Technical Cooperation Group on the SDG 4 –

Education 2030 Indicators (TCG)

Terms of Reference

November 2021-2023

I.   Background

With the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the UN General Assembly in September 2015 and the Education 2030 Framework for Action (FFA) at the UNESCO General Conference in November 2015, attention has turned to the development of processes and plans for monitoring progress towards the targets associated with SDG 4 on education. At the level of global monitoring, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) developed a global indicator framework which was agreed by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2016. A slightly refined version was agreed in March 2017 and formally adopted by the UN General Assembly in July 2017. At the level of sectoral thematic monitoring, the Technical Advisory Group on post-2015 education indicators (TAG), established by UNESCO in 2014, set out a proposal for 43 thematic indicators that was included in the Education 2030 Framework for Action.

To lead the development and implementation of the thematic indicators for education, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and the UNESCO Education Sector's Division of Education 2030 Support and Coordination (UNESCO ED/ESC) convened the Technical Cooperation Group on the Indicators for SDG 4-Education 2030 Indicators (TCG) in May 2016.

The TCG provides a platform to discuss and develop the indicators used for monitoring the Education 2030 targets in an open, inclusive, and transparent manner, involving the main stakeholders.

The TCG makes recommendations on the necessary actions to improve data quality and availability, as well as the design and development of methodologies to produce thematic monitoring indicators. The TCG plays a critical role of advancing the implementation of the thematic indicator framework on education.

This document specifies the TCG's terms of reference, membership, governance and working groups. It also explains the TCG's partnership with the UIS-led expert groups to implement the SDG 4 indicator framework.

II. Objectives

The objectives of the TCG include the following:

- **SDG 4 global and thematic indicator framework development**: Recommend and decide on priority improvements; propose, develop, and endorse indicator methodological norms, standards, tools and guidelines; identify needs and propose ways to develop country capacity; coordinate global efforts to improve data availability and quality; and collaborate with agencies and countries.
- **Other indicator development**: Define and approve methods for other pressing policies and management challenges identified by member states not included in the SDG 4 framework.
- **Quality assurance**: Assure data quality and timeliness, and compliance with TCG decisions.
- **Support to global and regional entities**: Work with the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) and relevant regional organizations on the implementation of the global and thematic monitoring framework and coordinate the harmonization of regional monitoring frameworks, assuring the coherence of these processes.
- **Benchmarking process:** Advice and monitor the development of the national benchmarking process.
- **Report to the**: Global Education Cooperation Mechanism - Education 2030 High-Level Steering Committee (HLSC).

III. Membership

The TCG, for which UIS serves as secretariat, is composed of 38 members (**Annex 1**) with:
- UNESCO (3 members of which 2 voting);
- UNESCO member states (28);
- Multilateral organizations (3);
- Civil society organizations (2); and
- Sherpa of the Education 2030 High-Level Steering Committee (HLSC) co-chair.

It also includes observers, notably from UN regional commissions, regional agencies, non-government organizations and other organizations able to provide expert technical advice and support.

IV. Roles and responsibilities of TCG members

The roles and responsibilities of TCG members are the following:

- Commit to tasks and outcomes of TCG work plan and additional tasks decided by the TCG;
- Commit time and effort to complete tasks on time and to a level of excellence;
- Participate in physical meetings and virtual communications;
- Review key deliverables/products from the TCG, its working groups and GAML task forces;
- Identify issues that the TCG should address;
- Identify potential risks and suggest possible solutions;
- Participate in at least one working group (or designate an alternate);
- Contribute towards successful communication and positive motivation among participants

V. Governance

As the UN office for the production of internationally-comparable statistics on education and in line with the mandate given in the Education 2030 Framework for Action, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) is the Secretariat of the TCG and its Director chairs the TCG jointly with the Director of the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report. The Chairs of the TCG inform the Education 2030 High-Level Steering Committee Steering Committee on the activities of the TCG twice a year on each of the Education 2030 High-Level Steering Committee (HLSC) meetings.

Secretariat

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) is the Secretariat of the TCG

Co-chairs

UIS Director and Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report Director.

Responsibilities of the co-Chairs

The responsibilities of the TCG co-Chairs are:
- Chair meetings and ensure meetings are strategic, participatory, concise, and in line with the purpose of the group;
- Coordinate the work of the Working Groups and ensure the delivery of their outputs;
- Inform and update the SDG-Education 2030 SC co-Chairs on the TCG's activities and outputs;
- Promote the work of the TCG;

- Liaise with partners and promote their participation, if relevant to the objectives of TCG.

Role of the Secretariat
The UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the TCG Secretariat, will:

- Organize the meetings and select the meetings' venues;
- Prepare and facilitate meeting agendas;
- Draft the minutes of the meetings in a timely manner;
- Maintain accurate and complete information and key documents related to the work of the group on a joint platform;
- Submit all relevant documents and meeting minutes to co-Chairs for their approval;
- Draft and present TCG reports to the Education 2030 High-Level Steering Committee (HLSC);
- Coordinate with TCG Working Groups and ensure delivery.

VI.   Member states engagement

The terms of reference specify that the 28 member states should help achieve 'balanced regional representation'. Member states are not expected to represent their regions, report to them, or seek their views on the TCG decision points arising, as this would have been a major commitment that few, if any, would have been able to undertake.

In the 2021 revision two tiers were recognized in the TCG structure to ensure communication on TCG priorities and decisions and sharing developments on the SDG 4 monitoring framework.

- All Member States will nominate **TCG contact point(s)** who will receive the agenda, take part in the global and regional meetings, and be notified of the decisions.
- **TCG members**, as recognized in the terms of reference, will be those who TCG contact points who, in addition, will vote for issues put to decision using the current TCG rules.

Rotation
Each selected Member State will serve as TCG member for three calendar years. Member States will be selected through the UNESCO regional Electoral Groups. The next selection will take place in the first quarter of 2024 for the period 2024–2026. It is possible for a Member State that is already serving as a TCG member to be selected again.

Delegates
Each member state would nominate one TCG contact point from the education ministry and one TCG contact point from the national statistical office.

Engagement

The TCG seeks to apply to education the principles and ways of operations of the IAEG-SDGs (**Annex 3**) and is, first and foremost, an inter-governmental body, which should serve the interests and needs of member states. To move closer to this aim, participation of member states needs to be strengthened in TCG plenary and working group meetings, giving more opportunities to member states to express preferences and concerns. The global setting of these meetings may be an obstacle to more active participation. The support of regional organizations with existing education agendas and monitoring frameworks can be a way forward.

VII. Regional organizations

For each regional group, one or two regional organizations with an education agenda and monitoring framework, would become TCG members (a list of such regional organizations is attached in **Annex 2**). As of 2021, 6 of the 28 TCG member state seats are vacant. It is proposed that these seats are taken up by 6 regional organizations, which will be invited to become TCG members. Until further rotation the TCG membership is completed by these 6 regional organizations.

Regional TCG meetings would be an additional activity to the plenary and working group meetings. The objective would be to increase ownership of TCG processes, help form consensus in the region on potential decisions, encourage stronger participation and improve coherence of communication. Different options can be examined with respect to the timing of these regional meetings to ensure complementarity with other related activities. For instance, regional meetings could take place:

- after the working group and before the plenary meetings;
- around annual UIS coordination workshops;
- around regional organization meetings.

VIII. TCG ways of working

Since 2019, its mode of working has been based on six working groups focused on data sources:

- Administrative data and education management information systems;
- Household survey data;
- Learning assessment data / Global Alliance to Monitor Learning (with indicator-specific task forces);

- Teachers and personnel data;
- Expenditure data; and
- Additional groups on specific issues (e.g. refugees, conflict-affected countries).

Other working groups may be set up with the agreement of the TCG to address specific priorities. The working groups, which are chaired by TCG members:

- Develop objectives, indicator priorities and deliverables in an annual work plan;
- Meet at least twice a year and report on progress to the TCG;
- Coordinate with each other.

IX. TCG (2022-2024) composition

		TCG current
Member States	**Countries**	**22**
Group I (Western Europe and North America)	Canada Germany France Sweden	4
Group II (Eastern Europe)	Armenia Estonia Russian Federation	3
Group III (Latin-America and Caribbean)	Brazil Colombia Cuba Jamaica Mexico	5
Group IV (Asia and the Pacific)	Bangladesh Indonesia China Pakistan	4
Group V (a) (Africa)	Angola Gambia Zambia	3
Group V (b) (Arab States)	Lebanon Oman Saudi Arabia	3
Regional Organizations		**6**
European Commission		
CARICOM		
SEAMEO		

Pacific Community	
African Union	
ALECSO	
Civil society organizations	**2**
Education International	
Collective Consultation of NGOs (CCNGO)	
Multilateral	**3**
OECD	
World Bank Group	
UNICEF	
UNESCO	**3**
Director, Division of Education 2030 Support and Coordination	
Director, Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report	
Director, UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) – Non voting member	
Sherpa of the HLSC co-chair	1

Annex I

Number of TCG member states by UNESCO electoral groups

	TCG current	TCG intended	IAEG-SDGs
Group I (Western Europe and North America)	4	4	5
Group II (Eastern Europe)	3	3	2
Group III (Latin-America and Caribbean)	5	5	5
Group IV (Asia and the Pacific)	4	6	6+1 chair
Group V (a) (Africa)	3	7	6
Group V (b) (Arab States)	3	2	3
Total	**22**	**28**	**28**

Proposed number of TCG member states and regional organizations by UNESCO electoral groups (2022–)

	Member States	Regional organizations	Total
Group I (Western Europe and North America)	4	1	4
Group II (Eastern Europe)	2		3
Group III (Latin-America and Caribbean)	4	1	5
Group IV (Asia and the Pacific)	5	2	7
Group V (a) (Africa)	5	1	6
Group V (b) (Arab States)	2	1	3
Total	**22**	**6**	**28**

Annex II

Potential eligible regional organizations

Group I (Western Europe and North America)	European Union
Group II (Eastern Europe)	European Union
Group III (Latin-America and Caribbean)	CARICOM
Group IV (Asia and the Pacific)	SEAMEO, Pacific Community
Group V (a) (Africa)	African Union
Group V (b) (Arab States)	ALECSO

Annex III
For reference

Terms of reference for the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators

1. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators will:
   - Develop an indicator framework for the follow-up and review of the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level, taking into account existing efforts by different groups of countries and organizations, including regional and international agencies, regional commissions, academia, civil society and other relevant international organizations, to be adopted by the Statistical Commission at its forty-seventh session, in 2016;
   - Provide technical support for the implementation of the approved indicator and monitoring framework over the 15-year period towards 2030; ensure the use of harmonized and agreed indicator definitions; share experiences on monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals; and encourage good practices and innovations, including in the area of national capacity-building;
   - Regularly review methodological developments and issues related to the indicators and their metadata;
   - Regularly review capacity-building activities in statistical areas relevant to Sustainable Development Goal monitoring and make recommendations to be considered by the Statistical Commission, the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities;
   - Review and support work by the Secretariat for the development of a Sustainable Development Goal data-user forum, tools for data analysis and an open dashboard on the state of the Sustainable Development Goals.
2. The Expert Group consists of 27 representatives of national statistical offices and one ex officio member and also includes, as observers, representatives of regional commissions and regional and international agencies, to provide important technical advice and support as needed. Members of the Group will be nominated through existing regional mechanisms for an initial period of two years, after which some are expected to be rotated as agreed by the respective regional mechanisms, with a view to ensuring equitable regional representation and technical expertise and including members of the least developed countries, landlocked developing

countries and small island developing States. The respective regional mechanisms will ensure that a certain number of members will be rotated for continuity of the work of the group. Countries that are not members of the Group may send their representatives to participate in the activities of the Group as observers.

3. The Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat will be the secretariat of the Expert Group. Member States that are part of the Group will elect two Co-Chairs. At the time of membership rotation, one Co-Chair is expected to step down and is invited to serve for an additional term of two years as a member. Preferably, members of the Expert Group should not serve concurrently as members of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The existing global monitoring groups, generally composed of representatives of national statistical systems and experts from international agencies working on specific indicators, will contribute to the work of the Expert Group as deemed appropriate by the Group. In addition, as deemed appropriate, global monitoring groups will be formed bringing together national and international experts that will support the work of the Group on the selection and definition of indicators and data compilation and reporting to monitor progress in new and emerging areas covered by the new Goals and targets.

4. The Expert Group will conduct its work in an open, inclusive and transparent manner, and will invite experts, as appropriate, from civil society, academia and the private sector to contribute their expertise and experiences on indicators and innovative data compilation methods.

5. The Expert Group will meet physically twice a year, and otherwise conduct its work electronically. Participation in the physical meetings is self-funded. A limited number of developing countries that are members of the Group may receive funding to support their participation in the meetings, if available. In this connection, a trust fund is expected to be established to mobilize resources in support of the work of the Group.

6. The Expert Group will report annually to the Statistical Commission and seek guidance from it.

Number of members by IAEG-SDG regional groups

Chair of UN Statistical Commission	1
Eastern Africa	2
Middle and Southern Africa	2
Western Africa	2
Northern Africa	2
Western Asia	1
Central, Eastern, Southern, and South-Eastern Asia	4
Oceania	2
Caribbean	2
Central and South America	3
Eastern Europe	2
North America and Northern, Southern and Western Europe	5
Total	**28**