Proposal on revising SDG 4.c.1: Trained teachers

Lack of standardized definition for trained teachers

Definition of trained teacher in the UIS Survey of Formal Education instruction manual (2020):

"...one who has fulfilled at least the minimum organized teacher-training requirements (pre-service or in-service) to teach a specific level of education according to the relevant national policy or law."

Examples of trained teacher definition reported by countries:

"A trained teacher is one who has fulfilled at least the minimum organized teacher-training requirements - 3 days of training per year, equivalent to 1 credit according to the pre-university education law (in-service)..."

"Training in pedagogy for at least one year"

"A teacher with minimal training that enables entry to the classroom, so all teachers are considered trained"

"Certification of approval by Ministry"

Objective: present alternative proposals for 4.c.1

Given these challenges, UIS has been working to strengthen monitoring of Target 4.c

This includes considering **alternative proposals for updating indicator 4.c.1, these are:**

Proposal 1. Current methodology but update data collection process

Proposal 2. Use a formal skills recognition as definition of trained teacher (based on meta-data)

Proposal 3. Combine academically qualified with professionally qualified (OECD approach)

Proposal 4. Use teacher survey data

Proposal 5. A policy indicator on the teacher qualification framework characteristics

Proposal 6. Remove the indicator

Proposal 1. Current methodology but update data collection process

- Current data collection relies on country respondents to understand the definition in the instruction manual

- This has led to a lot of variability in the actual definitions used by countries (see previous slide)

- This approach would create a questionnaire to "walk" respondents through the definition

Pros: ensures that the definition of a trained teacher adheres to formal definition nationally (or notes if one does not exist)

Cons: remains highly country specific, i.e.: a trained teacher in one country could still have a different level of pedagogic training than in another country

Example "walk through" data collection process

1. Is there a national minimum designation for teacher qualifications that require pedagogic training?   yes / no

2. What is the name of this designation? _____

3. How many teachers have this designation or higher: _____

Proposal 2. Use a formal skills recognition as definition of a trained teacher

- Essentially the same as Proposal 1 but the definition of what is a trained teacher is narrowed in order to improve comparability

- Many countries defined trained teachers based on a form of formal recognition (certification by an official body; graduation from an accredited teacher training college)

Pros: reduced variation in what is accepted as a trained teacher for reporting

Cons: as in Proposal 1, remains highly country specific, i.e.: a trained teacher in one country could still have a different level of pedagogic training than in another country

Example "walk through" data collection process

1. Is there an official minimum qualification for teachers that require pedagogic training (e.g.: diploma from an accredited teacher training institute; a certification from a national certification agency)?   yes / no

2. What is the name of this qualification(s)? _____

3. How many teachers have this qualification or higher: ____

Proposal 3. Combine academically qualified with professionally qualified

- Montjourides (2019) noted that many countries do not distinguish between trained and academically qualified teachers in official definitions, particularly in many middle-income and high-income countries

- Proposed approach would change the indicator to include only one definition of qualified (e.g.: OECD Education at a Glance definition)

Pros: simplifies the indicator and reporting; no need to distinguish between academic and professionally qualified teachers, countries may be more likely to have data on fully qualified (e.g.: upper-middle / high-income countries).

Cons: relies on national definitions, limiting comparability across countries; lose the ability to know about professionally qualified teachers (though see proposal 5)

Definition of fully qualified teacher in the OECD's Education at a Glance 2024

"Fully qualified teachers refer to teachers who have fulfilled all the training requirements for teaching (a certain subject) and meet all other administrative requirements according to the formal policy in a country. The administrative requirements can comprise formal qualifications and attainment level, specific training or practical experience, succeeding in competitive examinations, and the successful completion of a probation period or induction programmes."

Proposal 4. Use teacher survey data

- Teacher questionnaire data from student assessments (and teacher surveys, TALIS) may collect information about the content of pre-service (and in-service) training

- Proposed approach would create an international minimum standard that could be applied to the international student assessment data and TALIS to define having pedagogic training

Pros: may allow for a comparable definition of pedagogic training; definition could be linked to evidence-base / best-practice on teacher training, provides an average across the country (e.g.: including private schools)

Cons: Limited data coverage as would rely on assessments with teacher questionnaires (e.g.: 4.c.7 which also relies on student assessment has low response rate about 30 percent of countries)

B. As part of your formal education and/or training, to what extent did you study the following areas?

Check one circle for each line.

Not at all
Overview or introduction to topic
It was an area of emphasis

a) <language of test>
b) Literature
c) Pedagogy/teaching reading
d) Educational psychology
e) Learning support
f) Reading theory
g) Special education
h) Second language learning
i) Assessment methods in reading
j) Early childhood education
k) Digital literacies

Proposal 5. Policy indicator on the teacher qualification framework characteristics

- **Objective is to assess the characteristics of official teacher qualification requirements** related to teaching competencies—not provide a percent of teachers that are professionally qualified

- **Explicitly defined teacher qualification requirements:** national qualification frameworks, teacher competency frameworks, national teacher standards

- **Implicitly defined teacher qualification requirements:** a diploma from an accredited teacher training institute (qualifications defined in accreditation requirements)

- **Teacher qualification requirements could be assessed based on research:** including required pedagogic training content, practicum and duration.

- **Data would be collected from** country sources: official qualification frameworks, accreditation frameworks, etc.

Pros: comparable across countries in terms of characteristics required for teacher professional qualifications; linked to research on best-practice

Cons: captures *de jure* requirements only (many countries allow teachers to teach without official qualifications), Does not provide a proportion of teachers who are properly trained

Proposal 5. Policy indicator on the teacher qualification framework characteristics (only valid option)

- Proposal 5 is the only valid option.

- Proposals 1 and 2 improve clarity but are highly country-specific and may lead to discrepancies as national definitions change.

- Proposal 3 simplifies the framework but eliminates a key distinction between professionally and academically qualified teachers, important for lower- and middle-income contexts.

- Proposal 4 relies on self-reported data and is limited to countries participating in specific teacher surveys, resulting in coverage gaps.

- Proposal 5 introduces a policy-level indicator with consistent comparability across countries and aligns with research on teacher qualifications.

- Proposals 1–4 were ultimately deemed less feasible, shifting focus to Proposal 5.

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	Option 1	Option 2
Description	Request the UIS to propose a policy-level indicator to measure the number and characteristics of official teacher qualification frameworks.	Do not adopt a policy-level indicator on teacher qualification frameworks.
Pros	• Enables cross-country comparability. • Aligns with established research on teacher qualifications. • Reflects the elements of the Global Framework for Teaching Standards.	• Retains the existing methodology without introducing new complexities. • Avoids additional data collection burden on countries. • Keeps the focus on improving current data coverage and quality.
Cons	• Requires detailed data collection and verification. • Relies on official qualification frameworks, which may not always reflect current teaching practices.	• Lack of measurement of policy characteristics of official teacher qualification. • Limits cross-country comparability and policy-driven insights.
Proposed decision	Option 1: Request the UIS to propose a policy-level indicator to measure the number and characteristics of official teacher qualification frameworks.	
Document	Proposal on revising SDG 4.c.1 Trained teachers	

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