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## [Education sector analysis](#)

### BRIEF 2

#### [Educational planning methodology](#)

**Education sector analysis (ESA) is the first step in sector planning, and consists in conducting an in-depth and holistic diagnosis of recent trends and of the current status of the education system, to identify progress achieved and outstanding challenges.**

To plan for improved learning outcomes, some key questions that such a diagnosis must cover are:

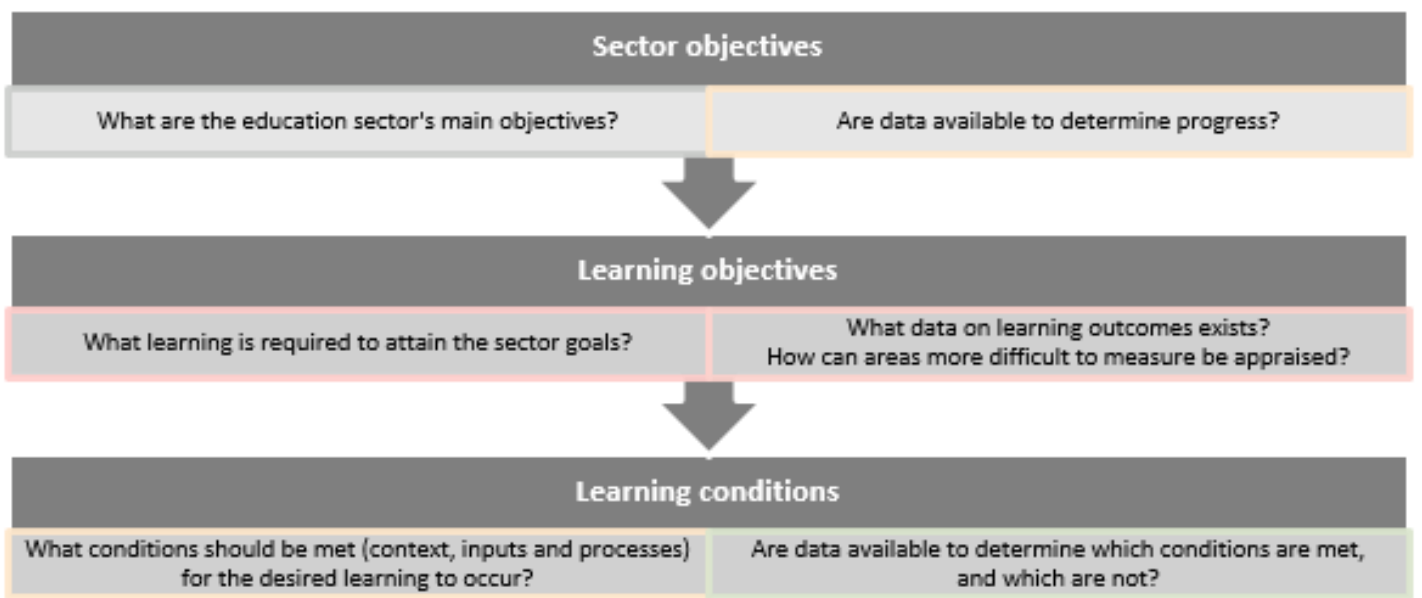
- What are students learning?
- Does their learning respond to their parents', community's, and country's needs and aspirations?
- How well are resources turned into results?
- What are the main factors influencing learning?
- Which aspects of the system must improve?

#### **Focusing on learning in the education sector analysis**

IIEP's Pôle de Dakar, in collaboration with other partners, has published comprehensive [Education sector analysis methodological guidelines](#) (IIEP-UNESCO *et al.*, 2014). ESAs routinely include a chapter on *learning quality*, that will hinge on an assessment of learning achievements, but may also cover an analysis of associated factors, school-level performance, and teacher management, among others. A sector diagnosis will also consider *learning relevance*, appraising the external efficiency of education systems. This will provide information on learning through a review of learners' employability, the return on investment in different levels of schooling, and the net social effects of education.

Having obtained information on these different aspects of learning relevance and quality, it is also important to strategically analyse the sector's performance according to its major objectives or goals. Education system objectives may include: supporting sustainable development, ensuring the population has the basic level of skills and knowledge necessary for pursuing independent lifelong learning, developing a workforce with the skills and knowledge necessary to contribute to economic development, cultivating artistic and scientific talent for innovation, redressing social and economic inequities, or developing active citizens, among others.

Each of these objectives implies that specific kinds of learning must occur during the educational process. Ideally, an ESA should be able to determine whether the required learning is occurring, and analyse the inputs, processes, and contextual factors that impact it.



### Components of a strategic sector analysis focussing on learning

A sector analysis must therefore include sufficient information to evaluate both learning outcomes, and the diverse range of conditions that make learning possible. Where available data on learning achievements are felt to be weak, joining an international learning assessment programme such as [PASEC](#) or [SACMEQ](#) may be worth considering for the medium-term. However, as research into the determinants of quality learning outcomes has not yet led to consensus, it may be helpful to adopt an alternate approach, to understand what factors are counter-productive to learning.

### Identifying key obstacles to learning

The first stage in identifying key obstacles to learning is to gather relevant information from a wide variety of sources. Data sources can include: school census, monitoring and evaluation data, examination results, international learning assessments, household surveys, impact studies, stakeholder interviews, and qualitative studies, among others. Average national learning statistics should be disaggregated and analysed to identify demographic and school characteristics that are linked with poor learning outcomes (by correlation or regression, even if causation is not clear).

### Tools

- Regressions between resource inputs and learning outcomes, to pinpoint key factors
- Institutional analysis, to appraise accountability, management and inspection mechanisms
- Indicator computations, to determine equity and consistency in resource deployment
- Surveys of teacher satisfaction and teaching time, for a qualitative appraisal of this key input

### References and sources

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IIEP-UNESCO (International Institute for Educational Planning) *et al.* 2014. [Education sector analysis methodological guidelines: Volume 1](#). Dakar: IIEP.

IIEP-UNESCO (International Institute for Educational Planning) *et al.* 2014. [Education sector analysis methodological guidelines: Volume 2](#). Dakar: IIEP.

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