SDG 4 benchmarks

A common framework of global, regional and national priorities to improve education program quality, efficiency and impact

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July 2021
There is global commitment to honour the Education 2020 Framework for Action call to foster improvements in education outcomes.

**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 indicators for subsequent monitoring” (§10).
Benchmarks provide focus on a small number of priority policy areas linked to the achievement of SDG4

1. Basic education
2. Pre-primary
3. Teachers
4. Expenditure
5. Equity
Benchmark targets will be set at global, regional and national levels for each priority policy area.

### Priority policy areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Area</th>
<th>Global Indicators</th>
<th>Regional Indicators</th>
<th>National Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic education</td>
<td>4.1.1 Minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics&lt;br&gt;4.1.2 Completion rate&lt;br&gt;4.1.4 Out-of-school rate</td>
<td>4.2.2 Participation in organized learning a year before primary education entry</td>
<td>1.a. 2/FFA Education expenditure (% GDP / % budget)</td>
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<td>Pre-primary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>4.c.1 Qualified teachers</td>
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<td>Expenditure</td>
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**GLOBAL**

SDG 4 benchmark indicators

**REGIONAL**

+ Definition of the regional minimum levels for global indicators

+ Indicators selected from regional frameworks:
  - Africa (CESA)
  - Arab States
  - Asia/Pacific
  - Europe/North America
  - Latin America/Caribbean

**NATIONAL**

+ Definition of national commitment for global indicators

+ Indicators selected from national frameworks
Why do we need regional benchmarks in addition to national ones?

Benchmarks are just an entry point for policy dialogue.

Benchmark process aims to empower regional organizations to strengthen peer dialogue processes.

**Minimum regional benchmarks. Why?**

Regional benchmarks are sensitive to countries furthest behind and though to help them.

In *homogeneous* regions, regional benchmarks motivate more countries to achieve it.

In *heterogenous* regions, regional benchmarks are relevant only for a few countries but foster collaboration and shared responsibility.

**Region-specific indicators?**

This is a good opportunity to add other relevant indicators from its monitoring framework, if it has one and if sufficient data are available.
Benchmark targets will be set at national and regional levels for each priority policy area

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<td>4.1.4 Out-of-school rate</td>
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<td><strong>Equity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Higher education/TVET</strong></td>
<td>Equity</td>
<td>Equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills for work</strong></td>
<td>4.3.1 Participation in organized learning a year before primary education entry</td>
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<td><strong>Learning environment</strong></td>
<td>4.4.1 Qualified teachers</td>
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</table>

**REGIONAL**

- **Africa:** +2 (R&D - TVET)
- **Asia/Pacific:** +3 (adult education; tertiary GER; STEM) Europe: +2 (adult education; tertiary GER)
- **Africa:** +1 (Participation TVET grads in LF) Asia/Pacific: +1 (youth/adult TVET participation) Europe: +2 (VET graduates work-based learning; digital skills)
- **Africa:** +2 (schools with electricity/Internet/computers; WASH)
Dashboards and regular monitoring reports will be used to visualize progress at country and regional levels

- A **global benchmark dashboard** visualizes progress at all levels
- Allows **comparison** and identification of ‘bright spots’
- Intuitive and usable for stakeholders at all levels
- Countries are trained to ensure effective use
- All stakeholders will have access, ensuring **transparency and accountability**
On track to endorse benchmarks by November 2021

**G O A L**
Endorsement of regional benchmarks levels

**K E Y A C T I O N S**
Define regional benchmarks

**A C T I V I T I E S  A T  R E G I O N A L  F O R A**
- Technical meetings on feasibility/levels
- Political endorsement
- Definition of additional indicators for regional monitoring

http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/benchmarks/
## Regional activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>AFRICA</strong></th>
<th><strong>ASIA/PACIFIC</strong></th>
<th><strong>ARAB STATES</strong></th>
<th><strong>LATIN AMERICA</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oct 2020</strong>: consultations UIS &amp; the <strong>African Union Commission</strong></td>
<td>UIS partnered with <strong>UNESCO Bangkok</strong> and <strong>Learning and Education2030+ Networking Group</strong> in establishing regional benchmarks for the region</td>
<td>UIS partnered with <strong>UNESCO Beirut</strong> in establishing regional benchmarks for the region</td>
<td>Regional partners: <strong>ECLAC, OEI, CARICOM, CECC-SICA</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Feb 2021</strong>: consultations with AU member states, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and key stakeholders</td>
<td>Regional partners: <strong>ASEAN, SEAMEO, SAARC, SPC</strong></td>
<td>Regional partners: <strong>ABEGS, RCEP</strong></td>
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<td><strong>May-Jun 2021</strong>: UIS and IPED organize 5 regional meetings on benchmarking process</td>
<td><strong>Oct-Nov 2020</strong>: regional consultation and technical team meetings</td>
<td>End 2020: High-level meetings</td>
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<td><strong>Mar-April 2021</strong>: sub-regional consultations; country feedback</td>
<td><strong>Early 2021</strong>: Consultation with regional stakeholders and one-to-one meetings with Ministries of Education</td>
<td><strong>Alignment of CARICOM Phase 1 indicators to the 7 benchmark indicators</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Agreement on all proposed indicators for regional benchmarks</td>
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<td>Commitment to benchmarking process</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional indicators proposed</td>
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<td>Proposed benchmarks shared with Member States</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Summary Report Africa Regional technical consultation on SDG4/CESA 16-25 with Member States</strong></td>
<td><strong>Summary Report Asia/Pacific Regional technical consultation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Summary report scheduled</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Summary report scheduled</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bridging Latin America and the Caribbean Monitoring Frameworks and SDG 4</strong></td>
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</table>
Process to finalize the compilation of national benchmarks

Who
Each country will outline and communicate their benchmark through the respective SDG 4 national focal point

How
Benchmark values will be a quantified target for each indicator and level:
- If a country has a strategy or plan and actions that sets a target for a benchmark indicator in 2025 and 2030, this will be the benchmark source
- If a country does not yet have a target for 2025 and 2030 for the benchmarked indicators it is a good opportunity for national dialogue.

When
- Complete national submissions by September 30
- Compile results by October 15
Thank you
Learn more

http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/benchmarks/
Frequently asked questions (1)

**Are countries far from and close to the goal treated the same way?**

The methodology used sets *different levels* for each country to achieve but the *same progress rate*, given their level of educational development, which should be faster than what was observed in the past.

**What is the difference between proposed and national benchmarks?**

Proposed benchmarks are based on projections if they could progress at rates faster than the average progress observed in the past: these values are basis for discussion. Each country can set benchmark at higher level.

**COVID-19 is expected to negatively affect education outcomes**

Benchmark values are set for 2025 and 2030. By that time, countries should be back on their original trajectory. If COVID-19 consequences prove more severe, benchmarks may be adjusted around 2025.

**Baseline/latest data are inconsistent and benchmarks are questionable**

Despite quality assurance checks, some data series fluctuate. A TCG task force will assess queries. Benchmarks need to align with and empower, not substitute national planning processes.
Regional Benchmarks (minimum levels)
Regional entities and their Member States that participated in different consultation rounds endorse the minimum regional benchmarks by July 2021.

National benchmarks
Member States will endorse their national benchmarks by Friday October 15th.