

2ND ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL EDUCATION MINISTER'S CONFERENCE (APREMC-II)



POLICY BRIEF

Adolescent and Youth Education, Learning and Skills Development

Introduction

For the half billion adolescents and youth in the Asia and Pacific region (UNICEF, 2019a), how, what, and whether they learn during adolescence determines their ability to learn further, enter the labour market, and participate in society (UNICEF, 2013). Education programmes whether formal or non-formal should enable adolescents and youth to build on learning gains from primary education, prepare them for higher education, or facilitate their transition into the workplace, and support broader empowerment as well as meaningful engagement in decision-making.

Adolescents and youth education and learning in the region take many forms, including:

- **Formal secondary education which is the conventional age-appropriate pathway.** Secondary education builds on foundational learning from primary schooling and widens and deepens learning. It includes lower secondary education which in most Asia-Pacific countries is part of compulsory education and is free (UIS, 2022), and upper secondary education which typically includes multiple pathways (general and vocational). Upper secondary education remains non-compulsory in most of Asia-Pacific and in some countries is not free (ibid.).

- **Formal post-secondary education, particularly Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**, is one of the possible education pathways after upper secondary education and focuses more on school-to-work transition.¹ Post-secondary non-tertiary programmes provide adolescents and youth with the **skills for employment** including through work-based learning and apprenticeship.
- **Alternative non-formal programmes** (e.g., accelerated education programmes, catch-up/remediation, and bridge programs) are offered to out-of-school adolescents, to provide opportunities to re-engage with education, continue learning and as a bridge to formal education, as well as to the labour market (UNESCO Bangkok, 2011; UNICEF, 2019). Different programmes target different out-of-school and NEET (not in education, employment or training) adolescents and youth, based on their age and specific needs.

Recent trends indicate that the region is **not on track** to achieve the desired education and learning outcomes for adolescents and youth, especially those from vulnerable and marginalized backgrounds.² In Asia-Pacific, a growing number of experts, including those from UNESCO, the World Bank, and UNICEF, warn of a learning and skills crisis that has only worsened throughout the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and the COVID pandemic (UNESCO, 2018a; World Bank, 2019a; World Bank et al., 2021). Without immediate and effective action from governments and other stakeholders, this crisis could have seriously negative short- and long-term implications for adolescents and young people.

Key Issues and Challenges

Secondary Education

Students' access to, retention in, and completion of secondary remain key challenges, in particular in upper secondary education

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, many parts of Asia-Pacific had seen improvements in the share of adolescents and youth completing secondary education. Enrolment rates in the region rose by 20% from 2000 to 2018 (UIS, 2021a). Sub-regionally, South Asia rates increased to 70% from 43% from 2000 to 2016, whilst in the Pacific, it increased from 63% in 2000 to 74% in 2013 (ILO and ADB, 2020; UIS 2021a, 2021b). Despite these positive trends, many adolescents and youth, mostly those among the lowest socio-economic quintiles and the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in low and middle-income countries, were out of school. 35 million children and adolescents in East Asia and the Pacific were not in school prior to the COVID-19 crisis – 27% of whom were of lower secondary and upper secondary ages. Boys now outnumber girls among out-of-school

¹ This brief focuses on post-secondary non-tertiary TVET programmes. Tertiary education is addressed by a different brief.

² At its current state, the region is not on track to deliver its commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals – especially SDG 4 (targets), SDG 5, and SDG 8. Among the countries in the region, only a few countries have made significant traction in specific targets. But this masks discrepancies within countries in relation to various layers of vulnerability – including gender, disability, ethnicity, among others.

adolescents as there have been marked improvements in enrolment rates for the latter across the region (UNICEF, 2022). The high direct (and indirect) cost of secondary education and lack of access to free education and social services impede poor families from investing in secondary education as they would have to bear the costs themselves. In some countries, this challenge is exacerbated as adolescent boys are expected to supplement their families' income by engaging in child labour, which disrupts their ability to learn and continue studying (Chavez et al, n.d). On the other hand, the risk of early marriage and adolescent pregnancies affects many girls and young women more, coupled with a disproportionate share of household responsibilities and expectations to fulfil care duties at home (Bhutta, n.d.; Chavez et al., n.d.).

The COVID-19 crisis is likely to lead to more adolescents and youth dropping out of formal secondary education if action is not taken urgently. While specific data on adolescent and youth are not readily available, it is estimated that overall, 12 million children and adolescents dropped out due to the COVID-19 pandemic in South and West Asia (UNICEF and UNESCO, 2021).

Learning outcomes remain low in many Asia-Pacific countries

Quality learning is essential for students to progress toward higher education levels, promote intergenerational mobility in society, and contribute to the empowerment of adolescents and youth, especially girls and young women (Herbert et al., 2021; World Bank, 2018). While some high-income countries in Asia-Pacific have high levels of learning at the secondary level, many students in the region do not reach minimum proficiency in numeracy and literacy, nor have learned transferable, 21st century and job-specific skills.³ As learning gaps compound over time, students who do not reach minimum proficiencies tend to struggle to catch up and drop out altogether, leave school with poorer learning outcomes, and be in disadvantaged earning positions as workers (Hanushek and Woessmann, 2020).

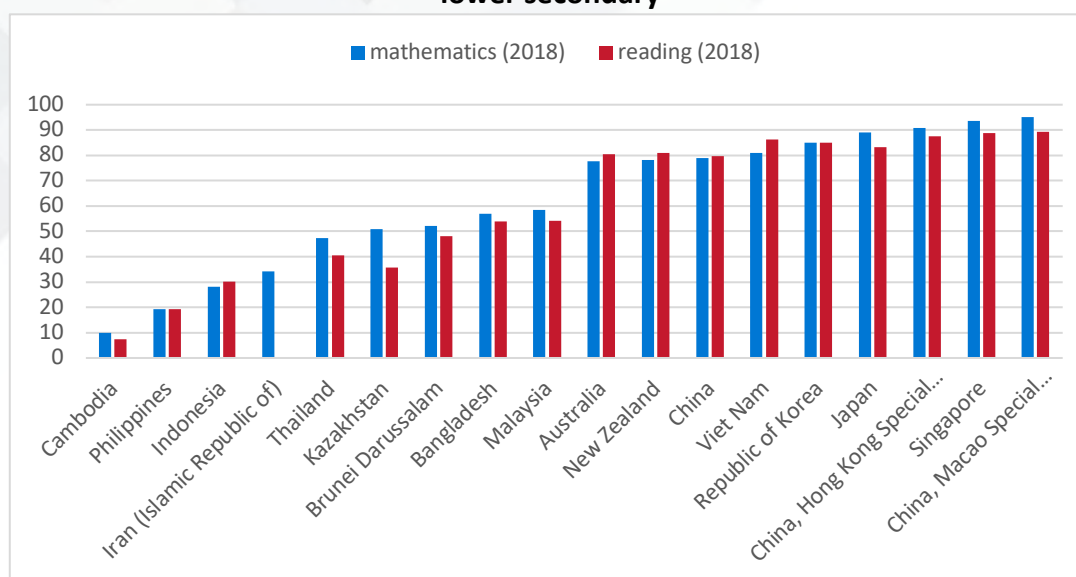
- **Foundational skills:** As critical learning blocks, foundational skills – i.e., literacy and numeracy – enable learners to build a strong basis for further learning. Learning outcomes in foundational skills vary widely between Asia-Pacific countries and within countries. A majority of fifteen-year-olds and grade nine students in high-income countries such as Singapore, Japan and Korea have reached at least minimum proficiency in numeracy and literacy, as shown by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) (OECD, 2019). However, over a third of students in low and middle-income countries in Asia-Pacific do not reach minimum proficiency in literacy and numeracy at age 15 or grade nine (see Figure 1). Disparities in learning outcomes within countries are also important. Students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to reach minimum proficiency in literacy and numeracy than their peers from more advantaged backgrounds. In South and

³ For a definition of the skills, see UNICEF. 2019c, p.1...

South East Asian countries participating in PISA 2018, 70% of students from the bottom 20% of the socio-economic distribution did not reach minimum proficiency in numeracy, compared to less than 30% among students from the top 20% of the distribution. Moreover, across East and South East Asia and Pacific, socioeconomically advantaged students scored 75 points higher in the PISA 2018 reading test than those from the bottom 20%, which is equivalent to about 2 years of schooling gap (World Bank, 2019b).

- **Digital and 21st Century skills:** The demand for 21st century skills and digital skills has increased not least due to 4IR, and more recently, labour market changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. “Human skills”, such as self-management, interpersonal skills, and stress tolerance, differentiate human workers from machines and help mitigate job losses from automation (UNICEF, 2021). Other skills in demand include problem-solving, critical and creative thinking, collaboration, communication, understanding and use of digital tools, and socio-emotional skills (Coberly-Holt and Elufiede, n.d.; Forbes Human Resources Council, 2021; OECD, 2021a; World Economic Forum, 2020). Labour market data indicate that adolescents and young people are leaving school without sufficient proficiency in these skills leading to important skill mismatch (ILO, 2019). Despite their proven importance, digital and 21st century skills are not effectively integrated in secondary education teaching and learning. While more and more curriculum frameworks, including in many Asian countries, now recognise these skills, this does not necessarily mean that they are effectively taught. Many constraints such as lack of teachers’ readiness to teach these skills, lack of alignment of textbooks and assessment tools, as well as parental and societal pressure for a narrower focus on core competencies and subjects, are limiting the development of 21st century skills at the secondary level (OECD, 2020).

Figure 1: Proportion of students achieving at least a minimum proficiency level at the end of lower secondary



Source: UIS Database (PISA 2018 and TIMSS 2018). Accessed March 2020

While data on the COVID-19 impact on learning outcomes in secondary education remain sparse, many studies project a widening of learning gaps at secondary level. In the region, learning losses range from 8% in the Pacific, 24% in Central Asia, 35% in Southeast Asia to 55% in South Asia, translating to around \$1.25 trillion in earning losses – or 5.4% of Asia’s gross domestic product in 2020 (ADB, 2021a). Limited data make it difficult to gauge, however, the actual and extent of learning loss in the region, particularly for adolescents and young people in secondary and post-secondary education as a result of prolonged school and training centre closures.

Skills development and secondary and post-secondary TVET

An increasing share of adolescents and youth are finding it difficult to transition into higher levels of education and employment, in particular young women

The share of adolescents and youth Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET rate) has risen from 24% in 2018 to 25% in 2020 – both higher than the global rate of 22% and 23%, respectively according to the latest ILO modelled estimates. NEET rates are higher for young women compared than for young men in the region, with the highest gaps found in South Asia.

While youth employment trends already presented challenges before the pandemic, these have worsened at the onset of COVID due to disruptions to education and training, jobs and school-to-work transitions. Many youth employed pre-COVID had stopped working altogether, particularly those working in clerical, services, sales, crafts, and related trades (ADB and ILO, 2020). Moreover, with limited job vacancies in the market, school-to-work transitions have been prolonged. The risk to be laid off, or work in precarious temporary jobs that shut down due to COVID is higher for youth aged 18-24 years than for other age groups (Decent Jobs for Youth, 2020).

Despite positive impact on future earning and employment prospects, the offer of, and demand for TVET in secondary and post-secondary education remains low in parts of Asia-Pacific

Quality TVET programmes at both secondary and post-secondary provide young people with a good opportunity to acquire relevant skills and improve their employment prospects and income. Despite its positive impact, enrolment in TVET remains low compared to general programmes and varies widely between countries. TVET programmes are well-developed in Central Asian countries and seen as an alternative to tertiary education for many students, but enrolment in TVET remains very limited in South Asia and parts of South East-Asia (UNESCO and UNICEF, 2021). While 23% of 15–24-year-olds were enrolled in TVET programmes in Uzbekistan in 2018, only 1% and 0.5% of youth were in Bangladesh and Lao PDR respectively (UNESCO, 2018b).

Further transformations are needed to ensure the relevance of TVET training for the future of work in Asia-Pacific

The TVET offer needs to change to meet the skills demands of 4IR and the necessary transition to the green economy. The intensity of demand for green skills is highest in 25 countries around the world, including Australia, India, Indonesia, and Singapore. Rapid technological developments in 4IR have increased demand for digital skills, but training for these skills remains limited (ADB 2021b). For example, an Asian Development bank survey of 236 training institutions in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam showed that half of the institutions did not have programmes preparing learners for the 4IR and a majority (e.g. 90% in Indonesia and 88% in the Philippines) reported needed financial and technical support to develop adequate training programmes for the 4IR (ADB, 2021c).

Alternative learning pathways

Lack of recognition of alternative learning pathways limits the possibility to transition into formal education and work

Alternative learning pathways can empower adolescents and youth not in formal education with choices to shape learning experiences and cater to their differentiated needs and capacities, in addition to promoting lifelong learning and removing barriers to education (Santiago et al., 2021). In practice, the promotion of alternative learning pathways in Asia-Pacific faces several constraints including (UIL, 2017):

- Lack of policy integration with formal education, including lack of recognition of certification and re-entry points into formal education;
- Limited availability of trained educators;
- Lack of quality assurance guidelines;
- Lack of public budget allocation to alternative learning programmes.

Key Priorities for Adolescent Education, Learning and Skills Development

Nascent knowledge of the extent of COVID's impact on adolescent education, learning, and skills development stresses the urgency to recover learning loss, facilitate the entry and reintegration of young workers into the labour market, and address pre-existing inequalities before they become much worse. At the same time, innovations, and emerging promising practices provide countries with opportunities to transform adolescent learning and education to be more relevant, inclusive and agile to future changes and skills demand.

Key priority for learning recovery:

- **Safe return to secondary and post-secondary schools and training centres:** As a priority, Asia-Pacific countries should re-open secondary and post-secondary schools and training centres and take necessary measures to ensure learners', teachers' and educators' safety, health and well-being. Moreover, back-to school campaigns and targeted re-enrolment measures can be used to identify adolescents and youth at risk of not returning to education and re-engaging them in learning.
- **Identifying learning loss and setting-up adequate recovery strategies:** As adolescents go back to secondary schools, their learning levels should be assessed through diagnostic assessments to identify gaps. Appropriate catch-up strategies need to be put in place, such as differentiated learning in the classroom or remediation, taking into account the identified learning needs. While catch-up strategies should focus on foundational skills, 21st century skills, skills for employment as well as socio-emotional skills should not be neglected given their demonstrated importance for future employability and personal development.
- **Strengthening and investing in alternative learning pathways for the re- and up-skilling of young workers and re-engaging out-of-school adolescents and youth in learning:** Asia-Pacific countries should invest in alternative education programmes as a mean of re-engaging adolescents and youth in learning as part of their learning recovery strategy. Multiple pathways should be set up to meet various learners' needs based on their educational attainment, age and choices (see Table 1).
- **Validating and recognizing the non-formal and informal learning that happened during the pandemic:** Continuous skill development and learning through informal or non-formal pathways served as an alternative mode for many adolescents and youth amidst school and training centre closures and reduced working hours. In order to re-engage these adolescents and youth in further learning and employment, it is therefore important to validate and recognize these acquired skills and competencies.

Key priorities for transforming education and learning for adolescent and youth:

Quality, relevant and inclusive secondary education

- **Re-designing curriculum content and pedagogical approaches** to better integrate transferable/21st century competencies, skills for employment and socio-emotional skills. This will require rethinking curriculum content, including by integrating learning areas, grouping various subjects and promoting collaboration among pedagogical staff. It will also require rethinking pedagogies to be more learner-centred and collaborative. To do this successfully, it is important that the instruction time, assessment framework, teacher training and school quality standards are continuously aligned with the curriculum and

pedagogical intent (OECD, 2020). The current ongoing reform of the secondary curriculum in Korea is a good example such reform (see box 1).

- **Delaying streaming, reducing ability grouping and ensuring better flexibility between programmes:** Delaying streaming into vocational and general programmes until upper secondary education and avoiding ability grouping are important strategies to reduce drop-out and promote equity (OECD, 2018). Moreover, countries should ensure that programmes are flexible and allow for transition between programmes or use modular approaches to give students more choice and agency in shaping their education pathways.
- **Developing quality and relevant vocational programmes in upper secondary and promoting enrolment:** Stronger investment in secondary vocational education is needed in many parts of Asia-Pacific. This means developing engaging and relevant content, training teachers and educators and strengthening links with the labour market. Communication campaigns should also be used to increase enrolment in vocational programmes.
- **Reforming end of secondary certification:** End of upper secondary examination and certification need to be reformed to ensure that it certifies all secondary programmes including all vocational programmes. It also needs to certify a wider set of competencies including 21st century skills. In many Asia-Pacific countries, this will require reducing the reliance on written paper-based examination and exploring other assessment methods such as student portfolios, project-based assignments as well as developing computer-based assessments.

Box 1: Curriculum reforms and free semesters in Korea's lower secondary education

Korea started a major reform of curriculum in 2015, aiming to transform the curriculum to be learner-centred and competency-based, and focusing on six core competences: self-managed knowledge-information processing, creative thinking, aesthetic and emotional competency, communication skills, and community competence. The introduction of a “free semester” in lower secondary without written summative assessment in 2016 and its extension to a full year in 2018 has lessened the burden of test preparation and allowed teachers and schools more flexibility to introduce innovative pedagogies including for promoting and assessing 21st century competencies.

Source: OECD, 2021b.

Post-secondary TVET promoting skills for work and employability

- **Developing quality training on skills for the future of work:** Green and digital skills are going to be required as countries pursue green-growth strategies that require the use of new technologies and the greening of processes and industries. To prepare for increased jobs in these areas, training programmes and curricula need to be adapted to equip youth with these and other high-demand skills.

- **Facilitating transition to employment:** Quality labour market information systems that provide reliable and up-to-date information on labour market needs should help inform the design of relevant training programmes that focus on high-growth sectors and on projected demand for skills. At the institution level, career and employment guidance needs to be reinforced to help orient learners during their education and at the transition point into employment. Work-based learning should also be strengthened through better engagement with private sector actors including incentives and capacity-building.

Recognized alternative learning pathways as part of a lifelong learning approach

- **Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of non-formal and informal learning:** in the framework of lifelong learning, coherent guidelines and procedures will be needed to validate and recognize knowledge and skills acquired from non-formal education programmes and through informal learning, according to levels and descriptors in a National Qualifications Framework. This will entail setting-up accreditation and monitoring processes and providing guidance and regulation on training content. The Philippines Alternative Learning System provides a good example of a institutionalized and recognized model of alternative learning (see Box 2).
- **Providing multiple learning pathways to meet all learners’ needs and re-engage them in learning:** The programme offer of alternative learning should be diversified to meet learners’ needs and prepare them for further education and employment (see table 1).

Table 1: Multiple alternative learning pathways to meet the needs of Adolescents and Youth

Target group	Multiple pathways
Adolescents who have never been to school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy programmes • Primary-level accelerated education for those with low levels of basic literacy and numeracy • Skills training with employability focus for older adolescents
Adolescents who dropped out before completing primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary/level accelerated education programmes • Skills development with employability focus for older adolescents
Adolescents who did not transition to or complete lower secondary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch-up programmes for recent dropouts • Lower secondary accelerated education programs if several years OOS • Alternative modalities of lower secondary provision for remote/hard to reach adolescents who did not transition to lower secondary • Skills training with employability focus for older adolescents
Adolescents who did not transition to, or complete, upper secondary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch-up programmes for recent dropouts • Upper secondary accelerated education programs • Alternative modalities for upper secondary for remote/hard to reach • Skills training and apprenticeships/on the job training

Box 2: Example of good practice: the Alternative Learning System in the Philippines

In the Philippines, the Alternative Learning System (ALS) provides young and adult learners a second chance to acquire basic education and offers students the opportunity to earn official certificates equivalent to regular school diplomas (Igarashi et al., 2020). This, in turn, would help them qualify for further education and vocational training, and earn higher incomes. Every year, 130,000 learners on average pass the ALS Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) Program. In a World Bank study (2016), ALS graduates were found to be earning twice as much as the average of high school dropouts (Yamauchi et al., 2016).

Figure 1: Major ALS Components



Source: F., Igarashi et al., 2020; Yamauchi et al., 2016.

System Level (Enabling environment)	Institutional and Student Level (Implementation)
LEARNING RECOVERY	
Formal secondary education	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a coordination mechanism between the ministry of education, ministry of health and other key ministries to ensure a safe and sustainable return to secondary school. • Develop a safe return to school and learning recovery strategy with a focus on the most vulnerable backed by adequate funding. • Adjust curricula to focus on core competencies and revise assessments accordingly. • Adjust academic calendars where needed • Strengthen access to high quality distance learning programmes for all adolescents and put in place blended learning • Strengthen data collection and monitoring on return to school and learning recovery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare secondary schools for a safe return and an enabling learning environment. • Conduct diagnostic learning assessments to determine learning gaps. • Train teachers in diagnostic and formative assessment techniques to identify individual learner needs, as well as in learning recovery strategies and the provision psycho-social support. • Put in place teacher support programmes, including peer exchange networks. • Provide remediation programmes that respond to the individual needs of secondary-level students, co-designed with students, parents/caregivers and other education community members for greater relevance and uptake. • Provide students with the capacity to be more autonomous in their learning approaches, including through digital learning to enable more flexible approaches to future disruptions. • Put in place early warning systems to prevent drop-out and provide targeted support to at-risk students. • Increase the offer of targeted equivalent alternative and accelerated learning and training programmes for out-of-school secondary-level learners. • Put in place nutrition, psychosocial support and health, and hygiene service provision in schools.
Skills development and TVET	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a system to identify NEETs and develop remediation strategies. • Conduct rapid labor market assessments to determine jobs in demand, available employers, and training opportunities. • Work with different actors to help all adolescents and young people access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train instructors/trainers in diagnostic and formative assessment techniques to respond to individual learner needs. • Co-design and implement remediation programmes for TVET learners with the private sector.

System Level (Enabling environment)	Institutional and Student Level (Implementation)
<p>high-quality, no- or low-cost skills training programmes through the internet and other remote learning channels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance instructor capacity through provision of short training courses, including digital learning and psycho-social support. • Undertake re-skilling and upskilling of adolescents and youth.
TRANSFORMING EDUCATION SYSTEMS	
Formal secondary education	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance evidence-based policy and planning through open-source management information systems that can respond to national crises like COVID 19. • Put in place, or strengthen, policies to ensure access to secondary education and retention of vulnerable and marginalized adolescents and youth, which eliminate barriers to secondary education, e.g. through abolishing school fees for students from low-income households and indirect costs like school supplies, uniform, meals, and transportation. • Reform secondary education curriculum to promote competence in using digital tools, transferable/21st century, green and employability skills, as well as flexibility, creativity and resilience. • Strengthen the use of formative assessment to support learning and reform national assessments. • Support teacher training (pre- and in-service) in transferable/21st century skills and the corresponding pedagogical approaches in both formal and non-formal settings. • Support the systematic measurement of learning outcomes at secondary level, in both formal and non-formal education. • Build strong partnerships with the private sector, specialized organizations and training institutions to enhance skills for employability and transition into decent work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put in place more effective data gathering and tracking systems of adolescents and youth-at-risk at the school level to be able to design appropriate learning and psycho-social interventions, and to accurately monitor learning. • Develop learning materials that are of contemporary relevance and respond to issues such as conflict resolution, tolerance, and climate change. • Provide support tailored to individual students' needs. Institutionalize the provision of psychosocial support and other services that promote well-being – to both teachers and students. • Provide continuous professional development opportunities to teachers in each institution, with an emphasis on high-quality 21st century skills. • Put in place systems and train teachers and school staff to prevent bullying and gender-based violence at the school level. • Enable every school to provide nutrition, health, sanitation and psycho-social support to those requiring these services.

System Level (Enabling environment)	Institutional and Student Level (Implementation)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen feedback loops from labour market actors and learners so that learning remains relevant to employers and students. • Design inclusive education policies that recognize the differentiated needs of students and reach those previously excluded from the school system. • Progressively increase budget allocations for secondary education including from new funding sources. 	
Alternative learning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a common qualifications framework for formal and non-formal education and the Recognition, Validation and Accreditation (RVA) of non-formal learning outcomes. • Strengthen and institutionalize flexible learning pathways and multiple entry points, taking a lifelong learning approach. • Establish national standards of quality and relevance for NFE programmes, as well as support and monitoring of providers. • Strengthen data collection to identify target groups and their educational needs. • Increase the offer and quality of alternative education opportunities which are recognized and certified. • Strengthen training of NFE educators/facilitators through providing common basic training modules with formal teachers. • Strengthen partnerships with private sector (especially employers and mentors) around co-delivering employability-enhancing modules, and providing financial support to vulnerable and marginalized students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide flexible alternative education opportunities for out-of-school adolescents that are adapted to the learner's needs and his/her starting point and combine accelerated education with vocational training and life skills. • Target and prioritize vulnerable and marginalized adolescents and youth based on their specific circumstances and needs, partnering with relevant CSOs/NGOs.

System Level (Enabling environment)	Institutional and Student Level (Implementation)
Skills development and TVET	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish labour market information systems that provide reliable and up-to-date information on labour market demand to inform policy and programme design. • Strengthen capacity to formulate and implement employment services, including career guidance for transition to decent work over the life course. • Design national youth employment policies for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and towards a brighter future of work. • Promote skills for digital and green jobs at system and institutional level, engaging with employers' organizations, private sector and relevant stakeholders to align skills supply and demand, and promote investments and job creation in these areas. • Institutionalize the use of learner-centred design principles in the development of programmes. • Develop a systematic approach to the digitalization of TVET including changes at the level of TVET governance, IT infrastructure and instructors. • Provide policy incentives to private sector actors that promote skills development, host and/or recruit vulnerable and marginalized on-the-job trainees or new employees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage labour market assessments in the design of appropriate skills development programs. • Based on labor market assessment findings, design and offer more programmes that focus on high-growth sectors, including digital and green jobs • Engage students from vulnerable and at-risk backgrounds in identifying priorities, incentives, and remediation programmes • Provide after-school learning opportunities through informal and non-formal means.

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Education is UNESCO's top priority because it is a basic human right and the foundation for peace and sustainable development. UNESCO is the United Nations' specialized agency for education, providing global and regional leadership to drive progress, strengthening the resilience and capacity of national systems to serve all learners. UNESCO also leads efforts to respond to contemporary global challenges through transformative learning, with special focus on gender equality and Africa across all actions.



United Nations
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The Global Education 2030 Agenda

UNESCO, as the United Nations' specialized agency for education, is entrusted to lead and coordinate the Education 2030 Agenda, which is part of a global movement to eradicate poverty through 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Education, essential to achieve all of these goals, has its own dedicated Goal 4, which aims to *"ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."* The Education 2030 Framework for Action provides guidance for the implementation of this ambitious goal and commitments.



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