Benchmarks for SDG 4 indicators

Fulfilling a neglected commitment, proposing a basis for discussion

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Regional SDG 4 Benchmarking Process
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Objectives

Agree on:

- **support** to the benchmarking process in the region
- **approval process** for regional benchmarks setting (as part of a global roadmap)
- **technical team** to discuss measurement issues
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).

Two key factors:

- **Political commitment:** Benchmarks need to be feasible and based on national ownership. As this is not easy at global level, define benchmarks at regional level: common challenges and more opportunities to enter into policy dialogue

- **Technical issues:** Measurement issues to resolve.
Objectives and principles of benchmarks

Three objectives:

- **Availability**: identify data gaps
- **Accountability**: assess progress
- **Actionability**: lead to responses

Five principles:

- **Fair**: take aspirations, initial conditions and feasible progress into account
- **Efficient**: timely data are available for most countries, on regular basis
- **Relevant**: indicators linked to national and regional agendas and assessment of progress is linked to policy responses
- **Simple**: benchmarks understood by all
- **Transparent**: process is verifiable and communicated clearly
Proposed benchmark indicators

7 indicators to benchmark were adopted by the TCG in 2019, which satisfy the principles of efficiency and relevance.

- **4.1.1** Minimum learning proficiency in reading and maths
- **4.1.2** Completion rate
- **4.1.5** Out-of-school rate
- **4.2.2** Participation rate one year before primary
- **4.c.1** Trained teachers
- Education expenditure as share of GDP/total expenditure
- **Equity indicator** (to be defined)
# Data availability for selected indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Data point last 5 years</th>
<th>Trend</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global indicator 4.1.1 b reading</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum learning proficiency in reading and mathematics</td>
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<td>Global indicator 4.1.2</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<td>Completion rate – Primary education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic indicator 4.1.4</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<td>Out-of-school rate – Lower secondary education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global indicator 4.2.2</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<td>Participation rate one year before primary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global indicator 4..c.1</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>37%</td>
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<td>Percentage of trained teachers – Primary education</td>
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<td>Framework for Action benchmarks</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>58%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education expenditure as share of budget</td>
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<td>Framework for Action benchmarks</td>
<td>66%</td>
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<td>Education expenditure GDP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global indicator 4.5.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Equity indicator to be defined]</td>
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Political process

Involve regional organizations to achieve alignment between global and regional education agendas and avoid duplication. A (sub-)regional organization will need to:

- **confirm** willingness to support a benchmarking process
- **coordinate** with organizations where memberships overlap
- **identify** steps leading to approval of benchmarks
- **communicate** steps to TCG to develop a global roadmap
- **define** technical support in need, where necessary

Two aspects of **flexibility** in the process:

- **any** willing regional organization can lead the process
- regional organizations may set **additional** benchmarks
Technical issues

Two main different ways to define benchmarks

Approach 1
Common benchmark for all countries in a region
= equal to the feasible progress a country can make
(e.g. country furthest behind, in bottom 25% etc.)

Approach 2
Different benchmark for each country
= based on its initial condition and a measure of feasible progress based on past observations
(e.g. progress of average country, of fastest 25% etc.)
Technical issues

- A region can set a common regional benchmark
- OR
- A country-specific benchmark may be proposed

...but countries may also **set their own benchmark**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Region (SDG or other)</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Minimum regional benchmark</th>
<th>Proposed national benchmark</th>
<th>Nationally set benchmark</th>
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<td>Algeria</td>
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Regional averages emerging from national benchmarks
Communication

While benchmark is defined as a level, rate of progress is also monitored for information; a **dashboard** distinguishes:

- with colours, if benchmark is reached or not (lack of data is marked by grey)
- with arrows, if value of the indicator is increasing (fast) or decreasing (fast)

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**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
- \(\uparrow\) increases slowly
- \(\rightarrow\) no change
- \(\downarrow\) decreases slowly
- \(\downarrow\downarrow\) decreases quickly
- \(\uparrow\uparrow\) increases quickly
Next steps

Third day of TCG meeting (29 October 2020) is dedicated to benchmarks and regional representation is expected

Thank you

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