



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Associated Schools

UNESCO  
Associated  
Schools

# Strategy and Plan of Action 2004-2009

Quality education in practice




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# Introduction

Following fifty years of UNESCO Associated Schools (ASPnet) networking with a view to reinforcing the humanistic, ethical, cultural and international dimensions of education, it was deemed essential to conduct a Global Review evaluation which aimed to identify strengths and weaknesses of the Network and to make recommendations to enhance its effectiveness and to chart its future course. The Global Review concluded "that ASPnet is in a unique position to effect improvement in educational quality as defined by the areas such as peace, democracy, rights, sustainable development and the quality of life."

Hence, the participants of the ASPnet International Congress "Navigators for Peace" in support of Quality Education meeting in Auckland, New Zealand (3-8 August 2003) have developed the following Strategic Framework for the next six years. It is designed to chart a new course to enable ASPnet to play a more effective role in fostering quality education.

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## I · Mission Statement

**ASPnet is a network of committed schools engaged in fostering and delivering quality education in pursuit of peace, liberty, justice and human development in order to meet the pressing educational needs of children and young people throughout the world.**

ASPnet schools are 'navigators for peace' and agents for positive change. They:

- are instrumental to achieving Education for All as expressed in the six Dakar goals adopted by the World Education Forum, 2000;
- contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and to the implementation of UNESCO's strategies and programmes in education, science, culture and communication;
- serve as laboratories of ideas on innovative approaches for quality education for all;
- translate the four pillars of education for the 21st century -- learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together—into good practices of quality education.

The mission of the "Navigators for Peace", ASPnet principals, teachers and students who are privileged to be members of this global Network, can only be accomplished through assuming leadership roles within their schools, their societies, in their nations and in the international community in pursuit of the attainment of UNESCO ideals.

In order to enable ASPnet members to assume leadership roles for quality education, they require recognition, resources and support from:

- their local and national educational authorities;
- in alliances with a wide range of partners from both the public and private sectors;
- UNESCO Field Offices and Headquarters as well as with the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies.

Navigating for peace is a difficult and challenging journey. It necessitates courage, perseverance, life skills, creativity, and openness to others. The ASPnet "Navigators for Peace" have the courage, conviction and a clear vision as to where they are heading and what they are seeking to achieve.



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## II · Reorientation of ASPnet

### Towards quality education for all: sharing a holistic vision

#### Goal of ASPnet

Inspired by the UNESCO Constitution, ASPnet aims to promote quality education for all in pursuit of justice, liberty, peace and human development.

#### Objectives of ASPnet

- To reinvigorate a global network of schools committed to over-all quality improvement in support of EFA
- To focus on and to promote quality education as a right of all learners emphasising the dimensions of quality that are inherent in UNESCO's mandate
- To reinforce, disseminate, and mainstream good practice
- To promote local expression as beacon of UNESCO ideals, especially learning to living together in peace and harmony
- To contribute to sustainable socio-economic/cultural development, with special attention to issues relevant to the 21st century.

#### ASPnet vision of quality education

In light of the Dakar Framework of Action for EFA, ASPnet adopts a broadened vision of quality education, which implies the following:

- Consideration of what the learner brings to the learning experience
- Safe and psycho-socially enabling learning environment
- Supportive policy and effective school-based management
- Relevant curricular content
- Committed and professionally competent teachers
- Active learning processes
- Participatory governance and school-based management
- Adequate facilities and resources
- Appropriate monitoring and evaluation of all aspects as well as outcomes.

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## III · Strategies

ASPnet has a historic place in UNESCO's work. As a promoter of innovation, however, it will reorient itself to chart a course more closely tied to the UNESCO priorities of EFA. To achieve this, it will:

#### **Better focus its work through a common programmatic focus including:**

- Continuing its work in support of peace, human rights, tolerance, mutual understanding and respect for diversity;
- Contributing to sustainable human development, with particular emphasis on the difficult issues facing the 21st century, such as HIV/AIDS, conflict resolution, and environmental degradation;
- Building on research and lessons learned that are shared widely;
- Emphasising new and innovative approaches to learning, particularly with regard to pedagogical approaches, interdisciplinarity, solidarity, and cooperative learning that knows no frontiers;

#### **Implement its work through the following approaches:**

- Plan and implement flagship projects, with a focus on main dimensions of quality education
- Act as a mechanism to pilot and experiment innovative approaches that enhance learning and improve educational quality
- Develop, adapt and pilot quality content materials in ASPnet schools and explore ways that they can be used more generally beyond the network.
- Engage in capacity development for National ASP Coordinators, principals and teachers;



- Strengthen cooperation and coordination with Field Offices, National Commission for UNESCO, and national authorities, and engaging/committing governments for support to ASP schools as testing ground of policy changes;
- Work through strategic partnerships

### **Promote learning throughout life and life skills as key component of a quality education**

Use the four pillars of learning as fundamental principles for reshaping education:

- 1 Learning to know: to provide the cognitive tools required to better comprehend the world and its complexities, and to provide an appropriate and adequate foundation for future learning
- 2 Learning to do: to provide the skills that would enable individuals to effectively participate in the global economy and society
- 3 Learning to be: to provide self-analytical and social skills to enable individuals to develop to their fullest potential but psycho-socially, affectively as well as physically, for a all-round 'complete person';
- 4 Learning to live together: to expose individuals to the values implicit within human rights, democratic principles, intercultural understanding and respect and peace at all levels of society and human relationships to enable individuals and societies to live in peace and harmony

### **Facilitate mainstreaming of ASP successes through:**

- Sharing and mainstreaming good practices to scale in the delivery of quality education for multiplying effects
- Facilitating results-based programming and working modalities that could take advantage of changing approaches to management and will allow for sufficient flexibility for ASPnet to cope with emerging issues and challenges
- Harnessing the great potential of ICT as subject, as resources, as level of educational change, and as instruments for networking.

### **Improve networking in ASPnet in the following ways:**

- Decentralise and streamline management to make maximum use of available resources
- Recognise and nurture the volunteer spirit and idealism that characterizes ASPnet at the grassroots
- Involve families and local communities in reaching out as a catalyst for inclusive quality education for all
- Strengthen partnership and networking among ASPnet schools, with non-ASP schools, universities, teacher education and research institutions, non-governmental organizations and other civil society institutions.

### **Focus on quality assurance within the network**

- Identify mechanisms at international level for ensuring quality performance of the network as a whole
- Develop ways to ensure that ASPnet schools are living up to the commitments they made
- Limit activities to those that are directly related to the priorities identified above and only take on new activities that can be managed under the given resource base
- Staff and resource the UNESCO secretariat appropriately.

### **Improve evaluation, monitoring and management of ASPnet project implementation at school, national, subregional, regional and international levels.**



# IV · Proposed Plan of Action 2004-2009

## Quality education in practice

### ASPnet at the International Level

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#### **Goal 1 Reorient and reinforce ASPnet international co-ordination at UNESCO Headquarters and ensure close co-ordination with UNESCO Field Offices.**

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##### **Strategy a) Reorientation of ASPnet**

- Reinforce ASPnet 4 themes of study, with emphasis on non-violent conflict resolution,
- Reorient and reinforce ASPnet capacity to contribute to the goals of the Dakar Framework for Action "Education for All": particularly goal 3: providing life skills; and goal 6: Diffusing good practices on "quality education in practice" for policy making,
- Redefine criteria and principles modus vivendi/memorandum of understanding for participation in ASPnet.

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##### **Strategy b) Restructure and reinforcement of ASPnet**

- i Strengthen human and material resources of the ASPnet international co-ordination infrastructure, and enhance intersectoral co-operation and recognition within UNESCO;
- ii Establish an "International Advisory Group on ASPnet and Quality Education in Practice" to monitor and advise on effective implementation of the ASPnet Strategy and Plan of Action 2004-2009.
- iii Reinforce information and communication technologies (ICT) in support of ASPnet.
  - Maintain ASPnet international database,
  - Reinforce, frequent update and translate ASPnet international website,
  - Ensure electronic connections (including e-mail), to all ASPnet National Co-ordinators, ASPnet schools and to ASPnet focal points in UNESCO Field Offices;
  - Make available ASPnet Chat Forums for each category of ASPnet participants (co-ordinators, principals, teachers and students) and facilitate ASPnet video conferencing.
- iv Increase visibility of ASPnet:
  - in the academic community and government policy making arena;
  - through media coverage, press, radio and television.

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#### **Goal 2 Pursue and develop ASPnet Flagship Projects and Campaigns**

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##### **Strategy ASPnet Flagship Projects**

Maintain and launch a new set of selected number of UN/UNESCO intersectoral/international ASPnet flagship projects:

- "World Heritage Education" (extend to include the intangible heritage)
- "Breaking the Silence", Transatlantic Slave Trade (TST) Project and Indian Ocean Project
- Methods of non-violent conflict resolution in schools,
- "Feeding minds, fighting hunger", with FAO, Rome
- Intercultural Dialogue,
- ASPnet inter-agency Flagship project on teacher professional development (UNESCO, ILO, Education International)

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##### **Strategy ASPnet Campaigns**

Launch new ASPnet international campaigns such as:

- "Water Messengers"
- Elimination of discrimination, intolerance, racism and xenophobia,
- Preventive education (HIV/AIDS, drug abuse),
- Education for Sustainable Development.




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**Goal 3 Produce/provide ASPnet schools with appropriate and useful UNESCO resource materials.**

- Produce and distribute innovative educational resource material for international Flagship projects and initiatives in support of quality education in practice;
- Provide support to UNESCO Fields Offices so they can also produce and distribute educational resources;
- Produce, compile and distribute information material to facilitate ASPnet schools' contribution to United Nations international days, years and decades: e.g.:
  - International Decade for the Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010);
  - Human Rights Decade (1995-2003);
  - United Nations Decade for Indigenous People (1993-2003);
  - United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2013);
  - United Nations Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014).

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**Goal 4 Identify, distribute and exchange ASPnet "good quality education practices"; produce impact studies and research.**


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**Goal 5 Provide training/capacity building for leadership for ASPnet National Co-ordinators, principals, teachers and students.**

**Strategy** Provide training materials and training sessions (including distance education) for ASPnet National Co-ordinators with emphasis on:

- Quality education in practice,
- Monitoring and assessment,
- Fundraising
- Working with the media.

**Strategy** Produce and diffuse a training and professional development package for ASPnet principals and teachers to enhance their participation in the network

**Strategy** Strengthen links with Teacher Training Institutions, Universities, Educational Research Centers, UNESCO Chairs and other Academic Institutions to advise on ASPnet flagship projects, monitoring and assessment

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**Goal 6 Strengthen ASPnet's capacity to serve as laboratory for experimentation/validation of new UNESCO/UN education resource material**

- Experiment UNESCO Desertification Kit
- Experiment UNESCO Teacher's manual on Mountains
- Experiment FAO "Feeding Minds, Fighting Hunger" Educational Resource Material.
- Others

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**Goal 7 Develop Partnerships and Co-sponsorships**

Increased co-operation with:

- United Nations and specialized agencies, World Bank, regional banks,
- Multilateral and bilateral agencies
- Foundations; NGOs
- UNESCO Chairs, Clubs, Centres, Associations;
- Private sector.

## ASPnet at the Regional Level and UNESCO Field Offices

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**Goal 1**    **The reorientation and the reinforcement of the ASPnet at the regional and national level will be supported by UNESCO Fields Offices and UNESCO Headquarters.**

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**Goal 2**    **Launch and support ASPnet regional Flagship projects and campaigns such as:**

- Caribbean Sea Project
  - Baltic Sea Project
  - Zambezi River Project
  - Media education in the Pacific
  - Teacher and learning of human civilizations (Asia and the Pacific)
  - Euro-Arab “Learning to live together” Flagship Project.
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**Goal 3**    **Produce and distribute innovative educational resource material for regional Flagship projects or initiatives to promote quality education in practice.**

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**Goal 4**    **Identify and distribute annual reports with examples of Good Quality Education Practices of the ASPnet schools in the region.**

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**Goal 5**    **Develop training/capacity building for ASPnet National Co-ordinators, principals and teachers in co-ordination with Headquarters including fundraising skills.**

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**Goal 6**    **Develop partnerships and co-sponsorship at the regional level with other UN agencies and the private sector and assist ASPnet National Co-ordinators to find funding.**

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**Goal 7**    **Mainstream the role of ASPnet schools in quality education in EFA regional strategies.**

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## ASPnet at the National Level

Responsible body: National Commission for UNESCO/Ministry of Education

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**Goal 1 Provide information and raise awareness of ministers of education and senior officials on the goals, objectives and activities of the ASPnet in order to obtain continuous support and to ensure:**

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**Strategy**

- recognition of ASPnet schools as supporting quality education in practice,
  - alignment of ASPnet activities with government educational priorities where these concern quality education relating to the promotion of human rights, democracy, intercultural learning and sustainable development
  - co-ordination and development of a strong national ASP network as a testing ground for quality education combining top-down with bottom-up approaches
  - sustainability of the national ASP-networks in order to secure long term results and impact
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**Goal 2 Invite ASPnet schools to reconfirm through a memorandum of understanding in 2004 their participation in the Network as "Pilot Schools in Quality Education" in practice and reapply every 3 years: Criteria and principles for ASPnet schools to remain in the network, to serve as:**

- Laboratory of good ideas;
  - Clearing houses for good practices;
  - Catalyst for quality education;
  - Provider of "essential life skills";
  - Promoters of education for: sustainable peace, human rights, conflict prevention and sustainable development.
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**Goal 3 Mainstream ASPnet innovations into national education systems.**

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**Goal 4 Appoint and train a well-qualified full/part time ASPnet National Co-ordinator by the National Commission for UNESCO or Ministry of Education and provision of support wherever possible. (See attached: Job Description for ASPnet National Co-ordinators).**

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**Goal 5 Appoint members to a national ASPnet Consultative Committee, to include, if possible, the ASPnet National Coordinator; representatives from: the National Commission for UNESCO; the Ministry of Education; the national university; the national teacher-training institution; a curriculum development expert and one or more active ASPnet principals/teachers.**

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**Goal 6 Elaborate national ASPnet Strategy and Plan of Action, with clear goals, deadlines and measurable outcomes, and distribute it widely. The plan should be based on goals 3 and 6 of the Dakar Framework for Action.**

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**Goal 7 Plan activities, commemorate events and actions to coincide with International Days, Years and Decades whenever appropriate.**

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**Goal 8 Develop synergies and partnerships with municipalities, the local and regional (within the country) educational authorities, higher education institutions, cultural institutions, community associations, NGOs and the private sector.**

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**Goal 9 Develop stronger links with UNESCO Chairs, UNESCO Clubs and NGOs.**

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**Goal 10 Elaborate and implement a fund-raising strategy in support of ASPnet.**

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**Goal 11 Involve national media to cover ASPnet action. Send summaries or copies of press coverage (clippings, audio or video recordings etc.) to UNESCO Field Offices and UNESCO Headquarters.**

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## ASPnet at the School Level

Pilot Schools Strongly Committed to Quality Education in Practice

Responsible body: School Management Board.

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<b>Goal 1</b>	<b>To be an ASPnet school is a matter of importance for everyone in the school. School principals are fully engaged and supportive of the projects and activities, teachers of all subject areas contribute and pupils and students are actively involved. All schools appoint an ASPnet school focal point and provide them with the conditions to carry out their work (office space, access to school computer, e-mail and internet, time off teaching duties for administration, reporting etc).</b>
<b>Goal 2</b>	<b>Upon confirmation of participation, ASPnet, schools should receive a clear description of the implications of being an ASPnet school, i.e. expectations on the type of support from the national authorities, UNESCO Field Offices and Headquarters.</b>
<b>Goal 3</b>	<b>Promote quality education by adopting a school policy inspired by UNESCO's ideals of peace, respect for people and environment, human rights, non-discrimination, and promotion of sustainable development.</b>
<b>Goal 4</b>	<b>Draw up an annual school plan for quality education with clear goals and priorities, deadlines and measurable outcomes considering both process and results.</b>
<b>Goal 5</b>	<b>Take measures to ensure training and capacity building of school staff for elaboration of school plans in support to quality education in practice.</b>
<b>Goal 6</b>	<b>Report annually on results achieved to the ASPnet National Co-ordinator, with supporting evidence. All schools will be acknowledged for their reports and receive constructive feedback from the ASPnet National Co-ordinator. Failure to submit more than one annual report could result eventually in withdrawal from the network.</b>
<b>Goal 7</b>	<b>Establish/reinforce participatory democratic approaches both within the classroom and at school management level, involving students, teachers, parents and the local community.</b>
<b>Goal 8</b>	<b>Make sure the school is clearly identified with the UNESCO and ASPnet logo, displayed:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>— on a sign in a prominent place</li><li>— on the school website.</li></ul>
<b>Goal 9</b>	<b>Develop synergies and partnerships with other local schools, municipalities, the local and regional (within the country) educational authorities, teacher training institutions, cultural institutions, community associations, NGOs and the private sector.</b>
<b>Goal 10</b>	<b>Observe International Days, Years and Decades declared by the United Nations.</b>
<b>Goal 11</b>	<b>Inform local and regional media of special actions and results. Send copies of press coverage (clippings, audio or video recordings etc.) to the National ASPnet Co-ordinator.</b>
<b>Goal 12</b>	<b>Engage actively in fund-raising activities to finance project activities, school visits and exchanges.</b>

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## Proposed job description for ASPnet National Co-ordinators

Please note that the following elements describe an "ideal ASPnet co-ordinator", towards which every country should strive, with respect and consideration for each country's real capacity.

- 1 Receiving information from ASPnet schools on activities at the school level, provide them with constructive feedback and inform ASPnet schools of regional and international developments (through a national ASPnet communications network and database, where access to technology permits).
- 2 Information of ASPnet schools and the educational community on ASPnet developments and related activities.
- 3 Regular updating and renewal of ASPnet membership and eventual exclusion of inactive schools.
- 4 Appointment of regional and/or project co-ordinators, as well as "ASPnet focal points" at school level.
- 5 Organization of national ASPnet meetings with teacher-training components.
- 6 Cooperating with ASP schools on the development, monitoring and evaluation of their ASPnet project activities.
- 7 Initiating documentation on ASPnet "good practices" in support to quality education.
- 8 Organizing dissemination of major ASPnet achievements locally, nationally and internationally.
- 9 Sending UNESCO innovative resource material to schools for experimentation, testing and evaluation. Collation of evaluations at national level and transmission of results for analysis at regional and international levels.
- 10 Inform and invite the local and regional media to meaningful ASPnet school activities and report outcome of international competitions.
- 11 Exploring synergies, partnerships and relationships (with national educational authorities and institutes of higher education, national cultural institutions, national associations, NGOs, the private sector and the media to promote UNESCO values of peace and tolerance through education at national level by raising the profile of ASPnet schools.
- 12 Preparation of annual reports on action implemented by ASPnet schools in the country, and send them to UNESCO Field Offices and Headquarters with copies to all concerned (ASPnet schools, national authorities, etc.).
- 13 Facilitation of school twinning and exchanges through horizontal networking with other National Co-ordinators
- 14 Representing the national ASPnet work at national, regional and international level.
- 15 Ensuring the democratic and transparent selection of participants (according to the UNESCO criteria provided) of teachers and students chosen to represent the country at regional and international encounters.
- 16 Raising support from the nearest UNESCO Field Office.

Founded in 1953, UNESCO's Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet), commonly referred to as UNESCO Associated Schools, is a global network of some 7 900 educational institutions in 176 countries (ranging from pre-schools and primary to secondary schools and teacher training institutions), who work in support of quality education in practice.

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