Preparatory meeting for the UNESCO Conference on Education Data and Statistics

Setting and monitoring national SDG 4 benchmarks: what are the challenges going forward?

October - November 2023
Outline

- What are the uses of national SDG 4 benchmarks?
- What are the benchmark indicators?
- What is the coverage of SDG 4 benchmark indicators?
- Challenges
- Agenda forward to work with Member States
What are the uses of national SDG 4 benchmarks?

- Capture the contribution of each country to the global education goal
- Make progress monitoring context-specific, as each country’s starting points
- Focus attention on data gaps on key indicators that every education system needs for management purposes
- Strengthen national planning: all plans should include targets
- Link national, regional and global education agendas: coherence and common language
## What are the benchmark indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority policy area</th>
<th>SDG 4 benchmark indicator</th>
<th>Number of benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic education</td>
<td>4.1.1 Minimum proficiency in reading/maths</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.1.2 Completion rate</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.1.4 Out-of-school rate</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-primary</td>
<td>4.2.2 Participation in organized learning a year before primary education entry</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>4.c.1 Teachers with minimum required qualifications</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td>1.a.2/FFA Education as % budget / % GDP</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity</td>
<td>Gender gap in upper secondary completion rate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectivity</td>
<td>Proportion of schools with access to Internet for pedagogical purposes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is the coverage of SDG 4 benchmark indicators?

Participation in national benchmarking process

- National plans without targets: 6%
- National plans with targets: 14%
- Regional benchmarks (CARICOM and EU): 6%
- Submitted benchmarks: 64%

Benchmarks status at the regional level

- Pending submission
- No national plans
- National plans without targets
- National plans with targets
- Regional benchmarks (CARICOM and EU)
Challenges

**Missing benchmarks**
- Countries that only submitted national targets for some benchmark indicators.
- Countries that are yet to participate in the national SDG 4 benchmarking process.

**Quality of benchmarks**
- National targets may indicate a level of ambition that is too high or too low.

**Monitoring progress**
- Benchmark setting varies by indicator and is still low for some indicators, as well as benchmark progress reporting.
- The availability and updating of data has low frequency.
- Insufficient exchange with countries when methodological clarifications are needed.
A sustained communication campaign

- Familiarize ministries of education and the general public with national SDG 4 benchmarks
- Improve the GEO website

Introduction of an assessing process

- Give countries the opportunity to receive transparent updates on the assessment of their progress and to contest, seek clarifications or propose corrections to this assessment.

Introduction of a linking process

- A process that links assessment of progress to the monitoring of laws and policies
Thank you

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