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Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Sustainable
Development
Goals

Second SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee Meeting

Meeting Report



8–9 December 2016
Room X, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris

Education
2030 

ED-2016/ED2030/ME/3

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The present report provides the SDG-Education 2030 SC meeting programme, a short summary of key outcomes and decisions, as well as a second part including a more detailed summary of deliberations reflecting the themes, issues and understandings emerging from the discussions.

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SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee Meeting Programme

8 December 2016, Room X	
08.30 – 9.00	Welcome coffee/tea
09.00 – 09.45	<p>Opening Session</p> <p>Master of Ceremony: Qian Tang, Assistant-Director-General for Education, UNESCO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome by H.E. Michael Worbs, Chairperson of the Executive Board of UNESCO • Opening statement by Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO • Special Address by H.E. Dessima Williams, Special Adviser for the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, Office of the President of the UN General Assembly • Introduction and adoption of the Agenda, Dankert Vedeler, Assistant Director-General, Ministry of Education, Norway, Co-Chair of the SC
09.45 – 10.45	<p>Implementation of SDG4-Education 2030</p> <p>Chair: Dankert Vedeler, Assistant Director-General, Ministry of Education, Norway; Co-Chair of SC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Panel 1: Key opportunities and challenges in the first year of implementing SDG4-Education 2030 (One Member State representative per regional group, E-9, civil society/NGOs, Teacher Organization)
10.45 – 11.00	Coffee/Tea break
11.00 – 12.00	<p>Implementation of SDG4-Education 2030</p> <p>Chair: H.E. Roberto Iván Aguilar Gómez, Minister of Education, Bolivia; Vice-Chair of the SC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Panel 2: Key opportunities and challenges in the first year of implementing SDG4-Education 2030 (SDG4-Education 2030 Co-convenors; OECD; GPE)
12.00 – 14.00	Lunch Break
14.00– 15.00	<p>Presentation of the 2016 Global Education 2030 Monitoring (GEM) Report and the outline of 2017 report (theme: Accountability)</p> <p>Presenter: Aaron Benavot, Director, GEMR</p> <p>Chair: Maria Khan, Secretary-General, ASPBAE; Vice-Chair of the SC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Discussion ➔ Formulation of recommendations on follow-up to the GEMR report ➔ Agreement on possible activities of the SC as a follow up to the report
15:00 - 16:00	<p>Update on global and thematic indicators and on outcomes of meeting of TCG in October 2016</p> <p>Update on selected activities of UIS to support the implementation of SDG4;</p> <p>Chair: Dankert Vedeler, Assistant Director-General, Ministry of Education, Norway; Co-Chair of SC</p> <p>Presenter: Silvia Montoya, Director, UNESCO Institute for Statistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Endorsement of thematic indicators based on proposal from TCG ➔ Discussion and agreement on how SC could support initiatives to implement the SDG4–Education 2030 indicator frameworks
16:00 – 16.15	Coffee/tea break

16.15 – 17.00	<p>Presentation and debate on the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity Report</p> <p>Chair: Jordan Naidoo, Director, Division for Education 2030 Support and Coordination, UNESCO</p> <p>Presenter: Liesbet Steer, Co-Director of the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Discussion in plenary → Formulation of SC position and recommendations for follow-up by the SC
9 December 2016, Room X	
9.30 – 10.30	<p>SDG4-Education 2030 Champion countries</p> <p>Chair: Qian Tang, Assistant-Director-General for Education, UNESCO</p> <p>Presenter: Sobhi Tawil, Chief, Section for Partnerships, Cooperation and Research, Division for Education 2030 Support and Coordination, UNESCO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Presentation of proposal for establishing SDG4-Education 2030 Champion countries → Discussion and decision
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee/tea break
11.00 – 12.30	<p>Joint advocacy and communication strategy and activities of SC</p> <p>Presenter and Chair: Morgan Strecker, Education Specialist, UNICEF and Sarah Beardmore, Senior Strategy and Policy Specialist, GPE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Presentation of proposed advocacy activities → Discussion → Agreement on concrete advocacy activities and the way forward
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch break
14.00 – 15.00	<p>Regional strategies and coordination</p> <p>Chair: Prof. Kazuhiro Yoshida, Hiroshima University; Vice-Chair of the SC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Panel 3: Role of regional /sub-regional organizations in supporting the implementation of SDG4-Education 2030 and the integration of SDG4-Education 2030 into regional strategic frameworks in education and training, based on current frameworks (Regional Organizations of the SC and invited regional organizations) → Discussion in plenary and recommendations → Agreement on activities of regional organization
15.00 – 15.15	Coffee/tea
15.15 – 16.00	<p>Global coordination and cooperation</p> <p>Chair: Jordan Naidoo, Director, Division for Education 2030 Support and Coordination, UNESCO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Discussion and agreement on the Global Education Meeting → Discussion of contribution of the SC to the HLPF → Decision on Affiliated Members from the private sector and foundations
16.00– 17.00	<p>Discussion and agreement of a rolling road map in 2017 and 2018 for the SC including activities in: Reviewing Progress; Advocacy; Financing; Regional strategies and coordination; etc.</p> <p>Chair: Dankert Vedeler, Assistant Director-General, Ministry of Education, Norway; Co-Chair of the SC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Decision
17.00	Closing

Summary of Key Outcomes and Decisions

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Summary of key decisions and agreements

1. Overarching

Role and activities of the Steering Committee (SC) in terms of advocacy, reviewing progress, financing, and regional strategies and coordination agreed within a 3-year roadmap (2017-2019).

2. Specific

- SC response and recommendations for follow-up to the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR 2016), discussion on possible activities of the SC as a follow up to the report and comments of the SC on the outline of the GEM 2017 report (Theme: Accountability) and subsequent reports (see p.12-13 of the report).
- Endorsement of the thematic indicators proposed by the Technical Cooperation Group (TCG) based on conclusions reached at the TCG meeting in Madrid, 26-28 October 2016.
- Recommendations on how the SC could support initiatives to implement the SDG4–Education 2030 indicator frameworks at national, regional and global levels (see p.13-15 of the report).
- Comments on the “Learning Generation Report” and recommendations for follow-up by the SC for further engagement with the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity (see p.15-16 of the report).
- Decision on establishing SDG4-Education 2030 Champion countries deferred for further consideration at next SC meeting taking account of further clarification of appropriate terminology, new SG’s position on GEFI, other Champion country initiatives etc (see p.17 of the report).
- Agreement on SC advocacy activities including developing an advocacy strategy with thematic advocacy priorities and setting-up a web portal to provide the tools and knowledge to raise awareness and promote SDG4-Education 2030 (see p.18 of the report).
- Agreement to use the wealth of information on activities and initiatives undertaken at regional level as peer learning to support capacity building for SDG4-Education 2030 implementation (see p.18-19 of the report).
- Agreement on global consultation, coordination and cooperation activities (Global Education Meeting to be held in 2018; SC contribution to the HLPF report) (see p.20 of the report).
- Adoption of a general outline of a roadmap with main SC activities for 2017 to 2019 (see draft Roadmap)
- Agreement on establishing tentatively 4 Working Groups on: Review, Monitoring and Reporting; Policies and Strategies; Communication and Advocacy; and Financing (see draft TORs of the Working Groups). The exact number of Working Groups and definition of specific areas of work will be agreed upon once their TORs will have been shared and discussed among the SC after the meeting.
- Decision to hold the next SC meeting in mid-2017 in New York linked to the HLPF¹ to allow for the participation of the President of the UN General Assembly and thus creating a unique high-level

¹ Upon consultation with the Office of the PGA after the SC Meeting, it was recommended to hold the next SC meeting earlier than the HLPF, together with the PGA’s High-Level Event in June 2017.

profile advocacy opportunity at the UN, as well as better link the SDG-Education 2030 SC work with the UN SDG-wide processes.

Strategic information shared and issues discussed:

- SDG developments at global level
- Update on Activities for SDG-ED 2030 implementation (all members of the SC)
- Update on activities of regional organizations
- International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity report
- 2016 Global Education 2030 Monitoring (GEM) Report
- Global and thematic SDG 4 indicators
- Draft SC roadmap

Next steps:

1. The SDG-Education SC will set up **Working Groups** in the following proposed areas, pending final agreement on the TORs for each of the Working Groups:

- Review, Monitoring and Reporting;
- Policies and Strategies;
- Communication and Advocacy;
- Financing.



The Secretariat will submit the **draft Terms of Reference** for these four proposed Working Groups for comments and agreement by the SC by mid-January 2017 (see draft TORs). Upon agreement by the SC, TORs will be finalized and Working Groups established.

2. The Secretariat will further develop the draft **Roadmap with specific activities for the SC** and submit it for comments and proposals by mid-January 2017 to the SC (see draft Roadmap). The Roadmap would then be completed by the Working Groups for final endorsement by the SC as whole.
3. SDG-Education SC members will **choose the SC Affiliated Members** from the private sector and foundations through a survey mechanism to be set up by the Secretariat by end of January 2017. The SC will further consider youth representation in the SC.
4. UNESCO will **reach out to all Ministers of Education** to help raise awareness about SDGs (in particular SDG4) within their national curricula, as part of global awareness raising efforts, in partnership with the Office of the President of the UN General Assembly.
5. **Decision on the dates of the next SC meeting** will be taken in January 2017 through email consultations and in conjunction with the President of the UN General Assembly's Office who will take part in the event. Tentative dates are set for the week of 19 June 2017.

Summary of Deliberations

Summary of Deliberations

I. Opening Session (8 December, 9.00-9.45)

The Master of Ceremony for this session was Qian Tang, Assistant-Director-General for Education, UNESCO, Co-Chair of the SC.

The Second SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee (SC) Meeting was opened by **H.E. Michael Worbs**, the Chairman of UNESCO's Executive Board. He emphasized the importance of the work of the Steering Committee (SC) and indicated that the outcomes of the SC meeting will be transmitted to the Executive Board of UNESCO for information since SDG4-Education 2030 will be the priority for UNESCO's Medium-term Programme for 2018-2021. He encouraged UNESCO's Education Sector to develop a holistic strategy for the implementation of the global education agenda to contribute to the achievement of all SDGs.

The UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, **Qian Tang**, delivered the opening address on behalf of UNESCO's Director-General, Ms Irina Bokova, stressing the SC's vital responsibility in promoting a forward-looking vision on how to put the SDG and education agenda into action. The Director-General's message underlined the comprehensive scope of SDG4 and encouraged the SC to keep its universal and holistic vision as a guide, in order to implement SDG4 in its totality.

H.E. Dessima Williams, Special Adviser for the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals within the Office of the President of the UN General Assembly (PGA) gave a special address. She pointed out that the principle objectives of the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly consisted in driving the implementation of and raising awareness around all 17 of the SDGs, including education as a cornerstone. In this context, she explained that the PGA had recently sent letters to all Heads of Government requesting their commitment to educate young people on the vital importance of the SDGs. She invited the SC to use this initiative to closely collaborate with the Office of the PGA in awareness raising efforts during the 71st session and underlined the willingness of the Office of the PGA to continue its collaboration with UNESCO and the Steering Committee.

Dankert Vedeler, Assistant Director-General within Norway's Ministry of Education and Co-Chair of the SC gave a short introduction of the SC's scope of work and presented the Meeting Agenda which was adopted with no objection.

II. Panel 1: Key opportunities and challenges in the first year of SDG4-Education 2030 implementation (8 December, 9.45-10.45)

This session was chaired by Dankert Vedeler, Assistant Director-General, Ministry of Education, Norway, Co-Chair of the SC

Presentations were made by one Member State representative for each regional group (Belgium for Group I, Latvia for Group II, Bolivia for Group III, Republic of Korea for Group IV, Zambia for Group Va and Morocco for Group Vb), one E-9 representative (Pakistan) and one civil society/NGOs/teacher organization representative (GCE). The presentations detailed the rich spectrum of activities undertaken and outlined some of the challenges of the first year of implementation.

Main points included:

Common opportunities

- Promotion of regional and sub-regional cooperation to reach the SDG4-Education 2030 targets;
- Enhancing the role of education as the driving force to reach all SDGs and setting up multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms at national level;
- Identification and inclusion of SDG4-Education 2030 principles and aims in national education policy, plans and strategies and establishment of national priorities within the framework of the SDG4-Education 2030;
- Examining current national curricula and its correlation with the principles, aims and themes of SDG4-Education 2030.

Common challenges

- Ambitious agenda which requires adequate and effective financing for implementation – from both domestic resources and development cooperation;
- Need for greater capacity building to implement the agenda, including through peer learning mechanisms at regional level, in particular in the fields of planning, monitoring, data collection and reporting;
- Inclusion of vulnerable populations, with particular attention to the integration of migrants and refugees;
- Development of a comprehensive framework/set of indicators and integration/mainstreaming of the SDG4 perspective in the existing monitoring frameworks, with articulation between global, regional and national levels;
- Advocacy and communication: greater awareness raising efforts necessary and greater knowledge sharing among various SDG4 stakeholders and key actors.

Additional specific issues emphasized the need for:

- A more comprehensive framework of data collection, and, where feasible, a set of indicators for Target 4.7, including on global citizenship education (Europe and North America /Asia);
- Highlighting respect for diversity (Latin America);
- Greater attention to the inclusion of out-of-school populations (particularly in times of instability) (Arab States / E9);
- More investment in ECCE and TVET (Africa);
- Teachers with capacity to deliver (Africa / Europe and North America);
- Greater participation of CSOs in policy dialogue, including youth and student engagement (GCE).

Main Conclusion

The presentations and ensuing discussions indicated that **regional level exchange of experience** through peer learning mechanisms could be used as a privileged vector for greater capacity building in all regions.

III. PANEL 2: Key opportunities and challenges in the first year of implementing SDG4-Education 2030 (8 December, 11.00-12.00)

This session was chaired by H.E. Roberto Iván Aguilar Gómez, Minister of Education, Bolivia, Vice-Chair of the SC.

Presentations were made by UNESCO, UNICEF (also representing the World Bank at this meeting), UNDP, UNHCR, UNFPA, OECD and GPE.

Overall messages

- Important work is underway globally (over 25 regional and sub-regional consultations, more than 100 consultations at national level, 40 more planned)
- **Capacity gaps:** There is a need to identify capacity gaps and what specific strategies and financing efforts are put in place to tackle this (e.g. UNESCO is undertaking a pilot project in 10 countries to map policy and data gaps);
- **Beyond silo approach:** Silos between policy areas need to be broken down, e.g. SDG4 Targets and Target 5.6 (Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights); and between humanitarian and development approaches etc.
- **Strategic priorities** need to be established: Four main areas of work can be identified for the SC: review, monitoring and reporting; policy and strategy; advocacy and communication; and financing.
- **Youth engagement:** Mobilization of youth around the world is necessary. Youth should be brought together by means of forums, and toolkits should be provided to enable their active contribution in the field.
- **Vulnerable populations:** Considering the recent global increase in displacement, an important imperative in all future actions will be to take into account vulnerable populations such as refugees and internally displaced and their special learning needs.

Key focus areas

- **Review, monitoring and reporting:** An important challenge for the global community will not only consist in defining indicators, but also in establishing realistic thresholds, while taking into account a vast diversity of contexts.
- **Policies and strategies:** The breath of the global education agenda needs an integrated approach. There is a need to work across sectors and ministries and devise policies and strategies in concertation.
- **Advocacy and communication:** UNDP reports that 100 UN countries teams have received requests from countries for support, two thirds of which have identified communication and advocacy as an area for assistance.
- **Financing:** The SC will need to further engage in ongoing global, regional and national efforts to mobilize international and domestic funds to ensure the achievement of SDG4. 2017 will be an important year for financing efforts, including key moments such as the GPE Replenishment Pledging Conference.

Main Decisions

The presentations demonstrated the important level of current efforts worldwide in all areas of implementation but also the need for establishing strategic priorities. Four main areas of work can be identified for the SC: review, monitoring and reporting; policies and strategies; advocacy and communication; and financing.

IV. Presentation of the 2016 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report and the outline of the 2017 Report on Accountability (8 December, 14.00 - 15.00)

This session was chaired by Maria Khan, Secretary-General, ASPBAE, Vice-Chair of the SC.

Aaron Benavot, Director of the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report, presented the 2016 GEM Report entitled “Education for People and Planet: Creating Sustainable Futures for All” and introduced the outline of the 2017 Report which will focus on accountability. The presentation detailed a set of recommendations for monitoring SDG4 at national, regional and global levels, and proposed a set of specific actions to be undertaken by the SC over the next 12 months. All participants commended the GEM Report team for the quality of the 2016 Report. The discussion centred on which recommendations of 2016 GEM Report to prioritize and how to ensure they are implemented.

Key actions of the SC recommended by the GEM Report

- Reach out to other sectors to promote collaboration and see how education can better feature in their plans.
- Advocate with education ministries: review and revise education policies with reference to the needs of sustainable development agenda.
- Mobilize regional organizations: introduce or expand platforms for policy dialogue.
- Further explore the issue of an education-specific international household survey program.
- Improve coordination in the support provided to national learning assessment systems.
- Advocate for a global research hub to support the challenges of comparative measurement in education

Main discussion points

- **Regional organizations as platforms and space for sharing best practices and innovative work:** Given the challenge of moving from national to global reach, regional organizations are a key venue for action. The importance of the **exchange of experience across regions** was also highlighted. The SC was invited to consider supporting extending the invitation of representatives from other regions to each education regional meeting. Education regional meetings should involve other sectors (e.g. culture, science, finance sector etc.). The most important argument is that education is not competing with other areas for a share of the budget. Recommendations were made to take advantage of existing policy-dialogue platforms and leverage their ongoing discussions to present/discuss SDG4 (e.g. Africa Union meetings). There is a need for both horizontal and vertical expansion. In addition to inviting ministers of state to platforms for policy dialogue, there is a strong need to extend discussions to grass-roots level – teacher and student unions/associations, community participation as to be able to incorporate that into the thrust for education.
- **Learning assessment:** Participation in international learning assessments can drive improvements in national assessments and should therefore be encouraged. A broad approach to learning assessment was recommended – learning outcomes and contextual factors have to be improved to ensure education is delivered in a qualitative way. Strengthening national learning assessments should also involve assessing the conditions in which education is taking place as this remains a challenge in many contexts. The review process of the content of policies, curricula, textbooks etc. should also take into account the importance of human rights education and the issue of inclusion. The focus on gender parity is of key importance.

- **Global research hub on monitoring:** A concern was expressed that the role/functions of the recommended research-hub to support the challenges of comparative measurement in education would overlap with those of the UIS and the TCG, possibly duplicating efforts.
- **International household-survey devoted to education:** It was noted that there are a few major cross-country HHS including MICS and WB surveys and that it would be possible to add questions to these existing surveys. The GEM Report stressed that there are issues falling through the cracks which is one of the reasons why an international household-survey program on education is proposed.

Main Conclusions

A need was expressed to ground the GEM Report's recommendations in the diverse contexts of different countries (countries in conflict etc.) and to make sure that these recommendations are adaptable.

The SC can provide a mechanism by which there can be **stronger regional action** in follow-up to the recommendations on:

- Learning and exchange, within the region and across the regions, which the SC can facilitate.
- Appreciate the diversity of capacities and facilitate greater capacity development– following up on the indicators, building up a stronger database, facilitating the understanding of the outcomes of the GEM Report.
- Development of guidelines on how to implement the recommendations.
- Reach out to different sectors through existing mechanisms which the SC Members are part of.
- Although there is a strong need to use the regional level, there is caution that regional spaces may also require strengthening of capacities to support the implementation.

V. Global and thematic indicators and the outcomes of the TCG meeting in October 2016 (8 December 15.00 – 16.00 and 9 December 12.00 to 12.30)

This session was chaired by Dankert Vedeler, Assistant Director-General, Ministry of Education, Norway; Co-Chair of SC.

Silvia Montoya, Director of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), gave an update on the current status of the global and thematic indicator frameworks and outlined a series of proposed actions for the SC to support the implementation of the indicator frameworks. She summarized the process of the development of the indicator framework (global and thematic), recalling that thematic indicator framework is broader than the global one and constitutes a menu to choose from for regional reviews and national monitoring.

She then presented the way forward for global indicators as follows: the UN Statistical Commission will review and endorse proposals from the IAEG-SDGs for:

- refinements (annually from 2017);
- possible additional global indicators (in 2018);
- more substantial revisions in 2020 and 2025.

This was followed by a presentation of the outcomes of the meeting of the TCG in Madrid in October 2016 which discussed and agreed on a list of 29 thematic education indicators to be reported on in 2017, noting the need for further review and development of the remaining 14 thematic indicators in 2017 and additional 8 indicators which need some further development work. She also pointed out that three working groups were established to take forward development work on the following areas: Indicators for further development; International reporting mechanisms; Capacity building. A fourth area of work is on indicators on learning outcomes and skills.

The SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee was then invited to endorse the list of the 29 thematic indicators for reporting in 2017. This list of indicators was endorsed by the SC without discussion as per the decision in the May SC meeting.

Key actions of the SC recommended by UIS

- To advocate for establishing national strategies for the development of education statistics and report back on their progress at the next SC meeting
- Promote and communicate the results of the global initiatives at the national level through existing networks and help to facilitate consultations and technical support where necessary and report back at the next SC meeting.
- To provide support to efforts by regional bodies to articulate regional indicator frameworks where relevant and feasible.
- Lend political support and mobilize resources towards ensuring the sustainability of the global initiatives and report back at the next SC meeting on the steps taken to support these processes.
- Promote efficient flows of data reporting, dissemination and development.

While the participants appreciated the very ambitious attempt to come up with a comprehensive monitoring framework, they raised several questions.

Main discussion points

- **Coherence of the indicator endorsement process:** It was pointed out that discussions on the global indicators are still ongoing and some of the thematic indicators need more work while they have been already endorsed. What does endorsement mean in this context and who will publish and with what frequency? Some participants noted that the process may have lacked in transparency and was opened up at a late stage, hence certain indicators would still require further work (e.g. 4.1.2; 4.5 and 4.7). UIS clarified that definitions (benchmarks, frequencies etc.) are part of the decisions that will be taken to the TCG whose role is to ensure technical quality of indicators and of the framework and make recommendations to the SC and to the UN structures (within UIS mandate as agreed by UNSD). **In addition, the Chair further reiterated that by endorsing the 29 indicators, the SC accepted a list of thematic indicators that should be considered as a menu for regional bodies and Member States to use voluntarily.**
- **Fine-tuning of indicators:** A question was raised on several occasions as to whether there was room for **improving and fine-tuning** the indicators, or replacing them with national ones when more relevant. One of the biggest challenges is the sensitivity of these indicators to local contexts and their comparability. A need for a balance between quality and equity aspects of indicators was also emphasized.
- **Capacity building:** Numerous participants pointed out that strong focus on capacity building was necessary. A concern was raised regarding the insufficient understanding of the indicator framework implementation process at national level. Capacity building and guidelines for using and adapting the indicator framework were requested. UIS indicated that the aim is to coordinate the work at the policy level. UIS leads a pilot project in 10 countries to develop a medium and long-term strategy for establishment of national strategies for the development of education statistics.

- **Country ownership and engagement:** The issue at stake is the imperative of country ownership during each step of the process: definition of benchmarks, but also the validation, the availability of data etc.; with 180 countries, the lack of ownership could put the entire system at risk. UIS pointed out that for SDG4, a participation mechanism has been put into place and that regional representation is very strong.
- **Indicator availability and coverage:** It was pointed out that it is technically impossible to establish a core list of indicators covering the full spectrum of SDG4. Other sources need to be used (qualitative reporting, or other). UIS clarified that the use of official data is not exclusive, and that non-official sources are also taken into account when methodologies to standardize them exist. It was further specified that countries must validate the data before it is accessible to the public.
- **Support of the SC to the implementation of the indicator framework:** Several participants underlined the need for coherent sequencing between the TCG and SC Meetings. Some proposed that future SC Meetings could be organized in conjunction with the TCG meetings.
- **Aligning the existing systems with the indicator framework for SDG4:** It was underlined that the indicator framework for SDG4 is work in progress. What needs to happen is to align existing systems and try to relate them to SDG4 which is a tremendous job. It will take time and effort as well funding for this to happen and capacities will need to be built. A key added value of the SC and its Review, Monitoring and Reporting Working Group would be to mobilize the needed resources and to address capacity gaps.

Main Decisions

The Steering Committee **endorsed the list of the 29 SDG4 thematic indicators for reporting in 2017** based on the discussions and agreement of the TCG in October 2016, while taking note that further work was to be undertaken on the operationalization of the endorsed thematic indicators and the 14 remaining ones. The list of thematic indicators should be viewed as a menu and providing data for these indicators is voluntary.

The participants stressed the need for coherent sequencing between the TCG and the SC Meetings to allow for the SC's more adequate and timely support to the implementation of the indicator framework.

VI. The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity Report (8 December 16.15 – 17.00)

The session was chaired by Jordan Naidoo, Director, Division for Education 2030 Support and Coordination, UNESCO.

Liesbet Steer, Co-Director of the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity Report, presented the Learning Generation Report via Skype. The participants welcomed the findings of the report, while raising a number of questions.

Main points raised during the presentation

- Reconfirm the need for investment (not just spending) on education. Not investing in education will have immense costs.

- The Commission calls for the largest expansion of educational opportunity in history. The main purpose is to reinforce the momentum.
- The objectives of the Learning Generation report is not different from that of the SDG4, but set out ways for how to achieve learning.
- The Commission calls for a Financing Compact in which countries commit to invest and reform through 4 transformations: performance, innovation, finance and inclusion. Prioritization is given to early years and those from the more disadvantaged populations.
- Priorities in 2017 will focus on five areas: Supporting pioneer countries; establishing multilateral development bank investment mechanisms; strengthening global accountability – looking for cooperation, need to have parameters to show system progress; catalyzing strategic initiatives; and spreading the message.

Main discussion points

- **Scope of the Report and recommendations:** The important work of the Commission in making a greater investment case for education was welcomed and the recommendations on the system reform well received. However, some concerns about the scope of the Report were raised as some participants found that the latter did not fully support the SDG4 in its entirety, suggesting new areas of work, thus potentially giving the impression of a parallel agenda. Moreover, the Report calls for the creation of a new structure with a High-level body to take forward the recommendations which could also indicate a duplication of mechanisms. The Commission responded by stressing that the Commission’s targets are the SDG4 targets and that the narrative is the same.
- **Funding mechanisms:** Some participants were concerned about the risk of duplication of efforts especially with regard to the ongoing work of GPE, the Education Cannot Wait fund, and other multilateral funding mechanisms as the Report calls to establish a Multi-lateral bank for education. Clarification was sought as to the conditions of financing. On multiple occasions, participants stressed that the privileged line of action should be to strengthen the work of GPE, and not to establish new structures. The Commission clarified that the aim is to support the existing structures and that the Report is not suggesting to set up a new bank.
- **Public vs private education provision:** A word of caution was expressed by some participants who estimated that the Report did not sufficiently support the public provision of education. It was pointed out that attention should also be paid to domestic financing (including through taxes). The Commission clarified that they fully recognize the importance of the public sector but that there are many actors who play a valuable role and some countries are using mixed systems. There is a need to include non-state actors. However, terminology needs to be carefully chosen when talking about private for-profit providers.
- **Indicators:** Beyond learning and skills, participants noted that emphasis should also be put on access and participation. Moreover, avoiding the creation of parallel systems will need to guide all work on a global lead indicator. Some concern was also voiced regarding the choice of thematic indicators. The performance indicators to be used should reflect the content of learning. As far as inclusion is concerned, drop out costs also need to be taken into account. Indicators that are already being developed/proposed could also be used.

Main Conclusion

The SC and the Commission will collaborate in the future within the framework of SDG4-Education 2030, noting that particular attention should be paid to avoiding the setting up of any parallel structures to the existing SDG-4 coordination and funding mechanisms as well as ensuring that the entire SDG 4 agenda is implemented.

VII. Proposal for establishing SDG4-Education 2030 Champion Countries

(9 December 09.30 – 10.30)

The session was chaired by Qian Tang, Assistant-Director-General for Education, UNESCO, Co-Chair of the SC.

Sobhi Tawil, Chief of UNESCO's Section for Partnerships, Cooperation and Research, introduced the proposal for setting up SDG4-Ed 2030 Champion countries. The role of the Champion countries would consist in advocating for and supporting the implementation of the SDG4 targets and commitments in a similar spirit as the GEFI initiative, which was to foster high-level dialogue on education and on a second level, lead by example in advocacy efforts at the country level. The Ambassadors of the GEFI countries were invited to this session in order to share their experience.

Main discussion points

- **Timing of the initiative:** Some concerns were expressed regarding the timing of the proposal of such an initiative although the latter was positively received in general. Such an endeavor would require consultations at the highest levels, thus countries would need more time and more detailed information to be able to decide on their participation. It was also recommended to wait for the incoming SG to see what are his priorities and plans for the GEFI initiative.
- **Notion of "Champion":** It was observed that the Education 2030 SC is already a group of "champion countries". A negative connotation of the "champion" title for the remaining countries was underlined. It was recommended to avoid approaches that may promote divisions, advance certain countries over others. Instead, the notion to be promoted is **peer learning**. However, members accepted the idea of advocates for SDG4 and suggested that alternate language to "champion countries" be considered.
- **GEFI experience:** Some GEFI countries shared their experience and demonstrated their readiness to continue as Champion countries, while requesting additional information and time to consult.
- **Current initiatives at regional and sub-regional level:** The African Union has already established champion countries (Committee for the African Heads of State): Tunisia, Egypt, Gabon, Chad, Senegal (Chair), Sierra Leone, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia and Malawi. Countries and partners involved produce an annual report which is submitted to the champions' heads to state. One of the challenges is supporting these types of initiatives, which can be costly. SEAMEO supports the idea of having a lead country for each thematic area, which was done by SEAMEO during the EFA era. (e.g. Malaysia was tasked with the project on disabilities; Vietnam on reaching marginalized populations; Philippines and Indonesia on education in emergencies). Funds were allocated for research and capacity building and the results were assessed 5 years later.

Main Decisions

The chair of the session, **Qian Tang**, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Education, and Co-Chair of the SC, concluded that the idea of Champion Countries is potentially interesting for advocacy, maintaining and strengthening political commitment, and peer learning. Nevertheless, it would be too early to take any decision at this point – the SC would not want to launch a parallel initiative if the new UNSG opts for a certain form of continuation of GEFI. Moreover, the label is problematic and contradicts the spirit of a collective endeavor, based on solidarity around shared commitments. Keeping the idea of sharing of experience and peer learning, the Secretariat will provide further specifications on the proposal and SC members can give it more thought. At the next meeting, a concrete, workable mechanism for leveraging political commitment, advocacy and peer learning can be discussed.

VIII. Joint advocacy and communication strategy and activities of the SC

(9 December 11.00 – 12.30)

Presenters and chairs of this session, **Morgan Strecker**, UNICEF, and **Sarah Beardmore**, GPE, gave an introductory presentation on advocacy and communication.

Main discussion points and decisions

Need for a web platform on SDG4-Education 2030: The first objective of advocacy is to raise awareness for the SDG4 Education 2030 Agenda as a whole, including its principles and frameworks and locate SDG4-Education 2030 within the broader SDG agenda. A single web platform would need to be developed to provide the tools and knowledge to raise awareness and promote SDG-Education 2030. Resources for this activity need to be identified, including among the convening agencies.

Thematic advocacy priorities: Advocacy seeks to elevate important themes in the SDG4 Education 2030 Agenda and cultivate support of decisions makers for policies to promote progress on thematic issues. Suggested advocacy priorities for 2017 include education financing (with specific advocacy opportunities such as the GPE replenishment etc.), inclusion, equity, quality and governance as cross cutting-issues. An advocacy strategy will need to be developed detailing the priorities. A draft advocacy strategy will be developed by the Secretariat in collaboration with the co-convenors, to be refined and completed by the Working Group on Advocacy.

Process for undertaking advocacy work: The Working group on communication and advocacy, and the Working group on policy and strategy would facilitate the engagement of members on specific advocacy activity areas. The policy and strategy group could develop proposals for positions, tools, papers and other policy orientations on which the entire SC will take decisions for action. The communication and advocacy group could ensure that materials are user-friendly and accessible and identify opportunities for advocacy engagement. UNESCO Secretariat would provide final review and ensure consistency with SDG4-Education 2030 and ensure consensus. No Working group is a decision making group, all final decisions rest with the collective as a whole on any position.

Main Decisions

The SC agreed that a web portal would need to be developed to provide the tools and knowledge to raise awareness and promote SDG4-Education 2030. Resources for this activity need to be identified, including among the convening agencies. It was considered urgent to develop an advocacy strategy. Such a strategy should select thematic advocacy priorities.

IX. Regional strategies and coordination

(9 December 14.00 – 15.00)

The session was chaired by Prof. Kazuhiro Yoshida, Hiroshima University, Japan, Vice-Chair of the SC.

The following regional and sub-regional organizations gave a presentation showing their role in supporting the implementation of SDG4-Education 2030: ABEGS, ADEA, Council of Europe, European Commission, OEI and SEAMEO. The Regional Group IV having not yet designated a regional organization to be part of the SC, SEAMEO was invited to this SC Meeting to showcase activities in the region.

Highlights from the presentations

The regional organizations have all taken into account the SDG4 targets and their current and future strategies and programmes have been or will be modified in view of further alignment and synergy:

- **ABEGS:** The Regional Support Group in the Arab Region has been established, comprising 20 partners, including the three SC Member States of the Regional Group and ABEGS. The Group is meant to serve as a platform for partners to exchange information/resources related to SDG 4 and to plan and organize joint initiatives. One of its first joint activities is the development of a web portal dedicated to SDG 4 in Arabic and English languages.
- **ADEA:** The upcoming ADEA Triennale 2017 (15-17 March), with the theme of “Revitalizing Education towards the 2030 Global Agenda and Africa’s Agenda 2063” will offer a major opportunity for peer learning by addressing SDG4-Education 2030 implementation challenges in the region through strong focus on scalable and replicable successful innovations.
- **Council of Europe:** The commitment to the implementation of SDG4 and its Target 4.7 is translated through the CoE’s governing structures and programmes. For instance, the CoE’s Steering Committee for Education Policy and Practice (CDPPE), which comprises representatives of Ministries of Education of 50 States, now has SDG4 as part of its regular agenda items. Representatives tackle the issues such as evaluation of progress towards SDG4 and use the SC as platform for sharing practices among States.
- **European Commission:** The European Union reaffirmed its political commitment to SDG4 implementation by adopting in November 2016 a package of measures including a mapping on the synergies between the SDGs and EU actions both internally and in development cooperation. The SDG-4 process resonates closely with the currently ongoing reflection within the European Commission and the EU Member States on the current and future (2020-2030) set of EU education benchmarks and indicators. In this context, the Commission stressed its willingness to share experience in developing a framework and monitoring performance of education systems, stressing the importance of transparency and ownership by the countries concerned. In terms of method, Peer learning is key to EU’s activities with extensive efforts to embed it in reliable empirical data. EU is ready to share more information on its experience in this area during the next SC Meeting.
- **OEI:** The organization is working to integrate the SDG4-Education 2030 and its regional program Metas Educativas 2021 through various initiatives. One such initiative is the Observatory of good practices in Education. Adopted at the Conference of Ministers of Education, in September 2016, the activity aims to promote accurate understanding of education through thematic studies and applied research.
- **SEAMEO:** The discussions around the development of the SEAMEO Education Action Agenda for Education 2030 & 7 Priority Areas are fully based on SDG4-Education 2030 Agenda. The May 2017 Congress and July 2017 Ministers Meeting for the adoption of the Action Plan could offer a good opportunity for some of the SC Members to share their experience in SDG4 implementation.

Main Decisions

The presentations demonstrated the importance and wealth of action and efforts taking place at regional level which are critical to the successful implementation of SDG4-Education 2030. The regional organizations call for cross fertilization - learning from each other and call on the SC and UNESCO to help support peer learning processes. There is general agreement that regional peer learning experiences should be used as a foundation for supporting capacity building efforts for SDG4-Education 2030 implementation. The next SC Meeting could devote a particular session to this issue.

X. Presentation and discussion on Global coordination and cooperation

(9 December 15.15 – 16.00)

The chair and presenter **Jordan Naidoo**, Director of the Division for Education 2030 Support and Coordination gave a short introduction to present the main decisions to be reached.

Main discussion points and decisions

- **Global Education Meeting (GEM):** The GEM to be held before 2019 - as education will be reviewed at the HLPF, possibly during the second half of 2018, when there will be data to review progress to input to HLPF.
- Objectives and format to be agreed later during the next SC Meeting.
- Include inputs from CCNGO to facilitate dialogue with civil society. CCNGO meeting to take place in May 2017 in Cambodia.
- GEM frequency: one suggestion is for GEM to be held every two years, to correct the course and one suggestion for GEM to take place every 4 years in line with the HLPF process. Paragraph 95 of the Framework for Action states that the high-level meetings will be also held alongside the General Conference. This requires further discussion and some degree of flexibility is necessary.

Contribution of SC to the HLPF

- The initial decision was to have one SC Meeting a year, but a frequency of twice a year could be considered for the first three years.
- The SC should be engaging in the HLPF and UNGA by being present, organizing side events and contributing inputs. The web platform that will be developed and peer learning mechanisms will be fundamental in that regard.
- It is important to have the 2018 GEM meeting inform and be closely linked to the 2019 HLPF meeting, to report on progress made and engage with the HLPF.
- The next SC Meeting should be held in NY to make a closer link between the SC and the UN.

Affiliated members

- The SC needs to identify a rotating group of affiliated members (similarly to the Youth Forum) for the private sector and foundations.
- A decision needs to be taken during the next SC Meeting as to whether the Affiliated members stay affiliate or become main members. The SC members represent a constituency, foundations only represent themselves, therefore it would be difficult to have them as full members. More clarity is needed; a consultation process will be concluded by end of January 2017.

- The participation of a Youth representative selected via the Youth Forum needs to be approved. The participation of youth in the SC should be sustained in any case. Online platforms such as munplanet.com knowledge network, which the UN is part of, could be used to mobilize youth and have them participate in the decision making process.

Main Decisions

The first Global Education Meeting will be held in 2018, possibly during the second half of the year, when data will be available to review progress and inform the HLPF 2019 meeting 'Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness (with a focus on Goals 3, 4, 5, 10, 16 and 17).

XI. Presentation and discussion on a general outline of a roadmap with main SC activities for 2017 to 2019 (9 December 16.00 – 17.00)

The session was chaired by Dankert Vedeler, Assistant Director-General, Ministry of Education, Norway, Co-Chair of the SC

Jordan Naidoo, Director of the Division for Education 2030 Support and Coordination presented the general outline of a draft Roadmap.

The draft Roadmap contains a menu of actions that may be undertaken by the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee at global, regional/sub-regional or national levels. It is a flexible rolling map of actions that may be added or revised as circumstances require. The detailed draft roadmap can be found in the Annex.

The Roadmap is structured around four themes:

- (1) Review, Monitoring and Reporting;
- (2) Policies and Strategies;
- (3) Communication and Advocacy;
- (4) Financing.

The work around these themes will be facilitated by the establishment of four Working Groups on the four themes above. Recognizing that these groups are closely interrelated, the four themes have been chosen not only taking into account the priorities but also for practical reasons. Groups of 10 members can be more easily managed than larger groups. A Working Group is not a decision making group, all final decisions on any position or action rest with the collective SC as a whole.

Main Conclusion

The Secretariat will submit the draft Terms of Reference for these 4 Working Groups for discussion by the SC (see draft TORs). The Secretariat will further develop the draft roadmap with specific activities for the SC and submit it for discussion and agreement (see draft Roadmap). The final number of the Working Groups will depend on this feedback.

XII. Closing (9 December 17.00)

H.E. Dessima Williams, Special Adviser for the Implementation of the SDGs within the Office of the PGA gave closing remarks in which she proposed a partnership between the SC and the Office of the President of the General Assembly in five strategic areas:

1. To coordinate the implementation of SDG 4
2. To work with other partners and NGOs.
3. To inform other bodies on key priorities and catalytic actions and leadership initiatives that are taking place in UNESCO.
4. To build strong partnerships among diverse stakeholders.
5. To harmonize and create synergy for the shared work in New York and Paris, including the possibility to have the next Steering Committee meeting in New York during the High-Level Political Forum in July 2017².

Qian Tang closed the meeting by underlining the important support from the President of the UN General Assembly and the significant opportunity for advocacy the next SC Meeting in NY could represent.

² See mention on the dates of the next SC meeting on page 6 of this report.