

Dear ASPnet Community,
Dear National Coordinators,
Dear principals, teachers, students and parents,

COVID-19 is forcing our societies to take extraordinary measures in closing schools and restricting our daily lives. The UNESCO Associated Schools Network and all its members are going to face challenging times during the closure of schools around the world. Over 10,000 schools out of 12,000 ASPnet members are closed in 140 countries as of March 24 due to the rapidly spreading COVID-19 pandemic.

But as a global network we are **CONNECTed!**

For this reason, we are launching the ASPnet Newsletter "CONNECT", to keep connected with each other, to inform and share your messages of solidarity, resources and experiences, and to provide support.

With best wishes for you and your family,
The ASPnet International Coordination team

These are difficult times for all of us. We are dealing with challenges of learning and living together in circumstances beyond our control.



We, the ASPnet coordination team, want to let you know that we are in this together, want to assure you of our commitment to be with you all, to support you, and to stay in touch with you to make it through this and come out the other side stronger, more connected.

We want to achieve this through pro-active solidarity, support and cooperation for the whole of the network. Each of us can play a role towards this goal.

For this reason, we are launching the ASPnet Solidarity Newsletter, to keep connected to inform and share resources, experiences, to provide support.

In these times, solidarity is a fundamental value, not only to learning but also to living together well. We will put together newsletter issues every week/two weeks, providing you with updates, information and learning resources. As important as information is the sharing of ideas, experiences among all of us to benefit from as a learning community.

Your feedback and contributions are essential to this. For this reason, we want to feature messages of solidarity, your experiences and creative solutions to the challenges facing us.

Message from Julie Saito, Chief of UNESCO ASPnet International Coordination



Hello,

My name is [Julie Saito](#), I am the new chief of ASPnet and in charge of the International Coordination. I am very honoured to take this position to coordinate over 12,000 schools in over 180 countries around the world.

Although we are actually part of the Education Sector of UNESCO, our tasks go beyond that. At the moment, we are focusing on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), Global Citizenship Education (GCED), and Intercultural Dialogue.

Working on these themes include, connecting with the other UNESCO sectors, e.g. the sectors of Culture, Science, including the sectors for Human and Social Sciences, as well as that for Natural Sciences, and, finally, the sector for Communication and Information, along other partners outside of UNESCO.

We can initiate many projects together, for instance on topics such as Artificial Intelligence, gender, migration or even art education and, currently especially on solidarity and international cooperation and understanding.

We have a lot of opportunities to work together and I appreciate your inputs, interests and feedback on everything that we try to develop with you. [Read the full message](#) ->> [Watch the video](#) - >> [Discover Julie Saito's biography](#)

What is UNESCO doing?

Learn about UNESCO's "Educational response to COVID-19": UNESCO is providing

1. **Technical assistance** to quickly prepare and deploy inclusive distant learning solutions, utilizing hi-tech, low-tech and no-tech approaches.
2. A **community of practice** to exchange experiences, pose questions and seek support to maintain the provision of inclusive education.
3. A **selection of [free digital educational resources](#)** that governments, schools, teachers, parents can use to open opportunities for learners.

4. A repository of [national learning platforms](#) designed to support the continuity of curriculum-based study.
5. **Partnerships** to expand national and local capacities to assure the remote provision of education.
6. [Global monitoring of countrywide and localized school closures](#) and the number of learners affected.

Examples of Further Resources:

- WHO, Online training modules on COVID-19, which is health related and focuses on COVID-19 and how to stay safe and/or deal with the virus: <https://openwho.org/>
- UNESCO's list of national platforms for learning: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-emergencies/coronavirus-school-closures/nationalresponses>
- UNESCO's list of online learning platforms: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-emergencies/coronavirus-school-closures/solutions>
- UNESCO MGIEP, game-based topical learning: <https://framerspace.com/>. This resource was created by UNESCO MGIEP and focuses on game based learning for topics and contents related to SDG target 4.7.

Messages of Solidarity from ASPnet members

First Messages of Solidarity have reached us from different countries of the world...

Senegal

Good evening, dear member of ASPnet, we are very saddened to see many children deprived of schooling due to the coronavirus, and pray that the international community very quickly finds a remedy to face this scourge so that these many people can resume their normal activities especially the pupils and students, for a better life ... outside, outside, outside Coronas virus red card to infinity ..., Cordially,
M. Amadou Mactar Diagne,
Supervising teacher, ASPnet school



Jordan
[Video from Irbid Secondary School](#) -
Jordan ASPnet School
By Malaak Basheer Alzoubi, 1st
Secondary class, 17
years old

Mongolia

"If everyone in the world is healthy, then we can collectively work towards the common good. At this time of great risk, we need to be resilient, self-disciplined, responsible and caring for others. There is much potential for learning and growth if we follow the precautionary measures and foster mutual respect to overcome this force majeure. The lost time can be recovered; we just need a little patience. Every person should strive for the betterment of the whole world. During this time of quarantine, I am reminiscing all the good times I had with my colleagues and wishing them all the best. I am researching the "TV Lessons" and all other recommendations to improve my risk management skills and I believe good times are just around the corner."
Ms Erdenechimeg P, Social worker,
School No.31, Member of ASPnet

Lebanon

In my opinion, education should never stop! As a mother during this period of school closure, I open a school at home...

Our children are our future and it is our duty as teachers to continue their school learning.

As a teacher, I spend hours in front of the screen preparing my lessons in a way that they can be understood remotely and I stay online all day ready to answer the questions asked by my dear and valuable students.

It is a difficult period but we must not give up...

Rawdat El Fayhaa Secondary School

ASPnet Chemistry teacher and coordinator (French section)

Hungary

Berkes Bálint, 17 years old,

Kőbányai Szent László Gimnázium



We encourage you to send us your contributions, in words, pictures, videos, art works 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, out of schools and within your families. Please send your contributions to aspnetinaction@unesco.org.

As this is the first issue of the new Newsletter, it is still a work in progress, but since we wanted to urgently connect with all of you, we are sending it out in this simple format! We wish you all much strength and resilience and please know that you are not alone, but part of a community and network of solidarity!

Get connected: <https://aspnet.unesco.org>

Contact us: aspnetinaction@unesco.org