Equitable Remote Learning for All
Using multiple delivery channels to support ethnolinguistic minority children

UNESCO — United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

ASIA-PACIFIC MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

22 June 2021

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Background

The loss of learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic has affected all learners, particularly ethnolinguistic minority children. UNESCO estimates that at least 1.5 billion learners worldwide have had disruptions to their education, while an estimated 10.5 million students in the Asia-Pacific region are at risk of not returning to school. Close to half the world's learners are still affected by partial or full school closures, and the need for linguistically inclusive distance education remains.

The pandemic has drawn attention to remote education options, ranging from high-tech solutions to low-tech and no-tech forms of delivery. When these multiple delivery channels are implemented, ethnolinguistic minority children may be at a disadvantage compared to their peers who understand the language of instruction. According to the 2016 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report, around 40 per cent of the global population does not have access to education in a language they speak or understand. With regard to remote educational materials, the 2020 GEM Report estimated that less than 30 per cent of low- and middle-income countries have designed learning materials for speakers of minority languages. Taken together, when ethnolinguistic minority children receive distance learning, the learning materials may not be in a language they understand. As such, these children are not able to

access knowledge and as a result, continue to have a disruption to their education despite mobilized efforts.

In response to COVID-19 and its unique challenges for ethnolinguistic minority children, the Asia-Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group (MLE WG) created the regional webinar series to engage regional- and national-level educational stakeholders who are interested in maintaining and advancing mother tongue-based multilingual education programmes. In November 2020, the first of this webinar series explored developing digital learning materials for ethnolinguistic minority children. This webinar provided an opportunity for member-state stakeholders to exchange experiences and practices on the creation and distribution of digital learning materials. It also addressed the immediate challenges caused by the pandemic within the context of the continuing effort to build education systems that provide inclusive quality education for all.

At the second regional webinar in February 2021, the MLE WG launched the Guidance Note on Ensuring inclusive Education for Ethnolinguistic Minority Children in the COVID-19 Era. This guidance note highlights the unique challenges to learning for children from marginalized ethnolinguistic communities during and after the COVID-19 era. The guidance note lays out a number of compounded disadvantages, such as remoteness, poverty, migration, and language barriers, that ethnolinguistic minority children face in maintaining their learning remotely and for returning to school. Practical suggestions for policymakers and implementers are provided to address these compounded disadvantages during and after the pandemic.

Building on the discussions in the first webinar and the Guidance Note launched in the second, the third session of this regional webinar series will focus on using multiple delivery channels to support ethnolinguistic minority children's remote learning. The webinar will begin with a brief review of the Guidance Note mentioned above. Against this background, each panel speaker will provide examples of delivering remote learning that use various methods to minimize the effects of compounded disadvantages. The session will end with a Q&A and discussion for participants to understand the applications of the Guidance Note and strategies for remote learning in their own contexts.

Objectives

1. To share context-specific strategies for effectively delivering quality and inclusive remote learning to ethnolinguistic minority children.

2. To explore how remote learning can enhance and strengthen mother tongue-based multilingual programmes during and after COVID-19.

3. To catalyse multilateral engagement and cooperation in implementing MTB MLE programmes in the Asia-Pacific region.

Target Audience

The target audience for the webinar includes regional, national and international level education stakeholders (including both policymakers and implementers) interested in strategies for delivering remote learning to ethnolinguistic minority children for inclusive multilingual education programmes.

Working Language

English will be the working language of the webinar.

Date, Time and Format

Date: Tuesday, 22 June 2021
Time: 1:00 pm – 2:50 pm (Bangkok time; GMT+7)
Format: Zoom

Registration

Registration is free and required in advance. Once you register, a unique join URL will be sent to your email. Registration link: https://unesco-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN__aqojOCXRd-hVhKTnB66UQ

For more information

Asia-Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group Secretariat

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Agenda

Tuesday, 22 June 2021 Moderator: Francisco Benavides, Regional Education Advisor, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office	
1:00 pm – 1:10 pm	**Welcome and Introduction from the Asia-Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group**
1:10 pm – 2:10 pm	**Panel Speakers (15 mins each):** • "Reaching Ethnic Minority Students during COVID-19 in Cambodia" – Ms. Dany Khieu, Educational Technical Advisor, CARE International, Cambodia • "Smart Voice: A Digital Offline Learning Kit for Students in the Remote Areas" – Ms. Emmanuela Shinta, Founder and Executive Director, Ranu Welum Foundation, Indonesia • "Digitalizing MTB-MLE Teacher Training" – Ms. Suraporn Suriyamonton, Country Representative, Pestalozzi Children's Foundation, Thailand • "M-Lugha: First Languages First" – Mr. Abdinoor Ali Yerrow, Founder, M-Lugha App, Kenya
2:10 pm – 2:40 pm	**Q&A and Discussion**
2:40 pm – 2:50 pm	**Key Messages and Closing** • Ms. Margarete Sachs-Israel, Chief of Section for Inclusive Quality Education, UNESCO Bangkok