United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

UNESCO INSTITUTE FOR STATISTICS

TECHNICAL COOPERATION GROUP

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Report from Working Group 3 on data reporting, validation and dissemination

TCG 5th meeting, 14-16 November 2018

Mexico City (Mexico)

Objectives of the working Group

- Increase the transparency of the flow of information from data collection to indicator publication, including clear identification of decision-making processes and the actors involved in this data flow.
- Ensure that the data reporting process includes adequate metadata and clear communication of timelines and delievrables to ensure effective data validation.
- Ensure that there is clear communication between the international agencies that publish SDG 4 indicators and the national entities that supply the data, including adequate time and documentation for comments and feedback.

Working Group Memberships

- **Chair:** Canada (Klarka Zeman, Jolie Lemmon). Mr. Patrick Blouin replaced Klarka in this meeting
- Khaled Nasr El Din, Egypt
- Robert Rakocevic, France
- Philipa Livingston, Jamaica
- Said Hilal Al Hashami, Oman
- Carthbert Mulyala, Uganada
- Rasheda Choudhury, Collective Consultative on NGOs Coordination Group
- Corinne Heckmann, OECD
- Said Voffal, UIS

Progress since the last TCG meeting in Dubai

Working Group 3 organized three virtual meetings and finalized the following documents:

- The document describing the annual data validation process
- The terminology document that would complement the SDG 4 metadata document
- The calendar of publications and data releases featuring SDG 4 data; and a calendar of SDG 4-related meetings

➢ After their approval by the TCG these documents will be uploaded on the TCG webiste and updated twice a year when required.

Opt-out process and revision of historical data

During Wednesday's meeting of WG3 two additional important topics were discussed and agreed upon by the group:

- An opt out process by which countries could request UIS to not publish data for an indicator

- A policy on historical data revision

Opt-out process

To distinguish from 'not publishable' or missing data.

Definition: an indicator is defined as opt-out when the raw data are validated but a country doesn't want to publish it.

Acceptable reasons for opting out:

- Disagreement with methodology
- Inadequacy of the indicator in the national context.
- Other reasons to be defined by UIS looking back to the already accepted opt out

In these cases UIS will enter into dialogue with the countries about the specific case. UIS will create a specific missing data code, and there will be footnotes in the database based on common scenarios. Examples of opting out situations will be provided. UIS will give space in the country review document for countries to provide comment.

➢ **to add a section on this to validation process document**

Historical data revision policy

Need to make sure that time series reflect most up to date data.

- For OECD countries UIS will rely on OECD trend data collection.
- For countries under UIS responsibility it will update time series when countries revise data
- During data validation UIS will highlight changes so countries will be able to concentrate on them. Footnotes will be added to explain the reason for the change (eg: population data change).

➢ **to add section on this to the validation process document**

Who should validate SDG 4 data at national level?

WG 3 discussed this important issue and agreed on the following approach:

- The SDG 4 focal points will be identified by countries and reported to UIS. Until now, it was mainly the UOE/UIS data collection correspondents and SDG focal points provided by UNSD. These focal points should transmit the validation files to their experts when relevant.
- For the send out, we would typically have the national SDG focal point for all SDG global indicators and those responsible for SDG 4 indicators.

➢ **Would you agree with this?**

Education-related indicators in other SDGs

The Working Group 3 also on discussed this topic and identified a list of 4 indicators:

- **1.a.2** Proportion of total government spending on essential services (**education**, health and social protection)
- **8.6.1** Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training(NEET)
- **12.8.1** Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development (including climate change education) are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment
- **13.3.1** Number of countries that have integrated mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning into primary, secondary and tertiary curricula

Recommendations on SDG education-related indicators in other SDGs

1.a.2: given that UIS is the custodian agency for the component education and that the data are collected through the annual data collection, WG3 agreed to collect metadata of this indicator and include it in the UIS annual data review process

8.6.1: WG3 agreed that this indicator is very relevant for SDG 4 monitoring. WG 3 suggests to WG1 to explore including this in SDG 4. Caution is neeed however when it comes to disagregating these data by different parity indexes included in SDG4 (risk of low reliability of estimates)

12.8.1: This indicator is similar to the indicator to 4.7.1. WG3 suggests to be in contact with the custodian agency of target 12 to ensure that both indicators are treated coherently

13.3.1: Monitor closely the development of this indicator and see how it could be linked to SDG 4

- **Would agree with this?**

National portals for SDG 4-related work

WG 3 discussed and agreed that it would very useful to add links in the UIS website to country portal websites.

- This will provide valuable information on how the SDG 4 agenda is localized and monitored at national level.

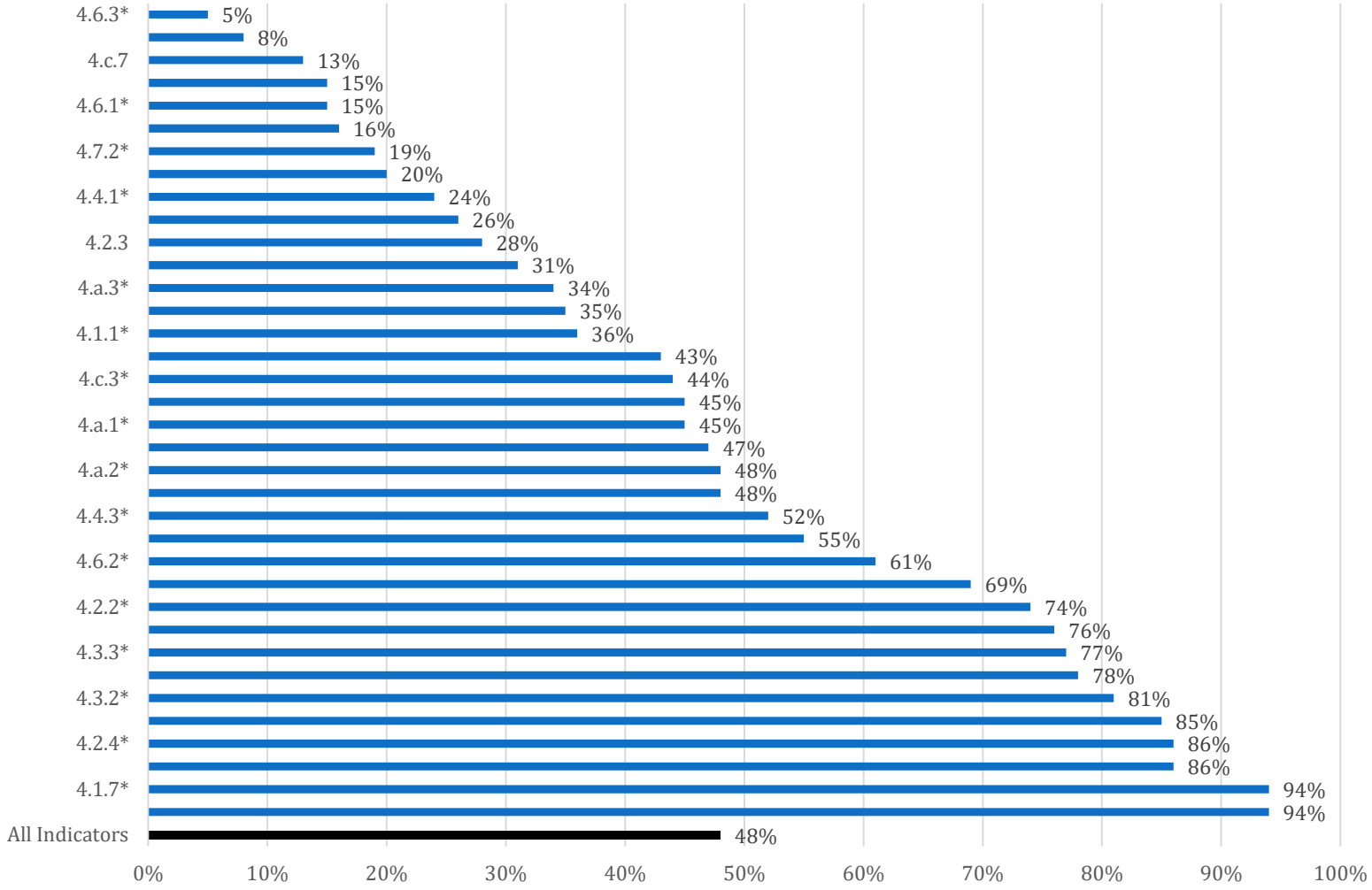
➢ UIS will request countries to provide links to their national portal during the annual data validation process

➢ **Any comment on this proposal?**

Update on data production and dissemination activities

- UIS released data twice in 2018: in February and September 2018
- The UOE 2018 survey was launched in June 2018
- UIS 2019 Education Survey of Formal Education launched in October 2019

Slightly improved coverage of SDG 4 indicators from UIS September 2018 data release



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Overal Improvements in data production in 2018

- Great collaboration between UIS and OECD led to improvements in:
  - Calculation of indicators 4.3.3 (inclusion of ISCED 4&5 data) and 4.5.4 (use of enrolment aligned to finance)
  - Data validation for OECD countries
- UIS improved metadata, provided raw data and calculation formula for more indicators - which was appreciated by countries as a substancial improvment to the process
- Timeliness of data was also improved as we published in september 2018 data for school year ending in 2017

Issues raised by countries during data validation process and how UIS will address them

The WG3 discussed the issues raised by countries and made some suggestions for the next send-out.

- Lack of sufficient time to review the data and validate them -> Extend the time to review the data to 1 month

- Not sufficient raw data provided to countries to understand how indicators are calcultated (Indicator 4.5.1) -> Add information on the calculation of low socio-economic status / High socio-economic status, urban/rural etc for each of the survey

- Difference between UIS and OECD calculation for some indicators (e.g use of FTE to calculate indicator 4.5.4) -> Explore the use of FTE data for OECD countries but keep FT+PT data for the other countries (this information being not available in the UIS questionnaire)

Population data issue

- Many countries expressed their concerns on the use of UNDP population data which is not adequate when calculating some of the SDG4 indicators (eg 4.2.2) due to the use of a smoothing method to get data by single age.
- UIS is willing to using national data in cases where UNPD are inconsistent with education statistics, but would like to adopt a transparent strategy.

The WG3 discussed this issue and proposed as a transparent strategy:

- Countries (except European countries) would have to send their national population to UIS including trends. They will have to ensure that they are able to specify the coverage (to ensure no controversial territories are included or excluded and all targets population is included).
- Population data from European countries will be taken directly from the Eurostat database

➢ **Would you agree with this approach?**

Publication of national estimates

Some countries proposed national estimates to fill in data gaps for some indicators (eg trained and qualified teachers)

The WG3 proposed to not include those national estimates as this:

- Would lead in some cases in non internationally comparable data
- Could result in countries opting out from internationally comparable data to use national data
- Could sometime result in outdated as there would be no mechanisms to update these national data
- Only exception to this are national learning assessment data collected through UIS Catalogue of Learning Assessment as these data were approved for interim repporting

➢ **Would you agree with this?**

Recommendations from WG3 for next TCG meetings

- Send papers on new indicators to be proposed for monitoring well in advance (at least a month) to allow for national and regional consulations before the TCG meetings
- When developing an indicator, ensure that consulations with countries are conducted and their feedback is taken into account before presenting the indicator to the TCG for approval
- Suggestion to have the dates of the next GAML and TCG meetings agreed on during each meeting to allow for planning and preparation well in advance

Future work

- Revise data validation process to include opt-out process and historical data revision policy
- Update the calendar of publications and meetings for 2019
- Send these revised documents to TCG members for approval before publication on the TCG website
- Work on the list of acceptable data sources for each indicator
- Given that the initial tasks that WG3 assigned to itself will be completed by the end of 2018-early 2019 the group is interested to start contributing to the indicator development work of WG 1.

➢ **WG3 is happy to discuss best ways of assuming this new responsibility**

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Data for the Sustainable Development Goals

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