

UNESCO co-led webinar to explore Global Citizenship Education in Asia-Pacific: ‘Changing Systems to Change the World: Systemic Transformations Needed to Advance GCED’

Background

The goal of UNESCO’s Global Citizenship Education (GCED) programme and its Asia-Pacific Regional Global Citizenship Education (GCED) Network is the development of comprehensive and relevant systems of formal and non-formal education, knowledge systems, and flow of information which embrace the values of human rights, respect for cultural diversity, and tolerance. This can be accomplished by promoting knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours that reflect and inspire these values.

The concept of GCED is not new; neither is the notion that students need to be provided with the type of education that fosters the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes of global citizenship. Yet while GCED has been a focus on and off in various countries over the past few decades, GCED programmes have often been seen as additions or complements to core curricula, rather than central to them.

Regional Trends and Constraints of GCED Implementation

The adoption and implementation progress of GCED is uneven. UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) data from 71 countries around the world – 11 of which are from Asia-Pacific – on the progress of Sustainable Development Goal 4.7 (SDG 4.7) reveals that over 90 per cent of the countries reported that they had mainstreamed GCED themes in their laws, policies, and curricula. However, on closer examination, there are variations between and within countries, and in some contexts these issues are lightly addressed. While governments’ policy commitments appear encouraging globally, in the Asia-Pacific region gaps remain between such country commitments and national implementation efforts to advance GCED in teaching and learning. Alongside inadequate financial, technical, and human resources, weak implementation is further exacerbated by insufficient know-how and lack of awareness on the importance of these issues by parents and community members.

Recent Global and Regional Efforts to Promote GCED

At the recent Transforming Education Summit (TES) convened by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in September, the global education community adopted commitments to deliver strong and coordinated action that will develop every learner into a global citizen with the knowledge, skills, and values to build a peaceful and sustainable world.

Turning to the Asia-Pacific region, GCED is commonly recognized as key to building peaceful and sustainable societies. At the second Asia-Pacific Regional Education Minister's Conference (APREMC-II; June 2022), and expressly through its Bangkok Statement 2022, ministers from the region reaffirmed the importance of acknowledging and promoting GCED in curriculum content and pedagogical approaches, especially in order to equip learners with the skills and knowledge to become resilient and adaptable to the fast-evolving economies, labour markets, and to the impacts of climate change, all the while contributing to social cohesion, peace, and sustainable development in Asia-Pacific.

In countries such as New Zealand and Australia, the GCED agenda is now being given mainstream attention by the education sector departments. To explore this phenomenon, a trans-Tasman research project, *Embedding and sustaining the global citizenship education agenda at system and school level*, has been established by CQUniversity, Australia, to explore the ways in which the GCED agenda is being implemented in these contexts, taking into account any challenges and barriers that may affect its being authentically embedded and sustained at the system and school levels.

The trans-Tasman research has raised questions as to the ability and willingness of systems and schools to implement adaptive rather than technical changes needed to truly embed GCED in the curriculum. It has also highlighted the need for genuine collaboration where the voices of all stakeholders are heard and considered.

Webinar Objectives

UNESCO's webinar, 'Changing Systems to Change the World: Systemic Transformations Needed to Advance GCED', will present some of the perspectives that have been identified through this research with the intention of providing provocation to participants to consider the changes that may be required in their systems and schools.

The panel-led webinar stems and provides examples from a trans-Tasman research project: *Embedding and sustaining the global citizenship education agenda at system and school level*. It will host multiple perspectives on the types of systemic changes needed for effective GCED. The objective of the session ultimately is to provoke considerations of systems changes that may be needed to authentically embed GCED in the participants' own contexts.

Expected Results from the Webinar

The Changing Systems webinar will provide participants with a deeper understanding of some of the opportunities and challenges faced at both system and school levels when trying to embed GCED. It will provide participants with a range of perspectives for consideration, as well as examples from New Zealand and Australian GCED projects. It will provide provocations for participants to reflect on their own contexts, and it will build on the collaborative approach that underpins the trans-Tasman project by offering an opportunity for participants to engage in ongoing regional collaboration.

Date and Time

17 November 2022, 13.00 –14.40 Bangkok (GMT+7)

Expected Participants

The direct beneficiaries of this activity will be GCED network members, including officials from member states (i.e., Ministry of Education, National Committees for UNESCO), teaching professionals and research institutes. Other beneficiaries will include greater GCED stakeholders, learners, teachers, school leaders and their families.

Provisional Agenda

Thursday, 17 November 2022, 13.00 – 14.40 Bangkok (GMT+7)	
Moderators: Ms Libby Giles, Centres of Asia-Pacific Excellence, New Zealand Dr Karena Menzie-Ballantyne, CQ-University, Australia	
13.00 – 13.05	Opening remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ms Rika Yorozu, Head of Executive Office, UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok)Dr Hyun Mook Lim, Director, Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Introduction and acknowledgement by country
13.05 – 14.05	Panel Discussion Speakers List: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ms Libby Giles, Education Director, Centres of Asia Pacific ExcellenceDr Karena Menzie-Ballantyne, Senior Lecturer in Education, CQUniversityMr Chris Dench, Former Principal, Kilcoy State High SchoolMr Andrew King, Principal, Oropi SchoolTyler Te Kiri, CAPEs Education Māori Project LeadSpeaker to be confirmed
14.05 – 14.35	Questions and facilitated discussion
14.35 – 14.40	Closing remarks and wrap up <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ms Rika Yorozu, Head of Executive Office, UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok)