SangSaeng

Living Together Helping Each Other

Media and Information Literacy and Fostering Global Citizenship

CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTE

In today's digital age, we increasingly rely on media content and information shared mostly online in order to keep us informed and connected as both information providers and consumers. The content and information we have access to significantly affect our endeavours to enhance solidarity and cooperation. The problems surrounding and associated with hate speech, stigma and racial discrimination, which have been highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic, are closely related to the spread of fake news and disinformation.

Thus, media and information literacy (MIL) has become even more crucial for global citizenship. In this context, this issue of *SangSaeng* focuses on "Media and Information Literacy and Fostering Global Citizenship."

In the Special Column, professor Milena Dragicevic Sesic critically reflects on the media culture of contemporary digital society and the unjust structures in all societal aspects. She emphasises that MIL is a must for all in the 21st century because it helps enable citizens to understand complex social processes and actively participate in social dialogues at all levels. Thanks to professor Sesic's suggestion, we are privileged to include three art pieces by Mr. Dan Perjovschi: "Fear," "Fake News," and "Freedom of Expression." Very relevant to the theme of this issue, the Romanian artist's humorous critique of international media and politics provide readers with the opportunities to reflect on our society and MIL in a creative way. "Fear" is also used as the cover of the issue.

In the Focus section, four contributors share their insights on crucial elements in promoting media and information literacy (especially in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic) and how to empower young people to better cope with this challenging time. Professor Sirkku Kotilainen stresses the need to listen to and involve young people and proposes "inclusive media education," based on Finland's experiences of developing multiliteracies in its national curriculum. Ms. Lisa van Wyk points out that emotional awareness has become as essential in media and information literacy as critical thinking skills and rational assessment. Introducing MIL education endeavours in South Korea, Dr. Amie Kim suggests ways to enhance young people's MIL competencies and digital citizenship. Ms. Bushra Ebadi argues that we should develop "more just and equitable media and information ecosystems to tackle disempowering narratives that contribute to greater insecurity, conflict, and injustice."

Both of the cases introduced in the Best Practices section examine youth-focused endeavours for MIL to tackle the challenges of our time: The Media and Information Literacy Learning Initiative (MiLLi*) in Namibia shows an encouraging model of youth capacity-building in MIL through the Training of the Trainers programme; while our other Best Practices story takes a look at The Health and Information Literacy Access (HILA) Alliance, a youth-led initiative to address the COVID-19 infodemic and the need for ensuring access to reliable information on the pandemic for diverse marginalised communities.

Through the two special reports, we would like to invite our readers to find inspirations in 1) the dialogue with Dr. Betty Reardon, one of the most respected pioneers of peace education, and 2) the highlights of the World Conference on ESD held in May 2021 to renew our commitment to "learn for our planet and act for sustainability."

I sincerely hope that this issue will help our readers be better informed and connected, while staying healthy in this continued pandemic. Thank you.

Yangsook Lee
Editor

MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY TO ENSURE RIGHTS, FREEDOMS

Fighting Hate Speech and Fake News by Enhancing (Trans)Media Literacy

By Milena Dragicevic Sesic
(Head of the UNESCO Chair for Cultural Policy and Management, former President of the University of Arts in Belgrade, Serbia)

▽ Dan Perjovschi, *Fear* (2018) / Installation at Jane Lombard Gallery / Newsprint, permanent marker and artist tape / Created for the "Time of Monsters" exhibition

This century can be described as the century of media culture. Computers and smart phones are part of everyday life, even for the most socially and economically deprived citizens. However, this digital realm has not yet found adequate legal and policy frameworks, neither on the national nor on the international levels. The majority of citizens have been and still are educated according to the values of the "Gutenberg galaxy," as expressed by Marshall McLuhan in 1962.

The new digital galaxy has enabled people to become not only users but creators of information and different forms and genres of digital contents (video clips, photos, digital auto performances, stories, reportage essays and other informational narratives). Moreover, this new digital galaxy is praising itself for assuring

△ Milena Dragićević Šešić speaking at the thematic webinar on 29 April 2021 on the occasion of the launch of UNESCO resource *"Media and Information Literate Citizens: Think critically, Click Wisely! (Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Educators and Learners)"* Screen captured image from the Facebook page of UNESCO milclicks.

that freedom of expression for all citizens is protected.

However, most citizens do not know how to cope with the misuse and/or resist the different forms of media manipulation that is coming from above, such as from powerful political authorities, and from the bottom as well, such as from citizens seeking their five minutes of fame. Thus, education for Media and Informational Literacy (MIL) has today become a need and a must in order to prevent media hate speech from dominating both traditional media and social networks.

To seduce or attract and keep "followers," loyal users and creators of media content are facing numerous competitors today. There are fewer and fewer professional editors, labelled in the 20th century as gatekeepers, controlling not only the quality of information but also its ideological content. Contemporary editors in some traditional media outlets are often pressuring journalists to provide sensational information, in addition to being the first to disseminate stories without verification as long as the story is attractive for potential users. If the story is seductive and appealing not only for the receiver but for other media outlets to follow, journalists are then pushed to delve deeper into the private lives of celebrities as well as common people.

New Ethical Code for Media

Value systems and ethical codes apply only to public service media outlets. They are legally obliged to follow public interests and provide information and media content that is of value or newsworthy to the public. However, public service media organizations have become less and less an important source of information in this new media realm.

Younger generations mostly use new digital platforms that are overwhelmed with tabloid journalism and promote sensationalism and hate speech. This is even more so in conflict societies in which different religious, ethnic or social groups are searching for information that suits their emotions and their needs in order to justify their hatred toward the "other." In such situations, social networks that might have an important positive impact instead play a reverse role, and as a result, further stimulate and enhance hatred. A citizen with no or low media and information literacy (as most educational systems have not provided such courses yet) easily becomes a victim of media manipulation.

Media Hatred, Local Conflicts, Populist Policies

Wars in former Yugoslavia, the Rwandan genocide, the continuing conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians, and all other local conflicts happening throughout the

globe are further fuelled by hate speech in the media. Historical facts, contemporary demographics, economic and all other data are misinterpreted so as to show to "your own" population the truth about the "evil others." Thus, the fact that other groups' natality is larger becomes a strategy of conquering "our territory;" the fact that economic growth of the neighbour is higher than ours is explained as the result of supporting international superpowers, etc.

Some journalists and media producers become more focused on interpretations that are appealing such as conspiracy theories. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, media platforms were over flooded with stories that "discussed" the origin of the virus, or the possible intentions of vaccine producers and outcomes of mass vaccinations.

Populism and populist political communication that is prevalent today in the world has media hate speech as its key supporter. Media often do not have to do much in transmitting a political message, as politicians are already using vulgar words, obscenities, and offensive words toward other groups and nations. In fact, populist communication that was republished in different media outlets started with attacks toward the educated, calling them "false elites," elites that alienated themselves from the people, and/or corrupted elites (often by foreign grants and research projects), etc. Thus, confidence and trust in research, knowledge and education, slowly started to erode most of the population's respect for its political leaders and trust in media.

Societies between Fear and Hope – the Rhetoric of New Geopolitics of Emotion

Societal development such as political polarization, extremism, and social differentiation (a huge discrepancy between the enormously rich and poor), together with the financial crisis of 2008, the migration crisis that lasted for over a decade, the environmental crisis linked to climate change and, finally, the COVID-19 pandemic, are all nurturing hate speech and other forms of media manipulation as citizens need some explanation for these unexpected processes.

In the mid-20th century, there was hope that science and technology would support social development. In this century, such a hope is lost, and our geopolitics has become the geopolitics of fear and humiliation, according to Dominique Moisi.

The rich Global North fearing the South has developed rhetoric full of prejudice, describing their vision of the South as a territory of poverty, mutual conflicts, terrorism, conservativism, and gender inequity that would easily, through its migrants, export all this to the Global North. Thus, walls and all other forms of obstacles (visa regime, etc.) are accepted as the new normality of the Global North.

Teaching Media Literacy – New Requests for Public Policies

These are reasons why teaching media and information literacy should not only be part of university courses, but also be part of general curricula and continuous professional education. Contemporary society needs education for all that will open new spheres of understanding societal changes and new phenomena and that will enable more fruitful and effective intergenerational dialogue.

Education for MIL (that should be called transmedia literacy) is necessary for everyone, even to those who were born in the digital era (and not to speak about the generation that grew up during the time of one TV and several radio channels). It is specifically important for parents to understand their children's needs to live not only in their physical neighbourhood but in numerous virtual neighbourhoods that they are selecting for themselves, while also understanding the dangers that might come from these new spheres.

In spite of legal regulations, digital space enables a lot of practices that are completely opposite to consensual social values. Paedophilia and sex trafficking might be legally prosecuted, but hate speech, speech that supports prejudices and stereotypes about others and spreads disinformation and false truths, is far less under the scrutiny of the legal system. Often, these lies are protected by those who advocate freedom of speech and see the efforts for internet control as official

© Jane Lombard Gallery/ Arturo Sanchez (Courtesy of the artist and Jane Lombard Gallery)

△ Dan Perjovschi, *Fake News* (2018) / Installation at Jane Lombard Gallery / Newsprint, permanent marker and artist tape / Created for the "Time of Monsters" exhibition

△ Dan Perjovschi, *Freedom of Expression*, marker on paper, 2003.

Courtesy of the artist

FINNISH MULTILITERACY MITIGATES CHALLENGES
Inclusive Media Education Promotes Media and Information Literacy

By Sirkku Kotilainen (Professor, Faculty of Information Technology and Communication, Tampere University, Finland)

limitations of freedom of speech and the biggest threat to democracy.

Art and Culture of Dissent and Criticism

Contemporary artists and civil society groups are well aware of those issues and are trying to fight against nationalism and ethnic discrimination in order to reveal the evils of contemporary discriminatory officials and unofficial policies.

For instance, the work titled "Entropa" (2009) by David Černy, which is positioned in the European Union building in Brussels, has raised numerous controversies. The video performance projects of Milica Tomić (2010), available on www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1kagFMbQ5k, have shown the extent to which militaristic and nationalistic narratives are normalized. With his 30-year drawing career, Romanian artist Dan Perjovschi continuously studies and represents contemporary society with his depiction of the evils of politics and the evil of new media. Civil society groups started to use new media realms to show the dangers of hate speech.

Portal "Byka" ("Noise," www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qd7m3jF8NC8) from Bosnia and Herzegovina, recently created the video clip "Hate Slavs" (pun of the Yugoslav hymn "Hey Slavs") to show the dangers of the normalisation of hate

speech (use of pejorative words for other ethnic groups). In just a few days, this clip was seen by several million people, which shows the interest of citizens to find a response to the propaganda of hatred.

Conclusion

Cultural and educational policies should both be engaged in revealing the uses and misuses of media in contemporary society: cultural policies should encourage projects, workshops, films, theatre works and exhibitions that aim to raise awareness about the impact of media hate speech; while educational policies should introduce courses in MIL to all levels of the educational system, from the primary and secondary educational level to university courses and curricula for continuous professional development (for media and education professionals), and also to curricula for the lifelong learning of all citizens of this planet.

In short, as no one in the 20th century had questioned the need for literacy for all citizens, today, in the 21st century, we should not question the need for media and information literacy. MIL is necessary because it helps to ensure the citizens' rights and freedoms while enabling citizens to understand complex social processes (political, economic, cultural, educational, etc.) so that they can actively participate in social dialogues at all levels,

from family through neighbourhood and working place to the city and the state.

In UNESCO's realm, it means that in all four sectors – education, culture, media and science – institutions should take their responsibilities in promoting the development of MIL in order to ensure a future of cultural literacy for all. 🏛

> **MIL is necessary because it helps to ensure the citizens' rights and freedoms while enabling citizens to understand complex social processes (political, economic, cultural, educational, etc.) so that they can actively participate in social dialogues at all levels.**

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This pandemic has created many global challenges to humanity's peaceful reality of living together. They include the spread of false information about health issues and the increased difficulties of properly understanding everyday news from around the world. This situation serves an argument for the increasing need for enhancing Media and Information Literacy (MIL) as a critical practice of evaluating information.

Moreover, the quick change into remote schooling has highlighted online learning as the primary mode of learning both at school and at home. It provides another argument for taking into account media and information, especially the operational and technical aspects on how to organize education in order to make it happen.

All in all, problems that have been solved or not during the pandemic have been circling around the MIL spectrum, they include the operational, practical, and critical stages of MIL. One important question remains: how should we live together peacefully and, at the same time, promote global citizenship amongst youth?

One solution offered in this article is called "inclusive media education," a model I developed with Mari Pienimäki, PhD, at Tampere University in Finland. It is partly based on the recent formulations of multiliteracies in the Finnish national core curriculum (Finnish National Agency in Education, 2016).

Formal Finnish Side

The Finnish Board of Education has defined "multiliteracy" as "the competence to interpret, produce and evaluate multiple forms of texts, including audio-visual and digital forms." Although Information Communication Technology (ICT) is a separate subject field in the curriculum, it has transversal linkages to multiliteracy: ICT as "competence or a set of skills that include the safe and responsible use of ICT; using ICT to create digitally; and using ICT to interact with each other."

Multiliteracy is practiced in the several different stages of the formal education system in Finland, starting from early childhood education until upper secondary education. It targets children and youth, mostly 5 to 18 years of age. In the final matriculation exam of 18-year-olds, multiliteracy is being tested at least in the Finnish language exam.

The Finnish national core curriculum is currently a competency-based curriculum that is developing transversal competences that are developing transversal competences across subjects. It introduces several transversal competence areas which are described as an entity of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and will, that should be taught and integrated into each subject. At this point, no one knows how the pandemic has affected this transversality, especially in ICT multiliteracy. Moreover, transversality is promoted in the recent Finnish media literacy policy document published in 2019 by the Ministry of Education and Culture (OKM).

MIL development has over 50 years of history in Finnish democracy. It is approximately as old as the development of the Finnish national core curriculum (FNCC), which was designed to address political and societal changes. Furthermore, this document has been renewed once every ten years. In the renewing processes, MIL has been titled differently: "mass media education" in the 1970's, "communication education" in the 1990's, "communication and media competence" in 2010 and, more recently, "multiliteracy" in 2016.

Digitizing Literacy

Currently, the idea of integrating sociocultural aspects of multiliteracy as a critical practice of information in an algorithm-based production of contents has paved the way for "digital literacy" at least in university-based curricula, as well as in teacher education. Still, digital equity is the goal for civic agencies to practice responsible global citizenship. And, not only in schools, but in the strong third sector where out-of-school youth work with national actors.

The Nordic and Finnish approach to education is civic rights-based, respecting children and youth as "citizens-in-place" or "prepared citizens." It is about valuing youth, which leads to emphasising participatory approaches in education when possible, as is the case in inclusive media education as well.

The model has been developed in a research project that included eight youth workshops within two years (2015-2017). The project extensively mixed methods of evaluation amongst the 100 involved youngsters aged 13 to 20. The usability of the model is expected to be used in schools, youth work and social work, and has been applied during the pandemic in adult-educational digital workshops in the Helsinki region. This has been reported in a master thesis by S. Salonen in 2021.

Inclusive Media Education in Practice

Inclusive media education features: 1) safe spaces, 2) caring interaction, 3) trust in competence, 4) creative mediamaking and 5) authentic agency (see Figure 1).

(1) *Safe spaces* in inclusive media education includes encouragement and the accommodation of friendly atmospheres for informal activities and secure interactions that eliminate bullying from peers both in face-to-face meetings and through social media channels. In our workshops for example, when asked for their views, participating youth have the opportunity to reveal their ideas by writing them on post-it notes instead of orally presenting them. In remote learning, the same practice applies but through an online forum such as padlet.com.

(2) *Caring interaction* supports youth identities with empathetic and trustworthy communication techniques. This is done with individual students and in their interactions with their peers both in face-to-face settings and on social media channels. The practice of caring interaction has been integrated into our workshops throughout the process through supportive and caring comments by the instructors. For online learning situations, there are possibilities to use instant messaging programs as well. It is important to note that the practice of caring interactions focuses on encouragement through the youths' communication with each other instead of their achievements.

(3) *Trust in youth competence* helps them highlight their strengths, helps them rely on those strengths and gives them plenty of positive feedback with extra time in the process to help them decide, plan and create. For example, in the beginning phase of the workshops, youth are inspired by the task behind the "treasure/dream map." This map provides them with an opportunity to reflect on their identities and promote trustworthy relationships amongst their peers. It became clear to us

that such creative methods could improve youth creativity so that they could come up with a project of their own as a theme to start with.

(4) *Creative mediamaking* helps them create and produce media as well as IT-based content. Through their participation, which includes working in a team or group, they learn the different filmmaking processes such as shooting and editing, etc. At this point, based on previous pedagogical activities in our workshops, young people involved in their roles focused their attention on their own interests and strengths. Online activities can also be used in this process with tools that eliminate the need for face-to-face interactions. Still, the organization of peer-supervision is essential for the instructor. In remote learning, the instructor's role is to provide structure and support for the creative mediamaking process by providing essential tools, links to manuals and promoting group interactions.

(5) *Authentic agency* is the opportunity to publish the youths' media content through authentic media forums in real-life contexts with audiences from different generations or different youth groups. This is important for young people because it helps them know that their voices

△ Professor Sirkku Kotilainen speaking to the youth participants of the Somejam hackathon project to build up concrete ways to enhance sustainable life through the use of digital technology in Tampere, Finland, on 4 February 2020.

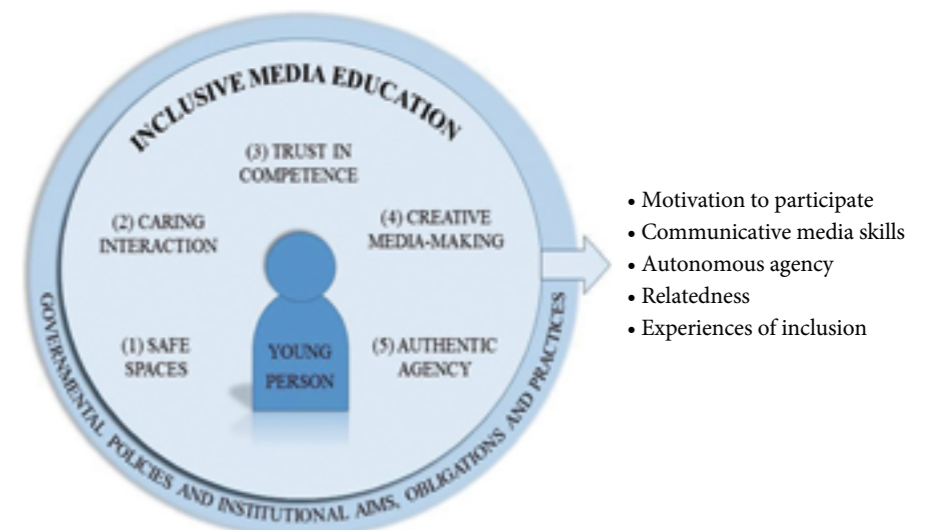*Screen captured image from the Facebook page of Somejam*

Figure 1. Model of inclusive media education (Mari Pienimäki and Sirkku Kotilainen, 2021)

- Motivation to participate
- Communicative media skills
- Autonomous agency
- Relatedness
- Experiences of inclusion

△ Finnish students attending the Fridays for Future demonstration on climate action on 27 September 2019

EMOTIONAL AWARENESS IN AGE OF MISINFORMATION

Media and Information Literacy Require Awareness While Avoiding Emotional Triggers

By Lisa van Wyk (Global Communications Manager, World Wide Web Foundation)

are heard and that they are noticed and identified as creators. Still, the promotion or advertisement of such work outside of the school is usually not suggested. In this case, in order to reach intergenerational audiences, promotional campaigns are conducted through forums or exhibitions (online) with parents, grandparents, and the school community.

Findings

The research conducted through the inclusive media education workshops show that participating youth improved their creativity, presentation, and technical skills. Moreover, the motivation of youth to create media content that covers the current issues relating to their own lives and communities increased together with their autonomous agency, especially in mediamaking. The study shows that

inclusive media education can also advance the youth's critical understanding of communication as part of a society and how it relates to mis- or dis-information, which is currently a key issue in most societies.

The inclusive media education model presented here has been developed in youth workshops with a focus on at-risk youth. One can say that currently, all youth belong in the at-risk category, especially after the pandemic because of the longstanding remote learning situation. On the other hand, this period has tested our skills of living together in a community and in dealing with school-family interactions. Still, there is a need to listen to young people and promote their empowerment in a peaceful manner that incorporates togetherness. That is the base for today's responsible global citizenship in which media and information literacy is an important aspect of communication. 🏛

> " The study shows that inclusive media education can also advance the youth's critical understanding of communication as part of a society and how it relates to mis- or dis-information, which is currently a key issue in most societies. "

△ Illustration of conflict between conspiracies and fact-checking

Misinformation, disinformation and propaganda have been a feature of the media landscape since its inception, but the current pandemic makes the consequences more apparent. Media and information literacy education and training have, traditionally, focused on arming audiences with the tools and skills to fact check, verify and assess the accuracy of information presented.

But media, and our relationship with it, is not what it once was. It is no longer a one-directional and predictable transmission between the source and the receiver. It is no longer confined to a discrete set of platforms, separate and distinct from "real-world" activities and relationships.

Emotional awareness has become a fundamental part of media literacy – particularly in response to a global pandemic that has left people tired, overwhelmed, scared and frustrated, and in a context where information about the world and current affairs, once restricted to formal news outlets, is deeply embedded in platforms that encourage emotional engagement and personal interaction.

For much of 2020 and 2021, the world has been, in many places, unrecognisable. Lockdowns forced by the global pandemic brought with them quiet streets at the usual rush hours, empty restaurants, deserted tourist hotspots and deserted schools and offices. Forced to stay home, those who had access to the tools and infrastructure moved their daily activities into the online space, with online lessons, video calls and meetings.

While it could be argued that these shifts to the online space were an acceleration of existing trends, with the increased digitisation of our lives already well underway, the sudden changes brought about by the pandemic put certain things into sharp focus. We became acutely aware of the digital divide that allowed some to transition seamlessly to this new lifestyle as others faced catastrophic loss of livelihood, education and connection. Perhaps most of all, our relationship to the platforms through which we access our information, and the very sources of that information themselves, became central to navigating this strange new world.

It did not take long for the pandemic,

△ Lisa van Wyk conducting a session on media and information literacy during the 7th Youth Leadership Workshop on GCED in July 2021.

and for government and global agency responses to it, to become politicised, and in some cases, manipulated. At a time when unified and trustworthy information was vital for an effective public health response, conspiracy theories, disinformation and counter-narratives, often fuelled by xenophobia and anti-science bias, clouded the picture. And audiences, both tied into digital and social media platforms and actively seeking out information as a natural response to fear and uncertainty, were ripe targets for unreliable information, whether deliberate propaganda or unthinking error.

Unrecognizable Sources

In this context it would be easy to give guidelines on testing the veracity of information and content. Checking sources and testing information against known facts, once the work of journalists, is now the responsibility of media consumers too, especially if one is to share content with one's networks.

Social media platforms have, in response to bad press that threatened their reputation and commercial interests, have at last taken small steps to counter problematic content by flagging material that is disputed (as seen in response to the pandemic and the flagging of information that does not match World Health Organization lines of response), or by providing more information about the publisher - if one bothers to click for this.

The past few years have also seen the growth of the media fact-checking

industry, with dedicated channels developing in countries across the world to verify or correct information that appears in the media. The external tools and aids exist, but these rely on individuals having the time, and the will, to seek these out. Given the pace and the volume of information consumed by audiences on a daily basis, this guidance is simply not enough.

In his book "The Happiness Hypothesis," social psychologist Jonathan Haidt describes the relationship between the "emotional brain" and the "rational brain." The rational brain is critical, takes time to assess situations, and comes up with reasonable responses to information it is served. But this part of the brain is connected to a more powerful emotional brain that rushes ahead, responds instinctively, seeks out pleasure and runs away from fear. While the emotional brain is overstimulated and excited, the rational brain does not stand a chance.

This emotional response is open to exploitation from all sides – particularly on social media platforms – and in the development of content designed for distribution on these platforms. Those who work in the world of communications for social development have become well-versed in the use of story, emotive language and relatable content for the sake of persuasion and connecting to audiences, but these tools are the same tools used by those who would mislead, agitate and subvert.

We have seen the rise of populist rhetoric that draws on these principles being used increasingly by authoritarian

governments all over the globe as well as the growing far right. Often, the resources of those using these tools for propaganda and misinformation outweigh the resources available to those using these tools for good.

Approaching Media

The pandemic is an intriguing case study in our approach to media and information. It offers us a chance to assess our responses, both as audiences and as sharers of information, to multi-layered and multidirectional media and information on a single issue. We can directly compare the forms this messaging takes, and follow clearly its path from initial broadcast, whether from agencies such as the WHO or on obscure conspiracy chat rooms, to dissemination on social media channels and private communication channels.

In many ways, the "track and trace" model used in response to the virus itself can be used to learn more about how

information, and misinformation, moves from its source to the population at large. In instances where conspiracy theories about the virus have been investigated, it has confirmed that we already know about how audiences respond to, and share, different types of information.

We know we are driven by emotions, particularly fear and anger. We communicate more regularly with people who share our worldview (and the age of digital and social media has created ideological communities quite separate from geographies). Confirmation bias is a potent driver of information sharing. With these fundamental principles driving the decisions we make about the information we receive, it becomes obvious that the "bigger picture," so often alluded to in traditional media literacy skills training as a way to gain perspective and evaluate content more objectively, is increasingly elusive.

This is further compounded by technology, for example Facebook's algorithms, that use similar principles to serve

particular content to particular audiences based on how likely they are to engage with and share it. There is no "worldview," but rather multiple, sealed, and smaller environments that echo and reflect back what we already believe. In this pandemic, it has become clear that if one engages with anti-vaccine, anti-mask rhetoric, this will become more regularly featured in the media served multiple times a day. If one follows conventional sources, and responds positively to these, one may remain completely unaware of dissenting views unless they are actively sought out.

Another aspect of the global nature of the pandemic, and its presence in media and information sharing spaces, is the loss of regional nuance. The inherent differences between places, people and populations sometimes have been overlooked in order to tell a global story, with often confusing or contradictory results. Assessments of the value of masks, lockdowns and other transmission prevention efforts, for example, might be based on examples that cannot be extrapolated into universal

△ One of the Freedom Rally protestors is holding an anti-vaxxer sign in Manchester, UK, on 12 December 2020.

△ The spread of disinformation and fake news is aggravating the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

EMPOWERING YOUTH TO SHAPE OUR DIGITAL FUTURE

Young People and Media: Digital Space Providing Both Opportunities, Challenges

By Amie Kim (Media and information literacy consultant, Republic of Korea)

truths, but still used to prop up arguments where convenient. Confirmation bias, in this case, plays havoc with context-specific information.

Power of Influence

Whether in the form of news or entertainment, media has always held the potential to influence ideas, decisions, actions and events, overtly or insidiously. The media has never been benign, neutral or objective. Critical assessment has always been a necessary skill, but it is equally important to stress that leaning towards cynicism, and complete distrust of all media sources, ironically, leaves one open to alternative and equally biased narratives.

The complete discrediting of the media is a well-known tactic of populist leaders, especially in societies where checks and balances in the media production space result in a moderation of views and a tendency to verification of claims. Conspiracy theorists responding to the global pandemic have regularly called out and dismissed informed medical opinion simply by virtue of the fact that it appears in the "MSM" (mainstream media) and have offered alternative theories designed to appeal to those distrustful of conventional scientific thought, and loaded with emotional trigger points (usually fear and outrage).

We should therefore remain critical, while guarding against cynicism and blanket distrust of all sources. Media and information literacy requires individuals to be aware of the limited nature of the information they receive. It also requires individuals to recognise the limited nature of one's engagement with that information, and not to rely on the emotional triggers – the warmth of recognition and comfort of the familiar – that might cause one to favour one piece of information over another.

While critical thinking skills and the encouragement of rational assessment are essential media and information literacy tools, they remain only as useful as our capacity as information consumers to regulate our own emotional responses and make space for that rational assessment. 🏛

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△ Digital media provide young people with not only opportunities to enrich their experiences with diverse online communities but also challenges such as invasion of privacy, cyberbullying and disinformation.

Young people live in a society where media technology is an integral part of their daily lives. For the young people I have met for research purposes as well as in educational settings, media is a sociocultural world that is as important for their identity construction and socialization as the offline world. It is not even clear where the digital world begins and ends.

Young people enjoy being online for the abundance of information and media content they can easily access, and for the possibilities of communicating with diverse people who often share similar interests and/or values. Digital media also provides young people with experiences of curating their individual and social identities based on various groups and communities both off and online. Moreover, it is becoming easier to access and use numerous digital media intuitively and to take part in diverse digital communities.

However, young people also face challenges in the digital world. They often suffer from invasion of privacy, cyberbullying, identity theft, even sexual predation, and exploitation. Due to the commercialized nature of the digital media platforms they use, they are at risk of data surveillance. In addition, national and international organizations are concerned with the spread of disinformation and risks of polarization, which can lead to the erosion of democracy.

We often tend to entitle young people as "digital natives" assuming that they are innately equipped with the abilities to make use of media and to communicate freely within the digital media environment. However, when we consider what young people experience within digital media, it can be said that young people are going through countless trials and errors to figure out how to navigate the digital media world. Therefore, media and information literacy (MIL) has become a pivotal skill as well as a necessary strategy to become active global and digital citizens, especially for young people.

UNESCO Bangkok pays attention to the importance of digital citizenship. It defines digital citizenship as "the ability to find, access, use and create information effectively; engage with other users and with content in an active, critical, sensitive and ethical manner; and navigate the online and ICT environment safely and responsibly, being aware of one's rights."

Empowering Youth to Become Global Digital Citizens: Cases in South Korea

1) Youth empowerment through enhancing MIL in schools and out-of-schools

In South Korea, there are various classes or activities implemented in schools to support young people's media and information literacy. These educational efforts often take place in collaboration with out-of-school institutions, such as local media centres, libraries, and media companies, especially when the focus is on digital citizenship and/or social participation via media.

For instance, experts from media centres collaborate with teachers to support young people's understanding of media platform's algorithms. There are also social MIL events such as the MIL national conference where diverse players in the field of MIL gather to share their thoughts and practices related to media literacy education for young people.

△ Poster image of the 3rd Youth Checkathon held on 31 May – 22 June 2021 by the Korea Press Foundation. This year's theme was 'Stop disinformation that spreads hate and discrimination.'

△ Amie Kim is speaking at a session during the 2019 International Conference on Media and Information Literacy

△ Young people grow up and live in a digital society and their voices need to be recognised

The "Youth Checkathon" (www.checkathon.org/kpf/factcheck/2021/1), an annual event organized by the Korea Press Foundation, uses the format of a hackathon and provides youth with opportunities to fact-check disinformation in small groups and to eventually develop and suggest strategies to discern reliable information from fake news. Such MIL activities planned and practiced collaboratively amongst several social agencies have positive social effects on youth empowerment because it lets their voices be heard and enables them to design for social action.

Within the school curriculum in South Korea, MIL is implemented in diverse subjects such as the Korean language, Arts, Social Studies, Ethics, Information Studies, and so on. Each subject focuses on MIL components and/or themes that are closely related to the subject knowledge. For instance, when dealing with online hate speech, within the Korean language classes, young people focus on the expressions and how those expressions represent social minorities. They are encouraged to find alternative expressions or persuasive strategies to combat online hate speech.

In Social Studies, online hate speech is approached from the human rights viewpoint. Young people are led to think of the impact of online hate speech, not only to those who are considered as the target but also to the global society and/or digital society.

In Art class, young people can think about the impact of memes, especially those that are used as part of online hate speech. They can analyse the visual elements of the meme and also examine its roots. As such, young people acquire MIL skills and competencies within various subjects. There are attempts in schools to integrate these activities under the umbrella of MIL education, which can help young people gain the skills necessary to enhance democracy as responsible digital and global citizens.

2) Empowering youth in the digital world: being active citizens that take part in digital governance

As mentioned above, young people are active users and producers of media content and information. In other words, they are active digital citizens. However, young people often mention that what they can do and cannot do online is not entirely up to their skills and/or knowledge. Digital media platforms that young people inhabit have unique affordances that allow and also limit users' activities. Moreover, algorithms that run underneath the media platforms decide the information and media that young people access.

It can be said that digital media platforms often give young people a false sense of autonomy and agency, but their autonomy and agencies are constrained by media structure including algorithms and often by invisible regulations and/or censorship of media.

Therefore, youth empowerment should not stop at supporting them with media and information literacy education via in and out-of-school learning. We can take one step further and provide young people with transparent and sufficient information concerning how the media platform works, what kinds of data are collected, and how they are being used.

Furthermore, it is important to empower youth by providing them with opportunities to imagine alternative digital media platforms or digital commons and critically reflect on the relationship between digital media technology and society. These efforts will lead young people to become active global digital citizens as well as an active part of digital governance. By empowering youth to take part in digital governance, we could think of ways to build the digital society in a way that is not solely profit-driven, but in a way that realizes global and digital commonality for all.

For Youth Agency in Global, Digital Society

In this column, we discussed how we can empower youth with MIL competencies and digital citizenship. Oftentimes, media and information literacy or digital citizenship are misunderstood as a set of skills or aptitudes that the adult generation can form and transmit to the younger generation. However, children and young people are the ones that grow up with and will continue living in digital spaces and in a digital society.

Therefore, it is important for young people to actively participate in forming digital citizenship. For that, the adult generation should listen to the young people's voices concerning their experiences and perceptions of digital media and involve them in establishing the digital society and its relation to the offline world. Social and global efforts to empower youth and recognize their voice as vital when making important decisions on how the digital technology will be developed and implemented to the digital society is as important as supporting youth with MIL. 🏛

A NARRATIVE IN PEACE(S)

Media in Crisis: Displaced and Dispossessed People, Cultures, Identities

By Bushra Ebadi (MIL Youth Ambassador for North America and Europe, UNESCO MIL Alliance and Founder, InGender Media)

> **"If you're not careful, the newspapers will have you hating the people who are being oppressed and loving the people who are doing the oppressing." - Malcolm X.**

False and toxic narratives help spread disinformation. In the absence of Media and Information Literacy skills, an overabundance of information – or an "infodemic" (a portmanteau of "information" and "epidemic"), as David Rothkopf called it in his 2003 Washington Post article – endangers peoples' lives. In fact, the spread of misinformation and disinformation on COVID-19 has resulted in vaccine hesitancy, anti-Asian racism and violence, distrust in public health measures, and the proliferation of conspiracy theories.

The preamble of UNESCO's Constitution recognizes the necessity of investing in building peace in our minds and our understanding of each other and the world. This does not undermine the importance of treaties and conventions, but instead points to the vital and complementary role of media, culture, and information in peacebuilding. Narratives in digital, print, visual, and oral media powerfully shape our minds and our understandings of the world and each other. This in turn shapes the ecosystem in which truth, possibility, and knowledge

can be defined and (de)valued. Those who are able to freely develop and disseminate narratives can exert power and influence over others. Storytelling (or the creation and sharing of narratives) therefore becomes an act of designing systems of power and possibility.

Disempowering Narratives

Attacking the Medium and the Message

As an Afghan in diaspora, I experience my culture in pieces; stories stolen and strewn around the world hidden within the confines of galleries, museums, and private collections. Violent non-state actors, such as Daesh and the Taliban, as well as colonial and imperial institutions, have destroyed and looted museums and cultural heritage sites to oppress and control marginalized people and to finance their activities or operations through the illicit trafficking of art.

Attacks on culture and people, as mediums by which narratives are transmitted, enact violence on and serve to marginalize and displace communities. In his 1933 Madrid Paper, Raphael Lemkin stated that "[a]n attack targeting a collectivity can also take the form of systematic and organized destruction of the art and

▽ A view of the Bamiyan Valley in Afghanistan. In March 2001, the Taliban's destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas made international headlines.

© Torsten Pursche / Shutterstock.com

△ Sophia Burton, Co-Founder of Migration Matters, speaking about attitudes toward migration in Europe on 13 November 2017.

© Robert Bosch Academy/Back

△ Bushra Ebadi conducting a session on Youth Agency and MIL during the 7ᵗʰ Youth Leadership Workshop on GCED.

> "
> **By framing our understanding of who is valued and who is not based on what we see and what is celebrated in media and public spaces, storytelling can both be weaponized against populations and serve as a tool for peacebuilding.**
> "

cultural heritage in which the unique genius and achievement of a collectivity are revealed in fields of science, arts and literature." Lemkin understood deliberate attacks on cultural heritage as threats to humanity and the continued existence of people.

*Misrepresentation and Toxic Stereotypes
Narratives help shape, develop, and inform policies, practices, and communities. Narratives promoting empathy, dialogue, and understanding can help build trust among people from diverse backgrounds and identities. The narratives we choose to promote and amplify influence what we understand to be true and possible, and subsequently what we choose to prioritize, act on, and budget for. By framing our understanding of who is valued and who is not based on what we see and what is celebrated in media and public spaces, storytelling can both be weaponized against populations and serve as a tool for peacebuilding.

There are many historical and contemporary examples of narratives erasing or misrepresenting people and their cultures. Both the presence of violent and marginalizing narratives, as well as the absence of narratives from excluded and oppressed communities contribute to their insecurity. These types of narratives

undermine the agency of individuals and communities, victimizing them and/or rendering them voiceless.

According to the 2015 Global Media Monitoring Project, "women made up only 24 per cent of persons heard, read about or seen in newspaper, television and radio news." This underrepresentation of women in media has contributed to a dearth of content that accurately portrays the experience of women and gender and sexually diverse persons, as well as the issues that directly impact them. The 2015 report found that only 10 per cent of internet news referred to gender equality issues, or policies or legislation on gender equality, women's rights and/or human rights and only 7 per cent challenged gender stereotypes.

This issue is exacerbated when we look at media content and narratives in the context of conflict and insecurity. In *Beyond the Helpless Victim: How the Media Portrays Women in Conflict Zones,* Carolina Marques de Mesquita reveals that *m*edia narratives chronically neglect to account for the diverse and important contributions women make to conflict and peace.

Despite widespread calls across the humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding sectors to adopt a "nothing for us without us" approach, the majority of stories about marginalized and

crisis-affected populations are not told by them.

Portraying forcibly displaced persons as destitute, hopeless, and desperate as a means to elicit pity among donors in the Global North and raise funds for humanitarian appeals, strips displaced persons of their agency and dignity. In the short term, these portrayals may succeed in raising money by appealing to saviour mindsets whereby the 'powerful' support or act benevolently toward the 'powerless'.

In the long term, these portrayals can entrench power hierarchies, encourage "othering," and enable the flourishing of fear-based narratives. For example, according to Daniel Trilling, the narrative European media outlets crafted about asylum seekers and refugees contributed to the "migrant crisis". Instead of addressing the cause of the crisis – ineffective governance and European policies on border control, military and arms trades, immigration, and development – media coverage largely focused on voyeuristic stories of suffering, crisis, and insecurity. According to a 2016 Pew Research Center study, negative depictions of asylum seekers and refugees, including overtly or covertly associating them with terrorism and violence, contributed to a rise in xenophobia, racism, and discrimination.

Beverly Crawford Ames argues that in the absence of meaningful policy measures to address social and economic disparities, state and non-state actors leverage fear-based narratives against refugees and immigrants for political gain. Not only have anti-immigrant politicians used these narratives to 'keep refugees out', but narratives are also crafted and weaponized to garner public support for policies (ex: selling arms and technology to oppressive actors) that help displace people from their homes in the first place. The people and communities who have experienced displacement are disappeared from stories, replaced with dangerous stereotypes that silence them and flatten their existence to a singular image, tweet, or video clip.

Instead of critically examining the systems that cause and facilitate the displacement of individuals and communities, and the complicity or active involvement of those who are able to freely exercise their power and agency in

allowing these systems to exist, discourse on displaced persons continues to marginalize them and treat them as a problem to be solved rather than as animated beings imbued with dignity, rights, and agency.

*Erasure
Narratives not only serve to project a picture of the world, but can also be used to hide and overshadow realities and experiences. The exclusion of stories from mainstream discourse and media enacts violent erasure of people and their cultures.

In March 2001, the Taliban's destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas made international headlines. According to the National Museum of Afghanistan, an estimated 70 per cent of its collection were either looted or destroyed, and 90 per cent of its artefact registration records burned by the Taliban to erase anything deemed to be 'un-Islamic' from both public space and people's minds. Understanding the historical and contemporary importance of these artefacts, museum staff risked their lives to hide and safeguard as many of them as they could, explained Ruchi Kumar in a 2020 BBC story.

Throughout its history, oppressive regimes and actors have set out to destroy tangible and intangible culture as a means of rewriting Afghanistan's history, controlling the population, and scapegoating marginalized communities, including women, the Hazara people, gender and sexually diverse persons, and people of different (non-Sunni Muslim) faiths. By disappearing pieces of the collective narrative, these actors are able to weaken the social fabric of the society and sow seeds of distrust and division among people.

Colonial powers have destroyed culture and information systems as a means of dividing and 'conquering' people and the lands they call home. Colonizers not only erase people's stories, but also target the very people and mediums through which experiences, knowledge, and information are shared.

In what is currently called Canada, the government, in partnership with churches, violently disrupted intergenerational transmission of Indigenous knowledge, culture, and practices through the Residential School system (which can be

better described as institutions for forced assimilation), the displacement of Indigenous peoples from their lands, and the portrayal of Indigenous people as savages and uncivilized, according to the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada report. The erasure of language, culture, and people endangered and continues to endanger the existence and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples around the world.

Narratives of erasure are also facilitated through algorithms and technologies that deprioritize, de-platform, and ultimately forcibly displace marginalized communities, by censoring and removing them from digital spaces. According to Access Now, a non-profit organisation promoting digital rights, social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, removed content posted by Palestinian users (and their supporters) to protest and document the forced displacement of Palestinian families from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah. Removing this digital content is akin to destroying physical evidence of human rights atrocities and ethnic cleansing. According to Omar Shakir, Israel and Palestine Director at Human Rights Watch, preventing
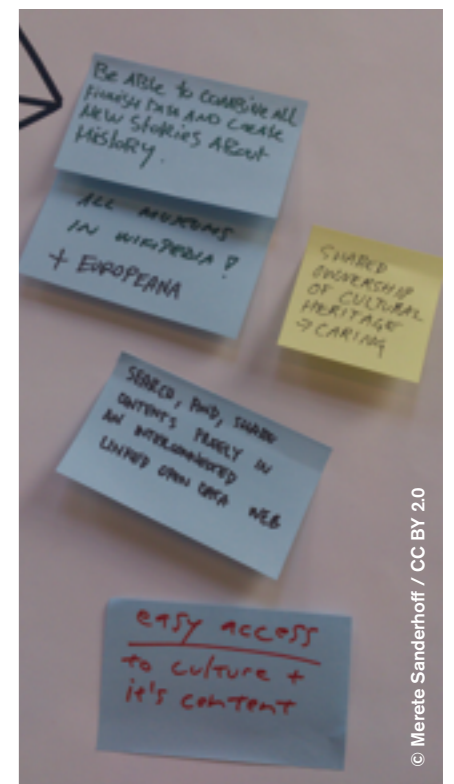
△ "Where we're heading, Open GLAM Workshop, #OKFest" by MSanderhoff

Palestinians, especially Palestinian activists and human rights defenders from sharing and documenting their experiences skews discourse about the ongoing Israeli apartheid, drawing attention away from policies and strategies that systematically persecute, exclude, criminalize and kill Palestinians with impunity. These incomplete narratives foster a lack of empathy among people around the world towards the plight of the Palestinian people who are being oppressed and victimized. This leads to apathy and a lack of political will to address the systems that foster and enable insecurity, violence, and apartheid.

Safeguarding Stories and Storytellers: Spotlighting Initiatives
In order to address the disempowerment of narratives and the harm, violence, and insecurity it enables and facilitates, it is vital to invest in and support initiatives, policies, and interventions that safeguard cultural heritage and enable marginalized communities to freely tell their stories.

The displacement and dispossession of cultural heritage renders it inaccessible to the very communities they represent. Attacks on cultural heritage as a means of inflicting violence and erasure of communities and their histories demonstrates the important role culture plays in the development and dissemination of narratives and community building.

The **Open GLAM** (galleries, libraries, archives and museums) initiative is partnering with cultural institutions to support access to collective cultural heritage by enacting open access to culture policies and documenting intangible cultural heritage under free licenses.

As we think about improving access to cultural heritage, it is also incumbent on us to ask how we define open and who has access. Many museums and galleries are filled with stolen and unethically attained artefacts and artworks of marginalized and conflict-affected communities (Lise Ragbir, Hyperallergic, 2018). To contribute to greater injustice, these very communities are often asked to pay to access what was stolen from them. In order to ensure more just, ethical, and equitable access to culture, systematically marginalized communities should be

meaningfully engaged and supported in designing and shaping "Open Culture" policies and initiatives.

Grassroots **community-led storytelling and literacy** can support conflict-affected communities collectively develop narratives to help promote and build peace. There are profoundly moving and impactful examples of people using storytelling to help foster peace, reconciliation, and justice using diverse mediums.

Leonardo Párraga, a young Colombian peacebuilder, started "Letters for Reconciliation," bringing together FARC ex-combatants and civil-society to share stories and build empathy through letter writing. Alena Murang, a Borneo-born Dayak-European, is helping preserve endangered Indigenous languages and cultures by sharing the stories of her people through music, dance and songs in traditional Kelabit and Kenyah. Asha Siad, a Somali-Canadian journalist and documentary filmmaker, holds space for members of the Somali diaspora to document and share their stories and experiences, and preserve memories and reimagine collective futures through her documentary "Memories of Mogadishu." Omaid Sharifi co-founded ArtLords, a grassroots movement of artists engaging in artmaking for societal transformation to foster dialogue and community-led peace in Afghanistan. Nadia Irshaid Gilbert, a Palestinian-American cinematographer and visual artist shares ancient Palestinian cuisine through her cooking show, "Sahtein" to foster a greater understanding of the role of food in community-building and the intimate relationship Palestinian people have to land.

Investments in community-led storytelling and mediamaking can help ensure that systematically excluded individuals have agency over how their stories and experiences are portrayed. In addition to producing content, marginalized communities should also be meaningfully engaged in governance and decision-making to shape and inform policies and peace processes.

Weaving Stories of Peace and Justice Together
Silence in the face of injustice is violence, as are toxic narratives that pollute our

understanding of reality and ability to empathize. We need to invest in developing more just and equitable media and information ecosystems to counter disempowering narratives that contribute to greater insecurity, conflict, and injustice.

Incomplete, unrepresentative, and excluded narratives break our collective narrative in pieces and doom us to disjointed and incomplete understandings and realizations of peace.

We must be intentional about what we speak and silence into existence. Open, equitable, and just access to and development of media, information, and culture can promote healthy community building practices and foster greater, more nuanced understandings of the world.

More informed and literate communities and individuals can better engage civically, politically, socially, and creatively. Narratives shape what we remember, what we understand, and what we imagine and dream; we must therefore ensure they are woven together by communities in ways that honour and value their experiences, knowledge, and cultures. 🏛

> " Open, equitable, and just access to and development of media, information, and culture can promote healthy community building practices and foster greater, more nuanced understandings of the world. "

BUILDING A FAMILLI*
OF MIL EDUCATORS IN NAMIBIA
AND BEYOND
MiLLi* Empowers Youth in Africa with Right Tools to Reflect on the News

By Uajorokisa Akwenye (Director, MiLLi* Trust, Namibia)
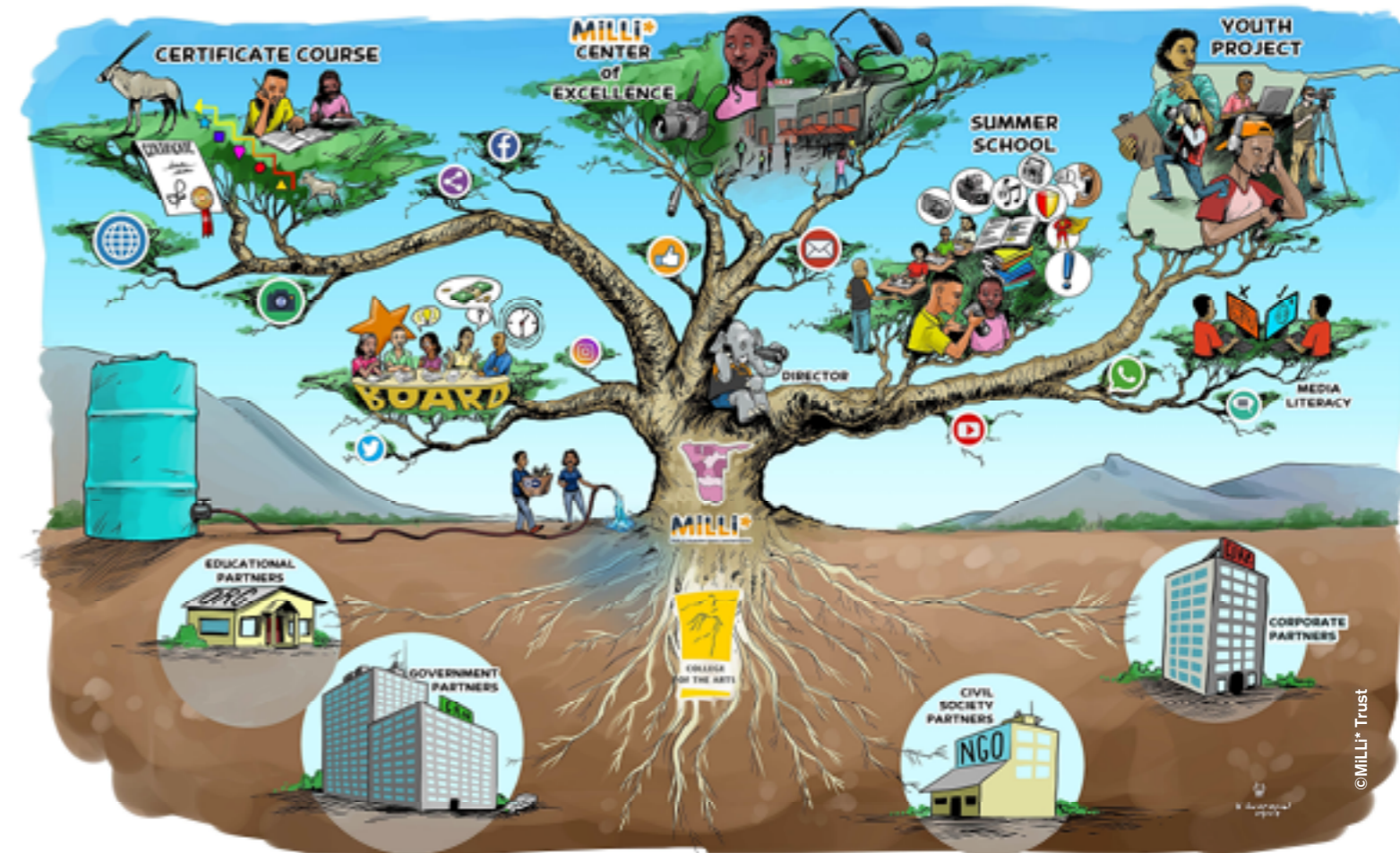
△ The MiLLi* Tree, an illustration on the Media and Information Literacy Learning Initiative

©MiLLi* Trust

The wave of misinformation is increasing in size and reach, with claims and speculations widely circulating the internet and shared excessively on various social media platforms. Thus, social media impacts our lives more and more. Still, young Namibians are prevented by socioeconomic challenges from gaining an understanding of ethics surrounding the use of media and the critical skills to analyse and understand media messages. Youth, being the largest consumers of social media, need education in media and information literacy (MIL) in order to assist them in navigating the world wide web of information.

Information literacy is the ability to become critical producers of information and to interpret and make informed judgements as users of information sources. The Media and Information Literacy Learning Initiative (MiLLi*) has, since its inception in 2015, advocated for media and information literacy amongst youth in Namibia by building capacities of Youth Projects in the area of MIL through the Training of the Trainers model. MiLLi* recently expanded its reach to other African countries, namely, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Lesotho and Uganda.

As one of the few institutions specialising in MIL education in Namibia, MiLLi* is uniquely positioned to provide MIL training. MiLLi* has taken an innovative approach to MIL education. Through our donor partner Deutsche Welle Akademie (DWA), we can ensure quality MIL educators through extensive Training of the Trainers programmes facilitated by DWA. MiLLi* believes in upskilling and reskilling our facilitators to ensure the maximum quality of training; we host an annual Campus Day where we conduct refresher training with our existing network of facilitators.

Our selection process promotes inclusivity. Our participants mostly come from grassroots communities, and youth who would otherwise not have had an alternative opportunity to be empowered through skills and job creation. Our training methodologies offer a diverse and interactive platform.

Mixing MiLLi*

At MiLLi*, we believe training should be participatory and that mixed tools (digital learning platforms, media software and flipcharts) and visual presentation when training youth are more effective. Smart partnerships serve as a pillar to MiLLi*'s success. Because of our network members, also known as our FaMiLLi*, we are able to ensure maximum reach and strengthen collaborative efforts to avoid operating in silos.

MiLLi* trains MIL using five key dimensions, namely, principles on how to "Access" media, "Analyse" and "Create" media content, as well as "Reflect" about media and "Act" with media. We train the aforementioned principles of MIL through five mediums, namely, video, radio, photography, sound and social media manuals. We believe that our methodology equips youth with a set of competencies that empowers citizens to access, retrieve, understand, evaluate, use, create and share information as well as media content in all formats using these various tools.

MiLLi* conducts training annually through our MiLLi* Summer School projects in which 40 participants are trained on MIL within the various mediums. As an outcome, participants become productive consumers of media and can produce responsible and ethical media content such as vox-pops, video reports, photo essays or loops and music.

△ Participants of the MiLLi* training workshops on MIL.

Giving Keeps Giving

Graduates of the MiLLi* Summer School become qualified facilitators of MIL and progress to the next step, which is to conduct youth projects within their communities. The facilitators train youth on MIL within one of the four mediums they were trained on at the MiLLi* Summer School.

Over the last 5 years, MiLLi* reached 1,800 youth in 14 different regions of the country with three core products namely, the Certificate Course (eight modules), Summer School (five modules) and Youth Projects (80-plus modules); and graduated more than 176 facilitators.

The feedback and outcomes of MIL facilitator training during the MiLLi* Summer School and MiLLi* Regional Youth Projects in 14 regions of Namibia have shown that MiLLi* activities are offering an outstanding standard of MIL training. They are cost-effective, relevant to youth and answer their needs in the rapidly developing media environment of Namibia.

Advocating for MIL does not come without its challenges. Some of the challenges we encountered included the lack of knowledge about media and information literacy. There was an increased need to create awareness about MIL and its importance. Socioeconomic inequalities aggravated by challenges such as access to technological infrastructure, internet, quality education, and sparsely located towns make it difficult to reach a great number of youth living in remote areas.

However, due to our large network of facilitators based across the country, we can ensure a wider reach.

To combat digital challenges such as access to digital media and the lack of smartphones in remote villages, MiLLi* provides facilitators with the necessary resources to conduct training. However, challenges remain for the participants of the local delivery trainings.

Together with the Deutsche Welle Akademie (Namibia), MiLLi* participated in the MIL Index Country Report conducted to ascertain the level of media and information literacy amongst citizens younger than 25 years of age in six different countries, including Namibia. The study was based primarily on qualitative data. Key findings from MiLLi* showed that youth in urban and peri-urban Namibia have broad experiences and expertise in using digital media. They access media largely through their smartphones. However, there exists a digital gap amongst rural and urban youth. The more urban the more digital.

Youth rely heavily on social media for information and value freedom of expression. They display a keen awareness of the ambivalent quality of news and information on social media. Youth have a high awareness of cyberbullying and disinformation, particularly online. However, they also displayed a considerable tolerance for cyberbullying, as opposed to disinformation and hate speech, and they do not have enough reflection of the content on journalistic media. Youth have basic technical skills when creating media but advanced skills are lacking. Increased intervention to strengthen advanced technical skills in creating media is required.

Youth display a confidence in voicing their concerns and self-expression via media. Youth have extensive use of media for specific information and for inspiration. However, they do not have enough awareness and understanding of the potential of journalistic media in public campaigning. There is an underestimation of the influence their activism can have using MIL skills.

These key findings continue to form part of MiLLi*'s interventions in fostering and strengthening MIL. Interventions include improving technical access and usage of rural youths; promoting the use of journalistic media; fostering a culture of reading and comprehension of more in-depth texts; encouraging critical trust in media and explaining how media functions; strengthening the contemplations of MIL by promoting critical reflections on cyberbullying and on the motivation behind malevolent behaviours; help youth believe that they can have an impact by creating media formats that help youth participate; and finally increase primary and secondary school MIL activities.

As a result, MiLLi* strongly believes that MIL competencies equip youth with the necessary knowledge and skills to become both responsible consumers and producers of media and information, thus fostering a well-informed and empowered global citizen.

△ MiLLi* Summer School 2018

△ Message stones by MiLLi* training participants

In terms of the way forward, MiLLi* is now looking to extend the group of supporting organizations and institutions to combine individual interests in supporting youth development, by joining efforts in the field of media and information literacy. We aim to increase the impact of MIL activities by combining resources, knowledge and capacity. MIL has received increased attention in Namibia beyond the media fraternity. We appreciate the increased appetite and welcome opportunities to further strengthen and increase the impact of MIL activities by combining resources, knowledge and capacity, and further forging MiLLi* as an expert in MIL, both regionally and beyond.

MiLLi* Video Impact
We held a Youth Project in Katima Mulilo, a small town in the north-east region of Namibia. We met Andreas, a 21-year-old from a rural community in Katima Mulilo who heard about MiLLi* from a friend and reached out to MiLLi* facilitators to express his interest in attending. It being the first Youth Project in the region, we looked forward to impacting the youth of that region with MIL skills.

Despite the lack of access to a smartphone (a requirement for participating in the Youth Project) and doubtful family members as they had never heard of MiLLi* nor of MIL training, we pulled together resources and took the time to reassure his family of the benefits of the training. Due to his keen enthusiasm and

determination, we were eager to have Andreas as a participant at the workshop.

After a three-day fun-filled intensive and interactive workshop, Andreas was excited to have been empowered on media and information literacy. He mostly depended on our national broadcaster for media information. "I feel so empowered that I can now critically reflect on what I watch in the news, this is a very important training and I wish there could be more of this in my town," said Andreas.

Andreas spoke about how, due to limited knowledge on understanding the five dimensions of MIL (Access, Analyse, Create, Reflect and Act), young people especially in his town are too quick and more likely to share disinformation online and amongst their peers. He acknowledged the MiLLi* facilitators and thanked them for going the extra mile to ensure he can participate. Andreas further encourages his fellow participants to return to their community as he would too and impact their fellow youth on the importance of MIL.

Impact stories such as Andreas' is testament to the need for increased advocacy and training of MIL among youth and demonstrates the efficacy and value of the MiLLi* model. 🏛

> " I feel so empowered that I can now critically reflect on what I watch in the news, this is a very important training and I wish there could be more of this in my town. "

YOUTH PROMOTING LITERACY FOR LIFE THROUGH HILA ALLIANCE
Building Information Skills, Engaging in Mutual Capacity Building with Communities

By Beatrice Bonami (Co-founder, HILA Alliance and MIL Youth Ambassador for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNESCO MIL Alliance)

In 2019, the Global Alliance Partnerships for Media and Information Literacy (GAPMIL, renamed as UNESCO MIL Alliance) appointed 12 youth ambassadors – representing the six regions of the globe – to develop regional plans to raise awareness about Media and Information Literacy (MIL) and to tackle digital inclusion gaps alongside misinformation cycles.

While the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a pandemic on 11 March 2020, we had been studying how the disease was developing, foreseeing some informational difficulties in dealing with the outbreak, starting with the "infodemic" (a portmanteau of "information" and "epidemic") since January 2020. From these observations, we decided to launch the Health and information Literacy Access (HILA) Alliance project with the goal to disrupt dis- and misinformation cycles around the world.

Our project was built on the 5Ps (planet, prosperity, peace, people and partnerships) and is related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2 (end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture), SDG 4 (ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all), SDG 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), SDG 10 (reduce inequality within and among countries), SDG 16 (promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels) and SDG 17 (strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development).

Enhancing Access to Credible Sources
Bushra Ebadi (Co-Founder of HILA Alliance and MIL Youth Ambassador for North America and Europe) and I structured a plan to translate recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO) into 27 languages and regional dialects so marginalized populations could have access to a trustworthy source of information about the virus, the disease, main symptoms and how to protect

△ Radio programme flyers created by communities.

themselves and their communities.

We also managed to collect credible media and information resources in 110 languages and created a virtual library where people could easily access a resources grid and share them with their communities. We compiled information on COVID-19 from credible sources, including international organizations such as the WHO, the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, and health authorities to create relevant information packages with 12 key topics including:

- available treatments and best practices to contain the spread;
- preventing and addressing social stigma regarding COVID-19; and
- how to identify myths.

The guides use simple and easily accessible language to ensure the information is understandable for the general public, including marginalized communities who may lack access to an internet connection. We hosted a series of webinars, in collaboration with young activists and experts on mental health, empathy, digital accessibility, and how youth can leverage MIL to tackle disinformation related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our work, however, did not stop there. As cofounders, Bushra and I were committed to advancing and fostering agency, health, and the wellbeing of marginalized communities around the world, by improving COVID-19 information accessibility, building media and information literacy capacities, developing multi-stakeholder partnerships, and advocating for system reforms and changes.

Based on our collective expertise and experience, we are especially focused on working with and supporting:

- Indigenous Peoples
- Communities with disabilities and differing accessibility needs, including those who do not have (or have limited) reliable and equitable internet connection and those who communicate through sign language
- Rural, remote and other communities lacking sufficient information infrastructure
- Forcibly displaced individuals,

△ Educational material to raise awareness about the pandemic in the native languages of Indigenous communities in Brazil.

www.researchgate.net/publication/343862541_Quarentenas_Amazonicas_Vol_5
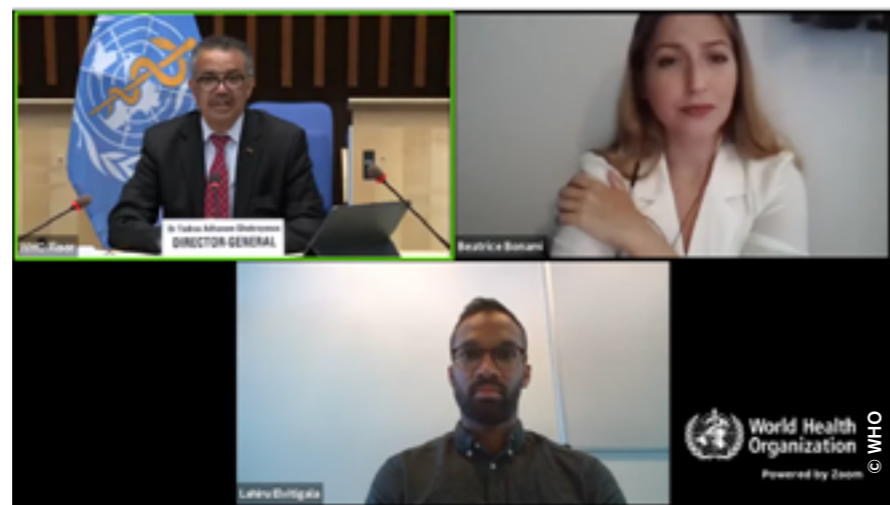
△ Beatrice Bonami (above right) attending the WHO and UNESCO International Youth Day Webinar on 12 August 2020 to present on you engagement for global action during the pandemic. Screen-captured image from the YouTube channel of WHO

including refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced and stateless persons
- Youth

These populations are, not coincidentally, concentrated in socioeconomically underprivileged and historically marginalized communities, including underdeveloped and redeveloping countries in the Global South. Applying an intersectional lens allows us to understand and address the various factors of marginalization that contribute to increased experiences of vulnerability and risk among these communities.

Reaching Out to Communities in Brazil

The Alliance tried to develop a feedback system to enable individuals and communities to share their insights and cocreate resources that meet their unique needs. Information guides were therefore treated as living documents that are systematically updated in ways that are transparent and understandable. The main geography we managed to develop offline resources to amplify our work was in Brazil.

Brazil has a population of more than 200 million people and as of June 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic has killed more than 500,000 civilians. There were two projects we understood as urgent and focused our attention on: to create and share radio programmes about the pandemic among impoverished areas (such as the favelas); and a project that tackled the disastrous consequences of the pandemic among Indigenous communities in the Amazon region.

I first connected with a social movement responsible for addressing the needs and demands of 100 favela communities in the region of Sao Paulo. The project #MDDFcontraocorona based their radio programme on our materials and produced audio sessions with local influencers and stakeholders from the communities. In partnership with the Universidade of São Caetano do Sul, radio programmes were coproduced and shared with local groups. Programme topics included:

- Isolation and hygiene

△ A man in the Amazon region walking with supplies for his family and chanting a song about the pandemic. Image from the Instagram page of Amazonia Contra A Covid-19 (Amazon Against Covid-19), @amazoniacontracovid19.

- Correct mask usage
- Precautionary measures while using public transportation
- What to do in the case of domestic violence, and
- Poetry sessions elaborated by the citizens about the pandemic.

The radio programmes were a hit and we managed to offer a certificate in partnership with UNESCO to people who actively worked in the production of the radio programmes.

For the second project, we dedicated our attention to digital crowdfunding to raise awareness about COVID-19 within Indigenous communities and to offer food supplies to populational groups affected by the pandemic either by the loss of their jobs or by the unavailability of transit in the Amazonian rivers.

Our crowdfunding campaign with Universidade Federal do Amazonas, HBO Brasil and other stakeholders raised enough funding to feed 20 communities for seven months. In addition, we created educational wrapping paper (to envelop food baskets and hygiene supplies) that contained information to raise awareness about the COVID-19 disease in native languages.

Findings and Plans

Although we are a new project, HILA Alliance has managed to support the wellbeing of a humble portion of people since its founding on 9 March 2020. We could not have done any of this without the support of our fellow ambassadors and the numerous volunteers who helped us each step of the way (especially the translation task forces and webinar series participants). To ensure the sustainability of our work, we have developed a social enterprise model, providing communication, research, and advisory services in collaboration with community partners and collaborators around the world.

Our assessment and research have demonstrated that credible and accessible information about COVID-19 is critically needed to inform decision-making and ensure the health and wellbeing of diverse communities. While some information and resources are being shared digitally via social media and web pages, the quality of this information is not being assured. Furthermore, 3.3 billion people lack Internet access globally, further contributing to cycles of disinformation (fake news, misleading contents and, sometimes, no information whatsoever) when reliable and credible information is

△ One of the territory leaders helping to manage the shipment of goods to his territory in the Amazon region.

PEACE AS AN END AND A PROCESS
Dialogue with Dr. Betty Reardon on Peace Education

By Institute of Global Citizenship Education, APCEIU

APCEIU hosted the "Dialogue with Dr. Betty Reardon on Peace Education" in a virtual format on 26 February 2021 in partnership with the Korean Society of Education for International Understanding. The Forum was held on the occasion of the publication of the Korean version of Dr. Betty Reardon's book, "Comprehensive Peace Education," translated by professor Soon-Won Kang from Hanshin University (Chairperson of the Governing Board of APCEIU). The video clip of the dialogue is available on APCEIU's YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/user/apceiu.

not available outside of digital formats.

We began distributing informational resources online via social media, and soon realized two issues: it can be difficult to distinguish credible information from misinformation when there is so much information online, and that some of the most marginalized communities lack access to the internet.

It became clear that we needed to leverage our expertise and experiences, and that of our networks, to develop MIL capacities and to communicate and engage with marginalized individuals and communities directly or via trusted partners and accessible information channels, including community radio.

The HILA Alliance is a comprehensive initiative that aims to make COVID-19 information accessible to marginalized individuals and communities through translated information packages: multimedia resources, including infographics, videos, radio shows, webinars, and community partnerships. Ambassadors

have recruited over 60 volunteers from around the world to support translations and project implementations. The Alliance is working to build information assessment skills and engage in mutual capacity building with diverse communities from around the world.

We are committed to the principles of Equity, Justice, and Accountability, and are seeking funding to ensure our work and the work of our collaborators and partners is fairly compensated (who have also been working voluntarily since the beginning). HILA Alliance's upcoming projects include "Decolonizing Digital Wellbeing," "Vaccine Trust," and "Webinars on Democratizing Scientific Dialogues." We are excited to continue working in collaboration with diverse communities and partners to advance health and information literacy. Those interested in HILA Alliance's initiatives can reach us at www.facebook.com/HILAalliance. 🏛

> " Our assessment and research have demonstrated that credible and accessible information about COVID-19 is critically needed to inform decision-making and ensure the health and wellbeing of diverse communities. "

A group of participants of a "March for Climate Justice NYC" on 20 September 2020.

Q1. (Dr. Samuel Lee, the first Director of APCEIU) The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly affected peace education and has especially been challenged with the climate crisis. We did not pay much attention to the ecological and climate crises in the past, although we have had some experiences when it comes to teaching about and studying the subjects related to 'peace with nature.' But, protecting life on Earth while taking into consideration the endeavours to promote peace on Earth as well as in human society have become ever more significant now. Given this context, please share your thoughts on the challenges and tasks facing holistic approaches to peace education today.

(Dr. Betty Reardon) I think Dr. Lee poses the major question that we now face as peace educators and as global citizens. The phrase, 'peace with nature,' is something that we must not go beyond with. In that phrase, there is the idea that we are separate from nature, we use nature, we are surrounded by nature, and we interact with nature.

But we need to understand and conduct peace education within the concept of the planet as one living system, and our being one single species on that planet. We and the planet will survive together and only together by mutual respect and interaction. We must begin to change our way of thinking about what ecology is, what our relationship to the planet is, and begin to think more in organic, life-affirming terms.

The interlinkages mentioned in the question between COVID-19 and, as the recent report from the United Nations puts it, the climate issue is very important because this interrelationship I speak of between the species and the planet is a primary interrelationship among many. All of these interrelate with and affect each other. We know that the COVID-19 spread is affected by climate and it is that kind of an interaction. We also know that both pandemics and climate change are existential threats to humanity and to the survival of the planet. Another threat we should consider regarding the future of the planet is nuclear weapons.

Humanity can be destroyed by uncontrolled pandemics. Humanity is suffering greatly from climate change, as we have suffered terribly in the United States recently, in Texas, and that happens throughout the world more and more. And, we stand every minute in danger of annihilation from nuclear weapons. They are all interrelated. They are all part of the larger issue, of the future of the planet and how ecological thinking presents a challenge to peace education.

I am looking forward to the great beyond where I will see you all developing an ecological perspective of peace education.

△ Dialogue with Dr. Betty Reardon on Peace Education held on 26 February 2021. Screen-captured image from the APCEIU Youtube channel.

Q2. (Dr. Samuel Lee) Your message that peace education must be about overcoming the fear of others provides crucial insight for peace education to overcome the division and bring peace on the Korean Peninsula. Peace educators, particularly in East Asia, can attribute the failure to achieve peace to fear and anxiety, as in the Korea-China-Japan or US-China relations. I wonder if you could share your insights and any examples of peace education in other countries in coping with such matters.

(Dr. Betty Reardon) First of all, I think it is very important to recognize that we all have fears and that fear is, in a way, a warning for us. We are fearful of things that we suspect, expect, or know threaten us in some way. The fear between North and South Korea, and the fear that we have right now in the United States about the others' political parties, are fears that are manufactured for political purposes – in Korea's case, purposes of the geopolitics of the Cold War that emerged at the time of the division. So we recognize the fear and I think it's important not to denigrate the fears of the other but to acknowledge them, then to acknowledge that we need each other.

Fear is destructive because it is contradictory to the unity of the human species, and to humanity's needs to develop collaborative modes to use differences creatively, and to have multiple ways of solving common problems.

To overcome fear of the other, based on the understanding that we all have fear and that our own fear is very reasonable to us, the most significant skill one needs is to learn to listen and not to tell the other why their fears are unnecessary but to listen to those fears. When we take up these issues in classes, we should ask our students to express what they think their fears are, where they came from, and what might relieve them, always understanding that the other is a human being and must be respected. I always quote Pope John XXIII in his 'Pacem in Terris' in which he said that we human beings make many mistakes and do many wrong things, but we never lose our humanity, our fundamental human dignity, and human rights, which must be respected. So, if we begin with that respect for each other, the desire to understand the other, and the desire to gather with the other, we will work on changing the conditions that we believe create fear.

Q3. (Dr. Samuel Lee) The United States is the strongest military power in the world, so it is hard for us to comprehend why it fears countries like North Korea, China, and Iran. National security ideology has become a very important issue for peace education. Could you tell us if there are examples of peace education that can help deal with this issue in the United States? Based upon your experiences, what should peace education look like in order to see more peace within the United States?

(Dr. Betty Reardon) The United States can use all kinds of peace education at every level and at every stage of human life from birth to death. There is indeed an articulated fear of China in U.S. media, and it is usually quoting one of our political leaders. The leadership and the media stalk fear against China and North Korea by saying, 'They are aggressive. They are trying to threaten us. They don't like us and our way of life,' rather than thinking, 'There are multiple ways of lives and let's cheer for them and let's try to understand that the average Chinese person probably feels that Chinese culture is the best culture in the world as so many other people feel about their own cultures.'

We need to understand that each of those ways of life is a way of being human, and we must stop the demonization of others in the media. One way to achieve this is media analysis in peace education. I think that part of global citizenship is to teach critical media skills. I think Dr. Lee has pointed to a very significant problem for peace education and for all citizens of every country.

Q4. (Prof. Soon-won Kang) Although the book was written during the Cold War period, as the Korean Peninsula is still exposed to a neo-Cold War system, I thought this book could be very impactful for us and I rushed to translate the book. My question as the translator of the book is related to the title. Dr. Reardon, your book, 'Comprehensive Peace Education,' is subtitled, 'Educating for Global Responsibility.' However, when translating the subtitle, I rephrased it to 'Peace Education is Global Citizenship Education,' which is the message we are trying to convey, and a message you have repeated yourself. I would like to ask if you agree on this translation.

(Dr. Betty Reardon) I agree that peace education is education for global citizenship, and I think for this particular time, that is an apt title. When I used the word responsibility, I was writing within the concept of the Cold War and during the Cold War, one of the problems that we faced was that there were very few energies coalescing around bringing together people transnationally. At the time, it was an international structure that we worked in; global civil society was not as organized, not as strong nor influential as it has become. We made substantive progress since then and only when civil society and global citizens mobilized for objectives. They have learned how to function in the structures.

△ Illustration of a peace symbol made up from a crowd of people.

Global citizenship education has to teach those international and transnational structures, as well as national structures, in which decisions are made that go into the international, so that global citizens can work not only within them but around them when they become obstacles to what global citizens are seeking – a dignified life for all of the human family, a healthy planet and a cessation of violence. I see citizenship and responsibility as complementary to one another because the global citizens that undertook these actions had not only the knowledge, but the affect, the value structure, and the motivation to exercise their global responsibility. I think that it's wonderful that the title reads global citizenship and I celebrate the fact that it is possible even though there isn't yet a global polity through which citizens can participate in global politics.

Q5. (Prof. Soon-won Kang) In your book, you used the term edu-learner to refer to educators, particularly peace educators, who learn as they teach. 'Edu-learners' stand in contrast with 'instructors,' who deliver knowledge one-directionally. A paradigm shift is needed to help teachers with the transition to become 'edu-learners,' and teacher training is crucial, both in pre- and in-service education and training. Do you have comments for APCEIU on teacher training?

(Dr. Betty Reardon) We need clarification of the functions of teaching. Instruction is but one part of the teaching process, and instruction is appropriate when specific content must be explained. However, learning to internalize new experiences of the world and using that experience in one's ongoing life is not something that is instructed or built in. It is something that comes from within the learner.

As teachers, we learn to teach in teaching, in the interactive process of working with younger learners to enable them to process what is built in, and to process instruction in such a way that it becomes part of who they are as a person in the world, part of their capacities to think, to value, and to act.

We have to make the process of edu-learning more visible and help teachers and education establishments understand that the most effective education is co-learning. Teachers and students are in fact in a learning process together. Both are learning around the same subject, but they are learning different things and internalizing different things and developing themselves each into a unique, deeper, and fuller person. That is the function of teaching – to help people learn to be full human persons who are also global citizens.

Q6. (Dr. Loretta Castro, Program Director, Center for Peace Education, Miriam College, Philippines) Please expound a little more about the social purposes of peace education, which you mentioned in the book. I would also like to hear more about the idea of 'peace as an end and a process.'

(Dr. Betty Reardon) In teaching curriculum development, I always put forth a framework, and that framework began with social purposes. What are the conditions in society toward which we

hope to educate? Every ethical and effective program of education has to begin with an exploration of social purposes. Can you establish an educational goal? What is the purpose of that knowledge? What expectations and hopes for society do you, as an educator, have as you undertake planning this educational experience? We determine that universal literacy, technical literacy and all other forms of literacy are important because their educational goals are to serve a social purpose. As part of the holism of the role of peace education, we have to always keep the social purpose in mind as we formulate the goals, learning objectives, and the lesson plan.

I would be cautious to say, 'peace is the process and the goal.' I don't think that we will ever have a definitive universal definition of peace because I think our concepts of peace are going to change as the human experience changes. However, we know now that the primary problematique of peace is violence, and that when we talk of peace, we are talking about overcoming violence. It is a great challenge to us, as peace educators, to say that peace is the process because we must develop ways to overcome violence that are constructive, creative, and life-affirming, and help our students do the same. Nonetheless, it is exciting to plot this itinerary in order to overcome, or at least reduce, so that it is no longer an existential threat, the violence that pervades all of our lives in so many ways from child abuse to nuclear weapons. We must deal with all of these issues in human life-affirming ways that acknowledge the human dignity of all in the process.

Q7. (Mr. Sung-geun Kim, Vice Governor of Education for North Chungcheong Province, Republic of Korea) During this COVID-19 pandemic, fear and hope have become common topics around the world. I also remember reading about an expert's advice in The New York Times Magazine, about 20 years ago, to a parent of three children on how to deal with their children's exposure to the violent footage of bombings on TV in retaliation for 9/11. I believe that pedagogical approaches to and the content of peace education should be different for students of different school levels. Do you have any words of advice for Korean teachers in this regard?

(Dr. Betty Reardon) I think it is important to make children comfortable in saying what they are experiencing and what they see, because even when we look at the same phenomenon, no matter what our age is, we do not necessarily see the same thing. It is also important not to impose on the younger ones what we see and what we fear, which I think has happened a great deal then and at other times. It happened around nuclear weapons, about COVID-19, and even in 1968 when students were shot in university campuses. My little godchild who was then three years old said, 'I will not go to university when I grow up because I will be shot.' That was her perception.

With the younger ones and with learners of all ages, it is very important to understand what they understand about the subject at hand, and to learn from them on how you can interact with them in a way that's going to help them make sense of it in the sense of being able to live with it or do something about it. It is very important to always introduce into all education, particularly

△ Participants of the 19th Asia-Pacific Training Workshop on EIU having diverse sessions on global citizenship education.

> My hope is that in the next period, what peace educators have been doing in terms of illuminating structural injustices, will in fact become part of what we are beginning to call global citizenship education.

to peace education, possibilities to take action about whatever the issue is. In terms of where you begin, the most important thing that youngest learners should take away from their early education is a value of the self and a respect for others. That requires the kind of listening that I am talking about, especially in terms of fear of the other. It is opening ourselves enough to the other so that they will articulate where they are, and then you have something to work with you can begin of learning process. That's day one in every class with every age. Find out who you are learning with and where they are in the situation. Only with that, can you really begin the process of mutual learning of edu-learning.

Q8. (Mr. Jae Young Lee, Co-Director of the Korea Peacebuilding Institute) I believe the current health and climate crises could also be opportunities to arouse stimulation and awareness towards humanity. Could you share any positive outlook on new opportunities for peace education in the post-pandemic era? I would also like to ask for your advice for peace educators and general teachers on how they might prepare for such opportunities.

(Dr. Betty Reardon) At this point, I have found myself wondering if we are ever going to be in a post-COVID-19 period. I think that the health crisis is going to continue to some degree, unless we do something about the major inequities in the world economic structure. There will be people whose lives are stunted and cut off by poverty and lack of health. This pandemic made very clear the profound interlinkages between COVID-19 and poverty, as well as the interlinkages between COVID-19 and the climate. That is true throughout the world, especially here in the United States. So, my hope is that in the next period, what peace educators have been doing in terms of illuminating structural injustices, will in fact become part of what we are beginning to call global citizenship

education; and that all citizens, not only those who are taking peace education, will become aware of these disparities that are as much a threat to our humanity as the pandemic and climate change.

Continuing this inhumane world structure threatens not only our humanity, but our reality of being human beings. We cannot just continue to teach that you can resolve problems without looking at the larger structures, the economic systems, and political systems of oppression that affect every level of life and all of life. So, in terms of your question, I think we now have the opportunity to disclose that more clearly and to integrate it more fully into our educational practice.

Q9. (From public) What are the implications of the recent spread of the Me Too Movement for global citizenship education and peace education?

(Dr. Betty Reardon) The Me Too movement was as revealing of the oppressive structures of patriarchy as COVID-19 was of the structures of economic disparity. Once women who had been victimized by harassment and violence began to speak of it in great numbers, it became possible to look at this as a major social problem.

Now, it is not necessary to take a particular gender unit in a peace education format. You only have to look at problems of injustice and violence in society and in general to understand that the injustices of sexual harassment and oppression must be addressed. So I think the Me Too movement was another kind of wake-up call for society about an opportunity for peace education to begin to look more deeply into the interrelationship between the patriarchy and what I call the world system, and into the ways in which the patriarchy manipulates power to the advantage of some, and the disadvantage of many. That is an important aspect of the unequal structures that we must confront. 📖

LEARN FOR OUR PLANET, ACT FOR SUSTAINABILITY
Highlights of World Conference on ESD

By Alexander Leicht and Won Jung Byun
(Chief/Senior Project Officer, Section of Education for Sustainable Development, UNESCO)

△ Students working on an ESD project in a school in Nairobi, Kenya
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Top scientists warn that in order to contain the effect of climate change to 1.5 degrees and avoid the catastrophic 2-degree scenario, we need rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society.

How do we make this fundamental transformation in our societies? In 2020, UNESCO conducted a global survey asking people to share their views on our world's most pressing challenges and their possible solutions. Sixty-seven per cent of those surveyed named climate change and biodiversity loss as the number one challenge we face, and education as key to addressing them. To change course, transformative education is the only choice. Education is one of the most powerful forces we have for changing the behaviours of future generations.

Sustainable Development Still Missing in Education

In May, UNESCO launched the "Learn for our planet" publication, which found that the integration of environmental themes into national policy and curricula documents was extremely low. Of concern, 45 per cent of national education documents of 46 countries studied made little-to-no reference to environmental themes, with climate change mentioned in under half and biodiversity loss in only one in five.

Despite many efforts made over the years, including through the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development, such a result reminds us that to ensure our survival on this planet, education must urgently change.

ESD: A Path to Change by 2030

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) equips and empowers learners with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to act for the planet and address the global challenges we face.

Through education, learners are encouraged to be responsible actors who contribute to creating a more sustainable world. ESD promotes personal and societal transformative action in learners of all ages by providing them with the tools to design new sustainable systems and ways of living.

UNESCO, as the lead UN agency for Education for Sustainable Development, advocates and implements this transformative change through its global ESD for 2030 framework for the period 2020-2030. ESD for 2030 focuses on five priority action areas of policy, education and training, educators, youth and communities. It aims to address environmental, social and economic unsustainable practices and help transform societies through education. ESD has been recognized as a key enabler for all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Launching ESD for 2030

To move forward in disseminating and implementing the new framework, the ESD for 2030 Roadmap for implementation was launched in November 2020 as a key ESD guidance reference publication for Member States and other stakeholders. Five regional online launches of the Roadmap were organized in late 2020 in six languages, reaching more than 7,840 stakeholders across the world.

With the delay of the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNESCO, in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Education and Research of Germany and the German National Commission for UNESCO, organized a series of monthly online workshops and an expert symposium on the key topics of the ESD for 2030 framework.

The series of seven workshops have reached more than 15,000 people in eight months, and as the series is being used as teaching material in classes, the overall

△ Cover image of the "Learn for our planet" publication

unesco
Learn for our planet
A global review of how environmental issues are integrated in education
Education 2030
© UNESCO

number of stakeholders reached is higher. Through these efforts organized virtually, it was hoped that a momentum can be generated for ESD and the crucial role of education for sustainable development despite the pandemic. The workshop videos are available on the following site: https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-sustainable-development/ESDfor2030-workshops

Strong Political Commitments to ESD
Building on these efforts, the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development, originally planned for June 2020 to launch the new framework and postponed due to COVID-19, was held virtually from Berlin, Germany on 17 to 19 May 2021.

The Conference discussed the ESD for 2030 Roadmap, with a strong focus on strategies and optimal ways to harness education to address interconnected global sustainability challenges. It also addressed ways to reinforce the capacity of educators, empower youth and take local actions through ESD, and to better integrate it into every level of education and training.

As a virtual event, aside from the invited participants, the sessions have been viewed over 20,000 times and the ideas reached more than 6.7 million people on social media. All 2,800 education and environment stakeholders participating from 161 countries, including 70 ministers and vice ministers and leading players, adopted the "Berlin Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development" which recognizes the crucial role of ESD as a key enabler for the achievement of all SDGs.

The Declaration calls to ensure environmental and climate action as a core curriculum component in all education systems, while maintaining a holistic perspective on ESD. It commits participants to investing in the capacity development of teachers and other education personnel at all levels and to ensure a whole-of-sector approach to the necessary transformation of education. It calls on stakeholders to prioritize marginalized populations through an inclusive approach by promoting innovative ESD policies; and to enhance multisectoral and multidisciplinary collaboration on ESD at all levels of governance to ensure a whole-of-government approach. The Declaration highlights the need to implement ESD with a focus on cognitive skills, social and emotional learning, collaboration skills, problem solving, and resilience building.

Time to Learn and Act for Our Planet Is Now
At the Berlin Conference, Ms Audrey Azoulay,
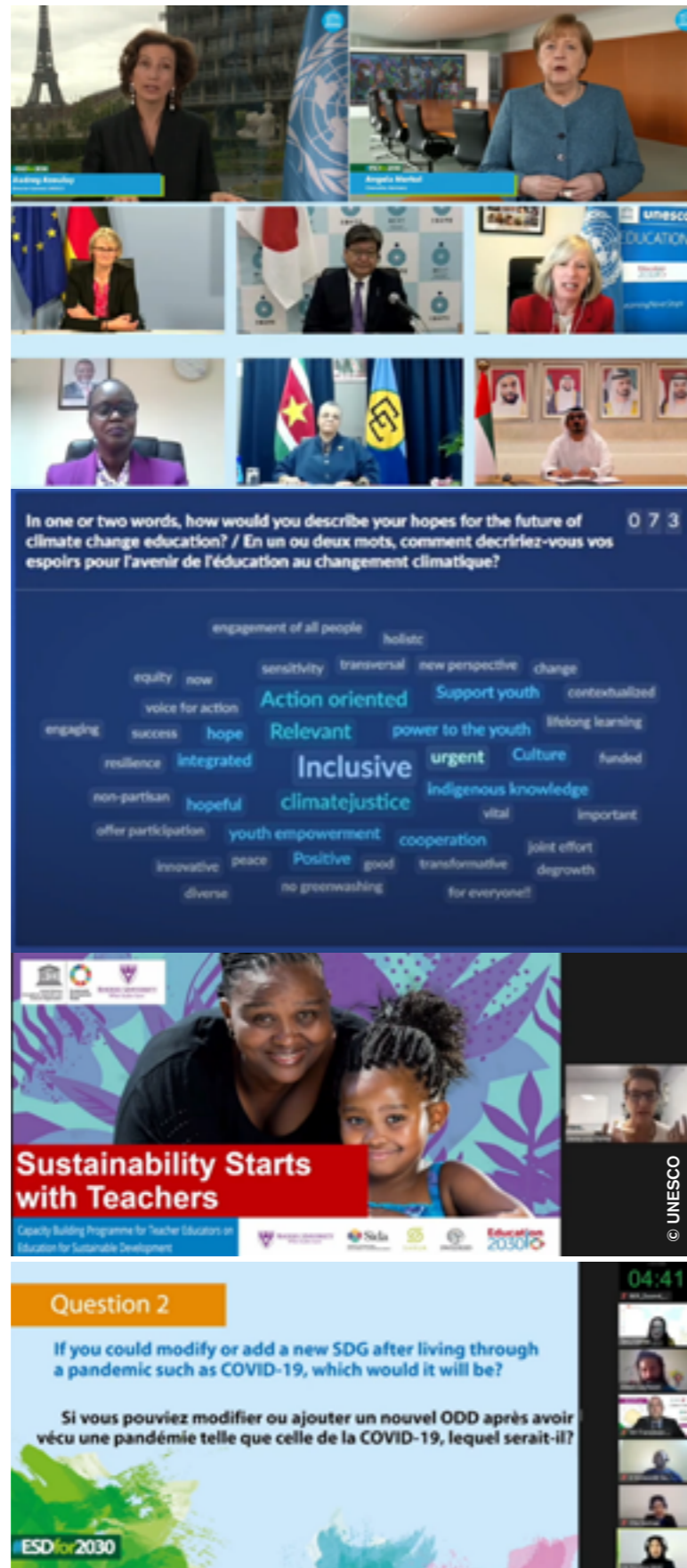
△ Screen captured images of the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development

Director-General of UNESCO, called for Education for Sustainable Development to be a core component of all education systems at all levels by 2025, so that 100 per cent of the world's population can learn for the betterment of people and the planet.

To achieve this ambitious goal, the Berlin Declaration will need to be implemented through global, regional, national and local processes, looking ahead to important milestones such as the 2021 United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP 15), the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 26) and beyond.

With the launch of ESD for 2030, UNESCO has started to work with Member States to encourage the development and implementation of country initiatives to mainstream ESD in the country's efforts made for pursuing sustainable development. Each country's initiative on ESD for 2030 is to have a national scope, which includes activities that have or potentially could have a country-wide impact. It can build on existing activities related to ESD or create a new initiative if necessary, in the context of SDG 4 contributions. Building on the strong level of political support shown at the Berlin Conference, already around 40 countries across the world are starting their preparation for their own country initiative.

"Education can be a powerful tool for transforming our relationship with nature. We must invest in this field in order to preserve the planet." – Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO Director-General

Transformative education is a necessity to meet the multiple crises we face today, prepare us for others we may face in the future, and bridge the rift with nature to stop potential crises before they can occur.

For our survival and that of future generations, we must learn for our planet and act for sustainability. We have no time to lose. 🏛

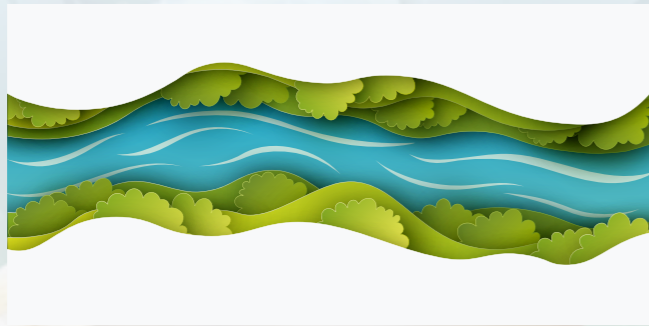△ Illustrations for the Berlin Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development

" **The Declaration calls to ensure environmental and climate action as a core curriculum component in all education systems, while maintaining a holistic perspective on ESD.** "

GALAP & JOMO

By Sirhajwan Idek
(Teacher, Keningau Vocational College, Sabah, Malaysia)

"My mother entrusted it to me, I must get it back," asserted Anang. "It's too dangerous, swimming closely to the coastal areas. You might get caught by those monsters that dwell on the land," warned her friend. Anang jumped into the water and her brown skin immediately turned luminescent as her flesh seemingly dissolved into fluid while maintaining her humanoid form.

There was a long rift between them, the dwellers of the fresh water known as galap and the monsters of the land that walked on their two feet that they referred to as "Jomo." Their ancestors had told them numerous stories of how these monsters terrorized them and drove them away to the huge lake surrounded by mountains in the middle of the island, Borneo, home to one of the oldest rainforests filled with native mammals like Orangutans and Tapirs.

Anang swam with a fluid grace through the large river heading towards the northeast as she saw the bird was flying in that direction. The pearl that the bird snatched from her hand was a gift from her mother during her 600th birthday. It was her responsibility to keep it safe and it was her fault that she lost it.

Her legs restlessly moved back and forth like a fish tail. The thought of those monsters of the land that had been relentlessly hunting them to near extinction flitted into her mind as she glided effortlessly in the water. Galap were elemental beings whose bodies were naturally water-like fluid when they were in water but they could take the solid form of two legged creatures with brown skin once they came up to the surface. Word had it that this ability was the only feature that distinguished them from the two legged monsters of the land that could not transform. The galap generally hated to be compared with the monsters that they deemed despicable and barbaric.

"Is this the right direction to the northeast land?" Anang asked a school of tiger barbs passing by. "Yes, just go straight," answered one of the slightly silvery yellow fish. "But you're a galap, I thought you were not allowed to go there." "I have to; I must find my mother's pearl," asserted Anang. "Just don't let the "jomo" see you," said the biggest tiger barb as they swam away in the opposite direction. "Are they that evil that even the fish warned her about them?" a dozen questions triggered in Anang's mind.

Once she was near the river bank, she swam up to the surface and popped her head up slightly to check for any non-underwater living beings. Her fluid form quickly turned to flesh with brown colored skin. Anang was astonished by the scenery surrounding the river, swaying coconut trees across a field of low lying grass. She could hear the distinct sounds of the seagulls and the crashing ocean against rocks. "No wonder the water is slightly salty, I am close to the ocean," thought Anang.

She dove under the water and swam closer to one of the nearby rocks. Once she reached the bottom of the rock, she carefully rose to the surface while leaning her body against the rock to avoid being seen. She squinted her eyes to see if the pearl was somewhere on the shore. She looked at the ground and then up to the trees, she then tilted her head back and forth, trying to spot the bird that took the pearl. She was disappointed that she could not do much from there.

"A galap! Unbelievable!" Anang heard a nasal voice speaking from behind.

She turned her head and saw a little creature that looked slightly like her except that the creature was walking on two feet. "Jomo!" shrieked Anang as she quickly moved away from the rock, frightened. "I can't believe it, you are galap!" cried the boy. "My mother told me a lot of stories about you," added the boy. Noticing his calm reaction with huge smile on his face, Anang slowly swam closer to him.

"Yes, indeed I am," answered Anang as she studied the physical appearance of the boy. She was fascinated by his sheer resemblance to her physical features in the flesh form. She flipped into the water and quickly emerged at the other side of the rock, trying to show her abilities. The boy's eyes grew big in surprise as he witnessed how she was changing her shape alternately between fluid and flesh forms. "I am a jomo," said the boy, pointing his finger to his chest. He stepped closer to the river and Anang immediately distanced herself from the bank, she thought of what her mother had told her about the monsters on the land and how they were referred to as "jomo."

"Don't be afraid, I'm not going to hurt you," the boy tried to comfort Anang. "My name is Katu," the boy extended his arm with an open hand. Anang swam closer and examined the hand with her eyes. She slowly raised her left arm. The moist skin quickly took its form once her water-like limb became exposed to the air, allowing her to touch Katu's fingers' before he grabbed her hand and squeezed it.

In an utter panic, Anang pulled Katu into the water together with her. She immediately let his hand go and swam away. As Anang swam deeper, she felt compelled to turn her head. She saw Katu was struggling in the water, his arms and legs were thrashing wildly, his eyes bulged out and he was clearly gasping for air. Anang realized that he could not breathe under the water. She was torn between running away and saving the creature.

All the stories of the vicious creatures on the land that murdered and captured galap ran through her mind.

She was afraid that the creature might be tricking her. "Ahhh...forget that," uttered Anang as she swam towards Katu. She was willing to take the risk in order to save a life. She grabbed Katu's arm and pulled him to the riverbank. She laid him on the beach and helped him to breathe.

"Cough ... Cough …" Katu coughed up the water he had swallowed.

"You're going to be fine," said Anang.

She immediately went back to the water as she could not be on the land longer than a minute. She stayed under the water before she popped her head up on the surface. Katu was standing at the rock where they first met, looking at her with a wide smile on his face, he seemed exhausted. "Thank you for helping me," gasped Katu. "I'm sorry for scaring you away with the hand-grabbing thing, it's called a handshake, it's what we do when meet others." Katu stooped at the edge of the rock when Anang swam closer.

"I'm sorry too, I thought you wanted to capture me," said Anang. "You could have just left but you returned and saved me, what made you change your mind?" asked Katu.

"I was always told that you are all monsters but I think it's not true, you seem like a really nice jomo," replied Anang. "I'm glad that you think so, we don't even know that galap existed, we thought they were just a myth," said Katu.

"Promise me that you'll never tell anybody about us," begged Anang. "I promise, you can trust me, it's our secret," said Katu. "I'm glad I met you. I have something for you," added Katu. "I guess it's my gift to you since you saved my life, I found it this afternoon." Katu took out a pearl from his pocket.

It was the pearl that Anang was looking for!

"I think it suits you, it sparkles just like your eyes," said Katu. Anang could not contain her joy; she grinned widely when Katu handed the pearl to her. "Thank you, Katu. I guess I have to leave now before anyone else sees me." "Nice meeting you, goodbye," said Katu.

Anang plunged into the water and swam away into the river, heading towards the

mountain. She rose up to the surface and waved at Katu once she was away from where he was. Anang was happy to get the pearl back and she was certainly glad that she had finally found out that the monsters on the land were not monstrous at all.

Since then, Anang and Katu occasionally met at the riverbank. Anang was relieved to learn that the jomo, despite their different physical features and lifestyles, were just like them. They were generous and friendly. Katu was delighted to find out that all the precautionary tales about galap were not true at all as they were loving and protective beings.

"So you really believed that we held jomo's heads underwater until they could no longer breathe," Anang laughed upon listening to Katu's story. "It was our number one rule that we should never kill any living thing," added Anang as she splashed some water on Katu's face.

"To be fair, I was a bit scared when I first saw you," replied Katu, giggling. " The tales of how we hunted your kind sounds ridiculous since there was no way we could even catch you to begin with," explained Katu.

"How I wished that everyone, whether galap or jomo, could find out about this so they can learn how wrong that they have been about each other," Anang expressed her hope. "Yup, I think they will, one day, it has to start with us, we need to show everyone that we all can live together and protect each other," Katu held Anang's hand as they stared at the majestic mountain, Mount Kinabalu, that stood tall in the middle of the land that they were living on. 📖

*Jomo is a Bajau word that means humans
*Galap is mythical creature that lived in rivers and lakes that the Bajau community of Sabah usually tell as a precautionary tale to children.

This story is one of the six stories selected from the GCED Storytelling Contest 2019 co-organized by APCEIU and SEAMEO QITEP in Language.

YES, WE HEAR YOU, WE SEE YOU
Youth Leaders Remain Connected to Enact Positive Changes

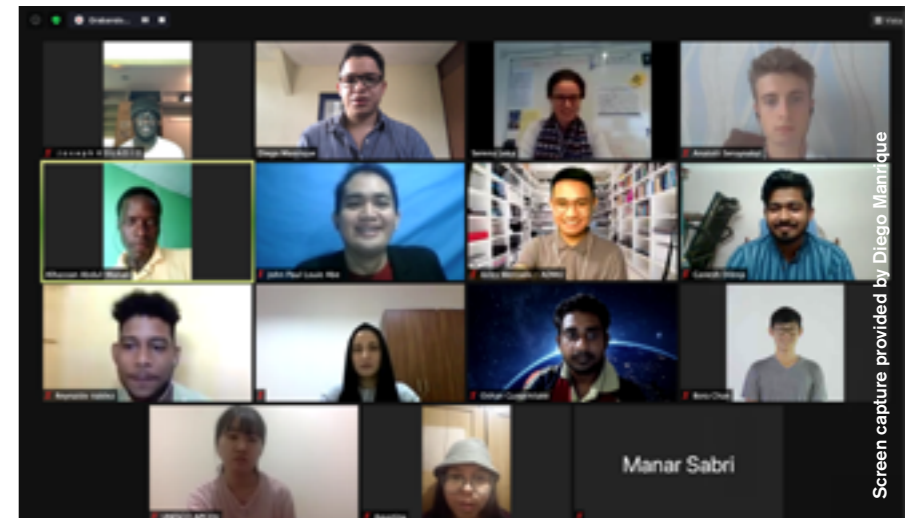By **Diego Manrique** (Member of the GCED Youth Network Core Group)

It is highly likely that expressions such as "can you hear me" or "can you see my screen" or "you are muted" have now become part of your everyday activities for more than a year. Furthermore, since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, many young people from around the world have been working, studying and interacting with others virtually. Although the sanitary protocols and different restrictions implemented to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 do not allow for youth to meet, learn and collaborate together, youth leaders working on Global Citizenship Education (GCED) initiatives and different areas of sustainable development have remained connected and active.

Since early 2020, we had to adapt to the new global context. We had to focus on different ways to engage with other youth by using digital platforms and we had to postpone some very exciting plans. What was initially a huge frustration because of the inability to sustain our personal, academic and professional lives soon turned into an opportunity to seek connections with previously unfamiliar actors, create new platforms and mechanisms in order to connect and learn from each other's works and experiences regardless of distance or language. The principles of interconnectedness and interdependence that are at the core of GCED became more evident and tangible than ever before.

The following examples from the GCED Youth Network not only exemplify the potential of young leaders but it also reminds us of the importance of fostering stronger and more authentic leadership while highlighting the power of youth working together.

Knowledge Transfer Webinars
After several months of communicating and working virtually, the GCED Youth Network started organizing knowledge transfer webinars together with the alumni of Global Youth Leadership Workshops on GCED that are annually held by APCEIU and the Network. Covering topics such as fundraising and monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL), alumni from all parts of the world connected with experts on the topics, both from alumni networks and external ones. Although this type of activity cannot be compared to a traditional workshop or training, it allows for a unique youth-led space to learn from each other about topics that are relevant for anyone leading an initiative or advocating for a particular cause in his or her own community. We used to think that we needed to travel long distances and invest a lot of resources to collect new knowledge, but it turns out that the knowledge we need to acquire can be brought to us in very simple ways.

Another way to remain engaged and active has been to participate on digital platforms created by organizations that work on similar thematic areas. In the past months, the GCED Youth Network has participated in conferences such as the AFS Global Annual Conference and the 6th International Conference on GCED organized by UNESCO and APCEIU. It has also contributed to digital events organized by youth-led platforms such as Kalinka.

Dialogues on Global Citizenship Education Policy
In late 2020, the GCED Youth Network participated in a series of regional dialogues leading to the creation of a regional Global Citizenship policy for the countries that are part of the Central American Integration System (SICA, in Spanish). This process was coordinated by SICA and the UNESCO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. Members of the Network present in this region shared their insights about the importance of GCED and the need for formal education systems so as to integrate them through intentional efforts. The dialogues convened the ministries of education of the region, high level UNESCO staff from the regional office and headquarters, youth representatives from across the region, and staff from the United Nations Agency against Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The series of inspiring dialogues between GCED and education practitioners, regulators and learners helped to clarify various perspectives on the need to strengthen regional education through GCED. The strongest moments of these dialogues were when attending youth members presented their views. Powerful voices from youth across the region challenged the narratives of the ministries of education and highlighted the need for changes in education that go beyond regulation and curriculum design, while focusing on the need for the meaningful inclusion of youth in education policy design.

Latin American and the Caribbean Course on GCED
The GCED Youth Network also participated in the creation of the first Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) on GCED designed for the youth of Latin American

△ Participants of the Webinars on Fundraising / Screen capture provided by Diego Manrique

Screen capture provided by Diego Manrique

△ Participants of the 5th Youth Leadership Workshop on GCED

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△ Regional Dialogue with UNESCO, SICA, UNODC / Screen capture by Diego Manrique

Caribbean, democracy and human rights, transformative and responsible global citizenship and activism in the 21st century. The course modules are instructed by different youth-led and youth-serving organizations, as well as UNESCO and thematic experts.

7th Youth Leadership Workshop on GCED

More recently, the GCED Youth Network and APCEIU conducted the 7th Youth Leadership Workshop on GCED, this time focusing on Media and Information Literacy (MIL) and youth empowerment. After having to postpone the offline activities of the 2020 Global Youth Leadership workshop on GCED due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 7th edition of this workshop was held online and hosted 50 participants from the Asia Pacific region, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and Africa.

For two weeks, participants were part of a series of online group sessions, lectures, seminars and online courses about MIL, GCED and Youth Advocacy.

and the Caribbean. The course titled "GCED: Youth, Human Rights and Participation in Latin America and the Caribbean" was collaboratively created under the coordination of the regional UNESCO office. The GCED Youth Network was part of the academic council that contributed to the creation of the course curriculum

and design, and contributed with original content for this course. In its first edition, the course had more than 5,000 students. It is available for new learners at Miriadax. net.

This MOOC on GCED is composed of four modules covering the current situation of youth in Latin America and the

△ Participants in group sessions of the 7th Youth Leadership Workshop on GCED (screen capture by Diego Manrique)

△ Poster for the 7th Youth Leadership Workshop on GCED

△ Promotional poster of GCED Online Course

Although this was entirely online, the participants and organizers felt closer than ever. Participants were able to learn from each other's experiences and knowledge, and also got to interact with experts on GCED, MIL and Youth Advocacy. The GCED Youth Network led a series of sessions focused on GCED and Advocacy during the first week of the workshop. This was a fantastic opportunity to reconnect with youth leaders from across the globe.

Participants developed action plans that they will be implementing mostly in the digital space over the coming months. We are excited about the new initiatives and efforts that are shaping and we are once again reminded of the power of young minds working together.

Stronger Connections, New directions

Although the past year has been a challenging one, it has highlighted the importance of young people leading the change they want to see and deserve. The global context has reminded us about the importance of collaboration and solidarity, and the youth that are showcased have all delivered their messages to this very demanding context. We now need to keep strengthening our existing connections and set new pathways to continue pursuing positive transformations for youth and for everyone in our communities. 🏛

" Although the past year has been a challenging one, it has highlighted the importance of young people leading the change they want to see and deserve. "

FOSTERING CULTURAL AND LANGUAGE DIVERSITY IN GEORGIA

By Marika Sikharulidze

(Head of the Program for Implementation of Digital Technologies,
National Center of Teachers' Professional Development of Georgia)

At the crossroads of Asia and Europe, in the Southern Caucasus, is Georgia, a small country with a population of around 3.5 million inhabitants and a rich history of unique cultures and diversity. The Georgian language, which is the main language in the group of Kartvelian languages, has a distinctive alphabet just like Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Korean, Cyrillic, Armenian, Chinese, Ethiopian and a few others.

As for multilingualism, despite being a small country, Georgia is unique in its language diversity due to its multiculturalism. Different ethnic minorities, such as Azeris, Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians, Yazidis, Abkhazians, Ukrainians, Kists, Russians, and others create the country's cultural and linguistic diversity. It is situated in a culturally diverse region of Caucasus and has always been populated by multilingual and multicultural societies. Georgians are known by their cordial hospitality and tolerance.

The ethnically and linguistically diverse modern country has several policies implemented by the government in order to integrate minorities into Georgian society. Besides, the constitution of Georgia recognizes the equal rights of every citizen regardless of race, colour, language, sex, religion, ethnic origin or nationality. Georgia ratified the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in 2008.

Georgia started expanding its multiculturalism outlook recently, when refugees from countries like Syria, Yemen, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, Egypt and others started arriving as asylum seekers. The integration of displaced persons into local society has become a big challenge not only for our education system but also for society as a whole.

As an alumnus of the APCEIU Global Citizenship Education Workshop, I came up with an idea for the development of a training programme for teachers and school representatives entrusted with the education of the refugee students. The training programme has been developed and supported in cooperation with the local office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

More than 300 school representatives from the different regions of Georgia have gained new skills and knowledge regarding the cultural heritage of newly displaced people, their history, religion and habits. They have also learned up-to-date educational approaches for the integration of the new members into school society and the creation of a multicultural, inclusive environment for the schools' newcomers.

As for the refugee students, surveys showed that their biggest challenge towards integrating into school society was the lack of proper language skills. Learning the Georgian language and its alphabet would be a big breakthrough for them because it would help them gain academic achievements and smooth their relationships with their peers.

The second step of the initiative run by the Distance Learning School of Georgian Language – one of the programmes supervised by our agency – is the implementation of Global Citizenship Education concepts into a special programme geared towards the education of refugees. The Distance Learning School is tasked with the teaching of Georgian as a second language to mainly children of Georgian families residing abroad. Even for our experienced teachers, teaching Georgian to non-native speaking children is challenging.

According to a special language and cultural programme, more than 120 students attended specially created online Georgian classes during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. During two school semesters, most of the students enrolled in the programme improved their language skills from non-existent to an intermediate level.

Since the lessons were conducted during the lockdown period, the process affected not only the students themselves, but the whole community of asylum seekers, according to the study hosted by partner organizations. Most of the family members of the course beneficiaries were able to attend the Georgian language classes together with their youngest family members. As the restrictions were mitigated and the schools were re-opened, students of the Distance Learning School showed significant achievements in their Georgian language skills.

The most emotional moment of the whole programme was the day when I found out that a little Pakistani girl called Laiba had translated the poem of a famous Georgian author into her mother tongue. That day, I realized that Georgia had become a second native land for Laiba and she would never feel like a stranger here. 🏛

კულტურული და ენობრივი მრავალფეროვნების ხელშეწყობა საქართველოში

მარიკა სიხარულიძე

(ციფრული ტექნოლოგიების დანერგვის ხელშეწყობის პროგრამის ხელმძღვანელი;
მასწავლებელთა პროფესიული განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი)

აზიისა და ევროპის კონტინენტების გადასაყარზე, იქ, სადაც პატარა, სახელმწიფო სახელწოდებით საქართველო განლაგებული, უნიკალური კულტურული მრავალფეროვანს იცრის თავს. ქართულს, რომელიც, თავის მხრივ, ქართველურ ენების წამყვანი ენაა, უნიკალური დამწერლობა აქვს მსოფლიო დამწერლობების ჩამონათვალში, როგორიცაა არაბული, ებრაული, ბერძნული, ლათინური, კორეული, სომხური, ჩინური, ეთიოპური, კირილიცა და სხვა.

რაც შეეხება ენობრივ მრავალფეროვნებას, მას უნიკალურ მულტიკულტურულ გარემო განაპირობებს: სხვადასხვა ეთნიკური ჯგუფის წარმომადგენელები როგორებიცაა, აზერბაიჯანელი, სომხური, ბერძნული, ასირიული, იეზიდური, აფხაზური, უკრაინელი, ქისტური, რუსული და სხვანი, ქმნიან მრავალფეროვან რეალობას. საქართველო ხომ კავკასიის რეგიონში მდებარეობს, რომელიც თავისი კულტურული მრავალმხრივობით გამოირჩევა. რაც შეეხება ქართველებს, ისინი გამოირჩევიან სტუმართმოყვარეობითა და ტოლერანტობით.

ეთნიკურად და ენობრივ მრავალფეროვან თანამედროვე სახელმწიფოს დანერგილი აქვს პოლიტიკის განმსაზღვრელი არაერთი დოკუმენტი, რომელიც სამოქალაქო საზოგადოებაში უმცირესობათა ინტეგრაციას ემსახურება. გარდა ამისა, საქართველოს კონსტიტუცია აღიარებს ყველა მოქალაქის თანაბარ უფლებებს, განურჩევლად რასობრივი, ეთნიკური, ენობრივი, სქესობრივი, რელიგიური და ეროვნული კუთვნილებისა. გარდა ამისა, საქართველომ 2008 წელს მოახდინა იუნესკოს კულტურული მრავალფეროვნების დაცვისა და განვითარების კონვენციის რატიფიცირება.

ბოლოდროინდელი საქართველოს კულტურული მრავალფეროვნება აქტიურად განვითარდა მას შემდეგ, რაც ისეთი ქვეყნებიდან როგორებიცაა სირია, იემენი, ირანი, ერაყი, პაკისტანი, საუდის არაბეთი, ეთიოპია, ეგვიპტე და სხვა, ლტოლვილებისა და თავშესაფრის მაძიებელთა ნაკადის შემოდინება გაძლიერდა. ამ ქვეყნების წარმომადგენელთა ინტეგრაცია გამოწვევად იქცა არამარტო განათლების სისტემისათვის, არამედ მთლიანად სამოქალაქო საზოგადოებისათვის.

როგორც იუნესკოს აზიისა და ოკეანიის საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობების ცენტრის გლობალური მოქალაქეობის

პროგრამის მონაწილეს, დამებადა ისეთი პროექტის იდეა, რომელიც ეხებოდა ლტოლვილი მოსწავლეების პედაგოგების გადამზადებას. სატრენინგო პროგრამა მომზადდა გაეროს ლტოლვილთა სააგენტოსთან თანამშრომლობით და მისი სამუშაოები გადამზადდა 300-ზე პედაგოგი შესაბამისი სკოლებში, სხვადასხვა რეგიონში. სატრენინგო პროგრამის საშუალებით მასწავლებლებმა შეიძინეს ისეთი ცოდნა და უნარები, რომელთა საშუალებითაც გაიაზრეს ახალი, განსხვავებული კულტურის წარმომადგენელი მოსწავლეების ადათ-წესები, ისტორია, რელიგიური მახასიათებლები, ასევე გაიზიარეს უახლესი საგანმანათლებლო მიდგომები ლტოლვილი მოსწავლეების ინტეგრაციისათვის სასკოლო საზოგადოებაში, პოზიტიური, ინკლუზიური გარემოს შექმნისათვის და სხვა.

კვლევის თანახმად, ლტოლვილი მოსწავლეებისათვის სასკოლო საზოგადოებაში ინტეგრატაციისათვის ყველაზე დიდ გამოწვევად ენობრივი ბარიერი რჩებოდა. ქართული ენისა და მისი ანბანის სწავლა მათთვის დიდი გარღვევა იქნებოდა აკადემიური მოსწრების გაუმჯობესებისათვის და ზოგადად, თანატოლებთან საერთო ენის გამონახვისათვის. გლობალური მოქალაქეობის მესახებ სხვა ენობრივი კულტურული პროგრამის მიხედვით, ქართული ენის დისტანციურ სწავლებას უფთოზემში მგზავრობა ქართველთა მოსწავლეებათან დასამევე მეორე ენის ფორმატში. დისტანციური სკოლის პედაგოგებისათვის ქართული ენის სწავლება არაქართული წარმოშობის მოსწავლეებისათვის ნამდვილ გამოწვევად იქცა.

მთელი კოვიდ-პანდემიის განმავლობაში 120-ზე მეტი მოსწავლე გადიოდა სპეციალურ დისტანციურ ინტენსიურ კურსს ქართულ ენაში. ათამა დიდება ნაწილმა ენობრივი კომპეტენცის ნულოვანი საფეხურიდან შუალედურ საფეხურზე მიაღწია ორი სასკოლო სემესტრის განმავლობაში. პარტნიორი ორგანიზაციების მიერ განხორციელებული კვლევის თანახმად, ქართული ენის კომპეტენცია ამხლის არამარტო მოსწავლეებმა, არამედ მათი სათვისტომოს ზრდასრულმა წევრებმა, რადგანაც მათ უწევდათ თავიანთ პატარებთან ერთად ონლაინგაკვეთილების მოსმენა. მას შემდეგ, რაც პანდემითი გამოწვეული შეზღუდვები შესუსტდა, სკოლაში დაბრუნებულმა მოსწავლეებმა ქართული ენის ფლობის კარდინალურად გაუმჯობესება გამოავლინა.

ყველაზე ემოციური მომენტს, რომელიც განვიცადე პროგრამის მსვლელობისასა იყო ის წუთი, როდესაც შევიტყვე, რომ პატარა გოგონამ პაკისტანიდან სახელად ლაიბა, ქართული ლექსი მშობლიურ ენაზე თარგმნა. მივხვდი, რომ საქართველო ლაიბასათვის მეორე სამშობლოდ იქცა და რომ ის თავს უცხოდ აქ აღარასოდეს იგრძნობს.

Peace Education Dialogue with Dr. Betty Reardon

APCEIU, in partnership with the Korean Society of Education for International Understanding (KOSEIU), hosted a virtual Dialogue with Dr. Betty Reardon on Peace Education. The forum on 26 February commemorated the publication of the Korean version of Dr. Reardon's book, "Comprehensive Peace Education," which was translated by Hanshin University professor Soon-Won Kang. About 100 participants attended the Forum through online platforms.

Moderated by Director of APCEIU Dr. Hyun Mook Lim, several peace education experts, including Dr. Samuel Lee, the first Director of APCEIU, professor Soon-Won Kang, professor Loreta Castro of Miriam College, took part in the dialogue with Dr. Reardon on key issues of peace education in the context of increasing demand for peace education due to the COVID-19 pandemic and intensified discrimination, hatred, and extremism. To watch a video of this forum, visit APCEIU's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqsRjmvdl6Q).

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Meeting of UNESCO Category 2 Centres in Education

Under the leadership of APCEIU, the Meeting of UNESCO Category 2 Centres in Education on UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029 (known as "41 C/4") was held virtually on 17 March with Ms. Astrid Gillet (Chief, Executive Office, Education Sector, UNESCO).

UNESCO Category 2 Centres in Education provided recommendations to improve the draft 41 C/4, which sets UNESCO's future activity goals and identifies key areas of work and will be adopted at the 41st Session of UNESCO General Conference in November this year. Participating Centres discussed the collected recommendations and examined the draft strategy on education, including global citizenship education, environmental education, adult education, and higher education. The Centres unanimously agreed to adopt a set of final recommendations, which were formally submitted to UNESCO by APCEIU as the representative of Category 2 Centres in Education.

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Launch of New Phase of GCED Curriculum Development and Integration Project
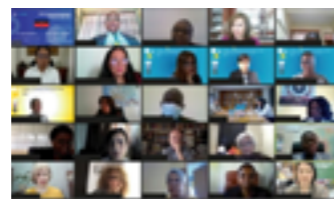
APCEIU officially kicked-off over Zoom the third year of the GCED Curriculum Development and Integration Project for the second-round countries, Kenya, Lebanon, Sri Lanka and the Philippines, on 23 and 24 March.

Two of the newly participating third-round countries, Laos and Georgia, also attended the meeting in order to gain a better understanding of the project.

Although the project faced challenges due to the global pandemic last year, participants showed invaluable progress based on their passion and commitment. During the meeting, participants described their progress and experiences, and compared each unique sociocultural and educational context as they examined different aspects of GCED integration in each country. Participants also shared their plans for this year and received feedback from external experts and fellow participants. This project is set to conclude this year, when participating countries pilot-test and finalize the initiatives they developed last year.

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From Refugees to Global Citizens' Webinar Series
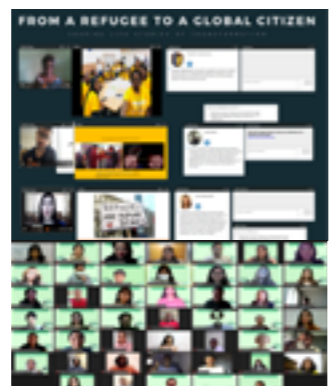
UNESCO APCEIU held a youth webinar series under the theme of 'From Refugees to Global Citizens' over three weeks from 22 April to 5 June 2021. Three alumni of APCEIU's 'Global Youth Leadership Workshop on GCED' were invited to share their life journey as refugees from the perspective of a global citizen.

Through the webinars, the speakers shared their own stories as global citizens, particularly their efforts to influence changes into their communities while fighting against prejudices and obstacles, and how they conquered the challenges and realized their aspirations in their own ways. Participants shared that they were inspired and empowered by the stories of young global leaders who were not defeated by their circumstances, but instead kept trying and succeeded to transform themselves into inspiring global citizens.

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Global Young Leaders Seeking Ways for Global Citizenship in Digital Era

APCEIU hosted the 7th Youth Leadership Workshop on GCED for

50 youth leaders from 28 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe from 7-18 June. Experts in media and information literacy (MIL) and GCED from around the globe, such as Mr. Fabrice Teicher, Mr. Dylan Wray and Ms. Lisa van Wyk, joined as facilitators and offered lectures and presentations around this year's theme, "MIL and Youth Empowerment."

Youth speakers joined from their respective locations to share their cases and stories on MIL and global citizenship as well as applicable strategies, tips, and new approaches. Youth participants discussed the need for global citizens to become agents of innovation and change, as well as the criticalness of reflective digital competency and active responsible engagement. Participants that successfully completed the two-week workshop are eligible to apply for APCEIU's mentorship and grant competition. Winners will be provided with mentorship and grant support to further facilitate their capacity-building initiatives and programmes, and maximize the impact of the workshops in the participants' communities and beyond.

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Virtual Consultation for East Asian Countries on GCED

Co-organized by the UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office and APCEIU, the Virtual Consultation for East Asian Countries on Global Citizenship Education (GCED) was held on 17 June. In attendance were representatives of Japan, Mongolia, The People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, UNESCO, and APCEIU.

Over the meeting, participants had the opportunity to review the current status of GCED implementation in each participating country, including their GCED initiatives, achievements and best practices. Representatives from participating countries also shared the opportunities and challenges they faced, as well as their respective future plans aimed at further enhancing and solidifying GCED implementations.

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2021 Online APTE Programme

The 2021 Asia-Pacific Teacher Exchange for Global Education (APTE) began as an online exchange programme in April due to the current pandemic. The online exchange programme is expected to minimize learning losses during the pandemic and be an opportunity to explore the possibility of virtual educational exchanges.

Schools in Korea and in the Asia-Pacific region became one-on-one partners in order to conduct virtual classes and educational activities online. A total of 20 schools participated in the programme in the first half of 2021, including 10 schools in Korea, three schools in Malaysia, four schools in Thailand, and three schools in the Philippines. Over 3 months, participating teachers conducted 60 interdisciplinary classes combining their subject matters with their respective cultures and Global Citizenship Education classes.

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Korean Governors of Education Roundtable on Curriculum Revision
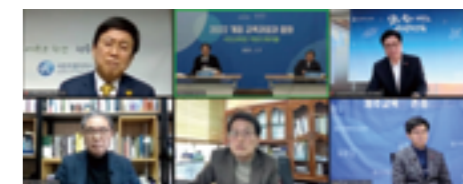
APCEIU and the National Council of Governors of Education (NCGE) of Republic of Korea co-hosted a virtual roundtable meeting on 7 January with the theme of "The 2022 Revised Curriculum and Peace." The online forum examined the needs and methods needed to emphasise "Peace, Global Citizenship, and Sustainability" in relation to the revision of the Korean national curriculum in 2022.

Five Governors of Education attended the roundtable: Mr. Gyojin Choi (Sejong City, president of the NCGE), Mr. Sunghun Do (Incheon Metropolitan City), Mr. Seok Mun Lee (Jeju Province), Jaejoung Lee (Gyeonggi Province), and Mr. Hee Yeon Cho (Seoul Metropolitan City). In her keynote speech, Hanshin University professor Soon-won Kang emphasized the need to strengthen the values of peace, global citizenship and sustainability in the introduction of the national curriculum in Korea and its relation to the societal changes brought about by COVID-19. More specifically, she proposed that the 2022 Revised Curriculum include "the ideal that an educated person practices peace, strives for an eco-friendly lifestyle, and contributes to world peace and sustainability as a global citizen." The provincial chiefs of education unanimously expressed their support for the proposal while sharing policy initiatives that reflect these educational values at the provincial level and suggestions for collaborative actions to be taken in the future.

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Proposal for the 2022 Revised Curriculum Published

APCEIU published its proposal for the national curriculum of Republic of Korea to be revised in 2022 (2022 Revised Curriculum), which is titled "Creating a Culture of Peace with Global Citizenship Education," in June.

The proposal outlines values, goals, the desired image of an educated person, and core competencies that should be included in the 2022 revised curriculum. Furthermore, the proposal describes the reasons why it is important to have such discourse over the national curriculum today, what values the curriculum should pursue, and what actions must be taken to create real change. It is hoped that the content of this proposal will be reflected in the 2022 Revised Curriculum and help develop future generations into becoming "global citizens who contribute to peace and sustainability."

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VARDZIA IS A CAVE MONASTERY (ROCK-CUT COMPLEX) LOCATED IN ASPINDZA IN SOUTHERN GEORGIA. BUILT IN THE 12TH CENTURY, THE MONASTERY WAS AN IMPORTANT CULTURAL CENTRE AND A PLACE OF SIGNIFICANT LITERARY AND ARTISTIC WORK. THE CHURCH OF THE DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD, LOCATED IN ONE OF THE CAVES HAS AN IMPORTANT SERIES OF MURAL PAINTINGS, INCLUDING THAT OF KING TAMAR, THE FIRST FEMALE RULER OF GEORGIA FROM 1184 TO 1213, PRESIDING OVER THE APEX OF THE GEORGIAN GOLDEN AGE. THE EXTENDED AREA OF VARDZIA-KHERTVISI HAS BEEN SUBMITTED FOR FUTURE INSCRIPTION ON THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LIST.

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