

NEWSLETTER



The Commonwealth



MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION



UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA



CTEF, Education 2030 and SDG4

CTEF Malaysia, as the hub for the Commonwealth countries on the development of tertiary education through knowledge generation and sharing good practices has been an active participant of the Education Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 that focuses on sustainability, universal and ambitious development and people-centred tertiary education.

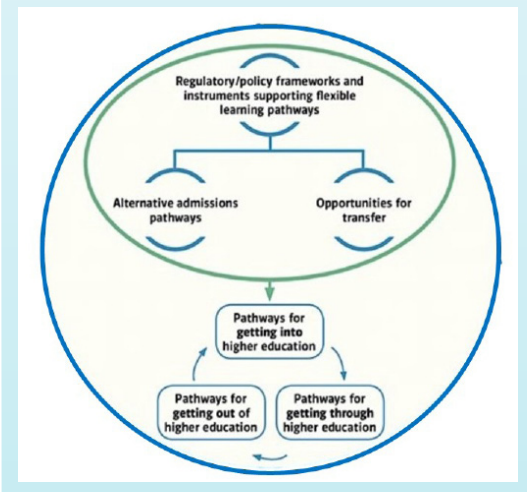
The Education Agenda 2030 and SDG 4 promote inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. It encourages countries to develop well-articulated higher education systems that provide flexible learning pathways for all students by focusing on:

- Entry points and re-entry points for all ages and all educational levels
- Strengthened links between formal and non-formal structures
- Recognition, validation, and accreditation of the knowledge, skills, and competencies acquired through non-formal and informal education.

SDG4: Flexible Learning Pathways in Higher Education

Higher education has constantly undergone the process of transformation. The recent decades have witnessed the diversification and massification of students entering the higher education system from the traditional admission, and increasingly, the non-traditional learners such as working adults as well as equity groups that in need of skills development. As a result, Higher education is expected to adapt to different learning needs.

Today, the world is at the peak of the COVID-19 crisis. Globally, the pandemic has affected more than 220 million students. Higher education is expected to be resilient and adapt to this situation by changing the teaching and learning approaches through multiple modalities. Increasingly evidence shows that flexible approaches in delivery mode and admissions have been better equipped to respond to the pandemic.





CTEF has been involved as a partner in the international research under the International Institute for Educational Planning – United Nations for Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (IIEP-UNESCO) on SDG4: planning for flexible learning (FLPs) in higher education. The research aimed to produce knowledge and provide evidence-based policy advice to ministries of the higher education.

Building and strengthening FLPs as an area of reform includes analyzing existing policy frameworks and practices, their implementation at the institutional level, and their effects on national equity groups, become the focuses.

CTEF with the other Malaysian counterparts – National Higher Education Research Institute (IPPTN), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) and Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) have represented Malaysia to undertake this study. The other seven countries involved were Chile, Finland, India, Jamaica, Morocco, South Africa, and the United Kingdom.

The International Research on SDG4: Planning for Flexible Learning in Higher Education

The International Policy Forum 2021

The Forum via online held on 6 to 8 July 2021 has offered a space to share and discuss the findings from the research with higher education policy-makers, and also the broader higher education community from Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, the Arab States, Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Forum was jointly organized by IIEP-UNESCO with CTEF together with the MOHE, USM, MQA and Malaysian National Commission for UNESCO (MNCU). It was streaming live through Zoom and YouTube streaming.

More than 80 countries have participated in the Forum. Professor Dato' Dr. Faisal Rafiq Mahamd Adikan, Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Sains Malaysia, presented the opening remark followed by the keynote opening speech presented by Dr Noraini Ahmad, Minister of Higher Education Malaysia. The highlight of the three-day forum was the four-panel sessions as the main dimensions that were identified in the research.

- Panel 1: Diverse entry pathways in higher education
- Panel 2: The role of technology in supporting flexibility in higher education
- Panel 3: Flexible pathways to progress through higher education
- Panel 4: The role of governance in enhancing flexibility

The Director of CTEF, Associate Professor Ts Dr Wan Fatma Zuharah, has made a concluding remark for the second day of the Forum.

There were parallel workshops on the final day of the Forum, to allow our policy-makers for a more direct exchange of national experiences. The outcomes of the discussions were presented in a streamed plenary. The Forum was nicely concluded by Dr Mazlan Yusof, the Secretary General of Higher Education Malaysia and the Chief of Higher Education UNESCO.

Resources:
Forum documents are made available online that include the Forum concept note, programme, the background paper, case studies, profiles of speakers and moderators and YouTube recordings. <http://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/international-policy-forum-flexible-learning-pathways-higher-education-13759>

Flexible Learning Pathways in Malaysian Higher Education: Balancing Human Resources Development and Equity Policies, @ CTEF's website: <https://www.ctef.com.my/our-work/publications>

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