



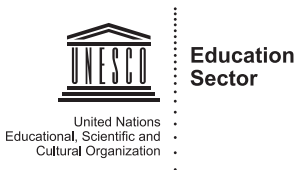
United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Education transforms lives

Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality

UNESCO Education Sector

Education is UNESCO's top priority because it is a basic human right and the foundation on which to build peace and drive sustainable development. UNESCO is the United Nations' specialized agency for education and the Education Sector provides global and regional leadership in education, strengthens national education systems and responds to contemporary global challenges through education with a special focus on gender equality and Africa.



The Global Education 2030 Agenda

UNESCO, as the United Nations' specialized agency for education, is entrusted to lead and coordinate the Education 2030 Agenda, which is part of a global movement to eradicate poverty through 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Education, essential to achieve all of these goals, has its own dedicated Goal 4, which aims to ***“ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”*** The Education 2030 Framework for Action provides guidance for the implementation of this ambitious goal and commitments.



Published in 2019 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
7, place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP, France

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Cover photo: Getty/Kerkez

Graphic design: Ana Carrasco-Martin

Printed by UNESCO

Printed in France

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[Education transforms lives - Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality](#)

This brochure compiles the main elements of progress on Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) highlighted in the [submission](#) by UNESCO, on behalf of the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee, to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) on the occasion of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) 2019 - *Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality*.

[The SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee](#)

UNESCO convenes the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee. The Committee is the global multi-stakeholder consultation and coordination mechanism for education in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Its primary objective is to harmonize and strengthen support to countries and their partners for the realization of the global education goal and targets. Hosted by UNESCO, the Steering Committee is composed of 44 members representing a majority from countries, the World Education Forum 2015 convening agencies (UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Women, ILO, and the World Bank), the Global Partnership for Education, the OECD, regional organizations, teacher organizations, civil society networks, foundations and youth organizations.

What is SDG 4 – Education 2030?



SDG 4

Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”



Education 2030 is the entire global agenda including SDG 4 as well as other goals that reference education

SDG 4 TEN TARGETS



Target 4.1
Free quality primary and secondary education



Target 4.2
Quality early childhood development, care and education for school readiness



Target 4.3
Affordable and quality technical, vocational and higher education



Target 4.4
Increase the number of people with the relevant skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship



Target 4.5
Eliminate all discrimination in education



Target 4.6
Universal literacy and numeracy



Target 4.7
Education for sustainable development and global citizenship



Target 4.a
Inclusive and safe schools



Target 4.b
Expand higher education scholarships for developing countries



Target 4.c
Increase the supply of quality teachers

THE FIVE OTHER SDGs WITH DIRECT REFERENCE TO EDUCATION



HEALTH



Target 3.7

Comprehensive sexuality education and care



GENDER



Target 5.6

Sexual and reproductive health care, information and education



WORK



Target 8.6

Promote youth employment, education and training



CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



Target 12.8

Promote sustainable consumption and production patterns



CLIMATE ACTION



Target 13.3

Improve education and awareness on climate change mitigation

Who is responsible for SDG 4 - Education 2030?

Governments have a primary responsibility in **ensuring the right to education**

Governments need to ensure...



Legislation and policies for equitable and inclusive education



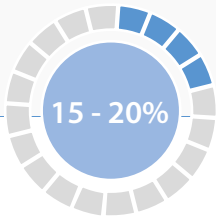
Investment in teachers and wider learning opportunities



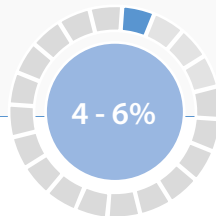
1 year free and compulsory pre-primary education



12 years free, quality primary and secondary education of which **9 years** are compulsory



of public expenditure should go to education



of GDP should go to education

Everyone has a stake in ensuring the right to inclusive quality education for all



Civil society actors must be engaged and involved at all stages



Youth are both beneficiaries and agents of change

Governments need to **engage stakeholders at all stages** from planning to monitoring progress, such as:



Teachers should be consulted in the development, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of education



Private sector actors provide technical expertise and resources

Source: 2017/8 Global Education Monitoring Report

How education equalizes, includes, and empowers

Education has the potential to be a **great equalizer** in society by transforming individuals' lives and driving progress towards sustainable development



How is education being prioritized

Research from the *Global Education Monitoring Report* shows that **governments are aligning their national targets with SDG 4** and striving to renew education systems

56

out of 111 countries emphasize education in national development (2016 - 2018)



Governments see education contributing to **human capital and social development**

Education is one of the most consistently discussed goals in countries' Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) on SDG implementation

Source: Beyond Commitments: How countries are implementing SDG 4 (GEMR, 2019)

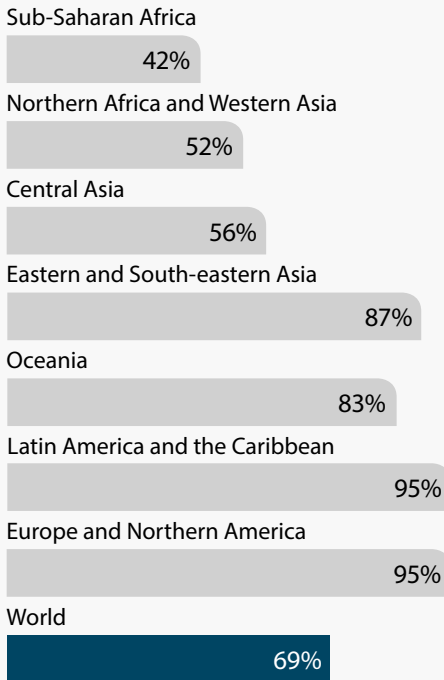
Leaving **no child** behind

Despite some progress,
the world is not on track to achieve
the SDG 4 goal and its targets

*Millions of children, young people,
and adults left behind*

Early childhood education is not universal

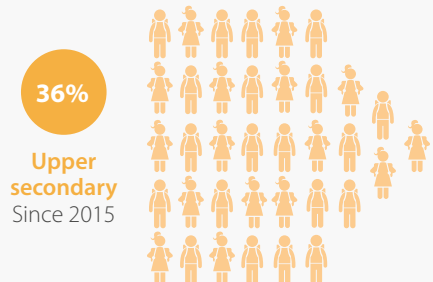
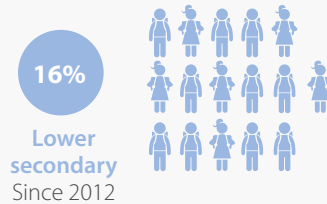
Participation rate in organised learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by region (%) (2017 or latest year available)



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics database, September 2018

262 Million 6 to 17 year olds were still out of school in 2017

While out-of-school numbers continue to decrease, the trend is slowing down



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics database, September 2018

In the face of a global learning crisis,
simply focusing on access is not sufficient

Schooling \neq Learning !

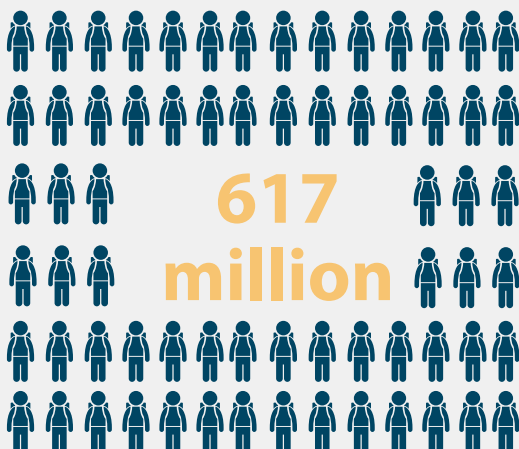
*Ministries of education can no longer consider numbers
of children in school as the sole objective*

GLOBAL LEARNING CRISIS



More than half (58%)
of children and adolescents are
not learning worldwide or
attaining minimum proficiency
levels in reading and mathematics

Children and adolescents
are not learning



of which **2/3** or
411 million are in
school

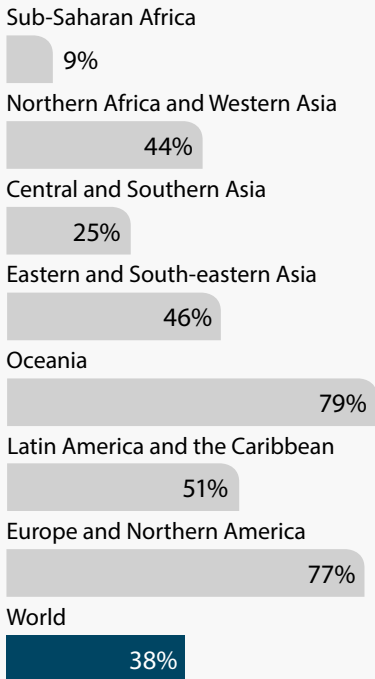
Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics fact sheet no. 46 (UIS, 2017)

Leaving **no youth** behind

Youth are still excluded from opportunities to learn the necessary skills for work and life

Large differences between regions in higher education participation

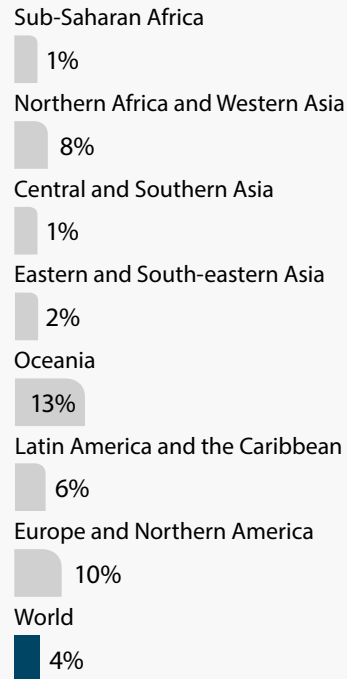
Gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics database, September 2018

Technical and vocational education and training is not widespread globally

Proportion of 15 - 24 year-olds enrolled in vocational education



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics database, September 2018

Leaving **no adult** behind

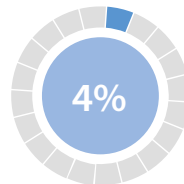
Adult education and access to lifelong learning opportunities will become ever more important as technologies change and skill demands shift

Illiterate adults globally

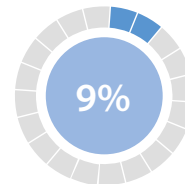


2/3 of whom are women remained illiterate in 2016

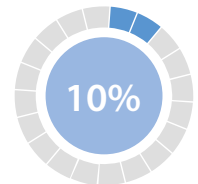
Southern Asia is home to approximately **50%** of the global illiterate population



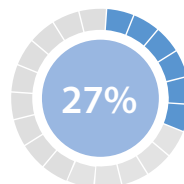
Latin America & the Caribbean



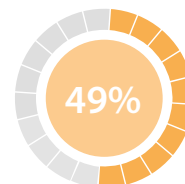
Northern Africa & Western Asia



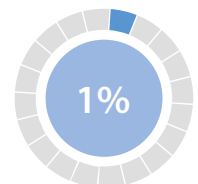
Eastern & South-eastern Asia



Sub-Saharan Africa



Southern Asia



Rest of the World

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics database, September 2018

Leaving **no country** behind

Countries with the greatest needs should be given a larger share of aid

However, aid is not going to those most in need



65%

of global education spending goes to high income countries



Funding gap US \$39 billion

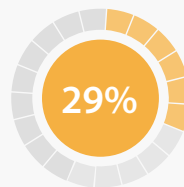
in low and lower middle-income countries

The lack of sufficient funding for education is a particular **challenge** for **low income countries**

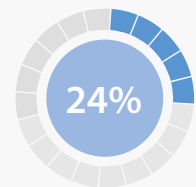


Households in low income countries bear the largest financial burden, accounting for approximately **30% of the education expenditure share**

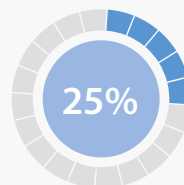
Distribution of total household spending on education by country income group



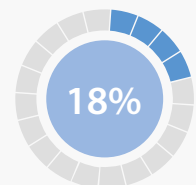
Low income



Lower middle income



Upper middle income



High income

What needs to be done

WE CALL ON GOVERNMENTS TO



Strengthen collective action on SDG 4 within the 2030 Agenda, recognizing the role of education to transform lives, maintain peace, and protect the planet



Allocate sufficient resources to youth and adult literacy programmes targeted to people most in need



Increase cooperation across sectors, and between humanitarian and development actors and ensure that at least 4% of humanitarian aid is allocated to education



Include migrants, displaced persons, and refugees in national education systems and facilitate the recognition of their skills and qualifications



Empower all girls and women through gender-responsive education sector planning



Strengthen education for global citizenship and sustainable development to promote values of respect and competences for shaping more peaceful and sustainable societies



Design curricula, learning materials, teacher education, and assessment systems that promote a wider vision of learning - beyond basic skills



Ensure that all teachers are adequately prepared and supported to deliver quality education for all, including through higher education and research



Mobilize resources to meet the twin benchmarks for financing education, prioritizing resources towards those most in need: 4 - 6% of GDP and 15 - 20% of public expenditure to education



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Education Sector

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Education is a human right, a public good, and a public responsibility. It is the most powerful force in our hands to ensure significant improvements in health, stimulate economic growth, achieve gender equality, unlock the innovation we need to build more resilient and sustainable societies. This is why we urgently need strengthened collective action for education.”


Audrey Azoulay
Director-General, UNESCO


Stay in touch

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