

Universal Screening to Address Learning Poverty and SDG 4

Side Meeting at the Transforming Education (TES) Pre-Summit

Tuesday, 28 June 2022

Room VIII, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France

Concept Note

In 2021, the World Bank highlighted that learning poverty among students across the world was at 53% and as high as 80% in poor countries. This was set to increase by at least 10% post the pandemic. School dropouts, which currently range between 3-6%,¹ were expected to increase to 5-8%. Thus, despite increased enrolments in school, global educational goals in terms of quality of learning could be in serious jeopardy. Moreover, learning assessments that are diagnostic in nature could prove to be insufficient as learners do not receive targeted remedial action. However, **both learning poverty and school dropout rates can be dramatically reduced if learner needs can be identified and addressed early.**

Therefore, a key policy recommendation of the Reimagining Education: The International Science and Evidence based Education (ISEE) Assessment (Duraiappah et.al, 2022) report is to introduce early universal screening, intervention, and monitoring through structured protocols in education systems.

Universal screening is a protocol for teachers to obtain information about learner needs - academic, cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral - and thus implement a more equity-driven approach to address each student's individual learning needs (Whitley and Hollweck, 2020). The design and implementation of universal screening protocols serve two purposes -(1) to delineate processes required to identify the needs and strengths of all students, and (2) to empower education systems to **not** pursue the 'waiting to fail' model (Fuchs and Fuchs, 1998; Lyon, 1995; Vellutino et al., 1996) when determining student needs. This awareness of students' knowledge levels, competencies, and weaknesses can subsequently allow teachers to provide quality education to all learners (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019).

Building on the ISEE Assessment report which was written by a transdisciplinary group of over 300 experts from over 45 countries, UNESCO MGIEP has formulated a set of guidelines to support Member States implement universal screening within their education systems. This meeting will thus serve as a forum for the Member States to understand what universal screening is, its costs and benefits, and how it can practically support learning recovery in the post-pandemic era.

¹ <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/798061592482682799/covid-and-education-June17-r6.pdf>

Agenda - Side Meeting at TES Pre-summit

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June 28 2022 1500 hrs - 1630 hrs	
1500 - 1505 hrs	<i>Opening Remarks on the ISEE Assessment Process and Futures Commission resolution</i> (Vera Lacoecilhe, Deputy Permanent Delegate at Permanent Delegation of St. Lucia)
1505 - 1510 hrs	<i>Setting the Scene</i> (Anantha K. Duraiappah, Director, UNESCO MGIEP)
1510 - 1420 hrs	<i>Interactive Presentation</i> (Ammaarah Martinus, Senior Programme Officer, UNESCO MGIEP and Nandini Chatterjee, Senior Programme Officer, UNESCO MGIEP) 1) <i>Universal Screening - a recommendation from the ISEE Assessment - for learning recovery with strong implications for transformative and inclusive education</i> 2) <i>Making a case for Universal Screening</i> 3) <i>Net benefits</i> 4) <i>Polls/Questions/Testimonies</i>
1420 - 1425 hrs	<i>Updates on the Science Conference in Montreal, global research agenda for education</i> (Michel Bonsaint, Quebec Government Representative at Permanent Delegation of Canada)
1425 - 1430 hrs	<i>Closing remarks - widening the toolkit for transformative education and learning recovery based on science and evidence</i> (H.E. Adam Al Mulla, Permanent Delegate of the State of Kuwait to UNESCO)