Report of the 3-Day Regional Workshop on Gender and Transformation Leadership Programme

Bolinggo Hotel and Towers, Abuja
24th – 26th June 2013
**Background**

The 3-day regional workshop on Gender and Transformative Leadership Programme was held in Bolingo Hotel and Towers, Abuja from 24\(^{th}\) to 26\(^{th}\) June 2013. The workshop was an offshoot of a partnership between UNESCO and Rutgers University which started in February 2012 targeting UNESCO BREDA, UNESCO HQ, Rutgers University, University of Ghana, University of Gambia and Tubman University, Liberia and the Centre for Gender and Social Policy Studies; Obafemi Awolowo University Nigeria who joined in March 2013. Gender specialists from the universities and CSOs contributed to the elaboration of the Curriculum Framework. The partnership was specifically initiated to support African universities which are implementing gender programmes for higher education, communities and national leaders; and aimed to:

1) develop a partnership with four African universities (University of Ghana, University of the Gambia, Tubman University, Liberia and Obafemi Awolowo University; Nigeria);
2) strengthen existing and help develop gender and leadership programmes within the University of Ghana, University of the Gambia, University of Liberia through curriculum design and development on gender and transformative leadership with focus on community leaders within formal and non formal domains; and
3) strengthen community leaders capacity to advocate and promote gender transformative policies and programmes.

**Participants**

The workshop brought together a broad range of participants including gender experts and practitioners from Universities across the Africa region and United States of America, Federal Ministry of Education, Parastatals, UN Agencies and NGOs among whom are three former countries Ministers. From the Federal Ministry of Education was the Honourable Minister of Education; Professor Ruqayyatu Ahmed Rufai represented by the Secretary-General, NatCom-UNESCO, Mrs Magdalene Anene-Maidoh and Universal Basic Education, a parastatal of FME was represented by Mrs Orugun as well as other participants from:

**Universities:**

- Rutgers University, United States of America
- 4 African Universities (University of Gambia, University of Ghana, Tubman University, Liberia and Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria)

**NGOs:**

- Women and National Development (Founded by former Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development)
- Women Empowerment Reproductive Health Care
UN Agencies:

- UN Women, Chair of UN Gender Theme Group
- UNFPA
- UNDP, and
- UNESCO with high level representation from UNESCO Dakar, Officer-in-Charge of Abuja Office and staff members of UNESCO Abuja Office.

Media:

A barrage of electronic (radio) and print media covered the opening session of the workshop and they include:

- News Agency of Nigeria
- Raypower
- Abuja Inquirer
- Leadership Newsprint etc.

Proceedings

The Director of UNESCO BREDAR while providing strategic guidance to the whole workshop discussions gave the opening remarks in which she thanked the Government of Nigeria for the trust it has in UNESCO. She acknowledged with great thanks the office space given to UNESCO Abuja after the bomb blast of August 2011 and the self-benefiting funds-in-trust at the disposal of UNESCO by the Government. She provided unique insights into what is happening in UNESCO Secretariat with regards to the field network reform. She told the gathering that the Abuja Office is being transformed from a national office to a regional one in charge of 7 other countries in the ECOWAS region (Benin, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Conakry, Togo and Nigeria) and which will place Nigeria as one of the fifth regional offices in Africa. Madam Ann Therese reiterated UNESCO’s commitment to Gender and women empowerment which she said the organization addresses through a two pronged approach: gender mainstreaming in all UNESCO’s areas of competence and specific gender targeted programmes. She told the meeting that the expectation is that the modules that will form the Gender and Transformative Leadership Curriculum will be finalized by December 2013, trial-tested in the participating countries by the teams. She alleged that UNESCO and its partners seek to develop an open educational resource accessible to all, free of charge to create an open learning platform which allows African leaders to participate in training without leaving the comfort of their homes and duties. Madam Ndong-Jatta in her speech noted the distressing statistics against women and reiterated the fact that Africa still has a huge proportion of women
who are illiterate, and that this undermines women’s ability to take up leadership positions. However, she still believed that women are natural leaders and managers going by the amount of support they give to their husbands and children. She called for more action in the promotion of women leadership by equipping women with the right skills and ideas. She urged the participating countries to ensure that the programme will be integrated into the universities curriculum either as a standalone certificate programme, undergraduate or post-graduate programme.

She ended her remarks with the quote saying that “it is only when women fall will they get up stronger”.

Following immediately after the Director of BREDA’s opening remarks was the Honourable Minister of Education’s remarks. The speech was read by her representative, the Secretary-General of Nigeria National Commission for UNESCO who equally declared the workshop open. Madam Minister in her speech acknowledged that women constitute a larger percentage of the illiterate population in Nigeria and are grossly under-represented in leadership and key decision making bodies at all levels. She listed some of the factors that contribute to this anomaly as family responsibilities, child bearing, economic and religious barriers, cultural beliefs and practices as well as inadequate education. She underpinned gender parity in education as a basic right that propels socio economic development. The Minister lauded the present administration for giving remarkable support to women empowerment by appointing a number of women in key positions. A good example is the first female Chief Justice of the Federation. She mentioned several other interventions targeting female participation at the basic education level, improving quality of education infrastructure, enhancing teacher quality and increasing financing by the administration.

The Honourable Minister highlighted such interventions as the Girls Education Project, Female Teacher Training Scholarship Scheme for indigent girls from remote areas to study a teachers’ pre-service course leading to the award of Nigeria Certificate in Education and the provision of gender-friendly school facilities. She called on stakeholders to upscale their strategies to improve girls’ participation in school by mobilizing communities, targeting financial support for girls, ensuring that gender-sensitive teaching methods and materials are used and providing safe and healthy school environments.

The Chair of UN-Gender Theme Group gave a goodwill message during which she commended the organisers for hosting the regional workshop and for extending invitation to the Group. She acknowledged the fact that there is a paradigm shift from what used to be. She stressed the need for equal participation of women and men, boys and girls in decisions that affect their lives; and that only then would everybody be involved and take responsibility. She wished the meeting constructive deliberations and good success.
Technical Session

Professor Hassana Alidou (Officer-in-Charge, UNESCO Abuja) took the meeting through the history of the partnership, the initial meeting in Dakar, the objectives of the Abuja meeting and the modalities for achieving the set objectives. She stated that the proposed curriculum would focus on adult learners with respect to community and traditional leaders, parliamentarians, university community – undergraduates, graduates and non-traditional students within socio-cultural, political and economic perspectives.

Professor Hassana said that the curriculum would be developed to be a spiral and living curriculum that will be built on case studies and problem solving that users would relate with and acquire a whole set of new skills after undergoing the training. She suggested that the outline of the modules should include:

a) Theme – defined with a socio-cultural dimension and values, citing governments and sectoral policy instruments e.g. the MDGs and EFA at the national community levels.

b) Concepts – within the range of 3-5 concepts per theme, with less academic definitions but simple explanations suitable to the understanding of the ordinary person.

c) types of skills

d) interactive activities, case studies, group work and hands-on activities

e) assessments

f) resources e.g. additional reading materials, You tube vdeos, Nollywood movies and how it treats different themes. She emphasized the need for the participants to use their creativity to know which resource to use per activity and build a community of practice and learners.

Digging deeper into the outline of the modules, Professor Hassana went on to give detailed explanation of keywords and actions that should be contained in the module and these include:

- Transformation - developing change agents, the process of moving from point A to point B and on-going, changing values, attitudes and behaviours.
- Definitions – not to be seen as the end goal but the learning outcome which is derived from the skills and competencies acquired.
- Competencies – to include respect to human dignity, values, attitudes and behaviours
- Skills – negotiating, mobilizing, taking on cases, advocacy, communication, resource mobilization, mobilizing people, being assertive etc.
- Activities – what type of activity should be organised to allow the learner practice what has been taught to make learning permanent.
- Gender – about space and temporality, not fixed but constantly changing. The transformative power of moving from women perspective to gender perspective and how to positively challenge men to embrace gender.
Book Presentations

Women and Leadership by Dr. Hajo Sani

The Book records historical achievements of women leaders across Africa whose fame grew to iconic proportions. Some of the women mentioned in the book include Queen Amina of Zazzau who in her time conquered and expanded her territories and promoted trade; and Liberia’s President; Ellen Sirleaf who struggled and persevered to break through the male dominance in Liberia and Africa to become Africa’s first democratically elected female president. The book treated issues looking at gender and religion perspectives. Chapter 10 discussed Islam and human rights, dismantling the misconception that Islam is a religion that suppresses women and with justifications from the Qur’an.

Journalism, Gender and Democratic Governance in Nigeria by Seyi Soremekun and Sylvia Iwuchukwu, a study on media presentation and representation of women. The book reported that women are mis-represented, under-represented and stereotyped. It beamed the torchlight on the roles the media make women play e.g. where women are undermined and badly served, while the men are depicted with symbols and characteristics of strength, power and influence. Other examples cited in the book are gender and politics, political participation and economic empowerment with Universities of Lagos and Moshood Abiola Polytechnic Communication Departments where it was elucidated that there has never been a 50-50 representation of men and women, rather women are marginalized. In the area of women in elective positions, the book further gave a heart-wrenching statistics of women participation; a case study of Mrs Sarah Jibrin’s experience in the last PDP’s election primaries was cited. In conclusion, the book recommended that media should promote gender equitable politics and increase the number of slots given to women in politics.

Muslim Women in Post Colonial Kenya by Ousseina Alidou

The Book told a story of leadership, representation, social change and how Kenyan Muslim women despite their different backgrounds pooled their strengths together for a common good to transform their communities. The book shows how the women effected change in the home, school, mosque, media; and challenged the oppressive influences of male-dominated power structures; and in accepting their differences as opportunities rather than obstacles, they redefined the meaning of women’s citizenship within their own community of faith and within the nation of Kenya.

Dr Alidou explained that inter-culturalism is a function of how religion plays out and that, the way one embraces diversity and inter-culturalism will go a long way to determine the attitude the person exhibits.
Presentation of Modules

Modules:

1. Review of literature on gender and transformative leadership in African contexts
2. Module 1: Developing strong knowledge base in Gender and transformative leadership in the African contexts (understanding the invisible structures)
3. Module 2: Governance Skills for Local Leadership
4. Module 3: Mentoring/coaching, Peer Learning and intergenerational support
5. Module 3: Developing a competent leader persona
7. Module 5: Understanding policy and policy making processes (reinforcing knowledge of invisible structures)
8. Module 6: Strategic competences (critical and strategic thinking, skills for building alliances, effective networking and partnership) and organizational competences (management)
9. Module 7: Resource mobilization and financial management
10. Module 8: Gender-responsive budgeting and auditing
11. Module 9: Decision making in the context of crisis

Presentations were made on each of the modules by the section writers, critiqued and peer reviewed by other persons than the writers. Overlaps were observed and addressed. The module on Gender and Transformative Leadership was blended across the manuscripts from Nigeria, Ghana and Gambia; and a definite outline was presented as template for the writing. On general terms, each module is expected to describe the socio-cultural aspects it is examining, the positive and negative socio-cultural practices affecting women and the good practices in the diverse cultures that allow and promote men and women to advance together.

Module Outline:

Title
Course Description
Objectives
Learning Outcomes
Session I: Title
Session II: Title
Target Audience
Methodology
Duration
Assessment
Materials
Session I: Title
Conclusion

The workshop started and ended in high notes. The participants were all elated, motivated and ready to run with the programme but, however, requested that UNESCO should write letters to their respective universities explaining their contributions to the programme, its importance and why the focal persons should be supported by their institutions and more especially, negotiate with faculties to have the programme institutionalized. It was equally agreed that such a letter would motivate and strengthen support from the Institutions. Further, on moving forward, another proposal was to explore meeting with the Association of African Universities where the Vice Chancellors work together to seek for institutionalization of the programme. The Group agreed that it has become imperative to make leadership courses part of the university courses as the continent is lagging behind because of lack of good leadership. Finally, the participants requested UNESCO to release the seed funds for the programme to enable them deliver on the work effectively and efficiently.

It was agreed that after reviewing the modules and approval by UNESCO, countries/universities should pre-test the modules they developed alongside the Gender and Transformative Leadership module. Dr Abena suggested that there may be a need to establish ‘Google docs’ account for the group to facilitate exchange of documents among them and fast track the writing process or a sakai site where messages and documents could be shared in a secured manner and make UNESCO the administrator. Dr Ousseina Alidou suggested uploading the work in the Rutgers University website and requested the participating universities to send their logos for acknowledgement and recognition.

Copyright issues

The meeting underscored the need for UNESCO to protect the copyright of the curriculum by securing it with a group name like Gender and Transformative Leadership Working Group. Consequent to that, it was suggested and agreed that modules will not be given away after the pre-test. Proprietary/intellectual property issues were asked to be respected even though the authors may give written consents for the partial use of their books. UNESCO agreed to signing partnership agreement with the universities as MOU had already being signed with Rutgers’ and
takes a rigorous process. Writers were asked to ensure they provide the link of most the additional reading materials they proposed in their respective modules and were cautioned not to include materials that the link will not open and example was given with JSTOR.

Next Steps

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<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Latest date of submission</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Final draft of Modules sent to UNESCO</td>
<td>31 July 2013</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Review and approval by UNESCO</td>
<td>15 August 2013</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Pre-testing</td>
<td>Any date after UNESCO’s approval</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Report of pre-test sent to UNESCO</td>
<td>1 November 2013</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>UNESCO and Rutgers Meeting</td>
<td>November 2013</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Date of next meeting</td>
<td>3 to 4 day’s meeting in the week of February 15 2014. Venue tbd.</td>
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Pre-Testing mechanisms by Universities

University of Ghana would invite NGOs and some members of parliament for one day to pre-test the modules.

University of Gambia would use a selection of gender students from Management Development Institute.

Tudman University, Liberia – the Abuja meeting was their first involvement in the programme and would like use their students for the pre-test and is strongly disposed to pre-test the Accountability and Code of Ethics module.

Obafemi Awolowo University – would use students from a private university to pre-test.

Evaluation

All the participants were enthused by the level of coordination and the clarifications the workshop provided. They all said it had the right caliber of participants, a learning process, participatory, had put the writing into the right context, provided the right sense of direction, polished what was started in Dakar, a good platform for networking, solidified relationships and got the group bonded in sisterhood and camaraderie. The commitment from UNESCO and the dedicated participation of UNESCO’s high level officers from beginning to the end of the workshop were appreciated. The participants saw the opportunity offered by the workshop as a
privilege and the work product as an outcome they look forward to being identified with as it is described according to the Liberian participant as a tool for winning all over the world. Professor Hassana concluded by saying that the project is fundamentally important to the future of gender equality, while Madam Ann Therese said that UNESCO would use the initiative to mobilize additional resources through regular programme and or extra-budgetary.

**Annexes**

1. Concept Note
2. List of participants
3. Programme