

NMUN•NY 2021



5 – 8 April 2021

Documentation of the Work of the United Nations Educational,
Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) NMUN Simulation*



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Conference B

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United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO)

Committee Staff

Director	Katie Conti
Assistant Director	Sejal Tiwari
Chair	Meagan Wong

Agenda

- I. Harnessing Emerging Technologies for the Achievement of SDG 4
- II. Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in Post-Conflict Areas
- III. Promoting Open Access to Scientific Information and Research

Resolutions adopted by the Committee

Code	Topic	Vote
UNESCO/1/1	Harnessing Emerging Technologies for the Achievement of SDG 4	Adopted without a vote
UNESCO/1/2	Harnessing Emerging Technologies for the Achievement of SDG 4	Adopted without a vote
UNESCO/2/1	Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in Post-Conflict Areas	Adopted without a vote

Summary Report

The United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) held its annual session to consider the following agenda items:

- I. Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in Post-Conflict Areas
- II. Promoting Open Access to Scientific Information and Research
- III. Harnessing Emerging Technologies for the Achievement of SDG 4

The session was attended by representatives of 21 Member States.

On Monday afternoon, the committee adopted the agenda of III, I, II, beginning discussion on the topic of “Harnessing Emerging Technologies for the Achievement of SDG 4.” By Tuesday, the Dais received a total of 2 proposals for the first topic, covering a wide range of sub-topics, including the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital tools into education and development of inclusive solutions to digital and remote learning. The atmosphere of the committee was very productive, with delegates considering all viewpoints and maintaining a high level of efficiency in building consensus.

By Wednesday evening, two draft resolutions had been approved by the Dais, one of which had a friendly amendment. On Thursday morning the committee adopted both resolutions with unanimous consensus of the body.

Following the adoption of the two draft resolutions, the committee proceeded to open debate on the second topic on the agenda, “Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in Post-Conflict Areas.” By Thursday afternoon, the committee produced another working paper, which was reviewed by the dais and eventually accepted as a draft resolution. This draft resolution worked to further protect intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in post conflict areas knowledge exchange and initiatives to raise awareness to further safeguard ICH. Draft resolution 2/1 received unanimous support by the committee.

Overall, the committee atmosphere was one of collegiality and mutual respect. Delegates were consistently focused on matters at hand, but encouraged inclusivity and consensus building at every step of the process.



Code: UNESCO/1/1

Committee: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Topic: Harnessing Emerging Technologies for the Achievement of SDG 4

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,

*Guided by the 2018 UNESCO Broadband Commission report on *Digital Skills for Life and Work*, which highlights that education systems worldwide are working to harness emerging technologies to excel in digital learning,*

*Highlighting Article 14 of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2007) which outlines the unequal opportunities that Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) have in the international community, and the need to protect their right to development in accordance with their own needs and interests,*

*Concerned that education can serve as a basis for forced cultural assimilation of indigenous and cultural minorities, as outlined in the 2019 UNESCO *Global Education Report: Monitoring Migration, Displacement and Education*,*

Recognizing the need to implement broad measures for the inclusion of all languages and cultures and the protection of human rights throughout UNESCO digital education initiatives, especially for IPLCs,

*Acknowledging the damaging consequences of conflict for the education for all, as examined in UNESCO's 2020 *Global Education Monitoring Report*,*

*Affirming the *Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the Implementation of SDG 4* (2015) to use information and communications technology (ICTs) to provide alternative modes of learning and education in emergency situations,*

Reaffirming the importance of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, "Quality Education," target 4.b on social and economic development and the effect that inadequate technological infrastructure and lack of resource access have on the ability of Member States to connect to the internet and harness emerging technologies in educational settings,

*Emphasizing UNESCO's adoption of the *Recommendation on Open Educational Resources* (OER) (2019) to allow inclusivity with education on an international level,*

*Understanding that Member States have different levels of economic development, which can make universal access to technologies a difficult task, as laid out within the 2020 UNESCO report on *Digital Transformation of Education and School Connectivity*,*

*Further guided by the *Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (2011-2020)* which focuses on education, training, science, technology, and innovation and development of ICT infrastructure and internet access,*

*Observing the connection between access to broadband internet, online resources and the ease of education in developing regions as laid out through the UNESCO Broadband Commission Report, *State of Broadband 2020: Tackling Digital Inequalities*,*

*Guided by the *Beijing Consensus on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Education* (2019), in which UNESCO reaffirms a humanistic approach to AI and sets clear-cut agendas for the ethical facilitation of AI programs for education,*

Further understanding the need for the development of national financing projects which work to improve technological infrastructure through the work of UNESCO National Commissions to collaborate with NGOs and the private sector, such as in Afghanistan's ICT Development Project,

Drawing attention to the roles that the UNESCO Executive Board and public-private partnerships could play to further the expansion of digital infrastructure and broadband in all Member States,



1. *Suggests* that UNESCO hosts an International Forum in cooperation with the UN Commission on Science Technology and Development, on leveraging Emerging Technologies to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 by:
 - a. Discussing best practices and policies to integrate digital accessibility for all the application of ICTs;
 - b. Outlining the barriers to emerging technologies adoption, that includes digital infrastructure availability, funding, and institutional technical support, which has a staggering impact on global education and the SDG progress in an era of pandemic;
2. *Recommends* the expansion and establishment of AI-powered education programs for teachers and students in grade levels K-12 on an international level by:
 - a. Utilizing AI tools to create personalized lessons for students by collecting analytics on students' performances and providing teachers with data analytics of students' subject scores that may further improve the quality of education provided;
 - b. Sharing open-source AI algorithms and AI technologies throughout schools that are programmed to recognize the needs of disabled, refugees, vulnerable, low-resource students, and other visible minorities;
 - c. Establishing a multilevel mutual learning consortium encompassing K-12 schools and national education departments to:
 - i. Enable the sharing of best practices and resources when it comes to implementing AI in the classroom;
 - ii. Conduct trials to monitor and evaluate all new initiatives;
 - iii. Promote cooperation between UNESCO National Commissions and public-private partnerships on facilitating AI workshops and training;
 - iv. Maintain a special focus on developing rural areas to mitigate the lack of substantive resources in AI education platform functions;
 - d. Implementing the objectives of UNESCO's outcome document called the *Beijing Consensus of Artificial Intelligence In Education* to ensure that emerging AI technologies use a humanistic approach and are human-controlled while encouraging formulation of national and international policies and regulatory frameworks that aim to:
 - i. Apply clear and outlined codes of conduct maintaining privacy and robust response to ethical issues;
 - ii. Include codes of conduct in all AI education programs to ensure the protection of education data, and upholding of data security;
 - iii. Encourage inclusivity in both the general AI field and in education-focused AI application;
3. *Affirms* the need to collaborate with national and international scientific and educational institutions to ensure quality education with AI as an essential tool to achieve the objectives set out in the SDGs, as well as comply with the legal and ethical commitments of each Member State by:
 - a. Collaborating with funding programs that expand upon exchange students and university staff and capacity-building projects, specifically for higher education and master's fellowships worldwide;
 - b. Promoting digital education plans that establish consistent technology use, improve access to digitally integrated educational tools, and further develop digital literacy skills among young people and teachers;
 - c. Sharing practices by UNESCO that can improve international and regional cooperation to improve exchange on knowledge on the utilization of AI;
4. *Encourages* the UNESCO-ITU Broadband Commission for SDGs to collaborate with the UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) to assess the state of broadband access to IPLCs,



establish a research team of qualified professionals to conduct studies, and provide recommendations of inclusive ICT infrastructural improvements to the Member States so IPLCs can access digital education resources, potentially through cooperation between UNESCO National Commissions, regional development banks, and the World Bank;

5. *Further resolves* to implement broad measures in for the inclusion of all languages and cultures and the protection of human rights, especially for IPLCs, within educational initiatives by:
 - a. Adapting all UNESCO educational and technological programs to encompass IPLCs and all other minority cultures and languages;
 - b. Protecting and promoting a diverse field of intangible cultural heritage through engaging and broad inclusion of the subject in educational curriculums;
 - c. Utilizing and adapting UNESCO's Digital Textbooks for All Initiative to branch out to vulnerable groups such as IPLCs for the achievement of SDG 4;
6. *Further recommends* the creation of initiatives to be assisted by UNESCO National Commissions that focus on financing programs that expand mobile and wired connectivity, IT industry development, and project management support and can be adapted to include ICTs that are proven reliable and usable on a case-by-case bases in individual Member States;
7. *Commits to* considering proposals by Member States that establish additional funding mechanisms to ensure the long-term success and achievement of SDG 4 by:
 - a. Inviting willing and able Member States to increase voluntary funding;
 - b. Establishing grant programs designed to prioritize crucial programs such as broadband internet access;
8. *Recommends* the implementation of measures to ensure communities in remote areas have access to wireless capacities in to facilitate remote education by:
 - a. Adapting plans that allow students to receive efficient digital learning through affordable laptops, supplies, and textbooks;
 - b. Providing adequate school facilities that meet the specific needs of children and persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups;
 - c. Guaranteeing access to emerging technologies to Member States under equal conditions to technical, professional and higher quality training.



Code: UNESCO/1/2

Committee: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Topic: Harnessing Emerging Technologies for the Achievement of SDG 4

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,

Recalling Article 26 of the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948) that enshrines the right to education for all,

Acknowledging Articles 13 and 14 of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) (1966) which recognizes the right to education for everyone and outlines the importance of compulsory primary education and a plan of action for the progressive implementation of this,

Viewing with appreciation the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) *Convention Against Discrimination in Education* (1960) which lays out a strong foundation that discrimination of any kind in education based on race, color, sex, gender, language, and religious violates of basic human rights,

Recognizing Article 24 of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) (2008), which stipulates that persons with disabilities are entitled to the right of inclusive education,

Emphasizing the need to integrate new technologies into school systems worldwide as acknowledged in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, “Quality Education,”

Recalling the Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the Implementation of SDG 4 (Incheon Declaration) (2015) that charges UNESCO with using ICTs to increase literacy and calls for the use of ICTs to provide modes for education in Emergency situations,

Alarmed by the percentage of students who were negatively affected since school buildings and other learning facilities were closed due to the global pandemic, as stated in the UN policy brief on “Education During COVID-19 and Beyond,”

Taking note of the increasing need for accessible and affordable education in non-urban areas during the COVID-19 pandemic,

Acknowledging the low level of quality education, inadequate technology transfer and model legislation, and the lack of intelligent equipment throughout many remote areas of developing countries, which need financial assistance and organization building, as noted in the UNESCO *Global Education Monitoring Report - Accountability in Education: Meeting our Commitments* (2017),

Noting the success of programs that have provided refugee children with access to sustainable education and education using digital tools through integrative initiatives in post-conflict societies,

Further guided by the *Global Compact on Refugees* (2018) by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) which aims to improve international responses to new and existing refugee situations,

Reaffirming United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution 2020/12 “Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society”, which encourages giving due consideration to the impact of key rapid technological changes on the achievement of the SDGs, considering more than 80 percent of students do not have access to a home computer or Internet in low-income countries,

Commending the success of programs made possible by public-private partnerships that work to sustainably bring digital access to schools, such as the Solar Electrification of Rural Schools Programme implemented by UNESCO in partnership with the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), and Panasonic,

Noting with appreciation the success of the Giga Initiative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) which aims to advise on technical solutions to provide schools with connectivity,



Recalling UNESCO's role in the Open Educational Resources (OER) program, which aims to provide universal access to information for high-quality education via digital platforms,

Recognizing the UNESCO Textbooks For All Initiative, which allows for online access to textbooks and other educational resources to be easily adaptable to be accessed in native languages or accommodated for Persons With Disabilities (PWD), supporting learners with a lack of access to schools and teachers and lack of retention and comprehension due to trauma,

Remembering UNESCO's *Guidelines on the Development of OER Policies* (2019) and the *2012 Paris OER Declaration* which define OER as teaching, learning and research materials in any medium (digital or otherwise) that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions thus promoting the use of education information available to all through ICTs and open access (OA),

Recalling Objective 8 of the UNESCO *Medium-Term Strategy 2014-2021*, highlighting the need for fostering creativity and the diversity of cultural expression which allow for improved education and the promotion of inclusivity to allow for better cooperation,

Further recognizing UNESCO's STEM and Gender Advancement (SAGA) programme and its contributions to improving the situation of women and reducing the gender gap in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) by creating a more inclusive and safe learning environment for women and girls and provide equal learning opportunities for all, working toward the achievement of SDG 5, "Gender Equality",

Taking into account the potential of the UNESCO-Fazheng Project to provide a framework for mobile learning that encourages school-wide technology planning, analyses learning practices at the school level, and provides mobile devices for students to access education whilst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic persists,

1. *Calls for* the expansion of the UNESCO Textbooks For All Initiative by creating regional-based workshops that educate communities about emerging technology opportunities and propose new learning materials in a variety of native languages and resources to address issues such as the needs of students with disabilities and lack of retention, harnessing emerging technologies for the implementation of SDG 4 especially among vulnerable groups;
2. *Suggests* the creation of a toolkit that utilizes Artificial Intelligence (AI) to tailor curricula for persons with disabilities to facilitate their remote education for K-12 education (or equivalent structures), university studies, and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET);
3. *Requests* Member States create policies and funds regarding the implementation of improved telecommunication infrastructure and work with Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to support distance learning in areas that struggle with connectivity to remote learning curricula and programs by:
 - a. Allowing teachers to access more materials for the construction of lessons and curricula;
 - b. Allowing students to stream interactive learning materials from remote locations;
4. *Encourages* the establishment of a network under the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies (IT) for Education called "Recycling IT to Achieve the 4th SDG (IT4SDG)" that focuses on:
 - a. Outlining the best practices for recycling technological devices that are to be used in the educational field;
 - b. Connecting stakeholders to facilitate the transport of technological devices to areas with low ICTs;
5. *Directs* UNESCO's SAGA Programme to create a report on the effects of COVID-19 on women and education to provide an assessment of what needs to be done to achieve gender equality and utilize ICTs within schools by harnessing emerging technologies for the achievement of SDG 4;
6. *Requests* all Member States adopt OER plans, enact programs, and provide aid to improve access to education such as workshops to help students, teachers and other faculty with their transition into remote/virtual learning;



7. *Encourages* all Member States to fully implement Articles 13 and 14 of the ICESCR by developing national plans that ensure students are in school from ages 6 to 16;
8. *Calls upon* the expansion of ITU and UNESCO's Application Program to include issuing periodical handbooks that highlight Member States best practices for implementing ICT use within national educational policies that include a focus on K-12 education (or equivalent structures), university education, and TVET;
9. *Suggests* expanding the implementation of the ITU Digital Skills Toolkit to developing countries via UNESCO National Commissions which will provide tools to promote the use of emerging technologies in education, highlight the need for financial aid within regions that are short of intelligent devices to improve education in remote areas, and use technology transfers and model legislation in order harness emerging technologies for the achievement of SDG 4;
10. *Encourages* the utilization of ICTs, especially in developing areas that have been severely affected by the pandemic, to create hotlines and open communication for those affected by gender-based violence that might affect access to education, in partnership with UNESCO's International Bureau of Education and the ITU-UNICEF Giga initiative and include resources for support infrastructure to help promote gender equalization, allow more children to attend schools, and harness emerging technologies for the achievement of SDG 4;
11. *Urges* Member States to prioritize the education of refugee and displaced children by:
 - a. Implementing the objectives of the *Global Compact on Refugees* of UNHCR, which is supported by UNESCO, to provide resettled children with language support through ICTs to ease curriculum transitions in refugee-hosting areas (RHA);
 - b. Expanding digital education initiatives to improve access to quality education for the internally displaced and the achievement of SDG 4;
12. *Encourages* North-South cooperation to fund ICTs and education initiatives that allow for the harnessing of emerging technologies to achieve SDG 4 by:
 - a. Understanding the need for appropriate funding for programs that prepare for a future embedded in OA, AI, and cellular connectivity;
 - b. Targeting interventions towards Member States with lower socio-economic status (SES) who lack sufficient resources for formal education and technology integrations, specifically targeting children in line with UNESCO's Operational Strategy on Youth;
 - c. Providing young scholars with resources that introduce them to economically and environmentally sustainable occupations, in line with UNESCO's objective 8 of Medium-Term Strategy;
13. *Strongly recommends* private-public partnerships to further expand the educational infrastructure of all income states to harness emerging technologies for the achievement of SDG 4;
14. *Suggests* the expansion of UNESCO's initiative in partnership with OPEC, OFID, and Panasonic "Company Solar Electrification of Rural Schools Programme" to other regions of the globe, specifically African and other developing Member States, to expand access to education by sustainably creating more infrastructure in the creation and electrification of schools by harnessing emerging technologies and ICTs for the achievement of SDG 4;
15. *Encourages* willing and able Member States to expand regional programs such as the "Accessible Europe Programme" that aim to advance 5G cellular technology and Cloud Computing, provide students and educators with sufficient connectivity for mobile learning, and deliver in-depth remote collaboration opportunities for broader access of students to top-rated teachers;
16. *Encourages* Member States to adopt or strengthen intellectual property rights legislation to further stimulate the growth of OER and increase accessibility to educational materials for all.



Code: UNESCO/2/1

Committee: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Topic: Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in Post-Conflict Areas

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,

Expressing its appreciation of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003 Convention) and its effect on raising awareness of the impact of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) on economic and social development and ensuring respect towards all communities,

Recalling the definition of ICH in the 2003 Convention which points to the ‘five C’s’: Credibility, Conservation, Capacity-building, Communication, and Communities to guide the safeguarding of ICH,

Noting the “List of ICH in Need of Urgent Safeguarding” under the 2003 Convention, which is updated as needed to log ICH that are susceptible to being lost due to war and conflict and are in need of protection,

Reaffirming guidance laid out in UNESCO’s Framework for Cultural Statistics (2009) that set standard definitions for concepts of culture and best practices for cataloging of cultural expression,

Remembering Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) target 11.4, which aims to “strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage”,

Recalling the 2019 decision of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, which outlined the need to fund pressing cultural conservation issues and mirrors the importance of achieving SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals),

Reaffirming the concepts outlined in the World Heritage Convention (1972) and the Kyoto Vision of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention (2012) its emphasis on strengthening relationships between people, environment, and cultural heritage to promote sustainable development,

Recalling Article 5(1) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979) that highlights the duty of Member States to ensure that all cultural practices and customs to not pose any harm or prejudice against women,

Recalling the UNESCO World Heritage Journeys platform, which promotes respectful sustainable tourism throughout the world, including in areas that are recently post-conflict societies or were once in conflict,

1. *Suggests the creation of an initiative that establishes a comprehensive tool for individual Member States that will provide legislation suggestions for ICH protection, improve transparency in ICH evaluation, strengthen preservation policies, and collect a variety of ICH educational materials;*
2. *Encourages post-conflict states, with the support of all Member States, to actively work to preserve the ICH within their borders to ensure that populations can lean on ICH during post-conflict reconstruction phases and utilize the UNESCO ICH Fund to employ national programmes with the help of UNESCO’s National Commissions;*
3. *Urges that post-conflict areas be given active, effective and impactful help in safeguarding their ICH by:*
 - a. *Assembling new grassroots-level efforts and teams led by local leaders;*
 - b. *Training pre-existing and new local groups to efficiently collect and teach ICH practices to younger generations;*
 - c. *Harnessing emerging technologies to further the spread of the teaching to the community as a whole regardless of different barriers such as language, distance, age and everything in between;*
4. *Calls upon Member States to adopt the conditions and expand efforts to complete the strategic objectives outlined in 2003 Convention and supported by the ‘five C’s’;*



5. *Recommends* Member States increase efforts to create and manage inventory, document, implement curricula including local customs, and otherwise note ICH for the preservation of delicate heritage as well as implement ICH risk assessment tools by utilizing educational sectors and programs to identify, assess, and revitalize cultures at risk;
6. *Encourages* Member States to expand public training centers, such as the UNESCO International Training Center for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia Pacific Region, in order to exchange knowledge and to raise awareness on how the digital and physical world can coexist during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to safeguard ICH;
7. *Recommends* expanding upon UNESCO's *Framework for Cultural Statistics* (2009) through potential collaborations between UNESCO and CEDAW to create a task force that would monitor Member State accountability in adhering to gender discriminatory principles in safeguarding ICH;
8. *Encourages* more cultural festivals in which local communities in post-conflict reconstruction phases can promote development programs to educate everyone about all cultures and heritage to further advance SDG 17 and contribute to inclusivity and diversity for all;
9. *Suggests* collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that aim to improve the living standards and self-esteem of relevant cultural practitioners, especially women practitioners through their social technology, including interpretation of the values attributed to their work and products by the wider public.