

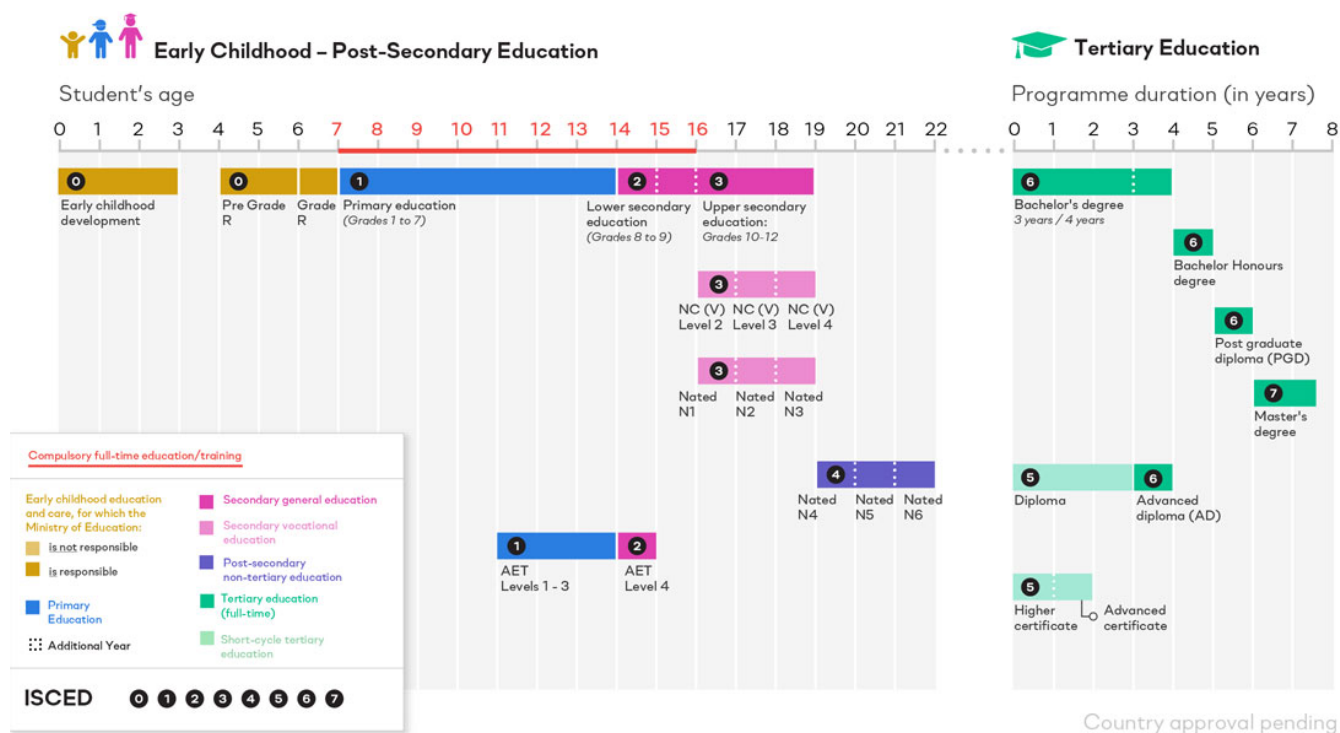
SDG 4 – Country Profiles

South Africa

SDG Region: Sub-Saharan Africa

International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED):

These country diagrams provide a visual image of the structure of national education systems classified according to ISCED 2011. The diagrams are based on mappings provided by Member States that have been verified internally and approved by countries.



ISCED	Level	School age population
0	Early Childhood Education	7,977,533
01	Early Childhood Educational Development Programmes	3,591,959
02	Pre-Primary Education	4,385,574
1	Primary Education	7,390,213
	Last Grade Of Primary Education	1,086,271
2	Lower Secondary Education	2,171,096
3	Upper Secondary Education	3,110,627
2T3	Secondary Education	5,281,723
4	Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education	1,949,183
5T8	Tertiary Education	5,078,636
	One Year Before The Official Primary Entry Age	1,037,625

The complete International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) can be accessed at [ISCED website hosted by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics \(UIS\)](https://uis.unesco.org/en/isced).

SDG Monitoring and Trends

This country profile presents the data available to monitor SDG 4 global indicators. Data points for South Africa are available for indicators 4.1, 4.5, 4.2, 4.b, 4.3, 4.a, 4.c, Education 2030 FFA, and 1.a. The trends are calculated here as the difference between the mean annual growth rate before and after 2015, whenever at least three data points are available in each period. An up green arrow , indicates that there was a positive change from the first period to the second. A down red arrow  indicates if the change was negative. Differences of +/- 5% between the two periods are considered stable and marked with a right orange arrow . For out-of-school rates, a squared red arrow  points down when the situation is worsening (when rates go up) and a green squared arrow  points up when the situation is improving (when rates go down). The gray area and line in the miniplot show the average for Sub-Saharan Africa (SDG) in the period.

Target 1.a - By 2030, ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, 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

1.a.2 Proportion of total government spending on essential services - education

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Percentage of Government Expenditure	16.8	16.4	18.9	16.1	18.9	20.3	18.7	18.6	18.9	18.6	-	-	

This indicator finds no correlation with AU regional framework.

FFA - Education 2030 Framework for Action

Government expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Percentage of GDP	5.4	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.6	5.6	5.9	6.2	6.5	6.2	6.1	6.7	

This indicator finds no correlation with AU regional framework.

Target 4.1 - By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in mathematics, both sexes

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Primary Education	29.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

This indicator can be used to monitor the AU regional framework:

- SO 4 : Ensure acquisition of requisite knowledge and skills as well as improved completion rates at all levels and groups through harmonization processes across all levels for national and regional integration - 4.5 : Proportion of children and young people (a) in grade 3; (b) at the end of primary education; and (c) at the end of lower secondary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading (ii) mathematics and (iii) science, by sex⁷

4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in reading, both sexes

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Primary Education	57.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

This indicator can be used to monitor the AU regional framework:

– SO 4 : Ensure acquisition of requisite knowledge and skills as well as improved completion rates at all levels and groups through harmonization processes across all levels for national and regional integration – 4.5 : Proportion of children and young people (a) in grade 3; (b) at the end of primary education; and (c) at the end of lower secondary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading (ii) mathematics and (iii) science, by sex⁷

4.1.2 - Completion rate, both sexes (%)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Primary Education	-	-	-	96.5	-	-	-	97.8	98.0	-	-	-
Primary Education (modeled data)	96.1	96.4	96.7	96.9	97.1	97.3	97.5	97.7	97.9	98.0	98.2	98.3
Lower Secondary Education	-	-	-	88.0	-	-	-	93.9	93.7	-	-	-
Lower Secondary Education (modeled data)	84.4	84.9	85.6	86.1	86.6	87.1	87.6	88.1	88.6	89.0	89.5	90.0
Upper Secondary Education	-	-	-	48.5	-	-	-	61.5	63.2	-	-	-
Upper Secondary Education	-	-	-	51.9	-	-	-	62.3	65.3	-	-	-
Upper Secondary Education	-	-	-	44.9	-	-	-	60.6	61.2	-	-	-
Upper Secondary Education (modeled data)	45.9	45.9	45.8	46.2	46.8	47.4	48.0	48.7	49.3	49.9	50.4	50.9

This indicator finds no correlation with AU regional framework.

4.1.4 - Out-of-school rate

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Primary Education (administrative data)	-	-	4.9	-	6.3	9.3	8.3	8.1	3.8	5.8	-	-
Primary Education (household survey data)	-	-	-	1.1	-	-	-	2.2	1.6	-	-	-
Primary Education (modeled data)	6	6	6.0	6.0	6.0	7.0	8.0	9.0	10.0	12.0	13	-
Lower Secondary Education (administrative data)	-	-	-	-	16.3	11.3	7.8	9.2	11.1	3.3	-	-
Lower Secondary Education (household survey data)	-	-	-	4.3	-	-	-	3.6	3.7	-	-	-
Lower Secondary Education (modeled data)	10	9	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	7.0	7.0	8.0	8	-
Upper Secondary Education (administrative data)	-	-	17.9	-	17.4	21.3	20.9	17.2	14.0	-	-	-
Upper Secondary Education (household survey data)	-	-	-	20.7	-	-	-	22.1	29.0	-	-	-
Upper Secondary Education (modeled data)	25	25	25.0	25.0	24.0	23.0	23.0	23.0	22.0	21.0	20	-

This indicator finds no correlation with AU regional framework.

Target 4.2 - By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

4.2.1 - Proportion of children aged 24-59 months who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, both sexes (%)

There is no data for this indicator

4.2.2 - Adjusted net enrolment rate, one year before the official primary entry age, both sexes (%)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
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One Year Before Than Official Primary Entry Age	-	-	70.4	-	-	77	76.6	79.2	69.9	77.4	-	-
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This indicator finds no correlation with AU regional framework.

4.2.2 - Adjusted net attendance rate, one year before the official primary entry age, both sexes (%)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
One Year Before Than Official Primary Entry Age	-	-	-	98.3	-	-	-	96.9	98.4	-	-	-

This indicator finds no correlation with AU regional framework.

Target 4.3 - By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

4.3.1 - Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, both sexes (%)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Population ages 25-64	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.1	3	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.4	2.7	2.6	- 

This indicator finds no correlation with AU regional framework.

Target 4.4 - By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill

There is no data for this indicator

Target 4.5 - By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

4.5.1 - Upper Secondary Adjusted Gender Parity Index

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Upper Secondary Education	-	-	-	1.1	-	-	-	1	1.1	-	-	-

This indicator finds no correlation with AU regional framework.

Gender gap in upper secondary completion rate

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Upper Secondary Education	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	1.7	4.2	-	-	-

This indicator finds no correlation with AU regional framework.

Target 4.6 - By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy

4.6.1 - Proportion of population achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional literacy skills, both sexes (%)

There is no data for this indicator

4.6.1 - Proportion of population achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional numeracy skills, both sexes (%)

There is no data for this indicator

Target 4.7 - By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

4.7.1 - Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in student assessment

There is no data for this indicator

4.7.1 - Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in teacher education

There is no data for this indicator

4.7.1 - Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in curricula

There is no data for this indicator

4.7.1 - Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in national education policies

There is no data for this indicator

Target 4.a - Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

4.a.1 - Proportion of schools with access to basic services

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Computers for pedagogical purposes - Primary Education	-	-	-	-	-	-	100.0	-	10.1	-	39.4	-
Computers for pedagogical purposes - Secondary (ISCED 2 to 3)	-	-	11.8	-	-	-	16.5	-	-	-	14.5	-

This indicator can be used to monitor the AU regional framework:

- SO 3 : Harness the capacity of ICT to improve access, quality and management of education and training systems – 3.1 : Proportion of schools with access to (i) electricity (ii) the Internet for pedagogical purposes and (iii) computers for pedagogical purposes

Target 4.b - By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries

4.b.1 - Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study, constant US\$ (millions)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Volume of official development assistance flows (millions USD)	9.6	8.9	8.9	8.6	12.7	7.5	9.6	28.6	5.8	7	4.5	- 

This indicator finds no correlation with AU regional framework.

Target 4.c - By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States

4.c.1 - Proportion of teachers with the minimum required qualifications, both sexes (%)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Secondary (ISCED 2 to 3)	-	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

This indicator can be used to monitor the AU regional framework:

– SO 1 : Revitalize the teaching profession to ensure quality and relevance at all levels of education – 1.1 : Percentage of teachers qualified to teach according to national standards

National benchmarks for South Africa

Indicator	Baseline	Value 2025	Value 2030	Progress relative to benchmark	Progress relative to historical trends
Target 4.1					
4.1.1 - Mathematics in Grades 2/3	-	42.0	50.0		
4.1.1 - Reading in Grades 2/3	22.0	27.0	33.0		
4.1.1 - Mathematics at the end of primary	29.7	70.9	100.0		
4.1.1 - Reading at the end of primary	57.2	100.0	100.0		
4.1.1 - Mathematics at the end of lower secondary	-	46.0	52.0		
4.1.1 - Reading at the end of lower secondary	-	90.0	95.0		
4.1.2 - Completion rate in primary	96.5	97.0	99.0		
4.1.2 - Completion rate in lower secondary	88.0	95.0	98.0		
4.1.2 - Completion rate in upper secondary	48.5	63.0	70.0		
4.1.4 - Out-of-school rate in primary	5.2	0.5	0.2		
4.1.4 - Out-of-school rate in lower secondary	11.9	1.8	1.0		
4.1.4 - Out-of-school rate in upper secondary	13.8	6.5	4.0		
Target 4.2					
4.2.2 - Participation rate one year before primary	70.4	96.0	97.0		
Target 4.a					
4.a.1 - Schools with access to internet for pedagogical purposes - primary	-	-	-		
4.a.1 - Schools with access to internet for pedagogical purposes - lower secondary	-	-	-		
4.a.1 - Schools with access to internet for pedagogical purposes - upper secondary	-	-	-		
4.a.1 - Schools with access to internet for pedagogical purposes - secondary	-	-	-		
Target 4.c					
4.c.1 - Percentage of teachers with the minimum required qualifications - pre-primary	-	-	-		
4.c.1 - Percentage of teachers with the minimum required qualifications - primary	-	98.0	99.0		
4.c.1 - Percentage of teachers with the minimum required qualifications - lower secondary	-	99.0	99.5		
4.c.1 - Percentage of teachers with the minimum required qualifications - upper secondary	-	99.0	99.5		
Target on Finance¹					
1.a.2 Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education)	18.9	15.0	15.0		
FFA - Education expenditure as share of GDP	5.5	4.0	4.0		
Target on Equity					
Gender gap in upper secondary completion rate	7.0	8.0	6.0		

¹ The Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4, paragraph 105, encourages countries to set nationally appropriate spending targets for education (i) allocating at least 4% to 6% of gross domestic product (GDP) to education; and/or (ii) allocating at least 15% to 20% of public expenditure to education.

Legend for benchmark trends:

Country classification of progress relative to national SDG 4 benchmarks

Category	Description
Fast progress	>75% probability that 2025 national benchmark will be achieved given the latest value (including countries which have already achieved the benchmark or are close to 100%)
Average progress	25-75% probability that 2025 national benchmark will be achieved given the latest value
Slow progress	<25% probability that 2025 national benchmarks will be achieved given the latest value
No progress	Negative progress
No benchmark	
No data for trend	
No data	

Country classification of progress relative to feasible benchmarks

Category		Description
Fast progress		>75% probability that 2025 feasible benchmark will be achieved given the latest value (including countries which have already achieved the benchmark or are close to 100%)
Average progress		25–75% probability that 2025 feasible benchmark will be achieved given the latest value
Slow progress		<25% probability that 2025 feasible benchmarks will be achieved given the latest value
No progress		Negative progress
No data for trend		
No data		

SDG 4 - South Africa

Source: [UIS/TCG Data Resources](#). [Click here for Metadata and Methodological Documents](#)