

**TO: Heads of Education Systems and Education Development Partners**

**RE: Pacific Regional Technical Consultation Meeting on Regional  
Benchmarks, 1 April 2021**

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### BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The Education 2030 Framework for Action called on countries to establish “*appropriate intermediate benchmarks* (e.g. for 2020 and 2025)” for the SDG indicators, seeing them as “indispensable for addressing the accountability deficit associated with longer-term targets”, a request that remains unrealized. In 2019, the Technical Cooperation Group (TCG) for SDG 4 indicators, whose purpose is to develop the SDG 4 monitoring framework, agreed at its 6th meeting on a set of seven indicators to be benchmarked of data and policy relevance (see Table 1).

*Table 1: Proposed benchmark indicators*

No.	Benchmark Indicators	Level
1	<b>indicator 4.1.1</b> Minimum learning proficiency in reading and mathematics	Global
2	<b>indicator 4.1.2</b> Completion rate	Global
3	<b>indicator 4.1.4</b> Out-of-school rate	Thematic
4	<b>indicator 4.2.2</b> Participation rate one year before primary	Global
5	<b>indicator 4.c.1</b> Percentage of trained teachers	Global
6	<b>Indicator:</b> Education expenditure as share of budget and GDP	Education 2030 benchmarks
7	<b>indicator 4.5.1</b> [Equity indicator]	Global

The extraordinary session Global Education Meeting in October 2020 reminded countries of this commitment. Its Declaration called on “*UNESCO and its partners, together with the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee, to ... accelerate the progress and propose relevant and realistic benchmarks of key SDG 4 indicators for subsequent monitoring*” . Fulfilling this neglected commitment to set benchmarks would help renew emphasis on achieving SDG 4. However, to set a regional benchmark which reflect the region’s reality, there is need of transparent technical process supported by strong regional political process.

The proposed benchmark indicators are well aligned with the PacREF's priorities and strategies and could help it to effectively monitor the progress in the region. Furthermore, due to the lack of agreed benchmarks for key SDG4 monitoring indicators, it is also difficult to measure the progress of the country in the region. The establishing of regional benchmarks will be very relevant to Pacific and can help to:

- ▶ harmonize (sub) regional and global monitoring framework
- ▶ develop data collection strategies
- ▶ monitor (sub) regional SDG 4 progress especially for the Mid-Term Review in 2023
- ▶ set indicator reporting standards and processes

As a technical lead in the monitoring of SDG4, the UIS is proposing interim benchmarks to help support regions including the SPC to develop regional and national benchmarks following various approaches. The regional partners and member states need to look carefully into these benchmark indicators and their values and their relevancy for regional and national level. In this regard, a technical consultation with regional agencies, partners, stakeholders and member states is suggested to agree on the processes and approaches of benchmarks and agree on the benchmark indicators and their levels.

## **OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES:**

The overall objective of the Regional Benchmarking Consultation on SDG 4 is to review the proposed the benchmark indicators and approaches used to set the benchmarks value and collect inputs and comments for finalization. The consultation will also discuss to expand the scope of the benchmark indicators and will discuss additional indicators that could be interest of region.

Expected outcomes of the consultation are:

- Agree on the benchmark indicators for the region with additional indicators relevant for the region.
- Seek expert advice and inputs to finalize the levels of regional and national benchmark for 2025 and 2030
- Develop a follow up plan for the national consultations

## **PARTICIPATION**

We invite two officials from Ministry of Education who are responsible for education data and monitoring, regional experts on education indicators and monitoring, regional partners and stakeholders will also be invited to the regional technical consultation meeting. The deadline for confirming country participation is Wednesday, 30 March 2021.

## DATES AND VENUE

The Pacific Regional Benchmarking Technical Consultation meeting on Regional Benchmarks will be held virtually via MS TEAM on 1 April 2021 from 1pm to 4pm Fiji time.

## MEETING AGENDA

What	How	How long	Who
Welcome and introduction to the meeting.	Remarks	10 minutes	SPC and TWG-SDG2030
Introduction to benchmarking and the regional process <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Why benchmarking?</li><li>▪ Indicators for benchmarking</li><li>▪ Regional process</li></ul>	Presentation	20 minutes	SPC and UIS
Discussion and agreement on the proposed indicators with Identification of additional indicators for benchmarking	Guided Discussion	45 minutes	SPC and TWG-SDG2030
Methodological discussion and Simulations of the benchmarks for the selected indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Pacific benchmarks</li><li>▪ National level benchmarks</li></ul>	Presentation/ demonstration	45 minutes	UIS/SPC
Feedback and discussion	Discussion	30 minutes	TWG-SDG2030
Plan for national consultations	Discussion	10 minutes	SPC
Closing	Remarks	5 minutes	SPC

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Further details about the workshop can be obtained from the following personnel as per their contacts below:

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