Call for case studies on good practices of countries on SDG4 implementation as part of the 5-Year Progress Review (5PR) on SDG4 (Education 2030) in Asia Pacific

Concept Note

Background:

Against the background of Education 2030 Framework for Action with its focus on “ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030, Education is at the forefront of global discussions last year, being one of the goals reviewed at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in New York last July, along with other SDGs (8, 10, 13, 16 and 17). Under the theme of empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality, education or SDG4 was a major contributor to these HLPF discussions.

At the regional level, the Asia-Pacific Regional Thematic Working Group (RTWG) on Education 2030+ which is co-chaired by UNESCO and UNICEF, is actively leading the SDG4 efforts and initiatives in this region and regularly contributes to global discussions both at High Level Political Forum and Global Steering Committee meetings. After almost 5 years since the adoption of the Education 2030 agenda, the RTWG will embark on its first regional 5-year progress review (5PR) of SDG4 (Education 2030) to: a) assess the overall progress of the Asia-Pacific region since 2015 and to draw lessons for and insights into the implementation of SDG4; and 2) prepare a regional report and present its key findings as main discussion input at the 2nd Asia Pacific Education Minister’ Meeting (APREMC-II) on SDG4 in August 2020 to further support accelerated efforts in the context of the ‘Decade of Action: 2020-2030’.

While the exercise will focus on the overall progress towards each of the 10 targets as well as the overall goal of the SDG4 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, innovations and lessons learned.

To kick off the SDG4 5PR process, a series of consultations were held in 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, it was proposed that the review should include selected case studies of good practices from countries on SDG4 implementation.

The purpose of collecting case studies is to serve:

- the gathering of information from all Member States in the region on what they can identify as good practices in the implementation of SDG 4 covering all its targets.
- the consolidation of such information for incorporation into the main report of 5PR for the region.
o the facilitation of sharing, exchange and replication of any of the good practices by countries of the region as they deem fit with suitable adaptations, if need be.
o the strengthening of the implementation of SDG 4 in all its individual targets in the Member States of the region in the decade of action towards 2030.

What is important to note further is that this exercise is expected to trigger experiential knowledge sharing among the Member States in tune with the contemporary Knowledge Management (KM) system, which seeks to provide the right knowledge for the right people, that is, policy makers, programme planners and implementers as well as other stakeholders. Again, such knowledge needs to be shared in the right format such that it could be properly understood and put into practice to strengthen education systems of the countries that may wish to replicate or upscale them to support the effective implementation of the targets of goal SDG 4.

**Definition of Good Practice:**

A good practice is commonly defined as a technique or method that, through experience and research, has proven reliably to lead to the desired result. As a word of caution, it is necessary to add here that the term “good practice” is not about a state of perfection, referring only to the elements that have been shown to contribute towards making interventions work fully successfully. Results may also be partial and may be related to only one or more components of the practice being considered. Therefore, documenting and applying lessons learned on what does not work and why it does not work are also to be deemed as important and integral parts of a good practice, so that the same types of mistakes committed, if any, can be avoided by other programmes and projects that seek to replicate them.

The term ‘good practice’ is also used to refer to ‘best practice’ in some cases. Similarly, the term ‘success story’ has been used in certain other contexts. ‘Pilot project’ and ‘innovation’ are other linked terms used in this regard.

**Criteria for selecting good practices:**

There are several aspects that need to be considered while selecting a good practice for knowledge sharing. These may include: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, ethical soundness, sustainability and possibility of duplication, the involvement of partners and the community and political commitment.

A good practice should meet at least the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and sustainability, in addition to one or more of the other criteria. A good practice need not meet all the above criteria, because it can be anything that works to produce results without using inordinate resources, in full or in part, and that can be useful in providing lessons learned. What is important is the documentation of what elements work and what do not work; as also how and why they work. It is also important to note the cultural contexts in which they have worked and highlight if there is something special in them that has contributed to the successful working of the good practice.

Another important aspect would be to look into the sustainability aspect of the good practice. A judgment needs to be made if the chosen good practice can sustain itself in the future. Some kind of anticipation of possible changes in the future in terms of emerging concerns and if the good practice can still hold good is warranted for doing this. Similarly, it is important to take stock of the fact that some pilot projects might have failed as well. It may be of use to keep the reasons for such failure in mind while choosing the good practices for knowledge sharing.

Some kind of ‘lessons learned’ from the good practices selected may be highlighted for the benefit of the countries which may be interested in replicating them.
Sources for Information/evidence needed for preparing the case studies on good practices:

Sources for collecting evidence/information for the preparation of good practices can come from different agencies/institutions such as Ministry of Education, other Ministries/departments who have implemented the project/programme or documented such good practices. The source can also include organizations such as NGOs, research organizations and private institutions. The information collected can be both quantitative and qualitative in nature.

Focus on Key Areas:

The key areas concerning the region may be focused upon while selecting the good practices. These could include: out-of-school children, gender imbalance at different levels, groups that get excluded for various reasons, youth and adult illiteracy, issues relating to the disabled, refugees, internally displaced populations, populations affected by conflicts and disasters, enhancing the quality of teaching-learning situations, literacy assessment, skill development linked to labour market demands, successful use of mobile technologies to reach the unreached, successful collaborations and partnerships between government, private sector, community based organizations (CBOs) and NGOs in the implementation and monitoring of SDG 4 targets, etc.

How will the compilation of case studies on good practices be useful in the context of 5-PR?

Country-specific good practices in these and other key areas will enhance the end use of the 5-PR for countries which are looking for ways to improve their performance in reaching the targets set for SDG 4 goal.

How the information can be collected?

Information may be collected from countries of the region on template as suggested below. This can be collected from MoEs, NSOs, leading education research institutions, private or public organizations implementing widely-acclaimed innovations in the key areas listed above, identifiable NGO networks, media and other sources of success stories. Further, there are lists available of good practices which can also be accessed via the internet, where organizations concerned with education have put up such lists. An important point to be borne in mind here is the need to impress on the data/information sources to adhere strictly to the template (see template below) and ensure that the information they provide conform to the expectations of comparability, consolidation and dissemination in the context of SDG 4.

There is provision in the template for the respondents to provide any important information on what made the practice work, which has not already been covered by the questions in the template. Respondents may be encouraged to use this, where appropriate.

Case Study Template

1. Contact personal information
   - Name:
   - Job Title:
   - Institution:
   - Address:
   - Phone:
   - Email:
   - Website:
2. Case study country(ies)
3. Case study title: (20 words)
4. Case study summary (200 words)
5. Description of the good practices: (where, when, how long, who involved, funding, etc. 300 words).
6. Case study contributes to which SDG-4 Target(s): (200 words)
7. Describe key results (outcomes/outputs) achieved by the activities: (200 words)
8. Explain problem(s) addressed by good practices: (200 words)
9. Objectives/goals of good practices: (200 words)
10. Describe key activities involved in implementing these good practices: (200 words)
11. How does such good practice(s)
   a. Ensure effectiveness? (100 words)
   b. Ensure efficiency? (100 words)
   c. Ensure relevance to SDG4 (100 words)
   d. Ensure sustainability? (100 words)
12. What country-specific social, economic, political, cultural or other determinants, if any, have contributed to the success of good practices? (200 words)
13. Any additional lessons learned you would like to share? (200 words)
14. How can these good practices be replicated in other contexts? (200 words)
15. Please separately attach figures, tables, other infographics, pictures or photos related to good practices

How to submit your case studies:

- Please submit your case studies using the link here on or before COB, 30th April 2020.
- All documents are to be submitted in English.

Selection Criteria

- A team of experts to review submissions has been established for this purpose. They will be responsible in shortlisting and selecting case studies based on criteria above (e.g., effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability).

Benefits

- The selected case studies will be databased in the SDG4 regional knowledge portal as a major resource reference for countries and partners.
- The team will also select a limited number of case studies (at least 10) to be included in the final 5PR report. The main authors of these case studies will be invited to attend the minister’s conference in August 2020 in Thailand. The conference organizers will cover their airfare and local expenses, including accommodation and meals during the conference.

For more information please contact Amalia Serrano, am.serrano@unesco.org