

A Note on Indicator Tiers and Placeholders

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The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) is classifying each of the global indicators into one of three tiers based on the availability and level of methodological development of the indicator in question. The purpose of this exercise is to identify which indicators would require further resources to develop or strengthen methodologies and standards and to identify suitable data collection approaches. The IAEG Members are currently assessing the provisional tier levels suggested by the UN Statistical Division and by international and regional organizations. When they have completed this exercise they will then develop a work plan in consultation with the relevant international or regional organizations with responsibility for the elaboration of each of the Tier 3 indicators.

The definitions of each tier are described below:

- Tier 1:** Indicator is conceptually clear, an established methodology and standards are available and data are produced regularly by countries.
- Tier 2:** Indicator is conceptually clear, an established methodology and standards are available but data are not produced regularly by countries.
- Tier 3:** Indicator for which there are no established methodology and standards or the methodology and/or standards are being developed or tested.

The UIS has adopted a similar approach for the thematic indicators for education in order to identify the indicators requiring further developmental work. So far, eight Tier 3 indicators have been identified:

- 4.5.2** Percentage of students in primary education whose first or home language is the language of instruction
- 4.5.3** Extent to which explicit formula-based policies reallocate education resources to disadvantaged populations
- 4.7.2** Percentage of schools that provide life skills-based HIV and sexuality education
- 4.7.3** Extent to which the framework on the World Programme on Human Rights Education is implemented nationally (as per UNGA Resolution 59/113)
- 4.7.4** Percentage of students by age group (or education level) showing adequate understanding of issues relating to global citizenship and sustainability
- 4.a.1 (d)** Percentage of schools with adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities
- 4.b.2** Number of higher education scholarships awarded, by beneficiary

country
4.7.7 Percentage of teachers who received in-service training in the last 12 months by type of training

Furthermore, in assessing the other thematic indicators, the UIS has identified a need for selecting a number of placeholders for indicators not yet widely available to ensure that monitoring can initially be based on an indicator that captures a similar concept but is more widely available now. The following set of criteria was used to define a good placeholder:

- i) The proximity of the placeholder to the concept the original indicator is measuring
- ii) The proximity of the placeholder to the target being measured
- iii) Cross-national comparability of the placeholder (at least for groups of countries if not globally)
- iv) Country and regional coverage
- v) Sufficient periodicity (i.e. at least once every 5 years)

The Technical Cooperation Group is invited to provide advice on the Tiers proposed for each indicator in the table in Annex I including, for those in Tier 3, recommendations on approaches to take in developing the proposed indicators.

The Technical Cooperation Group is also invited to comment on the proposed placeholders in the table in Annex II and/or to provide additional suggestions of their own.

Advice on both issues will help to inform the future work of the Technical Cooperation Group.

Annex I: Proposed tiers for the global and thematic education indicators

	Indicator	Tier proposed by UNSD (for global indicators)	Tier proposed by UIS
	Target 4.1		
4.1.1	Proportion of children and young people: (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex	3	1/2
4.1.2	Administration of a nationally representative learning assessment (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary education		1
4.1.3	Gross intake ratio to the last grade (primary, lower secondary)		1
4.1.4	Completion rate (primary, lower secondary, upper secondary)		1
4.1.5	Out-of-school rate (primary, lower secondary, upper secondary)		1
4.1.6	Percentage of children over-age for grade (primary, lower secondary)		1
4.1.7	Number of years of (a) free and (b) compulsory primary and secondary education guaranteed in legal frameworks		1
	Target 4.2		
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	2	2
4.2.2	Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex	1	1
4.2.3	Percentage of children under 5 years of age experiencing positive and stimulating home learning environments		2
4.2.4	Gross pre-primary enrolment ratio		1
4.2.5	Number of years of (a) free and (b) compulsory pre-primary education guaranteed in legal frameworks		1
	Target 4.3		
4.3.1	Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the last 12 months, by sex	2	2
4.3.2	Gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education		1
4.3.3	Participation rate in technical-vocational education programmes (15- to 24-year olds)		1
	Target 4.4		
4.4.1	Proportion of youth and adults with information communication technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill	2	2
4.4.2	Percentage of youth/adults who have achieved at least a minimum level of proficiency in digital literacy skills		2
4.4.3	Youth/adult educational attainment rates by age group, economic activity status, levels of education and programme orientation		1

Note: Global indicators are highlighted in the table.

Proposed tiers for the global and thematic education indicators (continued)

	Indicator	Tier proposed by UNSD (for global indicators)	Tier proposed by UIS
	Target 4.5		
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	1, 2 or 3 (depending on indicator)	1
4.5.2	Percentage of students in primary education whose first or home language is the language of instruction		3
4.5.3	Extent to which explicit formula-based policies reallocate education resources to disadvantaged populations		3
4.5.4	Education expenditure per student by level of education and source of funding		1
4.5.5	Percentage of total aid to education allocated to low income countries		1
	Target 4.6		
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	2	1
4.6.2	Youth/adult literacy rate		1
4.6.3	Participation rate of youth/adults in literacy programmes		2
	Target 4.7		
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	3	1
4.7.2	Percentage of schools that provide life skills-based HIV and sexuality education		3
4.7.3	Extent to which the framework on the World Programme on Human Rights Education is implemented nationally (as per UNGA Resolution 59/113)		3
4.7.4	Percentage of students by age group (or level of education) showing adequate understanding of issues relating to global citizenship and sustainability		3
4.7.5	Percentage of 15-year old students showing proficiency in knowledge of environmental science and geoscience		2

Note: Global indicators are highlighted in the table.

Proposed tiers for the global and thematic education indicators (continued)

	Indicator	Tier proposed by UNSD	Tier proposed by UIS
	Target 4.a		
4.a.1	Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) Internet for pedagogical purposes; and (c) computers for pedagogical purposes	1/2	1/2
	Proportion of schools with access to: (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities	1/2	3
	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)	1/2	1/2
4.a.2	Percentage of students experiencing bullying, corporal punishment, harassment, violence, sexual discrimination and abuse		2
4.a.3	Number of attacks on students, personnel and institutions		2
	Target 4.b		
4.b.1	Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study	1	1
4.b.2	Number of higher education scholarships awarded, by beneficiary country		3
	Target 4.c		
4.c.1	Proportion of teachers in: (a) pre-primary; (b) primary; (c) lower secondary; and (d) upper secondary 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	1	1
4.c.2	Pupil-trained teacher ratio by education level		1
4.c.3	Proportion of teachers qualified according to national standards by education level and type of institution		1
4.c.4	Pupil-qualified teacher ratio by education level		1
4.c.5	Average teacher salary relative to other professions requiring a comparable level of qualification		2
4.c.6	Teacher attrition rate by education level		2
4.c.7	Percentage of teachers who received in-service training in the last 12 months by type of training		3

Note: Global indicators are highlighted in the table.

Annex II: List of indicators and potential placeholders

	Original indicators	Potential placeholders	Proximity to concept	Proximity to target	Cross-national comparability	Country and regional coverage	Periodicity
	Target 4.1						
4.1.1	Proportion of children and young people (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex	As original but presented by type of assessment (PASEC, PILNA, PIRLS, PISA, SACMEQ, TERCE and TIMSS)	YES	YES	YES	GOOD	3-5 years
	Target 4.2						
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	As original but presented by type of index (ECDI, EDI, ICARO, IDELA, MELQO, etc.)	YES	YES	YES	GOOD	3-5 years
4.2.3	Percentage of children under 5 years experiencing positive and stimulating home learning environments	As original but presented by type of study (MICS, PRIDI, etc.)	YES	YES	YES	GOOD	3-5 years
	Target 4.3						
4.3.1	Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex	Adults enrolled in formal education as a share of total enrolments, by level of education	FAIR	FAIR	YES	GOOD	annual
	Target 4.4						
4.4.1	Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill	Percentage of students enrolled in education programmes offering computing or basic computer skills	FAIR	FAIR	YES	FAIR	3-5 years
4.4.2	Percentage of youth/adults who have achieved at least a minimum level of proficiency in digital literacy skills	Percentage of students at each proficiency level in digital literacy skills (based on IEA's International Computer and Information Literacy Study, PIAAC and PISA)	YES	YES	YES	POOR	3-5 years

Annex II: List of indicators and potential placeholders (continued)

	Original indicators	Potential placeholders	Proximity to concept	Proximity to target	Cross-national comparability	Country and regional coverage	Periodicity
	Target 4.5						
4.5.2	Percentage of students in primary education whose first or home language is the language of instruction	No proposals					
4.5.3	Extent to which explicit formula-based policies reallocate education resources to disadvantaged populations	No proposals					
4.5.4	Education expenditure per student by level of education and source of funding	As original indicator for sources of public funding	YES	YES	YES	GOOD	annual
	Target 4.6						
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	As original but presented by type of assessment (PIAAC, RAMAA, STEP)	YES	YES	YES	FAIR	3-5 years
4.6.3	Participation rate of youth/adults in literacy programmes	No proposals					
	Target 4.7						
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	As original, derived from national reports submitted in previous years on the implementation of the 1974 UNESCO Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms	YES	YES	YES	GOOD	4 years
4.7.2	Percentage of schools that provide life skills-based HIV and sexuality education	No proposals					

Annex II: List of indicators and potential placeholders (continued)

	Original indicators	Potential placeholders	Proximity to concept	Proximity to target	Cross-national comparability	Country and regional coverage	Periodicity
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 proposals					
4.7.4	Percentage of students by age group (or education level) showing adequate understanding of issues relating to global citizenship and sustainability	Percentage of students at each proficiency level in civic knowledge (based on IEA's International Civic and Citizenship Knowledge Study)	YES	FAIR	YES	FAIR	3-5 years?
	Target 4.a						
4.a.1 (d)	Proportion of schools with access to: (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities	No proposals					
4.a.3	Number of attacks on students, personnel and institutions	No proposals					
	Target 4.b						
4.b.2	Number of higher education scholarships awarded by beneficiary country	No proposals					
	Target 4.c						
4.c.5	Average teacher salary relative to other professions requiring a comparable level of qualification	Average expenditure on teachers' compensation as a % of GDP per capita, by level of education Teachers' average statutory salaries as a % of GDP per capita by level of education	YES YES	FAIR FAIR	YES YES	FAIR POOR	annual annual
4.c.7	Percentage of teachers who received in-service training in the last 12 months by type of training	Percentage of trained teachers, by level of education	FAIR	YES	YES	HIGH	annual