

Global Education Monitoring Report Strategy

2025–2030



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Global Education
Monitoring Report

Background

Monitoring and informing education action in an interconnected world

Sound evidence and analysis are needed to trigger actions that will contribute to inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. The *Global Education Monitoring Report* (GEM Report) is the **global public good** dedicated to compile such evidence and generate relevant analyses.

The GEM Report was established in 2002 as **editorially independent** and is hosted and published by UNESCO. Until 2015, it monitored the Education for All goals. At the 2015 World Education Forum, governments entrusted it with the mandate to monitor and report on the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, in particular, on:

- Progress on education in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with particular reference to the SDG 4 monitoring framework, as part of the overall SDG follow-up and review process.
- The implementation of national and international strategies to achieve SDG 4.

Since 2015, the GEM Report has provided a comprehensive macro view of education issues within the broad development context, assessing progress, explaining disparities and spotlighting good practices worldwide. It has progressively tailored its **knowledge products and outreach** to engage governments, development agencies, academics, foundations and think tanks, civil society and non-governmental organizations, as well as individuals who exercise influence and champion inclusive and equitable quality education for all. Its evidence-based and coherent insights and recommendations are being widely used to inform advocacy and actions on education access, equity, inclusion, quality and financing.

In 2025–2030, the GEM Report will build on its reputation as an impartial, trusted global knowledge broker to **accelerate meaningful collective action** for education in the countdown to 2030 and beyond. The GEM Report is making strategic changes of each of its three outputs to improve its work:

- The **research** focus and style of the flagship global report series will be sharpened to explain with even more clarity long-term trends in countries' performance with reference to access and

equity (2026), quality and learning (2027) and relevance (2028/9), with the ultimate objectives of summarizing progress and informing dialogue on the post-2030 international education agenda and its monitoring.

- The **communications** focus will be on diversifying the format of content to reflect the way audiences are now consuming information online, championing facts and the need for evidence-based online content, pushing back against the desire for crisis-oriented headlines, and prioritizing stories about policies and practices that work, as well as human interest stories that bring facts and figures to life. Special attention will be given to the opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence.
- The **advocacy** focus will be on identifying longer-term advocacy priorities that will cover the entire strategy period and demonstrate a clear position for the post-2030 agenda. This will set a solid foundation for stronger partnerships and will drive more in-depth policy dialogue with concerned actors to influence education progress.

Changes in the international context affecting education and its monitoring

Since the adoption of the GEM Report's previous strategy in 2019, **progress towards the 2030 global education targets** has been slow. Among a large list of possible explanations, two factors are clearly identified as having contributed to the slowdown:

- The COVID-19 pandemic led to prolonged school closures that thwarted education development.
- Responses to the COVID-19 health and social emergencies – and concomitant increased military spending and disruption to trade – have increased public debt levels, put pressure on public finance and reduced governments' prioritization of education.

Global developments have opened opportunities but also generate risks for the **use of data and evidence** to inform policy decisions in education:

- Rapid advancements in information availability means that the volume of publications is rising.
- But the oversupply of information makes it ever more important to check its validity.

- The dominance of social media further undermines the reliability of information.
- Contemporary media is changing not only how people receive but also how they interpret information. Attention spans have become shorter.
- Communication strategies increasingly resort to crisis narratives for a range of issues and can create a false impression that there are easy, off-the-shelf solutions that work across the board.
- There is a tendency to divert attention from the more reflective responses that are needed to transform education systems.

These developments affect the work of the GEM Report. Obstacles to achieving the international education goals increase demand for understanding the reasons. Fragmented information and communication also mean the global public more than ever needs a reliable source to get the big picture and long-term analyses that challenge quick-fix solutions. The GEM Report aims to continue serving its SDG 4 monitoring mandate in the run up to 2030, bringing together diverse audiences around its trusted data-driven reporting and insights.

In that effort, key developments in the **international education agenda** and the monitoring environment have also helped set the stage for the period to 2030:

- In 2019, the GEM Report and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) introduced the SDG 4 benchmarking process, as a new way to assess progress that respects country leadership in setting targets that are relevant to their starting points.
- In 2022, the Transforming Education Summit (TES), called by the UN Secretary-General, took stock of global education priorities at the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda; the monitoring of some of the global initiatives introduced at the TES has been incorporated into the SDG 4 benchmarking process.
- In 2024, the Education Data and Statistics Conference, convened by the UIS, built on a decade of international collaboration on the development of the SDG 4 monitoring framework. It introduced the principles of a rules-based, country-led mechanism of indicator development.
- As part of the reform of the international cooperation architecture, one of the revamped SDG 4 High-level Steering Committee's three workstreams is Functional Area 2 on data and monitoring, where the GEM Report and the UIS are technical co-leads.

These developments were based on an international commitment to multilateral action and a belief in the value of principles such as universalism, equity and inclusion, and the interdependence of development objectives. Even as these foundations are being challenged, the GEM Report will continue to serve them.

Why the GEM Report

Trusted evidence to inform collective action

With 19 editions between 2002 and 2024, accompanied by a comprehensive portfolio of knowledge products, the GEM Report has earned a distinctive role in the international development architecture which responds to the needs of its diverse audiences. Building on its editorial independence and the quality of its analysis, the GEM Report:

- Provides a **fresh perspective** on major policy issues
- Makes broad **policy-focused recommendations**

- Serves as a **foundation for evidence-based advocacy**, convening dialogue and initiating impactful conversations on pressing education topics that deserve attention.

Five external evaluations, the latest of which [was carried out in 2023](#) and covered the implementation of the GEM Report Strategy 2019–2024, have found that the GEM Report successfully fulfils its mandate, providing independent, rigorous, high-quality, policy-relevant research and analysis that influence the international community's policies and actions.

The strategic direction

This GEM Report Strategy covers the period to the end of its current mandate in 2030. The **implementation** of the GEM Report Strategy 2019–2024 helped the GEM Report evolve to meet the growing demands of its multiple audiences. Select aspects of that evolution since 2019 include: the addition of a full layer of regional publications that covered all world regions in a balanced way; the introduction of partnerships to strengthen the GEM Report’s relevance and outreach; the strengthening of collaboration with the UIS in the framework of their shared responsibility to monitor SDG 4, which led to the national SDG 4 benchmarking process; and the development of a stronger online presence.

This new strategy continues on the tracks of its predecessor and is further informed by the **recommendations** of the last external evaluation, which called for: rebalancing the monitoring and thematic parts of the report for the cycles leading up to 2030; streamlining and better integrating the new products generated during the implementation of the 2019–2024 strategy; mobilizing partners to use GEM Report findings; and reflecting on the mandate, as well as the aspirations, of the Advisory Board for a theory of change directed towards potential policy impact, in light of the position of the GEM Report in the SDG 4 architecture and a changing international landscape.

GEM Report’s vision, mission, values and theory of change

The GEM Report’s **vision** is a world where trusted evidence on the state of education is accessible and empowers countries to take education actions that lead to a sustainable future.

Its **mission** is to monitor and explain education progress and challenges, through consultation, research and analysis of the best available data and evidence, and to clearly present and communicate its findings and recommendations in order to help hold actors to account for their commitments and to stimulate dialogue on education improvement, acting collaboratively, where needed, to maximize impact.

The GEM Report team aims to fulfil its vision and serve its mission in accordance with its core **values**:

- *Quality:* We commit to upholding high standards in our reporting of evidence and data.

- *Independence:* We commit to maintaining our editorial independence; the GEM Report is not beholden to the interests of any country, organization or group in its reporting on the right to education.
- *Collaboration:* We commit to maximizing the impact and effectiveness of our work by seeking synergies with countries, organizations and initiatives working towards shared goals, acknowledging that sustainable progress in education requires collective effort, solidarity and multilateralism.

The **theory of change** underlying the GEM Report’s approach is based on the premise that, by:

- a. obtaining and analysing trustworthy data on SDG 4 and on education in the other SDGs;
- b. reporting on progress on SDG 4, providing insights on comparative data and policy, and explaining progress and differences; and
- c. stimulating reflection, dialogue and peer learning among its target groups through several activities, including advocacy, and feeding into the global, regional and national accountability mechanisms;

the GEM Report will:

- a. inform policymaking, finance and action to provide inclusive and equitable quality education; and
- b. contribute to inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all as a step in advancing towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Strategic outputs

This strategy guides the prioritization of the GEM Report’s resources in terms of developing knowledge products, communicating their messages, and leveraging stakeholder engagement to foster policy dialogue and peer learning and help hold all actors to account for their commitments, in order to move towards inclusive and equitable quality education for all in the run up to 2030 and beyond. The strategy will deliver three outputs:

1. **Evidence, research and data:** The GEM Report will continue to act equally as an accountability champion and a formative resource by identifying, synthesizing and analysing the latest and most compelling research in education, with an emphasis on cross-country and over-time comparisons informed by national contexts.

It will maintain its commitment to the clarity and relevance of conclusions on monitoring SDG 4 progress and recommendations on strategy implementation, as well as to a critical stance and impartial reporting. The GEM Report will further strengthen the synergies between the products in its portfolio to ensure efficiency and to fulfil its mandate within the global SDG 4 process to 2030 and beyond. This output is supported by the following components:

- The flagship global GEM Report (with its summary, statistical tables and background papers) will take the form of a three-part series, entitled 'Countdown to 2030', which will identify countries that have made faster progress relative to their peers, trying to explain these long-term performance trends. The SDG 4 benchmarks and other indicators will be grouped as follows: access and equity (2026), quality and learning (2027), and relevance (2028/9).
- A streamlined series of thematic reports (on gender, youth, finance and other SDGs) and regional reports (including the Spotlight series on primary education in Africa) will continue to take the GEM Report messages closer to countries and engaged constituencies to inspire policy dialogue at those levels.
- SDG 4 monitoring and reporting will be improved through consolidating existing online resources (Profiles Enhancing Education Reviews, PEER; Scoping Progress in Education, SCOPE; Visualizing Indicators of Education for the World, VIEW; and the World Inequality Database on Education, WIDE). New opportunities on the UNESCO website, more explicit links of these resources to the main publications, and new user experience features, such as the generation of customized reports, will be explored.
- Support to the global education cooperation mechanism and further investment in the national SDG 4 benchmarking process will continue, including for indicators requested after the Transforming Education Summit.

2. Production and communications: The GEM Report will continue to adhere to its high-quality publishing standards, while making its knowledge products visible and easy for relevant audiences to access. It will draw on its nuanced understanding of these audiences, to prioritize accurate, targeted, clear and policy-relevant

communication that equips stakeholders with insights, knowledge and direction, and inspires collective and individual action for positive change. To do so, the GEM Report will:

- Develop clear and accurate communications around GEM Report messages and recommendations, to increase their visibility and uptake by target audiences.
- Strengthen relationships with its audiences to ensure regular, targeted and impactful circulation of its findings in print, broadcast, electronic and social media to increase engagement.
- Continuously improve the user experience and access to online content.
- Adapt to the evolution of reading habits and the influence of artificial intelligence.
- Curate impactful and timely events, and be a strategic presence at others' events, to raise the visibility of GEM Report research and outputs among key audiences at the global, regional and national levels.

3. Partnerships and advocacy: The GEM Report is part of a global ecosystem committed to achieving inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. While the GEM Report retains unique mandate and editorial independence, it actively seeks strategic shared-value partnerships where the collective impact would surpass that of individual efforts. The GEM Report will thus continue to inspire and engage collaborative, relevant partners in data, research, advocacy and peer learning, to catalyse the impact of its products, messages and assets. To do so, the GEM Report will:

- Form strategic partnerships at the global, regional and national levels to improve the quality of its products and to maximize the uptake of its policy recommendations.
- Support global processes and regional policy dialogue mechanisms to monitor education commitments.
- Provide civil society actors with the knowledge and tools to participate in education policy dialogue.
- Collaborate with academic networks and institutions to catalyse research.
- Develop shared-value engagements with Advisory Board members.

Resource management and sustainability

The GEM Report operates under a special account modality, whereby contributions from a diverse group of funders are pooled, reducing the risks for each individual funder and to the GEM Report programme. The GEM Report receives less than 1% of its funding from UNESCO. Financial contributions from individual funders make up the total resources required to deliver on the GEM Report's strategy. By contributing to the pool, each funder leverages more value than from an individual contribution.

The special account allows for flexibility in the allocation of resources towards the commonly agreed priorities identified in this strategy's logical and results frameworks. Twice a year, the GEM Report team prepares a management report that provides a narrative update of progress relative to the results framework and consolidated financial statements. The special account adheres to UNESCO's financial, administrative and procurement policies as well as the special account's financial regulations. It is one of the oldest and largest

special accounts operating at UNESCO with an excellent audited track record in terms of operational and financial performance. The account will remain active until at least 2030, in line with the GEM Report's current mandate.

Since 2002, the GEM Report has raised over USD 100 million to fulfil its mandate. The GEM Report is funded by governments (66% in 2019–2022), foundations (21%) and multilateral organizations (13%). The GEM Report also receives non-financial support in the form of in-kind contributions (which may include the funding of staff positions) and, in exceptional cases, earmarked funding that fully aligns with this strategy. As of 2024, the annual budget stands at USD 6.6 million. For the period of this strategy (2025–2030), the total resource requirement is estimated at USD 40 million, of which USD 7 million has been secured, leaving a funding gap of USD 33 million. A key objective is the further diversification of government funders so that they more accurately reflect the GEM Report's global mandate.

Governance

The GEM Report has an **Advisory Board** which provides oversight, guidance and suggestions on:

- The vision, purpose and objectives of the GEM Report and their consistency with SDG 4.
- The national, regional and international context.
- GEM Report themes, priorities and approaches.
- The long-term development of the GEM Report.
- The identification of problems, priorities and concerns.
- The quality and timeliness of SDG 4 statistics and data.

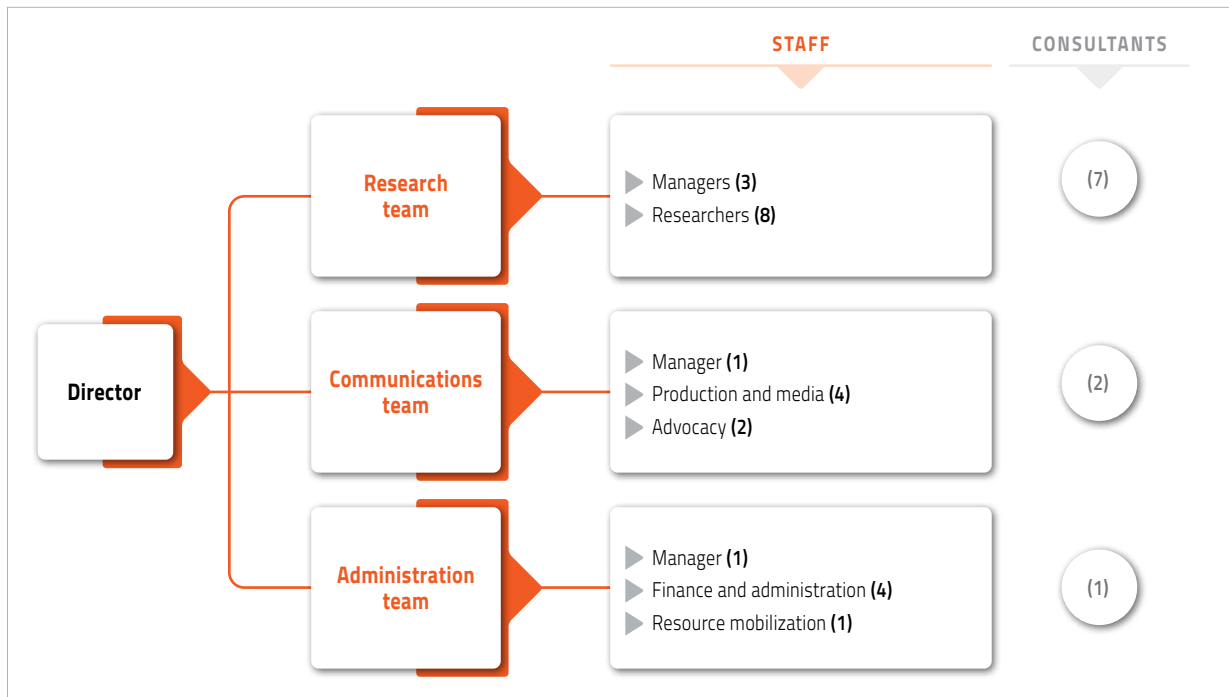
- Sources of expertise, knowledge, information and funding.
- Communications and outreach, including advocacy, publications and partnerships.

The Board is convened by UNESCO, meets annually and consists of 35 members. Its Chairperson serves for up to three years. The Assistant Director-General for Education of UNESCO and the Director of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics serve as ex officio members. The remaining members come from 7 constituencies: UNESCO (4), multilateral organizations (5), funders (5–6), regional experts nominated by UNESCO electoral groups (5), regional organizations (4), civil society organizations (5) and independent experts (up to 4).

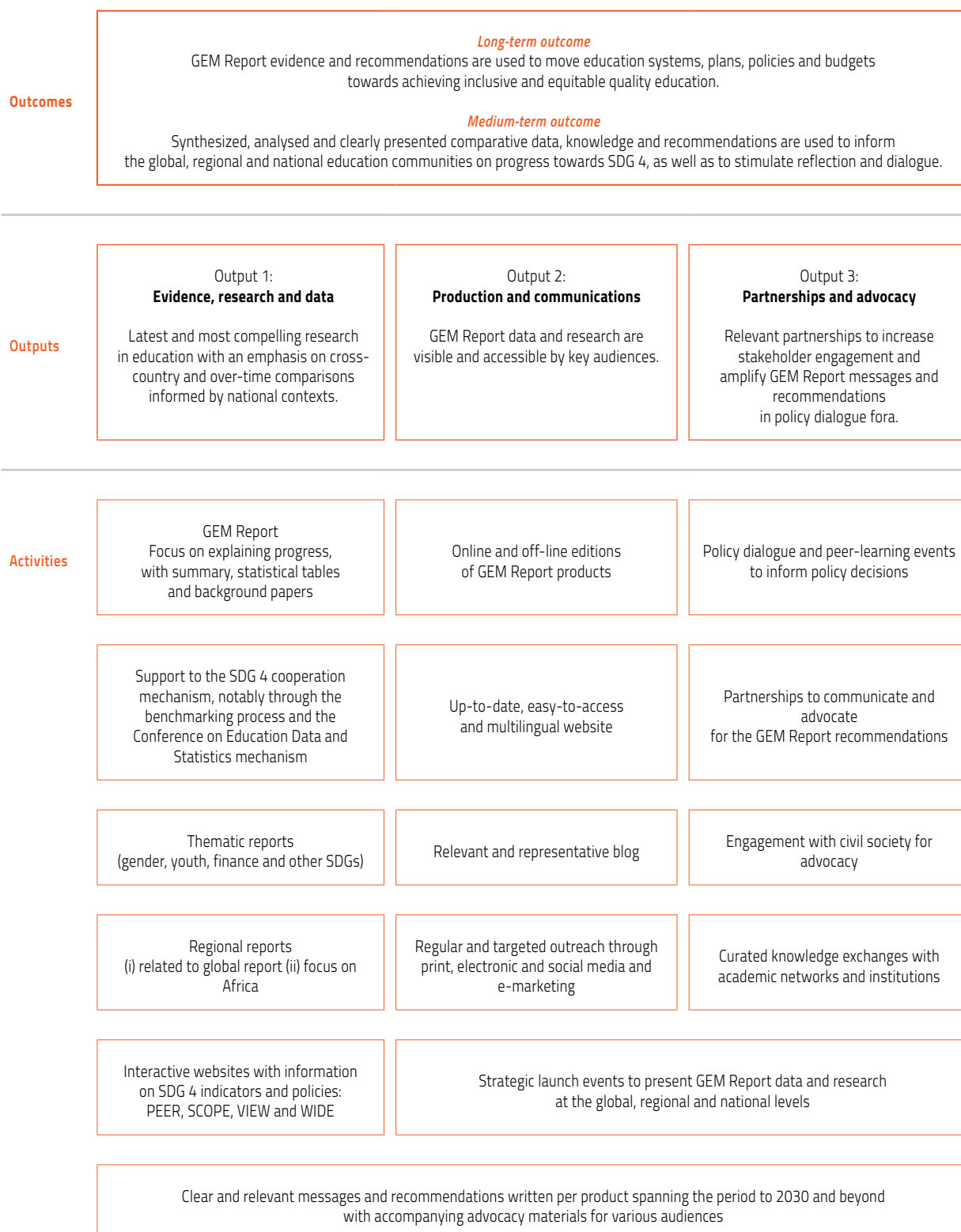
The GEM Report team

The GEM Report’s core assets include its mandate; its brand; its networks of partners, influencers and readers; and its team. As of 2024, the GEM Report team employs 25 staff in 3 teams – experts in monitoring and reporting,

analysis and research, advocacy, communications, production, publishing, resource management, partnerships and operations.



Logical framework



Results framework

Key performance indicators	Measurement frequency	Baseline 2023 GEM Report cycle	Target 2024/5 GEM Report cycle	Target 2026 GEM Report cycle	Target 2027 GEM Report cycle	Target 2028/9 GEM Report cycle	Target 2030 GEM Report cycle
Long-term outcome: Report evidence and recommendations are used to move education systems, plans, policies and budgets towards achieving inclusive and equitable quality education							
Medium-term outcome: Synthesized, analysed and clearly presented comparative data, knowledge and recommendations used to inform education on progress towards SDG 4							
0.1 Report informed policy at the global, regional and national levels	Per year	5 examples	5 examples	5 examples	5 examples	5 examples	5 examples
Output 1: Evidence, research and data: Latest and most compelling research in education with an emphasis on cross-country and over-time comparisons informed by national contexts							
1.1 Global report (with statistical tables)	Per cycle	1	1	1	1	1	1
1.2 Regional reports (linked to global report and Africa)	Per cycle	3	3	2	2	2	2
1.3 Thematic reports (youth, gender, finance and other SDGs)	Per year	5	5	3	3	3	3
1.4 SDG 4 Scorecard (with the UIS)	Per year	1	1	1	1	1	1
1.5 Country profiles in a policy area developed and validated	Per cycle	3	1	1 + updates	1 + updates	1 + updates	1 + updates
Output 2: Production and communications: GEM Report data and research are visible and accessible by key audiences							
2.1 Global report views (full/summary, all languages)	Per cycle	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000
2.2 Regional report views (full/summary, all languages)	Per cycle	15,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
2.3 Thematic report views (all languages)	Per year	21,000	31,000	32,000	32,500	33,000	33,500
2.4 Website viewers Of which % in Global South	Per year	700,000 45%	720,000 50%	750,000 50%	800,000 50%	800,000 50%	800,000 50%
2.5 Blog visitors Of which % in Global South	Per month	25,000 45%	27,000 50%	28,000 50%	28,000 50%	28,000 50%	30,000 50%
2.6 Social media engagement	Per year	70,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000
2.7 Language versions produced (full/summary, global/regional)	Per cycle	20	21	20	20	20	20
2.8 Media articles: Tier 1 Total	Per month	5% 250	6% 250	7% 250	7% 250	7% 250	8% 150
Output 3: Partnerships and advocacy: Relevant partnerships to increase stakeholder engagement and amplify GEM Report messages and recommendations in policy dialogue fora							
3.1 Ministers attending GEM Report events Of which panellists	Per cycle	65 14	80 25	80 25	80 25	80 25	80 25
3.2 Policy dialogue events Of which % in Global South	Per cycle	100 15%	110 15%	110 15%	110 15%	110 15%	90 15%
3.3 Contacts in CRM system Actively engaged	Per year	–	20,000 10%	21,000 10%	22,000 10%	24,000 10%	26,000 10%

Note: Monitoring cycles differ by output to ensure comparability and consistency in analysis.

Risks and mitigating measures

The GEM Report's work is underpinned by three key **assumptions**:

- National and international commitments to the attainment of inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- A belief in the use of data and evidence for education policy decisions and actions.
- Sufficient capacity by policymakers to use and interpret the data and analysis for policy impact.

The strategy identifies five **risks**: inadequate or unpredictable finance; a multiplicity of education reports; misunderstanding of the GEM Report's mandate; operational capacity constraints; and perceived interference of partnerships with the principle of independence.

Risks	Mitigating measures
Inadequate or unpredictable funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and engage donors willing to provide multi-year predictable funding. • Develop consistent messaging on the need for long-term agreements. • Cultivate shared-value partnerships with funders committed to multi-year support.
Multiplicity of education reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase consultation processes during report development. • Strengthen and expand network of launch event and research partners. • Ensure quality of evidence and data to maintain excellent reputation as a global public good.
Misunderstanding of GEM Report mandate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve the impartial nature of the report and ensure its work fulfils its mandate. • Continue consistent messaging on the importance of maintaining independence.
Operational capacity of team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify required skills and engage in professional development or tailored recruitment. • Partner with organizations possessing relevant expertise at the national and regional levels.
Impact of partnerships on independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the transparency of partner selection processes. • Strengthen partnerships with organizations which value and champion editorial independence. • Involve diverse stakeholders to ensure balanced perspectives in discussions.

Global Education Monitoring Report outputs 2002–2024

Global report and summary	
<i>EFA Global Monitoring Report</i>	
2002	Initial EFA assessment
2003/4	Gender
2005	Quality
2006	Literacy
2007	Early childhood
2008	Mid-term EFA assessment
2009	Governance
2010	Marginalization
2011	Conflict
2012	Youth and skills
2013/4	Teaching and learning
2015	Final EFA assessment
<i>Global Education Monitoring Report</i>	
2016	Education and other SDGs
2017/8	Accountability
2019	Migration and displacement
2020	Inclusion
2021/2	Non-state actors
2023	Technology
2024/5	Leadership
	Statistical and aid tables
	Background papers and policy papers

Thematic reports
Gender reports
Youth reports
Education Finance Watch series
Education and the other SDGs series

Regional reports
Regional reports
Spotlight series on Africa

Global education cooperation
SDG 4 Scorecard 2023 and 2024
High-level Political Forum reports in 2019 and 2022

Online resources
Profiles Enhancing Education Reviews (PEER)
Scoping Progress in Education (SCOPE)
Visualizing Indicators of Education for the World (VIEW)
World Inequality Database on Education (WIDE)

Communications
Launch events
World Education Blog
Media coverage in 100+ countries and videos

Global Education Monitoring Report

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