

29 November – 1 December 2021

Held as a virtual forum

Co-organized by UNESCO and APCEIU

Hosted by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea

1. Background

Education in our contemporary world is expected to instill the set of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes in learners to thrive in increasingly diverse and rapidly changing societies, and provides them with a moral compass, purpose and meaning, and thus contribute to individual and collective well-being. In light of contemporary challenges such as climate change, violent and hateful ideologies, conflicts, or risks of global pandemics, education should equip learners with relevant knowledge, awareness and action competencies so that they become change agents to transform our societies for the betterment for all people and the planet as responsible citizens of the global community. This includes essential ‘transversal’ competencies, such as critical thinking, creativity, empathy, collaborative problem-solving and systems thinking. Thus understood, education allows learners to learn about and shape who they are and what they want to be, to relate to their heritage, remain open to other ways of being and willing to learn throughout life.

Since its inception, UNESCO has been promoting the transformative power of education to make the world a better place to live through both individual and societal transformation. Its work has been guided by, among others, the 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International

Transformative education

For UNESCO, *transformative education* involves the teaching and learning geared to motivate and empower learners to take informed decisions and actions at the individual, community and global levels. This notably implies ensuring, for instance, the curriculum, pedagogy, learning materials, schools or learning environments are meaningful in the natural, political, economic and cultural contexts.

Importantly, education can only be “transformative” when learners, feel valued, acknowledged, safe and are included in the learning community as full and active members. This implies paying greater attention to the quality of the learning environment and school climate, as well as to learners’ political, social and cultural rights. This starts by preventing and addressing school violence and bullying, gender-based violence, as well as health and gender-related discrimination towards learners and educators. Coherence is also required between policy and practice, and also between the world we live in today at school and the world we want to build outside of school.

Education has to model the world, values and behaviours that we expect from children. Educators are expected to transform their teaching into something that speaks to learners, not just something that is talked about. Learners must then engage with the world and encounter it in ways that command attention and become significant.

Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and more recently Sustainable Development Goal Target 4.7.

The UNESCO Forum was initially created as a community of practice on global citizenship education (GCED) for policy makers, experts, practitioners, teachers, students and development partners. The first biennial Forum was held in 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the second in 2015 in Paris, France, and the third in 2017 in Ottawa, Canada. Since 2017, following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Forum has been addressing education for sustainable development (ESD) as well as GCED together to promote their synergy for achieving SDG Target 4.7. In 2019 the 4th UNESCO Forum on ESD and GCED took place in Hanoi, Vietnam. In 2021, UNESCO will, for the 5th time, bring together education stakeholders to expand the community of practice to promote transformative education through involving stakeholders in ESD and GCED as well as education for health & well-being from across the world. In view of underlining the complementarity and synergy among diverse education programmes and approaches that have been furthering increased quality and relevance of education and learning, UNESCO is moving towards an integrated approach to Target 4.7, and brings together under the term of “transformative education” these fields, to open the way for innovation in education today.

In recent years, many global, regional and national efforts have been made to monitor progress towards Target 4.7, or transformative education. Against the background of these efforts, which all have their respective strengths and weaknesses, and in light of the many efforts underway to implement transformative education, Member States and other stakeholders have increasingly voiced the need to understand better what concrete progress at the country level in transformative education looks like and how it can best be captured. The 5th Forum responds to this need. On this occasion, UNESCO will also present the results of the global survey carried out in cooperation with Education International on Teachers’ readiness for education for sustainable development and global citizenship across the world.

2. Overarching objective of the 5th Forum

The 5th Forum aims at identifying what country progress in transformative education looks like and how it can best be captured.

3. Specific objectives

- 1) To share and analyze good practices, including those that show progress towards achieving transformative education (in policy, curriculum, teacher development, assessment, learning environments, pedagogy, etc.).
- 2) To review recent global, regional and national level data collected and analysed in relation to Target 4.7.
- 3) To discuss possible benchmarks and success indicators for country progress towards transformative education.

4. Outputs

- 1) Good practices shared in the implementation of transformative education
- 2) Knowledge built on recent data and information collected and analyzed at the global, regional and national levels

- 3) A set of policy and practical recommendations formulated on how best to capture country progress including possible benchmarks and success indicators.

These outputs of the Forum will be captured in a summary report.

5. Outcomes

Implementation of transformative education improved on the basis of shared good practices, recent data and a clear understanding on how to track country level progress.

6. Format and programme elements

Due to the ongoing health crisis related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Forum will take place fully online. Innovative plenaries for debate and dialogue, interactive concurrent sessions for practical information and knowledge sharing, and other special sessions for facilitating networking are built into the three-day programme. A poster exhibition space will be organized in order to showcase the institutions and initiatives that have developed innovative approaches in implementing and monitoring the progress made in transformative education.

7. Participants

The participants will be education stakeholders from all regions of the world working in the areas of education for sustainable development (ESD), global citizenship education (GCED), education for health and well-being, education monitoring, as well as other relevant areas, including experts from Ministries of Education and other relevant ministries (e.g., culture and environment), experts, teachers, educators, students, representatives of NGOs, the development community, private sector, youth and media.

8. Working languages

The official working languages of the Forum will be English, French and Korean and simultaneous interpretation will be available.

9. Organizers and partners

The 5th UNESCO Forum is co-organized by UNESCO and the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) and hosted by the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea.

10. How to join the Forum?

2500 participants are expected. A list of invitees will be prepared by UNESCO and APCEIU through mobilizing Member States and other stakeholders to recommend participants. Others who are interested in participating can submit an expression of interest by approaching the Forum Secretariat (contact information below). The plenary sessions will be livestreamed and the recordings of the concurrent, special and poster sessions will be made available after the Forum.

11. Contact

5th UNESCO Forum Secretariat

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UNESCO

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