

Successful First ASPnet Global Webinar "COVID-19: Reflections by the ASP community" – thank you!



Dear National Coordinators,

Dear Teachers and Students,

I am very proud to say that our first global webinar, held on 12 May 2020, was a big success with more than 620 participants from over 80 countries.

Our voices, your experiences and ideas were the heart and soul of the webinar. Testimonies by the invited teachers, students and parents as speakers from different regions made us aware of the reality on the ground. Each one of their stories moved our heart and inspired our mind. We learned so much from this webinar. Thank you to you all who were there to share the moment of solidarity.

I particularly appreciated the over 300 mindful contributions by the participants flown in throughout the over-90-minute webinar from all over the world through chat, which reflected key issues shared at the discussion, including those vocal [interventions](#) from Greece, Canada, Japan and Germany. It is also a great encouragement for our team to continue receiving overwhelming positive feedback from you, dear ASPnet members, participants, as well as colleagues and experts within UNESCO. If you haven't done so, please give us your feedback and suggestions through our [Evaluation form](#).

As the requests for participation exceeded the capacity of our Zoom platform, we also livestreamed the webinar on Youtube, which is [now available](#) for you and you to share with your friends and colleagues. The webinar is also featured as [news article](#) on UNESCO's website.

I am also happy to share big news with you: two of our student from the ASPnet, one of who was a speaker of the webinar, are now being featured in a short BBC's 'Day in lockdown life' film 'Day in lockdown life' film. We thank them for having first responded to our call for the UNESCO Campaign [#LearningNeverStops](#). Big congratulations to you Nanda from Indonesia and Marwa from Lebanon!

The ASPnet Global Coordination team will also take into consideration several highlighted themes raised at the webinar, not only as part of the UNESCO's COVID-19 response, but also more broadly as how to facilitate your needs and initiatives! These efforts include a development of the know-how guidance tool to help organizing your own webinars and to continue discussions across your schools, communities, countries and regions.

We dedicate this issue to share with you the food for thought presented at the global webinar, including the presentations, questions and comments. While this issue contains links to these materials, please bear with us as some of the documents may need some more time for translation in all three languages, English, French and Spanish.

Last but not least, our webinar was organized in collaboration with the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE), whose Director, Mr. Tao Zhan, kindly sent us a message.

We welcome your comments and ideas for our future activities.



“The voices of teachers, students and parents made us aware of the reality on the ground and the challenges that we need to face in solidarity as the ASPnet community”

Julie Saito, ASPnet International Coordinator and overall webinar moderator

Stay safe. Stay CONNECTed!

Julie Saito, ASPnet International Coordinator

Video Message by Mr Tao Zhan, Director of IITE, co-organizer of the ASPnet Webinar



Mr Zhan led the collaborative efforts for the webinar from IITE’s side and delivered the closing remarks.

“It is the shared responsibility of all of us, working together to be prepared for this new age”

[Video message](#)

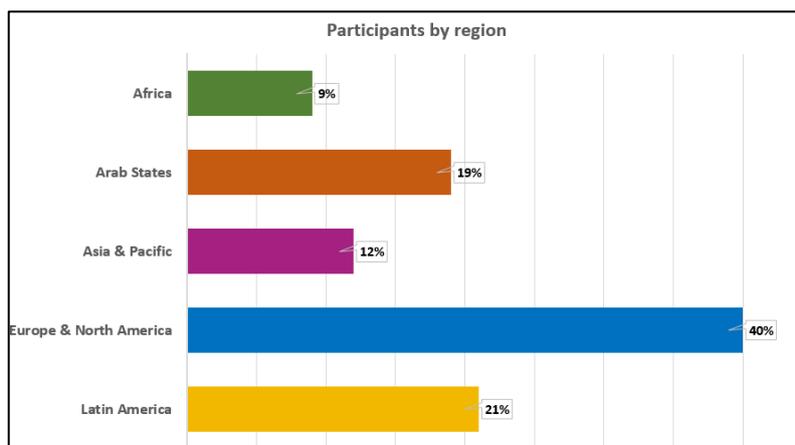
[Full text](#)

All about the ASPnet Global Webinar

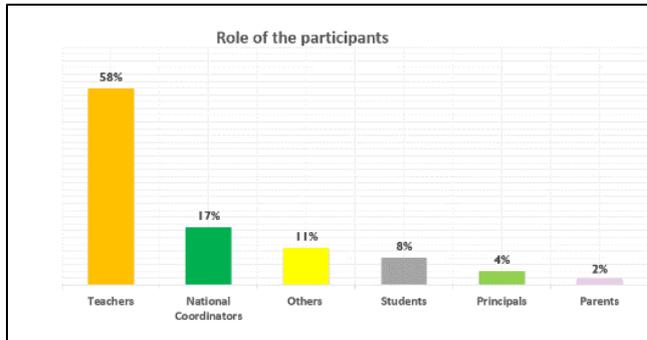
May 12, 2020, 2-3.45pm Paris time

620 people from 80 Countries

Summary: UNESCO ASPnet brought together all its members – National Coordinators, teachers, students and their parents – to come together as a global community, to share and explore observations, feelings and initial lessons learned on **two main themes: Experience of remote learning, and Reimagining the future of education** based on this experience.



ASPnet community members joined from all over the world, with over 620 participants from 80 countries, covering all five global regions, including teachers and students, from all levels of education, as well as many others.

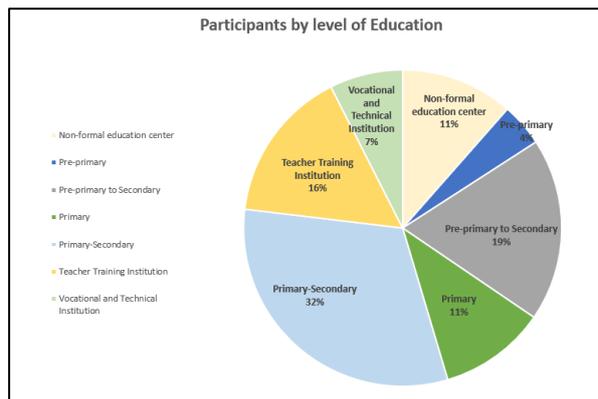


For regional participation, 40 percent of participants were from the Europe and North America region, 21 per cent from Latin America and the Caribbean, the Arab region constituted 19 percent, while 12 per cent of participants belonged to the Asia Pacific region, and 9 per cent to the Africa region.

In terms of category of participants, teachers represented 62 per cent (65 per

cent including principals), 17 per cent were National Coordinators, with 8 per cent students. Parents comprised almost 2 per cent.

Levels of Education were represented as follows: 32 per cent schools for primary and secondary schools, 19 per cent schools teaching from pre-primary to secondary level, 16 per cent Teacher Training Institutions, 11 per cent each for primary level only schools and non-formal education centres, 7 per cent were vocational and technical institutions, and 4 per cent pre-primary schools.



Opening

Ms **Vibeke Jensen**, Director of the Division of Peace and Sustainable Development in the Education Sector, UNESCO captured the essence of the two main topics in her opening remarks:



I strongly believe that we have to seize the momentum of this current crisis to “build back better” and to collectively strive and work towards a more peaceful and sustainable world.

Vibeke Jensen, Director, Division of Peace and Sustainable Development, Education Sector, UNESCO

See the full opening remarks [here](#)

Theme 1: Experiences of teaching and learning during lockdown

This session focussed on sharing observations, feelings and lessons learned in regards to how teaching and learning has been kept up during lockdown and how it worked (or not) for students, teachers and parents from different contexts and countries. The questions for discussion were:

1. How effective has the experience of remote learning been? What technologies did you use? What opportunities and challenges did you experience?
2. How has remote learning shaped and possibly changed the learning community and relationships between students – teachers – parents?

Presentations of the speakers from the ASPnet community:



“The challenges is that in using e-learning, we really rely on the internet connection and electricity”

Nanda Vania Qurratu Aini, Student, 17 years old, Indonesia



“Remote learning has affected the emotional side of learning. I miss the warm-hearted interaction with a teacher and free time with my friends and classmates.”

Nevenka Fadin, Student, 14 years old, Argentina



“Based on the experience of TV lessons, we should consider looking at a model of flipped classrooms (TV lessons at home and at school can focus on complementing and discussing the topics addressed to focus on strengthening students’s skills”

Ms Ganchimeg Jamba, English Teacher, Mongolia



“I find that, as a mom, online education has allowed me to support my children and as a teacher, constitutes an opportunity to be explored in depth in the future. Its integration into the world of traditional schooling has become necessary.”

Ghinwa Maassarani, Chemistry Teacher & Parent of two, Lebanon



“The government has to strengthen media literacy and civic education at all levels of education, so that we are prepared to deal with these issues. In Kenya, it has been a big challenge to parents. Most Kenyans living in towns ... live in very poor conditions and the situation is now getting worse during this time.”

Richard Iyaya, Teacher Educator and Parent, Kenya



“It would be a big step forward if environmental and social considerations would be made central to economic recovery plans and -- just as important -- that issues related to sustainable development are given a much stronger emphasis in education systems around the world.”

Katja Anger, ASPnet team, moderator, session 1

Find the full presentations [here](#)

Theme 2: Going back to school, reimagining the future of education

The second session focussed on sharing observations, feelings and lessons learned in regards to moving from confinement to de-confinement, to the new “normal”, and how we reimagine the futures of education. The question for discussion was: How do we reimagine the organization of our schools and learning environments following this crisis?

Presentations of the Speakers from the ASPnet community:



“With 13 million children out of school in Nigeria before the pandemic we should not go back to normal”

Aisha Bunu, Student, 14 years old, Nigeria



“I believe this [crisis] is an opportunity to think big, to be brave and to really make some bold decisions, when it comes to how we organize our education and learning”

Anne-Fleur Lurvink, English Teacher, the Netherlands



“This crisis has truly shown me that the nature of learning is first and foremost rooted in social interaction and processes. That is why I believe social and emotional learning should be given a bigger emphasis in education”

Si Gao, Chinese Literature Teacher, China



“Isn’t the solution to put [students] at the heart of change? We could rely on this autonomy gained during this health crisis and their dynamism to build something different. I think that together we have become aware of the interactions between health, education, inequality and the environment.”

Jean-Marc Septsault, Technology Teacher & Parent of two, France



“For many countries that were already in conflict, this pandemic has just made a bad situation worse. We need to think about the society that we need to be and what kind of education that we should give our children to create that society”

Ms Aseel Jasim, Parent of four, Iraq



“Lessons learnt during this period of lockdown -such as blended and distance learning approaches, emphasis on social emotional skills and our thinking of Out of School Children- will shape key elements of education, and critical reflections on learning”

Simon Wanda, ASPnet team, moderator, session 2

Find all full presentations made [here](#)

Experts’ Interventions

“Art is fundamental for me, it helps our mental health and allows us to reenergise ourselves”
Nevenka, age 17, Argentina

Experts at the meeting included Tigran Yepoyan, Chief of the unit on ICT in health Education at IITE, Sobhi Tawil, Chief of Education Research and Foresight at UNESCO and Xioxia Zhou, the Director of the International Centre for UNESCO ASPnet. Commenting on the sessions, they identified common themes, including the importance of addressing the socio-emotional dimension of learning, the impact

of remote learning changing relationships between students, teacher and parents, as well as the importance of ensuring students’ and teachers’ well-being. Prominent attention was also given to the role of arts education for the well-being of students, the need to equip teachers with skills, both in IT and media literacy, as well as psycho-social support to students.

Here are the experts commenting on the topics discussed.



“School is not just a building, but a learning community. Human interaction and connection, cooperation, open and timely communication between decision makers, schools, parents and students are the key enablers for overcoming the current crisis and rethinking *what* education is about and *how* it can be better organized in future.”

Tigran Yepoyan, IITE



“We need serious efforts to prevent a development in which ICT education will exacerbate divides and inequalities. Following the digital revolution, the future world of global interconnections will reflect increasingly intercultural and across-national communications and interactions.”

Xiaoxia Zhou, Director, International Center for UNESCO ASPnet, China



“The future is a perspective to inform our action in the present for more inclusive and meaningful learning for all. It is not what about what the anticipated future will impose. Rather, it is about our collective effort to forge the alternative future we want.” **Mr Sobhi Tawil**, Chief, Education Research and Foresight, UNESCO

[key messages](#) by the experts

Messages and Comments from the Audience



“Despite challenges opportunities in coping with school at home and distance learning, our biggest investment we bring to our ASPnet community is to stay connected and provide a virtual place to discuss, share and learn.”

Fouzia Belhami, ASPnet team, chat moderator

Assistance provided by Kangni Chen, Helene Darne, Erik Eschweiler, Alba Moral Foster and Natalia Tolochko

Comments received:

"it was amazing to hear children from the other side of the world and to feel like my classmates", (student)

"meeting people from so many different parts of the world sharing their experiences and views was impressive and touching",

"for me is very important that when discussing the futures of education it was made clear that the situation we are experiencing opens up alternative forms of education, where digital literacy dominates but building strong relationships between teachers, students and parents is paramount as well as the provision of emotional and social support in a context of global solidarity "

"I was so glad to hear that we share the same thoughts about the role of teachers which is irreplaceable".

Kenya - My appreciation for the wonderful webinar this afternoon. Great insights on the future of education and the role of digital learning were shared. I noted with satisfaction that the teacher is an irreplaceable component in the learning

Brazil - It is a time of great learning for educators. Today, one of the most important actions of the network's schools is the exchange of experiences. As there is no ideal model of action, the ideas and solutions of each school on the side of the world can help a lot to another. As Brazil is a very large country with many differences, this exchange is

process! Hope to have more such fora. <i>Teacher from Kenya</i>	what we are promoting with schools here." <i>Luiz Cruz, ASPnet and Teacher Training</i>
United Arab Emirates - There were various posts around the world by teachers, supervisors, students and parents around the world where our knowledge enriched some points and our dear students touched the content of this forum.... Thank you very much <i>Jumana Hanoun, ASPnet Coordinator, UAE</i>	Hungary - I particularly liked the issues of the transformation of curriculum in teacher training institutions, the strengthening of arts education, the importance of socio-emotional learning and digital literacy, and, more broadly, the need for human interaction and cooperation of stakeholders in education. <i>Dr. Gábor SOÓS, Secretary-General, Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO</i>
Mongolia – I would like to express my profound appreciation for organizing the first Global Webinar. It provided a great opportunity for the participants to not only share their good practices and experiences with online and remote learning, but also to deliberate on how we can collectively move towards a more inclusive and sustainable future based on our experiences with this unprecedented crisis. <i>National Coordinator for ASPnet</i>	

More comments can be found [here](#)

Meet ASPnet team member Melanie Seto



"Your voices, experiences, and personal contributions made the webinar a true community meeting! The current crisis is an immense opportunity to make changes for education, some of which are long overdue to emerge with a clear vision on the kind of learning we want."

[video message and text](#)

We encourage you to send us your messages of solidarity in words, pictures, videos and art works. Your experiences and innovative ways to learn, out of schools and within your families, can contribute to build and strengthen our network.

Please send to aspnetinaction@unesco.org and attach the [consent form](#).

The ASPnet Team

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