

**Transforming Education Summit, September 2022**  
**convened by the UN Secretary-General**

**Note on Preparatory Arrangements**

**I. Background**

1. Recognizing that education is a foundation for peace, tolerance, human rights and sustainable development and responding to the focus on leaving no one behind in the Political Declaration on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations, the Secretary-General announced in his report on Our Common Agenda his intention to convene a Transforming Education Summit (TES) in 2022.
2. **The Summit is being convened in the context of two dramatic and deeply interconnected challenges to ensuring quality education and lifelong learning for all.** First, our world is experiencing a global learning crisis that is depriving hundreds of millions of children and young people of their right to quality education, leaving many of the education-related targets of the SDGs well off track. The continuing COVID-19 pandemic and the lack of effective measures for learning recovery risks turning this crisis into a generational catastrophe, especially for marginalized and vulnerable groups. Second, the learning crisis is part of a broader challenge relating to the ability of conventional education systems to deliver the knowledge, skills and outlooks needed for children, young people and adults to excel in today's world and contribute to sustainable, healthy and peaceful futures. In the context of a global climate crisis, rapid technological change, profound changes in the world of work, lower levels of trust in public institutions, the erosion of democratic values and the rise of disinformation, intolerance and hate speech, UNESCO's landmark report on the futures of education noted that 'far too often, formal learning does not meet the needs and aspirations of children and youth and their communities'.<sup>1</sup>
3. **In recent years and particularly in response to the COVID-19 crisis, numerous efforts have emerged to tackle these challenges with renewed vigor and focus.** At an international level, UNESCO convened two Global Education Meetings to galvanize global action on education, with Member States agreeing to a set of immediate priorities for action, the *Paris Declaration: A Global Call for Investing in the Futures of Education* and a new SDG4-Education 2030 High Level Steering Committee on Education, with a clear and relevant functional focus, namely, priority setting, progress monitoring and effective financing. In tandem, the global education community has come together on a number of fronts. This includes the establishment by UNESCO of a Global Coalition for Education; a unique collaboration between UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank to monitor the impacts of the crisis on learning; the 'Save our Futures' global campaign to protect education during the crisis; a major drive to ensure access to remote and digital learning and skills; and a significant replenishment of the Global Partnership for Education Fund. Together, these efforts have helped to protect education, to expand the horizons regarding the value and future of education and to bring greater coherence and collaboration to global education cooperation.
4. **Yet, with a further deterioration of the education crisis a very real possibility in the coming year;** the education financing gap for SDG 4;<sup>2</sup> and the 2030 deadlines fast approaching, there is an urgent need to take the local, national and global response and approach to education to the next level.

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO: *Reimagining our futures together: a new social contract for education*  
<https://en.unesco.org/futuresofeducation/>

<sup>2</sup> Global Education Monitoring Team, *Act now: reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the cost of achieving SDG 4*, September 2020, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374163>

## II. Objective

5. **As the world emerges from the COVID-19 crisis, the Transforming Education Summit provides an opportunity to mobilize greater political ambition, commitment, and action to reverse the slide on SDG 4, reimagine education, and accelerate progress on education and the 2030 Agenda more broadly for the remainder of the Decade of Action.**

## III. Summit timing and milestones

6. It is proposed that the **Summit take place in New York in September 2022** during high level week with a view to elevating education to the top of the global political agenda and to maximizing public awareness and engagement.
7. A **Pre-Summit will be organized in Paris in June/July 2022** to harness the evolving discussions and generate greater momentum in the lead up to September. The Summit will also draw on the findings emerging from the review of implementation of SDG4 at the 2022 ECOSOC HLPF.

## IV. Summit principles and approach

8. Preparations for the 2022 Summit will be guided by three overarching principles:
  - **Country-led:** The Summit will be guided by the 2030 Agenda, the 2015 Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 and recent outcomes of the UNESCO Global Education Meeting, including the Paris Declaration. A significant emphasis will be placed on engagement at the national level and member states will be actively engaged throughout the process.
  - **Inclusive:** The Summit will embody the inclusive, networked and effective multilateralism envisioned by the Political Declaration marking the 75th anniversary of the United Nations and the Secretary-General's report on Our Common Agenda. The TES will therefore bring together the full range of stakeholders that are relevant to the advancement of the 2030 Agenda's commitments on education, including youth and children, teachers, academia, international organizations, civil society and the private sector.
  - **Youth-inspired:** The Summit will be prepared by, with and for youth. Steps will be taken to ensure that youth help to shape the Summit and participate in all Summit work streams.
  - **Building on existing efforts:** The Summit will seek to reinforce and strengthen global cooperation around education at all levels including by ensuring effective integration of the Summit's outcomes into existing SDG4 arrangements. It will be prepared with the full engagement of UNESCO and other relevant UN entities and seek to further strengthen existing efforts and initiatives, including those that emerged in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Summit will, for instance, ensure strong synergies with the work of the newly established SDG4-Education High-Level Steering Committee, helping to ignite its work for the future.
9. Within these parameters, the TES will employ three primary workstreams for advancing preparations.
  - **National consultations:** To translate political commitments into action, Member States could be encouraged to embark on inclusive national consultations in the lead up to the Summit aimed at developing a shared vision and commitment to transform education between now and 2030. Such dialogues could help identify ambitious yet feasible national benchmarks for advancing SDG4 by 2025 and 2030, commitments on domestic financing for education and a commitment to integrate new thinking, approaches and learning methods into education plans and policies, drawing on the

findings of *Reimagining Our Futures Together* report from the International Commission on the Futures of Education and other inputs.

- **Action Tracks** will focus on thematic areas that require greater action in order to transform education. The tracks will offer all Summit partners a space to share evidence-based solutions for accelerating SDG4 and reimagining education. They will also help mobilize international cooperation to support national education efforts, bolstering support for existing initiatives or fostering new actions and partnerships. Priority areas could address issues from across the education cycle as well as those critical levers for change and will be identified over the coming period.
- **Public engagement:** Given the speed and scale of change needed to achieve SDG4 and reimagine education, deep and sustained public engagement and support will be essential. Building off a range of existing efforts and in tandem with the above-mentioned national consultations, the TES could build strong public engagement at the national and international levels, including by placing youth and children to the fore of preparations, engaging all national stakeholders, and advancing public engagement campaigns.

## V. Summit outcomes

10. The Transforming Education Summit will be designed to strengthen and accelerate implementation of existing multilateral agreements – particularly the 2030 Agenda. As such, the Summit is not intended to establish new intergovernmental frameworks or inter-governmentally agreed outcomes. Instead, leveraging the Secretary-General's unique convening power and the reach and strengths of the UN development system, it would focus on achieving the following outcomes:

- **National and international commitments to transform education**
- **Greater public engagement around and support for transforming education**
- **A Chair's Summary to capture the knowledge generated by the Summit and its preparatory process, informing Summit follow-up including the work of the SDG4-Education 2030 High Level Steering Committee and the proposed intergovernmental Summit of the Future in 2023.**

## VI. Summit support arrangements

11. In addition to regular briefings to member states in New York and Paris, the following arrangements will be put in place to support inclusive preparatory process, building as much as possible on existing mechanisms:

- The **Deputy Secretary-General** will oversee Summit preparations, on behalf of the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General will also appoint a **Special Adviser for the Transforming Education Summit** to help place the Summit high on political agendas and engage with key partners, paving the way for concrete commitments at the Summit.
- A **Summit Advisory Committee** will provide guidance on the substantive focus and preparations of the Summit.
  - It will be co-chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General and the Co-Chair of the newly-created SDG4 High Level Steering Committee (HLSC) at the Ministerial level. A process of nomination within the HLSC is currently being finalized.
  - 10 additional seats will be allocated to member states:

- Regional groups in New York will be invited to nominate one representative per group at the Permanent Representative level to participate in the group. (5)
- Regional groups in Paris have already nominated 12 Member States to participate in the above-mentioned SDG4 High Level Steering Committee.<sup>3</sup> This group is being invited to nominate 5 representatives to join the Summit Advisory Committee, in addition to the Co-Chair. (5)
- Representatives of core international agencies, education champions and education stakeholders, including youth, teachers, higher education and the private sector will also be invited to participate.
- An **Inter-Agency Secretariat** will take forward the decisions of the Summit Advisory Committee and support the day-to-day preparations of the Summit, including the work of the Special Adviser. The secretariat will be led by UNESCO Assistant Director-General Giannini on behalf of the Director General, will be hosted by UNESCO-Paris and will include secondments from a number of key UN entities.
- A **UN Task Team** will provide a platform for all relevant UN entities to engage in preparations and to ensure the UN development system is mobilized to support all Summit preparations

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<sup>3</sup> The twelve-Member State members of the High-level Steering Committee nominated through regional groups in Paris are: Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone; Jordan and Morocco; Bangladesh, China; Latvia, Slovenia; Argentina, Columbia; France, Portugal.



## SUMMIT OVERVIEW



- SDG 4 off track – learning crisis to generational catastrophe

### Context

- Conventional systems struggling to provide quality and relevant education

- Urgent need to elevate education and take greater action to deliver SDG 4



**Objective**  
Mobilize greater political ambition, commitment and action to reverse the slide on SDG 4, reimagine education, and accelerate progress on education for the remainder of the Decade of Action



Inclusive



Youth-inspired

### Principles



Country-led



Building on existing efforts



Thematic Action Tracks



### Approach

National consultations



Public engagement

**Thematic Action Tracks**  
(to be determined)



Increased public awareness and demand



### Expected Outcomes

Education Commitments



SG summary and follow-up



Secretary-General-led



Special Advisor



### Preparations

TES Advisory Committee



UN Task Team



Summit Secretariat