SDG 4 Benchmarks

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

Silvia Montoya  Director, UNESCO Institute for Statistics  February, 2021
There is global commitment to honor 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 4 indicators for subsequent monitoring” (§10).
Benchmarks will improve outcomes through enhanced…

Alignment

- On a **focused set of global priority policy areas** for education
- On **regional benchmarks** as a minimum for each policy area
- On **national benchmarks** for countries to achieve, aligned to regional ‘minimum floors’

Commitment

- **From countries** at the political level to work towards the benchmarks
- **From regional bodies** to oversee country progress and peer learnings
- From donors to **mobilize resources** to support ongoing progress

Monitoring

- **Country capability and capacity** to regularly report results (e.g. via EMIS)
- Using dashboards to **identify ‘bright spots’ and best-practices**
- Support aimed at fixing **low performance, bottlenecks, and cross-cutting issues**

Accountability

- **Focus on improvement** through routine country reporting
- Based on **country ownership** to make improvements
- On partners and donors for provision of **targeted support based on evidence**

Each component is underpinned by a focus on ensuring regular, reliable, and high-quality education data at global, regional and country-levels
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**

| Basic education | 4.1.1 Minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics  
|                 | 4.1.2 Completion rate  
|                 | 4.1.4 Out-of-school rate  
| Pre-primary     | 4.2.2 Participation in organized learning a year before primary education entry  
| Qualified teachers | 4.c.1 Qualified teachers  
| Expenditure     | 1.a. 2/FFA Education expenditure - (% GDP / % budget)  
| Equity          | Equity  

**GLOBAL**

SDG 4 Benchmark Indicators

**REGIONAL**

Definition of the regional minimum levels for global indicators

**NATIONAL**

Definition of national commitment for global indicators

Indicators selected from regional frameworks:
- Africa – CESA Continental Framework
- Arab States
- Asia/Pacific
- Europe/North America
- Latin America/Caribbean
- EC/COE

Indicators selected from National Frameworks
Regular monitoring against benchmarks will drive commitment and focus on where investments are needed.

- Regional Benchmarking approach
- Policy Priority Areas SDG Global Targets
- SDG 4 Benchmark Indicators

Increased international commitment on learning data

- Alignment and coordination
- Financial Resources
- Global Public Goods

Policy gaps
- National commitments
- Missions (e.g., 100m children learning)

Data gaps
- National commitments
- Global Data Coalition

Solutions and means of implementation

Solutions
- Cross-cutting analysis
- Education strategies
- Policies initiatives
- Support mechanisms
- Improved processes issues and challenges

Means of implementation:
- Funding
- Program design
- Implementation
- Results
- Investment in data systems
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**

Legend:

- Dark grey: No data for trend
- Light grey: Exceeds benchmark by much
- Pink: Misses benchmark by a little
- Green: No data
- Orange: Misses benchmark by much
- Green: Exceeds benchmark by a little
- Blue up: Increases slowly
- Blue down: Decreases slowly
- Red: Decreases quickly
- Red up: Increases quickly
With your support we are on track to endorse the regional benchmarks approach by November 2021.

**Agreement 7 indicators TCG6**

**Adoption of technical process TCG7**

**Global Education Meeting 2021**

**UNESCO General Conference**

**GOAL**

Endorsement of regional benchmarks levels

**Key Actions**

Define regional benchmarks

**Activities at Regional Fora**

- Technical meetings on feasibility and levels
- Political endorsement
- Definition of additional indicators for regional monitoring

Regional bodies supported by the UIS are working with countries towards definition of benchmarks level

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<td>Continental technical meeting for Member States and REC</td>
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<td>Extraordinary Ministerial meeting for political engagement</td>
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| Technical team meeting:  
  • East and South East Asia expert consultation  |  South Asia Expert consultation | | | | |
| • Forum Education Ministers’ Meetings (FEdMM)  
  • Pacific Heads of Education Systems (PHES) | | | | | |
| Asia Pacific Regional Ministerial Meeting (APREC) | | | | | |
| • SEAMEO Councils of Ministers Meeting in Singapore  
  • Asia and Pacific Regional Expert Meeting to consolidate the subregional consultations | | | | | |
| **ARAB STATES** | | | | | |
| Gathering of at least two technical meetings between the countries’ experts and the TCG secretariat to finalize regional benchmark | | | | | |
| Adoption of benchmarks at a Higher Ministerial meeting | | | | | |
While regional benchmarks plug important gaps, further investments in data to support SDG4 monitoring are key.

### Data availability
- Expand **scope and country coverage** of learning assessments
- Increase **coverage and frequency** of household surveys
- Strengthen administrative systems
- Methodological developments needed to make full use of data

### Data Quality
- Strengthen country’s **administrative systems**
- Expand country **coverage and scope of learning assessments**, and increase alignment with international standards and procedures

### Mutual Accountability
- Countries and donors to **invest in learning assessments**
- Countries and donors to **use UIS to establish data-funding coordination / broker mechanism**
- Countries and donors to **establish systematic review through policy mapping and peer learning mechanisms**
UIS’ unique position ensures it can convene, coordinate, innovate and ‘broker’ support to fill gaps

Facilitator

Countries SOs
- Assistance
  - Technical
  - Financial
- Report SDGs

Donors SOs
- Priority areas
- Innovation
- Data for investment

UIS Strategic Objectives (SOs)
- Global leadership SDG4 reporting
- Strengthening capacity to monitoring SDG4 targets
- Respond to policy needs based on research, foresight and innovation

Products for identifying data gaps
- Global Education Database
- Indicator Heat Maps
- Country Profiles

Monitoring Benchmarks
- Regional Reports
- Policy Analysis
- Investment Case

Data production tools
- Operational Guide & EMIS
- Buyers Guide
- Innovations in Learning
- Outcomes methodology
- COVID-19 Surveys

International brokerage
- Technical Cooperation Group
- Global Alliance to Monitor Learning
- Working Group on COVID
- LA Virtual Register of donor commitments
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