

Monday, 25 March 2024

09:15-12:30 GMT+1

Room 1



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### 09:45 to 10:15 — Partnerships to propel progress towards SDG 4

#### Background and overview

In the face of rising global education challenges, responsive and coordinated multistakeholder cooperation is at the heart of UNESCO's social contract that drives the futures of education. The Coalition has grown into a significant network of over 200 institutional partners, representing a diverse spectrum of organisations, all united by a common goal to advance inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning. There are only six years left to achieve SDG 4 and the substantial work that remains demands coordinated, collaborative, cross-sectoral approaches among partners who can each contribute their unique expertise.

The Coalition is dedicating this annual meeting to increase partner commitment to collaborative projects that advance progress towards SDG 4. In a year that will redefine multilateralism for the digital age – and against the backdrop of the Global Digital Compact and the Pact for the Future – Coalition partners demonstrate their engagement in meaningful multistakeholder collaboration for positive education transformation, collectively addressing challenges related to scalability, sustainability, equity and relevance.

We cannot scale sustainable solutions in siloes. If we seek true education transformation, we must work together. This annual meeting will explore how we can better coordinate, build trust, harness solidarity, and align towards our collective north star of inclusive and equitable quality lifelong learning for all.

#### Objectives

1. Briefly present the key 2023 takeaways of the **SDG 4 Scorecard** and key takeaways of the **GEM Report 2023** to illustrate slow progress in improving educational outcomes, equity, inclusion and funding. These data underscore the need to cooperate across sectors to accelerate achievement towards SDG 4 and unlock the potential role of technology in this effort.

2. Briefly present international trends in student learning achievement through **PISA 2022**: highlights of students' performance in Mathematics, Science and Reading before and after the COVID, including a specific focus on equity and digital technology.
3. Technology has the potential to combat some of these inequalities, expand access and enhance learning outcomes, but its use in education must be centred on learners. Given the role of the private sector in the creation of EdTech tools and, more broadly, the role of industry partners to expand digital connectivity, we must have a candid dialogue on how public-private partnerships can be transparent, sustainable and steered by governments towards equitable, ethical applications in education.

### Participants and speakers

(Moderator) **Borhene Chakroun**, Director, Division of Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems, UNESCO

1. **Manos Antoninis**, Director, Global Education Monitoring Report, UNESCO
2. **Andreas Schleicher**, Director for Education and Skills and Special Advisor on Education Policy to the Secretary-General, OECD (online)
3. **Beth Havinga**, Managing Director, European EdTech Alliance

### Format & session logistics

The morning sessions will take place **in-person**, in Room I of the UNESCO Headquarters. Simultaneous interpretation in **English, French** and **Spanish** will be provided.

## 10:15 11:15 — Digital transformation in education for Africa: Synergizing for scale and impact

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### Background

In September 2024 at the Summit of the Future, governments from around the world will negotiate the terms of the adoption of the UN Secretary General's proposed **Global Digital Compact**, an agreement involving all stakeholders – governments, the United Nations system, the private sector (including tech companies), civil society, grass-roots organizations, academia, and individuals – for an open, free and secure digital future. The education sector is strongly implicated in the possibilities this compact would bring, especially to the region of Africa where progress towards SDG 4 has been slow.

### Objective

Although many African nations stand to benefit immensely from the transformative potential of digital transformation in education, the digital divide remains a complex barrier. This session will:

1. **Explore** barriers to digital transformation in education and why they are persistent in Africa.
2. **Share** cases of overcoming these barriers through multistakeholder collaborative efforts focused on improving equity, cost-effectiveness and relevance of applications of technology in education.
3. **Promote** cross-country cooperation and cross-sectoral coordination as critical to the scalability and sustainability of digital learning solutions in Africa, as well as to their impact on the overall equity and quality of educational experiences.

The session will be grounded in a presentation of the Digital Transformation Collaborative, a tech-focused sub-group of the Global Education Coalition that promotes the principles of **scalability, sustainability, equitability** and **relevance** and leverages multistakeholder expertise to support countries to plan comprehensive strategies for digital transformation in education.

### Participants and speakers

**Moderator: Borhene Chakroun**, Director, Division of Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems, UNESCO

#### Speakers:

1. **Dr. Ahmed Daher**, Deputy Minister for Technological Development, Ministry of Education, Egypt (online)
2. **Professor Abdel Rahamane Baba-Moussa**, Secretary-General, CONFEMEN
3. **Zohra Yermèche**, Program Director, Sustainability and Corporate Responsibility, Ericsson
4. **Adeleh Mojtahed**, GIGA Programme Coordinator, ITU
5. **Leticia de Rato Salazar-Simpson**, Head of Global Partnerships and Institutional Relations, ProFuturo
6. **Farid Fezoua**, Global Director Health, Education and Services, International Finance Corporation
7. **Jennifer Welsh**, Head of Business Development, Imagine Worldwide

### Additional Context

The Education 2030 Framework for Action is the roadmap for achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4. The UN General Assembly adopted the SDG 4 monitoring framework in 2017 and since then, the UNESCO Institute

for Statistics (UIS) and the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report have been working with countries to establish national benchmarks to monitor progress towards SDG 4. At the time of release of the second scorecard in February 2024, **72% of African countries have set national SDG 4 benchmarks for at least one indicator.**

Two global assessments – or scorecards – have been conducted which illustrate the speed at which countries have been progressing towards their 2025 benchmarks since 2015. However, as illustrated in **Figure 1** below, very few African countries have made fast progress towards minimum proficiency in reading at the end of primary education. The majority have no available data to analyze the trend, or simply no data on reading proficiency at all. This is also the case for the issue of school connectivity, as depicted in **Figure 2** below, which reveals some lower middle-income countries making fast progress, some low-income countries making slow progress, and the vast majority without viable data for analysis.

**Figure 1.** Minimum proficiency in reading, end of primary education (African region)

	Low income	Lower middle income	Upper middle income	High income
Fast progress	Burkina Faso	Benin		
Average progress	Chad, Madagascar	Cameroon		
Slow progress	Niger, Togo	Congo, Morocco, Senegal, Zambia		
No progress	Burundi	Côte d'Ivoire		
No data for trend	D. R. Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda	Egypt, Eswatini, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe	Botswana, Gabon, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa	Seychelles
No data	Central African Republic, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan	Algeria, Angola, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Djibouti, Ghana, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Tunisia	Equat. Guinea, Libya	

Source: UNESCO (2024). SDG 4 Scorecard progress report on national benchmarks in Africa. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000388662>

**Figure 2.** School internet connectivity, primary (African region)

	Low income	Lower middle income	Upper middle income	High income
Fast progress		Algeria, Cabo Verde, Egypt, Eswatini, Senegal, Tunisia	Mauritius	Seychelles
Average progress	Rwanda			
Slow progress	Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Niger, Sierra Leone, Togo	Morocco, Zambia, Zimbabwe		
No progress	Madagascar			
No data for trend	D. R. Congo	Angola, Comoros, Guinea	Namibia	
No data	Central African Republic, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda	Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Congo, Djibouti, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, United Republic of Tanzania	Equat. Guinea, Gabon, Libya, South Africa	

*Note:* Countries in grey have not set a national benchmark and are being assessed against their feasible benchmark.

These figures illustrate how the digital divide is creating problematic data divides on key issues such as foundational learning, which prevent education resources from reaching those who may need it most. Moreover, the lack of school connectivity in much of the African region is preventing countries from accelerating their progress towards SDG 4 by leveraging the potential of digital technology to improve access to learning by transcending rural barriers or insufficient infrastructure, enhancing quality by improving engagement and expanding training opportunities, and improving equity through adaptive, flexible and digital learning pathways. Overall, the present data underscore the need to work together to close the digital divide and bring sustainable, scalable digital learning opportunities to the countries for which digital technology could truly be an engine for education transformation and innovation.

## 11:15 to 12:20 — Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education: Perspectives and collaborative possibilities

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### Background and overview

Education stands at the crossroads of an age of Artificial Intelligence (AI) including Generative AI (GenAI). Like any data-fuelled digital tool, AI-powered technology poses both opportunities and risks for the education sector. Although education has grappled with the impact of AI for many years, never has AI taken the world by storm quite like a new series of generative, increasingly sophisticated AI tools publicly released since November 2023.

Discussions about the impact of such technologies on education have been equally as prevalent as they are polarizing. Some speak of the promise of personalized learning pathways, of streamlining administrative tasks, of improving data management and education decision-making, or of bolstering school cybersecurity. Others fear these tools will undermine the teaching profession, encourage plagiarism, or amplify existing discrimination in education systems because of non-representative or biased datasets. AI is already steering movement in the global economy, with governments launching national strategies and many industry stakeholders investing heavily in the production of new AI-powered tools, including products and services directed towards the education sector.

In some societies, a Generative AI race is resulting in sophisticated chatbots becoming part of the fabric of life, work, and indeed, education. At the same time, in many developing countries, innovation is curtailed by the multifaceted digital divide — in connectivity, human competencies, data systems, sustainable funding, and more. This unequal playing field requires a reckoning between the many partners involved: *how can we work together to bridge the digital divide within and across countries, enhance equity and inclusion and prepare students and workforces around the world for the world of tomorrow at speed and at scale?*

### Objectives

The potential uses of AI in transforming education cannot be ignored. The objective of this session is as follows:

1. **Use cases:** Discuss use cases of how globally active partners in the technology and EdTech industries are already applying AI in their education services, and to question how these solutions can be leveraged to address the learning crisis and reach the most disadvantaged.
2. **Education needs:** Investigate the needs and expectations of educational decision-makers regarding the utilization of AI and mitigating its adverse effects.
3. **Collaboration:** Foster a candid dialogue on how public-private partnerships should be grounded in a case-by-case understanding of what countries need in order to ensure that we are collectively moving towards transparent, representative and inclusive applications of AI globally.

### Participants and speakers

**Moderator:** Juliette Norrmén-Smith, Section for Education Policy, UNESCO

**Speakers:**

1. **Dr Iwan Syahril**, Director General of Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary Education, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology Republic of Indonesia (online)
2. **Marine Raberyn**, Director, EMEA, Lenovo
3. **Dina Ghobashy**, Global Lead on Education Transformation, Microsoft
4. **Nicolaas Matthijs**, Vice President of Product Management, Anthology
5. **Ryan Imbriale**, Vice President, Government Relations & Education Strategy, PowerSchool
6. **Karine Allouche**, Vice President, Global Enterprise, Coursera
7. **William Florance**, Head of Strategic and Government Initiatives, Google