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LEGAL GROUNDS FOR EDUCATION THROUGH UNESCO IN HARD-TO-REACH PLACES IN INDIVIDUAL STATES

The article reveals that UNESCO is an example of a global strategy to ensure the right to education for all, regardless of place of residence or social conditions. UNESCO is actively working to ensure access to quality education in remote, crisis and hard-to-reach regions.

In line with its strong commitment to the continent, UNESCO is at the forefront of the development of learning in Africa, as it strives to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all. A variety of initiatives focused on improving access to education, enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, and promoting lifelong learning opportunities are having a positive impact across the continent.

UNESCO works with African Member States, educational institutions and communities to address challenges such as inequality, gender disparities, the digital divide, and the impact of conflict, poverty and climate change on learning. By promoting innovative practices and policies, UNESCO aims to empower learners and support teachers, and to lay the foundation for sustainable development and social transformation across Africa.

Key words: *UNESCO, educational institutions, higher education systems, higher technical education, artificial intelligence.*

Problem Statement and Relevance. Africa, home to the world's youngest population, is grappling with significant challenges in higher education. Currently, only 9.4 % of youth in sub-Saharan Africa are enrolled in higher education, a stark contrast to the global average of 38 %. The region dedicates just 0.78 % of its GDP to research and development, far below the global average of 1.93 %. Youth unemployment and underemployment remain critical issues, with 31 % of young people either jobless or engaged in low-skill work. UNESCO seeks to address these gaps by promoting education systems tailored to market needs, encouraging academia-industry collaboration, and advocating for greater investment in research and development. The main objective of the study is to help the region improve its education system. So that everyone can access knowledge, no matter where they live in the complex region.

Analysis of Recent Research and Publications. Of all regions, sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rates of education exclusion. Over one-fifth of children between the ages of about 6 and 11 are out of school, followed by one-third of youth between the ages of about 12 and 14. According to UIS data, almost 60 % of youth between the ages of about 15 and 17 are not in school. Without urgent action, the situation will likely get worse as the region faces a rising demand for education due to a still-growing school-age population.

Education in Africa is major priority for UNESCO and the UIS. In response, the UIS develops indicators to help governments, donors and UN partners better address the challenges. For example, the UIS tracks the extent to which schools lack basic amenities, such as access to electricity and potable water, while monitoring classroom conditions – from the availability of textbooks to average class sizes and the prevalence of multi-grade classrooms. With seven out of ten countries facing an acute shortage of teachers [2], the Institute also produces a range of data on their training, recruitment and working conditions.

Girls' education is a major priority [2]. Across the region, 9 million girls between the ages of about 6 and 11 will never go to school at all, compared to 6 million boys, according to UIS data. Their disadvantage starts early: 23 % of girls are out of primary school compared to 19 % of boys. By the time they become adolescents, the exclusion rate for girls is 36 % compared to 32 % for boys.

To help policymakers bridge this gender gap [2], the UIS disaggregates all indicators by sex to the extent possible, while producing gender parity indices and developing specific indicators related to access to separate toilets for girls and boys and the presence of female teachers, who can serve as role models and encourage girls to continue their education.

These are just some of the ways in which the UIS is helping governments, donors and civil society groups strive towards Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) [2] and reach the most marginalised children and youth.

Main material. Recalling also the principles set forth in Articles 23 and 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which relate to the right work and to education, the principles contained in the Convention against Discrimination in Education, adopted in Paris on 14 December 1960, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted in New York on 16 December 1966, as well as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 1979. Recognizing that the development of technical and vocational education should contribute to the safeguarding of peace and friendly understanding among nations.

Having noted the provisions of the Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education, and the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, both adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session in 1974.

Having noted further the provisions of the Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education, adopted by the General Conference in 1976, and the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, adopted by the Special Intergovernmental Conference in 1966. Taking into account the relevant recommendations of the International Conference on Education.

Bearing in mind the provisions of the Convention (No. 142) and Recommendation (No. 150) concerning Vocational Guidance and Vocational Training in the Development of Human Resources, adopted by the International Labour Conference at its sixtieth session in 1975.

Noting further the close collaboration between UNESCO and the International Labour Organisation in drawing up their respective instruments so that they pursue harmonious objectives and with a view to continuing fruitful collaboration;

Considering the need to make a special effort to promote the technical and vocational education of women and girls;

Paying special attention to the diversity of education systems and socio-economic and cultural conditions, in particular those in developing countries which need special considerations and provisions;

Considering that, in spite of this diversity, generally similar objectives are pursued and that similar problems arise in many countries, making it desirable to develop common guidelines in technical and vocational education;

Recognizing that the pace of technological, social and economic development has considerably increased the need to expand and improve the technical and vocational education provided for both young people and adults;

Recognizing that technical and vocational education meets the global aim of developing both individuals and societies;

Convinced of the need for the exchange of information and experiences in the development of technical and vocational education and of the desirability of strengthening international co-operation in this field;

Convinced of the utility of an international legal instrument to reinforce international collaboration in the development of technical and vocational education

UNESCO spearheads initiatives to improve the quality, inclusivity, and relevance of higher education systems across Africa. Key programs include:

Campus Africa. This initiative focuses on creating a forward-looking higher education sector across the continent. It aims to develop integrated, inclusive, and high-quality tertiary education systems, reimagining African institutions as engines of innovation, sustainability, and social development.

Strengthening Research and Innovation Capacities. UNESCO supports higher education infrastructure and research capacities in key growth sectors such as agriculture, renewable energies, and technologies, particularly for green and digital transitions. This includes:

- Strengthening institutional capacities to lead, design, manage, and disseminate cutting-edge research portfolios.

- Leveraging technologies to advance research and development agendas.

- Facilitating collaboration between academia and industry through joint research initiatives and multistakeholder partnerships.

These programs aim to position African higher education institutions as global leaders in innovation and sustainable development.

Supporting doctoral studies. Doctoral studies and scholarship opportunities are supported through funding, faculty and student exchanges and inter-university cooperation. Strategies for bridging digital divides ensure that doctoral and applied researchers, universities and research institutions can exchange knowledge, are connected through online networks, and can access repositories of good practice and information on potential research and funding partners. Mobility between African universities, and with global institutions, are core elements of South-South-North capacity strengthening around research capacities.

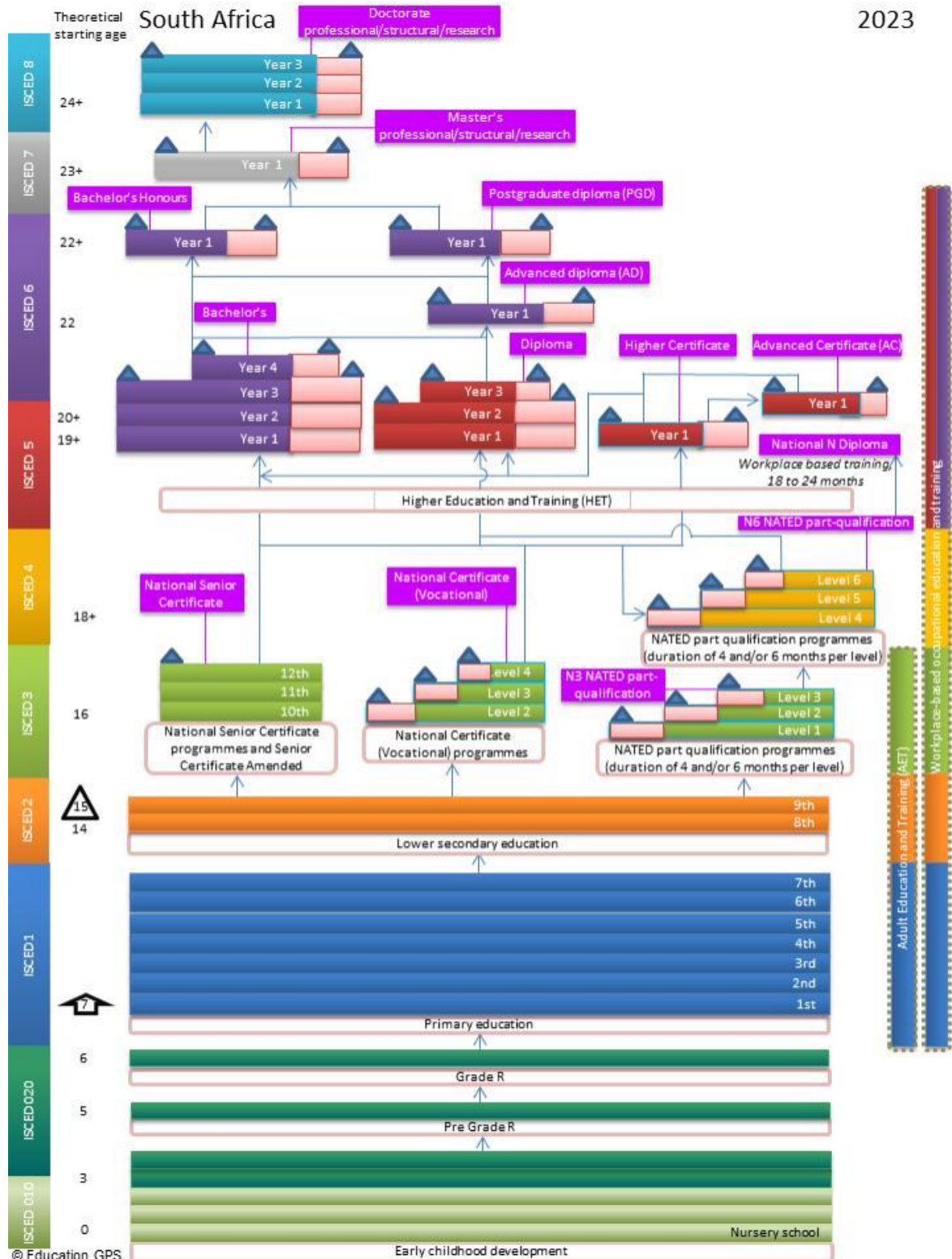
Boosting higher technical education. Campus Africa supports the alignment of tertiary training for African youth with skills in demand in fast growing innovation sectors – including smart agriculture, renewable energies, technology integration, digital transformation and AI – while cultivating entrepreneurial solutions to local development challenges. Targeted research, combined with more flexible, inclusive skills pathways and employability services, prepare young people for insertion into local economies and to shape the Africa of tomorrow. Campus Africa also supports pioneering work to assess the long-term impacts of skilling on employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Harmonizing quality assurance. UNESCO works with global, regional and national organizations such as OBREAL (Observatory of the Relations between Europe and Latin America) and CAMES (African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education) to support African countries with no formal higher education quality assurance (QAA) mechanism, to strengthen cross-border recognition of qualifications and portability of credits, and to harmonize emerging accreditation systems with existing QAA. Campus Africa also supports country efforts to increase student mobility through instruments such as the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education, and the Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications on Higher Education in African States (Addis Convention).

Leveraging data and AI. Recent transformations have boosted the importance of artificial intelligence, big data and Higher Education Management Information Systems, underlining the need to support higher education institutions in utilizing data for planning, financing and quality assurance purposes. Through the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, and cooperation with partner organizations such as the International Association of Universities (IAU), support is available through Campus Africa to reinforce the collection and take up of comprehensive evidence, data and statistics on higher education for decision making [13].

China Funds in Trust project (CFIT III): Benefiting over 13,000 youth and training 800 educators, this project focuses on higher technical education in Africa and aims to enhance the capacity of higher education institutions (HEIs) to respond to the skill needs for the labour market and national development.

Addis Convention: the Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States (Addis Convention) entered into force on 15 December 2019 and has been ratified by 14 countries. By ratifying the Convention, countries commit to implementing actions to ensure fair and transparent evaluation of higher education qualifications in the African region to facilitate inter-university cooperation and exchange through the mobility of students, researchers and faculty [14].



UNESCO collaborates with African governments and institutions to enhance quality assurance, improve data collection, and promote gender equity in education. Notably, student mobility within Africa has grown significantly, supported by 14 State Parties ratifying the Addis Convention, which facilitates the recognition of qualifications. This development has fostered exchanges among students, researchers, and faculty, paving the way for a more cohesive and integrated higher education system. Such initiatives expand learning opportunities and strengthen socio-economic connections across the continent.

Women's participation in higher education, particularly in STEM fields, is crucial for addressing Africa's development challenges and fostering gender equity, inclusive growth, and sustainable development. Encouraging progress is evident, with women making up 30% of science professionals in Africa and female enrolment in STEM courses steadily increasing. However, achieving full gender parity and equitable access in higher education remains a pressing goal. UNESCO continues to support initiatives aimed at boosting female enrolment in higher education, empowering women to drive innovation and take on leadership roles.

The findings of a joint UNESCO-African Union report, "Education in Africa – Putting Equity at the Centre of Policy", were launched at the 36th African Union Summit recently held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The report provides a comprehensive analysis of the progress made by education systems (including universities) towards achieving the goals set out in the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016–2025 and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4 – "Quality Education") [12].

Key findings of the report: When it comes to higher education, Africa continues to suffer from wealth and gender inequalities. This is evidenced by the "very variable quality" of private higher education institutions, as well as low levels of investment. Furthermore, the skills and education mismatch of young people in employment requires better financial support that puts equity and quality at the centre of policy planning and investment decisions.

Higher education spending. The Education 2030 Framework for Action sets education spending at 4–6 % of GDP and/or 15–20 % of total public expenditure. An analysis of public expenditure on higher education as a percentage of GDP reveals significant differences across countries. While Ethiopia spends around half of its education budget on higher education, Mauritius spends only around 5 %. Tanzania stands out as the country with the lowest tertiary enrolment ratio, spending just 0.7 % of its GDP on this level of education.

The African Union aims to invest 1 % of GDP in research and development, but several African countries, including middle-income countries such as South Africa and Tunisia, and low-income countries such as Burkina Faso and Senegal, have already exceeded the 0.5 % mark and continue to move upwards, the report said [17].

Expenditure per student. In South Africa, public expenditure from primary sources of funding on primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education per student is relatively low. (US\$3,021 equivalent, ranking 38/39, 2021) [7].

In South Africa, public expenditure on educational institutions as a percentage of GDP on primary, secondary and post-tertiary non-tertiary education from the final source of funding is relatively high. (4.4 %, ranking 3/41, 2021).

Public and private expenditure on education. In South Africa, total public expenditure on primary and tertiary education as a percentage of total public expenditure is relatively high (17.3 %, rank 1/42, 2021).

In South Africa, total public expenditure on primary education as a percentage of total public expenditure is relatively high (7.4 %, rank 1/43, 2021);

In South Africa, total public expenditure on secondary education as a percentage of total public expenditure is relatively high (3.7 %, rank 2/42, 2021);

In South Africa, total public expenditure on post-secondary education as a percentage of total public expenditure is relatively high (0.4 %, rank 2/22, 2021);

Conclusions. Transforming knowledge systems is essential for Africa to break through existing barriers and unlock its full potential for sustainable development. The opportunities available to future generations will depend significantly on how effectively Africa leverages knowledge and innovation.

This calls for a paradigm shift in the way knowledge is produced, shared, and applied, creating pathways to a more equitable, sustainable, and prosperous future. Building a collaborative research agenda for Africa's future must draw upon diverse yet complementary forms of knowledge, perspectives, and contexts. This approach requires interdisciplinary, cross-sectoral, cross-cultural, and forward-thinking strategies, enriched by diverse knowledge ecosystems, including the recognition and integration of indigenous knowledge systems.

UNESCO's experience shows that even in the most difficult conditions, it is possible to ensure access to education through innovation, cooperation and an integrated approach. Such practices can be useful for Ukraine as well, in particular for the organization of training in temporarily occupied territories or in regions affected by the war.

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Ю. О. Корольов, С. С. Атаманська. ПРАВОВІ ПІДСТАВИ НАВЧАННЯ ЧЕРЕЗ ЮНЕСКО У ВАЖКОДОСТУПНИХ МІСЦЯХ ОКРЕМИХ ДЕРЖАВ

У статті розкрито, що ЮНЕСКО є прикладом глобальної стратегії забезпечення права на освіту для всіх незалежно від місця проживання чи соціальних умов. ЮНЕСКО активно працює над тим, щоб забезпечити доступ до якісної освіти у віддалених, кризових і важкодоступних регіонах.

Відповідно до своєї твердої прихильності до континенту ЮНЕСКО є лідером у розвитку навчання в Африці, оскільки вона прагне забезпечити інклюзивну та справедливу якісну освіту для всіх. Різноманітні ініціативи, зосереджені на покращенні доступу до освіти, покращенні якості викладання та навчання, а також сприянні можливостям навчання впродовж усього життя, мають позитивний вплив на всьому континенті.

Наголошено, що ЮНЕСКО співпрацює з африканськими державами-членами, навчальними закладами та громадами, щоб вирішити такі проблеми, як: нерівність, гендерна нерівність, цифровий розрив, а також вплив конфліктів, бідності та зміни клімату на навчання. Пропагуючи інноваційні практики й політику, ЮНЕСКО прагне розширити можливості учнів і підтримати вчителів, а також закласти основу для сталого розвитку та соціальних перетворень в Африці.

Ключові слова: ЮНЕСКО, навчальні заклади, системи вищої освіти, вища технічна освіта, штучний інтелект.