SDG 4 benchmarks

A common framework of global, regional and national priorities to improve education program quality, efficiency and impact

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

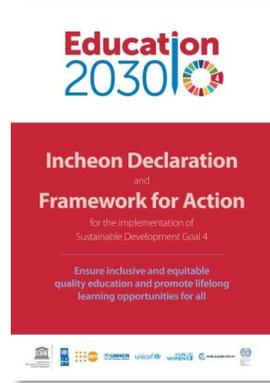**Silvia Montoya**   Director, UNESCO Institute for Statistics
Manos Antoninis   Director, Global Education Monitoring Report

July 2021

NEERAZ CHATURVEDI/Shutterstock.com

There is global commitment to honour the Education 2020 Framework for Action call to foster improvements in education outcomes

Education 2030 Framework for Action, 2015

Called on countries to establish "appropriate intermediate benchmarks (e.g., for 2020 and 2025)" for the SDG indicators, seeing them as "indispensable for addressing the accountability deficit associated with longer-term targets" (§28).

Global Education Meeting, 2020

"We request UNESCO and its partners, together with the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee, to … accelerate the progress and propose relevant and realistic benchmarks of key SDG indicators for subsequent monitoring" (§10).

Benchmarks provide focus on a small number of priority policy areas linked to the achievement of SDG4

1. Basic education

2. Pre-primary

3. Teachers

4. Expenditure

5. Equity

Benchmark targets will be set at global, regional and national levels for each priority policy area

Priority policy areas	GLOBAL — SDG 4 benchmark indicators	REGIONAL	NATIONAL
Basic education	**4.1.1** Minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics **4.1.2** Completion rate **4.1.4** Out-of-school rate	**Definition of the regional minimum levels for global indicators** **+** **Indicators selected from regional frameworks:** Africa (CESA) Arab States Asia/Pacific Europe/North America Latin America/Caribbean	**Definition of national commitment for global indicators** **+** **Indicators selected from national frameworks**
Pre-primary	**4.2.2** Participation in organized learning a year before primary education entry		
Teachers	**4.c.1** Qualified teachers		
Expenditure	**1.a. 2/FFA** Education expenditure (% GDP / % budget)		
Equity	**Equity**		

Role of regional benchmarks

Why do we need regional benchmarks in addition to national ones?

Benchmarks are just an entry point for policy dialogue.

Benchmark process aims to empower regional organizations to strengthen peer dialogue processes.

Minimum regional benchmarks. Why?

Regional benchmarks are sensitive to countries furthest behind and though to help them.

In homogeneous regions, regional benchmarks motivate more countries to achieve it.

In heterogenous regions, regional benchmarks are relevant only for a few countries but foster collaboration and shared responsibility.

Region-specific indicators?

This is a good opportunity to add other relevant indicators from its monitoring framework, if it has one and if sufficient data are available.

Benchmark targets will be set at national and regional levels for each priority policy area

Priority policy areas	GLOBAL — SDG 4 benchmark indicators	REGIONAL
Basic education	**4.1.1** Minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics **4.1.2** Completion rate **4.1.4** Out-of-school rate	
Pre-primary	**4.2.2** Participation in organized learning a year before primary education entry	
Teachers	**4.c.1** Qualified teachers	
Expenditure	**1.a. 2/FFA** Education expenditure (% GDP / % budget)	Africa: +2 (R&D - TVET)
Equity	**Equity**	
Higher education/ TVET		Africa: +2 (NEET; STEM) Asia/Pacific: +3 (adult education; tertiary GER; STEM) Europe: +2 (adult education; tertiary GER)
Skills for work		Africa: +1 (Participation TVET grads in LF) Asia/Pacific: +1 (youth/adult TVET participation) Europe: +2 (VET graduates work-based learning; digital skills)
Learning environment		Africa: +2 (schools with electricity/Internet/computers; WASH)

Dashboards and regular monitoring reports will be used to visualize progress at country and regional levels

- A **global benchmark dashboard** visualizes progress at all levels

- Allows **comparison** and **identification of 'bright spots'**

- **Intuitive and usable** for stakeholders at all levels

- Countries are trained to **ensure effective use**

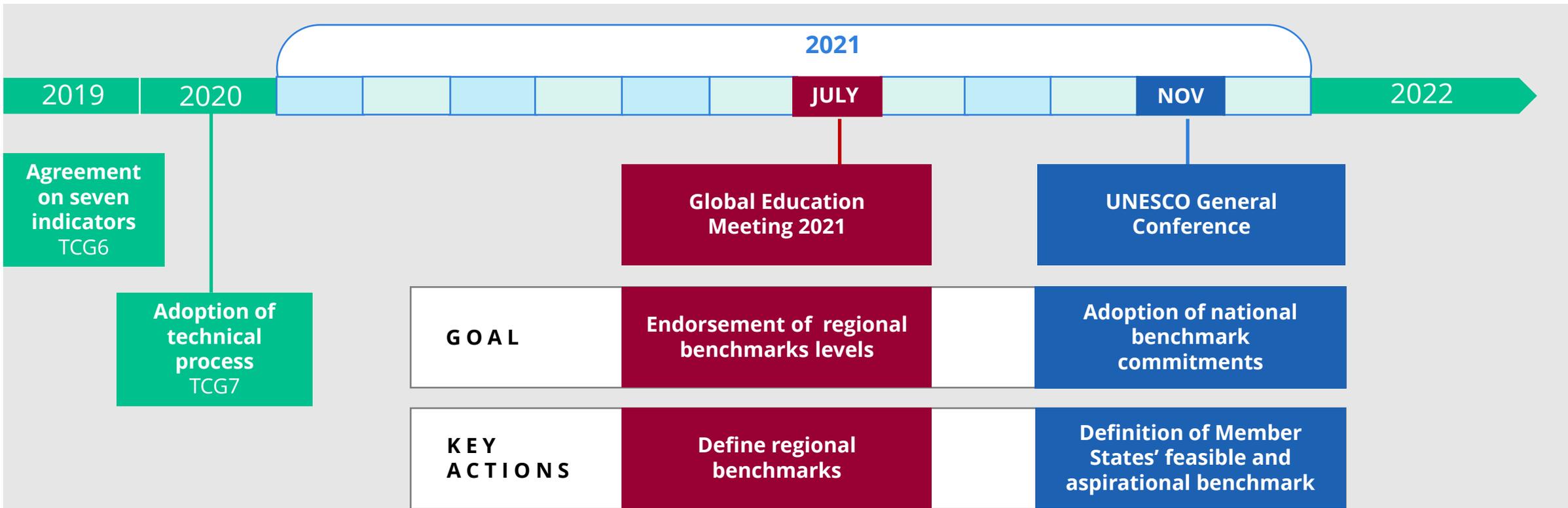- All stakeholders will have access, ensuring **transparency and accountability**

Indicative example of dashboard functionality

Legend

No data	
No data for trend	
Exceeds benchmark by much	
Exceeds benchmark by a little	
Misses benchmark by a little	
Misses benchmark by much	

↑	increases slowly
⇔	no change
↓	decreases slowly
↓	decreases quickly
↑	increases quickly

Regional activities

AFRICA	ASIA/PACIFIC	ARAB STATES	LATIN AMERICA
Oct 2020: consultations UIS & the **African Union Commission** **Feb 2021**: consultations with AU member states, Regional Economic Communities **(RECs)** and key **stakeholders** **May-Jun 2021**: UIS and **IPED** organize 5 regional meetings on benchmarking process	UIS partnered with **UNESCO Bangkok** and **Learning and Education2030+ Networking Group** in establishing regional benchmarks for the region Regional partners: **ASEAN, SEAMEO, SAARC, SPC** **Oct-Nov 2020**: regional consultation and technical team meetings **Mar-April 2021**: sub-regional consultations; country feedback	UIS partnered with **UNESCO Beirut** in establishing regional benchmarks for the region Regional partners: **ABEGS**, RCEP **End 2020**: High-level meetings **Early 2021**: Consultation with regional stakeholders and one-to-one meetings with Ministries of Education	Regional partners: **ECLAC, OEI, CARICOM, CECC-SICA**
Agreement on all proposed indicators for regional benchmarks Regional indicators proposed	Agreement on all proposed indicators for regional benchmarks Regional indicators proposed	Commitment to benchmarking process Proposed benchmarks shared with Member States	Alignment of CARICOM Phase 1 indicators to the 7 benchmark indicators
Summary Report Africa Regional technical consultation on SDG4/CESA 16-25 with Member States	Summary Report Asia/Pacific Regional technical consultation	Summary report scheduled	Bridging Latin America and the Caribbean Monitoring Frameworks and SDG 4

Process to finalize the compilation of national benchmarks

Who

Each country will outline and communicate their benchmark through the respective SDG 4 national focal point

How

Benchmark values will be a quantified target for each indicator and level:

▶ If a country has a strategy or plan and actions that sets a target for a benchmark indicator in 2025 and 2030, this will be the benchmark source

▶ If a country does not yet have a target for 2025 and 2030 for the benchmarked indicators it is a good opportunity for nnational dialogue.

When

▶ Complete national submissions by September 30

▶ Compile results by October 15

Thank you
Learn more

http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/benchmarks/

Frequently asked questions (1)

Are countries far from and close to the goal treated the same way?

The methodology used sets *different levels* for each country to achieve but the *same progress rate*, given their level of educational development, which should be faster than what was observed in the past.

What is the difference between proposed and national benchmarks?

Proposed benchmarks are based on projections if they could progress at rates faster than the average progress observed in the past: these values are basis for discussion. Each country can set benchmark at higher level.

COVID-19 is expected to negatively affect education outcomes

Benchmark values are set for 2025 and 2030. By that time, countries should be back on their original trajectory. If COVID-19 consequences prove more severe, benchmarks may be adjusted around 2025.

Baseline/latest data are inconsistent and benchmarks are questionable

Despite quality assurance checks, some data series fluctuate. A TCG task force will assess queries. Benchmarks need to align with and empower, not substitute national planning processes.

The Global Education Meeting

Regional Benchmarks (minimum levels)

Regional entities and their Member States that participated in different consultation rounds endorse the minimum regional benchmarks by July 2021.

National benchmarks

Member States will endorse their national benchmarks by Friday October 15th.