

**ANNOTATED AGENDA**

**GLOBAL ALLIANCE TO MONITOR LEARNING (GAML)**

**WORKING GROUP**

23 November 2022

The Global Alliance to Monitor Learning (GAML) is the working group of the Technical Cooperation Group on SDG4 indicators (TCG) that focuses on developments in learning outcomes and assessments. This year, the GAML meeting is taking place on 23 November 2022, from 8:30 to 12:30 ([Montreal time](#)). It will be held in English, with simultaneous translation to French and Spanish. It follows the TCG working groups meetings on teachers, administrative data, EMIS and household surveys, and finance (on 22 November) and precedes the ninth TCG meeting (on 24 November). For more information, please consult the [TCG 9 meeting page](#).

The GAML meeting will start with an introductory session that will present the concept note and agenda and will brief participants on the progress made in measuring learning. This session will be followed by 4 major sessions. The first session will present the latest changes made in the Minimum Proficiency Levels (MPLs) and present the international standards setting exercise; it will also discuss the feasibility of using science scores as proxy measures of literacy. The second session will focus on harmonization of methodologies and will look at the Rosetta Stone project, ERCE, PASEC, Policy Linking, the International Item Library and the Pairwise Comparison Method. The third session will focus on the measurement aspect and will look into the tools to measure learning, including the Assessments for Minimum Proficiency Levels (AMPLs), the PAL Network common assessments, the Literacy and Numeracy assessment or LaNA and the PISA Household Survey Module. The session will also present the Foundational Learning assessments, including a discussion revolving around EGRA/EGMA and MICS module. The last session will present the latest methodological developments in the field including a discussion on trend statistics in learning proficiency and regional and global averages. The session will also discuss SDG indicators 4.2.1 and 4.6.1.

***Please refer to the annotated agenda below for more details.***

### **1. Introductory session**

The session will present the concept note and agenda of the GAML meeting. It will also present the progress made in measuring learning since the last meeting and present pending issues and tasks.

| <b>Duration</b> | <b>Topic</b>   | <b>Speaker</b> |
|-----------------|--|----------------|
| 5               | Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome</li> <li>• Concept note</li> <li>• Agenda</li> </ul> | Luis Crouch    |
| 10              | Overview of progress to report on indicator 4.1.1 and pending tasks  | Silvia Montoya |

### **2. Session 1: Minimum Proficiency Levels and Standards Setting**

The first session of the GAML meeting will show the latest [updates](#) made by ACER in the descriptions and illustrations of the Minimum Proficiency Levels (MPLs), for reading and for mathematics, for the three educational levels of end of lower primary (4.1.1a), end of primary (4.1.1b) and end of lower secondary (4.1.1c). The MPLs are described and elaborated in nutshell statements, expanded statements, domains, constructs and descriptors and sample items.

The session will then present the International Standards Setting Exercise ([ISSE](#)), the goal of which is to establish SDG4.1.1 MPLs in reading and mathematics for end of lower primary education, end of primary education and end of lower secondary education, on common Learning Progression Scales. This work conducted by ACER, with support from the Global Education Monitoring Centre, is a step towards developing a common framework for countries to use their own regional or national learning assessments to monitor progress towards achieving SDG 4.

Finally, the session will discuss the feasibility of using science scores from different educational assessments as proxy measures of literacy to measure and monitor SDG 4.1.1. This could be a solution to measuring learning which is constantly faced by numerous challenges, including the existence of different approaches, tools and data whose validity and reliability have not been evaluated yet and little coordination among various stakeholders.

| Duration | Topic   | Speaker  |
|----------|---|--|
| 15+10    | Minimum Proficiency Levels Unpacked (October 2022)  | Maurice Walker and Goran Lazendic (ACER)                       |
|          | International Standards Setting Exercise: Final Report (November 2022)  |  |
| 10       | The feasibility of using science scores from different educational assessments as proxy measures of literacy to measure SDG 4.1.1 | Andres Sandoval Hernandez<br>(To be moved later in the agenda) |

### 3. Session 2: Efforts towards harmonization of methodologies

The second session of the GAML meeting will present the various efforts made, mainly over the past year, towards the harmonization of the different methodologies to measure learning and monitor progress towards achieving SDG 4.1.1.

The session will first present the latest results and implications for reporting of UIS' implementation of the [Rosetta Stone project](#) which is designed to measure global progress towards SDG 4.1.1 by relating different national and regional assessment programmes to the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). The goal is to provide countries that participated in regional or national assessments but not in TIMSS and PIRLS with information about the proportions of primary school students who have achieved a minimal level of competency in literacy and numeracy (SDG 4.1.1) that allows international comparisons. The first results of the Rosetta Stone Study consisted of establishing concordance tables that project the score distributions estimated from two regional assessments to distributions on TIMSS and PIRLS.

The two assessments that were used in the Rosetta Stone project will also be presented during this second session of the GAML meeting and they are the following: UNESCO's Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (ERCE; Estudio Regional Comparativo y Explicativo) implemented in Latin America and Caribbean countries and the Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems (PASEC; Programme

d'Analyse des Systèmes Éducatifs de la CONFEMEN) implemented in francophone sub-Saharan African countries.

The session will also review the Policy Linking Toolkit (PLT), describing the main changes identified including the six new stages of the PLT, alignment with the Global Proficiency Framework for reading and mathematics, items to be selected and the timeline.

The session will also present a demo of the new version of the prototype of the International Item Library by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). Finally, it will discuss the Pairwise Comparison Method ([PCM](#)) which involves a group of reading and mathematics experts that evaluate and place assessment items on the same item difficulty scale in an independent way. With this method, each item is compared to other items at least 30 times, and its difficulty is judged by several different experts. The PCM approach was first set out in 2019 and is also known as the Comparative Judgement method.

| Duration | Topic   | Speaker   |
|----------|---|---|
| 15       | Rosetta Stone: Results of UIS and implications for reporting  | Oliver Neuschmidt (IEA)                                     |
| 10       | The Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (ERCE) in Latin America and the Caribbean (Estudio Regional Comparativo y Explicativo) | Carlos Cayuman Cofré and Carlos Henriquez Calderon (UNESCO) |
| 10       | The Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems (PASEC) in Africa (Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Éducatifs de la CONFEMEN)     | Hilaire Hounkpodote (CONFEMEN)                              |
| 15       | Policy Linking: overarching view and the policy linking toolkit (PLT)   | Colin Watson (ACER UK)                                      |
| 10       | International Item Library  | Thierry Rocher (IEA)  |
| 15+10    | Pairwise Comparison Method: Concept note (November 2022)  | Goran Lazendic / Colin Watson (ACER)                        |

#### 4. Session 3: Measurement of learning

The third session will focus on the measurement aspect and is divided into 2 parts: the first part presents the various tools to measure learning while the second one focuses on the foundational learning assessments.

The first part will start by introducing the Assessments for Minimum Proficiency Levels ([AMPLs](#)) which are ground-breaking and robust tools targeted at measuring the attainment of a single proficiency level for each of the reading and mathematics domains at a given level of the education cycle. These tools

allow to identify the proportion of children and young learners in each level of education who are achieving at least the MPL and also allow countries the production of international comparable learning outcomes data to report on the global indicator SDG 4.1.1. The first AMPL developed was AMPL-b which measures the proportion of students meeting the MPL at the end of primary and was implemented in six African countries as part of the MILO project in 2021. AMPLs can be administered as a standalone assessment, or they can be integrated into a national assessment as a whole booklet form or as a rotating booklet through national forms.

It will then present the PAL Network common assessments which were developed as a result of the discussions held in the context of previous GAML meetings. These discussions motivated the PAL Network to work on new and more sophisticated assessment instruments, especially that the results of the previous Citizen-led Assessments (CLAs) were very difficult to be compared which was an obstacle for advocacy at the global level. To overcome this issue, the PAL Network has been working on common assessment initiatives that could be mapped to global standards unlike CLAs which are mapped to national curricula.

It will also present the Literacy and Numeracy assessment (LaNA) of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). This assessment is targeted to students at the end of primary school in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). It delivers high-quality data while identifying strengths and weaknesses in education systems which will serve as a basis for evidence-based education policies.

The last tool presented in the first part of this session is the PISA Household Survey Module ([PISA-HSM](#)) developed by the OECD and which aims at assessing whether 14-to-16- year-olds have acquired "minimum levels of proficiency in reading and mathematics" as defined by PISA and agreed with the UN system for SDG 4 monitoring. PISA-HSM was developed taking into account the measurement goal and the operational constraints of a household administration.

The second part of this session will focus on the foundational learning assessments. It will start by a presentation on the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) by USAID. It will also present UNICEF's MICS module. The session will end with a discussion on using these various assessments to report on SDG indicator 4.1.1.

| <b>Duration</b> | <b>Topic</b>  | <b>Speaker</b>                 |
|-----------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>Part 1</b>   |   |                                |
| 15              | Assessments for Minimum Proficiency Levels (AMPLs)  | UIS                            |
| 5               | PAL Network Common Assessments: evidence to improve foundational literacy and numeracy                    | Armando Ali (PAL Network)      |
| 5-10<br>(TBC)   | Establishing a link between IEA's Literacy and Numeracy Assessment and IEA's TIMSS and PIRLS              | Oliver Neuschmidt (IEA)        |
| 5               | PISA Household Survey Module (HSM)  | Michael Ward (OECD)            |
| <b>Duration</b> | <b>Topic</b>  | <b>Speaker</b>                 |
| <b>Part 2</b>   |   |                                |
| 10              | EGRA/EGMA   | Joan, Anne and Melissa (USAID) |
| 5               | MICS  | Manuel Cardoso (UNICEF)        |
| 5               | Foundational Learning metrics: reporting towards the SDG (Proposal to report 4.1.1a using EGRA/EGMA/MICS) | TBC depending on time          |

## 5. Session 4: Methodological developments

The last session of the GAML meeting will highlight the latest methodological developments. It will start by presenting a report on trends in learning proficiency in the past 20 years. The report focuses on the estimation of regional and global trends for 4.1.1 indicators from 2000 to 2019 as analyzing these trends is important in understanding how things could evolve from now till 2030.

The session will then review early childhood assessment tools to support the report of SDG indicator 4.2.1, or the 'proportion of children aged 24-59 months who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex'.

Finally, the session will end with a briefing on the main activities by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) in relation to SDG indicator 4.6.1, or the 'proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex'.

| Duration | Topic   | Speaker  |
|----------|---|--|
| 10       | Trends in learning proficiency in the last twenty years: How close are we to reliable regional and global SDG 4.1.1 trend statistics? | Martin Gustafsson  |
| 15+10    | A review of early childhood assessment tools to support reporting SDG 4.2.1: Work in progress, emerging themes                        | Dan Cloney (ACER)<br><br>(To be moved to an earlier time slot) |
| 15       | SDG 4.6.1   | Jonas Nicolas (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL))   |

## 6. Closing session

The GAML meeting will end by summarizing the main points and conclusions and compiling the main decisions that should be presented to the Technical Cooperation Group on SDG4 indicators on the next day, November 24.