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Educational, Scientific and  
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UNESCO  
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# CONNECT

ASPnet Newsletter "NO to discrimination in Education" - Issue 14, 10 December 2020

Dear ASPnet community,  
Dear National Coordinators,  
Dear teachers, students and parents,



Greetings to all at ASPnet for the last issue of our newsletter of 2020. It's been a year of unprecedented challenges, and I am very proud to say, of unprecedented solidarity, support and communication within ASPnet. It has been an

exceptional and incredibly enriching experience 'encountering' each other in our various events, including our very successful global webinar in May, along with other webinars, and communications between us all. We have witnessed and benefited from many inspiring voices from students, teachers and parents during the events, but also, of course, in our newsletter. I want to sincerely thank you all for your solidarity, inspiration and sharing of experiences!

In this issue, we recognize the importance of the right to education and the work undertaken worldwide against discrimination, on the occasion of the celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention Against Discrimination in Education. In collaboration with our colleagues at UNESCO we have put together a rich package of relevant information on the Convention mixed with info boxes on different aspects of the right to education which can be used in school and at home to spark reflection and discussion. A very big thank you to Gwang-Chol Chang and his right to education team for the great support and advice in compiling this package.

And, as always, we bring you the most recent activities of UNESCO, relevant to you, including news from ASPnet, such as the recently held second Change Initiative webinar for Teacher Training Institutions. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, including the feedback you can see at the top of my message.

Speaking on behalf of the whole International Coordination Team, I want to thank you for your invaluable contributions over this past year, and wish you all a peaceful, healthy and restful end to 2020. We look forward to 'seeing' you all and continuing this great work next year.

PS Look out for a special heartfelt video message from a student saying NO to discrimination.

Stay safe. Stay CONNECTed!

[Julie Saito](#), ASPnet International Coordinator

## Special Message from Gwang-Chol Chang, Chief of the Education Policy Section



*"Knowing your rights is the first necessary step to make sure they are respected!"*

See the full [video message](#), [text](#) and [bio](#)

## UNESCO's work against discrimination

### Celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Convention against Discrimination in Education



The UNESCO [Convention against Discrimination in Education](#) celebrates its 60th anniversary from 10th to 14th December 2020. The Convention is the first international instrument, having binding force in

international law which covers the right to education extensively. This Convention is also recognized as a cornerstone of the Education 2030 Agenda and represents a powerful tool to advance SDG 4. More info on the event [here](#).

The anniversary is of great significance as the Convention remains as relevant as ever in overcoming barriers to fully realize the right to education. Covid-19 has only worsened the learning crisis faced by the world, exacerbating disparities leaving vulnerable students, already prone to discrimination, at higher risk of being left behind.

Sixty years after the adoption of the Convention, it is time to effectively put an end to all kinds of discrimination and ensure equality of opportunity in education in law and in fact. The worsening of pre-existing inequalities caused by the Covid-19 crisis urgent and crucial to build back better, by ensuring that education systems are rights-based, inclusive, non-discriminatory and resilient to disruptive events.

### **Did you know... that discrimination in education is legally prohibited?**

The [UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education](#) states that 'any distinction, exclusion, limitation or preference which, being based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, economic condition or birth' is prohibited in education.'

## The Voice of ASPnet

### ASPnet student describes the real effects of discrimination in education



Responding to a call to the network for testimonies on discrimination in education, secondary ASPnet student Tomás Casals Namura Borges Pinto from the ASPnet school “Escola Secundária Filipa de Vilhena” in Portugal describes how discrimination has severely affected the whole of his brother's education. Watch the [video](#)

## The Right to Education

### The Right to Education - what does it mean?

*Much more than you think!* At UNESCO we are doing our best to ensure youth, children and parents fully understand what it entails. We also work with governments at the international level to make it respected and implemented, but YOU are yourself an important actor for the respect of your own rights. How can you make sure that they are respected? To understand more, here are links to answer these questions:

[What you need to know about the right to education?](#)

[What are states' obligations and responsibilities?](#)

[What is the “Right to Education handbook”?](#)

[What has been done in recent years to implement this right?](#)

Education as a fundamental human right lies at the heart of UNESCO’s mission and is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and many other [international human rights instruments](#).

The right to education is one of the key principles underpinning the [Education 2030](#) Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) adopted by the international community. SDG4 is rights-based and seeks to ensure the full enjoyment of the right to education as fundamental to achieving sustainable development.

Yet [millions of children and adults](#) remain deprived of educational opportunities, many as a result of social, cultural and economic factors.

### Curious about what your country is doing?

We are periodically conducting Consultations with Member States to monitor what they are doing to implement the Convention (or the Recommendation if they are not party to the Convention). The [10th Consultation on its implementation with UNESCO Member States](#) was launched early 2020 and is ongoing until end of 2021. If your country has sent a report it will be available next year on our [Observatory on the right to education](#). But you can already have a look at it and see if your country has sent a report for the previous consultations, or most importantly at what measures your country is taking to advance the right to education. Click and discover the Observatory, it contains a lot of information!

Education in itself is an empowering right and one of the most powerful tools by which economically and socially marginalized children and adults can lift themselves out of poverty and participate fully in society.

In order to do so there must exist [equality of opportunity and universal access](#). [Normative instruments of the United Nations and UNESCO](#) lay down international [legal obligations](#) which recognize and develop the right of every person to enjoy access to education of good quality. This [legal framework](#) is considered of great importance by Member States and the international community in [implementing the right to education](#).

UNESCO supports States to establish solid [national legal and policy frameworks](#) that create the foundation and conditions for the delivery and sustainability of quality education. In turn, governments must be held accountable to fulfil their [legal and political obligations](#) to provide good quality education for all and to implement and monitor education [policies and strategies](#) more effectively.

### Are you engaged ...

in the fight against gender inequalities, or just curious about women's rights over the world?

[Explore UNESCO's Atlas of girls' and women's right to education: Her Atlas](#). This new tool will help you explore countries around the world to see what legal protection is in place to ensure the right to education for girls and women, if any!

### Do you want to learn more ...

about what UNESCO is doing for the right to education of various groups?

[Right to education for refugees](#), [Right to education for indigenous people](#), [Right to education for persons with disabilities](#), [Impact of climate displacement on the right to education](#), etc.

### Do you want to do more...

for the right to education to be a reality for all? Join us in celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention against discrimination in education and spread the word: [Say no to discrimination in education!](#) - [#RightToEducation campaign](#)

### Discover other actions that you or your network can take:

[What can I do to help advance the right to education?](#) Articles includes actions that students and teachers can take at their level to ensure the full realization of the right to education without any discrimination.

## Recent and upcoming UNESCO activities

### UNESCO Director General's message on World Aids Day 2020 –

Download the World Aids Day 2020 message from Ms Audrey Azoulay in the following UN languages: [English](#) - [Français](#) - [Español](#) - [Русский](#) - [العربية](#) - [中文](#) . More information on the day and the event can be found [here](#).

*"It is only through solidarity, and shared responsibility, that we can truly fight the spread of public health threats such as HIV and COVID-19. That is why "Global Solidarity, Shared Responsibility", is the theme of 2020 World AIDS Day, celebrated on 1 December."*

Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO



**UNESCO Webinar #10: Hybrid learning approaches** - The webinar on 16 December focuses on the delivery and effectiveness of hybrid and remote learning modalities and intends to share experiences from countries grappling with decisions to open or close their school systems. More information on the webinar which takes place on 16 December at 15h (GMT+1) can be found [here](#).

**Malala Yousafzai joins the campaign by UNESCO’s COVID-19 Global Education Coalition to safeguard girls’ education** - The education activist and co-founder of the Malala Fund has joined the campaign [Keeping girls in the picture](#) launched by UNESCO’s COVID-19 Global Education Coalition to advocate for girls’ education and their safe return to school, with a video produced jointly by the Malala Fund and the Coalition’s Gender Flagship, The [video](#) is available in [Urdu](#), [Spanish](#), [French](#), [Portuguese](#), [Turkish](#), [Arabic](#), [Dari](#) and [Pashto](#). Read [more](#).

**Virtual regional meetings by the Teacher Task Force (TTF)** – Following on from the Regional Meetings initiated in May/June of 2020 on distance teaching and the return to school, the TTF, with member organizations and partners, organized a new series of discussions during the [World Teachers’ Day celebrations](#). The talks built on the initial dialogue and explored the topic of teacher leadership and its key role in developing effective solutions to address challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic and build back resilient education systems. See the [concept note](#) and [other information](#).

**Online workshop series “How to continue Education for Sustainable Development during the pandemic”** - In the second edition of UNESCO’s series of [online workshops](#) on the [‘transformative power of Education for Sustainable Development \(ESD\) for the world beyond Covid-19’](#), on 14 October 2020 practitioners shared their experiences of creatively integrating ESD into digital and remote settings, and how to build structures to ensure that ESD learning continues. For more info see [here](#).

## News from ASPnet

### ASPnet’s Change Initiative – Second Webinar with Teacher Training Institutions

The second webinar of UNESCO ASPnet’s Change Initiative for Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) took place on 19 November 2020, bringing together 87 participants: deans, teacher educators and student teachers from 18 TEIs, experts and UNESCO colleagues (Headquarters, Regional Bureaus, Institutes and Centres), with the aim of building common understanding of Global Citizenship Education for Sustainable Development, discussing a multidimensional conceptual framework for educational change processes and its application, as well as sharing examples of good practices. Examples from TTIs were presented by Belgium, Finland, Japan, Namibia and Zimbabwe, and participants discussed the expert presentations and country examples, agreeing that the exchanges were informative, useful and enriching. Particularly appreciated were the exchanges among institutions around the world. The full webinar report can be found [here](#).



## ASPnet and Transdisciplinarity

The 3<sup>rd</sup> World Forum on Interdisciplinarity took place on 27 November 2020 in Rome under the title “[Transdisciplinary Education for the Citizens of the Earth](#)”. It was organized by the National Coordinator for ASPnet in Italy and attended, along with selected participants, by a number of Italian ASPnet schools. The full text of Ms Julie Saito's UNESCO presentation on the work of ASPnet in the context of transdisciplinarity can be found [here](#).

## Year-end greetings to all of ASPnet from the ASPnet International Coordination Team



**Happy Holidays in Solidarity!**

We wish you a safe, healthy and inspirational 2021

Greetings from the International Coordination Team of ASPnet

We encourage you to send us your messages of solidarity and other contributions, in words, pictures, videos and art works in order to build and strengthen our network, encourage and take care of each other. We would also like to hear from you about your experiences and innovative ways to learn, in and out of school and within your families.

Please send your contributions to [aspnetinaction@unesco.org](mailto:aspnetinaction@unesco.org). Please attach the [consent form](#).

### The ASPnet Team

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