



## Background

Global research has demonstrated that children who speak ethnic minority languages at home yet study in majority languages at school exhibit lower levels of literacy and numeracy than their peers. More recently, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic these ethnolinguistic minority children have fallen even further behind, partly due to their inability to access distance learning materials in languages they understand. In addition, many of these children are representative of a 'digital divide' in their lacking electronic devices or internet access in their low socioeconomic or geographically remote communities.

The side event, 'Building Back Better: Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education for Ethnic Minority Children' will discuss how mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB MLE) can significantly help such learners. Our expert panel will address fundamental issues with guiding questions, such as:

- What is MTB MLE and how does it improve students' learning outcomes?
- How does MTB MLE help students learn other languages, including English?
- What digital learning tools are most helpful for children who don't speak the school language and have limited internet access?
- How does MTB MLE engage local communities and promote social harmony and inclusion?

- How would endorsing the UNESCO *Bangkok Statement on Language and Inclusion* help a country achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4)?

## Objectives

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- To raise awareness on MTB MLE as an enabler for learning recovery, transformative education and accelerating progress towards SDG 4
- To sensitize Member States on the *Bangkok Statement on Language and Inclusion*
- To discuss policies and practices that will help Member States support vulnerable and disadvantaged ethnolinguistic minority learners

## Target Audience

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The target audience for this side event consists of regional and national level education stakeholders, especially policy-makers and practitioners, to enhance their understanding of how multilingual education can play a role in the post-pandemic process of ‘building back better’ and achieving SDG 4 for all, especially ethnolinguistic minority children.

## Working Language

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English; no additional language accommodations provided.

## Date, Time and Format

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Sun, 5 June 2022  
12.45 – 13.45 (Bangkok time; GMT+7)  
Zoom Conferencing (Hybrid)

## Registration

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Registration is free but required in advance; upon registering, you will receive a unique join URL via email: <https://unesco-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUtceGgrzgtHNFKglDpoHF88tFDnBA7dMHi>

## For more information

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Asia-Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group Secretariat  
E-mail: [mlewg@unesco.org](mailto:mlewg@unesco.org)

## Agenda

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**Sunday, 5 June 2022, 12.45 – 13.45 (Bangkok time; GMT+7)**

**Moderator:**

- **Brandon Darr, Consultant, UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok)**

<b>12.45 – 12.50</b>	<b>Welcome and Introduction from the Asia-Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kyungah Kristy Bang, Programme Officer, UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok)</li></ul>
<b>12.50 – 13.25</b>	<b>Panelists</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ‘Language and the Learning Gap in Asia: Evidence from SEA-PLM’ – Ethel Agnes Pascua-Valenzuela, Director, SEAMEO Secretariat</li><li>• ‘MLE Transformation in the Philippines: a Policymaker’s Perspective’ – Dina Ocampo, Professor, University of the Philippines and former Undersecretary for Department of Education, Philippines</li><li>• ‘The Bangkok Statement on Language and Inclusion and SDG 4’ – Kirk Person, Senior Consultant in Literacy and Education, SIL International</li></ul>
<b>13.25 – 13.35</b>	<b>Global response</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maki Katsuno-Hayashikawa, Director, Division of Education 2030 Support and Coordination, UNESCO Headquarters</li></ul>
<b>13.35 – 13.45</b>	<b>Wrap Up/Closing comments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Erin Tanner, Education Specialist, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO)</li></ul>