Global Advocacy Projects on the implementation of E2030 Midterm Project Lesson Brief

The Arab Campaign for Education for All (ACEA)

Title of project: Engaging youth in education for social transformation.

Contextual/problem analysis:
In the Arab countries where ACEA operates, CSOs encounter serious institutional and structural obstacles to youth participation and involvement in decision-making and policy making processes. The effects include, but are not limited to: (i) lack of clear governmental policy and regulatory frameworks concerned with increasing youth engagement and influence in public education policies, (ii) limited capacities of youth CSOs in terms of youth mobilization, unification and engagement, and (iii) limited awareness of youth in terms of their role as agents of change, conjugated with their limited knowledge and capacities in SDG-4, civil society principles, human rights, advocacy, tactics and mechanisms.

Project description (focus of the project, expected outcomes/results, and strategies):
ACEA is an independent, non-profit coalition consisting of networks, coalitions, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), teachers' unions, associations and other sectors interested in promoting education in Arabic countries. With support from the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), ACEA launched a 12 months project in June 2022 entitled “Engaging...”
youth in education for social transformation” to accelerate GCE’s global youth engagement mission in the region. The project’s main objective is to promote better possibilities and effective engagement of national and regional coalitions in partner countries in policy dialogues related to monitoring and following-up on Education 2030 Agenda/SDG-4 at national, regional and global levels through institutionalization of youth integration, capacity building and awareness raising.

**Key activities:**

1. ACEA created and launched the youth temporary consultation committee on 17 August 2022. The meeting brought together 10 members (5 males and 5 females) from the 5 targeted countries (list countries). You can find the introductory video of the project: [here](#).

2. ACEA conducted a 2-day preparatory workshop from 10 to 11 September 2022. The workshop aimed at establishing a temporary Youth Consultation Committee with a mission to plan the project from a youth perspective and to ensure an enhanced culture of youth involvement in the ACEA and educational coalitions. The meeting also aimed at anticipating the future youth role within ACEA and its partners in influencing educational policies; proposing national and regional policies and strategies to ensure youth involvement in the educational movement; and developing the theory of change for the project strategically to ensure the sustainability of youth engagement.
3. On 18 October 2022, ACEA held a webinar on "Youth Declaration on Transforming Education"- Critical review of the "Youth Declaration on Transforming Education" from the perspective of Arab youth, under the slogan of (Arab Youth’s Vision to Contribute to Achieving SDG4). More than 50 participants from the region and the globe joint the webinar, which created a strong launch of the committee’s work and show youth efforts. Link for the webinar is available: here.

4. Two members of ACEA’s Youth Committee participated in the GCE Youth and Students Action Month. The 1st activity was conducted on 25 October 2022: Under the Theme: Youth and Students #ClaimingOurEducationAgency. Majd Hithnawi talked about media campaigns for women in the vocational and technical education sector in Palestine. The 2nd activity was conducted on 27 October 2022 with the theme ‘Enough Solidarity, Time for Action! #OurEducationOurFuture.’ Reem Hamdan talked about youth efforts to compensate for the learning loss for student in Talbiya camp for Palestinian refugees in Jordan.

5. On 15 November 2022, the committee held a webinar on “Education and environmental citizenship: The role of youth in addressing climate change.” More than 70 participants from the region participated in the webinar, held in conjunction with COP-27 summit Sharm El-Sheikh. This event aimed at raising youth awareness and the importance of taking action to confront the impact of climate change on development sectors. Link for the webinar is available: here.

What has been done so far/implementation progress and results

ACEA’s efforts have successfully led to the:

- Institutionalization of youth (males and females) integration into the frameworks and structures of ACEA;
- Creation of joint national and regional programs (ACEA, NECS and governments) to increase youth (males and females) awareness of their role as well as their knowledge and capacities in SDG-4, civil society principles, human rights, advocacy, tactics and mechanisms;
- Development and adoption of a framework for integrating youth into ACEA, including increasing and expanding youth membership and promoting their role in coalitions; and
- Integration of a youth constituency into ACEA.
**Experienced and anticipated challenges and how ACEA has dealt with them:**

- Shrinking spaces and restriction on civil society movements, especially youth participation. The institutionalization of youth engagement in ACEA structures is the first move to address the limitation of youth participation in civic spaces.

- Disparity of youth experiences and the lack of Arab youth movements/organizations that work on the right to education at regional level. ACEA’s efforts towards establishing a Youth Committee and Arab Youth Movement are established to address this challenge.

- Lack of well-organized and well capacitated youth/students societies or movements capable of engaging youth and increasing their influence in SDG4-related policy dialogues at national and regional levels. ACEA’s efforts towards establishing a Youth Committee and Arab Youth Movement are established to address this challenge.

- Weak engagement of youth/students in national and regional policy dialogues related to the achievement of SDG-4. ACEA’s efforts towards establishing a Youth Committee and Arab Youth Movement were established to address this challenge.

**Learning aspects/best practices of the project:**

- Youths embraced the notion that they are the current and future leaders and decision-makers with regard to their participation in decision-making processes.

- ACEA is engaging regional youth and students to participate in its advocacy efforts and knowledge exchange which is effective in helping young people to share their experiences, needs and expectations from the coalition.

- Following the successful implementation of the Youth Educational Academy in August 2021, young people adopted a resolution that they should not only be included as neutral participants, but should be considered as a driving force involved in public action and structures as equal partners in the movement in order to truly learn from their perspectives.

**Resources:**

You can access ACEA’s project presentation: [here](#).