

# IIEP-UNESCO 12th Medium-Term Strategy

2026–2029



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International Institute for  
Educational Planning



## Planning education, building the future

*From planning to action*



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**Published by:**

UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning  
7-9 rue Eugène Delacroix, 75116 Paris, France

**Printed in 2026 by:**

IIEP-UNESCO



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# Educational planning today

Educational planning seeks to improve learning and wellbeing for all learners, especially those furthest behind, by translating policy into meaningful change at the classroom level. This requires policies that are not only well designed but also feasible to implement, monitor, and sustain.

In an era of rapid transformation, the mission of the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) is to ensure that planning leads to action, bridging policy design and implementation to build inclusive, adaptive, and future-ready education systems.

For more than 60 years, IIEP has supported countries in planning and managing their education systems to make this vision a reality.

Building on this legacy, the 2026–2029 Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) focuses on supporting the implementation and sustainability of education policies that expand access, promote equity, and improve learning outcomes.

IIEP's new MTS addresses a dual challenge: supporting the reforms needed to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), while contributing to the development of the post-2030 global education agenda. This requires practical, results-oriented planning approaches that deliver measurable and sustainable impact within a compressed timeframe, while remaining open to innovation and foresight.

**Martín Benavides**  
IIEP-UNESCO Director

# On the road to 2030

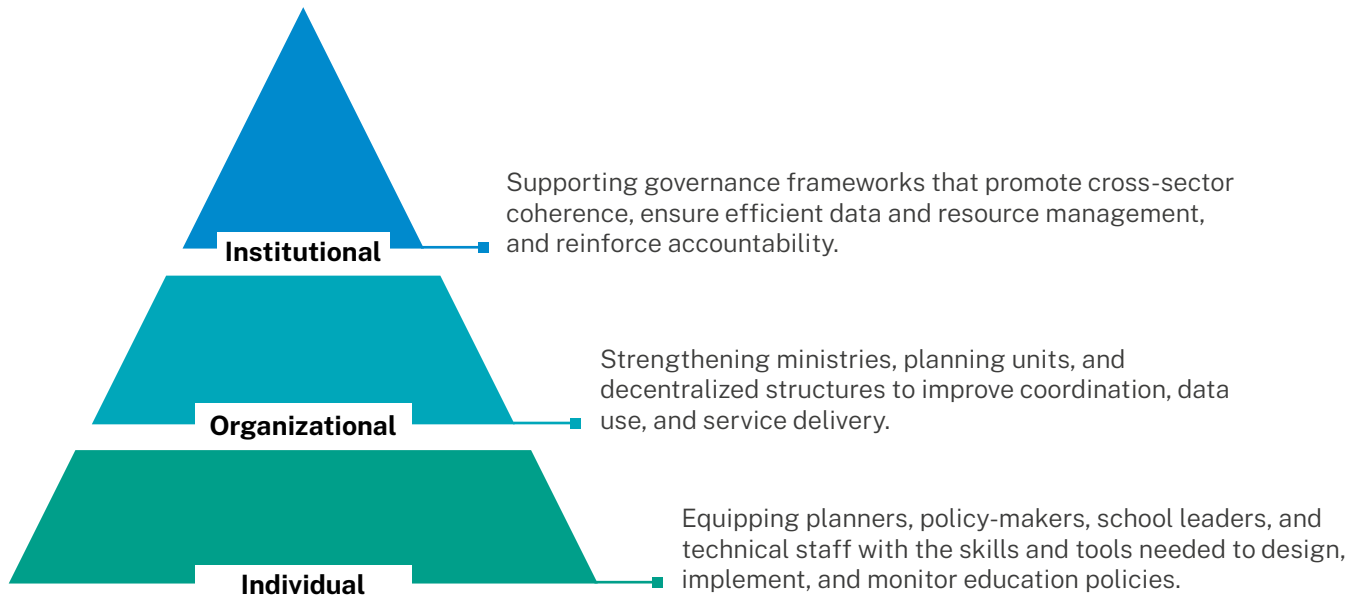
## Our strategic objective

Strengthen Member States' capacity to plan, implement, and manage education systems through strategic support that is aligned with national priorities and responsive to key education challenges.

The 2026–2029 MTS presents a roadmap to address key challenges facing education today: rapid technological change, demographic transitions, tightening financial constraints, and recurrent crises such as conflicts, pandemics, forced displacement, and climate-related shocks.

## Driving change

To be effective and transformative, capacity development must operate at three interdependent levels.



# Our added value

As countries navigate increasingly complex education landscapes, they require more than isolated technical solutions. They need integrated approaches that recognize the interdependence of education policies and connect vision with action.

## **Enhancing policy and institutional coherence**

IIEP supports integrated planning across curriculum, teacher policy, governance, financing, infrastructure, and learner wellbeing, ensuring alignment to improve learning, strengthen system coherence, and sustain reform impact over time.

## **Promoting adaptive and forward-looking policy-making**

IIEP promotes flexible planning approaches that evolve in response to evidence, disruption, and changing contexts while balancing immediate needs with long-term equity and resilience goals.

## **Expanding the governance scope**

IIEP works across the education ecosystem, engaging ministries beyond education, sub-national authorities, communities, civil society, and the private sector to strengthen coordination and accountability.

## **Strengthening institutional capacity for implementation**

IIEP focuses on governance arrangements, incentives, and political economy dynamics, with particular attention to sub-national actors and school leaders who bridge policy and practice.

## **Connecting education levels and advancing lifelong learning**

IIEP supports coherence across education levels, flexible learning pathways, and skills development for lifelong learning and employability.

## **Strengthening data systems for evidence-informed policy-making**

IIEP strengthens interoperable data systems, data governance, and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) frameworks to support informed decision-making.

# Cross-cutting pillars

These pillars guide how IIEP engages with countries, ensuring that its support is effective, context-sensitive, and sustainable.

## Capacity development

Capacity development is embedded across all IIEP work. It empowers ministries and education stakeholders to design, implement, and sustain education policies through a combination of targeted training and technical assistance, including policy advice, technical backstopping, partnerships, and organizational development.

## Knowledge generation and sharing

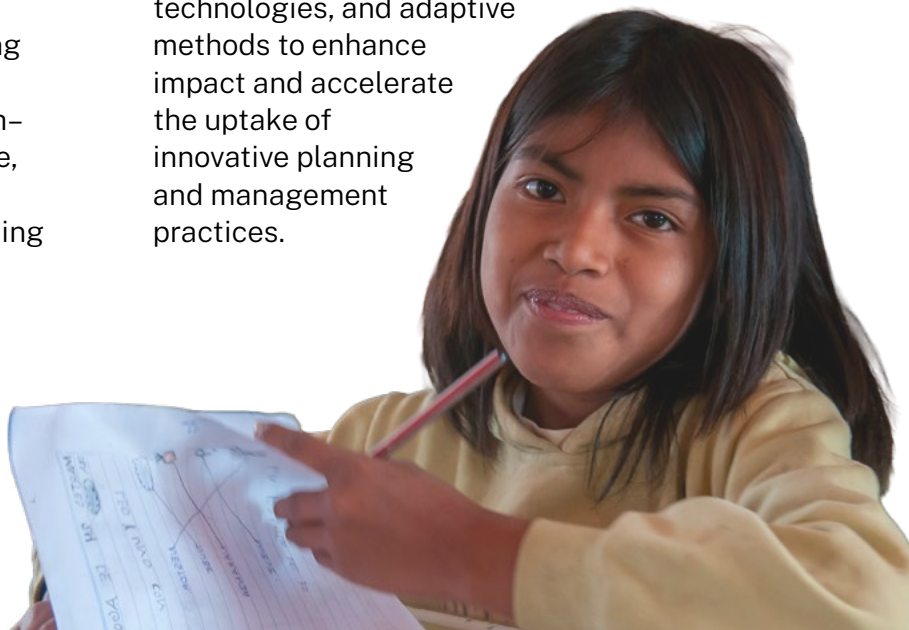
IIEP promotes practice-oriented learning and evidence-informed policy-making through co-produced knowledge, South-South learning, communities of practice, and forums, while IIEP methodologies strengthen the evidence base for planning and management.

## Contextualization and co-construction

All IIEP support is co-developed with national counterparts and rooted in a deep understanding of each country's institutional context, governance arrangements, and political economy, ensuring local ownership, contextual relevance, and long-term sustainability.

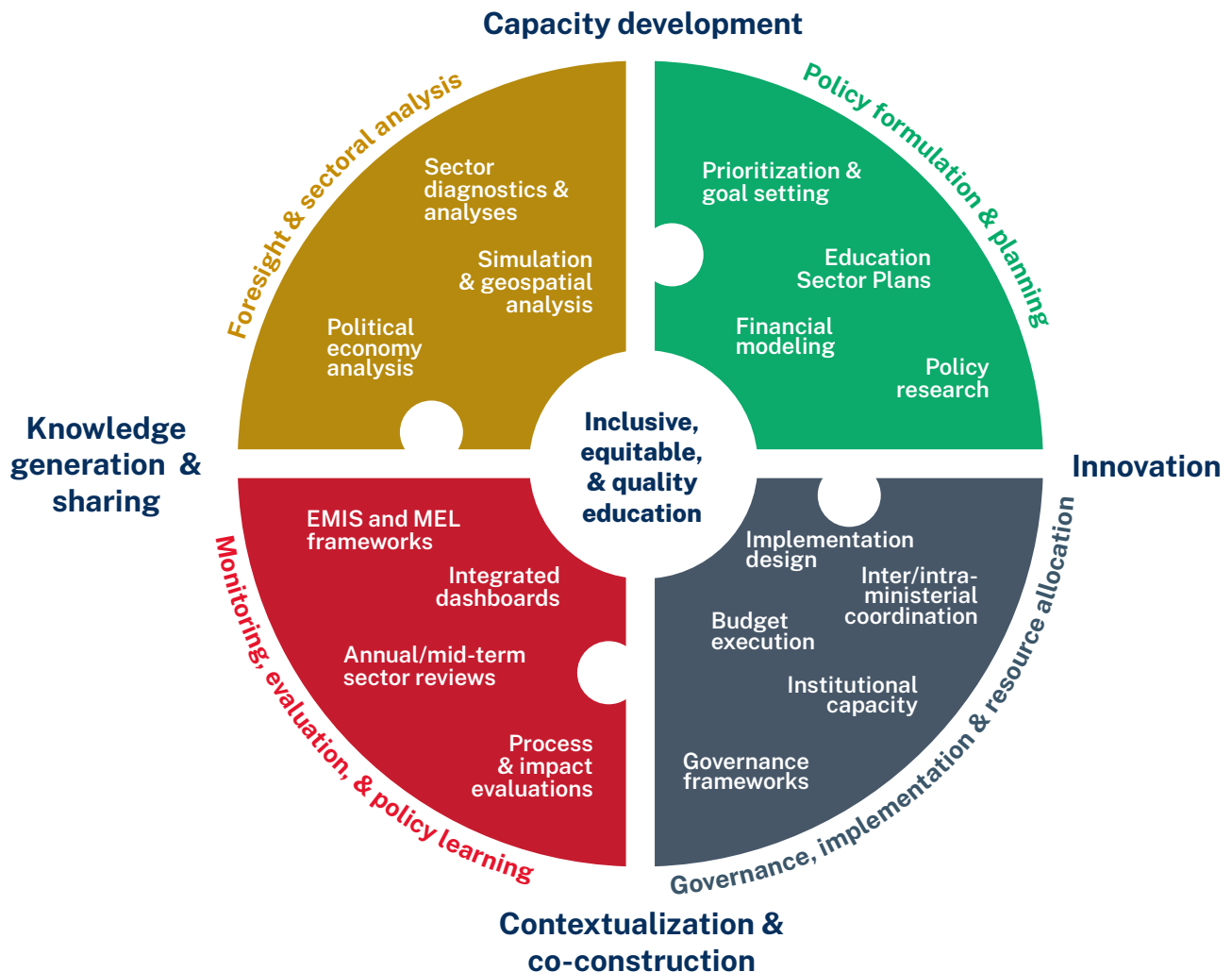
## Innovation

IIEP integrates foresight, emerging technologies, and adaptive methods to enhance impact and accelerate the uptake of innovative planning and management practices.



# Building adaptive capacity

Our process-oriented approach strengthens education systems by supporting the full policy cycle – from foresight and sector analysis to planning, implementation, monitoring, and learning – so that reforms are sustained and context-responsive.



# Enabling strong systems

Thematic areas are addressed throughout IIEP's integrated policy cycle approach, combining foresight, planning, implementation, and learning.

## *Inclusive & equitable*

### **Equity & gender equality in and through education**



Gender-transformative planning and budgeting, and equity-focused policies for teachers and school leadership.



### **Culturally relevant & inclusive education**

Strategies to enhance equity, social cohesion, and meaningful learning for all students.

## *Resilient & future-ready*

### **Crisis-resilient & safe education systems**



Climate adaptation, school safety, learning continuity, and data-driven planning.



### **Skills development, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), & higher education**

Alignment with labour market needs, quality assurance, flexible pathways, and TVET capacity-building.

## *Effective & accountable*

### **Education financing & efficiency**



Public financial management, costing, and simulation models for implementable reforms.



### **Education leadership for implementation & change**

Leadership development across national and sub-national levels, implementation capacity, and peer learning for system change.



### **Governance, data, transparency, & digital transformation**

Open government and data, citizen engagement, and responsible use of AI.

# Our commitments

We apply a concise set of key performance indicators that ensure our support to UNESCO Member States turns education policies into concrete, sustainable results.



# Working together

## Locally, regionally, globally

IIEP works across local, regional, and global levels to support educational planning and implementation. IIEP's regional presence fosters South-South cooperation and policy dialogue.

At the same time, close collaboration with UNESCO Headquarters and field offices, in-country missions, and diverse partners ensures tailored, context-specific support for UNESCO Member States. This enables IIEP to align global knowledge with national priorities and deliver sustainable impact through its offices in Paris, Buenos Aires, and Dakar.

## Monitoring, evaluation, and learning

IIEP's Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) framework promotes a culture of accountability, reflection, and continuous improvement. To improve project quality and strategic direction, IIEP applies post-project follow-ups, outcome harvesting, and external evaluations for projects over USD 1.5 million per UNESCO's policy.



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