8th Meeting of the TCG

Update on the National Benchmarking Regional Process

ARAB REGION
Efforts to fill in data gaps and adjust to the shift in education:

• Arab countries individually took the lead in adjusting and adapting to the ongoing shift in education sector as a result of the impact of COVID-19.

• The focus areas of interventions to react to the pandemic included:
  - Support to teachers in adapting to new learning models such as hybrid and online learning through capacity building;
  - Provision of learning solutions to ensure learning never stops and that education can continue outside the classroom online;
  - Adapting learning assessments to take into consideration changes in learning progress and learning modalities; and
  - Quality assurance of online and hybrid learning modalities.

• Arab Regional SDG 4 Progress Report finalized (to be disseminated)

• Arab Regional Learning Loss Report being finalized (in partnership among UNESCO, UNICEF, and WB)
The AR-MED IV took place in July 2021 with the attendance of over 120 people:

• Focus on “Education Resilience” with the main objectives being:
  
  o Present the **SDG4 progress** for the Arab Region;
  o **Identify challenges** affecting progress of SDG4, including lessons learned, promising practices, opportunities emerging due to COVID-19 as well as opportunities through discussing innovative and promising approaches in the region especially related to crisis management and planning;
  o Discuss issues and solutions related to monitoring the targets, data gaps and enhancing reporting;
  o **Re-enforce regional commitment** on moving forward on achieving Education 2030 Agenda.

**OUTPUT:**
AR-MED IV emerged with concrete suggestions as a way forward through national action plans for accelerating SDG4 progress at country level. The action plans developed by member state establish commitment to progress as well as harness regional ownership to the process.
Overview of the Benchmarking Process

1st Regional Consultation
- Meeting with SDG4 Support Group to present the SDG4 Annual Action Plan.
- Regional partners meeting with ABEGS, RCEP, RCQE and ECRDC.

2nd Regional Consultation
- To present the benchmarking process.
- Agreement to establish regional and not sub-regional level benchmarks given the regional context.

3rd Regional Consultation
- To confirm regional benchmarks.

Regional Benchmarks finalized

Capacity Building Workshops
- on SDG 4 Indicators - 2 sets (basic & advanced)

National Benchmarks finalized by 11 Member States

Global Education Meeting 2021

Bilateral Consultations
- to confirm commitment to the process and respond to any queries.
- to clarify any technical queries for setting the national benchmarks.

Regional partners meeting with ABEGS, RCEP, RCQE and ECRDC.

Shared suggested benchmarks against the 7 indicators

Regional Benchmarks finalized by 11 Member States

Capacity Building Workshops
- on SDG 4 Indicators - 2 sets (basic & advanced)

National Benchmarks finalized by 11 Member States

Global Education Meeting 2021

Bilateral Consultations
- to clarify any technical queries for setting the national benchmarks.

* Arab regional benchmarks will be used by 13 Member States, not 19. Countries from the Africa continent will join the Africa continental benchmarking exercise.*
During bilateral meetings with member states capacity building was requested, UNESCO Beirut worked to:

- **Survey disseminated** following the regional consultation to identify areas of support needed by member states for SDG4 monitoring and reporting.

- **Two workshops held on SDG4 Indicator Measurement:**
  
  - **Preparatory workshop for National Benchmarking Exercise.**
    - (August 2021)
  
  - **Advanced workshop for National Benchmarking Exercise.**
    - (September 2021)

*Key topics covered during the workshops:*

1. Understanding SDG4 indicators, concepts and methodologies,
2. Use of Household Surveys and other sources of data and

*Capacity building was aimed at all 19 member states of the region.*
Member States that have submitted:

- Algeria
- Bahrain
- Jordan
- Kuwait
- Lebanon
- Mauritania
- Morocco
- Oman
- Palestine
- Sudan
- Syria
- Iraq

Lessons Learnt:

- Certain indicators, especially 4.1.1, remain unclear. Further support is needed in breaking them down so that members states can adequately monitor and report on them;
- Additional technical support is needed in ‘reporting’ on SDG4;
- Data related to education financing remains weak; and
- Capacity building is needed to strengthen data collection and measurement.
Thank you