TCG-7/REF/2

TCG PROGRESS REPORT

2019 - 2020

Introduction

The Technical Cooperation Group on the Indicators for SDG 4 – Education 2030 (TCG) held its sixth meeting (TCG 6) in Yerevan, Armenia on 29-30 August 2019. This document summarizes activities related to indicator development and data dissemination that took place since TCG 6.

Consultation after TCG 6

Following TCG 6, the TCG Secretariat consulted the voting members of the TCG via an online questionnaire on 3 main areas: indicator definitions, refinement and classification; benchmarks and reference points; and institutional organization of the TCG.

In February, TCG members were also consulted on indicators which are not part of the global and thematic monitoring framework for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) but which have been identified by the UIS as useful for national monitoring and policy guidance.

Finally, in July, another consultation resulted in the general agreement regarding issues related to methodological developments and specification in the name of SDG thematic indicators 4.5.3 on education resources for disadvantage population, 4.7.3 on human rights, and 4.7.4 and 4.7.5 on knowledge and skills to promote sustainable development.

Methodological Development of Indicators

The TCG Secretariat has continued with methodological developments in various fronts. Some of them have been shared in the April Newsletter.

Learning Assessments

The table below describes the progress in the Learning outcomes indicators.

Indicator	Aspects

Indicator 4.1.1	▪ Refinement of Minimum Proficiency Levels
	▪ Policy Linking
	  - Tools: Global Proficiency Framework, Policy Linking Toolkit
	  - Piloting in 5 countries
	▪ Rosetta-Stone implementation of field work finalized

Indicators 4.7.4, 4.7.5	Endorsement of: ▪ Conceptual framework discussed and approved ▪ Global Framework approved and reporting strategy in 2019 ▪ Reporting data based on existent ILSA ▪ **Indicators 4.7.4 and 4.7.5 reported in 2020**
Breadth of Skills-4.7.6	▪ Green light from TCG 2018 ▪ Endorsement of Work Plan in 2019 ▪ Conceptual and methodological framework shared in Webinar ▪ **Pilot and framing of the indicator in this GAML/TCG7**
Indicator 4.6.1	▪ Endorsement of PIAAC methodological framework 2018 ▪ Endorsement of Level 2 as FL in 2019 ▪ Workplan approved and new tools in development
Indicator 4.4.2	▪ Conceptual framework approved and endorsed.
Extraction of Non-cognitive SDG4 indicators to report on SDG4	▪ Mapping 2018 ▪ Approval of LA to report for 4.5.2 in 2019, reported in 2020 ▪ Learning Assessment data used to report for indicator 4.a.2 ▪ TCG7 Methodological work

Indicator	Aspects
	▪ Seek Approval for
Brokerage/Market transparency	▪ Donors Registry ▪ Bank of items
Expand the use of learning assessment	▪ Life Cycle approach to the development of modules to measure learning and skills in household surveys

Policy Linking Timeline

Policy linking makes use of a standard-setting methodology (the Angoff approach for those familiar with standard setting methodologies), long used in many countries, to set benchmarks (also known as "cut scores" or "thresholds") on learning assessments. While it is an old standard-setting methodology, UIS and its partners have now extended its use to help countries set benchmarks using the Global Proficiency Framework (GPF), a framework developed by multilateral donors and partners based on current national content and assessment frameworks across more than 100 countries. The GPF provides performance expectations/standards for learners in Grades 2-6 in reading and mathematics. By linking their national assessments to the GPF, countries and donors are able to compare learning outcomes across language groups in countries as well as across countries and over time, assuming all new assessments are subsequently linked to the GPF. Policy linking allows countries to use their existing national assessments or early grade reading and math assessments to report against Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.1.1 as well as some donor-required indicators, such as USAID's Foreign Assistance ("F") indicators.
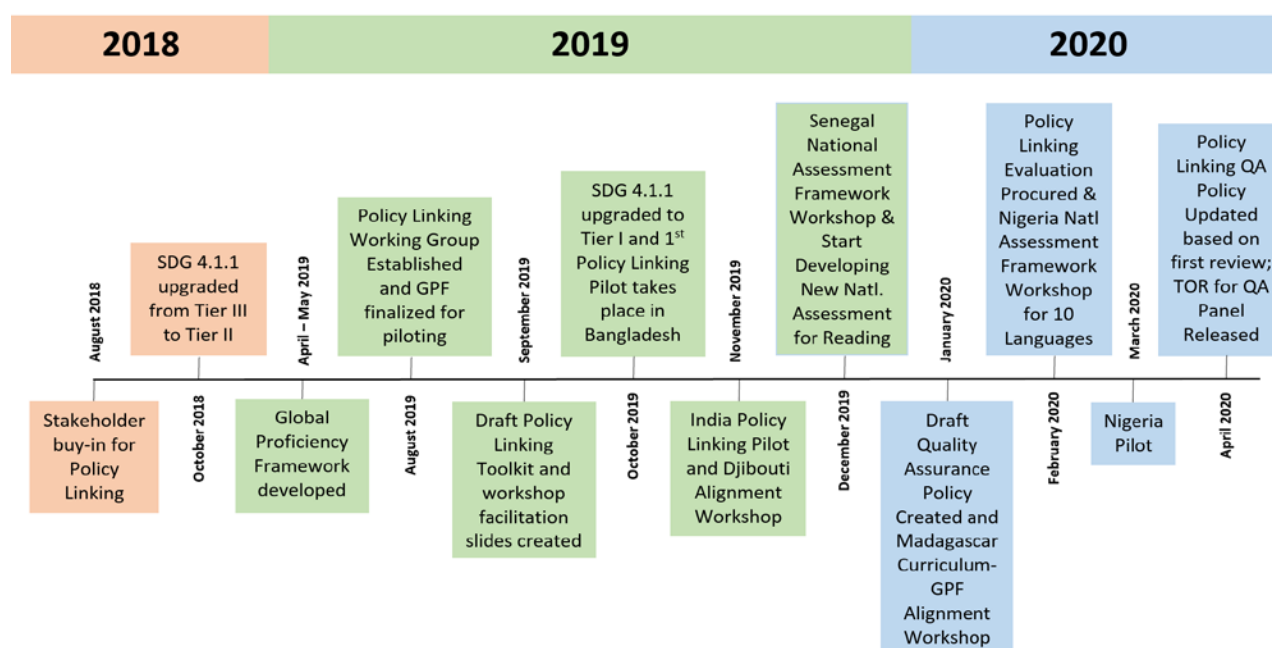
Teachers' Indicators

Update on the development of ISCED-T and indicators related to teachers' qualifications and training are detailed in the following links: ISCED-T and 4.c.1 to 4.c.4. Progress in teachers' salaries' methodological development are described here.

SDG indicator 4.7.3: Current status and next steps

Indicator 4.7.3: Extent to which the framework on the World Programme on Human Rights Education is implemented nationally (as per the UNGA Resolution 59/113)

Current status

There is no approved data collection instrument or methodology for calculation of SDG indicator 4.7.3. Human rights education is also covered in SDG indicator 4.7.1 (*Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment*).

The Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) has developed a Human Rights Education (HRE) Indicator Framework in consultation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Six countries have piloted the indicator framework (Australia, Denmark, Ecuador, Georgia, Nigeria, Philippines). The questionnaire for the indicator framework can be completed by National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) and be used both for human rights treaty reporting and to provide data to National Statistical Offices for SDG monitoring. Specifically, data collected with the Framework could be used for calculation of indicator 4.7.3 and for validation of data collected by UNESCO for indicator 4.7.1.

At a TCG meeting on 21 April 2020, the Danish Institute for Human Rights presented its HRE Indicator Framework and gathered feedback on the data collection instrument and associated metadata. As of October 2020, ten NHRIs in Africa have used the new online version of the instrument, and three to four NHRIs from other parts of the world are currently using the tool. Based on these experiences and discussions with the respective NHRIs, DIHR has made some adjustments to the questionnaire and revised its guidance to users.

Next steps

After DIHR reviewed the information collected, the results could be presented to the TCG in a future meeting. The calculation method for indicator 4.7.3 could then also be discussed.

COVID-19 response

The medium and long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are still uncertain, but the need to continue educating children, and the need to restore the learning losses brought in by the crisis, requires short-term actions by Ministry of Education and other Government authorities. However, given the exceptional nature of the crisis, there were no ready answers to the basic questions for ministries, agencies and statistical institutions, which are: (i) what data to collect, and (ii) how to collect it, to ensure efficient policy response and successful mitigation strategies.

To that end, **the UIS has developed and offered to the Member States:**

- [A statistical framework for COVID-19](), including:
    - Suggested structural indicators to assess preparedness and Impact; and
    - Suggested indicators to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on education.

- Guidance on how essential data collection should and can continue to inform vital policy decisions on education delivery as well as support the health and well-being of learners – especially those in vulnerable populations (e.g. via a [fact sheet]() and [webinars](), conducted by the UIS or partners with the UIS participation).

- A platform to share experiences, good practices and express their needs via a series of global and regional meetings with education stakeholders.

Moreover, two new data collections to capture COVID-19 impact on education were designed and launched:

- Survey of COVID-19 Pandemic Impacts on National Education Planning Units; and
- Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures.

The latter, implemented in partnership with the World Bank and UNICEF, was first launched in April, and its results have been widely used for assessing the impact of school closures as well as novel catch-up strategies to consider for the reopening of schools. See, for example:

- School closures in poor countries could be devastating (*The Economist)*
- The risks of keeping schools closed far outweigh the benefits *(The Economist)*
- As schools reopen, how can pupils make up for lost time? *(The Economist)*
- Impact of school closures on learning can be curbed with adequate catch-up strategies *(GPE)*

The second iteration of the survey has been completed. The database and a joint report with UNICEF and World Bank Group will be released on October 29th on the UIS platform. Three major aspects of national education responses were covered in the Survey: education strategies and methods, education participants, and impacts on learning outcomes. Within these categories, over eight topics were included: plans for re-opening schools, school calendar, distance education delivery systems, online distance learning strategies, teachers, students, parents/caregivers, learning, assessment and examinations. The questionnaire covers all education levels except higher education and technical and vocational education and training. The analysis of the results will allow for policy learning across diverse country settings in order to better inform local and national responses and prepare for school reopening.

First Round of Data Collection for the Covid-19 Survey
The first round of data collection for the survey was completed on June 12, 2020, with a total sample size of 118 countries. The size of the final sample is 116 after excluding countries which requested to be excluded from the survey analyses and data cleaning processes. In terms of regional distribution, we recorded 2 countries from Northern Africa, 26 countries from sub-Saharan Africa, 11 countries from Central and Southern Asia, 14 countries from Eastern and South-eastern Asia, 12 countries from Western Asia, 11 countries from Europe, 30 countries from Latin America and the Caribbean, and 10 countries from Oceania. The final data set contains 250 variables including a country identifier, country region, and variables that correspond to the questions in the survey. The country identifier in the dataset anonymizes country names and ISO3 codes.

Second Round of Data Collection for the Covid-19 Survey
The preliminary results of the second data collection of the survey were presented in the webinar themed "Framework for Reopening Schools: How are countries reopening and addressing learning loss?"; Visit https://infogram.com/final-unesco-education-covid-19-data-1hke60d1x7m525r for more information on the event. A special data visualization focusing only on G20 countries has also been compiled and was presented in the meeting of G20 education working group. Visit https://infogram.com/phase-ii-survey-g20-only-1hxr4zkgjp374yo?live for more information.

Links to questionnaires and reports:

http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/survey-education-covid-school-closures/

Survey on Planning Units
As the COVID-19 pandemic spreads across the globe, the statistical community is facing new challenges. During these trying times, when countries need data more urgently than ever before to plan and monitor emergency response efforts and prepare for medium- and long-term mitigation and recovery strategies, statistical operations and other office activities are seriously disrupted or interrupted. Therefore, the UIS launched an independent survey to national planning units in order to better inform data need in the process of data-based policy making. The Survey of Statistical Planning Units was launched at the end of June and collected information until mid-September. During this period of time, 120 countries participated. In terms of regional distribution, the survey team recorded data from 2 countries in Northern Africa, 29 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, 9 countries in Central and Southern Asia, 11 countries in Eastern and South-eastern Asia, 13 countries in Western Asia, 15 countries in Europe, 30 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 11 countries in Oceania. The final dataset contains 119 variables including two country identifiers (ISO3 and full country name), country region, income group and variables that correspond to each of the questions in the Survey.

Results are available at the following link.

Report on results available here.

Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Household Surveys (ISWGHHS)
The UIS is an active participant of the ISWGHHS and co-chairs the COVID-19 Task Force. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented itself as both a tremendous challenge and an opportunity for household survey programmes within countries.

The overall objectives of the Task Force are to (a) support the coordination of the COVID-19 impact surveys in countries; (b) provide guidance to countries both on maintaining the continuity of regular survey programmes and various methodological aspects of COVID-19 related surveys; and (c) establish a collective vision on the implications of COVID-19 in reshaping national household survey programmes.

More information on the Task Force is available in the Terms of Reference.

- ISWGHHS Task Force:
    - Sharing information from the COVID-19 impact surveys (https://unstats.un.org/iswghs/task-forces/covid-19-and-household-surveys/COVID-19-impact-surveys/), updated every 2 to 3 weeks
    - Methodological work:
        - Compiling methods developed by all ISWGHHS members (https://unstats.un.org/iswghs/task-forces/covid-19-and-household-surveys/methodology-on-COVID-19-impact-surveys/)
        - Technical Guidance Note on Planning and Carrying out a Household Survey Under COVID-19
        - A vision paper on the post-COVID "new normal" for all household surveys
    - Advocacy: webinar series

Regional meetings and webinars

Several meetings were held by the TCG Secretariat since the last TCG annual meeting. They are presented in the table below.

Event	Description and objectives
Regional meetings in five regions: • Sub-Saharan Africa • Latin America and the Caribbean • Asia • Pacific • Arab States	• Discuss ways to ensure that the most relevant information will continue to be provided to decision-makers in 2020 and beyond, taking into consideration the pandemic-related challenges. ▪ Inform participants of actions undertaken by UNESCO and the UIS to support Member States in the context of the pandemic. ▪ Update participants on the latest TCG discussions on the most relevant education indicators that could serve in the COVID-19 pandemic. ▪ Learn from countries about the main data production challenges caused by the crisis, including interruption of current data collection processes, new data demands and new monitoring mechanisms.
TCG Global Virtual Meeting (April 2020)	▪ Share the latest developments and agreements achieved during the 6th TCG meeting on the implementation of the SDG 4 Thematic Indicator Framework; ▪ Share updates from the latest IAEG-SDG 2020 Comprehensive Revision Framework, including the latest changes to the official list of SDG 4 global indicators; ▪ Learn about the main national challenges to monitor SDG 4 on different levels (national, regional, thematic, global) to inform and improve the work of the UIS and the TCG addressing and working with countries in the current COVID-19 pandemic; ▪ Obtain feedback from the TCG on specific topics related to the implementation and monitoring of the SDG 4; and ▪ Support the coordinating role of the regional country representatives to the TCG.
GAML Webinar in SDG 4.1.1 Measurement Tools – Application in the wake of COVID-19 (10 June 2020)	To share details with GAML members on its progress in the past year in advancing the measurement for SDG 4 Indicator 4.1.1

SDG Indicator 4.7.3 on Human Rights (19 June 2020)	▪ Overview the proposed Framework for reporting on SDG Indicator 4.7.3, which was presented during the Global TCG Meeting on April 21 2020 in partnership with the Danish Institute on Human Rights (DIHR)
	▪ Address questions on:
	    ▪ selection of an instrument for data collection;
	    ▪ development of the indicator calculation method; and
	▪ Provide inputs for the TCG decision on the indicator's measurement and status.

Event	Description and objectives
Measuring sustainable development knowledge and skills: Are we there yet? *Methodological progress on SDG Target 4.7* (29 June 2020)	▪ To present the methodological developments for Thematic Indicators 4.7.4 and 4.7.5, including different concepts ▪ To explain how International Large Scale Assessments (ILSA) can be used as powerful instruments to report on SDG Indicators 4.7.4 and 4.7.5 ▪ To introduce the conceptual framework for a newly proposed indicator for Target 4.7 on breadth of skills
Launch of the *Efficiency and Effectiveness in Choosing and Using an EMIS. Guidelines for Data Management and Functionality in EMIS* (16 September 2020)	Joint virtual event to present the collaboration between the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in optimizing Education Management and Information System (EMIS) for the monitoring of SDG 4 indicators with the newly launched guide.
	Launch on EMIS Microsite
	Launch of Operational Guide to measure

Communication and Outreach

Blogs Published

The TCG Secretariat has published the following blogs.

Impact of School Closures on Learning Can Be Curbed With Adequate Cat-Up Strategies, July 29 2020
https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/impact-school-closures-learning-can-be-curbed-adequate-catch-strategies
Social impact bonds to measure progress towards the global education goal, June 26 2020
https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/social-impact-bonds-measure-progress-towards-global-education-goal
Collecting essential education data during the Covid-19 crisis, May 14 2020
https://gemreportunesco.wordpress.com/2020/05/14/collecting-essential-education-data-during-the-covid-19-crisis/
Data-driven decision making in education: A new guide for education management information systems (EMIS), September 17 2020
https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/data-driven-decision-making-education-new-guide-education-management-information-systems-emis
Recalculating Proficiency in Schools: COVID-19 Related Learning Losses and Dropping Out, October 23 2020
- o https://sdg.uis.unesco.org/author/uisblog/
- o https://sdg.uis.unesco.org/2020/10/23/recalculating-proficiency-in-schools-covid-19-related-learning-losses-and-dropping-out/