

**Inter-Agency Group on Education Inequality Indicators (IAG-EII):
Meeting summary**

World Bank, Washington, DC

9 June 2016

1. PARTICIPANTS

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2. MEETING OBJECTIVES

Members of the Inter-Agency Group on Education Inequality Indicators (IAG-EII) convened at the World Bank in Washington, DC for their second meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to review definitions for key education indicators, discuss options for future work, learn about activities by partner agencies, review the Terms of Reference for the IAG, and agree on the next steps.

3. MEETING SUMMARY

Silvia Montoya and Luis Benveniste opened the meeting and summarized the objectives for the day. Ariel Fiszbein presented a summary of the first IAG meeting on 5 April and then acted as moderator for the meeting.

Review of key indicators

The next part of the meeting was dedicated to a review of indicator definitions prepared by technical focal points from the GEMR, OECD, UIS, UNICEF, and the World Bank. The session was moderated by Hiroyuki Hattori. Friedrich Huebler presented three indicators for monitoring of SDG 4.1:

- Completion rate (primary, lower secondary, upper secondary)
- Out-of-school rate (primary, lower secondary, upper secondary)
- Percentage of children over-age for grade (primary, lower secondary)

For each indicator, Huebler presented a definition, the purpose of the indicator, the calculation method, a formula, the data required, possible data sources, dimensions for disaggregation, notes on interpretation, and limitations and other comments. The participants proposed modifications to the indicator definitions that will be incorporated into the next draft.

For the completion rate, much of the discussion focused on the age range proposed for its calculation, i.e. the age group 3 to 5 years above the intended age for the last grade of a level of education, and the possible effect on indicator values. This effect will be explained in more detail in the revised definition of the indicator. It was also suggested to say more about the terminology, for example the use of "completion" vs. "attainment". The document should also mention that this "completion rate" is different from the "primary completion rate" disseminated by the World Bank (the latter is called "gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary education" by the UIS).

During the discussion of the out-of-school rate the question of treating children in pre-primary education as out of school, as in the current definition, was raised. The consensus was to leave the definition unchanged but to revisit this issue in the future. For now, some statistics on the prevalence of pre-primary attendance among primary-age children will be added to the document. Another issue was the current definition of "attendance" used in DHS and MICS surveys, which refer to attendance at any time of the school year. For simplicity and ease of data collection, this definition was retained but the explanation in the document will be expanded.

For the percentage of children over-age for grade, the group deviated from the proposed definition, which considered all students two years or more above the intended age for their grade as over-age. Some participants felt that this was possibly too strict and moreover not consistent with the definition of the completion rate. As a result, the group recommended modifying the definition by counting only those three years or more above the intended age for their grade as over-age. However, after the meeting some of the proponents of this revised definition expressed doubts about changing the age standard, in particular because the percentage over-age is a very different indicator than the completion rate. It was also confirmed after the meeting that the WIDE database by the GEMR uses the "two years or more" definition, not "three years or more" as stated during the meeting. The focal points working on the definitions will review this issue as they prepare the next draft of the definitions. Another suggestion of the group was to calculate this indicator not only for primary and lower secondary education, as currently proposed, but also for upper secondary education.

Other results of the discussion were:

- The rationale for selecting a specific age group or range of years for each indicator must be made clear in the documentation.

- Some remarks on data availability and reliability with regard to disaggregation by disability will be added, for example that sample sizes are small because of low prevalence.
- The section on age adjustment will be expanded. Age adjustment is especially important for indicators calculated for small age groups.
- The document will explain how changes in the duration of individual levels of education can affect indicator values and how this should be taken into account during indicator calculation.
- An annex with links and other resources, for example links to survey data providers or databases with education indicators, may be added to the document

Future activities and roadmap

In the next session, Patrick Montjourides presented options for future work by the IAG. The session was moderated by Husein Abdul-Hamid. Montjourides described work streams linked to education (e.g. additional indicator definitions), other issues (e.g. quality control with survey data), communication (e.g. the establishment of an IAG website), and possible outputs (e.g. methodological notes, recommendations for data collection, guidelines for analysis of survey data, and an annual publication on education inequalities).

The discussion that followed touched upon several issues, in particular on the extent to which the IAG would engage in data production. There was no consensus on this, with arguments presented for and against a group that would also produce regular outputs, such as an annual report on education inequality or that would fund research on this topic. Some participants leaned towards seeing the IAG as a methodological advisory group that focuses on coordination and harmonization. On the other hand, regular outputs, including well-defined research studies, were presented as a means to raise the visibility of the IAG and to keep it active.

One point that was stressed was that the work of the IAG must feed into the work of the Technical Coordination Group on the Indicators for SDG 4 – Education 2030 (TCG SDG4-ED2030) in order to eventually influence countries, for example through the indicator definitions or research carried out by members of the IAG.

Work of partners

The next session, moderated by Manos Antoninis, was on work by partners of the IAG. Michael Ward talked about PIAAC and PISA for Development. PIAAC is currently in the third round of its first cycle, and a second cycle is planned to start in 2018. PISA for Development assesses both 15-year-olds in school, as well as (in some countries) 14- to 16-year-olds out of school. Analysis of PISA data is planned for 2018 and reporting for 2019.

João Pedro Azevedo talked about the Global Micro Database (GMD), an effort by the World Bank that combines data from about 900 surveys on welfare, utilities, demographics and education. Azevedo described the challenge of harmonizing surveys in view of differing national definition and presented some of the tools used at the World Bank to examine the data. He also explained that the datasets could not be redistributed due to limitations imposed by countries. At present, some education indicators cannot be calculated from GMD data because information on grades and years of education is missing, although this is available in about three quarters of all surveys and could be added to the database. After the presentation, representatives of the UIS and the World Bank agreed to collaborate on the production

of education indicators from GMD, starting with a possible visit of UIS staff to the World Bank to review the database.

TOR and governance

In the afternoon, Ariel Fiszbein moderated a session on the TOR of the IAG. Friedrich Huebler presented a new version of the TOR, inspired by the original concept note for the IAG, a mission statement developed after the first IAG meeting, and the TOR of the Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (IGME).

The responsibilities of the IAG were the main topic of discussion, in particular whether the IAG would be limited to coordination or whether it would also engage in data production. For clarity, it was proposed to rearrange the IAG's activities in two groups: (1) coordination and advocacy, (2) research and other executive functions. As during the earlier session on future activities, the consensus was that the group itself would not produce data but that data production would be carried out independently by the organizations represented in the IAG, following the guidance of the group. The creation of a database to monitor SDG 4 targets would be the responsibility of the UIS, using data from different providers and relying on the expertise and recommendations of the IAG.

The structure and working procedures of the group were also discussed. In the draft reviewed at the meeting, the members of the IAG were not listed individually; they should be mentioned, with some criteria for membership as guidance in case other agencies wish to join the IAG in the future. It was also suggested to make clear that the IAG was not a group that countries could join.

The proposed TOR suggested that there would not be a permanent separate Expert Group, but that such groups would be convened as needed. Absent from the draft was a point about linkages between the IAG and the TCG and the SDG 4 – Education 2030 Steering Committee; this has to be added.

The issue of funding – of core activities and special projects – was not resolved, and the frequency of future meetings of the group is also unclear.

Lastly, there were some questions about the current name of the IAG and whether it captured its purpose and responsibilities. As one alternative, "IAG on Education Indicators" was mentioned but this topic was not pursued further at the meeting.

Next steps

The final session of the day, moderated by Ariel Fiszbein, was on the next steps for the IAG. It was proposed to revise the indicator definitions and TOR within the following two weeks and to share them with the other group members for their review.

Outreach to the TCG SDG4-ED2030 (next meeting in October 2016) would be assured through the IAG members that are also members of the TCG (Husein Abdul-Hamid, Manos Antoninis, Hiroyuki Hattori, Silvia Montoya, Michael Ward).

The group also identified possible candidates for the next round of indicator definitions: the pre-primary GER, the percentage of primary-age children in pre-primary education, and the gross intake ratio to the last grade. The next meeting of the IAG would be after the October meeting of the TCG.

4. FOLLOW-UP

- Focal points from the GEMR, OECD, UIS, UNICEF and the World Bank will collaborate on the next revision of the indicator definitions, which will then be presented to the IAG. It was suggested to give the IAG members two days to comment, with silence interpreted as approval.
- The UIS will draft a revised version of the TOR and share them with the other IAG members. The responsibilities of the IAG, in particular, need further clarification.
- The UIS will contact the World Bank to explore options for adding additional variables to the Global Micro Database that could be used to calculate some of the disaggregated indicators needed for monitoring of SDG 4.

Inter-Agency Group on Education Inequality Indicators (IAG-EII)

Meeting agenda

9 June 2016

World Bank, Washington, DC
Room MC 3-850

9:00-9:15 Opening of the meeting

Silvia Montoya and Luis Benveniste

9:15-9:30 Summary of last meeting and agreed action points

Ariel Fiszbein

9:30-10:45 Review of key indicators

Moderator: Hiroyuki Hattori

Presenter: Friedrich Huebler

10:45-11:00 Break

11:00-11:30 Work of partners

Moderator: Manos Antoninis

Presenters: TBC

11:30-12:30 Future activities and roadmap

Moderator: Husein Abdul-Hamid

Presenter: Patrick Montjourides

12:30-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:00 TOR and governance

Moderator: Ariel Fiszbein

Presenter: Friedrich Huebler

15:00-15:15 Break

15:15-16:00 Next steps

Ariel Fiszbein