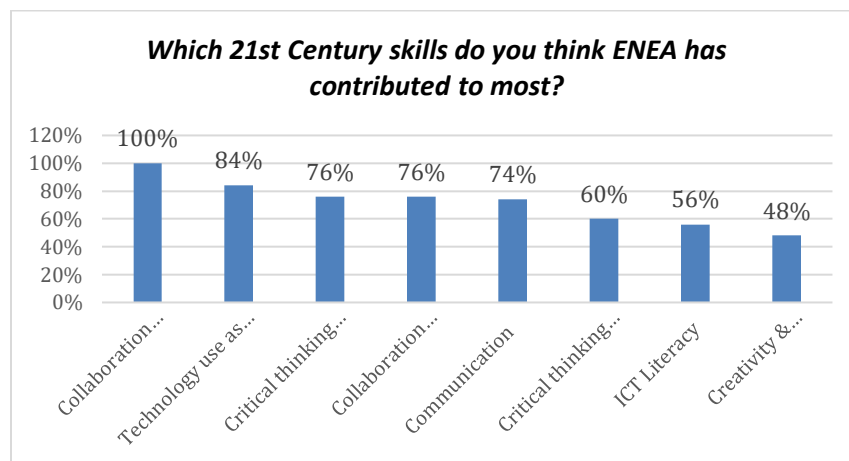
Based on GESCI's restructured Web-based costing tool **Total Cost of Ownership** analysis, GESCI was invited to support the Bank's "**Digital Skills Country Action Plan**". This includes co-facilitation of workshops with the World Bank Team along with Global Team of consultants in 5 countries and virtual support to 15 African countries on skills development and higher education support, likely to extend into 2020. To date Mozambique and Rwanda have been supported by the World Bank team, including GESCI to provide technical assistance to develop Country Digital Skills Action Plans. This work is currently on hold during COVID 19 closure on travel but GESCI is being asked to look at virtual support to countries. *For further information contact: senthil.kumar@gesci.org*

ADSI Teacher Conducts Online Lessons for Students in Tanzania

April. One of the ADSI teachers, Andrew Kichumisa, a teacher at Nassoro Seif Secondary School in Morogoro Tanzania is conducting online classes for students to ensure they are readily prepared for national exams. He talks to us about his training in ADSI and how he runs the online lessons. *Visit: <https://bit.ly/3h1Lj1y>*

Survey on Teacher Perception of ENEA/ADSI Impact, Côte d'Ivoire

April. 200 teachers and 20 Heads of School participating in the ENEA programme participated in a survey on a variety of topics. They were asked to rate the extent to which ENEA had taught them how to teach 21st C skills among students. As can be seen in the graph below, responses consistently supported collaboration and communication. Creativity and ICT literacy were not as well addressed.



Full report is available at www.gesci.org

ADSI Approach to facilitate Online Learning

May. Here is an overview of the African Digital Schools Initiative (ADSI) Programme training phases and the education response on #COVID19 to promote student centered learning: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tevxw5vbhao&t=15s>

ADSI Teacher uses Coding Knowledge to fight COVID19, Kenya

May. An ADSI teacher, Mr. Stanley Njagua Kiguta, a Physics and Computer Studies teacher at Gachororo Secondary School in Kiambu County, Kenya has developed an automated water and hand wash dispensing machine to ensure safety and social distancing. Mr. Kiguta talks about his coding skills and training through the ADSI programme. Watch his interview with GESCI here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDSHM8aitWM>

GESCI and Energy Access – Learning Partnership (TEA-LP) Webinars

May. GESCI'S Education Specialist attended the webinar on curriculum development with TEA-LP partners on 12th May where the universities of Port Harcourt, Gulu and Lesotho teams presented their draft curricular

designs for critique and reflection towards improving individual university designs. Another webinar was held 20th May, where the Strathmore University team shared how they have conceived a structured and facilitated student internship as part of their curriculum, in accordance with key findings from their Employer Needs Assessment and in alignment with their programme-level learning outcomes and objectives. *For further information contact: elizabeth.mbasu@gesci.org*

New GESCI/PAUWES Staff to Support Mini-Grid Entrepreneurship Programme

On 1st June, 2020, GESCI and the Pan African Institute of Water and Energy Sciences (PAUWES) have recruited Dr David Tsuanyo as the coordinator of the joint mini-grid energy programme both organizations are developing as an online business incubator model under the DFID Transforming Energy Access programme. David will be based at PAUWES in Algeria and working to implement the development of the programme. Dr. Tsuanyo holds a MSc. in Energy Engineering from the 2iE Institute of Engineering in Burkina Faso, and a PhD in Energy systems, with specialization in the technical and economic approaches for off-grid energy systems optimization. He is an energy expert with over 9 years of experience in designing energy systems, project management and capacity building in energy related sectors and has undertaken multiple assignments in Central and West Africa in the renewable energy sectors. David has worked with diverse international development organisations and private companies involved in the energy sector, and has developed a comprehensive understanding of the needs and requirements in the implementation of strategies to achieve and meet international standards. *For further information contact: david.tsuanyo@gesci.org*

ENEA Certification and Graduation in Cote d'Ivoire

17 -18 and 22-23 June. Over 200 ENEA participating teachers received certificates and were graduated at a ceremony held at the Hotel La Rose Blanche in Cocody-Angré as well as on June 22 and 23, 2020 at the Hotel Villa des Hôtes II in Yamoussoukro. The (ENEA) Programme in Côte d'Ivoire launched on June 8, 2016 by the Ministry of National Education, Technical Education and Vocational Training (MENETFP) and GESCI holds in its genes the solution to the continuity of learning, especially in situations similar to those imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. *For further information contact: sylvie.tanflotien@gesci.org*

Call for Subject Content Experts

GESCI and PAUWES have opened calls for applications for Subjects Matter Experts regarding the PAUWES- Minigrad – Digitalization – Entrepreneurship (MDE) programme, an online post-graduate programme to strengthen youth entrepreneurship capacities on the continent.

To apply visit: <https://pauwes-mde.org/news/>

The deadline for the submission of applications is **19th July 2020**.

Events – Past and Upcoming

July, September

Upcoming mEducation Alliance 2020 Virtual Symposia Events

Coding Global

This is the second event of the mEducation Alliance 2020 virtual Symposia series on Play and Technology for Lifelong Learning and will be held on July 15, 2020 from 10:30 am EDT. In addition to Coding Global, Millenium@Edu will host at least two additional virtual Symposia events in the coming months. The preliminary list of presenters and final dates, including opportunities for general registration will be published in the weeks preceding each event.

The upcoming topics will be:

- Hands on Educational Games for Lifelong Learning (August) - tech and non-tech games for advancing subject learning (e.g., STEM, literacy) and socio-emotional learning.
- Play Every Day (multi-day event in September 2020) - our largest virtual series event which will feature a range of tech and non-tech play-based interventions for formal and non-formal educational settings.

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor for the Symposia series and/or individual virtual events identified above, please e-mail: medalliance@meducationalliance.org

Education Development News

Global

Flexible learning during COVID-19: How to ensure quality higher education at a distance

The Covid-19 outbreak closed universities and other tertiary education institutions in 175 countries and communities, affecting over [220 million](#) post-secondary students. While some institutions moved their classes to online and distance education platforms thanks to their pre-existing experience, many others struggled. In some countries, this lack of preparedness resulted in delays in moving the courses online; in others, governments have halted higher education completely for an indefinite period of time. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/2zyHjPI>

COVID-19 offers a chance to join ‘global research race’

Global initiatives which provide free access to COVID-related intellectual property, tech discoveries and research data offer African universities a “golden opportunity” to join the global “research race.” Through the United Kingdom-based Wellcome Trust Pledge, African universities are able to access shared research data and peer-reviewed publications, and can benefit from a growing number of open source COVID-19 initiatives including Against COVID-19, and COVID-19 Tech Feed. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/2Y3FluE>

UNESCO Report: COVID-19 leaving vulnerable children behind

“The ‘2020 Global Education Monitoring Report,’ released June 23 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, shows progress is slowing on the global out-of-school rate for primary and secondary school-age children, and COVID-19 will only make it worse. According to the report, an estimated 258 million children are out of school — and 97 million of these are in sub-Saharan Africa, and that number is growing. This means that by 2050, more than one in 10 adults in the region will not have completed primary education...” (Cornish, 6/23). *Visit:* <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/report/2020/inclusion>

An opportunity to reinvent school

With over a third of the global population under some form of lockdown due to COVID-19, the health crisis has caused an unprecedented disruption in education. From kindergarten to university, schools worldwide have been temporarily closed, forcing educators to find alternative teaching methods. This situation is likely to leave a lasting footprint. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/2Z9NmDI>

Prioritising the use of ICTs

Information Communication Technology (ICT) has completely metamorphosed the process of education systems. With the advancement of ICT gadgets the education system has taken a paradigm shift from traditional to digital teaching and learning. It has made the teaching-learning process more effective and productive. The outbreak of the Covid-19 has caused a huge problem to the educational institutions. Most governments around the world have temporarily closed educational institutions in an attempt to contain the spread of the covid-19 pandemic. *Visit:* <https://easternmirrornagaland.com/prioritising-the-use-of-ict/>

GPE US\$400 million for COVID-19 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 to ensure regional and global efficiencies and knowledge sharing. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/3glhJrz>

Switzerland increases its 2020 contribution to GPE

Switzerland has increased its 2020 contribution to GPE by CHF 6.5 million (US\$6.75 million). The increased funding brings the total Swiss contribution to GPE to more than US\$77 million. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/38HjcvB>

A school for all: What does it look like and where do we stand?

From infrastructure requirements to teacher training and tackling societal attitudes, observations from a recent online course show the realities of inclusive schools in eight African countries. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/3d3GTyr> ____

Countries

GPE provides US\$130 million to support education in Guinea, Niger and Somalia

GPE has approved over US\$130 million in new grants to Guinea, Niger and Somalia. The funding will ensure that millions of children in these countries are able to access quality learning, whether in school when these reopen or through distance education. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/2ZRO9cm>

South Sudan

Education on Air Programme Launch

The “Education on Air” programme is aimed at ensuring that all school age going children both girls and boys, still access quality education even when schools are currently closed down. To ensure that all schoolchildren are reached through the radio programme, the Deputy Minister urged development partners to continue supporting the programme by providing radio sets for households that still lack a radio. He concluded that the Ministry of General Education is committed and keen to ensuring access to quality education for all. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/2MY0Fky>

Kenya

STEM in Kenya Programme Launch

The objective of the activity is to keep students connected to STEM in the face of COVID-19 while inspiring their young minds through exposure to the beauty and power of science. The UNESCO Regional Office in Eastern Africa in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) are taking Lead on implementation of this Programme. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/2N5sd7m>

Kenya Learning to Resume in 2021

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has announced that learning in primary and secondary schools will resume in January 2021. All learners will be expected to repeat their current levels as the 2020 school calendar year will be considered lost due to COVID-19 restrictions. The national exams which are taken in the last quarter of the school year will be done in 2021. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions and universities will resume in September 2020 when they comply the Ministry's of Health directives to contain the spread of COVID19. *Visit:* <https://bit.ly/3iHC3eA>

Edtech Nairobi

Edtech Nairobi is the pioneer of the larger EdTech Community in East Africa. **It is a monthly meetup that brings people in the Education Technology ecosystem together.** EdTech East Africa is a community of professionals in the Education technology field around East Africa, who come together and share insights that help improve the quality of their work in education delivery. It is an umbrella body of regional EdTech communities. EdTech Meetups are communities brought together by the common goal of improvement in EdTech work. They are EdTech professionals, educators, people in Academia and EdTech enthusiasts. EdTech East Africa is jointly hosted by EdTech organizations. Currently it is run under a partnership between Spire and Eneza Education. Edtech has partnered with the **Mastercard Foundation** to host **#EdtechMondaysKe**. The first session was held on Monday 15th June, 2020 *Visit: <https://lnkd.in/g5DTQSK>*

Rwanda

Supporting Homeschooling during the COVID19 Pandemic

Following the announcements of school closures on 14th March, the government of Rwanda began a home learning initiative to support children learning remotely during the period of lockdown, and the Rwanda Education Board called on all partners in the education sector to support the initiative, with a view to minimising the impact of lockdown on the education system. *Visit: <https://bit.ly/384xvKk>*

Uganda

Free e-Learning Platform

The National Information Technology Authority partnered with UNICEF to introduce Kolibri countrywide, a free e-Learning platform to assist children during the school shutdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The platform is available online and offline, with education content approved by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC). *Visit: <https://bit.ly/2NmNCcu>*

Botswana

E-Learning Initiative Wins Prestigious UN Public Service Award

e-Thuto, an interactive web-based platform, brings teachers, learners and parents together in an effort to improve education by making educational material and administrative information easily accessible. The initiative is being recognized by the United Nations Public Service Awards 2020 for its value to communities in North-East Botswana after being showcased a year ago at the Botswana Public Service Day. *Visit: <https://allafrica.com/stories/202006240048.html>*

Vacancies, Awards & Other Opportunities

The World Academy of Sciences - CSIR Postgraduate Fellowship Programme

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of India and TWAS have established a number of fellowships for foreign scholars from developing countries who wish to pursue research toward a PhD in emerging areas of science and technology for which facilities are available in the laboratories and institutes of the CSIR. Applications can only be submitted via online portal once the call is open. Please use the “apply now” button at the bottom of this page to start your application once the call is open. **Closing date of this fellowship: Extended to 31 July 2020.** *Visit: <https://bit.ly/37ygEiF>*

A Collection of Youth Empowerment Grant Opportunities

Youth are a significant part of our society that immensely contribute to its development. There are thousands of NGOs that are working to enhance the status of young people; therefore, building skills and competencies for life. They offer different programs and projects to empower youth for a bright future. International organizations and foundations are also supporting these youth-based NGOs in achieving their objectives through their funding calls. *Visit: <https://bit.ly/3frReG1>*

COVID-19 Grant Opportunities

Amid the COVID-19 crises, several NGOs, CSOs and International foundations are contributing in a big way in the fight against novel coronavirus. They are putting their best efforts to uplift the marginalized. NGOs and their teams are operating with the government and looking out for millions of people who require assistance in this crucial time. They are extensively engaged in providing essentials like food, medicines, and personal care items to the poor. Here are some of the best funding opportunities related to the novel coronavirus and its impact on various areas such as Health, Education, Children, Women Empowerment, Youth development and many more. Visit: <https://bit.ly/3d07v3y>

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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