

Transforming Education Summit 2022

Q&A

08 May 2022

What is the Transforming Education Summit (TES)?

The Transforming Education Summit is a key initiative of [Our Common Agenda](#) launched by UN Secretary-General (SG), Antonio Guterres, in September 2021. Bringing together global, national and local education stakeholders and actors, it offers an opportunity for inclusive, networked and effective global dialogue on the types of coordinated actions needed to reverse the slide on **progress towards SDG4**, to ensure that lessons are learned from pandemic responses for **resilience, social prosperity and environmental sustainability** in the post-COVID world, and to **think big** on how we imagine education systems of the future.

Taking place during the 77th session of the UN General Assembly, the Summit is an SG-convened event with a view to **elevating education to the top of the global political agenda** and to maximizing public awareness and engagement. It expects to fully mobilize the support of all UN Member States, development partners, civil society and youth organizations, and all other partners and stakeholders in education and beyond.

To do this, the Summit is being prepared and advanced across three intersecting and reinforcing work streams.

- **National consultations** for developing a shared vision, commitment, and alignment of action across constituencies to transform education between now and 2030.
- **Thematic Action Tracks** which place a spotlight on five areas that require greater attention and action and that can accelerate progress on education as part of the 2030 Agenda and transform education, notably:
 - 1) Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools
 - 2) Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession
 - 3) Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development
 - 4) Digital learning and transformation
 - 5) Financing of education
- **Public engagement and mobilization** to democratize dialogue around education and to grow a global movement for education transformation building on a range of existing efforts.

What are the expected outcomes and what happens after the Summit?

The Summit is not intended to result in inter-governmentally agreed outcomes. Through its preparatory and convening processes, it rather aims to galvanize national and international commitments to action and greater public engagement to transform education. Young people will be centrally involved in all aspects of the Summit.

A Chair's Summary report capturing the knowledge and experiences curated through the preparatory process, and informing the Summit follow-up, will be presented as an outcome document at the end of the Summit. The follow-up actions to the Summit outcomes will then be taken forward by the [SDG 4 Education 2030 High-Level Steering Committee](#) (HLSC) under its mandate for the overall coordination and monitoring of SDG4.

In sum, the Summit will help to boost commitment and actions for the HLSC agenda in accelerating SDG 4, while the Chair's Summary Report will feed into the proposed intergovernmental Summit of the Future in 2023.

What is the timeline of the Summit and why is it taking place now?

The Summit will take place in **New York in September 2022** during high level week of the UN General Assembly. A Pre-Summit will be convened in **Paris 29-30 June 2022** at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, to capture the evolving discussions and generate greater momentum in the lead up to the September event.

The timing is critical. In spite of progress made over the past decades, the international community is falling behind on its commitments. Indeed the world is experiencing a deepening global education crisis, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has left hundreds of millions of children and young people deprived of their right to quality education. Beyond issues of access and inequality, education systems will face major challenges in the years ahead including: dramatic changes in the world of work, the emergence of technical innovations that challenge the purposes of, and modalities for, education provision, the reality of climate emergency and a general loss of trust between people and institutions.

There is an urgent need to reignite international political and financial commitment to **education as a global public good** and to accelerate progress towards realizing SDG4: 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote learning opportunity of all' and radically transform education systems.' But there is an equally urgent need for collective reflection on how education systems can evolve to accompany and support the transformation of societies by 2030.

The Summit thus takes place at the critical mid-point of the Sustainable Development Agenda and an important juncture in the Global Education Cooperation Mechanism's roadmap for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education).

What is the added value of the Summit?

Accelerating progress towards SDG 4 will depend on countries working effectively together across borders and sectors to identify priorities and overcome the many obstacles currently slowing down progress towards global education goals outlined in the SDG agenda.

We know that COVID-19 resulted in a historical disruption to education systems worldwide and set back progress further and faster than anyone could have predicted. But COVID 19 also revealed the energies and capacities that can be unleashed when partnerships and coalitions are created between actors from across the public, private and non-State sectors who pool their expertise, knowledge and resources to ensure learning continuity.

The Summit therefore offers an opportunity to bring these stakeholders around the table for formal and informal discussions on how the same energies can be channelled into overcoming bottlenecks to progress and a renewed push towards SDG4; including a reimagining of how education is delivered, and teaching and learning supported, for millions of vulnerable and at-risk learners around the world.

Is the Summit led by UN Member States and how are countries expected to contribute?

Member states and stakeholders are central to making the Transforming Education Summit a success and all countries are expected to actively engage in the various Summit work stream activities, namely: convening national and regional consultations, participating in online thematic consultations around the action tracks, contributing good practices, innovative studies and reports, as well as participating in the Pre-Summit and the Summit.

To this end:

- There will be regular briefings to delegations in New York and Paris.
- The Summit Advisory Committee will be co-chaired by the DSG and a Member State representative.
- 11 Member States representatives are invited to serve on the Summit Advisory Committee.
- Member States are centrally involved in the Summit Action Tracks.
- Ministers of Education will be invited to attend the Pre-Summit.

Heads of State and Government will be invited to participate in the Summit and encouraged to report on progress made in addressing pandemic-related learning losses and present their national statement of commitment at the Summit in September which should build on existing plans and capture national commitments and consensus on priority actions.

What is the Summit's governance structure?

The preparations for the Summit are supported by a multi-tier governance structure.

- On behalf of the Secretary-General, the **UN Deputy Secretary General (DSG)**, Ms. Amina Mohammed, is overseeing the Summit preparations.
- She is supported by a **Special Adviser**, Mr. Leonardo Garnier who is responsible for mobilizing and engaging with key partners and will help place the Summit high on the international political agenda with a view to generating concrete commitments.
- A **UN Task Team**, chaired by the Executive Director of UNICEF, Ms. Catherine Russell, provides a platform for all relevant UN entities to engage and cooperate effectively.
- A **Summit Advisory Committee** will offer strategic guidance to all actors and stakeholders leading up to the event.
- The **Summit Secretariat**, hosted and led by the UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, Ms. Stefania Giannini, provides support to Summit preparations and related activities throughout the whole process.
- Two Member States and a non-state Stakeholder representative act as **Co-Leads for each Action Track**, backstopped by a UN Support Team to ensure an open and transparent process.

What are the roles of UNESCO and UNICEF in the preparatory process?

As the UN specialized agency for education, UNESCO is wearing a number of hats. First, UNESCO is hosting the **inter-agency Summit Secretariat** which is responsible for the overall coordination of preparatory activities and for taking forward the decisions of the Summit Advisory Committee. The Summit Secretariat is led by UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Education.

In collaboration with other UN organizations and partners, UNESCO is also providing **technical inputs and guidance to the overall design of the Summit and its contents**. The flagship Report of the International Commission for the Futures of Education, '*Reimagining our futures together: A new social contract for education*,' and the ongoing dialogues within the Global Cooperation Mechanism for SDG4, will serve as a basis for national stakeholder consultations that will help to shape outcomes of the Summit.

Finally UNESCO will **channel its technical expertise to the Summit's Action Tracks** which align with the four thematic focus areas identified by the High-Level Steering Committee for SDG4, together with financing for education. These address key accelerators across the education cycle to achieve SDG 4 in the COVID-19 context and beyond, and integrate an explicit focus on advancing inclusion, equity, and gender equality. The Action Tracks also provide another framework for national and international consultations (at a later date, additional priority areas may be chosen that require greater and urgent actions with Member States playing a lead role in these processes).

For its part, UNICEF will play a **key role in the Summit preparations at country level** as part of the UN Country Teams. UNICEF Regional Offices also serves as the focal point to coordinate support and monitor progress of the national consultations within their regional coverage in coordination and collaboration with UNESCO regional offices. At the global level, UNICEF serves on the Summit Advisory Committee and the Executive Director serves as the chair of the UN Task Team.

How does the Summit connect with the newly established SDG4 Education 2030 High Level Steering Committee and other high level dialogue mechanisms?

The preparatory process managed by the Summit Secretariat, as well as the pre-Summit and Summit itself, build on several of the existing stakeholder platforms under the umbrella of the [Global Education Cooperation Mechanism](#) (GCM). The Summit Secretariat is working alongside the GCM Inter-Agency Secretariat (IAS) to ensure alignment and synergies.

Of note, the Secretariat is placed under the **Inter-Agency Secretariat for the SDG4-Education 2030 High-Level Steering Committee** (HLSC), also hosted by UNESCO, which is expected to ensure

that commitments, coalitions and initiatives created in the context of the Summit are taken forward and monitored beyond September 2022.

To ignite reflections and mobilize the political commitment and actions necessary, the Summit deliberations will draw on the findings from the review of the progress towards SDG 4 at the July ECOSOC HLPF 2022 (an inter-governmental process and a central platform for follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development).

Notably, this year's HLPF, under the theme "Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", will assess the impact, progress and lessons learned of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of SDG 4 and other goals. The review will generate policy recommendations, commitments, and cooperation measures to be considered for inclusion into the Ministerial Declaration.

Finally, the Summit can help build momentum in advance of the 2023 HLPF under the General Assembly and the outcomes of the TES will further inform the Summit of the Future in 2023.

When does the Pre-Summit take place and what are its purposes and format?

A Pre-Summit is being convened at UNESCO HQ in Paris from **29-30 June 2022** to generate a shared understanding on the key elements of transformed education landscapes to inform the Secretary-General's Summit Outcome Document and Call to Action in September 2022. Its overall objective is to capture the evolving discussions on transforming education, elaborate initial content for the Summit in New York and generate greater momentum in the lead up to September.

The Pre-Summit will be held in hybrid format, with approximately 1,000 participants, including Ministers of Education, Finance, Development Cooperation and others, UN agencies and multilateral organizations, regional organizations, young people, parents, teachers/educators, civil society, experts, etc.

How can my country participate in the Summit process?

The Summit requires a focused, intensive, and inclusive preparatory process built from the ground up responding to Member State priorities, and ensuring the meaningful engagement of young people and the full set of education stakeholders. A significant emphasis is therefore placed on country level engagement throughout the process via:

- A series of **government-led inclusive national consultations** aimed at developing a shared vision and commitment to transform education between now and 2030 and ensuring deep and sustained public engagement to align action across constituencies.
- Countries serving as a **co-lead for the action tracks**, together with key stakeholders, to guide the development of discussion papers and substantive inputs to the Pre-Summit and Summit.
- Participation in **public online consultations around the Action Tracks**, to provide constructive inputs to the discussion paper, identifying and contributing good practices and innovations for curation, and advocating for the Action Track and the work thereunder at local, national, and global levels.
- **Participating in the Pre-Summit** (Ministerial level) and the Summit (Heads of State and Government level,) and announcing national commitments to transform education.

What kind of engagement and inputs are expected from civil society?

Deep and sustained public support and engagement from all stakeholders, particularly young people and civil society, is essential, given the speed and scale of change needed to achieve SDG 4 targets and to reimagine education.

One of the main Summit work streams is **public engagement** through two main approaches:

- engaging youth and children from the outset through the Summit preparations and
- increasing public support both at the global and country levels through inclusive, youth-led mobilization efforts.

To ensure their engagement, civil society representatives have been invited based on their ability to represent their group, their capacity to engage in high-level policy discussions and decision-making, and their pro-activeness in leading on the development of their groups. With the support from the Summit Secretariat, Member States will also be able to suggest and vet invited representatives during the whole Summit process.

How will youth be engaged in the Summit?

A dedicated youth engagement strategy is under development in consultation with key youth-led networks. The strategy will enable youth and student-led priorities to be proposed, supported, and implemented leading up to the Summit. Specific guidelines will be provided to articulate how country dialogues can engage young people. Young people will also play a leading role in Summit Action Tracks and will be actively involved in the Pre-Summit and Summit.

Where can I find further information?

The latest information about the Summit, including key documents, can be found on the TES website: <https://www.un.org/en/transforming-education-summit>.

You can reach out to the Summit Secretariat through e-mail:

- For general inquiries to the Secretariat: tes@unesco.org
- For information on the National Consultations: tes.nationalconsultations@unesco.org
- For information on the Action Tracks: tes.actiontracks@unesco.org
- For media relations and communication: TES.communications@unesco.org