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<u>Item **6** of the provisional agenda</u>

UNESCO's GLOBAL/REGIONAL COORDINATION OF AND SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDG 4 – EDUCATION 2030

SUMMARY

Pursuant to 200 EX/7, the Director-General submits to the Executive Board the report on UNESCO's contribution to the coordination of and support for SDG 4 – Education 2030.

The financial and administrative implications of this document have been covered in document 38 C/5.

Action expected of the Executive Board: Proposed decision in paragraph 18.

I.   INTRODUCTION

1.   The 2015 Incheon Declaration mandates UNESCO to lead and coordinate SDG 4 – Education 2030. As the focal point for education within the overall 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNESCO has been leading the coordination of, and support for, the implementation of SDG 4 – Education 2030 through: (1) coordination of global and regional partnerships; (2) policy support and capacity development, and (3) monitoring, review and reporting. In line with 200 EX/Decision 7, the Director-General presents to the Executive Board at its 202nd session her report on UNESCO's coordination of and support for SDG 4 – Education 2030.

2.   Major Programme I (MP I) will be driven by a two-pronged approach, structured around two Main Lines of Action: (a) supporting the implementation of SDG 4 – Education 2030 at country level, through eight expected results and (b) leading the coordination and review/monitoring of SDG 4 – Education 2030 at global and regional levels through two expected results. In full alignment with the 2030 Agenda, MP I defined its 39 C/5 ten expected results to contribute directly to nine out of the ten SDG 4 targets/means of implementation and to other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

II.   GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

3.   The coordination of education stakeholders through diverse platforms and mechanisms at global and regional levels has strengthened partnerships and harmonized approaches in support of more effective and efficient delivery at country level.

4.   The SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee is the main global multi-stakeholder consultation and coordination mechanism for SDG 4. It was established in May 2016 in order to support Member States and partners to achieve SDG 4 and the education-related targets in other goals of the 2030 Agenda. In December 2016, the Steering Committee adopted a roadmap outlining priority actions to strengthen political commitment to Education 2030 targets and to provide strategic guidance for national implementation and monitoring. At its most recent meeting at the United Nations in New York (29-30 June 2017), the Steering Committee formulated a number of recommendations on: (i) policies and strategies for the implementation of SDG 4, (ii) domestic and international financing, as well as on (iii) monitoring, review and reporting. Organized back-to-back with the High-Level Action Event on Education (New York, 28 June 2017) convened by the President of the General Assembly, the Steering Committee was also able to strengthen its visibility among development partners and to better profile education as the centerpiece for the 2030 Agenda.

5.   In addition, the Steering Committee established a course of action leading up to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) Review on the SDGs in 2019. After submitting input to ECOSOC on the contribution of education to "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" as part of the 2017 HLPF review, the Steering Committee will contribute to the 2018 HLPF review devoted to the theme of "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies". It will also prepare a thorough review of SDG 4 and education-related targets in other SDGs for the 2019 theme on "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness", including SDGs 3, 4, 5 10, 16 and 17 through the 2018 Global Education 2030 Meeting. Aligned with the meeting schedule of the HLPF 2019, this meeting will review progress made towards SDG 4 – Education 2030 and also be an opportunity to critically review the effectiveness of global and regional consultation and coordination mechanisms.

6.   Regional consultation and cooperation mechanisms are essential links between national experiences and global education policy. Regional multi-stakeholder consultations have not only contributed to a shared understanding of education in the 2030 Agenda, but they also serve as platforms for peer learning around the challenges and opportunities for translating global Education 2030 targets and commitments into sector policy, planning, management and monitoring. SDG 4 – Education 2030 consultations have been organized across all regions/subregions since the adoption

of the 2030 Framework for Action in November 2015.[1] Many of these have resulted in roadmaps, often taken forward by the regional Education 2030 thematic working groups, task teams, or partner groups established by UNESCO and which aim to ensure more coordinated country support for implementation and monitoring.

7.   The E-9 partnership of high-population countries represents some of the largest education systems in the world. The recent Ministerial Education 2030 Meeting in Dhaka (5-6 February 2017) marked the rotation of the E-9 chair from Pakistan to Bangladesh. Initially established to strengthen progress towards quality basic education for all, the Ministerial Meeting refocused the E-9 partnership on system-wide issues of governance and management. The Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report background note prepared for the Dhaka meeting, *Sharing, Learning, Leading: The E-9 and SDG 4*, focused its review on such issues as integrated policy and planning, financing of education, national learning assessments, as well as on monitoring, review and reporting.

8.   The Consultative Consultation of NGOs (CCNGO) on Education 2030 is UNESCO's key mechanism for global dialogue and partnership with civil society organizations working to advance education development. The recent global meeting of the CCNGO in Siem Reap (8-9 May 2017) recast the global NGO network in light of the more ambitious SDG 4 – Education 2030 agenda and commitments.

9.   Represented on the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Board of Directors, as well as on two of its committees, UNESCO has provided substantive inputs into key GPE documents and decision-making, including those concerning grant review. At the operational level, UNESCO has been involved in the management of GPE's various funding schemes, such as the projects funded under the Global and Regional Activities (GRA) Programme, the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF), the country grants, as well as in the coordination of the Local Education Groups (LEGs) in a number of countries. UNESCO is also coordinating closely with GPE and other partners, through the SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee, to support countries in the implementation of SDG 4-Education 2030 targets.

III.   POLICY SUPPORT AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

10.   UNESCO provides support for Education 2030 through a range of knowledge products, research and foresight initiatives, capacity development programmes and technical guidelines in areas in which it has sound expertise and a clear comparative advantage. The policy briefs and working papers produced have addressed a range of critical issues for education and the broader 2030 Agenda at both global and regional levels. These include stagnating aid to education; financing of education; privatization; poverty reduction through universal primary and secondary education; out-of-school children and youth literacy; lifelong learning; equitable access to higher education; school-based violence; education for displaced people; curriculum and learning assessment; textbooks; and language of instruction.

11.   The research and foresight programme aims at strengthening UNESCO's observatory function in education and at contributing to policy debate and research that can guide future education policy and practice. Since its release in 2015, *Rethinking Education* has served to prompt public policy debate on the purpose of education and the organization of learning in a changing world. Building on this, regional projects devoted to re-visioning education and development are now underway in Africa and in the Arab States, as are a number of global and regional studies on such issues as harnessing local culture for education policy and practice; exploring youth demand for post-basic

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[1]   West and Central Africa (Dakar, November 2015, September 2016); Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok, November 2015, November 2016 and July 2017); Arab States (Cairo, December 2015; Dubai March 2017); Central Asia (Almaty, February 2017); Europe and North America (Paris, October 2016); East Africa (Dar-es-Salaam, February 2016); Latin America and the Caribbean (Buenos Aires, January 2017); South Asia (September 2016).

education; the culture of testing; financing of education; national legal provisions for the right to education; as well as the recognition, validation and accreditation of adult basic education.

12. UNESCO's Capacity Development for Education (CapED) Programme has continued to implement its pilot component in ten countries with the aim to operationalize SDG 4 commitments at the national level, bearing in mind context-specific needs, expectations and policy/planning cycles. The programme is based on a two-phased approach: (1) supporting the ten countries in the review of existing policies, plans and strategy documents in light of SDG 4 targets and commitments; (2) improving national monitoring data and information systems for SDG 4 through the preparation of national strategies for the development of education statistics and the establishment of robust national monitoring frameworks. As part of this exercise, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) is developing a capacity development package for on-the-job training of national statistical teams, which will enable countries to undertake a self-assessment of data sources and quality, and to identify their capacity development needs for statistical data production, analysis and use.

13. Furthermore, UNESCO has developed a number of technical guidelines to support Member States and partners in translating SDG 4 – Education 2030 into national education systems. These include guides on unpacking SDG 4 targets and commitments, and technical guidelines for field offices to support national partners in mainstreaming SDG 4 into sector-wide policy and planning.

IV.   MONITORING, REVIEW AND REPORTING

14. Monitoring and review of progress in education is a key function of UNESCO. The Organization leads in the development of a global indicator framework and in monitoring educational progress based both on internationally comparable data, as well as on more qualitative research and review. This is undoubtedly one of its comparative advantages.

15. Co-chaired by UIS and UNESCO's Education Sector, the third meeting of the Technical Cooperation Group (TCG) on SDG 4 – Education 2030 Indicators in Montreal (31 May-1 June 2017) further developed the indicator framework for global monitoring of SDG 4. Participants were updated on the global process of SDG reporting; outcomes from the three TCG working groups and on additional topics related to statistical capacity development and methodological (and policy) issues related to assessing learning outcomes. In addition, the third meeting of the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning (GAML), organized by UIS (Mexico City, 11-12 May 2017), formulated recommendations for the TCG on monitoring learning across SDG 4 based on current cross-national learning assessment data, as well as on progress towards development of a Global Lead Indicator.

16. UNESCO has also been leading the implementation of SDG Target 4.7 through its work on Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education, providing policy guidance, capacity development and technical support. Monitoring Target 4.7 at the global level is based on Member States reporting on the implementation of the *1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*. The findings of the Sixth consultation are submitted to the 202nd session of the Executive Board (202 EX/24 Part III). Furthermore, UNESCO has launched a special webpage *"Learning to live together sustainably (SDG 4.7): Trends and Progress"*[2] that showcases relevant data to monitor the progress of SDG Target 4.7.

17. The 2016 GEM Report explored the reciprocal linkages between education and other development outcomes, as well as the challenges of monitoring the more ambitious scope of education in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. It was the first Report in a newly mandated fifteen-year series to monitor progress towards the implementation of SDG 4. The 2017 Report, devoted to accountability in education, will be released in October 2017. Both the Global Action Week on Education (April 2017), as well as the High-Level Ministerial Forum devoted to

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2   https://en.unesco.org/gced/sdg47progress

"SDG 4 – Education 2030: Two years on" to be organized at the 39th General Conference, have accountability as their overarching themes.

Proposed decision

18.   In the light of the above, the Executive Board may wish to take the following decision:

The Executive Board,

1.   Recalling 197 EX/Decision 6 and 200 EX/Decision 7,

2.   Having examined document 202 EX/6,

3.   Expresses its appreciation to the Director-General for her efforts on the coordination of and support for SDG 4 – Education 2030;

4.   Welcomes the strong cooperation established to ensure a comprehensive approach as well as the development of close partnerships with relevant actors and stakeholders;

5.   Urges Member States to support UNESCO activities on the implementation of SDG 4 – Education 2030, including through extrabudgetary sources;

6.   Requests the Director-General to report to the Executive Board at its 205th session on UNESCO's coordination of and support for SDG 4 – Education 2030.