

# Terms of Reference, Principles and Rules of Operation of the Rwanda Education NGO's Coordination Platform (RENCP)

## Table of content:

1. Objectives
2. Main tasks and activities
3. Internal organization:
  - a. *Membership*
  - b. *Leadership and Representation*
  - c. *The General Assembly*
  - d. *Working Groups*
  - e. *Organization of Meetings*
  - f. *Financial resources and management*

## 1. Objectives

The overall objective of the Education Coordination Platform is to ensure that Member Organizations are better informed and coordinated, valuing complementarities and influencing sector policies and strategies by actively organizing open dialogue and shared learning.

By doing so, RENCP member organizations will have opportunities to effectively contribute more to the goals of Rwanda's Education Sector policies. Through the Platform, Education NGOs will be able to effectively contribute to the evidence based policy making process in the Sector.

More specifically, RENCP aims at:

- (a) Fostering interaction between Education NGOs with emphasis on **content** and **geographical complementarities**. This is achieved through harmonized contributions to the Education Sector via RENCP, through Working Groups, Joint monitoring and experience sharing, complementarities and joint efforts (including strengthening local organizations role).
- (b) Fostering interaction, **transparency** and **fairness** between Education NGOs, MINEDUC/Donors and Multilateral agencies with emphasis on **information sharing, contribution to policy and strategy formulation and on opportunities**. This is achieved by ensuring that RENCP is a viable NGO contact point to interact with MINEDUC and Donors through a common agenda (one voice) to MINEDUC/ Donors.
- (c) Increasing **visibility** and **accountability** of RENCP in all its dealing with the Government, the Community Partners, the Public and donors. This is accomplished by effectively informing policy on the ground realities and by proposing adjustments as a Common Platform in order to demonstrate performance of NGOs contributions to the Education sector.

## **2. Tasks and Activities**

In order to achieve its objectives, RENCP members carry out the following tasks and activities:

### **(a) Tasks and activities aimed at Fostering interaction between Education NGOs with emphasis on content and geographical complementarities:**

- Coordination of regular platform meetings;
- Creation of an appropriate support (Summary profiles, booklet, Platform brochure, Website Development, etc...) presenting member organizations and their activities;
- Coordination of member field visits according to themes and member interests;
- Exchange on interesting education related topics and/or research,
- Information sharing on plans and activities/experiences within the platform to ensure improved complementary learning and eventual concerted action;

### **(b) Tasks and activities aimed at fostering interaction, transparency and fairness between Education NGOs , MINEDUC/Donors and Multilateral agencies**

- Representation of the platform members in Education sector clusters as well as in various task forces and technical Working Groups as seen to be suitable;<sup>1</sup>
- Organization of National forums to discuss emerging issues with all stakeholders in the sector

### **(c) Tasks and activities aimed at increasing visibility and accountability**

- Create a resource centre as for example a web site or another simple electronically accessible site for information sharing on issues or experiences considered important by members
- Liaise with MINEDUC and with others actors/stakeholders in the sector;
- Representation of platform members with respect to outstanding topics and corresponding common recommendations seen to be critical

## **3. RENCP Internal organization**

RENCP is a voluntary coordination and consultative Platform with no decision making mandate. All major decisions are made by Members through the General Assembly.

### ***a. Membership***

#### **(i) Terms and conditions**

RENCP membership is voluntary and is open to all NGOs active in the Education Sector on condition that (1): the NGO is officially registered at the proper Government bodies; (2): The Organization is willing and able to actively participate in at least one of the RENCP Working Groups. The Platform is also open to Donor Supported Projects.

---

<sup>1</sup> This does not preclude Individual Organizations from attendance if they are already members in their own right or should they be individually invited by the Cluster Development Partner. It is simply to ensure that every Member of the RENCP will receive effective communication from and representation at the National level.

The RENCP registration is completed upon submission of the RENCP membership application duly filled by the interested Organization. Organizations applications are submitted to the RENCP Chair and Co Chair and are validated at the next General Assembly.

### **(i) Affiliate Membership**

There are two types of Affiliate Members:

(1) Organizations which do not have a presence in Rwanda permanently but may conduct some activities through or in conjunction with local partners or Government agencies; or

(2) Rwandan-registered entities that do not function as NGOs (such as for-profit companies and consultants), but which are interested in supporting the work of RENCP.

Like full members, Affiliate members can attend and take part in various RENCP activities including Working Groups meetings and Workshops, RENCP General Assemblies, Field and Study Visits, etc....

However, given their limited involvement in RENCP activities, Affiliate members are limited in membership privileges. Affiliate members do not have a vote on any matter of the General Assembly and may not nominate themselves as candidates for any RENCP leadership role (Chair, Co-Chair or Working Group).

Affiliate members may change their profile to full membership if they decide to establish permanently active non-governmental organizations in Rwanda.

### **(ii) Member representatives**

The representative of a Member Organization is the person participating in RENCP activities such as meetings, workshops, field visits, forums, Working Groups, etc....

### **(iii) Privileges of membership**

Privileges are:

- Each member organization is entitled to one vote on any matter of the General Assembly
- Member organization may serve if voted by their peers as chair of any Working Group or of the platform
- Members may display on the web of their promotional material if they choose, the RENCP logo

## ***b. Leadership and Representation***

Positions of Chair and Co Chair of the RENCP are to be **facilitators** within the Platform and **representatives** of RENCP interests to outside stakeholders. The RENCP will be represented by the elected Chair and Co Chair Organizations which also play the coordinating role for representation. As appropriate within technical fields, RENCP may be represented by a Chair Organization of a Working Group. The Chair Organization of the Working Group can represent the RENCP Working Group even up to the National Level. They will represent the platform in order to present a common point of view or a common agenda with Education Stakeholders.

The Chair and Co-Chair Organizations are responsible for secretarial tasks which would comprise: Management of meetings; Centralised documentation of meeting minutes and every kind of reports/documents produced as well as representative and coordinating tasks as described above; The Chair and Co-Chair are responsible for meeting the internal costs related to these responsibilities, such as payment of salaries for responsible staff.

The selection of the RENCP Chair and Co-Chair is done on vote by Member Organizations representatives sitting in the General Assembly once per year. The procedures are as follows:

- Self-nomination: Any Organization willing to serve in the capacity of Chair or Co-Chair is to nominate itself
- Nominees get listed in a visible format
- Vote of the General Assembly with written and anonymous ballots
- Ballots tallied by Current Chair and Co-Chair
- If there is a tie , then there shall be a runoff (2<sup>nd</sup> round)
- The Organization receiving the most votes shall be declared the incoming Chair Organization and the Organization with the second most votes shall be declared the incoming Co-Chair Organization.
- Handover of responsibilities will happen prior to the next General Assembly

Should 51% of the RENCP Membership raise an issue about the inability of the Chair and/or Co Chair to provide proper and smooth leadership in accordance with RENCP objectives and principles, the matter would be put to a vote in a General Assembly. Chair and/or Co Chair Organizations would formally submit their resignation in a General Assembly.

### ***c. The General Assembly***

The General Assembly is the highest decision making body of the RENCP and is the final authority in the management and administration of the affairs of the Platform. The General Assembly is the key forum for exchange and dialogue among delegates from different Member Organizations.

Any matter that is brought forward by one third of the members of the General Assembly must be put on to the agenda by the Chair and Co Chair Organizations. Any decision of the General Assembly will be passed by two thirds of the member organizations present.

The General Assembly has the following exclusive powers, which cannot be delegated:

- To determine and approve amendments to RENCP policies and principles;
- To elect the RENCP Chair and Co Chair Organizations, and to remove them for cause;
- To approve developmental and working plans of the Platform;

### ***d. Working Groups***

Active participation in at least one Working Group is a requirement of membership within the RENCP. Working Groups are established according to different educational sub sector demands and areas of operation of the RENCP members. A Working Group may be created during a General Assembly by the expression of interest of at least 3 Member Organizations and validated by the General Assembly. Each Working Group is open to any Member Organization interested in the Working Group activities.

Working Group members organize their own activities (meetings, workshops, field visits, campaigns, etc...) independently but provide updates to each General Assembly as well as posting updates on the RENCP website. The Working Groups are each to identify their Chair organizations. A Chair Organization for each Working Group would be voted on annually by two thirds of all Organizations formally registered to be part of the Working Group. Any time, two third of any Working Group can choose to conduct election for Chairmanship/Leadership of the Group. The outcome of any such matter would be brought to the immediate attention of the Chair and Co Chair Organizations. A Working Group may be dissolved upon the written consent of participating Organizations and would be formally validated at the next General Assembly.

Should it be required, the Chair and Co Chair may communicate about the Working Group dissolution to other stakeholders.

#### ***e. Organization of Meetings***

The Chair and Co Chair are by all possible means to organize quarterly meetings of the General Assembly which will feed into the National Policy, dialogue via the Development partner meetings and the cluster meetings. Regular meetings are to be called two weeks in advance of the proposed date.

All Working Groups meetings will also be aligned to engage within the same process. Should there be a need of an extraordinary meeting, this will be called for by the Chair and Co Chair giving as much notice as possible. The Chairperson of a meeting is not necessarily the representative of the Chair/ Co Chair Organization but can also be any other representative of a member organization who has been designated as such in a properly convened meeting.

The Chair and the Co Chair are to Chair General Assemblies whereas Working Group meetings are to be chaired by the Chair Organizations of those Groups.

#### ***f. Financial resources and management***

RENCP operates on a voluntary basis. However, financial participation is open to all member organizations willing to contribute to the execution of specific tasks agreed upon by the Platform. The organization taking the lead on the execution of a specific task will manage and monitor the implementation process and the use of the resources. External financial resources may be sought and administered and transparently accounted for by the Chair and Co Chair for RENCP activities.