Benchmarks for SDG 4 Indicators

From a neglected commitment to global implementation roadmap

Silvia Montoya
Director, UNESCO Institute for Statistics

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Commitment

Education 2030 Framework for Action, 2015

Called on countries to establish “appropriate intermediate benchmarks (e.g. for 2020 and 2025)” for the SDG indicators, seeing them as “indispensable for addressing the accountability deficit associated with longer-term targets” (§28).

Global Education Meeting, 2020

“We request UNESCO and its partners, together with the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee, to ... accelerate the progress and propose relevant and realistic benchmarks of key SDG 4 indicators for subsequent monitoring” (§10).
Proposed benchmark indicators

7 indicators to benchmark were adopted by the TCG in 2019, which satisfy the principles of efficiency and relevance.

- 4.1.1 Minimum learning proficiency in reading and maths
- 4.1.2 Completion rate
- 4.1.5 Out-of-school rate
- 4.2.2 Participation rate one year before primary
- 4.c.1 Trained teachers
- Education expenditure as share of GDP/total expenditure
- Equity indicator (to be defined)
## Political process: the approach

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<th>Benchmarks are relevant to (sub-)regional organizations:</th>
<th>(Sub-)regional organizations have a role to play:</th>
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<tr>
<td>harmonize (sub) regional and global monitoring framework</td>
<td>engage in technical discussions on benchmarks</td>
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<td>develop data collection strategies</td>
<td>suggest additional regional relevant indicators</td>
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<td>monitor (sub) regional SDG 4 progress</td>
<td>organize follow up with their Member States for feedback</td>
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<td>set indicator reporting standards and processes</td>
<td>ensure high-level political endorsement of benchmarks</td>
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Two aspects of **flexibility**:
- **Any** willing regional organization can lead the process
- Regional organizations may set **additional** benchmarks
Technical process: the approach

In increasing order:

- A common regional minimum benchmark for all countries = equal to the feasible progress the country/ies furthest behind can make

- A country-specific feasible benchmark (equal to or above the minimum benchmark level) = based on its initial condition and a measure of feasible progress (e.g., based on progress of average country)

- An optional country-specific and country-set benchmark = based on country’s willingness and ambition to commit
Communicating progress

While benchmark is defined as level, rate of progress is also monitored for information; a **dashboard** distinguishes:

- if benchmark is **reached** or **not** (lack of data is marked by **grey**)
- if value of indicator is increasing **↑** (**fast** ↑) or decreasing **↓** (**fast** ↓)

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**Legend**

- No data
- No data for trend
- Exceeds benchmark by much
- Exceeds benchmark by a little
- Misses benchmark by a little
- Misses benchmark by much
- ↑ increases slowly
- ↔ no change
- ↓ decreases slowly
- ↓ decreases quickly
- ↑ increases quickly
Thank you!

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