UNESCO
Institute for Statistics

CONFERENCE ON
EDUCATION DATA
AND **STATISTICS**

CONFERENCIA SOBRE
DATOS Y **ESTADÍSTICAS**
DE **EDUCACIÓN**

CONFÉRENCE SUR LES
DONNÉES ET **STATISTIQUES**
DE L'**ÉDUCATION**

7-9 FEBRUARY 2024
UNESCO HEADQUARTERS, PARIS, FRANCE

2024 CONFERENCE ON
EDUCATION DATA AND **STATISTICS**

Report of the Conference on its first session

10 February 2024

Luis Crouch

Outline

1. Listing and recall of resolutions, updates, and formal written comments

2. Emerging themes, from resolution and participant commentary

Resolutions and formal written comments

We got a lot of work done (thank you UNESCO, UIS staff, member states, speakers!)

- There at least 9 resolutions, several written statements, including 8 from the Engagement Day sessions, and many updates, as follows
- Each resolution was thoroughly commented from the floor (on average 15-20 country comments)
- Several informative panels/exchanges

Resolutions and formal written comments

1. TCG
2. ISCED
3. Administrative data
4. Teacher data
5. Education expenditure data
6. Learning assessments
7. Household surveys
8. National SDG4 benchmarks
9. Integration of statistics

1. Early childhood education
2. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)
3. Higher education
4. Adult education and learning
5. Education in emergencies
6. Data for governance
7. Data-driven decision-making
8. Gender
9. Disability

…and many others

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Six emerging themes and cross-cutting issues

- 300 (or more!) very good comments from the floor

- Here are just two pages of notes; there are 30 pages.

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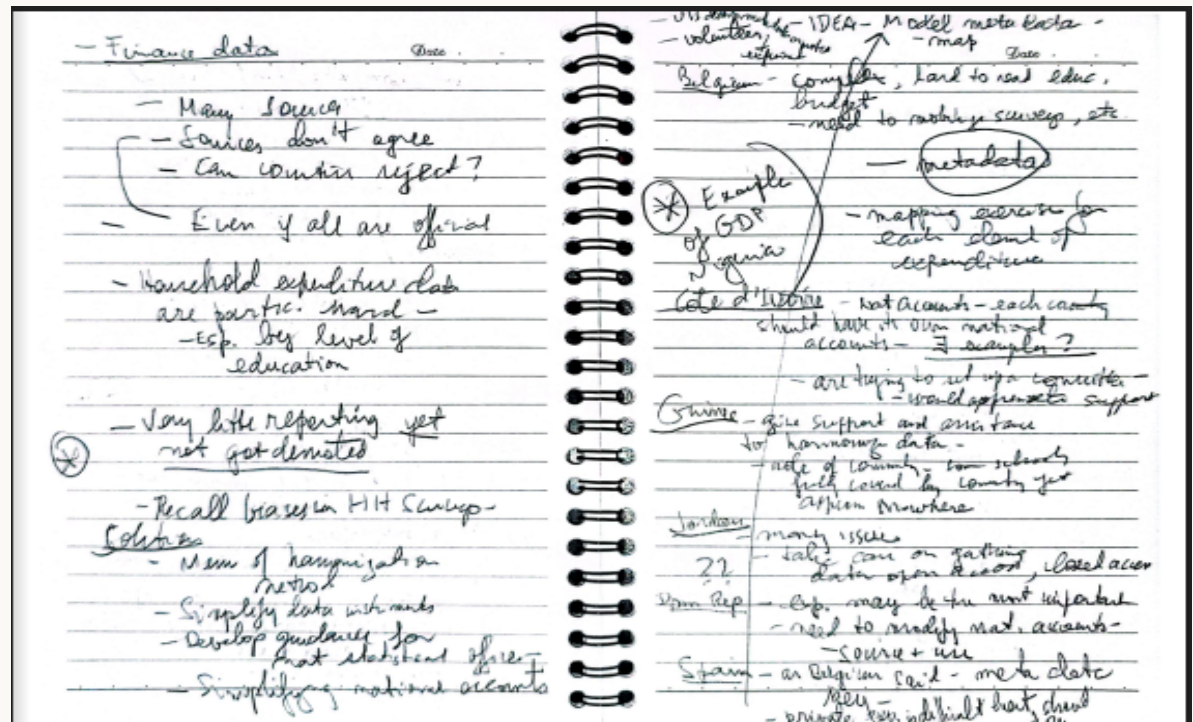
Six emerging themes and cross-cutting issues
Not in order of priority – all about equal

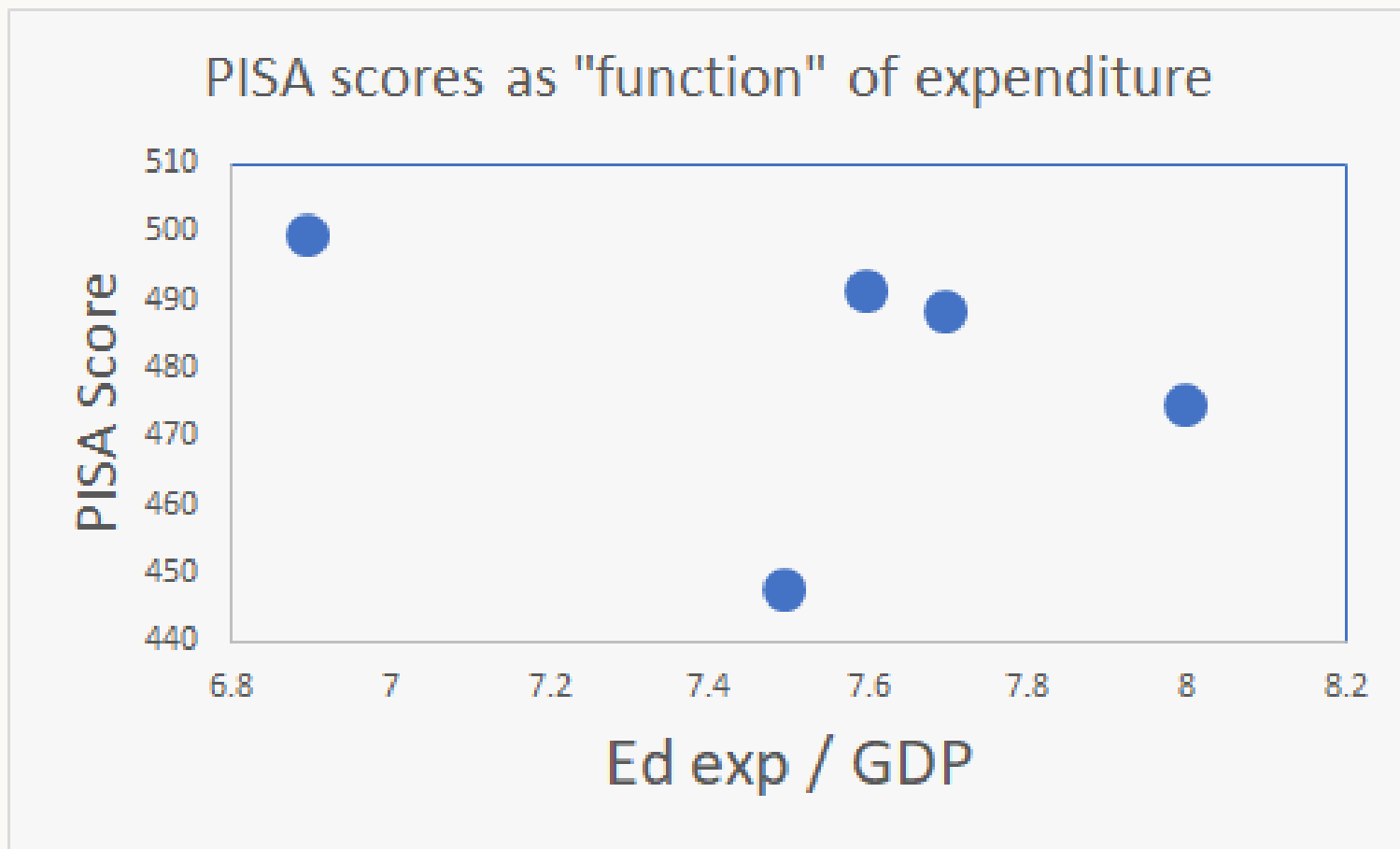1. Data are costly, so they must be used

   a. Policy/planning (all data)

   b. Classroom (learning assessment)
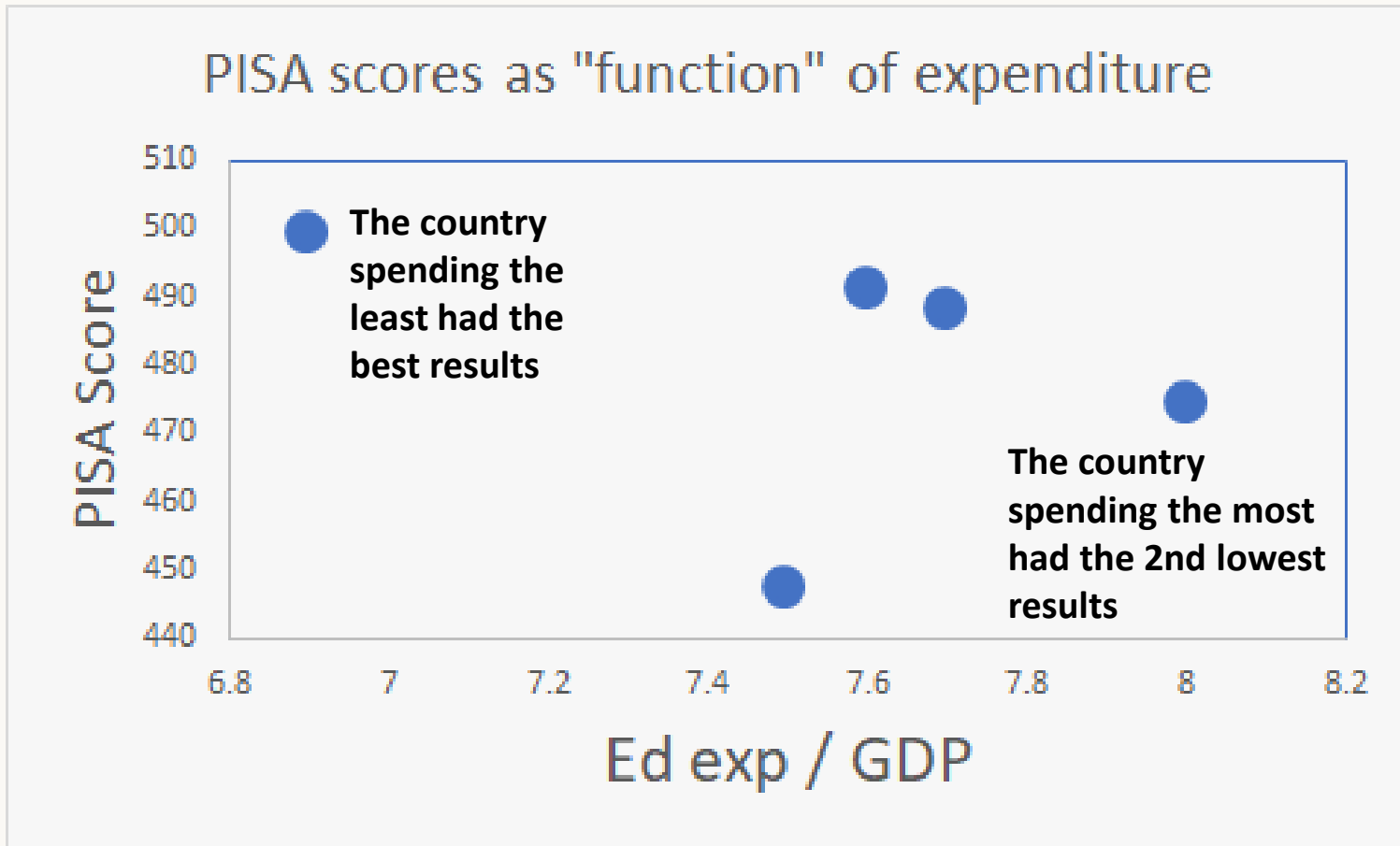
- One must problematize the idea that "data are expensive"

- "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance" – same goes for data

- Dominican Republic made this point very well

Parenthesis:
An example from Nordic countries

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- The range in Ed exp / GDP is 1 point of GDP

- That's 6 billion US$ for one of these countries

- Suppose PISA analysis can make the system just 1% more efficient; not unrealistic, there are documented cases

- That's $60,000,000. How much does PISA cost?

- <u>But if one does not use the data, even $1 is too much.</u>

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$800 million to design these rubberized rings?

Expensive!
But cheap if it can avoid this:

Deputy Minister of Finance, to me (at age 35), sending a message to the MoE:

"Yes, of course we know education is an investment… but we don't trust your colleagues at the MoE as an *investment manager*, because they don't measure what they produce relative to how much they spend."

Emerging themes and cross-cutting issues

2. Demand for technical support

    a. For data as such

    b. Related to point 1: To <u>link</u> data to policy/planning (many countries) and pedagogy in the classroom/grassroots (thank you Kenya, Nigeria!)

    *   Is UIS optimized for this? Don't forget sister institutions such as IIEP, WB, regional banks, UNDP, local think tanks, etc., etc.

Emerging themes and cross-cutting issues

3. Harmonization, manuals, criteria
   - Enormous demand for this
   - <u>Global</u> harmonization → federal and highly countries (e.g., countries such as Argentina)
   - Link to demand for support: manuals = a form of support, curricular guide to cap. building
   - "Certification"? ←→ support?
   - But a lot will fall to TCG, realistically for UIS to support. **A lot of work!** Consider outside help?

Emerging themes and cross-cutting issues

4. "Bringing worlds together" - integration

- Use of HH surveys and censuses

- Linking administrative datasets (EMIS, finance, exams, etc.) – Example The Gambia

- Case study: The Gambia: all key data already linked: able to assemble a dataset for value-added and positive outlier analysis in 2 days!

- Not "forcing" the issue: just something to consider

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Methodological humility

5. "Science as a philosophy of acceptable ignorance"
(Morocco reminds us of need to be humble)

- The science is in determining what's acceptable; there are rules for that
- We may have to have ranges of estimates sometimes
- "Everything is a sample" $\rightarrow$ surveys are useful
- No census in X years (Haiti, Lebanon)?
    - Surveys can provide num. and denominator
- Sometimes we may have to admit we do not have data
- We may need to footnote or asterisk some estimates
(Refer to integration and UIS/GEMR OOS and completion

Admittedly this is hard to explain to politicians!

But, note the re-basing of GDP in Nigeria: doubled GDP from one year to the next "simply" via re-basing its estimates. If central banks can do this, we need not be *falsely* humble!

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Emerging themes and cross-cutting issues

6. Politicians/civil soc./technocracy and data

- Many calls, linked in part to use, but also support
- If policy makers/politicians not on board… things will be slower
- How politicians use info/data: Germany "PISA shock"

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Emerging themes and cross-cutting issues

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rarely. Policy makers use the knowledge produced by educational research very autonomously and according to the logics of functioning of the *political* sphere. Scientific knowledge is so attractive to policy makers not because it is more rational than other types of knowledge, but because it carries higher legitimatory potential. In the case of many of the measures legitimated through PISA, there

Emerging themes and cross-cutting issues

6. Politicians/civil soc./technocracy and data

   - This relationship may be the most complex issue
   - Disability example from how to measure is instructive: politicians pay attention to something emotions; but civil soc. saw need to collab and offer serious hard data
     - Emotion + politics + hard data → power!
     - Patient collab countries, donors, civil soc, esp. groups representing those with disabilities
   - Citizen science/counts an option (related to big data): UIS case, use soc media to prove youth targeted by vape products

Thank you!

And my congratulations to the team for the best procedural innovation: the little clock for speaker time

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