

Global Coalition for Education Data

December 2019

Executive summary

The Global Coalition for Education Data (GCED) is a joint effort by countries, development partners, civil society and academia to strengthen national education systems, improve the quality of education data and build capacity to track progress towards the sustainable development goals (SDGs). This alignment of technical support needs and funding will be achieved through sharing of information and a package of standards and tools for all sources of education data. The expected outcome is increased efficiency of domestic and external investment in producing comparable, timely and accurate educational data to strengthen monitoring and accountability. The document describes the next steps towards a Global Education Data Summit in November 2020.

1. Background

The UIS has led the proposal to develop a **Global Coalition for Education Data** (<u>TCG6/REF/9</u>; <u>Global</u> <u>Coalition for Education Data</u>: <u>Concept Note</u>), which was strongly supported by the Multilateral Education Platform (UNGA, September 2019).

The objective of Coalition is to improve data availability and the quality and use of data in order to achieve SDG 4. It aims to ensure that global education partners align their financial and technical resources around a common agenda and a common approach for measurement - to serve clearly articulated and prioritized country needs (**Annex I**).

This initiative is in line with UN Member States' acknowledgement at the 50th Session of the UN Statistical Commission (March 2019) of the UIS' role as a broker for development efforts related to education statistics. Similar coalitions have proven to be effective in health (e.g. Global Health Data Collaborative) and agriculture.

The Coalition will provide:

- a mechanism for sharing information between countries and donors and for strengthening **accountability** with respect to data for SDG 4 monitoring
- a more effective system for raising and channelling **funding from donors**;
- a more efficient system for distributing **funding to countries** in line with their needs;

The Coalition will help:

- countries to prioritize and formulate their capacity development needs;
- **donors** to prioritize and align their support programmes behind these needs; and



• countries and donors to match country **demand** with donor **supply**.

This process will be supported by the following deliverables:

- a country **technical package** of tools and guides to help countries diagnose their needs for support in all areas under the proposed TCG Working Groups, and
- a country **technical and institutional profile** that can help them present and communicate their needs and can be used as a framework for funding and programmatic agreements with donors.

2. Operationalization of the Global Data Coalition in the global architecture

Figure 1 describes how the proposed initiative fits in the global education architecture.

The <u>SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee</u> (SC) is the **global multi-stakeholder mechanism for education in the 2030 Agenda**. One of its primary objectives is to 'encourage harmonization and coordination of partner activities" to achieve SDG 4 and the other education-related targets in the SDGs. It coordinates with regional SDG 4 Steering Committees or related mechanisms in five regions: sub-Saharan Africa; Arab States; Asia and the Pacific; Latin America and the Caribbean; and Europe and North America. Country ownership is the necessary condition for appropriating the SDG agenda.

The technical branch of the SC is the <u>Technical Cooperation Group on the Indicators for SDG 4</u> – <u>Education 2030</u> (TCG). Established in 2016, the TCG serves as a platform to discuss and develop indicators used for monitoring the Education 2030 targets in an open, inclusive and transparent manner. The <u>SDG 4 - Education 2030</u> Framework for Action ratified that the UIS remains *"the official source of cross-nationally comparable data on education"* while it is also clearly recognised that *"in addition to collecting data, the UIS will work with partners to develop new indicators, statistical approaches and monitoring tools …working in coordination with the Education 2030 Steering Committee"*. Under its proposed re-organization, the TCG will have six working groups, by source of data (**Figure 2** and **Annex III**). One of roles of the working groups will be to develop standards and tools that will guide countries and donors.

The Multilateral Education Platform (MEP) is a forum for strategic dialogue among 13 key multilateral partners that aims to reduce fragmentation and agree on priorities. Established at UNESCO in July 2019, the MEP is comprised of principals of UN agencies and other multilateral partners involved in education. The Paris Outcome Document <u>agreed</u> to jointly accelerate progress toward SDG 4 based on the seven broad priorities. During the UN General Assembly in September, the MEP agreed to move ahead on one – namely the need for more coordinated technical and financing support for increasing availability and quality of education data, under the <u>Global Coalition for Education Data</u> led by UNESCO's Institute for Statistics.

Most of these UN agencies and multilateral partners, often jointly with other partners, are already collaborating in a range of **inter-agency and other groups** (Annex II) to plan, develop, and implement coordinated activities in response to their and their partner country needs for education data. However, these are yet not sufficiently aligned to take advantage of potential synergies. One of the purposes of the Coalition will be to strategically align all these groups to the common goal of supporting SDG 4 monitoring. These inter-agency and other groups will essentially become the technical arm of the MEP.



Finally, the initiative of the Special Envoy, Mr Gordon Brown, the **Global Education Forum (GEF)** cochaired by UNESCO and two senior personalities, serves as a complement in the system in terms of advocacy and mobilization of financial resources.

In education statistics, there are already a number of mostly ad hic initiatives to raise funds for education data that try to bring together countries and donors but, as with some of the technical collaboration mechanisms, they are not yet sufficiently aligned to the goal of supporting SDG 4 monitoring. Through the Coalition work, the dialogue between countries and donors will become more systematic – and essentially the data-specific arm of the GEF.

In other words, the Global Coalition for Education Data offers an opportunity to align multiple and often uncoordinated donor initiatives, both at the technical and the financial level. It will set the stepping stones for working with existing platforms and inter-agency working groups as appropriate within a clear framework to support the monitoring of SDG 4; addressing specific technical issues and topics; harmonizing tools where necessary;, and ensuring broad buy-in for future dissemination and use. It will build on existing roles and mandates as explained in **Figure 1**.



Figure 1. The Global Coalition for Education Data and Roadmap to Delivery





Figure 2. TCG working groups and deliverables





3. Timeline to delivery

Figure 3 shows the proposed timeline towards a Global Summit for Education Data.

Figure 3. Timeline for the Global Coalition for Education Data





Annex I. Global Coalition for Education Data Project Summary

1	Description			
	UNESCO data coordination by the UIS, given that it is the statistical agency with the global and thematic mandate on data.			
2	Obje	Objective		
	a)	To coordinate strategies for strengthening national education information systems through a global platform for sharing data expertise and collaborating on education data issues.		
	b)	To mobilize and align all resources, either domestic or international, including ongoing and planned ones, behind a common agenda, and activate public-private partnerships for data production in a strategic and more cost-effective way.		
3	Any	solution should		
	a)	Deliver the goods (institutional and technical quality).		
	b)	Be sustainable (institutionally, technically and financially).		
4	Нуро	otheses as to barriers for data reporting		
	Cour	ntries tend to under-report as long as:		
	a)	Investments in data are inadequate, fragmented and poorly coordinated		
	b)	Major international programs and donors are not engaged in a coordinated way		
	c)	There is insufficient support for countries to understand and use global reporting standards.		
	d)	Reporting has a high cost in terms of usage of scarce skills, because it may require estimation and imputation of key data in cases where the SDG indicators go beyond sectoral administrative data.		
	e)	Reporting is seen as largely satisfying donor needs or the needs of the global community rather than national needs		
	f)	The responsibilities to report internally in the Ministry are either not clear or not enforced, and the higher levels of Ministries under-fund the data function.		
	g)	Data, even if of good quality and available, are not used by local communities or schools		
5	Assu	mptions		
	a)	There is interest "in principle" in good quality data.		
	b)	There are capabilities to produce data but they need to be spread and improved.		
	c)	Evidence-based decision making can be enhanced.		
6	How	to channel partners commitments		
	colle	ctive action will re-direct funding from its existing individual approach to a coordinated ctive action that is designed to build sustainable data within the SDG context, along the wing lines:		
	a)	All partners who want to be in the Coalition align behind this agenda for SDG 4 monitoring and ensure that all the initiatives they support are consistent with it.		
	b)	Countries that receive support dedicate own-source budget and resources to data.		
	c)	Donors and countries agree to align existing and new education strategies, loans, projects, technical assistance, training and funding to complement the investment in data collection for SDG 4 monitoring, taking a comprehensive capacity development approach that includes institutional strengthening for data analysis and data literacy to support evidence-based decisions.		
	d)	The Secretariat of the GCED provides timely, centralized, and brokered information on innovations in data methods, funding sources,		



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7	Scope of work – Key actions		
	A. Global action	B. Country action	
	Strengthen countries' ability to monitor and act	Improve efficiency and alignment of investments	
	on their response to the targets and measure of national priorities and the education related	in education data systems through collective action	
	SDGs		
	a) Work at global level to establish common	a) Strengthen policy and institutional	
	standards, indicators and databases,	environment, including a strong national	
	contributing to countries' education	monitoring and evaluation plan for the	
	information systems.	education sector with aligned issue-specific	
	b) Better map countries' own needs to assess	plans.	
	the degree to which reporting can be	b) Advocate for and support the development	
	made a by-product of their own needs.	and use of a common investment framework	
	Generalize from a sample (or universalize after the sample has pilot tested the	for country data systems, based on a resource mapping of domestic and partner	
	assessment).	investments.	
	c) Develop a joint technical package of tools	c) Identify gaps and opportunities for innovative	
	and standards for strengthening country	solutions, reduce fragmentation.	
	education measurement and	d) Raise the profile of the education related SDGs	
	accountability.	and the global effort in strengthening country-	
	d) Promote and facilitate open data access.	led effort and accountability among	
	e) Agree on a country-prioritization approach	government senior officials, partners and other stakeholders.	
	for funding (build on what exists, e.g., the		
	GPE funding formula).	 e) Identify the priority needs and capacity enhancements that should be considered. 	
		f) Enhance country capacity to conduct cross-	
		program analysis and country level decision- making and reporting to SDG.	
8	Output		
0		is through more timely, accurate and comparable	
	data.	s through more timely, accurate and comparable	
9	Outcome		
	Effective policies and impact at national and glo	bal level (SDGs).	
10	Budget per year		
	Staff – 1 million USD to cover staff, activities and	the global public goods such as databases and	
	technical standards		
11	Deliverables		
	Global Observatory for Education Data and Tool		
		tion information standards established to share best practices for countries and regions, based on	
	i. Technical package with tools and guidan	ce	
	ii. Country profile		
	b) Global platform of SDG4 education data:		
	i. Education data with distributed data hub	as and analytics	
		is and analytics	

ii. A global report on the state of the country education information systems.



Annex II - Existing platforms and initiatives in data, measurement and accountability

Technical	Existing platforms and initiatives	Global investors
1) Country action	 Country compacts, multi- partner coordination groups at country level, civil society Improving national statistical capacities 	UNESCO, GPE EC, World Bank, USAID, bilaterals, regional development banks, PARIS 21
2) EMIS	 UNESCO UNICEF World Bank FHI 360 	Bilaterals, GPE, World Bank, European Commission, UNICEF, Aga Khan and other philanthropies, UNESCO, UIS
3) Population surveys, census & population estimates	 International household survey network DHS - MICS collaboration LSMS working group World Population and Housing Census programme Inter-secretarial Working Group on Household Surveys (ISWGHS) UNFPA 	USAID, UNICEF, World Bank, UNSD, OECD, UN Population Division, GEMR, regional commissions
4) Learning Assessments	 GAML TALENT NEQMAP UNESCO IIEP 	UNESCO, WBG, OECD, IEA, PASEC, SACMEQ, SIMEAO
5) Teachers	 OECD NESLI ILO IMF UNESCO/UIS OECD/TALIS 	ILO, UNESCO, Education International, OECD UNICEF, NORAD, GPE
6) Finance	 WBG IIEP/UIS OECD GEMR GPE IMF 	World Bank, GPE, OECD, IMF, EC, UNESCO, GEMR.
7) Refugees	OECD UNHCR	Education Cannot wait (ECW), GPE

Note: Analytics, data use & open access and Scorecards & profiles to evaluate if working groups are needed



Annex III. TCG Institutional Organization

At the sixth TCG meeting in Yerevan (August 2019), the UIS presented a proposal to divide the indicator development group into working groups focused on data sources with the objective of focusing on data availability and quality including time dimensions. The following working groups were settled:

- administrative data / Education Management Information System (EMIS);
- household surveys;
- learning assessments
- personnel data on teachers;
- education expenditure; and
- additional groups on specific issues (e.g. refugees, conflict-affected countries).

The UIS will operate as the Secretariat for the working groups. The working groups will have different chairs from institutions willing to delegate their time for this task. Consultants could be appointed to support the working groups, but ideally they will not act as chairs.

The **objectives** will be to:

- **recommend and decide on priorities** on improvements in efficiency and alignment of education data collection systems;
- propose, develop and endorse methodological norms and standards for specific indicators;
- propose, develop and endorse tools and guidelines for specific indicators;
- **identify needs** and propose ways **to build capacity** for countries to utilise these tools and guidelines;
- **coordinate global efforts** to improve data availability and quality based on norms, standards and procedures; and
- collaborate with agencies and countries in the implementation of the working groups strands by sharing the chairing of the working groups with the support from the UIS as Secretariat.

The new working groups will work, when necessary and appropriate:

- with existing coordinating platforms, such as inter-agency working groups;
- with specific sectors and communities of practice interest; and
- others as may be suggested by the UIS.

The working groups will operate under the following guidelines:

- Working groups are set up with the agreement of the TCG to address specific technical topics that are discussed as priority in the TCG and the Education 2030 Steering Committee. In the future, other working groups could be set up with the agreement of the TCG.
- Each working group, facilitated by the working group co-leads, will develop the proposed objectives, issues, indicator priorities and deliverables in an annual work plan.
- Working groups will meet at least twice a year and will report on progress to the TCG and to the indicators working groups.
- The Secretariat will facilitate working group meetings and provide other administrative support.
- Coordination between the working groups will be actively pursued with support from the Secretariat.
- Each of the working groups and the nature of their work is presented in more detail below, establishing a first draft of the <u>Terms of Reference for each strand of work</u>.



All.1. Administrative Data / EMIS

This working group will leverage efforts to develop harmonized guidance to countries that seek to strengthen their national EMIS. The first area of work will be to ensure faster action to maximize the reporting of indicators derived from administrative data by coordinating producers of administrative data and harmonizing different data sources. Another potential area will be on how to capitalize on technological advances, imputation and estimation.

Administrative Data/EMIS Working Group

	Key issues		
•	Data gaps despite data availability in countries.		
•	Data discontinuity in time series.		
•	Insufficient use of administrative data for disaggregation by student characteristics.		
•	Insufficient use of administrative data to collect data on teachers.		
•	Disagreements over national and UN population data		
Obj	jectives		
•	Agree on the parameters needed to ensure quality of the data collected, i.e. data that are complete, relevant, accurate, timely and accessible, with a high degree of integrity.		
•	Map and take advantage of existing efforts in the production of EMIS data.		
•	Review, harmonize and endorse standards and generic guidance/tools.		
•	Streamline the flow of information by reducing and eliminating duplications and redundancies, as well as filling information gaps.		
Ind	licator priorities		
•	4.1.3 Gross intake ratio to the last grade and 4.1.5 Out of school rate		
•	4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning and 4.2.4 Gross early childhood enrolment ratio		
Del	liverables		
•	Data cleaning procedures (verification and validation) so information could yield internationally comparable data for various indicators.		
•	Good practice in data imputation and estimation implementation methods when no observed data are available.		
•	Protocol for data reporting to allow comparability with other sources of information and to guide reporting by countries.		
•	Guidelines for disaggregation using administrative data.		
	Children for an difference bester and the ENGCA and the transmission of the second second second second second		
•	Guidelines for modifying school surveys under EMIS to collect data on teacher qualifications.		
• Lin	ks with other groups		
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• Lin •	ks with other groups		
•	ks with other groups UNESCO-managed coordination group on EMIS		
• •	ks with other groups UNESCO-managed coordination group on EMIS Global Partnership for Education (GPE) data roundtable		
• • • Me	ks with other groups UNESCO-managed coordination group on EMIS Global Partnership for Education (GPE) data roundtable Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER)		



All.2. Household Surveys

This working group will support the development of household survey-based indicators, maintain definitions of indicators calculated from survey data, contribute to the harmonization of survey data used by different organizations, and prepare guidelines for producers and users of survey data. Household surveys include multipurpose, income and expenditure, and labour force surveys, as well as population censuses.

Household Surveys Working Group

Key issues		
•	Household survey data are not sufficiently utilized for SDG 4 indicator measurement.	
•	Estimates based on administrative data and household survey data are often inconsistent.	
•	Guidelines are required for data providers (national statistical agencies and large-scale survey programmes, e.g. MICS and DHS, or repositories, e.g. IPUMS and LIS) that could be relied upon to estimate SDG indicators.	
•	Methodologies need to be developed for measuring specific indicators that balance the goals of (1) accurate measurement, (2) cross-survey and cross-time comparability, and (3) widest possible coverage.	
•	Methodology and criteria also need to be developed for reporting confidence intervals and standard errors as household surveys are sample-based.	
•	Capacity constraints: technical capacity is lacking in many education ministries: education ministries may not have a formal partnership with statistical agencies, statistical agencies may not have a mandate or technical expertise to provide data on education indicators.	
Obj	ectives	
•	Maximize the use of household survey data for SDG reporting.	
Ind	icator priorities	
•	4.1.4 Completion rate	
•	4.1.5 Out-of-school rate: methodology and guidelines for measuring.	
•	4.5.1 Parity indices: gender, wealth, ethnicity/language/religion, regions	
•	4.c.5 Teacher salaries relative to similarly educated professionals (using labour force surveys)	
Del	iverables	
•	Guidelines on methodologies for defining and measuring relevant SDG indicators and disaggregation.	
•	Guidelines on reporting estimates and confidence intervals (or alternative measure of estimate sample variation).	
•	Guidelines on reporting deviations in methodology (e.g. if the survey excludes some parts of the country, etc.).	
Lin	ks with other groups	
•	Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Household Surveys	
•	Inter-agency Group on Education Inequality Indicators	
Ме	mbers	
Сои	ntries:	
Age	Agencies:	



All.3. Learning Assessments

This working group is composed of the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning (GAML), whose goals and tasks are to improve learning outcomes by supporting national strategies for learning assessments and developing internationally comparable indicators and methodological tools to measure progress towards key targets of SDG 4.

So far, the GAML has focused on the development of methodologies for learning outcomes indicators with a special focus on Indicators 4.1.1, 4.7.4 and 4.7.5. Although there is still a need to continue working on the methodological aspect, there is also a need to fill the data gaps with information already produced by the countries through learning assessments.

Learning Assessments Working Group

Key issues		
Low coverage for some indicators.		
• Data is underutilized for providing measures of indicators other than learning outcomes (e.g. teacher characteristics, school characteristics).		
Objectives		
Finalize the methodological developments for all learning outcome indicators.		
• Complete the definition of the minimum (or adequate) level of proficiency or for the remaining indicators.		
Indicator priorities		
Finalize guidelines for measuring SDG targets using learning assessments.		
4.6.1 Adult literacy and numeracy proficiency		
4.7.4 and 4.7.5 on global citizenship and sustainable development skills		
Information on teacher qualifications, language of instruction, school environment and other indicators.		
Deliverables		
Protocol for data reporting and harmonization of indicators from different learning assessment		
Guidelines on measuring non-learning outcome related indicators using learning assessments		
Links with other groups		
Global Alliance to Monitor Learning		
Members		
Countries:		
Agencies:		



All.4. Personnel Data on Teachers

This working group will develop guidelines for strengthening government capacity to compile data from various administrative and survey sources to provide measures for SDG 4.c indicators. A primary source of data for SDG 4.c indicators consists of public sector personnel data.

Personnel Data on Teachers Working Group

Key	/ issues
•	Lack of data collection on teacher qualifications in school surveys/EMIS.
•	Low capacity by education ministries to report actual teacher's salaries due to poor processes of infrastructure (e.g. no standardized electronic records).
•	Inability for education ministries to report actual salary payments (e.g. salary payments are administrated sub-nationally, by provinces or states; or salary payments are administrated through a different ministry including public service ministries).
Ob	jectives
•	Improve the collection of data on teachers using different sources of information such as EMIS, humar resources and payroll databases, and financial data.
Ind	icator priorities
•	4.c.1-4.c.4 on trained and qualified teachers.
•	4.c.5 on teacher salaries
•	4.c.6 on teacher attrition
•	4.c.7 on in-service training
De	liverables
•	Guidelines on strategies and best-practice examples for improving salary reporting capacity including regulatory or policy changes, partnering with sub-national jurisdictions or other ministries as needed developing adequate reporting processes and infrastructure.
Lin	ks with other groups
•	OECD NESLI, Teacher's Task Force
Ме	mbers
<i>C</i> οι	intries:
Age	ncies:



All.5. Education Expenditure Data

This working group will support the development and implementation of guidelines for producers and users of education expenditure data, contributing to the harmonization of data from different sources.

Education Expenditure Data Working Group

Key issues	
Weak adoption of the NEA methodological framework.	
• Public expenditure data have low country coverage, are not comprehensive (missing spending at local government level, especially if they result from fiscal transfers), are not disaggregated (by level of education or by spending category), have time lags, and double count fiscal transfers.	
Non-articulation of public expenditure and aid to education data.	
• Low coverage and frequency of private expenditure data on both public and private schools:	
Lack of coverage of direct subsidies to private schools.	
Lack of information by income or wealth quintile of citizens.	
Objectives	
• Promote the use of the National Education Account (NEA) methodological framework, as a key step for harmonizing data sources for both public and private expenditure. Even if a formal NEA is not created for a given country, steps in that direction will help.	
Develop standards and guidelines on:	
• reporting public education expenditure data disaggregated by level of education and spending categories;	
reporting education expenditure data from sub-national units; and	
how to avoid double counting public education expenditure and aid to education data.	
Promote the use of the World Bank/UIS guidelines on household expenditure in HHS	
Develop a dissemination strategy to communicate key issues.	
Indicator priorities	
Framework for Action indicators: Expenditure as percentage of GDP/total public expenditure.	
4.5.3: Extent to which formula-based policies reallocate resources to disadvantaged populations.	
4.5.4: Education expenditure per student by level of education and source of funding.	
Mapping of current information to a simplified NEA.	
Deliverables	
Mapping of public education expenditure data gaps and their causes.	
Refinement of NEA methodological framework and promotion to countries.	
Guidelines on reporting public education expenditure data from central and local governments.	
Guidelines on reporting public education expenditure data by spending category.	
Promotion of the standardized household survey module on education expenditure to countries.	
Links with other groups	
Links with other groups • Global Platform to Strengthen Education Financing Systems	
 Links with other groups Global Platform to Strengthen Education Financing Systems International Monetary Fund (IMF) Statistics Department (STA) / Government Finance Statistics (GFS) 	
 Links with other groups Global Platform to Strengthen Education Financing Systems International Monetary Fund (IMF) Statistics Department (STA) / Government Finance Statistics (GFS) World Health Organization (WHO) National Health Accounts team. 	
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All.6. Additional Groups on Specific Issues

This working group will focus on the development of indicators with disaggregated data for different vulnerable groups, which has been a priority in the adoption of the SDG Agenda and the Global Indicator Framework. As UIS is mandated to develop and implement the indicators needed to monitor SDG 4, it will work with the working group to develop a strategy to address the challenge of producing quality statistics on education and specific methodologies to report on vulnerable groups (such as refugees and migrants), which were prioritised by the 2030 Agenda. The work of this group will aim to support countries and agencies to apply the methodology and strategies developed to increase their capacity to report on these groups.

Additional Groups on Specific Issues Working Group

Key issues		
Low availability of data to report on vulnerable groups.		
 Lack of methodology to produce and harmonize quality statistics on education, and thus, to report on vulnerable groups. 		
Objectives		
• Develop a data strategy to improve the availability and quality of education statistics for refugees and migrants.		
Indicator priorities		
Guidelines for the production of indicators		
Deliverables		
• Guidelines on education data report for refuges consisting of standards and definitions that could serve as the reference conceptual framework to collect statistics on the education situation of migrants and refugees.		
• Methodology to translate education data from different sources into a set of internationally-comparable categories as a data strategy on education statistics for migrants and refugees		
Links with other groups		
•		
Members		
Countries:		
Agencies:		