



# Central Asia Regional Technical Consultation Meeting on Regional Benchmarks

April 29, 2021

## Concept Note

### 1. Rationale of Establishing Regional Benchmarks for SDG 4

The Education 2030 Framework for Action 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” (P28), a request that remains unrealized. In 2019, the Technical Cooperation Group (TCG) for SDG 4 Indicators, whose purpose is to develop the SDG 4 monitoring framework, agreed at its 6th meeting on a set of seven indicators to be benchmarked of data and policy relevance.

No.	Benchmark Indicators	Level
1	<b>indicator 4.1.1</b> Minimum learning proficiency in reading and mathematics	<b>Global</b>
2	<b>indicator 4.1.2</b> Completion rate	<b>Global</b>
3	<b>indicator 4.1.4</b> Out-of-school rate	<b>Thematic</b>
4	<b>indicator 4.2.2</b> Participation rate one year before primary	<b>Global</b>
5	<b>indicator 4.c.1</b> Percentage of trained teachers	<b>Global</b>
6	<b>Indicator:</b> Education expenditure as share of budget and GDP	<b>Education 2030 Benchmarks</b>
7	<b>indicator 4.5.1</b> [Equity indicator]	<b>Global</b>

The extraordinary session of the Global Education Meeting in October 2020 reminded countries of this commitment. Its Declaration called on “*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 4 indicators for subsequent monitoring*” (p10). Fulfilling this neglected commitment to set benchmarks would help renew emphasis on achieving SDG 4.

However, to set a regional benchmark to reflect the region's reality, there is need for transparent technical processes supported by strong political processes.

The Regional Roadmap for the SDG 4- Education 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific (2015-2030) has specific focus on strengthening monitoring capacities of the countries and also monitor the progress of the goal at regional level.

The proposed benchmark indicators are very much relevant for the roadmap and could help the region to effectively monitor the progress of SDG 4. Furthermore, due to the lack of agreed benchmarks for key SDG 4 monitoring indicators, it is also difficult to measure the progress of the country in the region. The establishing of regional benchmarks could help to:

- Harmonize (sub) regional and global monitoring framework;
- Develop data collection strategies;
- Monitor (sub) regional SDG 4 progress especially for the Mid-Term Review exercise in 2022-23;
- Set indicator reporting standards and processes.

## **2. Establishing Benchmarks for the Region**

As the custodian agency of SDG 4 monitoring, **the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) is proposing interim benchmarks to help support regions to develop regional and national benchmarks** following various approaches. The regional partners and Member States need to look carefully into these benchmark indicators and their values and their relevancy for regional and national level. In this regard, a technical consultation has been planned to discuss with Member States of Central Asia on the processes and approaches to the benchmarks and agree on the indicators.

## **3. Objective**

The overall objective of this consultation is to review the proposed benchmark indicators and approaches used to set the levels of benchmarks as well as to collect inputs and comments for finalization. The consultation will also update the progress of alleging SDG 4 indicators in national education monitoring framework and discuss expanding the scope of the benchmark indicators with additional indicators of interest to Central Asia and its Member States.

## **4. Expected outcomes of the consultation are:**

- Update on the status of SDG 4 indicators alignment at country level;

- Agree on the benchmark indicators for the region with additional indicators relevant for the region;
- Seek expert advises and inputs to finalize the levels of regional and national benchmark for 2025 and 2030;
- Develop a follow up plan for the national consultations.

## 5. Participants

The officials from the ministries of education and national statistical offices who are responsible for education data and monitoring, regional experts on education indicators and monitoring, and regional partners and stakeholders will be invited to this technical consultation meeting.

## 6. Date and Venue

The Central Asia Regional Benchmarking Technical Consultation Meeting on SDG 4 will be held virtually on April 29, 2021.

## 7. Time

- 11:30-14:00 (Almaty time)

## 8. Organizers

UNESCO Almaty and UNESCO Bangkok with the technical support from UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

## 9. Contact

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## 10. Tentative Agenda

Session	Delivery	Approx. Duration	Lead/Moderation
Welcome and introduction to the meeting.	Remarks by Ms Krista Pikkat - Director, UNESCO Almaty	10 minutes	Ms. Meirgul Alpysbayeva, UNESCO Almaty
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on the status of SDG 4 indicators alignment at country level</li> </ul>	Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kazakhstan</li> <li>• Kyrgyzstan</li> </ul>	40 minutes	Ms. Meirgul Alpysbayeva, UNESCO Almaty

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tajikistan</li> <li>• Turkmenistan</li> <li>• Uzbekistan</li> </ul>		
<p>Introduction to benchmarking and the regional process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Why benchmarking?</li> <li>▪ Indicators for benchmarking</li> <li>▪ Regional process</li> </ul>	Presentation	20 minutes	Mr. Roshan Bajracharya, UIS
Discussion and agreement on the proposed indicators with Identification of additional indicators for benchmarking	Guided Discussion	20 minutes	Mr. Nyi Nyi Thaung, UNESCO Bangkok
<p>Methodological discussion and Interim benchmarks for the selected indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sub regional benchmarks</li> <li>▪ National level benchmarks</li> </ul>	Presentation/ demonstration	20 minutes	Mr. Roshan Bajracharya, UIS
Feedback and discussion	Discussion	20 minutes	Ms. Meirgul Alpysbayeva, UNESCO Almaty
Plan for national consultations	Discussion	10 minutes	Mr. Nyi Nyi Thaung, UNESCO Bangkok
Closing	Remarks	5 minutes	UNESCO Bangkok