

# Target by target response to the Education 2030 Agenda

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## Goal 4

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



Education is a stand-alone goal and is also an explicit priority under several other goals. Quality, equity, inclusion and gender equality are at the centre of the new education agenda and there are dedicated targets on qualified teachers as well as safe learning environments.

The 2030 agenda recognises that primary education alone is not enough to prepare people for life and includes targets on pre-primary, secondary, vocational and tertiary education as well as youth and adult literacy and numeracy.

# Target 4.1

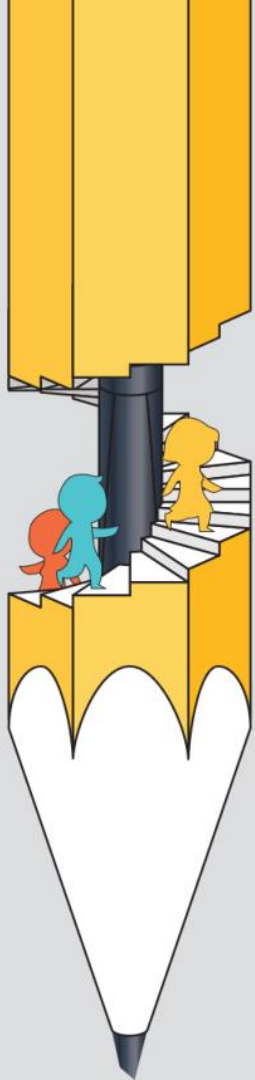
By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes



This target on the completion of quality primary and secondary education should be considered the universal minimum standard for education beyond 2015.

The commitment to free education is central and a prerequisite for universal access to and completion of quality primary and secondary education by all young people, regardless of gender, location, socio-economic background, or any other characteristic. It is also an important reaffirmation of the right to education.

Relevant learning outcomes should be understood as those that meet the diverse needs of learners and are in line with national standards.



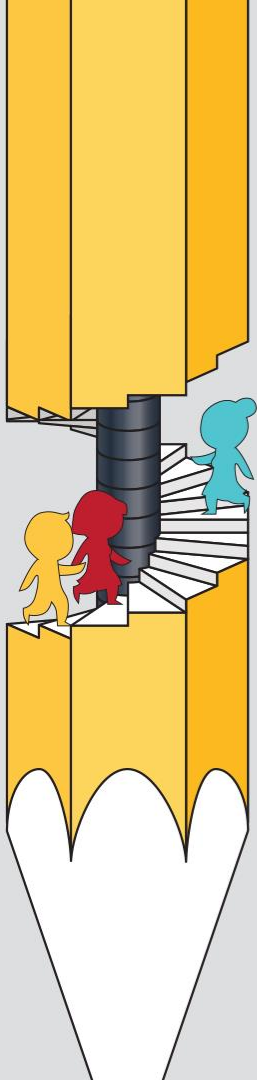
## Target 4.2

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



Expanding access to early childhood education is key to the right to education, but unfortunately this target emphasises early childhood development and pre-primary education, leaving out *early childhood education for the youngest children*. The right to education starts at birth.

Early childhood education is education in its own right and plays a particularly important role in overcoming disadvantages due to differences in the backgrounds of children. The 2030 education agenda should have included a commitment to at least one year of compulsory and free pre-primary education.



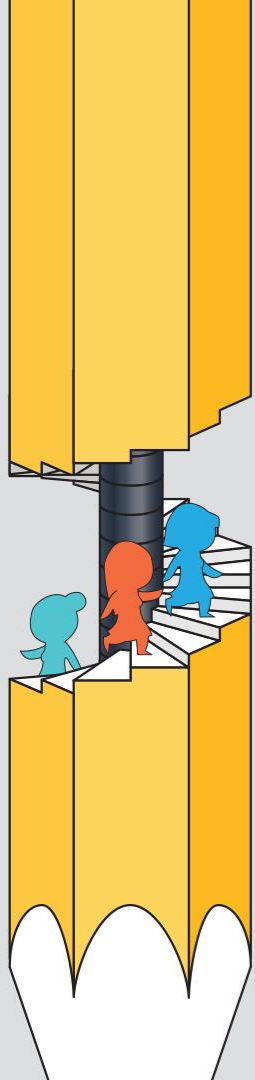
## Target 4.3

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



Expanding access to quality technical and vocational as well as tertiary education represents an important step forward, as these levels of education weren't covered by the previous global education agenda.

The emphasis on *affordable* is unfortunate as there is no such thing as affordable for the very poorest. The aim must be “the progressive introduction of free education”, as agreed in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.



## Target 4.4

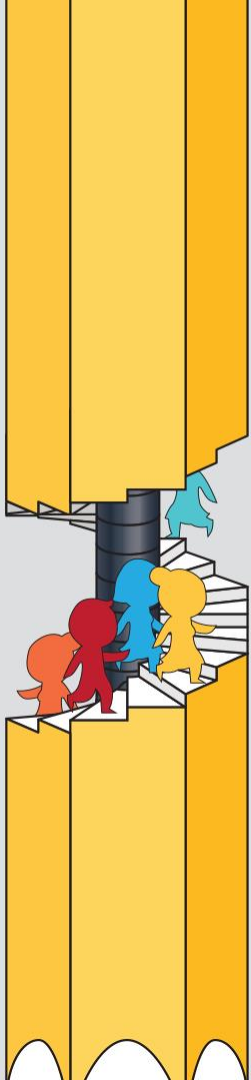
By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship



The emphasis on relevant skills can be seen as a direct response to the current high levels of youth unemployment.

The implementation of this target depends on the access to and completion of vocational and tertiary education, as these are the means through which many of these skills are acquired.

Decent work must be ensured for all.



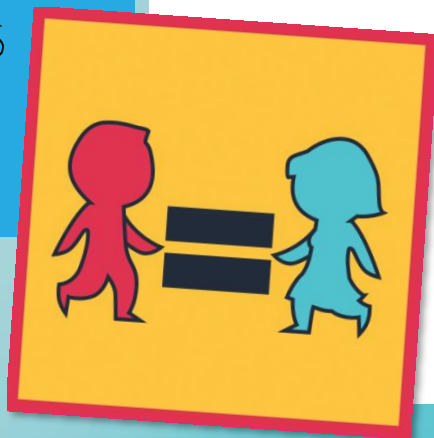
# Target 4.5

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



Equal access is at the core of the right to education, and this target is an important commitment to reaching those that traditionally have been excluded from education.

At the same time, equity considerations have to be made under each and every target.



## Target 4.6

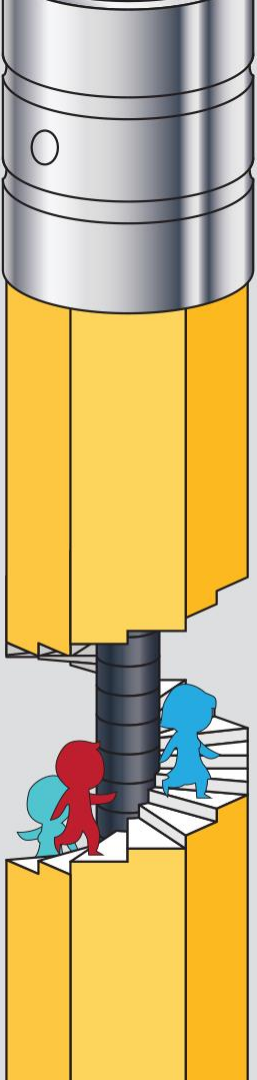
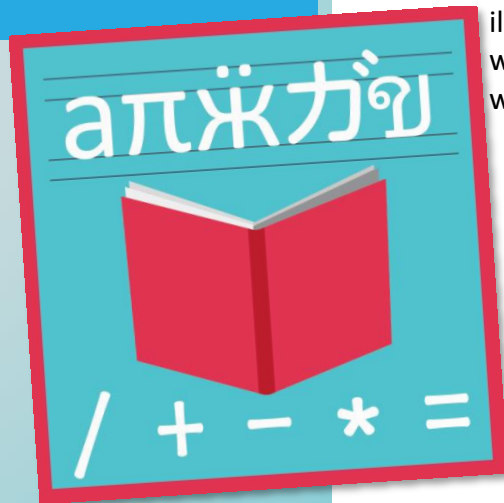
By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy



This is an improvement from the previous EFA target which only focused on adult literacy.

It is however unfortunate that the target covers *all* youth but only a *substantial* proportion of adults.

Given the current number of illiterate adults (the majority of whom are women) a zero target would have been more appropriate.

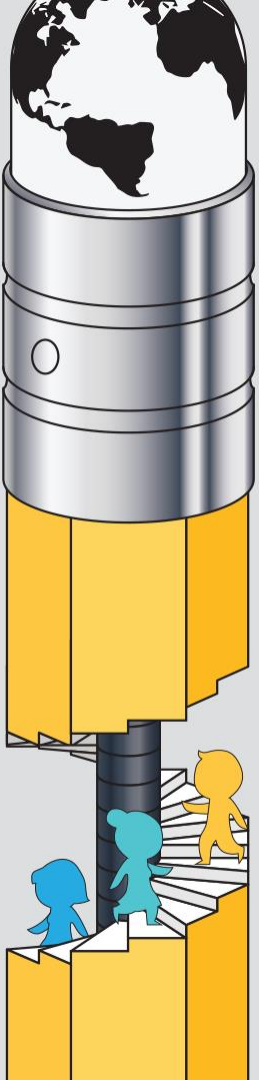


## Target 4.7

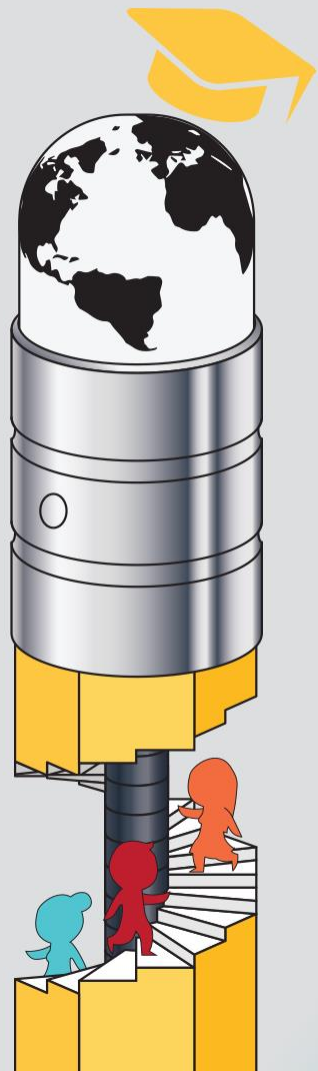
By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship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



This target places education for human rights, global citizenship and sustainable development at the centre of quality education and of education policy beyond 2015. Importantly, it counters the narrow focus on test scores and reaffirms that “education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms”. Its success will depend on the extent to which it is integrated across the curriculum, teacher training and teaching and learning materials.







## 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



Quality education cannot take place without adequate, safe and inclusive learning environments. The target represents an important commitment to building new schools but also to upgrading existing education facilities. It also pushes for clearer national-level definitions and policies on *child, disability and gender-sensitive learning environments*.



# Target 4.b

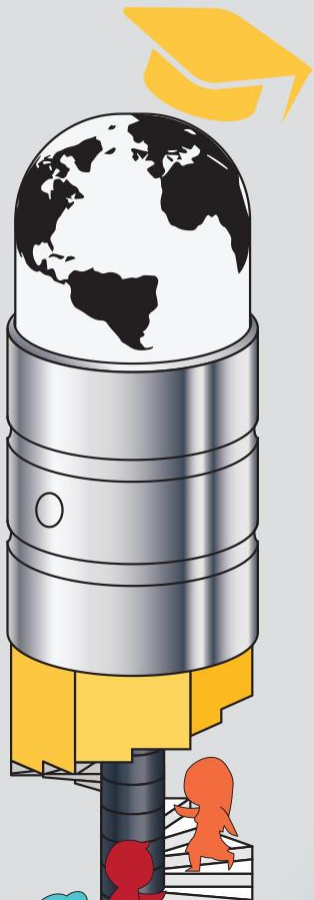
By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology,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



This target is insufficient as a means of implementation for higher education and vocational education and training. The education goal can only be met if supported by robust targets on education financing, setting minimum funding benchmarks for governments and donors.

While recognising the added value of student exchanges, scholarships alone will not contribute to building and strengthening national higher education systems.

The target itself lacks an equity dimension, which means that inequalities of opportunity risk being reproduced. While it may facilitate useful student mobility at the same time, it risks encouraging brain drain.



## 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



A target dedicated to teachers and their role in delivering quality education for all is of course key to the success of the new agenda. However, this target is insufficient as a means to overcoming the shortage of trained and qualified teachers.

Firstly, the ambition should be to ensure that all children have quality teachers. Secondly, teachers must be both professionally trained and highly qualified, and empowered and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems.



# Thank you

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