



unesco



## Side Event at the 79<sup>th</sup> Commission Session of UN ESCAP Climate change and the right to education

**17 May 2023 (15.30–17.00, GMT+7)**

Hybrid (Conference Room 3, Level 1, United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok / Zoom)

### About the side event

---

Past warnings from scientific communities have become reality: the effects of climate change are no longer isolated emergencies but have become the new global norm. At the [Transforming Education Summit \(TES\) of 2022](#), the UN Secretary-General confirmed that education must be transformed globally to respond to a multitude of climate and environmental crises.

In the context of the 79<sup>th</sup> ESCAP Commission Session, UNESCO and UNU-IAS are jointly organizing a side event on ‘Climate change and the right to education’ on 17 May (15.30–17.00, GMT+7) to discuss how the right to education, including access to and continuity of quality education and lifelong learning, are threatened by the effects of climate change; and on the critical role of education in addressing these phenomena, which continue to increase alarmingly in intensity and frequency every year.

An important new initiative that emerged from TES is the [Greening Education Partnership](#), an open and inclusive community of Member States, organizations, and institutions for promoting, implementing and enabling every learner to be climate ready. The Partnership aims to inspire strong, coordinated, and comprehensive action from countries to empower learners with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to tackle climate change, and to promote sustainable development. The Partnership is focusing on four action areas which countries are encouraged to commit to achieve, whether in part or in totality, by 2030: 1) Greening Schools; 2) Greening Learning; 3) Greening Capacity and Readiness; and 4) Greening Communities.

Contributing to this Partnership, [UNESCO initiative on the effects of climate change and displacement on the right to education](#) was launched in 2020. UNESCO’s initiative aims to investigate climate displacement patterns and climate-induced barriers to education, with the objective to provide operational policy guidance for policy-makers that are helping to ensure the right to education in national and regional education systems affected by climate change. The policy recommendations inform the four action areas of the Greening Education Partnership.

### Context and background

---

In 2021 alone, 23.7 million people were displaced in 137 countries and territories globally due to natural disasters, which the scientific community confirms are becoming more frequent and intense due to climate change. In practical terms this means that catastrophic effects of climate change are no longer isolated emergencies but have become a new global norm.

In that context, UNESCO launched its initiative on the effects of climate change and displacement on the right to education with the publication in 2020 of [a policy paper](#) outlining general recommendations. Proceeding from this first step, UNESCO conducted research in four sub-regions

(including in Asia-Pacific) from which common trends and emerging differences were identified. Policy recommendations at the regional level were made subsequent to this research. [Asia Pacific regional synthesis: climate change, displacement and the right to education](#) was based on country case studies drawn from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Tuvalu, and Viet Nam, and it was released to the public on Earth Day 2023.

To fully examine the impact of climate change and climate displacement on education, this report:

1. Examines the characteristics and profiles of climate-displaced persons in the region;
2. Identifies barriers and obstacles to education that exist for climate-displaced persons;
3. Analyzes existing national laws, policies, actions and measures for climate-displaced persons in the field of education; and
4. Recommends ways that countries can improve the preparedness and resilience of the national education system to protect the right to inclusive, quality education of climate-affected and climate-displaced persons.

Based on this report and on the findings and outcomes of this upcoming side event, UNESCO will release a global report in late 2023 featuring specific guidance for all relevant policy-makers and stakeholders.

## Rationale and objectives

---

The side event 'Climate Change and the Right to Education' will thus emphasize the importance of education in climate solutions. Speakers will discuss:

- 1) The current impact of climate change on human displacement;
- 2) Challenges and opportunities arising in countries in Asia and the Pacific in ensuring the continuity of education and lifelong learning of displaced persons; and
- 3) The critical importance of building the resilience of schools, learners, and societies.

Updated information on the Greening Education Partnership will be shared, and participants to the side event will be encouraged to join the Partnership. The event will also discuss policy implications on the four areas of action of the Greening Education Partnership.

Expected outcomes of the side event are the following:

- 1) Evidence-based policy recommendations shared with Member States on providing climate change displaced persons with equal access to quality education and lifelong learning; and
- 2) Member States' enhanced understanding and increased engagement in the Greening Education Partnership.

## Modalities and format

---

The event will be hybrid (via Zoom conferencing) and will be open to all participants of the Commission Session. Also invited are experts from the countries that participated in the report (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Tuvalu and Viet Nam) and key stakeholders of the Greening Education Partnership from the Asia-Pacific region.

## Provisional Agenda

17 May 2023

15:30 – 17:00 (GMT+7)

	Moderated by <b>Faryal Khan</b> , Programme Specialist, UNESCO Multisectoral Regional Office in Bangkok
15:30 - 15:35	<b>Opening Remarks:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Borhene Chakroun</b>, Director for Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems, UNESCO Headquarter [online]</li></ul>
15:35 - 15:40	<b>Overview of the session:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Faryal Khan</b>, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Multisectoral Regional Office in Bangkok</li></ul>
15:40 - 15:55	<b>The impact of climate change and displacement on the right to education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Rolla Moumné</b>, Right to Education Programme Specialist, UNESCO Headquarter [online]</li><li>• <b>Jonghwi Park</b>, Academic Programme Officer and Head of Innovation and Education, United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS)</li></ul>
15:55 - 16:15	<b>Trend development of impact of climate change on human displacement and right to education, challenges, and measures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Dr Chongrak Thinagul</b>, Director, Climate Change Cooperation Promotion Division, Department of Environmental Quality Promotion (DEQP), Thailand</li><li>• <b>Anindya Dutta</b>, Project Officer-Migration Environment and Climate Change, International Organization for Migration (IOM) Thailand</li></ul>
	Moderated by <b>Jonghwi Park</b> , Academic Programme Officer and Head of Innovation and Education, UNU-IAS
16:15 - 16:35	<b>Presentation of the Greening Education partnership (GEP) and its recent initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Rika Yorozu</b>, Head of Executive Office and Regional Programme Coordinator, UNESCO Multisectoral Regional Office in Bangkok</li><li>• <b>Deepali Gupta</b>, Advocacy and Partnership Specialist (Asia-Pacific), Global Partnership for Education</li></ul>
16:35 - 16:55	<b>Q/A session and open discussion with the audience</b> moderated by <b>Jonghwi Park</b> , Academic Programme Officer and Head of Innovation and Education, UNU-IAS
16:55 - 17:00	<b>Conclusions and way forward:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Libing Wang</b>, Director, a.i., UNESCO Multisectoral Regional Office in Bangkok</li></ul>