

Education International Toolkit

# Guide to Indicators for SDG 4 Quality Education

Version 1.1 (June 2017)



Education International  
Internacional de la Educación  
Internationale de l'Éducation



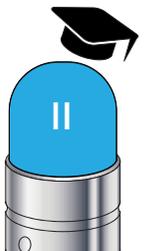
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# 1 AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Your government adopted the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) in September 2015, together with all other governments in the world. It is a universal agenda for ending poverty and hunger, ensuring quality education and health, gender equality and decent work for all, while protecting forests and oceans, and combating climate change. In total, there are 17 SDGs that have been negotiated and agreed by your government and apply to all countries in the world.

Governments are responsible for making these goals a reality by year 2030. Progress will be monitored and reviewed regularly, in part through so called indicators that will help show whether your country is on track to achieve the goals.

The education goal, **SDG 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**, is made up of 10 targets outlining the specific priorities and commitments on education – the Education 2030 Agenda. It includes targets on free primary and secondary education, early childhood and

tertiary education, qualified teachers and safe learning environments.

Another key goal for us is **SDG 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**, which commits to decent work, equal pay for work of equal value, labour rights and safe and secure working environments.

While the SDGs set a global level of ambition, the targets need to be adapted to national contexts and translated into national education plans. The Education 2030 Agenda considers teachers and educators, and their organisations, crucial partners in their own right and pledges to ensure “their full participation in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of education policy”.

Education International and its affiliates fought hard for the goal on quality education. It is crucial that the views and unique insights into the classroom reality of teachers and education support personnel are reflected

in the implementation and monitoring of SDG 4. This guide aims to support you in holding your government to account for making the SDGs a reality.

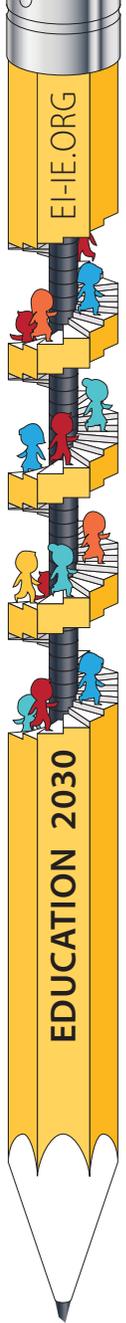
## Taking Action!

**Find out how your government has kicked off its implementation of the SDGs. Is there a specific process for SDG 4 on quality education?**

**Has your union been involved already? How can you become more involved?**

Find out more about the SDGs and EI's work and demands here: [Better Bargain](#)





# SDGs

## The 17 Sustainable Development Goals

- Goal 1. **End poverty in all its forms everywhere**
- Goal 2. **End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture**
- Goal 3. **Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages**
- Goal 4. **Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**
- Goal 5. **Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**
- Goal 6. **Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all**
- Goal 7. **Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all**
- Goal 8. **Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**
- Goal 9. **Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation**
- Goal 10. **Reduce inequality within and among countries**
- Goal 11. **Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable**
- Goal 12. **Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns**
- Goal 13. **Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts**
- Goal 14. **Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development**
- Goal 15. **Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss**
- Goal 16. **Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**
- Goal 17. **Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development**



## Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

### Target 4.1



By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

### Target 4.2



By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

### Target 4.3



By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

### Target 4.4



By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

### Target 4.5



By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

### Target 4.6



By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy

### Target 4.7



By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

### Target 4.a



Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

### Target 4.b



By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries

### Target 4.c



By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States



# 2 SDG INDICATORS

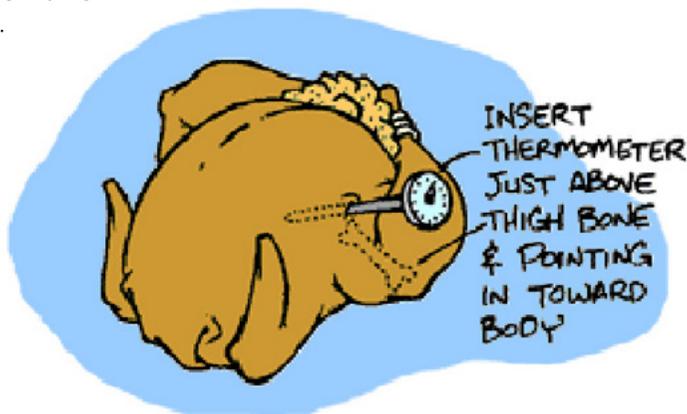
## WHAT IS AN INDICATOR?

An indicator tells us how we are doing: temperatures tell us how cold it is, our body temperature whether we are healthy, and grades are indicators of how well students are doing.

An indicator helps us understand where we stand in relation to a certain objective but if measured over time also the direction in which we are moving, and how far we are from our destination. It can help us spot problems and adjust the course. In the case of the SDGs, it helps measure the progress towards achieving a target and thus works like a report card for governments.

Indicators can also shift the focus and reinterpret objectives. While often being framed as a technical matter only, the choice of indicators is often political and can have a number of unintended consequences. To return to the example above, your body temperature will tell you if you have a fever, but it won't disclose whether you have an infection, high cholesterol or allergies. Or, schools at the top of the rankings might have good test results but this does not say much about the overall quality of education.

Sometimes the measuring itself gets too much attention: your body temperature will not change the more you check it, and fever cannot be prevented by a thermometer.



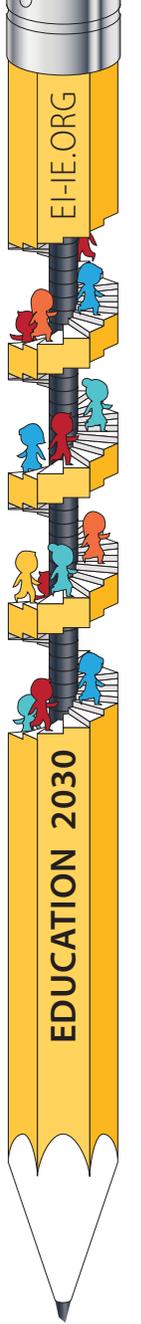
## WHY DO WE NEED INDICATORS?

Indicators help us track progress towards policy objectives. Thanks to indicators, we might be able to identify problems at an early stage and get a hint of how to solve them.

Indicators are often used as a summative assessment of how a country's education system is doing. But a good indicator supports the further development of a country's education system by shedding light on the consequences of policy choices. **For any indicator to be justified, it must be clear what policy decision it is likely to inform; that is, in what way will this indicator help you improve the education system.**

Measuring and monitoring progress also helps us put pressure on our government and hold them to account for their promises. In the case of the SDGs, they are not legally binding for States, so implementation largely depends on the pressure that is put on governments – by trade unions, amongst others.





## HOW ARE INDICATORS USED?

Indicators can be developed and used at different levels, ranging from school to national and international level.

The SDGs will be tracked through four different indicator frameworks:

### 1) GLOBAL INDICATORS

The global set of indicators (see tables pages 8-13) will apply to all countries and guide the global-level conversation about progress. There will be no more than 1-2 indicators per target. The global indicators are the basis for country reporting at the United Nations; countries will come together in July every year at the High-Level Political Forum to discuss, measure and compare their respective progress.

### 2) REGIONAL INDICATORS

The regional set of indicators allows for regional specificities to be captured and for more focused monitoring and discussions in regional intergovernmental fora, such as regional UN Commissions.

### 3) NATIONAL INDICATORS

The national set of indicators allows countries to focus more on their country context and particular challenges or policy priorities. Countries are free to design these indicators and are encouraged to work with national and local stakeholders, in particular education unions.

### 4) THEMATIC INDICATORS

The thematic set of indicators (see tables pages 8-13) allows for more breadth in the global conversation on education progress. They will automatically include all the global indicators, but go well beyond them as there are many thematic indicators under each target. The thematic indicators will be the basis for monitoring overall global progress on education through the annual Global Education Monitoring Report.

Countries are not obliged to develop separate national indicators, but it is through a national set of indicators that we can make sure that national needs and priorities are reflected. In countries with federal systems it is important to discuss how to monitor differences between states/provinces, and whether yet another set of indicators is needed at that level.

The global set of indicators is meant to have no more than one indicator per target, which means that it is narrow and often fails to capture the full intention of the target. This makes the national and thematic indicators more important as they will help reflect the full breadth and depth of the SDGs.

## WHAT IS THE PROCESS AND TIMELINE?

The **global SDG indicators** are being developed by an expert group put together by the United Nations, the so-called [Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG indicators](#). They have already agreed on about two-thirds of the indicators; the remaining one third will be developed **in the course of 2017 and 2018**.

The **thematic indicators** have **already been developed** by a group of education experts. **But work is still underway** to find the data and refine the methodology for some of them. The process is led by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and supported by the [Technical Coordination Group \(TCG\)](#), of which Education International is also a member.

There is no process yet in place for the development of **regional indicators**, and it is up to individual countries to decide whether they want to have separate **national indicators**. But there is not much time: the indicators should be in place **as soon as possible** to help us monitor the implementation of the SDGs from their adoption in 2015 to the deadline in 2030.

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR US?

Deciding what and how we measure progress is very political. It is important for education unions to participate in these policy processes because indicators have the power to shape and redefine the new education agenda and our countries' education systems. By being involved, education unions can make sure that the voice of the education workforce and their organisations' perspectives on quality education are reflected and the breadth of SDG 4 respected.

This guide aims to support you and your participation in the different processes related to the development and use of indicators. By introducing human rights-based indicators, the most common education indicators and the cross-cutting themes of SDG 4, the guide aims to help you question and challenge proposed indicators and suggest alternative perspectives. The proposed global and thematic indicators for SDG 4 are the basis of the guide and can be found in the annex.

## NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF A GLOBAL AGENDA

The same SDG targets apply to all countries of the world, despite their different contexts and circumstances. While all countries are expected to reach the goals, their priorities and challenges as well as pace and timeline will be different. Countries should adapt the targets to their own contexts, looking at how best to foster progress, in cooperation with stakeholders such as the teachers, education unions and other relevant stakeholders.

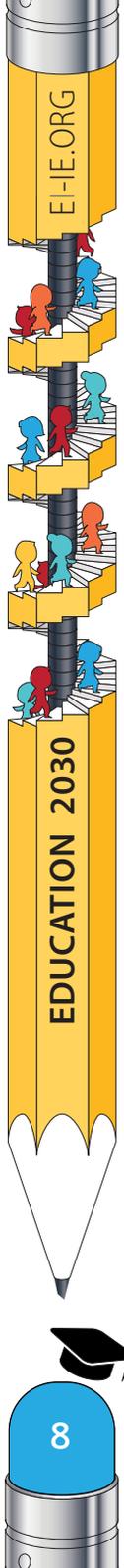
The global indicators will be used to monitor and compare the efforts and the progress of countries. but should not interfere in the national-level planning or restrict the autonomy of countries.

### Taking Action!

**Step 1:** Find out whether your country is developing its own set of national SDG 4 indicators. If not, your first task is to advocate for such a set of indicators to be developed. If yes, your first task is to find out when, who and what.

**Step 2:** Make sure your union is represented in the process and recognised as a key expert and stakeholder.





## CURRENT SET OF GLOBAL AND THEMATIC INDICATORS UNDER SDG 4

The proposed global indicators are marked in light blue shading; all the remaining indicators are thematic. The red text highlights areas where further indicators have to be developed, as identified by the Technical Coordination Group at their



 <b>Primary and secondary education</b>		<b>Target 4.1</b> By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes	<b>For monitoring in 2017</b>	<b>Requires further development</b>
<i>Learning</i>	4.1.1	Proportion of children and young people (a) in Grade 2 or 3; (b) at the end of primary education; and (c) at the end of lower secondary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex	YES	YES
	4.1.2	Administration of a nationally-representative learning assessment (a) in Grade 2 or 3; (b) at the end of primary education; and (c) at the end of lower secondary education	YES	
<i>Completion</i>	4.1.3	Gross intake ratio to the last grade (primary education, lower secondary education)	YES	
	4.1.4	Completion rate (primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)	YES	
<i>Participation</i>	4.1.5	Out-of-school rate (primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)	YES	
	4.1.6	Percentage of children over-age for grade (primary education, lower secondary education)	YES	
<i>Provision</i>	4.1.7	Number of years of (a) free and (b) compulsory primary and secondary education guaranteed in legal frameworks	YES	



### Early Childhood

	<b>Target 4.2</b>	<b>By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education</b>	<b>For monitoring in 2017</b>	<b>Requires further development</b>
<i>Readiness for primary school</i>	4.2.1	Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex	YES	YES
<i>Participation</i>	4.2.2	Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex	YES	
<i>Readiness for primary school</i>	4.2.3	Percentage of children under 5 years experiencing positive and stimulating home learning environments	NO	YES
<i>Participation</i>	4.2.4	Gross early childhood education enrolment ratio in (a) pre-primary education and (b) and early childhood educational development	YES	
<i>Provision</i>	4.2.5	Number of years of (a) free and (b) compulsory pre-primary education guaranteed in legal frameworks	YES	



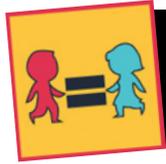
### TVET and Higher Education

	<b>Target 4.3</b>	<b>By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university</b>	<b>For monitoring in 2017</b>	<b>Requires further development</b>
<i>Participation</i>	4.3.1	Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex	YES	YES
	4.3.2	Gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education by sex	YES	
	4.3.3	Participation rate in technical-vocational programmes (15- to 24-year-olds) by sex	YES	
	<b>Additional areas for development</b>	<b>Affordability, quality</b>	Not applicable	YES



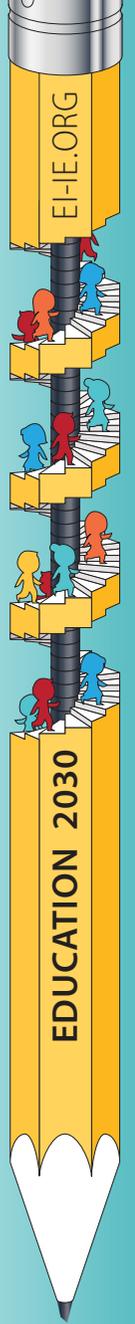


Skills for work	Target 4.4 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university		For monitoring in 2017	Requires further development
Skills	4.4.1	Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill	YES	YES
	4.4.2	Percentage of youth/adults who have achieved at least a minimum level of proficiency in digital literacy skills	NO	YES
	4.4.3	Youth/adult educational attainment rates by age group, economic activity status, levels of education and programme orientation	YES	YES to simplify
	<b>Additional areas for development</b>	<b>Measures of a broader range of work-related skills than ICTs, other employment-related indicators</b>	Not applicable	YES



Equity	Target 4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations		For monitoring in 2017	Requires further development
Policy	4.5.1	Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated	YES	
	4.5.2	Percentage of students in primary education whose first or home language is the language of instruction	NO	YES
	4.5.3	Extent to which explicit formula-based policies reallocate education resources to disadvantaged populations	NO	YES
	4.5.4	Education expenditure per student by level of education and source of funding	YES	
	4.5.5	Percentage of total aid to education allocated to least developed countries	YES	





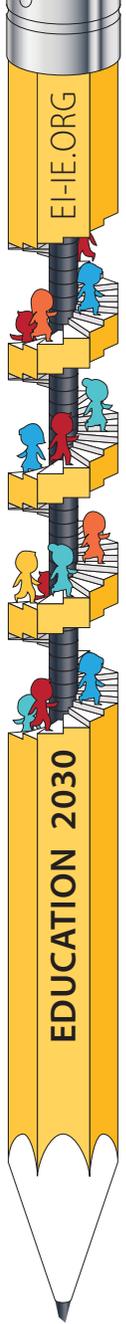
**Literacy and Numeracy**

<b>Target 4.6</b> By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy		<b>For monitoring in 2017</b>	<b>Requires further development</b>	
<i>Skills</i>	4.6.1	Percentage of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex	YES	YES
	4.6.2	Youth/adult literacy rate	YES	
<i>Participation</i>	4.6.3	Participation rate of illiterate youth/adults in literacy programmes	NO	YES



**Global Citizenship**

<b>Target 4.7</b> By 2030, ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity		<b>For monitoring in 2017</b>	<b>Requires further development</b>	
<i>Provision</i>	4.7.1	Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment	YES	YES
	4.7.2	Percentage of schools that provide life skills-based HIV and sexuality education	NO	YES
	4.7.3	Extent to which the framework on the World Programme on Human Rights Education is implemented nationally (as per the UNGA Resolution 59/113)	NO	YES
<i>Knowledge</i>	4.7.4	Percentage of students by age group (or education level) showing adequate understanding of issues relating to global citizenship and sustainability	NO	YES
	4.7.5	Percentage of 15-year-old students showing proficiency in knowledge of environmental science and geoscience	NO	YES
<b>Additional areas for development</b>	<b>Attitudes and values, life-long learning/non-formal, qualitative indicators</b>	Not applicable	YES	



School Environment		Target 4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all	For monitoring in 2017	Requires further development
Resources	4.a.1	Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) Internet for pedagogical purposes; and (c) computers for pedagogical purposes	YES	
		Proportion of schools with access to: (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities	YES	YES
		Proportion of schools with access to: (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions)	YES	
Environment	4.a.2	Percentage of students experiencing bullying, corporal punishment, harassment, violence, sexual discrimination and abuse	NO	YES
	4.a.3	Number of attacks on students, personnel and institutions	NO	YES
<b>Additional areas for development</b>		<b>Expenditure, national quality standards</b>	Not applicable	YES



Scholarships		Target 4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training, information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes in developed countries and other developing countries	For monitoring in 2017	Requires further development
Numbers	4.b.1	Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study	YES	
	4.b.2	Number of higher education scholarships awarded by beneficiary country	NO	YES
	<b>Additional areas for development</b>		<b>Support for marginalised students</b>	Not applicable





## Teachers

Target 4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States		For monitoring in 2017	Requires further development	
<i>Resources</i>	4.c.1	Proportion of teachers in: (a) pre-primary education; (b) primary education; (c) lower secondary education; and (d) upper secondary education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g., pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country, by sex	YES	
	4.c.2	Pupil-trained teacher ratio by education level	YES	
	4.c.3	Proportion of teachers qualified according to national standards by education level and type of institution	YES	
	4.c.4	Pupil-qualified teacher ratio by education level	YES	
	4.c.5	Average teacher salary relative to other professions requiring a comparable level of qualification	NO	YES
	4.c.6	Teacher attrition rate by education level	YES	
	4.c.7	Percentage of teachers who received in-service training in the last 12 months by type of training	NO	YES





# 3 WHAT IS A GOOD INDICATOR?

The Education 2030 Framework for Action sets five criteria for an effective education indicator:

- 1) **Relevance**
- 2) **Alignment with the concepts in the targets**
- 3) **Feasibility for regular data collection across countries**
- 4) **Ease of communication to a global audience**
- 5) **Interpretability**

Data collection and availability is a challenge. Often there is a gap between the data we have and the data we would need. An example is the pupil-teacher ratio; we have much more use for a pupil to qualified teacher ratio but it is often difficult to collect data on this. The danger is that difficulties related to data collection will lead to inadequate indicators – and therefore poorly informed policy priorities.

In some cases you might also decide that it is important to complement the quantitative data (i.e. data expressed in numbers) with qualitative data. For instance, on the topic of teacher training it might be important to talk to teachers to find out what hinders them from participating in continuous professional development. Their answers cannot be expressed in numbers, but they provide valuable insights into why certain policies are failing and how they can be improved.

But it is not enough to have the data; the data has to be reliable and valid. The *reliability* refers to the consistency and repeatability of a measure; while the *validity* is the extent to which the data measures what it is supposed to measure.

There is also a difference between countries when it comes to data collection and analysis. While some countries have collected data over a long time and have systems in place, other countries lack both financial and human resources to collect data for all the SDG indicators.

To further complicate things: statistics are often collected by many different institutions and at many different levels. In a majority of countries the national statistics office is in charge of SDG indicators while education statistics often are collected and analysed by the Ministry of Education. This might mean that those in charge of the indicators for SDG 4 lack the expertise and understanding for education indicators.

Most countries will only accept so-called official data; this means that the data is collected and analysed by a government agency, which makes the data credible and trustworthy in their eyes. The global SDG indicators will, for example, be based only on official data.

But there are many actors and stakeholders in society that do research and collect data, and it is important to look at how this data can be used in the SDG reporting process. So-called citizen-generated data may be able to shed light on things that the government data is not capturing.



### 1) Relevance

It tells us something that we need to know about the education system and progress towards SDG 4 on quality education for all.

### 2) Alignment with the concepts in the targets

It corresponds directly to the target that it aims to measure.

### 3) Feasibility for regular (but not necessarily annual) data collection across countries

The information is available at reasonable cost, or can be gathered in time to inform policy-making and implementation.

### 4) Ease of communication to a global audience

They are easy to understand, also for people outside the education sector.

### 5) Interpretability

It is clear what the indicator measures and what it is telling you about progress in achieving the target.

### Taking Action!

Find out how it works in your country: is there an authority responsible for collecting and analysing education data? What education data is collected, by whom and how often?

Is the data publicly available?

Is your union collecting any data to contribute to better reporting on teacher and education issues?





# 4 HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED INDICATORS

Ensuring quality education for all is one of the sustainable development goals, but fundamentally it is an obligation of all States under international human rights law. All education indicators should, therefore, be based on and in line with human rights.

Human rights-based indicators help you measure:

- 1) the extent to which States as duty-bearers deliver on their obligations, and
- 2) the extent to which right-holders enjoy their right to quality education.

The first one focuses on what the State is doing, i.e. is free education provided, while the second one looks at the outcomes, i.e. how many children enjoy free education?

These two dimensions are measured through three types of indicators: the obligations of States are measured through so-called structural and process indicators, while outcome indicators help us measure the enjoyment of the right to education. In practice this means the following:

**Structural indicators** look at legislative efforts of governments. This means that they, by design, won't reveal whether a law is being implemented. An example is legislation on free primary and secondary education (target 4.1).

**Process indicators** look at the measures that States have taken to implement the laws that guarantee the right to education. Examples are the percentage of schools that are fee-free (target 4.1), the ratio of students to trained and qualified teachers (target 4.c), and the involvement of teachers and their representative organisations in the formulation of policy and strategies.

**Outcome indicators** look at the results of these legislative and policy efforts, that is, the extent to which the right to education is realised. An example is the percentage of the population that completes free upper secondary education (target 4.1).

Member states have a tendency to favour outcome indicators; they want to know if they are reaching the goals. Yet, it is the

structural and process indicators that allow us to capture some of the more complex concepts covered by the right to education, such as quality. It is, therefore, important to make sure that there are structural and process as well as outcome indicators.

## Taking Action!

What do the education indicators in your country look like? Are there structural and process indicators alongside the outcome indicators?

What can your union do to push for more human rights-based indicators? Who are your allies?





# 5 THE MOST COMMON EDUCATION INDICATORS

Countries already gather and analyse data on education, often with the support of international organisations such as the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the World Bank and the OECD.

In addition to looking at the indicators for SDG 4, it is good to examine the indicators that already are tracked on a regular basis. Some of these were used to track the Millennium Development Goals (net enrolment rates and gender parity at primary school level), others are probably linked to the implementation of your national education plan. Even if these indicators have been around for a long time, they remain important for us to track the remaining challenges related to access and enrolment as well as gender equality at different levels of education.

## ENROLMENT RATES

**WHY?** Enrolment rates are used to show the level of participation in education. There are gross enrolment as well as net enrolment rates and they are counted separately for the different levels of the education system (i.e. primary, secondary and tertiary).

Enrolment rates usually reflect disparities in access – which in turn often mirror structures of exclusion and discrimination. By disaggregating the data you can analyse the impact of gender, wealth and location, as is the case for SDG indicators, but also ethnicity, mother tongue or disability status. Other factors to consider include the availability of schools, and circumstances such as the impact of emergencies and/or conflict.

## GROSS ENROLMENT RATE/RATIO (GER)

**WHAT?** Total enrolment in primary education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population of official primary education age.

The GER can be higher than 100 % as it includes the total number of students of any age enrolled at a given level of education. This means that it includes under-aged and over-aged students (students that have started early/late or are repeating grades).

**HOW?** The number of students enrolled (in primary) is divided by the number of potential students enrolled (in primary).

## NET ENROLMENT RATE/RATIO (NER)

**WHAT?** Total number of students in the age group enrolled in that level, expressed as a percentage of the total population in that age group.

The NER shows the degree of coverage for the official school-age population,

### Taking Action!

Find out what education indicators your government collects, how often and who the actors are. Is it the National Office of Statistics or the Ministry of Education that collects education statistics?



which means that the maximum number is 100 %. A lower number does not necessarily mean that the others are out-of-school children; they might be enrolled at other levels.

The difference between the GER and the NER shows the incidence of under-aged and over-aged enrolment.

**HOW?** The number of students enrolled who are of the official age group for primary education is divided by the population for the same age group and the result is multiplied by 100.

To give a more comprehensive picture of the situation, indicators such as *completion rates*, *repetition rates*, *drop-out rates* for each level of education, and *transition rates* (from primary to secondary, for instance) are used alongside the enrolment rate.

- Enrolment rates are easy to deal with when applied to primary or secondary education, where the obvious aim – and obligation – is 100 % enrolment and completion. It gets more complicated when setting objectives for technical and vocational, or tertiary education; here countries will have to agree on benchmarks. When combined with completion rates indicators can also tell us about dropout rates and WHO is dropping out WHEN.
- Some indicators do not work for short-term measuring of impact, but demand a long-term perspective. For example, it is impossible to have quick results or progress in the enrolment rate in higher education of students from marginalised groups, as this largely depends on whether they access and complete quality early childhood, primary and secondary education.

## LINK to the SDGs

Within the SDG indicators, enrolment rates are used alongside completion rate, out-of-school rate, participation rate and attainment rates, and they are included as follows:

- 4.1.4 Completion rate** (primary, lower and upper secondary education)
- 4.1.5 Out-of-school rate** (primary, lower and upper secondary education)
- 4.2.2 Participation rate in organised learning** (one year before official primary entry age)
- 4.2.4 Gross early childhood education enrolment ratio** in a) pre-primary education and b) early childhood educational development
- 4.3.2 Gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education**
- 4.3.3 Participation rate in technical-vocational programmes** (15-24-year-olds)
- 4.4.3 Youth/adult educational attainment rates** by age group, economic activity status, levels of education and programme orientation
- 4.6.3 Participation rate of illiterate youth/adults in literacy programmes**

For more information about these indicators, please see the table on page 8.

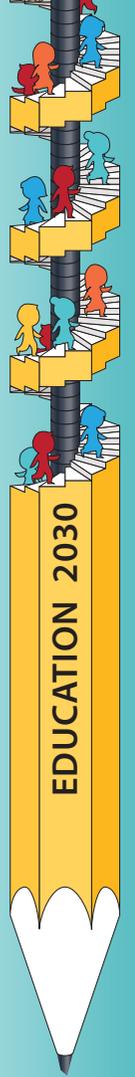
## GER & NER

**GER = Enrolled children of all ages**

**NER = Enrolled children in the age group of the grade**

EXAMPLES of gross and net enrolment rates at primary school level, both sexes (year 2014, UIS):

<b>Togo:</b>	GER: 125;	NER: 91
<b>Liberia:</b>	GER: 96;	NER: 38
<b>Nepal:</b>	GER: 135;	NER: 94





## THE GENDER PARITY INDEX (GPI)

**WHY?** The gender parity index helps us measure the progress towards gender parity in education.

**WHAT?** Ratio of girls/females to boys/males. It is usually counted at least for enrolment at different levels of education but can be applied to any education indicator. The recommendation under SDG 4.5 is to apply the gender parity index to all education indicators.

A GPI equal to 1 indicates parity between females and males. In general, a value less than 1 indicates disparity in favour of males and a value greater than 1 indicates disparity in favour of females.

**HOW?** Divide the female value for the indicator by the male value for the indicator. This means that GPI can be counted for any education indicator for which you have the female and male values.

## GPI of gross enrolment (GER)

**Examples** of GPI of gross enrolment (GER) at **primary school level** (year 2014, UIS):

**Togo:** **0,94**  
GER for female: 121.4028  
divided by GER for male: 128.80454  
= 0.94254

**Liberia:** **0,92**

**Nepal:** **1,08**

Although much progress has been done in gender parity at primary school level; **secondary remains a great challenge:**

**Togo:** no data available

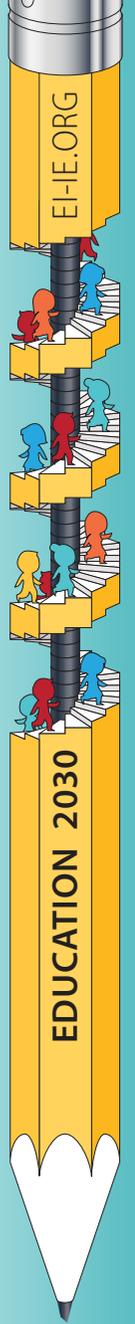
**Liberia:** Lower secondary: **0,81**  
Upper secondary: **0,74**

**Nepal:** Lower secondary: **1,08**  
Upper secondary: **1,06**

## LINK to the SDGs

Parity Indices will be used for all the thematic indicators under goal 4 that can be disaggregated (explained in more detail further below). In addition to male/female, rural/urban and bottom/top wealth quintiles, data will be disaggregated according to disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected areas, as data becomes available.





## PUPIL-TEACHER RATIO (PTR)

**WHY?** The pupil-teacher ratio shows us how many students there are per teacher and allows for an analysis of the inputs and investment in the quality of the education system. This data is key to monitor whether national norms and standards are followed.

**WHAT?** The pupil-teacher ratio is the average number of pupils per teacher at a given level of the education system.

It is generally assumed that a low pupil-teacher ratio means smaller classes, more time for the individual and higher quality education. The ratio does, however, not necessarily say whether the teachers are trained and qualified, or supported by decent working conditions. Therefore, EI advocated for a ratio of pupil to trained as well as qualified teacher and both are included in the thematic indicators under target 4.c (number 4.c.2 and 4.c.4). These are

examples of indicators where data remains largely unavailable, which means that many countries currently are unable to report on the ratios.

UNESCO Institute for Statistics tends to favour a benchmark of 40:1 when estimating the cost of educational access and quality. However averages can be deceiving. Ratios can sometimes mask large variations within a country. Several studies conducted by EI and its affiliates have shown a large variation between official statistics on the PTR and the situation on the ground.

**HOW?** The total number of pupils enrolled at a level of education is divided by the number of teachers at the same level.

### Pupil-teacher ratio

**Examples** of pupil-teacher ratio at primary school level (year 2014, UIS):

**Togo:**  
41 pupils per teacher

**Liberia:**  
26 pupils per teacher

**Nepal:**  
24 pupils per teacher

**Ethiopia:**  
64 pupils per teacher

**Mozambique:**  
54 pupils per teacher

**Pakistan:**  
47 pupils per teacher

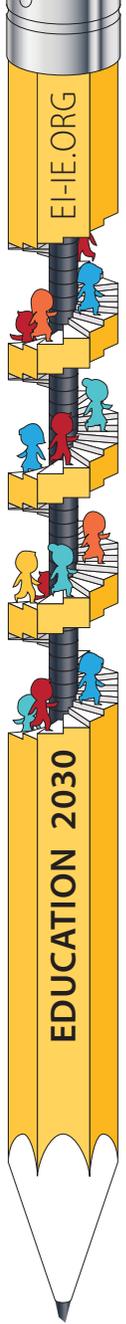
### LINK to the SDGs

Target 4.c obliges countries to increase the number of qualified teachers. However, quality education requires teachers that are both trained and qualified and there should be indicators for both, as is the case in thematic indicators 4.c.2 and 4.c.4:

**4.c.2 Pupil-trained teacher ratio by level of education**

**4.c.4 Pupil-qualified teacher ratio by level of education**





# 6 PRIORITY AREAS WHEN TRACKING THE SDGs

There are a couple of priority areas for us when monitoring the implementation of SDG 4. These areas could be described as the core of SDG 4, or, rather, as the prerequisites for the success of SDG 4: the role of the state; equity and equality; quality; teachers; and financing. These are cross-cutting themes that apply across the different targets.

EI has succeeded in getting many of our proposed indicators integrated in the current set of SDG 4 indicators (see table on page 8)

## MEASURING THE ROLE OF THE STATE AND THE PROVISION OF FREE EDUCATION

States have agreed to ensure the right to education through several human rights instruments and to the provision of quality education for all through the SDGs. As it is the State that is responsible for realising SDG 4, indicators should focus on the State and the actions they are taking. This means that focus should be shifted from measures of individual's success to governments and their investment in equitable quality education systems.

### CASE STUDY:

**TARGET 4.1** By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

The target refers to free primary and secondary education but there is only one indicator among the proposed thematic indicators that aims to measure this: *Number of years of (i) free and (ii) compulsory primary and secondary education guaranteed in legal frameworks.*

This is a good example of a structural indicator (focus on the legal frameworks only), which means that it has to be supplemented by indicators on whether free education is ensured in practice. Moreover, secondary education is often interpreted as lower secondary only, which means that both lower and upper secondary should be specifically mentioned. Examples of possible additional indicators:

- Percentage of primary and lower secondary schools that charge tuition fees
- Percentage of household expenditure on primary education
- Percentage of upper secondary schools that charge tuition fees

- Percentage of students in age cohort that complete (i) free primary and lower secondary education; (ii) free upper secondary education

the population into quintiles – that is five equal parts, where the top quintile is the richest and the bottom the poorest, as in the indicator below, which looks at the percentage of children from poor households enrolled at different levels. Indicators can also focus on the difference made over time; for example, one of the aims of SDG 4 is to reduce the gap between rich and poor children, so the second indicator below looks at whether the gap is closing.

- Existence of national quality standards for each level of education
- Existence of a monitoring body/ mechanism that controls whether minimum educational standards are met at each level of education
- National educational standards are applied to privately provided education
- Percentage of technical and vocational education and training institutions that follow national quality standards
- Percentage of (i) early childhood education; (ii) pre-primary; (iii) primary and lower secondary; and (iv) upper secondary schools that are public
- Existence of national plan/strategy for access, inclusion and completion of marginalised groups
- The right of persons with disabilities to education (Article 24 of the Convention for the Rights of People with Disabilities, CRPD) is guaranteed in your national legislative framework

### Nota Bene

The provision of free education implies the removal of indirect costs of education too, such as the costs of learning materials, uniforms, meals and transport to and from school.

Possible additional indicators include:

- Percentage of learning materials/ school books that are available without charge
- Percentage of household expenditure on indirect costs of primary education (i.e. uniforms, school meals, materials, transport costs)

One of the most common ways of analysing the impact of wealth is to divide

- Percentage of children in lowest quintile enrolled at primary, lower and upper secondary level
- Reduction in difference in participation rates of children in lowest and highest quintiles at primary, lower and upper secondary level

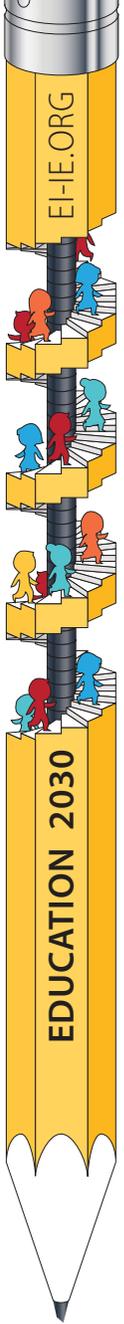
The State also has a duty to oversee and regulate the education sector, ensuring quality and access as well completion for all. This can be monitored through the following indicators:

- The right to education is enshrined in the Constitution

### Taking Action!

Target 4.3 refers to *affordable vocational and tertiary education*, while the right to education commits States to progressively making post-primary education free. What does affordable mean in your country? Defining this is the only way of making sure that vague targets like this one are implemented.



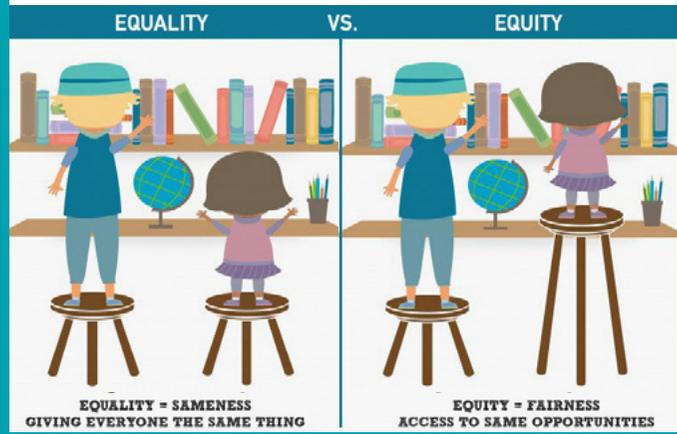


## MEASURING EQUITY AND EQUALITY

Equality and non-discrimination are human rights principles that should be integrated in all indicators. EI's Human and Trade Union Rights Policy Paper includes the following as grounds of discrimination: age, disability, ethnicity or indigeneity, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation, language, marital status, migratory status, political

### The difference between Equity and Equality

*Equality* means that everyone is treated exactly the same, while *equity* assumes that different people require different support to be successful. Both approaches are used to ensure fairness but equality only works if everyone needs the same support.



activism, religion, socio-economic status, trade union affiliation, among others.

The most common way of analysing inequality is to disaggregate data. This means that you split the population into groups and look at the differences in results between them. This shows you how girls are doing compared to boys, rural students compared to urban, and the poorest students compared to the richest – these are examples of disaggregation according to gender, location and wealth (see page 25).

Structural and process indicators look at the laws and policies put in place to ensure equitable and inclusive education, while disaggregated outcome indicators will show you the result. But while an unequal outcome reflects an unequal system, it might not help us identify all the barriers and what we need to do in order to overcome these.

For example, gender equality in education cannot be understood only through the percentage of girls accessing and completing school; it also requires an analysis of the measures that make the education and school environment more equitable and sensitive. Possible indicators include:

- Existence of national standards for gender equality for each level of education
- Existence of (i) a policy and (ii) an action plan for promoting and ensuring gender equality in education
- Percentage of teachers at each level of education who have received (i)

pre-service training and (ii) in-service training in gender equality and gender-sensitive education

- Percentage of textbooks that have been gender audited
- Coherence between minimum school leaving age and (i) minimum legal age for marriage and (ii) minimum age for work (national legislation)

Some issues will be difficult to monitor at national level and require school-level monitoring:

- Girls and boys are given the same opportunity to speak in class (measured in numbers of interventions and time used)

For a more nuanced understanding of inequality, it is good to have indicators that measure experiences as well as attitudes.

- Percentage of female (i) teachers, (ii) education personnel and (iii) students reporting having been victims of harassment or violence in the past 12 months

Measuring equity and equality requires tailoring indicators to your local and national context. Depending on the marginalised and vulnerable groups in your society, you might need an emphasis on particular barriers faced by specific groups, such as disabled students or ethnic minorities. For example:

- Percentage of students with visual impairments that have educational materials in formats that are readily accessible

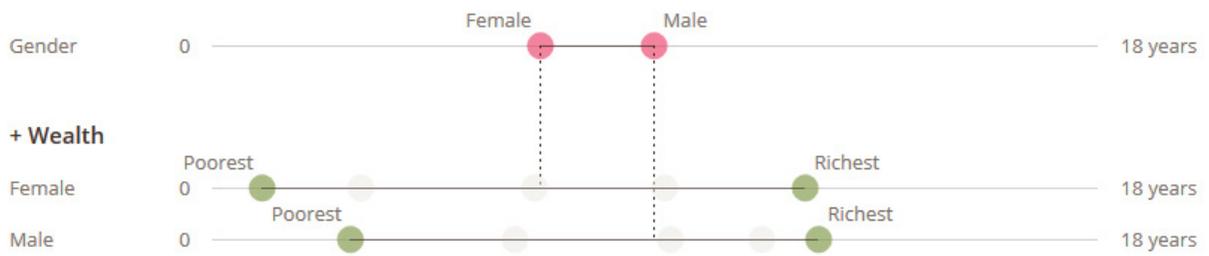


As an example

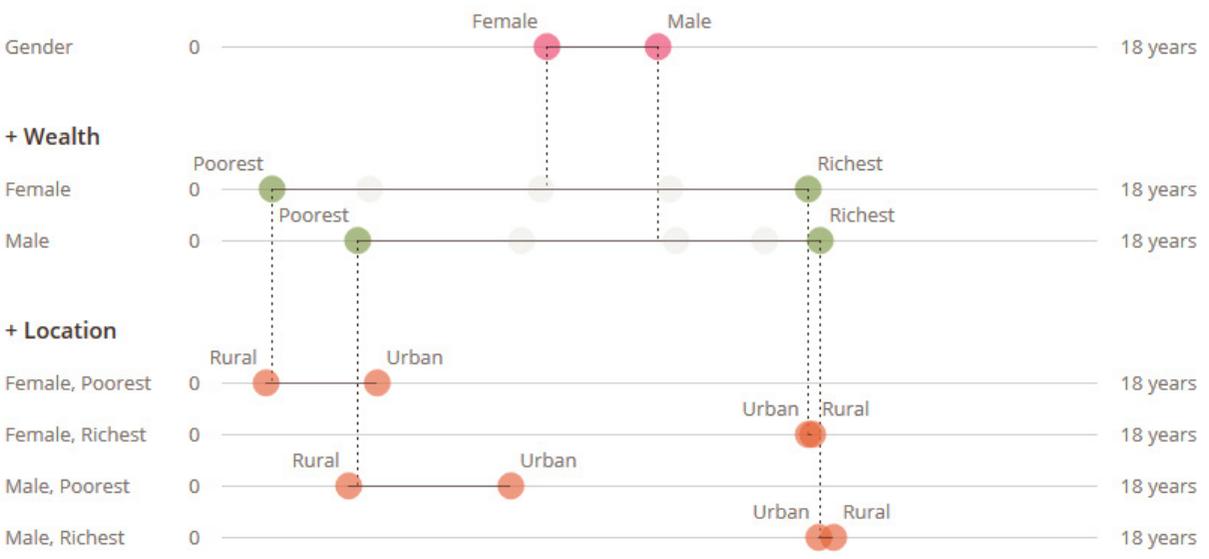
**Nigeria** has an average of just over 7 years of schooling. However, if you look more closely and disaggregate the data according to gender you see that men enjoy 8,97 years while women only enjoy 6,67 years.



When adding wealth, you see that the poorest girls have only 1,1 year of education, compared to 2,8 years for the poorest boys.



Finally, when adding location, you see that poor rural girls get 0,9 years of education, compared to 2,59 for poor rural boys. However, the richest boys and girls enjoy more than 12 years of schooling. This shows how misleading averages can be.



Source: UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report World Inequality Database on Education [www.education-inequalities.org](http://www.education-inequalities.org)



- Percentage of children who are deaf that receive instruction in sign language
- Percentage of students with intellectual, developmental and other disabilities that have assistive devices, adapted curricula and appropriate learning materials

Socioeconomic background and poverty is one of the main reasons for exclusion. One of the most common ways of analysing the impact of wealth is to divide the population into quintiles – that is five equal parts, where the top quintile is the richest and the bottom the poorest. This allows us to see whether the system sufficiently supports the poorest students; an example would be:

- Reduction in the difference in performance and completion across quintiles

Indicators under target 4.5 include: 4.5.3 *Extent to which explicit formula-based policies reallocate education resources to disadvantaged populations* and 4.5.4

*Education expenditure per student by level of education and source of funding.*

The latter could be combined with the disaggregated participation rate for a fuller picture.

None of the proposed indicators acknowledge household expenditure on education, which includes both tuition fees and indirect costs of education, and has to be reflected through indicators for the different levels of education (see chapter on free education, page 22). Another interesting indicator would be the disaggregated participation rate in combination with per pupil expenditure at the different levels of education (as proposed above).

Finally, when gathering data, it is important to remember to respect privacy, confidentiality and the right to informed consent and self-identification. Members of discriminated/persecuted groups are often vulnerable and must be protected from any possible negative consequences.

## MEASURING QUALITY EDUCATION AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Quality is difficult to measure; it is multidimensional and context-specific. Many proxies of quality, such as learning outcomes or participation rates, reflect too narrow an understanding and don't necessarily reveal much about the actual quality of education.

To get the full picture you need indicators that take inputs and processes, as well as outcomes into account. EI defines quality education by its **inputs** (including students' background, teachers' qualifications, working conditions, class-size and investment in education); by the **education process** (including teaching, parenting and related processes of learning) and by **projected outcomes** (including individual, social, cultural, economic and environmental needs).

The debate on indicators for SDG 4 has been very focused on outcome indicators, and on learning outcomes in particular. This guide is, therefore, focusing on the challenges surrounding the measurement of learning outcomes, as well as some of the other dimensions of quality that have to be captured.

Measuring learning outcomes is among the more controversial aspects of measuring quality. There is a tendency to favour standardised multiple choice tests and proficiency in reading and mathematics as a proxy for overall learning, reflected in the numerous available instruments and

### Taking Action!

**Who are the most marginalised and vulnerable groups in your country? Do you need specific indicators to monitor the extent to which members of these groups enjoy the right to education?**



measurements. This reduces the teaching and learning process to quantifiable indicators, which often narrows the curriculum and undermines professional autonomy by encouraging teaching directed to meeting the standardised external requirements. In addition, education systems that are very focused on standardised testing tend to be less inclusive to children with special educational needs.

The SDGs must not be used to justify standardised testing and global benchmarking but support countries in enhancing the quality of their systems through the development of national standards that reflect relevant national priorities. Assessment systems must be in line with national curricula and standards, and apply across core subjects. Learning outcomes should be measured based on a representative sample, rather than the entire population as the latter is expensive and distorts the educational system towards only measuring that which can be easily tested.

The SDGs recognise that quality goes far beyond literacy and numeracy, as shown in SDG target 4.7 that obliges countries to ensure education for human rights, global citizenship and sustainable development. Indicator 4.7.1. *Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment* importantly recognises that what is assessed must be included in both policy, the curriculum and teacher education.

Given the overall emphasis on outcome indicators, we highlight a number of alternatives to be considered when developing indicators of quality:

### **Quality standards and quality assurance; for example:**

- Existence of national quality standards for each level of education
- Existence of a monitoring mechanism that ensures that minimum educational standards are met in (i) public and (ii) private educational institutions
- Percentage of (i) TVET and (ii) higher education institutions that follow national quality standards
- Representation of teacher unions in development and monitoring of quality standards
- Representation of teacher unions in development and monitoring of teacher standards

### **Curriculum, assessment and educational processes; for example:**

- Existence of a broad and balanced framework curriculum
- National standards for assessment in line with framework curriculum at each level of education
- Percentage of students who reach nationally defined standards across core subjects

### **Teachers' qualifications and training, working conditions and support in the profession**

For examples see section on teachers below.

### **Teaching and learning materials and resources; for example:**

- 4.a.1 Percentage of schools with access to (a) electricity; (b) Internet access for pedagogical purposes; and (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and basic handwashing facilities
- Percentage of learning materials/school books that are available as open source
- Percentage of teachers reporting having adequate teaching and learning materials

### **Safe and inclusive learning environments; for example:**

- 4.a.2 Percentage of students experiencing bullying, corporal punishment, harassment, violence, sexual discrimination and abuse
- 4.a.3 Number of attacks on students, personnel and institutions.
- Existence of national standards for safety for each level of education.
- Existence of national standards for inclusion for each level of education





## MEASURING TEACHERS



Teachers and teacher policy are integral to quality education. There should be indicators on teachers' qualifications and training, rights and working conditions and support in the profession, applied at all levels of education. Many of these aspects are to some extent covered by the indicators under SDG 4.c.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) collects data on workers' rights and conditions and some of this data will be used to monitor progress under SDG 8 on Decent Work for all.

As target 4.c refers to qualified teachers, the SDG indicators focus on teachers rather than the education workforce more broadly. While many of the indicators proposed in this section could apply to education support personnel too, it would be good to add specific national indicators on the numbers, categories and distribution of education support personnel.

### Qualified and trained teachers

- 4.c.2 Pupil-trained teacher ratio by education level
- 4.c.3 Proportion of teachers qualified according to national standards by education level and type of institution
- 4.c.4 Pupil-qualified teacher ratio by education level

- Percentage of qualified and trained teachers working with children with disabilities
- Existence of national quality standards for teachers

It is key to have indicators on both qualifications and training; *qualified* often refers to individuals who are licenced to teach and/or have qualified teacher status according to national standards, while *trained* refers to the minimum level of pre- and in-service preparation. Therefore, you need separate indicators on the ratios of pupils to trained and to qualified teachers.

The emphasis on national standards in the first indicator allows for context- and system-specific variation, and supports the further development of the national education system. However, the reference to minimum training requires national-level definitions.

While the incidence of in-service training is a good start, being a competent teacher requires continuous professional development too. Therefore additional indicators to consider are:

- Percentage of (i) teachers and (ii) education support personnel who report having received adequate in-service training
- Percentage of (i) teachers and (ii) education support personnel who report having received adequate in-service training in gender-sensitive education

- Percentage of professional development that is offered (i) for free; and (ii) during working hours
- The extent to which (i) teachers and (ii) education support personnel can choose their professional development
- Percentage of professional development that includes collaboration or teaming with other teachers/education support personnel

At the same time, availability is not all; the professional development must be relevant and of quality, which is often more difficult to capture in indicators at this level.

### Rights and working conditions

There are of course a number of possible indicators on rights and working conditions, and it is important to choose indicators that are relevant to your country context. For instance, a country with a significant proportion of so-called contract teachers will have to have indicators that help them monitor and analyse that situation. Or, countries with a large private sector might want to disaggregate the data for teachers in public and private institutions.

Despite being integral to the motivation and support of teachers, there is only one indicator on working conditions: *4.c.5 Average teacher salary relative to other professions requiring a comparable level of education qualification*. Other possible indicators on salaries are:



- Average teacher/education support personnel salaries relative to poverty levels
- Percentage of teachers/education support personnel paid below the average pay
- Percentage of teachers/education support personnel reporting that they have to have a second paid job
- Gender wage gap

There is an important indicator on labour rights under SDG target 8.8: *Increase in national compliance of labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status.* Other indicators to consider include:

- Precarious employment rate
- Working poor rate
- Female share of employment in middle/senior management
- Trade union density rate
- Collective bargaining rate
- Existence of mechanisms for institutionalised social dialogue that ensures the participation of teachers and their representative organisations in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of education policy

### **Motivated and supported teachers**

Rights and working conditions are of course central factors in teachers' motivation and support, but the best data on motivation and support is gathered through teacher surveys, consultations and other forms of self-reporting. States are unlikely to collect this form of data so it might be something for the union to consider advocating for and/or collecting regularly. The OECD TALIS survey is a good transnational example of how to gather this sort of data and provides survey questions that may be useful.

There is one thematic indicator that aims to shed light on motivation: *4.c.6 Teacher attrition rate by education level.*

Possible other indicators include:

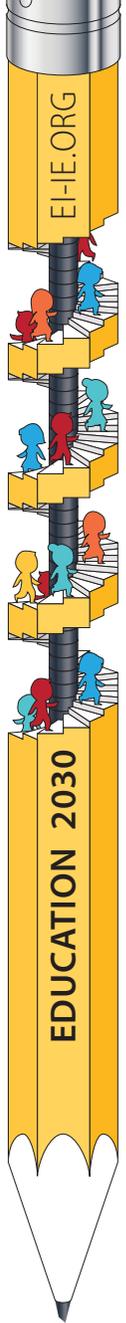
- Percentage of teachers reporting having sufficient professional freedom and pedagogical autonomy
- Percentage of teachers reporting having sufficient planning time

- Percentage of teachers reporting having adequate teaching and learning materials
- Percentage of teachers reporting being sufficiently supported by school leadership
- Percentage of teachers leaving the profession within first five years



### **Taking Action!**

**What kind of data is your union collecting? How can you contribute to a better understanding of teachers' working conditions, motivation and support in the profession?**



## MEASURING EDUCATION FINANCING

There is no SDG target on education financing – despite financing of course being at the core of both implementation and monitoring. Luckily, under SDG target 1.a on resource mobilisation for ending poverty, there is an indicator (1.a.2) on Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection). This will allow us to track whether States follow the Framework for Action recommendation of “at least 4 % to 6 % of GDP” to be allocated to education.

Looking at the percentage of GDP, the Gross Domestic Product is one of the most common ways of monitoring education financing. But GDP only measures economic activity, which makes it a biased measurement, and the percentage itself has to be analysed in relation to the overall make-up and development of GDP, including the size of domestic revenue raised by government.

### *Nota Bene*

*An apparent increase in percentage might be a de facto decrease in spending on education if the overall GDP is shrinking.*

Dependency, predictability and sustainability should be our key concerns when analysing public expenditure on education. Strong

national education systems require sufficient but also predictable and sustainable long-term financing; it is important to know where the money will be coming from, particularly if it is external support through aid or private sector contribution. It would also be relevant to look at transparency of financing and decision-making around funding priorities. Possible indicators include:

- Percentage of government spending on education (at national/state/local level).
- Percentage of government spending on education allocated to different levels of education (early childhood/primary/secondary/VET/higher education). Another alternative is to look at the spending per student at different levels of education.
- Percentage of government spending on education that is allocated to privately provided education.
- Percentage of education budget allocated to the private sector through subsidies and other forms of financial support to privately provided education and different forms of private-public partnerships.
- Distribution of public education spending (per teachers, per books, materials, training/qualifications of teachers, school infrastructure, in rural/urban areas).
- Proportion of national revenue that is tax paid by multinational companies.

## Financial cooperation for education

The aid to education should be compared to total aid by country in question. As aid can include loans and credits as well as products, personnel and services of the donor country, it is important to know the proportion of aid to education that is given directly to the recipient country. Indicators to consider include:

- Percentage of education budget funded through aid/external support.
- Proportion of total aid that is given to education.
- Proportion of aid that is conditional.
- Proportion of aid that is used in the donor country, e.g. money allocated to scholarships for studies in the donor country.



# 7 HOW TO GET STARTED: TEN THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN STARTING YOUR WORK ON NATIONAL INDICATORS

## **1. The state of play**

What indicators are currently used to measure and monitor progress in education in your country? Is there a difference between local and national level, or between the different levels of education? To what extent do these indicators cover the SDG 4 targets?

## **2. National priorities**

What are the priority areas of your country in relation to SDG implementation? Many countries will prioritise a couple of targets and focus on developing indicators for these targets. If you are in a decentralized country, you might need provincial or state indicators too.

## **3. Union priorities**

What are the priority areas of your union in relation to SDG implementation? Will you be able to monitor the implementation with the current set of indicators?

## **4. Defining the demands**

Many of the SDG targets are quite vague in scope; concepts like relevant, affordable and quality will have to be operationalised at the national level to get any meaning. What are relevant skills or learning outcomes in your country? What constitutes quality?

## **5. Indicator formulation and development**

It is expensive to collect data about the education system so indicators cannot be about measuring only; the indicators should be directly linked to specific targets (either the SDG targets as such, or a more specific national target for achieving SDG 4).

The main question to ask about any indicator is what decision it is likely to inform; in what way will this indicator help you improve the education system?

## **6. Setting baselines and benchmarks**

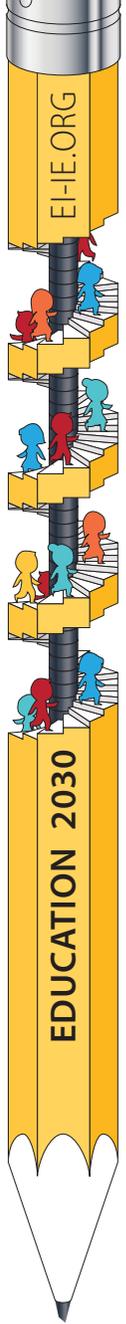
Once the indicators are in place, the monitoring of them requires knowing the 'starting point' as well as the 'final destination'. If your aim is to have more students complete a vocational training by 2030, you need to know the current number of students in vocational education, that is the baseline, but also what more means in this context: what proportion of the population should complete vocational education by 2030?

In some cases, particularly for more urgent policy priorities, it makes sense to have stepping stones too, that is intermediate goals for 2020 or 2025.

## **7. Identifying possible gaps in data collection**

Is missing data making it impossible for you to monitor progress? Are there specific gaps in data collection and/or indicators? What can your union do in terms of data collection? Who are the other actors/organisations in the field?





## **8. A plan of action**

What is your union's role and responsibility in terms of data collection and analysis? Do you have the capacity to contribute to this area of work, or will you focus on monitoring and advocacy?

## **9. Finding allies**

Who can help you? Are there organisations that share your values and priorities, and with whom you could share the work?

## **10. Using the indicators to hold your government to account**

The indicators are a great tool for holding the government to account to their citizens. In what ways can you use the indicators in your work? Can you collect your own data and release your own shadow reports?



# 8 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Index:** An index is a combination of many indicators, designed to give a fuller picture of a phenomenon than what is possible with one single indicator. Usually an index gives equal importance to all of its indicators.

For example, one of the indicators under target 4.2 is the Early Childhood Development Index, which aims to measure the developmental status of children within four domains: literacy-numeracy, physical, and social-emotional development. While the index might give a better indication of child development than any single indicator, it is often difficult to interpret what any change is due to as we will not know what exactly has changed.

**Disaggregated data:** Disaggregating data means that you break up the data in smaller parts. For instance, disaggregation by gender means that you separate the data for men, women and other to get a better understanding of the gender dimension of the issue.

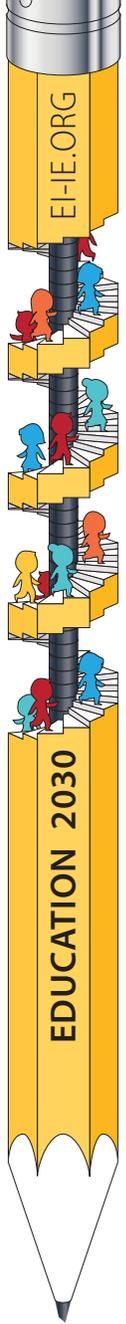
All SDG indicators are supposed to be disaggregated according to sex, wealth and location.

**Quintile:** A quintile refers to a fifth of a population and is commonly used to compare how different income groups are doing. Often the lowest quintile (the poorest fifth of the population) is compared with the highest quintile (the richest fifth of the population).

**Baseline:** The baseline for any indicator refers to the start date, i.e. to the moment when the indicator has started being tracked and to which any progress will be compared.

**Benchmark:** A benchmark is a standard or reference point, e.g. a country can set national benchmarks for the different SDG 4 targets, which means that a standard to be reached is established. Benchmarks can also help if wanting to compare progress across regions or countries.





## 9 FURTHER READING

About international human rights frameworks: <http://www.right-to-education.org/page/international-law>

Applying Right to Education Indicators to the Post-2015 Education Agenda, Right to Education Project, January 2015  
[http://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/RTE\\_Applying\\_RTE\\_Indicators\\_to\\_the\\_Post\\_2015\\_Agenda\\_2015.pdf](http://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/RTE_Applying_RTE_Indicators_to_the_Post_2015_Agenda_2015.pdf)

Measuring Education as a Human Right – List of Indicators, Right to Education Project, 2013  
[http://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/RTE\\_List\\_Right\\_to\\_Education\\_Indicators\\_May\\_2013.pdf](http://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/RTE_List_Right_to_Education_Indicators_May_2013.pdf)

The Danish Human Rights Institute's Human Rights Guide to the SDGs: <http://www.humanrights.dk/our-work/sustainable-development/human-rights-sdgs>

The Measure of Progress, Center for Economic and Social Rights:  
[http://www.cesr.org/downloads/cesr\\_measure\\_of\\_progress.pdf](http://www.cesr.org/downloads/cesr_measure_of_progress.pdf)

Education Indicators – Technical guidelines, UNESCO/UIS, November 2009:  
<http://www.uis.unesco.org/Library/Documents/eiguide09-en.pdf>

Gender-sensitive Education Statistics and Indicators – A Practical Guide, UNESCO:  
<http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/unesco-gender-sensitive-edstats-indicators.pdf>

Social Dialogue Indicators – Technical Brief, Department of Statistics, International Labour Organisation, November 2011:  
<http://laborsta.ilo.org/applv8/data/TUM/TUD%20and%20CBC%20Technical%20Brief.pdf>

Monitoring Education for Global Citizenship: A Contribution to Debate, DEEEP & CONCORD, January 2015:  
[http://deEEP.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/DEEEP4\\_QualityImpact\\_Report\\_2014\\_web2.pdf](http://deEEP.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/DEEEP4_QualityImpact_Report_2014_web2.pdf)

### ONGOING INDICATOR PROCESSES

The United Nations Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG indicators:  
<http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/>

UNESCO and UNESCO Institute for Statistics Technical Coordination Group:  
<http://tcg.uis.unesco.org/>

### RELEVANT DATABASES

World Inequality Database on Education (UNESCO & Global Education Monitoring Report): [www.education-inequalities.org](http://www.education-inequalities.org)

UNESCO Institute for Statistics databases:  
<http://data.uis.unesco.org/>

OECD statistics: <http://stats.oecd.org/>



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## Guide to Indicators for SDG 4 Quality Education

For any questions about this guide or the SDGs,  
please get in touch with Antonia Wulff ([antonia.wulff@ei-ie.org](mailto:antonia.wulff@ei-ie.org))



Education International  
Internationale de l'Éducation  
Internacional de la Educación  
Bildungsinternationale

### Head office

5 bd du Roi Albert II  
1210 Brussels, Belgium  
Tel +32-2 224 0611  
[headoffice@ei-ie.org](mailto:headoffice@ei-ie.org)

[www.ei-ie.org](http://www.ei-ie.org)  
[#unite4ed](https://twitter.com/unite4ed)

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