SDG 4 benchmarks

Fulfilling a neglected commitment, supporting the global education cooperation mechanism
Benchmarks are a neglected Education 2030 Framework for Action commitment

UN Secretary General Synthesis Report, 2014
Called on countries to “embrace a culture of shared responsibility, one based on ... benchmarking for progress” (§146)

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)
Process towards benchmarks in 2021

Agreement on seven indicators (TCG6)
Adoption of technical process (TCG7)

2019 2020 2021 2022

GOAL
Global Education Meeting
Regional benchmarks endorsed as first step to national benchmarks
UNESCO General Conference
National benchmarks endorsed

KEY ACTIONS
Regional organizations propose minimum regional benchmarks
Member States propose national benchmarks
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority policy areas</th>
<th>GLOBAL SDG 4 benchmark indicators</th>
<th>REGIONAL Definition of regional minimum levels for global indicators</th>
<th>NATIONAL Definition of national commitment for global indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Basic education**  | 4.1.1 Minimum proficiency in reading/maths  
4.1.2 Completion rate  
4.1.4 Out-of-school rate | + Indicators selected from regional frameworks:  
- Africa  
- Arab States  
- Asia/Pacific  
- Europe/North America  
- Latin America/Caribbean | + Indicators selected from national frameworks |
| **Pre-primary**      | 4.2.2 Participation in organized learning a year before primary education entry | | |
| **Teachers**         | 4.c.1 Qualified teachers | | |
| **Expenditure**      | 1.a.2/FFA Education as % GDP / % total gov't expenditure | | |
| **Equity**           | 4.5.1 [To be defined] | | |
### Benchmarks for seven SDG 4 and regional indicators

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| Pre-primary           | 4.2.2 Participation in organized learning a year before primary education entry |  |
| Teachers              | 4.c.1 Qualified teachers             | **Africa**  |
| Expenditure           | 1.a.2/FFA Education as % GDP / % budget | **Arab States**  |
| Equity                | 4.5.1 [To be defined]                | **Asia/Pacific**  |
| TVET / Higher education |                                      | **Europe/North America**  |
| Skills for work       |                                      | **Latin America/Caribbean**  |
| Learning environment  |                                      | **Africa**: +2 (NEET; STEM)  |
|                       |                                      | **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)  |
What are regional benchmarks?

- **minimum** targets to be achieved by all countries in a region

  - In **homogeneous** regions, they are relevant for many countries
  - In **heterogenous** regions, they are relevant only for countries furthest behind but can foster shared responsibility

Why regional benchmarks in addition to national ones?

1. Regional organizations have unique role to facilitate peer dialogue and national benchmark setting

2. Regional organizations may want to benchmark indicators from their own monitoring framework

3. Help align global, regional and national education monitoring frameworks for coherence

Selected regional organizations will share their experience
What are national benchmarks?

= contribution of each country to the achievement of SDG 4, given their starting point

To be proposed for 2025 and 2030 for seven SDG 4 indicators
e.g. climate change-related national determined contributions

When

► National SDG 4 focal points to submit by September 30
► Submissions to be compiled by October 15

How

► Use targets specified in the national strategy/plan
► If a country does not yet have targets in the national strategy/plan, use Technical Cooperation Group website resources to help decision

http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/benchmarks/
Setting Benchmarks to Achieve SDG 4 Targets

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Education 2030 Framework for Action 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 long-term targets” (SDG). However, a majority of countries has not yet translated the global targets into specific ones to serve as references to report their progress in a regular manner.

To fill this gap and make countries accountable vis-à-vis the agreed global targets of the 2030 Agenda in education, seven global indicators were endorsed to benchmark the global framework against regional areas at the 8th meeting of the Technical Cooperation Group on SDG 4 (TCG) in 2019 in Yerevan, Armenia.

Access dashboards with summary of progress and dashboards for regions and countries

The extraordinary session Global Education Meeting in October 2020 reminded countries of their commitment to the Declaration, which called on 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).

The effectiveness of the process to set, monitor, and act on benchmarks rests on two factors:

- **AGREEMENT ON POLITICAL COMMITMENTS**
- **OVERCOMING TECHNICAL CHALLENGES**

In response, countries and international governmental organizations have designed regional education plans to articulate the SDG 4 Targets. The main objective of benchmarks is to draw attention to data gaps and introduce a coordinated mechanism to flag countries that may be falling behind in terms of certain key indicators.
Thank you

Learn more

http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/benchmarks/