PROVISIONAL AGENDA

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2. Education data governance
3. International Standard Classification of Education: challenges and solutions forward
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8. Learning assessments and skills survey data: challenges and solutions forward
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ANNOTATIONS

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) is the statistical branch of UNESCO, and the United Nations depository for global statistics in education, science and technology, culture and communication, and serves accordingly as the official and trusted source of internationally comparable data in these areas. The Institute produces a wide range of indicators in UNESCO’s fields of action by working with national statistical offices, line ministries and other statistical organizations in member states. As the statistical agency of UNESCO, the UIS has functional autonomy and applies rigorous professional standards to produce high-quality data, methodologies and standards.

Under its Mid Term Strategy for 2022-2029, Cross-cutting function C « Brokerage, dissemination and policy use », the UIS, continuing in its leadership role in education measurement, convenes the Technical Cooperation Group (TCG) on the indicators for SDG-4 Education 2030. The TCG serves as the platform for the member states and education stakeholders to refine and develop
the indicator framework while forging the consensus needed to mobilize efforts to address the measurement challenges.

Following a decision of the TCG, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in collaboration with the Global Education Monitoring Report, is therefore organizing the first meeting of the UNESCO Conference on Education Data and Statistics to fill this gap and serve the following purposes:

- Establish the process for an international community of practice among education statisticians and the relationship of the Conference with the TCG;
- Communicate, discuss, and reach consensus on key issues regarding concepts, definitions, methodologies and operational aspects of SDG 4 indicator measurement in the form of recommendations and guidelines for adoption as international standards to improve comparability.
- Debate the impact of technological developments on education statistics and ways in which the community of education statisticians can benefit from opportunities and address challenges.

Under this first agenda item, the UNESCO Conference on Education Data and Statistics is invited to adopt the agenda, programme of work and timetable, and rules of procedure. The latter are intended to assist participants in planning and conducting the work of meetings of the Conference and to facilitate the adoption of a written report embodying such recommendations and decisions as may emerge from the deliberations. Any additional issues that the Conference needs to be informed of can be taken up under this agenda item.

Documentation

1 UIS/EDS/1.1
Annotated provisional agenda
English | French | Spanish
1 UIS/EDS/1.2
Provisional programme of work and timetable
English | French | Spanish
1 UIS/EDS/1.3
Rules of procedure: UNESCO Conference on Education Data and Statistics
English | French | Spanish
2. Education data governance

The Technical Cooperation Group on the Indicators for SDG 4-Education 2030 (TCG) was established in May 2016 to lead the development and implementation of the thematic indicators for education. 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. It 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.

Co-chaired by the directors of the UIS and Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report, the TCG, for which UIS serves as secretariat, is composed of 28 members, which are UNESCO Member States. It also includes observers, notably from UNESCO, multilateral organizations, civil society organizations, UN regional economic commissions, and regional organizations, which provide expert technical advice and support. 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.

The TCG shall make recommendations to UNESCO/UIS concerning the date of the following meeting of the Conference, ensure the substantive preparation of each meeting (including in particular all new proposals relating to education statistics standards, guidelines and models) and the finalization of the draft agenda, including proposals for inclusion of items emanating from the regional preparatory meetings, and ensure coordination of the follow-up to the meeting’s recommendations and decisions. During the period of the Conference meetings, the chairs of the working groups of the TCG shall, in conjunction with the meeting’s elected officers (Chair, Vice-Chairs and Rapporteur) serve as the Bureau of the Conference and in this regard take all necessary steps to ensure smooth and efficient proceedings and examine draft decisions and recommendations before their submission to plenary for adoption.
3. International Standard Classification of Education: challenges and solutions forward – For information

ISCED is a framework that facilitates the transformation of national education data into internationally agreed categories making cross-national comparisons possible. As custodian of ISCED, the UIS is responsible for its development, maintenance, and provision of guidance on its use for data collection and analysis. In 2023, the UIS established an ISCED Committee to advise on the administration of ISCED 2011 and ISCED-F 2013, and ISCED-T to classify teacher training programmes. The first session of the UNESCO Conference on Education Data and Statistics will discuss the report presented to the review panel that described the main issues with the implementation of ISCED 2011; the mandate and recommendations of the ISCED Review Committee; and a progress summary of the implementation of ISCED-T.

4. Administrative data: challenges and solutions forward

While the agenda focuses on a subset of SDG 4 indicators, it is necessary to improve long-established statistical processes to resolve issues for reporting SDG 4. A selection of those pertaining to administrative data will be discussed at the first session of the Conference: mapping missing data and developing strategies to fill them; use of national and international population estimates; calculation of regional and global aggregates; the UIS survey of formal education and new templates; capacity building requests and streamlining of external assistance support; and initial prioritization of issues for a future education monitoring agenda post-2030.
5. Teacher data: challenges and solutions forward

Teacher indicators have been part of the standard set of comparable education statistics for more than 20 years and yet there remains a considerable degree of uncertainty over even the most basic definitions, including those related to core SDG 4 concepts such as qualified and trained teachers. Issues that will be discussed at the first session of Conference include: new global definitions of qualified and trained teachers; appropriate data collection methodologies to monitor the updated definitions; mapping of teacher policies and development of policy indicators; and development of metadata related to teacher qualifications and training programmes.

6. Education expenditure data: challenges and solutions forward

There are two indicators on expenditure in the framework for action. Current reporting uses alternative sources with each source ranked by order of priority on when to use them. The problem with multiple sources is that indicator values may differ for the same country and year. These sources are official in the sense that they have been provided to data collectors through official government channels by official government respondents. Private expenditure relies on the existence of surveys and other sources for the non-household component. The Conference will explore ways to combine different sources and discuss how to obtain more regular private expenditure data and the per capita indicator.
7. Household survey data: challenges and solutions forward

The emphasis of the SDG data agenda on equity has popularized the use of household surveys. Since 2020, household surveys have also been used in education to introduce an additional source of information to fill gaps and triangulate estimates that have traditionally been based on school censuses for core indicators, such as out-of-school and completion rates, but also for new indicators, such as those related to adult education participation or digital skills. However, there remain important issues that will be discussed at the Conference: validation process of indicator estimates based on multiple sources; development of an inventory of household surveys and mapping of key variables; harmonization of key education-related questions in household surveys; and limited use of household surveys as a source of information for SDG 4 indicators.

8. Learning assessments and skills survey data: challenges and solutions forward

The most important development in education monitoring relates to the introduction of learning outcome indicators, especially those with reference to minimum learning proficiency in reading
and mathematics for primary and lower secondary school students. Major progress has been achieved in refining concepts, agreeing definitions, issuing guidelines, and designing options that Member States can use. However, there are still considerable challenges that will be discussed at the Conference: low reporting on learning outcome indicators; lack of information on options for collecting and reporting data, including operational and cost issues; characteristics of a robust assessment; and limited use of learning assessments as a source of information for other SDG 4 indicators.

Documentation

1 UIS/EDS/8
Learning assessments and skills survey data: challenges and solutions forward
English | French | Spanish

Background document

1 UIS/EDS/BP.LO.1
Measuring and monitoring learning outcomes and skills: Where we are and what is missing in terms of SDG4 coverage?
English


The national SDG 4 benchmarking process has been at the heart of recent efforts to revise education monitoring by focusing on national targets. Extensive efforts have been made to present the process to Member States, respond to queries, communicate developments, introduce a mechanism to assess progress and report back to Member States. The process has also brought up issues that will be discussed at the Conference: differences in definitions and data sources for selected benchmark indicators; familiarization of all Member States with the process and with the outstanding gaps; process of registering queries and of updating national benchmarks; and alignment between national, regional, and global targets.

Documentation

1UIS/EDS/9
National SDG 4 benchmarks: challenges and solutions forward
English | French | Spanish


10. Integration of statistics

*TBD*

11. Regional organizations and education monitoring

*Strengthening the monitoring of progress to SDG 4: the role of regional organizations*

Regional education organizations are critical partners in the collection of data to enable monitoring of progress towards SDG 4. This work includes the setting of regional benchmarks reflective of regional and national situations and relevant for regional and national educational policies. This session will feature representatives from regional organizations from Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean responsible for bridging national and global processes in monitoring and reporting of SDG4.

The objective of this session is to improve coordination with regional organizations with a stake in education in terms of the quantitative and qualitative monitoring of SDG 4 and to promote policy dialogue. Discussants will:

- Discuss on the articulation between global and regional monitoring frameworks in education
- Outline diverse approaches to setting regional benchmarks and how these link to national implementation of regional policies and strategies to achieve education goals in the respective regions
- Foster peer learning and collaboration amongst regional education stakeholders to build a culture of learning, knowledge generation and evidence-based alternatives to accelerate progress towards SDG 4.

12. UN organizations and education-related indicators

*Education data and monitoring across sectors*

Data and monitoring approaches differ widely between UN agencies each tasked to monitor various facets at the intersection of education with the other sustainable development goals. Whilst cross fertilization and collaboration on data collection exists amongst different sectors more needs to be done to streamline data collection methodologies, avoid duplication of efforts
and ensure the provision of consistent, credible data to policy makers and data users on all aspects of education.

Featuring representatives from different sectors with a stake in these areas the objective of this session is to learn from current education data collection and monitoring efforts across sectors and identify ways to harmonize approaches to ensure efficient and expansive coverage on all aspects of SDG 4. Discussants will:

- Introduce and learn from different education data and monitoring efforts across sectors
- Identify areas for increased collaboration
- Demonstrate the utility of new benchmark indicators in the ongoing efforts to collect data and monitor progress for specific interest groups

13. Role of technology in education data production

The relentless pace of digital technology development; the rapid expansion of generated data; and the advent of artificial intelligence tools are changing the education monitoring landscape and have potential implications that are yet to be mapped or discussed at a global scale. A selection of future-oriented issues that affect the education statistics community will be discussed at the first session of the UNESCO Conference on Education Data and Statistics: big data and potential implications for SDG 4 and other comparable education monitoring; rules and protocols for the use of big data in education; and potential of artificial intelligence for the generation of policy-related indicators.

14. Education data: challenges and solutions forward

Documentation

1UIS/EDS/14
Agenda forward

English | French | Spanish

Background document
1 UIS/EDS/BP.RC.1
Summary of key issues raised in the regional preparatory meetings for the Conference
English | French | Spanish

15. Report of the Conference

The decisions concerning individual agenda items adopted at the end of each relevant agenda item and the conclusions reached by the Conference shall be embodied in a Report which shall be transmitted to the Director-General. Draft proposals/decisions shall first be considered by the Bureau of the Conference before being submitted for adoption to the plenary. The Secretariat shall provide the necessary support for the preparation and adoption of the Report and ensure its timely and broad dissemination.

Documentation

1UIS/EDS/15
Report of the first session of the UNESCO Conference on Education Data and Statistics
English | French | Spanish

16. Provisional agenda of second Conference on Education Data and Statistics

1UIS/EDS/16
Provisional agenda of second Conference on Education Data and Statistics
English | French | Spanish