

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



In this issue of our newsletter, we want to look back on the achievements of our journey, in the context of the challenges posed by COVID-19 as well as of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 4.7, and provide a particular focus on our activities for promoting transformative education.

Faced with many challenges over the past year, we shared information and solidarity through our communication channels, in particular this newsletter CONNECT, launched at

the beginning of the pandemic. We appreciated your heartfelt messages and videos, artistic contributions, and active participation at numerous webinars and meetings in our priority themes and under the overall objective of reaching SDG Target 4.7.

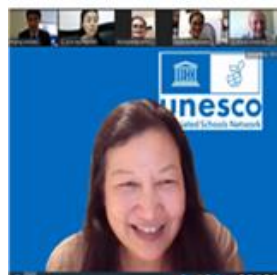
One of the biggest achievements I would like to highlight is the recent 5-day Global Meeting for Teacher Education & Training Institutions (TEIs), which resulted in a Joint Invitation to strengthen collaboration for Global Citizenship Education for Sustainable Development in teacher education and training.

Below we give you an overview of how ASPnet has been implementing our three priority areas of Global Citizenship, Education for Sustainable Development and Intercultural Learning and the Appreciation of Cultural Diversity and Heritage through the approach of transformative education. We will give some space to arts education as an important element of this last thematic area and as a crosscutting means of our work; and we will show examples of your great contributions to the recent International Arts Education Week 2021. You will also find some news on other recent and upcoming activities, including from you and other members of the ASPnet community.

Last but not least, I would like to express my appreciation to you in a video message and present our vision on how to make best value of our network towards achieving SDG Target 4.7 through transformative education.

Stay safe. Stay CONNECTed!

[Julie Saito](#), ASPnet International Coordinator



Special message from Julie Saito, ASPnet International Coordinator: "What is transformative education?"

"Transformative education calls for rethinking what we learn, where we learn and how we learn"

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

How ASPnet brings to life SDG Target 4.7 and transformative education

Walking the Talk

Since the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were launched in 2015, all of us in the ASPnet community are well aware of SDG 4 on education and Target 7 on Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). But what is the best way to move towards the achievement of SDG Target 4.7 in light of the challenges we are facing, both in general and in particular during the current pandemic, which have brought new challenges and exacerbated old ones?

SDG 4.7: “by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development”

One of the approaches that must be discussed is **transformative education**. It aims to motivate and empower learners to question and change the way they see and think about themselves, others and the world, and take informed decisions and actions to actualize a more peaceful, inclusive, equitable and sustainable world. Teaching and learning strategies are holistic, involving the integration of learning processes rooted in learners’ heads, hands and hearts. Curriculum, pedagogy, learning materials and environments connect with the natural, political, economic and cultural contexts to be significant and meaningful for both teachers and learners. In that sense, transformative education is not an add-on to what we have been doing so far but it is quality education, and as such enshrined in SDG Target 4.7. As was said at the opening of our recent Global Meeting: transformative education means “to walk the talk” and “to practice what we teach”.

Drivers of Innovation

The spirit of this is clearly reflected in two important and very recent documents, first the [Berlin Declaration](#), the outcome document of the Global Conference on ESD held in May 2021, as well as the Joint 2021 Invitation, a dynamic statement by ASPnet Teacher Education & Training Institutions issued during the Global Meeting in June 2021.

In ASPnet, we have been promoting SDG Target 4.7 and transformative education through our three thematic action areas: Global Citizenship Education (GCED), Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Intercultural Learning and the Appreciation of Cultural Diversity and Heritage.

Examples - The Change Initiative, Futures of Education and Trash Hack

Trough the **Change Initiative** we are building a global community of practice (CoP) of ASPnet Teacher Education & Training Institutions (TEIs). Since September 2020, TEIs are coming together through a series of webinars to exchange and explore transformative approaches for GCED and ESD as well as to collaboratively develop change experiments to strengthen GCED and ESD in their institutions and beyond. At the recent Global Meeting, the CoP issued a Joint Invitation, specifying a dynamic, shared vision for ASPnet TEIs and inviting for global collaborative action. More on the Global Meeting and the Joint Invitation document further below.

The **ASPnet x Futures of Education** Initiative is an ambitious attempt to rethink education and help shape the future. Over the past year, we set out a consultation process in which more than 2000 ASPnet students, teachers, school principals and parents from all regions participated, reflecting on and debating questions related to GCED and ESD. We shared the experiences and results through 3 global webinars, demonstrating great engagement and contributions, which will inform the work of the [International Commission on the Futures of Education](#). A short publication of key findings will be issued later this year.

As part of the global **Trash Hack Campaign**, we developed a short [practical guide for teachers](#) and partnered with the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) to invite all our members to engage in action learning on trash, waste management and sustainable development. In May, we came together in a global webinar to celebrate successful trash hacks from across the world. Find out more [here](#).

A hub for intercultural learning

ASPnet's work related to the thematic action area on Intercultural Learning and the Appreciation of Cultural Diversity and Heritage can be seen as connecting and holding the activities and the network itself together. As a global network, exchanges and interaction have intercultural learning and dialogue at their heart. Under this theme, we are continually striving to strengthen this aspect by encouraging members to use the potential of the network to work together and learn from and with each other. We see culture as a context of learning, and the appreciation of cultural diversity and the understanding of the role of culture for sustainable development have become explicit targets of quality education. Culture and intercultural learning are relevant for all 17 SDGs, considering their dynamic and transformational nature. ASPnet and our common work are living proof of the richness of the cultural diversity of the ASPnet community.

This action area also infuses our two other action areas: GCED and ESD. As such, it is an important part for SDG Target 4.7 (see box above). We have highlighted examples of ASPnet schools' participation in a UNESCO-EU project on learning with intangible cultural heritage below.

Lessons learnt from a year of unprecedented challenges

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic all of us have been traversing for the past 18 months, we have learned to adapt, to be resilient and creative as a community, and to stand in solidarity and support for each other. ASPnet has contributed greatly to UNESCO's education response, amongst other through the many excellent contributions from members from around the world to the **#Learningneverstops campaign**. The **first Global ASPnet Meeting**, held in May 2020, offered support, solidarity and the possibility for exchange of experiences. It gave voice to students, teachers and parents and laid a few seeds for activities that followed, including the ASPnet X Futures of Education collaborative initiative and our joint re-imagining of education. Through the ASPnet newsletter, "**CONNECT**" that was launched in March 2020 we have been showing our solidarity and support to each other, keeping each other updated and connected.

Intercultural Learning and International Arts Education Week

Transformative learning through arts education



Arts education takes a prominent role in ASPnet schools around the world to diffuse UNESCO's values. Examples show that learning through the arts not only facilitates reflections and actions on topics related to Global Citizenship Education, Education for Sustainable Development and Intercultural Learning, it also enables participatory, action-oriented, inclusive, transformative and creative pedagogical approaches to learning and teaching, as aimed for in Goal 3 of the [Seoul Agenda](#):

[Goals for the Development of Arts Education](#) (*Goal 3: Apply arts education principles and practices to contribute to resolving the social and cultural challenges facing today's world*) and SDG Target 4.7.

International Arts Education Week 2021 - Reflections on the role of arts education during the COVID-19 pandemic

UNESCO celebrated the **International Arts Education Week** from 24 to 30 May 2021. This year we have invited **ASPnet students** to showcase the importance of arts education during the COVID-19 pandemic. Your contributions responded to the questions on how arts education was impacted during the pandemic and what innovative ways you found to use arts as solution to overcome the unprecedented circumstances.

Examples of ASPnet's action on arts education

Song for global citizenship, cultural diversity and reconciliation

A [song and video project](#) from the ASPnet Allison Bernard Memorial High School in Eskasoni (First Nation, Nova Scotia, Canada) done during the pandemic and following the strictest of COVID measures. It is a great example of reconciliation in action between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in Canada. It is sung in English, French, Gaelic and Mi'kmaq.

International Arts Education Week message

On the occasion of International Arts Education Week 2021, a [joint message was conveyed by the Assistant Director General of Education, Ms. Stefania Giannini together with the Assistant Director General of Culture, Mr. Ernesto Ottone Ramirez](#), inviting the world to join UNESCO in the celebrations and to support UNESCO in its mission to harness arts education as a building block for a holistic human and societal development.

Artworks from Trash – Trash Hacks by ASPnet Members



Activities in the [guide for teachers](#) encourage for creative and innovative approaches!

[Get inspired by artistic Trash Hacks by ASPnet schools around the world](#)

EBI Francisco Ferreira Drummond,
ASPnet, Portugal

Recent and Upcoming ASPnet activities

Online Course on GCED for ASPnet Primary School Teachers in Africa - We are organizing a 6-week online training on GCED for primary school teachers in Africa. It will be held between September and October 2021, involving asynchronous sessions on the UNESCO Open Learning Platform and live sessions on Zoom. You can find more information [here](#).

Student Forum on Global Citizenship Education for Sustainable Development: Taking Action for People and the Planet - UNESCO ASPnet and the International Centre for the UNESCO ASPnet (ICUA) will hold a 2-day Student Forum in December 2021. It will be a platform for exchange of ideas around GCED and ESD, and particularly for sharing experiences and showcasing examples of innovative actions by young people of ASPnet and other youth networks. The Global Forum will be preceded by regional workshops in September 2021. Find more information [here](#).

International Week of Sound Contest - For the second year in a row, as part of UNESCO's Week of Sound, ASPnet is calling on member schools to participate in the International Competition "**When Sound Creates the Image!**" by making a short film of less than 2 minutes from the original music created by the composer Gabriel Yared. Schools can download the music and enter this Competition [here](#).

News from ASPnet

Global Meeting of the Change Initiative

The ASPnet Community of Practice in Teacher Education came together from 31 May to 4 June 2021 for a global technical meeting to share and explore innovative approaches in teacher education and training. The meeting provided opportunities for inspirational discussions and learning in support of their development and implementation of change experiments and projects on Global Citizenship Education for Sustainable Development.

One of the major significant outcomes of the meeting was the endorsement - through a collective online clap in sign language - of a “Joint Invitation”, outlining a shared vision and inviting for global collaborative action.

In her closing remarks, Julie Saito, ASPnet International Coordinator welcomed a renewed enthusiasm for action: “You are the change makers for teacher education and training! Let us build our shared futures together!”



A resource kit for TEIs and anyone interested, providing detailed information on the sessions of the meeting, including presentations, videos, participants’ discussions and feedback as well as the “Joint Invitation” document can be found [here](#). For the full article of the meeting see [here](#).

From our members

Teaching and learning with living heritage

ASPnet schools in Europe participated in an inspiring UNESCO-EU pilot project “[Raising awareness for and learning with intangible cultural heritage in European schools](#)”. The results show impressively how the linking of living heritage with education supports the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and the engaging in transformative education. We invite all ASPnet teachers to use the developed [resources](#) to design and implement own projects on living heritage! Learn more about the pilot projects, developed resources and further action by ASPnet members on living heritage [here](#).

Coventry Cities of Peace Project bringing together arts, culture and education



This project involves **five ASPnet Primary Schools in Coventry, UK**, working **collaboratively with pupils in Japan with a focus on peace and reconciliation**. The participating schools were Broad Heath Primary School, Finham Primary School, Howes Primary School, Park Hill Primary School and Stivichall Primary School. The project has been facilitated by the Japan Society London, in collaboration with [Between the Stones](#). The Coventry Young Ambassadors worked on three projects with the *Between*

the Stones team. The projects were called the **Coventry Cities of Peace Projects**, building on Coventry’s links with the City of Hiroshima. See [further information about the project](#) and have a look at the [Booklet on the Cities of Peace Schools Project](#), including a message by Julie Saito, International Coordinator of UNESCO ASPnet, on the occasion of the inauguration of the Coventry Young Ambassadors Islands of Peace Garden.

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, out of schools and within your families.

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

The ASPnet Team

Julie Saito, Melanie Seto, Fouzia Belhami, Katja Anger, Simon Wanda, Helene Darne, Erik Eschweiler, Apolonia Torres

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

Contact us: aspnetinaction@unesco.org