The Sustainable Development Goals
Extended Report 2022

Note: The Statistics Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNSD) prepares the annual The Sustainable Development Goals Report, also known as the glossy report, based on storyline inputs submitted by UN international agencies in their capacity as mandated custodian agencies for the SDG indicators. However, due to space constraints, not all information received from custodian agencies is able to be included in the final glossy report. Therefore, in order to provide the general public with all information regarding the indicators, this ‘Extended Report’ has been prepared by UNSD. It includes all storyline contents for each indicator as provided by the custodian agencies and is unedited. For instances where the custodian agency has not submitted a storyline for an indicator, please see the custodian agency focal point information linked for further information.
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COVID-19 reverses historical progress in reducing extreme poverty

Global poverty declined substantially from 2000 to 2018, the last year with sufficient data to calculate global poverty rates. Whereas more than a quarter of the world’s population lived below the international poverty line of $1.90 per day in 2000, that number had fallen to 8.6% in 2018. The declines were particularly strong in Eastern Asia and South-eastern Asia which saw a drop in the extreme poverty rate from 31.7% to 1.0% over this time period. The majority of the world’s extreme poor are now estimated to live in Sub-Saharan Africa. That said, also Sub-Saharan Africa has seen declines from about 59.3% in 2000 to 39.9% in 2018. Though data are sparse, estimates suggest that poverty has been on the rise in Western Asia and Northern Africa over the past decade.

COVID-19 has reversed some of the impressive historical progress. For the first time in a generation, projections suggest global poverty increased in 2020. Before the pandemic spread, global poverty was predicted to fall from 8.3% in 2019 to 8.0% in 2020. However, it is now estimated to have increased from 8.3% to 9.2%. This reverses more than four years of progress and means that about 93 million people worldwide were in extreme poverty because of the pandemic. Little progress has been made in catching up to the pre-COVID trend since then. A nowcast for 2022 still predicts that 75 million people worldwide are living in extreme poverty because of the pandemic.

Rapid food inflation could make this prospect grimmer. Poorer households tend to spend a larger share of their resources on food relative to non-food. In isolation, this means that poorer households are likely to be hit harder by the current inflationary pressures. That said, many rural households engaged in agricultural production are net sellers of food and as such could benefit from rising prices. Households also respond to higher prices by changing their consumption patterns to lessen the impact. As a result, assessments of previous major food price crises have shown that high food prices are not necessarily detrimental to poverty reduction.

Regardless of whether this bears out this time, projections suggest that the world is not on track to meet the SDG 1.1 target of ending extreme poverty by 2030. For that to happen, poor countries would need to experience unprecedented levels of growth and reduce inequality at a speed not seen historically.

Global poverty rate, 2000-2022 (%)
Target 1.2: By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions

Indicator 1.2.1: Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age

Most countries not on track to halve poverty by 2030

Prior to 2020, only 27% of countries with comparable national poverty rates across 10 years or more had halved the proportion of their populations living in poverty. Yet an additional 52% of countries had reduced their national poverty rate while the remaining 22% had experienced increases in poverty.

The most encouraging trends are in Central Asia and Southern Asia where five of the six countries with data available halved their national poverty rate over 10 years. In Latin America and the Caribbean and Eastern Asia and South-eastern Asia trends were also encouraging, with nearly all countries with data lowering their national poverty rate and a considerably share by more than half. The trends also look encouraging in Western Asia and Northern Africa where all six countries with data lowered their national poverty rate and two by more than half. Yet in that region, the countries without data tend to be more conflict prone which might give a biased sample of trends.

Trends are less encouraging in Northern America and Europe, where half of countries saw an increase in national poverty rates and only two out of twenty decreased their poverty rate by more than half. This is in part because some countries in this region measure poverty using relative standards, that is, using poverty lines that increase as countries get wealthier. In Sub-Saharan Africa, though the vast majority of countries saw declines in poverty, many of these still have a long way to go to halve poverty by 2030.

COVID-19 is threatening to reverse some of the progress made. For the 21 countries with national poverty rates in 2020, only a quarter saw declines in poverty relatively to the prior year with data available. This is particularly the case in Latin America and the Caribbean where the nine countries with comparable data in 2020 and before all saw increases in poverty. In Northern America and Europe and Eastern Asia and South-eastern Asia, though data for 2020 are sparser, some countries do seem to have decreased national poverty in 2020.

A very simple extrapolation – continuing current trends linearly until 2030 – suggest that only 36% of countries with available data will have halved poverty by 2030. The numbers are most dire in Northern America and Europe, where only 15% are on track to halve poverty by 2030. In Central Asia and Southern Asia and Eastern Asia and South-eastern Asia this applies to about 75% of countries while in Sub-Saharan Africa it applies to 28%.

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Custodian agency(ies): World Bank

Indicator 1.2.2: Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions

Custodian agency(ies): National Gov.
Target 1.3: Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable

Indicator 1.3.1: Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable

Cash transfer programs have been a favorite social protection response to ameliorate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cash transfer programs have become a favorite social protection mechanism to direct assistance to vulnerable populations amidst the COVID-19 response. Once the pandemic hit, 203 countries implemented 962 cash transfers programs and 48 countries, 61 social pension programs to deal with the crisis. Many countries adapted their existing cash transfer programs by either expanding the number of beneficiaries or increasing the amount of the transfers or adding top ups benefits. They also relaxed administrative constraints to program intake. This proves the flexibility of cash transfers program as an emergency response and thus as an important building block for countries to move into adaptive social protection systems.

However, coverage gaps were prevalent before COVID-19, demonstrating how ill-prepared some countries were to deal with the effects of the pandemic. Before the pandemic, these types of programs reached one fifth of the world’s total population. However, coverage differed among income groups. For instance, in low-income countries, cash transfer programs reached only 5% of the population while in high-income countries, 35%.

Conditional (CCT) and unconditional cash transfer (UCT) programs are the most common type of cash transfer programs implemented across countries. CCT reached, before the pandemic, in average 44% of the poorest quintile of the population in low-middle, upper-middle and high-income level countries. UCT programs cover almost one third of this population whereas in low-income countries it reached, at most, 4%. Social pension programs were also prevalent in these income level groups, having a higher coverage in upper-middle income countries where they reach one fourth of the poorest quintile.

CCT programs were more prevalent in Latin America & the Caribbean, where all countries in the ASPIRE inventory have at least one CCT program implemented reaching 42% of the population in the poorest quintile, whereas UCT and social pensions are more predominant in other regions. For instance, in Northern America and Europe all 9 countries in the ASPIRE inventory have implemented at least one UCT program reaching 39% of the poorest quintile. In the Sub-Saharan African region, 19 out of 21 countries have implemented at least one UCT program but their coverage is smaller, reaching only one tenth of the poorest population.

Social pension programs are also prevalent in Latin America & the Caribbean but its coverage in the bottom 20% of the population is still low. Whereas coverage is higher in other regions as Sub-Saharan Africa where social pension programs reach almost half of the population in the 1st quintile (although only 7 out of 21 countries in the region have implemented at least one social pension program).

Administrative data from 2020-2021 show welcoming expansion of these programs as the pandemic unfolded. For instance, 146 cash transfer programs in 90 countries expanded the number of beneficiaries, while 727 programs in 192 countries increased the transfer amount. 39 programs in 32 countries expanded both, beneficiaries, and transfer amounts. The next wave of household surveys will allow us to analyze the distributive effect of these expansions.

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**Percentage of Population in the Poorest Quintile Receiving Cash Transfer Programs, as Captured in Household Surveys - by Income Group (%)**


Notes: Based on results from 65 household surveys from 2014 onwards using latest year available per country. The number of countries is as follows: Total (n=65, CCT n=20, UCT n=61, Social Pensions n=37); Low-income (n=8, CCT n=9, UCT n=8, Social Pensions n=9); Lower middle income (n=22, CCT n=4, UCT n=17, Social Pensions n=9); Upper middle income (n=32, CCT n=12, UCT n=22, Social Pensions n=8); High income (n=3, CCT n=2, UCT n=3, Social Pensions n=2). Aggregated indicators are calculated using simple averages of country-level social assistance coverage rates across regions. Coverage is: (Number of individuals in the total population or poorest quintile who live in a household where at least one member receives the transfer)/(Number of individuals in the total population).

This figure underestimates total coverage because household surveys do not include all programs existing in each country. The poorest quintile is calculated using per capita pre-transfer welfare (income or consumption).

**Percentage of Population in the Poorest Quintile Receiving Cash Transfer Programs, as Captured in Household Surveys - by Region (%)**


Notes: Based on results from 65 household surveys from 2014 onwards using latest year available per country. The number of countries is as follows: Total (n=65, CCT n=20, UCT n=61, Social Pensions n=37); Central and Southern Asia (n=6, CCT n=1, UCT n=4, Social Pensions n=9); Eastern Asia (n=7, CCT n=2, UCT n=4, Social Pensions n=1); Europe and Northern America (n=8, CCT n=0, UCT n=8, Social Pensions n=7); Latin America and the Caribbean (n=17, CCT n=17, UCT n=6, Social Pensions n=1); Northern Africa and Western Asia (n=6, CCT n=0, UCT n=5, Social Pensions n=2); Sub-Saharan Africa (n=21, CCT n=4, UCT n=19, Social Pensions n=7). Aggregated indicators are calculated using simple averages of country-level social assistance coverage rates across regions. Coverage is: (Number of individuals in the total population or poorest quintile who live in a household where at least one member receives the transfer)/(Number of individuals in the total population).

This figure underestimates total coverage because household surveys do not include all programs existing in each country. The poorest quintile is calculated using per capita pre-transfer welfare (income or consumption).

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Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Claudia Rodriguez-Alas, World Bank; Emil Tesliuc, World Bank; Ana Sofia Martinez, World Bank

Custodian agencies: ILO
Strengthening resilience by building universal social protection

Social protection systems are fundamental to prevent and reduce poverty across the life cycle, including benefits for children, for mothers with newborns, for persons with disabilities, for the unemployed, employment injury victims, and for older persons. The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated the importance of social protection systems to protect people’s health, jobs and incomes. However, it also revealed the consequences of high coverage gaps in many countries, exposing the vulnerability of the population coping with the devastating health and employment impact of the crisis.

From the onset of the pandemic up until May 2022, many new social protection measures were introduced: almost 1900 measures (mostly short-term) were announced by 211 countries and territories in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Majority of measures were introduced in the area of general assistance directed to the vulnerable population groups – 39 per cent of all measures, following by measures of income and unemployment protection and healthcare – 26 per cent and 11 per cent of all measures, respectively.

The effectiveness of unemployment protection schemes as a crisis response instrument is limited by two factors: (1) many countries do not yet have an unemployment scheme in place – only 96 countries have unemployment protection schemes (contributory or non-contributory) in place; and (2) even where such schemes exist, effective coverage is often limited, especially in countries with high levels of informal employment.

Globally, in 2020 only 43.1 per cent of the labour force were legally covered by unemployment benefit schemes and only 18.6 per cent of unemployed workers worldwide actually received unemployment benefits (figure 1). While in high-income countries, more than half of unemployed persons received cash benefits (52.2 per cent), this was the case for only 17.5 per cent in upper-middle income countries, 5.5 per cent in lower-middle income countries, and less than 1.0 per cent in low-income countries. Coverage gaps were also linked to the fact that most unemployment protection schemes focus on employees, largely excluding self-employed workers. For example, of the 83 countries with mandatory unemployment insurance schemes, only 11 countries include self-employed workers on a mandatory basis and 9 countries include them only on a voluntary basis.

Despite significant progress in the development of national social protection floors, vulnerable population groups still face greater challenges than other sections of the population in accessing social protection. Globally, in 2020 only 28.9 per cent of people considered vulnerable – all children, along with people of working age and older people not covered by social insurance – received social assistance (figure 1). While in high-income countries, almost two thirds of vulnerable people received non-contributory benefits (63.0 per cent), this was the case for only 34.4 per cent in upper-middle income countries, 15.2 per cent in lower-middle income countries, and only 7.8 per cent in low-income countries.

The persistence of coverage gaps is associated with significant underinvestment in social protection. The financing gap in social protection urgently needs to be closed to ensure at least minimum provision for all – a social protection floor. In 2020, countries spent on average 12.9 per cent of their GDP per year on social protection (excluding healthcare), but this figure masks staggering variations. High-income countries spent on average 16.4 per cent, or twice as much as upper-middle-income countries (which spent 8 per cent), six times as much as lower-middle-income countries (2.5 per cent), and 15 times as much as low-income countries (1.1 per cent). Since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, lower-middle-income countries require an additional US$362.9 billion and low-income countries - US$17.9 billion annually.

Source: ILO estimates based on national data. ILO World Social Protection Database.

Figure 1. People covered by social protection systems and floors; population covered by at least one social protection benefit, vulnerable population covered by non-contributory schemes and unemployed persons receiving cash benefits, 2020.

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:
- World Social Protection Data Dashboards
- Social Protection Monitor
- Financing gaps in social protection: Global estimates and strategies for developing countries in light of the COVID-19 crisis and beyond
- ILOSTAT

Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Valeria Nestenerko, ILO; Helmut Schwarzer, ILO

Custodian agency(ies): ILO
Target 1.4: By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance

Indicator 1.4.1: Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services

**Custodian agency(ies):** UN-Habitat

Indicator 1.4.2: Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, (a) with legally recognized documentation, and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and type of tenure

**Custodian agency(ies):** World Bank, UN-Habitat
Target 1.5: By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters

Indicator 1.5.1/11.5.1/13.1.1: Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population

COVID-19 has reversed progress made in reducing disaster-related mortality.

The COVID-19 global pandemic has claimed more lives in 2020 than other disasters have done over the previous five years. In 2020, a total of 80 countries reported 297,540 deaths caused by disasters of all origins, including mortality attributed to the pandemic (Sendai Framework Monitor). This is more than the total number of disaster-related deaths reported between 2015-2019: 286,000 casualties, as reported by a total of 139 countries (Fig. 1). From a preliminary analysis, it is estimated that at least 80 percent of the disaster-related mortality in 2020 was due to COVID-19. Even this high figure on disaster mortality rate in 2020 is significantly underreported, as the impact of the pandemic alone was estimated to be 1.9 million deaths by the end of 2020 as per COVID-19 reports compiled by WHO.

The most widespread and devastating biological hazard in recent history, COVID-19 has disrupted and threatens to reverse global progress in reducing disaster-related mortality and people affected. Prior to 2020, the world was making progress, albeit uneven, towards achieving SDG 1.5.1 / Sendai Framework Target A on reducing disaster-related mortality. Disaster-related deaths averaged at 57,000 people per year between 2015-2019 (Fig. 1). Moreover, the global trend over the past decade was on a downward trajectory (Fig. 2). The pandemic has however placed this goal beyond reach, as it overwhelmed health systems and highlighted underlying socio-economic vulnerabilities to biological hazards.

The simultaneous occurrence of other disasters, including tropical cyclones and floods, while people were still struggling to contain the pandemic, resulted in compounded impacts, outstretching the disaster risk management systems. The importance of multi-hazard and multi-sectorial approaches to disaster risk reduction therefore remains paramount for the post-COVID recovery and building back better.

Some of the most vulnerable countries experience particularly high levels of disaster-related mortality. In 2020, disaster mortality rate was as high as 2.1 and 1.5 deaths per 100,000 population in LDCs and SIDS respectively and up to 11.8 deaths per 100,000 population in LLDCs. (Fig. 3).

Even while there has been an unprecedented rise in mortality in 2020, primarily owing to COVID-19, the trend of persons reported affected by disasters, that primarily includes those ill or injured, whose dwellings are damaged or destroyed or whose livelihoods are disrupted; has been on declining after peaking in 2015 (Fig. 4).

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:
- Sendai Framework Monitor, UNDRR: https://sendaimonitor.undrr.org/

Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Animesh Kumar, UNDRR; Galimira Markova, UNDRR; Rahul Sengupta, UNDRR, Xuan Che, UNDRR

Custodian agency(ies): UNDRR
While struggling to cope with the economic impact of COVID-19, countries suffered from severe economic losses due to other disasters, resulting in a dual blow to poverty eradication.

Disasters and their wide-spread economic impacts can reverse development gains, decelerate poverty reduction, and curb hunger alleviation. COVID-19 is estimated to have pushed an estimated 97 million more people into poverty in 2020. While countries were still struggling to cope with the widespread economic impact of the pandemic, a sample of 33 countries have reported direct economic losses of US$ 16.5 billion due to disasters in 2020 (Sendai Framework Monitor). This amounts to a collective share of 0.14% of GDP lost to disasters over 2020. It is well recognised that this is a severe underestimation of actual disaster-induced losses. For instance, in 2019, a total of 50 countries reported an overall loss of over US$ 221.0 billion, amounting to 0.6% of their combined GDP (Fig.1). The average annual disaster-related economic losses during 2015-2019 is US$ 512.6 billion, as reported by 85 countries in total.

While the economic impact of geophysical disasters has remained fairly stable over recent decades, annual economic loss from climate and weather-related events has risen significantly over the past decade, in line with their increased frequency.

Of the total economic losses from disasters accrued in 2020, 41% (USD 6.8 billion) is in the agriculture sector and 38% (USD 6.2 billion) in critical infrastructure. These are followed by shares of loss of 12% in the housing sector (USD 2.0 billion), 9% in productive assets (USD 1.5 billion), and 0.4%, in cultural heritage (USD 71.5 million). (Fig.2).

There is a great regional variability of disaster-related economic loss, with economies in Sub-Saharan Africa being hit the hardest. In 2020, the region sustained economic losses from disasters equivalent to 3.6% of its GDP (Fig.3). This is a significant amount, capable of causing perceivable economic disruptions with severe impacts on national, regional and international markets.

Beyond monetized disaster-related losses, several countries have also reported physical losses in housing, critical infrastructure, and other sectors.

In addition to economic loss, disasters in 2020 caused damage and destruction to over 8,000 critical infrastructure facilities, over half of which were educational facilities (in 21 reporting countries). Disasters, including COVID-19, caused the further disruption of over 287,000 basic services, including provision of health and education services (in 48 reporting countries).

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:
- Sendai Framework Monitor, UNDRR: https://sendaimonitor.undrr.org/

Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Animesh Kumar, UNDRR; Galimira Markova, UNDRR; Rahul Sengupta, UNDRR, Xuan Che, UNDRR

Custodian agency(ies): UNDRR
Good progress in developing national disaster risk reduction strategies but greater need of alignment with climate change and development planning.

Significant progress has been made towards increasing the number of national disaster risk reduction strategies. As of 31 Dec 2021, a total of 123 countries have reported the adoption of national disaster risk reduction strategies. This represents a significant advancement, marking an increase of 124 percent from 2015 when only 55 countries reported the adoption of such strategies (Fig 1).

Further, the number of countries with DRR strategies that follow a substantial or comprehensive alignment with the Sendai Framework has quadrupled compared to 2015, rising from 15 to 61 countries. The number of countries with DRR strategies that promote policy coherence and compliance, notably with the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, has reached 118 countries, compared to only 44 countries in 2015.

Despite significant progress, the implementation of disaster risk reduction strategies require further concerted effort, including through coherent institutional architectures, clear legislative mandates, partnerships and sufficient financial resources at national and sub-national levels. In line with the recent IPCC findings, the disaster risk reduction strategies and national adaptation plans should further align with a shared understanding of risk. The COVID-19 crisis has further triggered global awareness of the urgency to adopt multi-hazard DRR strategies that address all risks.

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:
- Sendai Framework Monitor, UNDRR: https://sendaimonitor.undrr.org/

Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Animesh Kumar, UNDRR; Galimira Markova, UNDRR; Rahul Sengupta, UNDRR, Xuan Che, UNDRR

Custodian agency(ies): UNDRR
Indicators 1.5.4/11.b/13.1.3: Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies

Countries strengthen localisation of SDGs through local disaster risk reduction strategies

The impact of disasters is first and most experienced by those at the frontline of disasters. Hence, local disaster risk reduction strategies assume high significance. Between 2015 to end-2021, the number of reporting countries with local governments having disaster risk reduction strategies nearly doubled from 51 to 98. Within these countries, the average proportion of local governments with such strategies increased from 51 percent in 2015 to 66 percent in 2021.

Countries have made efforts in aligning disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and development plans at the local level. However, a multi-hazard approach to local resilience building is important, in view of the systemic and cascading nature of risk, often fuelled by the climate emergency and more recently by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:
- Sendai Framework Monitor, UNDRR: [https://sendaimonitor.undrr.org/](https://sendaimonitor.undrr.org/)

Storyline author(s)/contributor(s): Animesh Kumar, UNDRR; Galimira Markova, UNDRR; Rahul Sengupta, UNDRR; Xuan Che, UNDRR

Custodian agency(ies): UNDRR
Target 1.a: Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development co-operation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions

Indicator 1.a.1: Total official development assistance grants from all donors that focus on poverty reduction as a share of the recipient country’s gross national income

Total official development assistance grants from that focus on poverty reduction represent a small share of recipient countries’ GNI.

From a recipient country’s perspective, this was 0.05% of developing countries’ combined GNI.

The following regions received the highest share of grants, which focus on poverty reduction: Oceania (0.16%), Africa (0.07%), the Caribbean (0.03%), whereas Asia and Europe received respectively 0.01%. The Least developed countries (LDCs) received 0.14%.

Indicator 1.a.2: Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection)

The COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath threatens to squeeze education budgets through a combination of reduced revenue and increased demands from other sectors.

The Incheon declaration and Framework for Action (2015) recognizes that domestic resources will remain the primary source of funding for education and reiterated the importance of maintaining the Addis Ababa Agenda benchmarks for education, aiming towards: • allocating at least 4% to 6% of gross domestic product (GDP) to education; and/or • allocating at least 15% to 20% of public expenditure to education.

Preliminary data shows that expenditure on Education decreased in the first year of the pandemic to bounce back in 2021 as schools re-opened. This was in line with the commitment to “Increase or maintain the share of public expenditure on education towards the international benchmarks of at least 4-8% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and/or 15-20% of public expenditure” ratified by countries during the Emergency Global Education Meeting in July 2020. Globally, the median share of government expenditure on education (measured using either actual expenditure or education budget as a proportion of total government expenditure) declined between 2019 and 2020 and increased in 2021.

Despite education being a greater budget priority, poorer countries spend less on education as a percentage of GDP because of lower capacity to raise government revenue. On average, however governments in poorer countries with small budgets but large cohorts of children tend to spend more as a share of total government spending.

At the regional level in 2020, Sub-Saharan Africa has the 2nd highest government spending on education as a percentage of the total government spending (14.5%) and the lowest government spending on education as a percentage of GDP (3.7%). Conversely, the Europe and Northern America region meets the global benchmark as a share of GDP (6.2%) but does not achieve the benchmark of share of total spending to education (10.7%).

In low and low middle income countries, reaching the share of GDP benchmark for education spending requires more domestic resources. As described in the Framework for Action, this calls for a more effective and fair taxation (GEMR, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath threaten to squeeze education budgets through a combination of reduced revenue and increased demands from other sectors. Strong calls have been made during the COVID crisis to protect spending on education. Despite being as important as other sectors that have benefited from government support packages, the education and training sector represents only 2.9% of the total global stimulus package amount. Although a total of US$ 16 trillion was invested in education stimulus worldwide from the beginning of the Pandemic to 2021, large inequality exists across countries – 97% of this was concentrated in high-income countries.

Keeping schools open and offering remedial classes to children whose learning has suffered represents an investment that will avert future social costs from increased early school leaving and lower learning achievement (UNESCO, 2020). Indeed, the equity focus of national education financing policies is slowly gaining more attention (UNESCO, 2021).

Regionally, the trend of prioritizing basic education is particularly powerful in African countries. More African countries (64%) and Arab States (80%) reported stimulus funding to Primary and Lower secondary than any other sector.
Target 1.b: Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions

Indicator 1.b.1: Pro-poor public social spending

Custodian agency(ies): UNICEF