From commitment to action:

A guidance note for translating national commitments into action in follow-up to the Transforming Education Summit

December 2022

1. Context

The Transforming Education Summit (TES) in September 2022 concluded with the UN Secretary-

a) Galvanize a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach

The transformation of education engages not only the actors directly responsible for the organization and delivery of education, such as the ministry of education, schools, universities, technical and vocational colleges, and community learning centres. It requires commitment of students, families, communities, industries and various government sectors beyond education. Education also needs to adapt to the evolving social and economic realities and the transition to green, digital and care economies. The follow-up process, therefore, needs to be guided by a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, through systematic inter-sectoral coordination a63(to 563ys)-2(t)-3(ematic in)-38n2(s)-00

4. Paths to transformation

The follow-up to the Summit is a long-term engagement involving many stakeholders with different perspectives. Based on a simplified theory of change, transformation will have greater chances of success if:

> there is a shared vision among the many stakeholders that transformation is needed and possible, and shared ownership;
>
> policies and implementation strategies are in alignment with the conclusions of the TES;
>
> local actors, crucial to implementing these policies, are empowered to play an active part in the national transformation agenda;
>
> an effective governance structure exists, which holds different actors accountable for and committed to playing their part in the follow-up to the TES.

This section describes these four inter-connected paths and indicates strategies and initiatives that governments could undertake.

Each country can identify domains which may demand specific attention. This may include work on strengthening the teaching profession, exploring the opportunities of digital learning, or integrating gender equality in the curriculum. In each domain, the global initiatives that are being launched in the wake of the Summit (see the section on "Support") may provide useful advice. Member States may also refer to the report of the International Commission on the Futures of Education[2] as a foundation for post-TES consultation and action. The report proposes a number of levers of transformation relative to pedagogy, curriculum, the teaching profession, schools, digital learning, greening, role of universities, as well as research and innovation.

Evidently, the success of the follow-up also depends on the available finances. This is not highlighted here as a separate path. It is expected that a global initiative aimed at "Transforming the financing of education by investing more, more equitably, more efficiently, more innovatively" may provide guidance, building on the Call to Action on educational investment launched at the TES.

Creating wider and deeper ownership of the commitment to transformation

At present, the transformation agenda is owned mainly by education policy-makers and their development and humanitarian partners. Ownership may be further expanded in two ways. First, by making ministries and agencies outside of education aware of the global message and the national commitments and how their contribution and collaboration are essential to transforming education. Second, by reaching out to the local and school actors to ensure their support to transformation.

Indicative strategies and initiatives

> Identify key moments and forums at national and global levels, within and beyond the education landscape, where the transformation agenda could be at the centre of the policy and financing discussion as a foundation for sustainable development.
> Strengthen the whole-of-government and inter-ministerial dialogue on the role of education in economic and social transformation, including preparing a national investment case for education, building on the evidence that quality education contributes to economic and social development.

---

[2] International Commission on the Futures of Education. 2021. *Reimagining our futures together: a new social contract for education.* Paris: UNESCO.

Map the wider stakeholder network.

Conduct a post-TES consultation with stakeholders, including ministries/agencies (e.g. ministries of finance, economic development, planning, labour and environment), sub-national entities, youth and civil society organizations, to present the outcomes of the TES, clarify the roles of the stakeholders and build co-ownership.

Review and adapt existing EMIS and monitoring and evaluation frameworks (in particular, the SDG 4 monitoring framework and national plan indicators) to integrate the specific indicators on the follow-up to the TES.

Promote the use of qualitative studies by country-level researchers that provide insights into the performance of different actors and the context within which they work.

Work with youth to identify and adapt data collection instruments that provide youth organizations, students and teachers with venues for feedback on national initiatives.

Discuss and disseminate the monitoring and evaluation findings through social media and working sessions which bring together relevant stakeholders to deepen understanding of outcomes and identify useful follow-up actions.

Balance the request for accountability with the provision of relevant support so that actors have the capacity to improve.

At the global level, Member States could make use of existing mechanisms, such as the Voluntary National Reports (VNR) to the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), periodic review of normative instruments, and the Global Education Meeting (GEM) convened by UNESCO, as milestones/modalities to share their progress/achievements against their commitments to SDG 4 and transforming education.

5. Support

Education transformation is an effort that requires "the collective commitment and action of visionary political leaders at all levels, parents, students, teachers, and the public at large"[3]. While the national government leads this transformation process, the international community will accompany and support it. The following are examples of international support specific to the TES follow-up to accompany Member States where relevant.

UN Resident Coordinators and Country Teams

National consultations were supported and facilitated by the UN Resident Coordinator and the UN Country Team, with UNESCO and UNICEF co-leading the provision of technical support. Countries/governments should approach and engage the UN system in their countries, especially UNESCO and UNICEF, for continued support for coordination, technical support, and mobilization of development and humanitarian partners beyond education.

UNCTs, as well as country education sector partner groups (e.g. Local Education Groups, Education Clusters), can be called to review their programming documents, such as the UN Cooperation Frameworks, GPE Partnership Compacts and Refugee and Emergency Response Plans, and to support the implementation of the transformation agenda. A funding window for the Summit's follow-up will be opened in the Joint SDG Fund to incentivize follow-up support by UNCTs to national governments on TES commitments.

---

[3] Vision Statement of the Secretary-General on Transforming Education: An urgent political imperative for our collective future

Leveraging the TES Global Initiatives

The Summit saw the lanching of five global multi

As the apex body for global SDG 4 coordination and monitoring, the HLSC will lead the global TES follow-up through its broad network of Member States and organizations, representing their respective regions and constituencies[5].

The HLSC promotes and carries out joint actions in its three functional areas – evidence and policy, data and monitoring, and education financing– in fulfilling its mandate to provide strategic guidance, make recommendations on priorities and actions, monitor and advocate for adequate financing, and encourage harmonisation and coordination of partner activities.

---

[5] The SDG4 High-Level Steering Committee is composed of 28 members of which 18 represent the 6 regions of the world, with two countries and one inter-governmental regional organization per region, and representatives of civil society organizations, teacher organizations, youth/students, foundations and the private sector, multilateral organisations/banks/funds, and development cooperation (donors).

Annex 1. Key questions when integrating the national statement of commitment into an existing education sector plan (or an equivalent document)

Does the analysis of the education sector pay attention to the crisis of education? Does it discuss the causes of the crisis? Is the analysis still relevant or does it need to be updated?

Do the policy priorities include the commitments made at the TES? If not, can these commitments easily be integrated within the existing priorities, or would this lead to a significant shift? Is there a risk of contradiction between the plan priorities and the commitments?

Can the plan outcomes and targets be adapted, broadened, or rewritten so that they include the commitments? Are there any outcomes or targets that are no longer relevant or that need to be completely rethought to ensure coherence with the commitments following the TES?

Do the priority programmes in the plan pay sufficient attention to the transformational changes that the TES has highlighted and that are present in the national statement of commitment (e.g. digital learning and transformation; Resilience to future shocks; Addressing educational exclusions; Transforming the teaching profession)? If not, can these changes be integrated into existing programmes? Do new programmes need to be designed?

Does the monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework allow us to assess the achievement of the commitments? If not, can new indicators be identified and added without overloading the

Annex 2. Suggested outline for a roadmap

1. The country's vision of "transformation": a statement of what the education system should look like in 2030

    This may be inspired by the conclusions of the TES, the UN Secretary-General's Vision Statement, the country's National Statement of Commitment, as well as the existing national socio-economic and education plans.

    It may indicate not only what the education system will look like in 2030 but also how it will relate to and contribute to the socio-economic development of the nation.

Annex 3. Key global and regional moments and milestones for education / SDG 4

2022											2024
Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jul	Sep	Nov	Dec	C /Span	