

Unpacking the Literacy Target of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 – Education 2030

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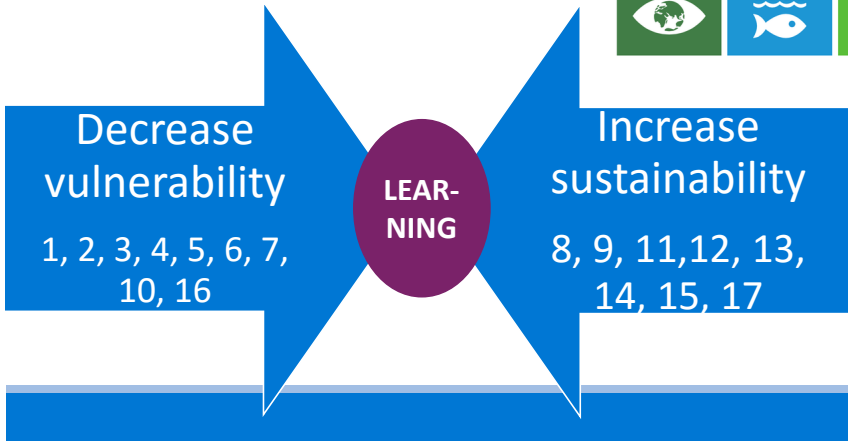
„National Policy – Local Implementation“
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Global commitment 2015-2030:
17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) → 169 targets

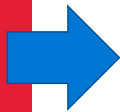


SDGs and transformation (= learning)



SDG 4: QUALITY EDUCATION

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all



10 targets:

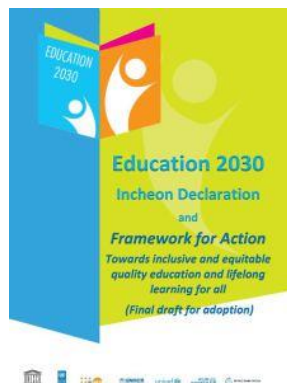
- 7 outcome targets
- 3 means of implementation

Education 2030: Framework for Action (SDG 4)

- 4.1 - all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality **primary** and **secondary education** leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes
- 4.2 - all girls and boys have access to quality **early childhood development**, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education
- 4.3 - equal access for **all women and men** to affordable and quality **technical, vocational** and **tertiary education**, including university
- 4.4 - substantially increase the number of **youth and adults** who have relevant **skills**, including technical and vocational skills, **for employment**, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
- 4.5 - eliminate **gender** disparities in education and ensure equal access to **all levels** of education and vocational training for the **vulnerable**, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations
- 4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy**
- 4.7 - **all learners** acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global **citizenship** and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to **sustainable development**

Interpretation of the target 4.6 -

“By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy”
- based on the Education 2030 Framework for Action



- Principles, strategies and actions of target 4.6 are underpinned by the contemporary understanding of literacy as a **continuum of proficiency levels** in a given **context**.
- It goes beyond the understanding of a simple dichotomy of ‘literate’ versus ‘illiterate’.
- Action for target 4.6 aims at ensuring that by 2030, **all** young people and adults across the world achieve relevant and recognised **proficiency levels** in functional **literacy** and **numeracy skills** that are **equivalent** to levels achieved at successful completion of **basic education**.

Excursus: What is „basic education“?

Basic Education:

- covers notions such as fundamental, elementary and primary/secondary education
- is free and compulsory without any discrimination or exclusion
- consists of at least 9 years and progressively extends to 12 years
- is provided in the mother tongue, at least in its initial stages, while respecting the needs of multilingualism
- prepares the learner for further education, for an active life and citizenship
- meets basic learning needs including learning to learn, the acquisition of numeracy, literacies, and scientific and technological knowledge as applied to daily life
- is directed to the full development of the human personality
- develops the capability for comprehension and critical thinking, and it inculcates the respect for human rights and values, notably human dignity, solidarity, tolerance, democratic citizenship and a sense of justice and equity (*)

(*) Operational Definition UNESCO, 2007

Excursus: What is „basic education“? (cont.)

Equivalent basic education is offered for **youth** and **adults** who did not have the opportunity or possibility to receive and complete basic education at the appropriate age (*).



(*) Operational Definition UNESCO, 2007

Comparison EFA and Education 2030 FFA (LITERACY)

Education for All (EFA 2000-2015)

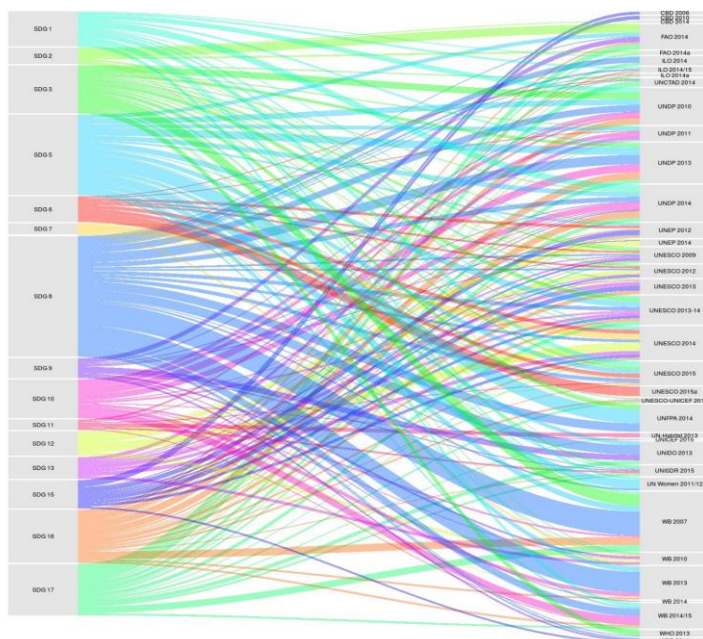
- EFA (Basic Education for All) **not part** of MDGs (Goal 2: Universal Primary Education)
- MDGs and EFA: mainly for the Global South
- **EFA Goal 4:**
 - Improve **levels** of literacy (50 per cent) for **all** adults
 - Especially for **women**
 - Equitable **access to basic and continuing education** for all adults
 - Perceived to focus only on the **South**

Education 2030 - Framework for Action (FFA 2016-2030)

- FFA **part** of SDGs (Goal 4: Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and LLL Opportunities for all)
- SDGs (incl. SDG 4 ED 2030 – FFA): Global
- **SDG Target 4.6:**
 - Achieve literacy and **numeracy**
 - For **all** youth and a **substantial proportion** of adults (both men **and** women)
 - At a **proficiency level** equivalent to formal **basic education**
 - **Global** (universal)

Key Features of SDG 4 – Education 2030

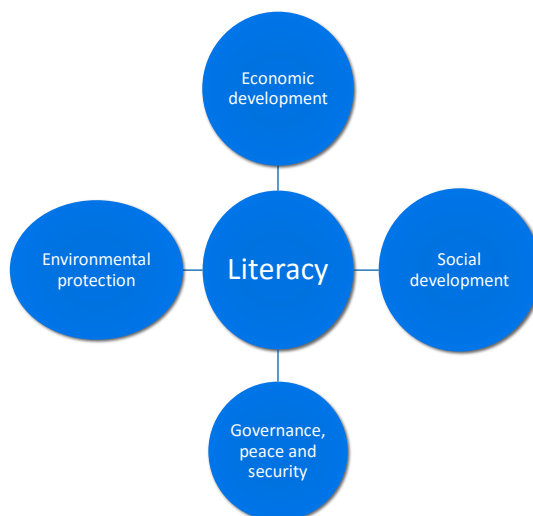
- A universal agenda (comprehensive – ambitious)
- Ensuring lifelong learning opportunities for all
 - Basic education for all
 - Equal opportunity to post-basic education
- Renewed focus on equity and inclusion
- Renewed focus on effective learning
- New focus on relevance of learning



Link between
SDGs and SDG 4

Source: Elaboration Katia
Vladimirova.
Graph Credit: Michael
Dayan.

Literacy: a driver for sustainable development



Implementation of SDG4 at the national level

- Builds a common understanding and high-level political commitment
- Maps existing national policies and gaps
- Plans for country level priorities and actions
- Ensures appropriate coordination mechanisms
- Monitors and reports on progress

Indicators: What should be measured?

Suggested key concepts to measure in target 4.6:

- **Functional literacy** and **numeracy** (proficiency levels)
- **Access** to and **participation** in literacy and numeracy programmes

Implementation of Education 2030 at the country level: Example Germany

Call to „overcoming inequality in education“ through (among others):

„With the aid of low-threshold access learning opportunities and integrated approachers and of effective counselling services, to **lift the literacy and numeracy skills levels** of at least **five million** of the 7.5 million functional illiterate **adults** up to a **proficiency level equivalent** to the levels achieved at successful completion of **basic education in Germany.**“

<http://goo.gl/pnHiZp>

Resolution of the 75th **General Assembly** of the **German Commission for UNESCO**, 18.09.2015

The way forward

Risks:

- Business as usual
- Level of ambition makes sceptical
- Budgetary constraints push again towards limited focus („prioritization“)
- Imposition of assessment-oriented approaches („outcome-oriented“)
- Literacy & numeracy disappears under „skills for work“
- „Uniformization“

Opportunities:

- Youth and adults as well as vulnerable groups more in focus
- Work across sectors (strategic partnerships and synergies, life-wide approach)
- Dealing with literacy along a person's lifespan, intergenerational approaches
- Emphasis on literate & conducive environments

For discussion:

- Have there been taken any national actions in your country to implement SDG4 – Education 2030?
- How will/should the youth and adult literacy target (4.6) be addressed in your country?
- Which challenges and opportunities do you see with regard to the implementation of the literacy target?

THANK YOU!

