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Promoting critical knowledge, skills and qualifications for sustainable development in Africa: How to design and implement an effective response by education and training systems

Sub-theme 1

Common core skills for lifelong learning and sustainable development in Africa

Application of ICT by Basic level Teachers and Learners to the Development of Core Skills for Lifelong Learning: A Transnational Study in Ghana and Mali

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ABSTRACT

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Application of ICT by Basic level Teachers and Learners to the Development of Core Skills for Lifelong Learning:
A Transnational Study in Ghana and Mali

Abstract

It has been generally suggested that 'conventional education and training provision is not sufficiently promoting development of the skills necessary for economic and social success' (McGrath, 2003). A call has therefore been made for a new focus on Lifelong Learning skills in the light of major challenges such as poverty, inequality and mass unemployment. With this in mind, this study sought to unearth the basic lifelong learning skills associated with sustainable development at basic education. It also picked on one of the vital cross cutting issues of 'the roles of ICTs in improving access to quality and relevant education. Three schools (two in Ghana and one in Mali) were used as cases for study on the topic and in-depth data generated using triangulation approach. The analysis have shown that curriculum developers were conscious of the need for lifelong learning skills development when designing the national curricula and that provisions had been made in the curricula for their development. However, the level of effectiveness in the development of these lifelong learning skills has not been very commendable because of the relatively narrow scope in which the skills are perceived by the curriculum implementers. On the other hand while ICT integration into the school curricula is a desired option for all stakeholders involved in the study, the school environment did very little to promote it. Though Ghana has an ICT policy for the education sector, the curriculum design does not strongly recommend the application of ICT as a teaching tool and the schools ill-equipped for this desired option. In Mali, there is yet to be an ICT policy for the education sector. Recommendations have been made to serve as a basis for a paradigm shift in the nature and construction of Lifelong Learning pathways for the youth.