

T a f i g Ed ca i S i 2022

Guidelines for National Consultations

April 2022

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National consultations aim to develop a shared vision of the futures of education and to strengthen political and public commitment, align priority innovative actions across constituencies, and mobilize collective capacity to deliver that vision between now and 2030.

Governments are encouraged to conduct national consultations between April and August 2022. The outcomes of this process should inform the Pre-Summit meeting in Paris in June 2022 and be presented at the Transforming Education Summit in September 2022.

Key components

Governments are encouraged to organize national consultations around the four components proposed below. The framing of each component will be informed by the scale and nature of the COVID-19 educational disruption and response as well as the timelines of national education policy cycles.

A. Ensuring full recovery from COVID-19 educational disruption

Over the past two years, education systems have faced the most severe disruption in recent history which left some 1.6 billion students out of school at its high point, resulted in full school closures on average of over 20 weeks per country and the loss of an estimated 2 trillion hours of instruction. Research from UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank point to the risk of a generational catastrophe if determined efforts are not made now to get all children back into school and to support learners to recover ground lost.

Based on the available evidence of the multifaceted impact of the COVID-19 disruption, consultations are encouraged to take stock of and identify additional targeted actions needed to ensure full learning recovery.

- What has been the impact of the COVID-19 educational disruption on learning loss, student disengagement, dropout, and non-reenrollment?
- What has been the impact of the COVID-19 educational disruption on nutrition and health, the protection of girls, and the well-being of both learners and teachers?
- What steps have been taken to recover pandemic-related losses? What progress has been made to date?
- What additional measures are proposed to support further recovery in the short-term?

Additional guidance on learning recovery approaches is available in [Where are we in the Learning Recovery](#)¹.

¹ Where are we in the Learning Recovery, UNICEF 2022

B. Identifying the main strategic transformations and levers for reimagining education for the 21st century and accelerating progress towards shared education goals

As noted above, even before the pandemic, governments were not on track to achieve SDG 4 by 2030 as they struggled to overcome a global learning crisis. What's more, as the pandemic demonstrated in myriad ways, the world of education is ripe for change and the [Futures of Education report](#) provides a framework to examine how education systems need to change to better serve learners and societies into the future.

Building on lessons and insights gained from educational responses during the pandemic and drawing on the thematic areas of focus of the Summit (see box on Thematic Action Tracks and Futures of Education Report), consultations could identify innovative approaches that can serve as levers for game-changing transformations of education policy and practice in the medium and longer-term.

- Was the country on-track with regard to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" before the pandemic?
- If yes, what are the main obstacles that have made it so difficult to move towards an adequate fulfillment of SDG 4?
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C. Ensuring strengthened and more sustainable public financing of education

- Do national benchmark values reflect the maximum level of ambition possible, given the urgent need to accelerate progress towards SDG 4 commitments and the opportunities for progress that ?
- Can global benchmarks for other SDG 4 targets (e.g., skills development, youth and adult literacy, higher education, enrollment, vocational and tertiary education) be elaborated further at the national level? If so, how?
- How can political accountability for achieving national SDG 4 benchmarks be strengthened?

SDG 4 benchmark indicators

Approach to National Consultations

In convening national consultations, governments are encouraged to adhere to the following three principles:

Adopt a whole-of-government approach

Given the interlinkages between education and broader development efforts, a whole-of-government approach is advisable. National consultations should ensure multi-sectoral representation beyond education, to include health, social protection, food and nutrition, labor, environment, and connectivity. Given the importance of financial resources

for education, the active participation of finance ministries in these national dialogues is also critical.

Incl de m l i le con i encie

National dialogues should seek to ensure meaningful engagement of the full set of education stakeholders beyond government. This includes the voices of students and youth organizations, teachers and teacher associations who are central protagonists in all processes of innovation and transformation. It could also include networks of adolescent girls and young women, feminist movements, civil society groups who often bring unique expertise, advocacy and mobilization capacity. Parliamentarians, the private sector, development partners, education advocates, community and religious leaders, academia, research institutions and university networks can also inform dialogues with data and evidence.

Depending on circumstances, stakeholders may also decide to organize their own parallel dialogues and submit their visions for a reimagined education to both national consultation process and the overall Summit process.

Foc on o h

Transforming education starts with young people as agents of change. Adequate representation of children, youth and students in government-led consultations is essential.

R le a d e p ibility ie

National consultations will involve or draw on the following key actors, depending on the local circumstances.

- **National convenor:** Heads of State and Government are encouraged to appoint a national convenor to oversee the consultation process on their behalf. National Convenors will seek to ensure that consultations are intersectoral and multi-sectoral, inclusive and results-oriented.
- **National Commissions for UNESCO** can also help support government-led national consultations.
- **UN Country Teams** (UNCTs), where they exist, will be mobilized under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator to support this process, with UNICEF and UNESCO playing a key role in national consultations, depending on the local context.
- **Special Adviser of the Secretary-General:** The Special Adviser and the Summit secretariat will work to mobilize global and regional level networks and platforms, including those organized by and for civil society organizations and youth organizations, to support and facilitate national consultations within and beyond their constituencies.

Opportunities and expected follow-up

National consultations are expected to inform the development of National Statements of Commitment to Transform Education.

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