

Call for Consultancy

UNESCO Bangkok Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education

Terms of Reference

Organizational Unit: UNESCO Bangkok Office, Section for Inclusive Quality Education

Duration of Contract: 17 February – 30 May 2020 (tentative)

Application Deadline: 10 February 2020

Assignment: To conduct an analytical 5-year progress review (5PR) of the SDG4 (Education 2030) in Asia Pacific and draft a Regional Progress Report as a key input to the second Asia Pacific Regional Education Ministers Conference (APREMC-II).

1. Background and Rationale

The adoption of the Incheon Declaration at the World Education Forum in May 2015 and the Education 2030 Framework for Action in November 2015 signalled the crucial need for governments, national as well as international community and other key stakeholders and partners to work together toward “ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030.

In the Asia-Pacific region, a Regional Thematic Working Group (RTWG)-Education 2030+ was established to lead the coordination and implementation of SDG4. The [Regional Roadmap](#) was prepared to facilitate regional coordination, cooperation and partnership among stakeholders and to serve as strategic guide for Member States in implementing and monitoring SDG4. The Roadmap maps out SDG4 implementation into five phases: 1) Phase 1: Foundation Building (2015-2016); 2) Phase 2: Clarification of Targets, Towards implementation and 1st regional progress review (2017-2019); 3) Phase 3: Implementation and regional midterm review (2020-2023); 4) Phase 4: Acceleration, reviewing of success and remaining challenges (2024-2027) and; 5) Phase 5: Into the Future (2028-2030). The roadmap’s key strategies centered on three main areas of support: 1) advocacy/information and knowledge exchange; 2) capacity development; and 3) monitoring.

One of the key regional milestones articulated in the Roadmap is the 1st regional SDG4 progress review. With more than 4 years having already passed since the adoption of the agenda, it is high time to review the region’s 5-year progress (2015-2020) on SDG4. While the exercise will focus on the overall progress at the regional and sub-regional level, countries are highly encouraged to participate in, and contribute to the review exercise in terms of sharing cases of good practices/ (scalable) innovations and lessons learned. Since many countries still view SDG4 as an extension of EFA/MDG, and have not fully embraced the holistic vision of equitable quality lifelong learning under SDG4, this review process also intends to further raise the awareness and reinvigorate the commitments of countries and partners (all stakeholders) to internalize the full vision of Education 2030 or consider how they can now plan to take a broader approach as per SDG 4.

In addition, the 5PR can help countries to get ready and geared up for the mid-term review of the SDG4 (scheduled towards 2023) and also for any Voluntary National Review (VNR)¹ that they plan

¹VNRs are part of the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Such reviews are carried out by the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) under the auspices of ECOSOC. Member States are encouraged to “conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels which are country-led and country-driven” (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>).

to undertake in subsequent years. The 5PR will offer a regional benchmark against which countries can also measure themselves at the mid-term review point. This exercise is seen as an opportunity to systematically collect and analyse information to understand what truly works or not and/or makes a difference on the ground by focusing more on the qualitative aspects (stories)/cases of progress such as through policy alignment, reforms, or innovations. At the end of this whole process, we intend to present an updated regional baseline for countries to refer to for their mid-term progress in 2023 and to introduce a mechanism to collect case studies. These case studies can also be databased in the [SDG4 regional knowledge portal](#) as a major reference resource for countries and partners.

To kick off the SDG4 5PR process, a series of consultations were held during 2019 with SDG4 National Coordinators, relevant stakeholders and experts from national, regional and international institutions/bodies, and RTWG-Education 2030+ members based on the inputs and feedback from these consultations, the following areas of focus are proposed as key contents of the 5PR report:

Sections of the Report	Key Contents/Focus
1. Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the progress review, rationale and methodologies used
2. Overview of Progress/ Executive Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • highlights on key progress made in the Asia-Pacific region and for each on the 5 sub-regions (Southeast Asia, East Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, and Pacific)
3. Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief description of the Asia-Pacific regional development context that is rapidly changing/evolving (i.e. political, economic, social, demographic, climatic, cultural, etc.) which has implications (direct or significant influence/impact) on the education development in the region.
4. Equity and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description/justification of why equity and inclusion is the focus of the review with clarification of this key concept. What is the historical background and current situation as well as discourse in the region? What are the major barriers to equity and inclusion? What are costs/risks of inaction?
5. Target Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative and qualitative (various data)
6. Thematic Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive analysis of the policies and interventions/strategies in place to address barriers to equity and inclusion (<i>identified in Section 4 above</i>) with specific focus on vulnerable/marginalized groups (e.g. people with disabilities, ethno-linguistic minorities, the poorest, refugee/migrant/undocumented/stateless) and cross-cutting themes (e.g. data and monitoring, finance, governance and accountability); which policies and strategies are working and need to be continued/scaled; which are not yet working but need to be adjusted or strengthened.
7. Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative, emerging (good) practices/solutions; examples of innovations being taken to scale
8. Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of sharp and focused recommendations (maximum of 10) drawn from the findings and lessons learnt to replicate/scale up good policy practices,

Sections of the Report	Key Contents/Focus
	advocate for a shift in policy thinking and reinforce commitments to accelerate progress towards achieving SDG4.

2. Objectives of the 5-year Progress Review

- To assess the overall progress of the Asia-Pacific region since 2015 and to draw lessons for and insights into the implementation of SDG4
- To prepare a regional report and present its key findings as main discussion input at the 2nd Asia Pacific Education Ministers’ Meeting on SDG4 in August 2020

3. Assignment and Work Objectives

- Responsible for conducting a comprehensive desk review and analysis of available literature and resources relating to the implementation of SDG4 (Education 2030) in the Asia-Pacific region. The consultant will review existing/emerging policies and interventions on SDG4 implementation.
- Expected to bring in a strong inclusion, equity and gender equality lens to the entire review and analysis, while also identifying and highlighting specific equity and inclusion issues that may potentially hinder the attainment of SDG4 in the coming years. The consultant shall also look at the interlinkage (to the extent possible) of SDG4 with other SDGs going beyond education.

Specifically, to perform the following tasks:

- 1) Serve as the main drafter of the following sections of the Report as referenced above:
 - a. Section 1: Introduction
 - b. Section 2: Overview of the progress/Executive Summary
 - c. Section 3: Context
 - d. Section 4: Equity and Inclusion
 - e. Section 6: Thematic Analysis
 - f. Section 8: Recommendations
- 2) Conduct a comprehensive analytical review of the Asia-Pacific region’s progress on SDG4 implementation mainly consisting of :
 - a) Identification, review and analyses of explicit and underlying equity and inclusion issues that are hindering or may potentially hinder the attainment of SDG4 (all sections);
 - b) Analysis of existing policies and interventions, especially those innovative policies, systems or thinking that have brought positive changes in education delivery and outcomes (Section 6);
 - c) A description of the methods used in reviewing and analyzing literature (including electronic databases, academic journals, “grey literature”, online searches and key informants) and provide the full reference of the literature reviewed (Section 1).

- 3) In analyzing the overall progress and drafting the above sections of the 5PR report, consult with the Secretariat (UNESCO Bangkok, UNICEF Regional Offices in Bangkok and Kathmandu) which collects/compiles the case studies for the Section 7 as well as another consultant who works on the Section 5 (quantitative analysis of the 10 targets of the SDG4).
- 4) Develop a set of recommendations to be presented under Section 8, drawn from the findings and lessons learnt to replicate/scale up good policy practices, advocate for a shift in policy thinking and reinforce commitments to accelerate progress towards achieving SDG4;

In line with UNESCO's overall gender mainstreaming strategy, the consultant is expected to integrate a gender perspective in all activities and apply gender mainstreaming concepts whenever feasible.

4. Deliverables and Timeframe

All deliverables shall be submitted to UNESCO Bangkok in English. Feedback from UNESCO, UNICEF and SDG4 peer-review group will be provided to the consultant according to the timeline below. Overall supervision and technical guidance will be provided by IQE UNESCO Bangkok staff, through regular communication by distance (via email, Skype, phone). To the extent possible, the consultant shall reflect comments and suggested modifications.

The assignment should be carried out during the period from 15 February to 30 May 2020. The consultant is expected to submit the following deliverables to UNESCO Bangkok.

- 1) Elaborated outline of Sections 1,2,3,4,6 and 8 of the report and methodologies that will be used by 25 February 2020
- 2) First draft of the report by 30 March 2020
- 3) Second draft of the report based on comments of the review group, by 30 April 2020
- 4) Final draft of the report based on comments of the review group, by 30 May 2020

Specification: An indicative size for the total six sections of the report (i.e. Sections 1,2,3, 4, 6 and 8) would be between 20,000-25,000 words, equivalent to approximately 50 pages in single-space with Times New Roman font size 11, excluding annexes and references.

5. Qualifications, experience and competencies:

- Possess 10 years of professional experience in education and research, including experience working with the UN and at the international level;
- Proven track record in leading and/or conducting progress reviews and producing high-quality written analytical reports;
- Strong analytical skills and excellent English proficiency (written and oral)
- Advanced university degree in education, social sciences, monitoring and evaluation, or related fields;
- Strong understanding of SDG4 agenda and its targets including the ongoing discussions about the agenda at global, regional and national levels; and
- Experience working in the Asia-Pacific region is required

6. How to apply:

Interested individuals are invited to submit to UNESCO Bangkok office the specific requirements as below:

- An expression of interest to undertake the assignment in writing;
- An up-to-date CV stating details of educational qualifications, work experience, including prior experience of similar work)
- A list of past similar work or report/publication written with hyperlinks to access such paper if they are available online or samples of such papers if they are only available offline.
- A proposal (not more than 3 pages) discussing the approach/methodology that will be adopted in carrying out the tasks in the TOR with detailed work plan.
- A financial proposal (may include travel costs, which must be shown separately)

Travel clause:

The individual consultant may be required to travel during the assignment. The consultant should travel economy class and receive DSA at the standard rate (and which should be reduced as necessary, when the number of days of DSA exceeds the limit stipulated in the table rates published by ICSC). However, lower rates may be paid where negotiated by the staff member responsible for the contract. DSA is only payable to individuals carrying out assignments away from their usual place of residence or work. Individual consultant is expected to make his/her own travel arrangements and should be provided with a lump-sum to cover travel-related expenses in accordance with UNESCO rules and regulations. Travel-related expenses (e.g. the cost of tickets, terminal fares and DSA) must be fixed and agreed between parties.

UNESCO places great emphasis on ensuring that the objectives of the work assignment, as described in the Terms of Reference, are met. Accordingly, in evaluating the proposals for the assignment, attention will focus first and foremost on the technical elements. From those proposals deemed suitable in terms of the criteria in the Terms of Reference, UNESCO shall select the proposal that offers the Organization best value for money.

The expression of interest must be received by email @ ige.bgk@unesco.org no later than 17:00 hrs, 10 February, 2020 (Bangkok time). Only complete application submitted before the deadline will be considered.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.