

May 2016

## SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee

### Terms of Reference

#### Background

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the UN Summit in September 2015, and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the international community has committed to a new global agenda, aimed at eradicating poverty by 2030 and achieving sustainable development, leaving no one behind. Education is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda reflected both through a stand-alone goal on education (SDG 4), as well as through important reciprocal linkages with other Sustainable Development Goals. SDG 4 on education aims to “*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*”; together with its associated targets it sets an ambitious universal education agenda for 2030.

SDG 4–Education 2030 is the result of three years of intensive consultations, including milestones such as the Muscat Agreement (May 2014) and the Incheon Declaration (May 2015). It is based on a vision of education that transforms the lives of individuals, communities and societies, leaving no one behind, while contributing to all relevant SDGs. The Education 2030 Framework for Action (FFA), adopted by 184 Member States in November 2015, is the vehicle for the implementation of the SDG-Education 2030 agenda. The FFA specifies that UNESCO, as the specialized UN agency for education, will continue its mandated role to lead and coordinate SDG-Education 2030.

In order to ensure strong global coordination, UNESCO is tasked with convening a multi-stakeholder SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee (SDG-Education 2030 SC) as a key structure for coordinating the support to global education efforts within the wider 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development architecture. The SDG-Education 2030 SC is part of the global coordination mechanism which may be periodically reviewed and adapted as necessary through the Global Education Meetings (GEMs).

#### Terms of Reference (TORs) of the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee

The primary objective of the SDG-Education 2030 SC is to support Member States and partners to achieve SDG 4 and the education-related targets in other goals of the overall 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development.<sup>1</sup> In doing so, the unfinished Education for All agenda will continued to be addressed.

To achieve this objective, the SDG-Education 2030 SC will:

- Provide strategic guidance to Member States to support the implementation of SDG 4 and the education related targets in the other SDG goals based on the Education 2030 Framework for Action;
- Provide strategic guidance to the global education community, including national, regional and international partners to support coordinated implementation of SDG 4 based on the Education 2030 Framework for Action; ensure linkage between the SDG-Education 2030 SC, education stakeholders<sup>2</sup> and the broader SDG architecture and process at global, regional and country level including with the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) and the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC);
- Work with other existing global bodies within SDG processes and support mechanisms or ones yet to be established, as appropriate;
- Make recommendations to education stakeholders on key priorities, as well as catalytic actions including on potential flagship initiatives;
- Review progress towards the education goal and targets, drawing on the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report, UN-wide SDG Review Reporting, Regional Inter-Governmental Reports and other appropriate complementary studies and sources and make recommendations on remedial actions as appropriate, while feeding into the global follow-up and review mechanisms for the SDGs;
- Provide recommendations regarding the focus, agenda and outcomes of the periodic Global Education Meetings or High Level Meetings;
- Build strong partnerships<sup>3</sup> among diverse stakeholders and leverage support for the achievement of SDG-Education 2030;
- Promote and undertake joint advocacy activities;
- Monitor, advocate for and mobilize resources including adequate financing, both domestic and external. Noting the principle of leaving no one behind there should be a focus on vulnerable populations and countries most at risk, including countries affected by conflict and crises, those who may be most challenged in meeting the SDGs, as well as those that are furthest from ensuring basic education for all;
- Encourage harmonization and coordination of partner activities.

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1 Education makes a contribution to achieving progress in all of the SDGs. Goals related to poverty eradication, health, gender equality, economic growth and employment, sustainable consumption and production, and climate change make specific reference to education either in the target language or the global indicator: 1.a, 3.7, 5.6, 8.6, 12.8 and 13.3.

<sup>2</sup> These include Member States, UN agencies and multilateral, and bilateral organizations, civil society, the teaching profession, academia, youth, and the private sector and foundations.

<sup>3</sup> In general partnerships will involve the various constituencies represented in the SDG-Education 2030 SC. Specific partnership with particular entities will be determined and aligned to specific targets of the agenda or particular thematic issues.

## Composition of the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee

As specified in the Framework for Action, the SDG-Education 2030 SC consists of 38 members. The membership of the SDG-Education 2030 SC is as follows:

- Member States, forming the majority, with three Member State representatives for each of the six regional groups and one representative of the E-9 countries on a rotational basis;
- UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank, each having permanent seats, and one representative of the other convening agencies (UNDP, UNHCR, UNFPA, UN Women and ILO)<sup>4</sup> on a rotational basis;
- one representative of the GPE;
- two representatives of NGOs on a rotational basis;
- one representative of teacher organizations;
- one representative of the OECD, by virtue of its status as an international cooperation organization and its role in the global aid architecture related to official development assistance (ODA);
- one representative from regional organizations for each of the six regions, to be decided by the region, with an option to rotate representation. For Latin America and the Caribbean, the representative will be from the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture.

All members will be designated by their respective constituencies, represent them and are accountable to them. Countries participate in the SDG-Education 2030 SC on behalf of their region. It is therefore the responsibility of the Member States to ensure appropriate designation and sufficient communication within their regions. By the same token, it will be the responsibility of the representatives of the other constituencies to communicate and consult with their peers as appropriate. Consultations within and across constituencies should be undertaken at global, regional and national levels as appropriate to ensure relevant two-way feedback between the SDG-Education 2030 SC and stakeholders at each level.

Rotation of members of each constituency will take place every two years, ensuring continuity and institutional memory. In addition, a rotating group of affiliated members will be constituted by the SDG-Education 2030 SC with a view to ensuring regional balance. This rotating group of affiliated members may comprise representatives from the private sector, foundations, and youth and student organizations. Affiliated members will participate in meetings, upon invitation by the SDG-Education 2030 SC.

### Criteria for the selection of members

As the focus of the implementation of SDG-Education 2030 is at the country level, it is recommended that all members representing each constituency have strong technical expertise and experience in national or sub-national education policy development at a senior level. It is envisaged that each

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<sup>4</sup> One agency officially represents all five organisations. All agencies will participate in the SDG-ED 2030 SC meetings with regard to their specific areas of expertise and contributions to work of the SDG-Education 2030 SC and achievement of particular targets or thematic areas of the agenda.

constituency will have a balance between policy and political representation and education technical expertise. Furthermore, nomination of members to the SC should be made with a view to ensuring gender balance.

## Working modalities

Working modalities will be as follows:

- The SDG-Education 2030 SC is co-chaired by a Member State representative and UNESCO ADG/ED. Moreover, there will be three Vice Chairs, two from Member States from different regional groups and one from the civil society/teacher organizations constituency;
- The SDG-Education 2030 SC will elect a co-chair from a Member State and three Vice-Chairs at its first meeting, and this for a term of two years;
- A Bureau of the SDG-Education 2030 SC will be formed, composed of the two co-chairs and the three vice chairs, ensuring gender and regional balance. The Bureau:
  - will act as liaison between the SDG-Education 2030 SC (at large) and the Secretariat between meetings and as necessary to address time sensitive issues and requests upon the SC. The Bureau will take decisions only when mandated by the SC;
  - will work with and support the Secretariat to develop the themes and agendas for SDG-Education 2030 SC and global meetings, and on other strategic or operational issues;
  - may represent the Steering Committee in high-level political events related to the global SDG structures and processes (ECOSOC, HLPF...) or other fora and events.
- The SDG-Education SC will meet regularly, at least once a year, face to face. Further virtual meetings via teleconferencing and email consultations will be held as necessary;
- The SDG-Education 2030-SC may form time-limited, ad-hoc thematic expert groups to provide technical inputs to its work, and/or draw upon the work of existing ones. These may be further defined in operational work plans of the SC. In order to ensure linkages between the SDG-Education 2030 SC and global thematic/technical education groups, the SDG-Education 2030 SC may designate thematic focal points to represent the committee;
- SDG-Education 2030-SC members are expected to cover their meeting travel costs, except for representatives of civil society from developing countries and representatives of Least Developed Countries;
- UNESCO will provide funding to cover meeting interpretation costs;
- The working languages of the meetings will be English and French in line with UNESCO rules and regulations. When necessary and feasible, the Secretariat will attempt to provide interpretation in other UN languages as required;
- UNESCO will provide the Secretariat to the SDG-Education 2030 SC, and will ensure that documents are provided timeously to enable SDG-Education 2030 SC members adequate time for consultation;
- Close collaboration and dialogue between the SDG-Education 2030 SC and the Technical Cooperation Group on Indicators (TCG) will be ensured to support review of progress, including through: participation of members of the SDG-Education 2030 SC in the TCG as observers; regular reporting by TCG's Chairs to the SDG-Education 2030 SC on the implementation of the thematic indicator framework; recommendations by the TCG on development of statistical capacities for monitoring for consideration by the SDG-Education 2030 SC. The SDG-Education 2030 SC will

endorse the thematic indicators developed by the TCG, noting that technical discussions already undertaken in the TCG should not be re-opened in the SDG-Education 2030 SC deliberations.<sup>5</sup>

## Alignment between global, regional, and national levels

- Linkages between the SDG-Education 2030 SC and UN SDG Architecture and processes: The SDG-Education 2030 SC will engage with various processes and structures of the UN SDG architecture at global, regional and national levels. This may include interaction at regional level with regional commissions and other fora. At global level, the SDG-Education 2030 SC will respond to requests for inputs from the UN, including from the HLPF;
- Coordination at regional level is key to ensuring alignment of approach between global, regional, and national levels. Both the three Member States, as well as the organization representing each of the regions will have a key role to play in ensuring the articulation between the global and national levels. Regional articulation allows for two-way communication by ensuring: (i) that national priorities and concerns from diverse regions inform the work of the SDG-Education 2030 SC, and (ii) that the guidance provided by the SDG-Education 2030 SC to Member States is further supported at the regional level. One way of doing this is to ensure that the three regional representatives from Member States, as well as the regional organization be part of regional coordination mechanisms;
- Given their intergovernmental nature, regional organizations represented in the SDG-Education 2030 SC provide a legitimate platform for coordination, ensuring engagement of governments with representatives of civil society, co-convenor agencies, as well as other partners, as appropriate;
- UNESCO, co-conveners and other partners who are facilitating regional and national consultation and SDG-related activities will support Member States representatives in the SDG-Education 2030 SC to share information and knowledge about SDG-Education 2030 SC activities and to obtain information on regional and national activities and achievements related to the SDG 4-Education 2030 agenda as needed;
- The SDG-Education 2030 SC can play a role in ensuring coordination between the different (sub)regional efforts by facilitating links among the diverse consultations led by Member States,

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<sup>5</sup> **Global indicators:** The 11 global indicators for SDG 4 were developed by the Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDG) and approved by the 47th Session of UN Statistical Commission. They will be adopted by ECOSOC in June 2016 and the UN General Assembly in September 2016 within the overall global indicator framework for the SDGs. Global indicators are considered mandatory for all countries to report against. They may be reflected upon, but cannot be changed by the Steering Committee or any other instance, group or stakeholder different than the UN official bodies involved in those definitions.

**Thematic indicators:** A broader set of internationally-comparable indicators were developed by the Technical Advisory Group on Education Indicators (TAG) and later will be finalized and implemented by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) working with countries, partners and stakeholders in the Technical Cooperation Group on the Indicators for SDG 4 – Education 2030 (TCG). The thematic indicator set will serve to chart global progress on education and to monitor the SDG 4 education targets more comprehensively across countries, allowing the possibility to identify challenges regarding concepts of the targets that are not reflected well by the global indicators. The thematic indicator framework includes the global indicators as a subset and represents a recommended set of additional indicators that countries may use to monitor based on the national context, policy priorities, technical capacity and data availability.

regional intergovernmental organizations, partners, civil society, academia and other stakeholders;

- SDG-Education 2030 SC members will participate in SDG 4-Education 2030 consultations and related activities at national, regional and global levels as appropriate.

Particular outcomes, linked to SDG-Education 2030 SC activities, may be specified in SDG-Education 2030 SC operational plans.

## **ANNEX**

### **Nomination procedure**

Member States: Three representatives to be nominated by the chair of each regional group after consultation within the regional group. One representative to be nominated by the chair of E-9 after consultation within the group of E-9 countries.

Co-Convenors: Executive Heads of UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank to nominate one representative each. UNDP, UNHCR, UNFPA, UN Women and ILO to nominate one representative each and, after consultation among themselves, one of their organisations to represent them collectively in the SDG-Education 2030 SC meeting. It is to be noted that the representatives of all organizations will be invited as observers to the SDG- Education 2030 SC meeting and should therefore nominate a representative each.

GPE: Chair of GPE to nominate one representative.

NGOs: CCNGO Coordination Group to elect two representatives until next Global CCNGO Meeting.

Teacher organizations: Executive Head of Education International (EI) to nominate one representative.

OECD: Secretary-General to nominate one representative.

Regional organizations: Chair of each regional group to nominate a regional organization after consultation within the regional group. For Latin America and the Caribbean, this will be the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture. Each Executive Head of the organization to nominate one representative.

Nota bene: All nominations need to be accompanied by a biography in the form of a short abstract (no more than 200 words) and should be communicated to the UNESCO Secretariat. Nominations will be confirmed by the UNESCO Secretariat.