



# A better bargain?

Unions driving  
Education 2030  
forward



Education International  
Internationale de l'Éducation  
Internacional de la Educación



# Agenda 2030

## For Sustainable Development

Your government adopted *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* at the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in September 2015 together with all other governments in the world. It is a universal agenda for sustainable development, ending poverty and hunger, ensuring quality education and health, gender equality and decent work for all, while protecting forests and oceans, and combating climate change.

In total there are 17 *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*. These targets have been negotiated and agreed by your government and apply to all countries in the world.

Education International and its affiliates are advocating for the full implementation of Agenda 2030. We are committed to support the implementation by sharing our expertise and experiences from the classroom.

## SDGs The 17 Sustainable Development Goals

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Goal 1. <b>End poverty in all its forms everywhere</b>  | Goal 10. <b>Reduce inequality within and among countries</b>   |
| Goal 2. <b>End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</b>                         | Goal 11. <b>Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</b>   |
| Goal 3. <b>Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages</b>  | Goal 12. <b>Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</b>   |
| Goal 4. <b>Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</b>                 | Goal 13. <b>Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*</b>   |
| Goal 5. <b>Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</b>  | Goal 14. <b>Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</b>   |
| Goal 6. <b>Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</b>                                       | Goal 15. <b>Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</b> |
| Goal 7. <b>Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all</b>   | Goal 16. <b>Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</b>            |
| Goal 8. <b>Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</b> | Goal 17. <b>Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development</b>   |
| Goal 9. <b>Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation</b>            |  |



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# What Can Your Union Do?

## » **Tell your membership about Education 2030**

Inform your members and leaders about goal 4 and the need for the union to play an active role in holding your government accountable for the commitments they have made.

## » **Set your priorities!**

What are the most urgent priorities for education in your country? How can Education 2030 best be implemented? What are your main demands for your government?

## » **Demand your right to participate!**

Ask your Education Minister for a meeting today to discuss how the education targets can be integrated into your national education plans. The agenda can succeed only if national education plans and strategies are developed, implemented, and regularly monitored together with representatives of teachers and education support personnel.

## » **Insist on the integration of SDGs into national plans**

Demand the integration of Education 2030 targets into national education plans and programmes. To ensure successful implementation, insist on the enactment of relevant legislative frameworks by the Government.

## » **Demand adequate investment in education and teachers**

One of the key lessons learnt from the MDGs and EFA is that none of the SDGs will be achieved without adequate domestic investment. Urge your Government to allocate at least 6% of GDP or 20% of the national budget to education, and to invest in teachers (training, professional development, salaries and working conditions).

## » **Be a watchdog!**

Monitor implementation, analyse the impact of government policies and funding, and share your version of what is happening. Mobilise your members to share their stories: it is crucial that the unique insights into the classroom reality of teachers and education support personnel is reflected in the monitoring and evaluation of the new agenda.

## » **Find allies and build alliances!**

Find out more about the other actors in your political context and identify other organisations that can support you in your demands on education.

# WHAT NOW?

## National implementation of a global agenda

Agenda 2030 was agreed by national governments, who promised to reach these goals and targets in their respective countries. The Education 2030 Framework for Action translates the education goal and targets into concrete strategies for implementation.

### 1. Tracking progress

Governments are responsible for implementing Agenda 2030 and the Framework for Action. They have 15 years to make it happen, but progress will be reviewed regularly. At the global level, governments will come together in July every year at the so-called High-level Political Forum at the UN in New York, where your government will present the progress it has made.

At the national level, countries are obliged to put together mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and evaluation that ensure the full representation and participation of civil society.

Monitoring will be done with the help of indicators. All targets are being translated into a set of indicators that will help governments tell whether their countries are on track to achieve the target.

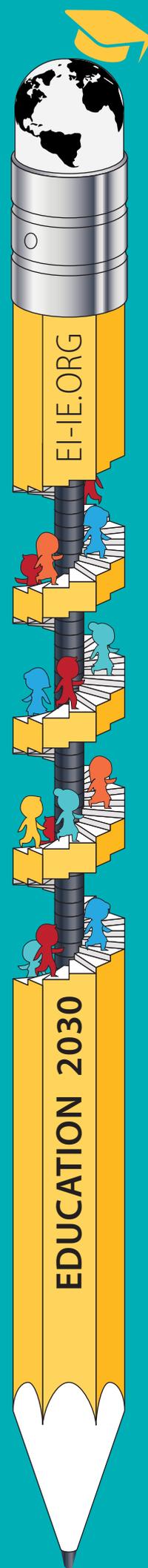
Some of these indicators are global, which means that they are the same for all countries and will be monitored at the global level. There will also be regional and national indicators. Countries can choose to have their own set of national indicators. Make sure that your union is involved in the development of national indicators.

### 2. Accountability

One of the greatest weaknesses of Agenda 2030 is lack of accountability. Agenda 2030 is a voluntary commitment, based on countries putting pressure on each other to implement the agenda. Your government has promised to do its utmost to make Agenda 2030 a reality, but the agreement is not legally binding.

Citizens, trade unions and civil society have a crucial role to play in pushing for mechanisms that allow us to hold our governments to account. This includes regular reporting on progress as well as structures for regular dialogue with different stakeholders.

At the same time, while Agenda 2030 in itself is not legally binding, governments are legally obliged to ensure quality education for all, as well as decent work, through its commitments and obligations under international law.



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## GOAL 4:

*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*

Quality education for all is one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by governments of the world. By making education a goal, your government recognise that equitable and inclusive quality education for all is a key driver of sustainable development.

The education goal is made up of 10 targets, outlining the specific priorities and commitments on education – the Education 2030 Agenda. We welcome the specific commitments on free primary and secondary education, qualified teachers and safe learning environments, and view them as preconditions for achieving inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. We also welcome commitments on pre-primary, technical, vocational and tertiary education, as well as youth and adult literacy and numeracy.

### Education 2030

The implementation of the education goal is supported by the Education 2030 Framework for Action that has been agreed by Ministers of Education in November 2015. It translates the education targets into concrete strategies for implementation. Under target 4.c on qualified teachers, for instance, countries are asked to “set up or strengthen mechanisms for institutionalised social dialogue with teachers and their representative organisations, ensuring their full participation in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of education policy”.

## For Education 2030 to be realised, Education International calls on governments to:

### 1. Demonstrate political will and commitment to ensure quality education for all through concrete actions

The promise of quality education for all is not new; it is time for governments to finally deliver on this promise by ensuring that the new agenda is fully implemented. This does not only mean that the SDG targets must be integrated into national education plans, but also that such integration is backed up with the political will needed to ensure the quality of such plans.

### 2. Work with teachers and education support personnel

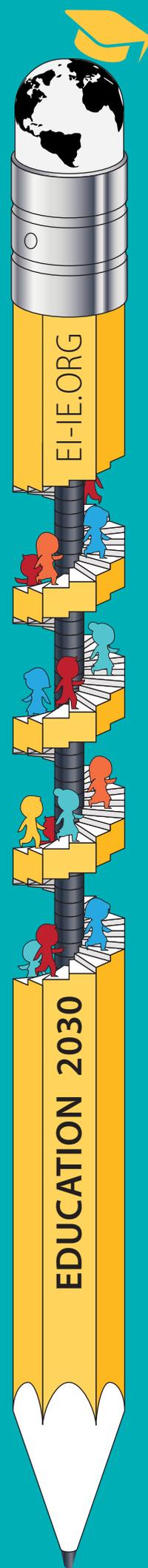
Governments must ensure the full participation and genuine consultation of teachers and support personnel in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of education policy, including the implementation of Education 2030. This includes setting up or strengthening mechanisms for social dialogue with teachers' organisations.

### 3. Ensure adequate public financing of education

The success of Education 2030 depends on adequate financing. Yet, no financing commitments have been made under this new agenda. This is alarming, and risks undermining the new agenda from the start.

Education must be free and publically funded. Only education that is adequately funded with domestic resources is sustainable and ensures real equitable access to all. Being a public good, the costs of education should not be disproportionately borne by poorer citizens. Enhancing national education budgets in a majority of countries will mean moving towards greater tax justice, entailing the development of progressive taxation systems, the closure of tax loopholes, and ending tax evasion.

Governments must allocate at least 6% of GDP and 20% of national expenditure to education. Donor countries should allocate at least 10% of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to education. At least 4% of humanitarian financing should be earmarked for education in order to address the huge education challenges confronting conflict, post conflict and emergency situations.



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## Target 4.1

**By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes**

### ***What do we want?***

All children have the right to complete quality primary and secondary education. To make this happen, governments should ensure 12 years of free and publically funded quality education; at least 9 years of education should be compulsory.

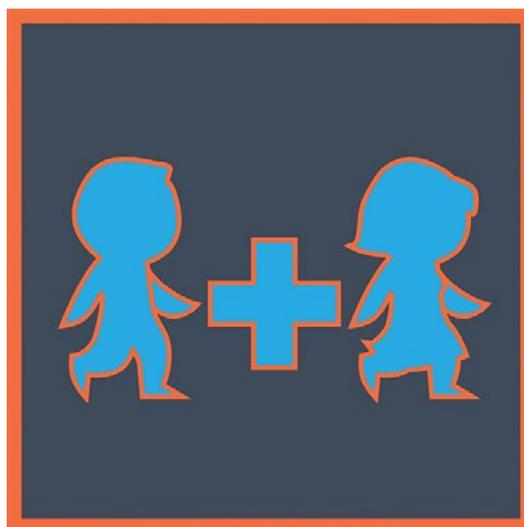
Universal access to, and completion of quality primary and secondary education is impossible unless education is free. To ensure equitable education, evidence of exclusion and its root causes must be collected so that all barriers can be removed.

Quality education implies quality teaching, quality tools and quality environments.

Relevant and effective learning outcomes rely on strong national education systems, with qualified, trained, and supported teachers, and a broad and balanced curriculum that is reinforced by holistic assessment systems and practices. The primary purpose of assessment is to improve teaching and learning.

### ***EI demands that:***

- Governments ensure primary and secondary education is made free through the abolition of all tuition fees and indirect costs, such as books and learning materials, school meals and uniforms.
- Governments take concrete measures to ensure equity and inclusion across the education system.
- Relevant learning outcomes are defined at national level, in line with national curricula, policy and standards. Assessment should be formative for learning and summative for meaningful qualifications that facilitate transition to further learning and/or work.



## Target 4.2

**By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education**

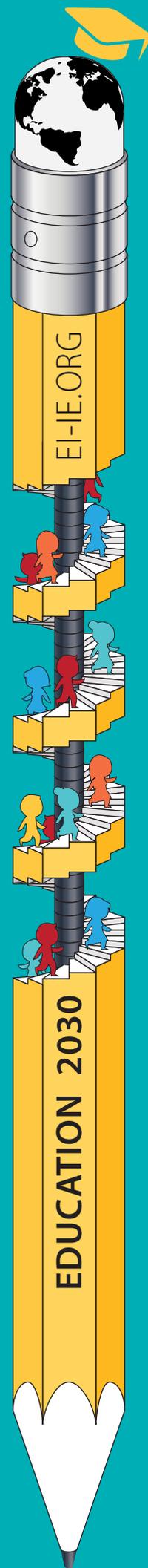
### **What do we want?**

Learning begins at birth. EI member organisations consider that expanding and improving access to quality early childhood education is the most important intervention in the life of a child, and key to realising the right to education for all children, irrespective of age, gender, origin, ethnicity and/or social background. ECE policies and legislation must aim to foster an holistic approach to growth and development so that every child can benefit from quality early childhood education.

The early years of education play a particularly important role for children's optimum development, preparing children for primary school and improving their learning outcomes. Initial education and training for ECE personnel should be comparable to those of primary school teachers, with equivalent professional status and responsibilities (ILO Guidelines, 2014). ECE educators and personnel must have the necessary professional knowledge and support to respond to the learning needs of all children.

### **EI demands that:**

- Governments guarantee at least one year of compulsory and free pre-primary education for all.
- Governments improve the quality of early-childhood education through holistic, child-centred curricula, safe and healthy conditions, child-friendly and quality infrastructure and equipment.
- Governments ensure that ECE educators and education support personnel are trained and qualified (minimum training to be equivalent to that of primary teachers), and receive adequate professional development and support.



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### Target 4.3

**By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university**

#### ***What do we want?***

It is urgent for governments to expand access to, and improve the quality of technical and vocational, as well as tertiary education. Many countries have neglected technical, vocational and tertiary education in the past. Public authorities must ensure that the education offered is relevant to local needs, and that institutions across the country uphold the same quality standards. This is particularly important for private providers.

Qualifications and learning should facilitate the transition to further learning and the world of work.

Efforts have to be made to ensure equal access for women, students from rural areas and marginalised populations. There is no such thing as affordable for the very poorest; the aim must be to progressively make education free at all levels, in line with UN instruments and conventions.

#### ***El demands that:***

- Governments abolish tuition fees and take measures to significantly reduce the indirect costs of technical, vocational and tertiary education.
- All teaching and education support personnel are trained and qualified, acquiring technical as well as pedagogical skills through quality free pre-service training and continuous professional development.
- Governments develop quality standards and an accreditation system to ensure that TVET institutions and universities, including private institutions, meet national quality standards, including private institutions. All institutions must be adequately equipped, for example, with libraries and equipment for teaching sciences, to provide vocational and tertiary education of high quality.



## Target 4.4

**By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship**

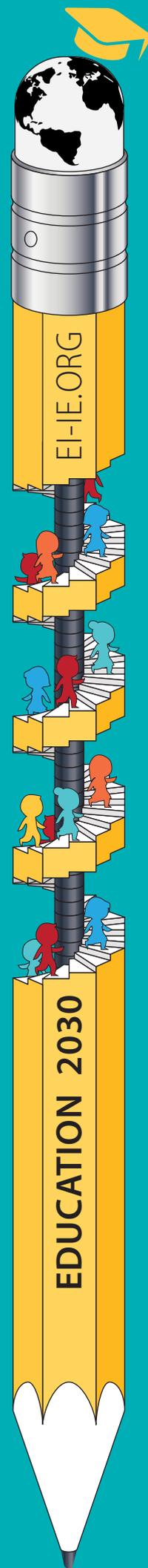
### ***What do we want?***

Formal education – primary and secondary as well as technical, vocational and tertiary education – are the basis for the acquisition and development of skills of youth and adults.

Efforts to enhance the skills of youth and adults require an understanding of what the relevant skills are in the national context. Particular attention should be given to marginalised groups that have not been able to benefit from formal education.

### ***EI demands that:***

- Governments invest in the quality, relevance and accessibility of technical, vocational and tertiary education.
- Relevant skills be defined at national level, and in dialogue with teachers, education support personnel and other social partners.
- The universal right to decent work for teachers, education support personnel and all workers be ensured by governments, in line with international labour standards.



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## Target 4.5

**By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations**

### *What do we want?*

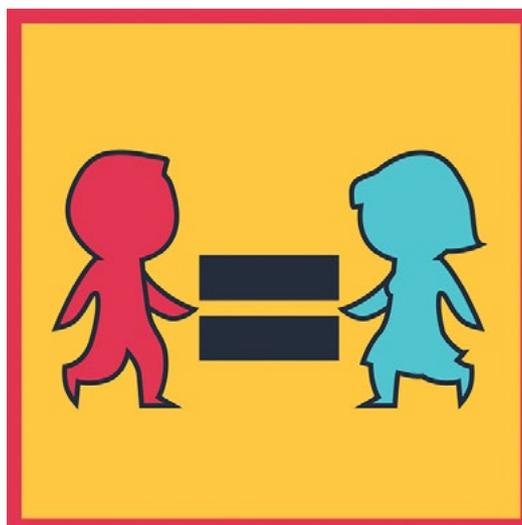
Equal access and parity of participation are at the core of the right to education. Yet, girls are still more likely to face greater obstacles to accessing and participating in good quality education. And this is exacerbated when gender intersects with other grounds of discrimination, including ethnicity, social class and/or ability.

Alongside efforts to ensure equal access, measures must be taken to help students stay in school and complete their education. In many countries enrolment rates are high but students drop out due to the costs of education, child labour, or gender-based discrimination.

Equitable, inclusive quality education implies mainstreaming gender-equality measures and implementing targeted measures to address the different challenges that boys and girls face in accessing and completing education. Gender inequality within education is also manifested through gender bias and stereotyping. All curricula should be gender-sensitive, and teachers must receive adequate training and resources to engage in gender-equitable classroom practice.

### *EI demands that:*

- Concrete measures be urgently put in place to facilitate access to quality education by marginalised or excluded groups. Teachers and education support personnel must be offered training and continuous professional development to meet the needs of all learners. Particular attention must be given to gender mainstreaming, and the development of gender-sensitive curricula and materials
- Governments must collect evidence on exclusion in education in order to identify vulnerable groups in their national context and tailor appropriate measures and policies to these groups.
- Governments place particular emphasis on making school facilities disability-friendly.



## Target 4.6

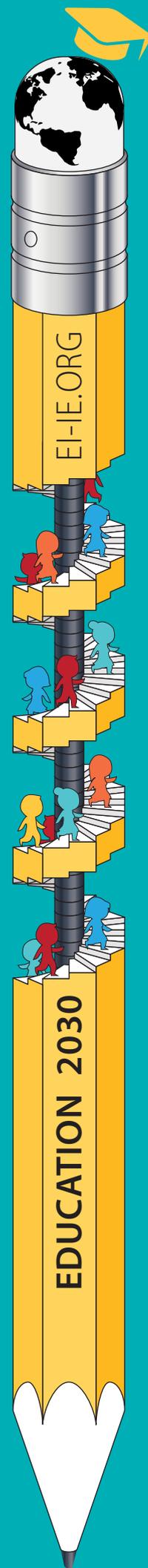
**By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy**

### *What do we want?*

All human beings, regardless of age, have the right to education. Yet, this was a largely neglected area of education policy and financing between 2000 and 2015, and the number of illiterate adults, a majority of whom are women, has remained unacceptably high.

### *EI demands that:*

- Governments invest in adult and youth literacy and numeracy programmes of good quality that are run by qualified and supported teachers and education personnel
- Governments make particular efforts to reach women, rural populations and marginalised groups.
- Governments ensure curriculum breadth and relevance of literacy and numeracy programmes, including clear linkages to skills development.



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### Target 4.7

**By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development**

#### ***What do we want?***

Education for human rights, gender equality, global citizenship and sustainable development are at the centre of quality education and should be integrated into education policy, programmes and curricula.

These focus areas should become an integrated part of teacher training, and free quality in-service training should be offered to all teachers who are already in the system. This is important, given that these are not only areas for knowledge acquisition, but also values that have to be lived and practised by the school community.

#### ***EI demands that:***

- Governments ensure that education for human rights, global citizenship and sustainable development is integrated across schools, curricula, teacher training and teaching and learning materials.
- Teachers be given the professional freedom to prepare and teach quality lessons, without being undermined by the narrow focus on test results.
- This type of education be made available to all learners from the primary level onwards.



## Target 4.a

**Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all**

### **What do we want?**

For EI and its members, adequate, safe and inclusive learning environments are essential. We cannot work towards quality education for all without adequate, safe and inclusive environments.

By building new schools and upgrading existing education facilities, governments can put an end to the overcrowded classrooms that currently make it difficult for teachers to teach and students to learn.

Gender-based violence in and around educational settings is recognised as one of the main barriers to girls' education. Educational facilities must play a key role in addressing such violence, through effective policies and regulation, reporting and response mechanisms, and gender-transformative teaching and learning approaches.

### **EI demands that:**

- Governments initiate a process for agreeing on national definitions, policies and guidelines on child, disability and gender-sensitive learning environments, and agree on strategies for their implementation.
- Governments take concrete measures to guarantee that the conditions of schools hold the same standards across the country, in rural, as well as urban areas.
- Governments take action to eradicate school-related gender-based violence must ensure safe and effective reporting for victims; ensure well-trained teachers and support personnel who are able to work on prevention, as well as respond adequately when such violence does occur; effective legislation and regulation, as well as multi-sector coordination and collaboration with key partners.



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### Target 4.b

**By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries**

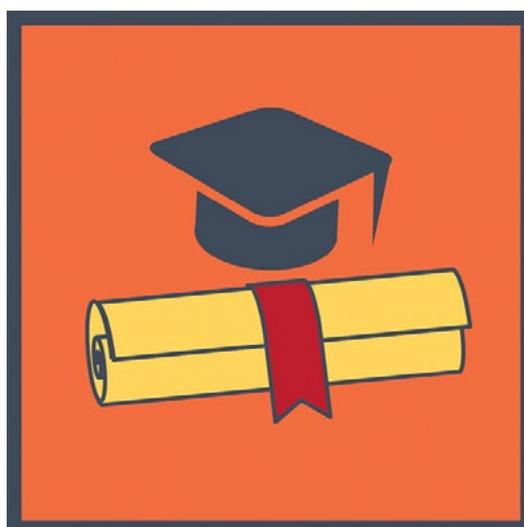
#### ***What do we want?***

This target is insufficient as a means of implementation for higher education and vocational education and training. Scholarships alone cannot build or strengthen national higher education systems. The target itself lacks an equity dimension, which means that inequalities of opportunity risk being reproduced.

The goal of quality education for all can only be met if supported by robust targets on education financing, setting minimum funding benchmarks for governments and donors.

#### ***EI demands that:***

- Governments allocate at least 6 % of GDP and 20 % of national expenditure to education. National higher education systems are built and strengthened through earmarked investments.
- Policies are put in place to ensure that scholarship schemes are equitable and inclusive, supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Policies are put in place to help prevent brain drain, by, for instance, introducing cooperation between home and recipient countries to ensure recognition and validation of qualifications acquired abroad.



## Target 4.c

**By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States**

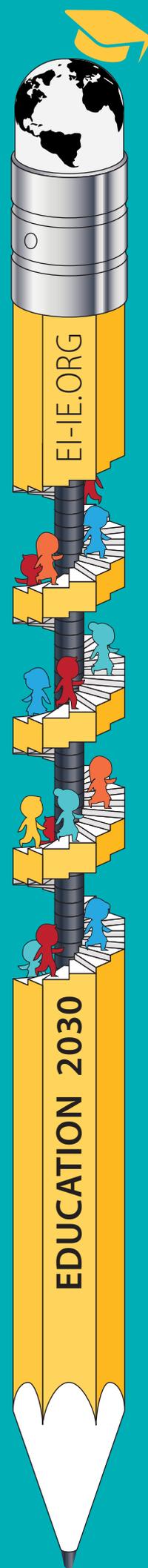
### ***What do we want?***

EI welcomes the target dedicated to teachers as a strong recognition of the urgent need for more qualified teachers, and of their role in delivering quality education for all. However, the level of ambition must be higher: governments have to ensure that all learners have the right to a trained and qualified teacher.

While international cooperation is important, it cannot replace coherent national policies and practices for the profession. In dialogue with representatives of teachers and education support personnel, governments must develop national plans for the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers, and for enhancing the status and working conditions of the profession.

### ***EI demands that:***

- Governments ensure that all teachers receive quality training (pre and in-service), ensuring that they are both professionally trained and highly qualified.
- Governments provide continuous professional development and support to teachers and education support personnel.
- Governments invest in making the teaching profession more attractive by ensuring decent salaries and working conditions, quality training, resources, support, continuous professional development, and rights at work.
- Governments set up or strengthen mechanisms for social dialogue with teacher organisations.



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# Background:

## Assessing 25 years of Education for All

Despite notable progress, the world did not achieve the Education for All goals set in Jomtien in 1990 and reaffirmed in Dakar in 2000; 25 years later, millions of children, youth, and adults are still being denied their right to a quality education. Just as teachers engage in formative assessment in their classrooms every day to improve learning, EI based its assessment of the EFA goals on practitioners' realities and views. Through regional consultations and a global survey, 13,500 teachers and education support personnel from 129 countries shared their views and recommendations for the future.

### 1. Know your system, know your context

Only by knowing our education systems can we reach all children, youth and adults, and improve the quality of education. A quality education system knows the people who work for it and those who benefit from it; as a result we know why some policies fail and how to improve them. Measuring and ranking schools by performance is not enough to improve the quality of education.

Governments should avoid the mere replication of policies that were supposedly successful elsewhere, and ensure that engagement with donors, multilateral agencies, and the private sector reflects the national vision of education, that is the vision of students, parents, teachers and government.

### 2. Invest more, invest equitably

Too many governments failed to mobilise sufficient funding for education. Often policies centred on cost efficiency and led to extensive recruitment of under-paid and under-trained education workers on short-term contracts, overcrowded classrooms, and insufficient facilities and learning materials. Governments need to make sure that education spending is equitable, and targets the most vulnerable and the marginalised.

Governments should set minimum funding benchmarks that guarantee sufficient resources to ensure quality education for all. Where governments genuinely lack the financial means to provide quality education, the international community should provide aid contributions. However, the long-term goal should be strong, sustainable, public education systems.

### 3. Engage in meaningful dialogue

Governments failed to deliver on their promise to establish mechanisms for dialogue on planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of education policy. For any sustainable long-term improvement of education systems, policies have to be contextually relevant and developed in dialogue with education workers. The classroom experience and reality should be at the centre of this dialogue.

Achieving quality education for all requires the participation of all, through effective and institutionalized dialogue. Better education is in the interest of all, but it takes political will to achieve.





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***Education International is the voice of teachers and education employees across the globe.*** It is the world's largest federations of education unions, bringing together 395 national organisations in 173 countries and territories, with a combined membership of 32.5 million professionals from early childhood education through tertiary education.

We advocate for free quality education for all and for highly qualified and motivated teachers and other education professionals to help build a better future for everybody. Education is a basic human right. Our education systems and institutions are a collective responsibility and must be publicly funded and accessible to all.

Trained, qualified, motivated and supported teachers and education support personnel are key to quality education. Raising professional standards; improving the status of teachers; pursuing the rights and equality agenda; building and strengthening independent education unions in all nations; these are the core objectives of Education International.

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