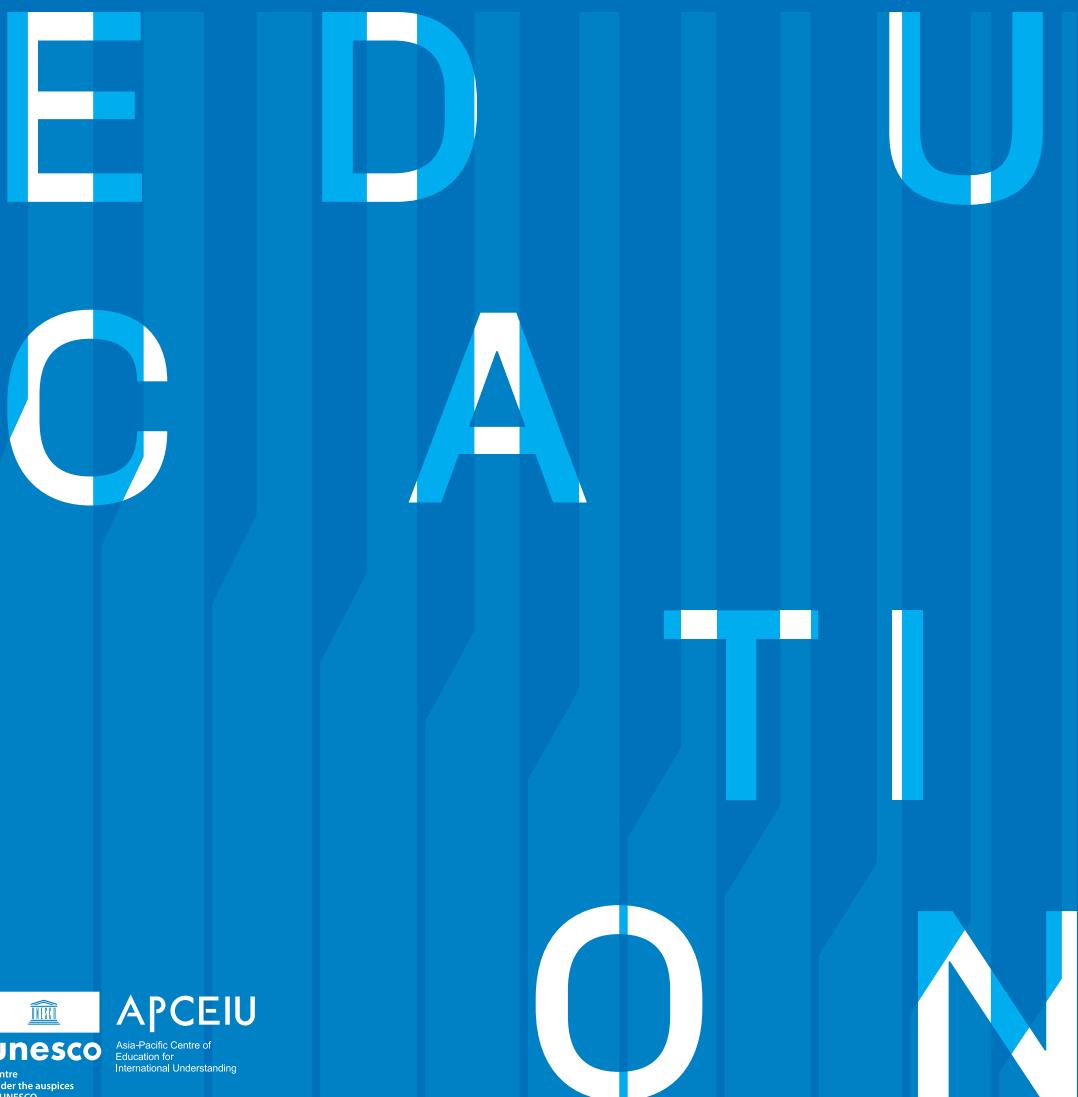


Envisioning the Future of Assessment in Transformative Education

A Synthesis Report of the Expert Meeting on Evaluation and Assessment for
Transformative Education: Towards and Beyond 2030



APCEIU

Asia-Pacific Centre
of Education for
International Understanding

Centre
Under the auspices
of UNESCO

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A Synthesis Report of the Expert Meeting on Evaluation and Assessment for Transformative Education:
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Published by

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The Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding under the auspices of UNESCO (APCEIU) is a UNESCO Category 2 Centre established in 2000 by the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Korea and UNESCO. APCEIU is mandated to promote Education for International Understanding (EIU) and Global Citizenship Education (GCED), as it seeks to build a culture of peace in collaboration with UNESCO Member States.

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Foreword

Assessment is an essential yet often overlooked dimension of transformative education. Given that transformative education aims not only to transmit knowledge but to foster critical awareness, values, and action for social change, assessment plays a particularly vital role. Within transformative education, including Global Citizenship Education (GCED), assessment should not merely measure learning outcomes but enable reflection, growth, and empowerment, nurturing learners' critical thinking, socio-emotional development, and sense of responsibility towards others and the planet. Yet, despite increasing attention to transformative education, ongoing discussions have tended to focus more on inputs such as curriculum and capacity building, leaving field of assessment less explored. At the same time, many educators and policymakers continue to grapple with fundamental questions: Can the outcomes of transformative education truly be assessed? If so, what should meaningful assessment look like in practice?

Recognising these gaps and questions, the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding under the auspices of UNESCO (APCEIU) convened the "Expert Meeting on Evaluation and Assessment for Transformative Education: Towards and Beyond 2030" in Seoul, Republic of Korea, on 2 and 3 July 2025. The Expert Meeting brought together experts, researchers, and policymakers from 12 countries around the globe to share perspectives, practices, and policy experiences on how assessment can better align with the purposes of transformative education. Participants reaffirmed that assessment needs to be embedded within teaching and learning rather than confined to end-point examinations, and that it should recognise diverse forms of learning, including socio-emotional and civic dimensions. The discussions also highlighted enduring challenges, particularly the inconsistency between policy and practice, as well as the need to strengthen assessment literacy at all levels of the education system. While much remains to be done, the Expert Meeting reaffirmed our shared belief that through continued collaboration and mutual learning, real progress can be achieved.

This publication captures the key insights and reflections that emerged from the Expert Meeting. Part I presents a synthesis of the discussions, further exploring conceptual and strategic directions for advancing assessment in transformative education. Part II provides a record of the Expert Meeting proceedings, including presentations and collaborative reflections among participants. Together, these two parts aim to inform ongoing international efforts to strengthen assessment practices in transformative education contexts.

Looking ahead to the post-2030 education agenda, this report invites the international community to envision assessment as a cornerstone of transformative education. APCEIU hopes that the analysis and directions offered here will inform continued cooperation in research, policy, and practice. We remain committed to fostering collaboration with partners, supporting capacity development, and advancing evidence-informed approaches, ensuring that assessment genuinely serves the purposes of transformative education.



Hyun Mook Lim

Director of APCEIU

Acknowledgements

This publication was made possible through the collective efforts of many individuals who contributed their time, expertise, and commitment to advancing dialogue on assessment for transformative education. The Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding under the auspices of UNESCO (APCEIU) extends its sincere appreciation to all who made the “Expert Meeting on Evaluation and Assessment for Transformative Education: Towards and Beyond 2030” a success and contributed to the preparation of this report.

The Expert Meeting and this publication were made possible through the dedicated efforts of Sunmi Ji and Yujin Jo, who led the planning, coordination, and overall management. APCEIU also acknowledges the invaluable support of Eunji Kim and Isabelle Cooksey in preparing the Expert Meeting, and of Yoon Young Lee and Jihyun Lee in supporting the session operations. Gratitude is also extended to Isabelle Cooksey and Youngjae Chang for assisting with the session documentation, and to Yoonji Chae for her support in the report preparation process.

APCEIU warmly thanks every participant from all 12 countries who brought diverse perspectives and experiences to the discussions: Aida Kuandykovna Abilyakimova, Anil Kanjee, Asman Osiche Amaunda, David Rutkowski, Esther Care, Genevieve Mensah, Giang Thi Huong Tran, Hyewon Chung, Kah Loong Chue, María José Ramírez, Maricris Bandiola Acido-Muega, Soojin Kim, Toshiko Kamei, and Zi Yan. Their insights and commitment enriched the dialogue and deepened the collective reflection on advancing assessment within transformative education.

APCEIU expresses its heartfelt gratitude to Esther Care for authoring Part I of this publication and for her insightful synthesis that captured the spirit of the discussions and extended their implications for future practice and research. APCEIU also appreciates the external reviewers—John Kabutha Mugo, Mauro Giacomazzi, and Kate Anderson—for their thoughtful feedback, and Richard Harris for his careful proofreading.

The collective efforts and shared dedication of all those people have made this publication a meaningful contribution to the global conversation on envisioning assessment in transformative education. APCEIU hopes that this collaborative work will continue to inspire dialogue, research, and partnership across communities committed to making education more inclusive, equitable, and transformative.

List of Acronyms

AI	Artificial Intelligence
APCEIU	Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding under the auspices of UNESCO
ATC21S	Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills
CCE	Citizenship and Character Education
EIU	Education for International Understanding
GCED	Global Citizenship Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IEA	International Association for the Evaluation of Education Achievement
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PLC	Professional Learning Communities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEL	Social and Emotional Learning
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Background of the Report

Education must evolve to address today's complex challenges by fostering not only knowledge but also values, attitudes, and behaviours essential for creating just, inclusive, and sustainable societies. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report "Reimagining Our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education" calls for a new social contract for education that is transformative, rebuilding relationships among people, the planet, and technology (UNESCO, 2021). The "Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development" (hereinafter "UNESCO 2023 Recommendation"; UNESCO, 2024a) reinforces this by emphasising learning that nurtures critical thinking, empathy, cooperation, and action-oriented engagement. Global Citizenship Education (GCED) exemplifies these principles by promoting participatory, values-based, and action-oriented approaches within curricula and pedagogy. However, its focus on holistic competencies, such as critical reflection and responsible action, raises significant questions about how to effectively assess such outcomes across diverse educational contexts.

To align with this vision, assessment itself needs some reflection, not only in terms of what is measured, but how and why. Traditional approaches that rely on summative testing and standardised evaluations remain important for certifying achievement and accountability; however, they are insufficient for capturing ongoing development in critical thinking, socio-emotional growth, and civic engagement. Recent trends emphasise formative assessment integrated into learning processes, allowing learners to reflect, adapt, and take ownership of their progress. This shift views assessment not as a final checkpoint but as a tool for guiding and deepening transformative learning throughout the educational journey. However, the natures of learning goals themselves pose challenges to assessment. Developing inclusive and locally adaptable assessment strategies demands a rethinking of the purposes, methods, and use of assessment. To address these issues, the "Expert Meeting on Evaluation and Assessment for Transformative Education: Towards and Beyond 2030" (hereinafter "Expert Meeting")¹⁾ brought together global experts in education to share ideas, examine challenges, and propose strategic directions for assessment in transformative education.

Building upon the rich discussions of the Expert Meeting, this report seeks to capture and extend its key insights as part of the broader global discourse on rethinking assessment in support of transformative education. It aims not only to document the Expert Meeting's proceedings, but also to provide forward-looking reflections that can inform future dialogue, policy, and practice.

The report is structured in two parts: Part I synthesises the discussions held and presents analytical reflections and strategic directions, while Part II provides a descriptive summary of the Expert Meeting, including details of presentations and discussions.

¹⁾ For more information on the Expert Meeting programme and participants' information, please refer to the Annexes.

PART I.

Rethinking Assessment for Transformative Education: Synthesis and Strategic Directions



PART I. Rethinking Assessment for Transformative Education: Synthesis and Strategic Directions¹⁾

This part synthesises inputs to and perspectives emerging from the “Expert Meeting on Evaluation and Assessment for Transformative Education: Towards and Beyond 2030” (hereinafter “Expert Meeting”) organised by the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding under the auspices of UNESCO (APCEIU) on 2-3 July 2025 in Seoul, Republic of Korea. Informing this document are: a) the concept note for the Expert Meeting; b) responses from the expert participants to two surveys circulated by APCEIU before and after the Expert Meeting; c) responses to activities and exercises during the Expert Meeting; d) presentations and discussions of contributions by participants; and e) UNESCO documentation on transformative education. These inputs are drawn upon to frame a synthesis of perspectives and a set of strategic directions to consider in support of transformative education through assessment.

1. Executive Summary for Part I

The global discourse on transformative education emphasises preparing learners not just with foundational skills but with the competencies, values, and agency required to navigate complex personal and societal challenges. Grounded in earlier frameworks which have reinforced the responsibilities that education bears both for society and the individual (Delors et al., 1996; Rychen & Salganik, 2001), the movement has been reinforced by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 Quality Education, which highlight the need for education systems to equip learners for global citizenship, sustainability, and lifelong adaptability.

Central to transformative education is a ‘new social contract’ (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2021, 2022) that shifts learners from passive recipients of knowledge to active, empowered agents of change. This vision demands alignment of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment, ensuring that assessment evolves from a narrow measure of memorisation into a process that nurtures and reports on dynamic competencies.

Assessment is increasingly recognised as multifunctional: supporting learning, signalling achievement, and monitoring systems. Global trends show growing emphasis on formative assessment, the use of technology, and reporting approaches that extend beyond scores. Yet challenges persist due to:

- limited assessment literacy among teachers and policymakers;
- over-reliance on summative assessment due to entrenched traditions and pressure from higher education;
- constraints of resourcing, teacher workload, and technical expertise;
- outdated perspectives and understanding within the assessment community; and
- cultural resistance to learner agency and competency-based models.

¹⁾ Part I has been prepared by Esther Care with assistance from APCEIU.

UNESCO's "Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development" (hereinafter "UNESCO 2023 Recommendation") highlights essential competencies such as analytical thinking, resilience, agency, respect for diversity, and peaceful conflict resolution, requiring a systemic rethinking of teaching, resources, and assessment (UNESCO, 2024a). Transformative education requires nurturing learners' ability to think critically, collaborate, adapt, and act creatively in real-world contexts. Traditional content-focused assessment cannot capture these competencies. Accordingly, assessment must also:

- reflect processes of learning and meaning making, not just outcomes;
- use formative approaches to guide teaching and support learner development; and
- be contextualised and inclusive, recognising diversity in learner needs and pathways.

Discussions at the Expert Meeting highlighted six recurring themes: assessment literacy, formative assessment, system coherence, educational philosophies, learner agency, and resources. While assessment literacy and formative assessment were dominant, it was acknowledged that their progress is hindered by teacher workload, policy-practice gaps, and inadequate tools. Systemic coherence and leadership commitment emerged as critical enablers. Persistent tensions include balancing summative pressures with formative needs, cultural norms around teacher-learner roles, and resourcing constraints in under-equipped contexts.

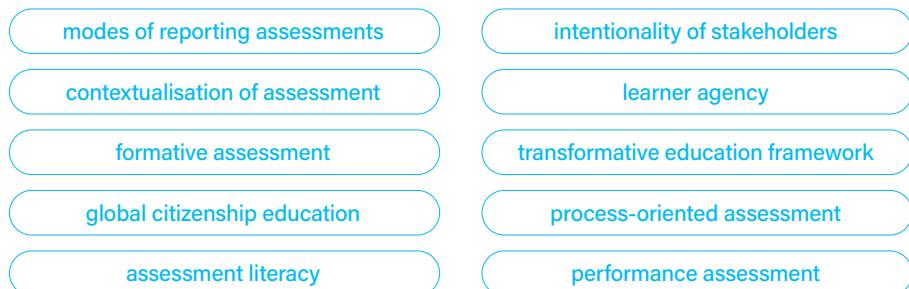
Participants drew on UNESCO 2023 Recommendation (UNESCO, 2024a) and "Road Map to Implement UNESCO's 'Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development' in Asia-Pacific" (UNESCO, 2024c) to identify the top priorities for advancing assessment in transformative education as follows:

- establishing systems that promote holistic learner development and well-being;
- developing frameworks to assess cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioural competencies; and
- prioritising formative assessment and supporting teachers with resources and professional development.

Recommendations emanating from discussions are:

- ensure cross-sector collaboration—policy, pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment must be synchronised;
- develop a coherent transformative education framework to guide curriculum, assessment, and learning; and
- build system-wide assessment literacy, particularly focusing on formative strategies for teachers.

KEY PHRASES



2. Introduction: The Transformative Education Context

This section outlines how transformative education is designed to equip learners with the skills, values, and agency needed for 21st-century citizenship, while acknowledging that many learners will remain untouched if practice does not catch up with policy. The roots of transformative education trace from Delors et al. (1996)'s vision of 'to know, to do, to be, to live together' through frameworks on competencies, deeper learning, and global citizenship. The SDGs, especially SDG 4 Quality Education, reinforce this agenda by emphasising broad skills, accountability, and measurable targets. At its core, transformative education seeks to empower learners as knowledge builders, fostering agency and collective responsibility for a sustainable future.

Amid the aspirations being voiced worldwide about an education that will be transformative for every individual and their societies, there are many children for whom education is not changing. For which cohort or generation of learners will education be transformative? Policies, which function as statements of intent, must be translated into practice now.

The work of Delors et al. (1996) was followed by taking the 21st-century context more explicitly into account through identification of key competencies (Rychen & Salganik, 2001, 2003), such as the use of tools for interacting effectively, engaging with others, taking responsibility for managing self within the broader social context, and then on 'deeper learning' (Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012). The European Commission (Gordon et al., 2009) comprehended both the high-level concepts as well as specific competencies, and the Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills (ATC21S) framework (Binkley et al., 2012) followed this model but with explicit acknowledgement of competencies beyond skills, identifying knowledge, and the cluster set of attitudes, values and ethics. These latter competencies appear again in more recent conceptualisations of global competence (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2018) and global citizenship (UNESCO, 2014).

The agreement by UN Member States on the SDGs in 2015 established a solid platform for consideration of a broader curricular approach through SDG 4 Quality Education, making explicit not only the valuing of literacy and numeracy but also the need to equip citizens with technical and vocational skills, social and cognitive competencies, and the characteristics associated with global citizenship²⁾. SDG 4 signalled an emphasis on the breadth of skills necessary to prepare children, youth, and adults comprehensively for 21st-century citizenship and life. Within the education community, the formulation of measurable goals and targets has much to do with the prominence and visibility of SDG 4; educational assessment can be a useful accountability mechanism and provides something tangible with which jurisdictions can engage.

²⁾ SDG Target 4.7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development (United Nations [UN], 2015)

The development of frameworks to describe the growing breadth of skills considered important for learners proliferated in the second decade of the 21st-century, with initiatives such as the Learning Metrics Task Force³⁾ (drawing on nations across Asia, Latin America, Africa, and elsewhere) and the Network on Education Quality Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific (drawing predominantly on jurisdictions across Asia). These initiatives were also accompanied by a focus on measurement and assessment (UNESCO & The Brookings Institution, 2013; UNESCO, 2016), spawning interest in how to measure these competencies that were widely considered 'difficult to measure' and considered by some to be much more demanding to teach and learn than rote memorisation-based skills (Saavedra & Opfer, 2012). At the same time, the global testing consortia of OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)'s curricular-based large-scale assessment took an interest in transversal or generic skills. From PISA's problem solving in 2003 through to creative thinking in 2023, and from IEA's Civic Education Studies in the late 1990s to computer and information literacy studies throughout the first two decades of this century, the attention of educators has been drawn to competencies beyond the subject-based curriculum. Intrinsic to these initiatives and the large-scale assessments has been the formulation of frameworks. Without this guidance, there would be no parameters for assessment, no blueprints, and nothing to report against.

The core message in transformative education is the empowerment of learners to address personal and global challenges. The goal is to prepare individuals to navigate uncertainty along the path to a peaceful and sustainable world. This requires an education system in which learners are treated as active knowledge builders rather than passive recipients of information. Transformative education is seen as a 'new social contract' (UNESCO, 2022) which will reshape current systems and living traditions into a sustainable future. This is a very different ambition for education, making explicit the need to focus on the common good through learner agency rather than passive cooperation.

3) The Learning Metrics Task Force was coordinated by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the Brookings Institution to investigate how learning progress can be tracked at a global level through strengthening assessment systems and use of assessment data. A significant output of the consultation was the Global Framework of Learning Domains, which described seven domains of learning that should be available to all children: physical well-being, social and emotional, culture and the arts, literacy and communication, learning approaches and cognition, numeracy and mathematics, and science and technology. The focus on competencies across the domains of learning took a curricular approach to 21st-century skills.

3. Current Trends and Needs in Assessment

This section outlines the multiple purposes that assessment fulfils—supporting learning, certifying achievement, and monitoring systems, noting that its role in guiding learning is increasingly emphasised. For transformative education, assessment must move beyond reductionist testing to embrace process-oriented, formative, and competency-based approaches that value diverse learner pathways. Key challenges include limited resources, low assessment literacy, reliance on traditional summative assessment, and tensions between standardisation and recognition of diverse capabilities.

Assessment in education has several purposes, which can be summarised across the need to support learning, to provide statements of achievement, and to monitor system performance. The focus on assessment's role to support learning has emerged most strongly consequent on the exposition of formative assessment by Black and Wiliam (1998, 2009). Although what might be termed 'reductionist' testing of learners' accumulation of knowledge remains the main form of educational assessment globally, its role to support learning continues to gain ground. The focus on estimating and evaluating progress and process is quite distinct from the function of assessment as a statement of end points. It also signals the need for assessment literacy beyond assessment experts or psychometricians, to teachers and educators more broadly.

Major trends in assessment include this endorsement of the different functions of assessment, the use of technologies, and the varied approaches to reporting of assessments. Experiences shared at the Expert Meeting reflected these trends. In addition, tensions that are context-specific, and issues that are shared across jurisdictions, revealed the complexity of managing the multiple functions of assessment. Lack of resourcing and lack of technical expertise was shown to be exacerbated by traditional and community views of education and assessment.

Re-thinking of assessment for transformative education requires commitment to the notion that assessment is a shared enterprise, as distinct from perception of it as a technical area that is the sole province of assessment experts and psychometricians. Expanding the visibility of assessment as a learning support role is a major challenge to the view that its primary function is as a judgement system.

Examples presented by the participants in the Expert Meeting highlighted elements such as:

- the importance of student agency;
- the multi-functionality of assessment;
- the breadth and complexity of competencies that are the targets of teaching and learning;
- the use of learning progressions to link assessment with pedagogy;
- constructive teaching to the test;
- a shift towards process-oriented assessment and feedback; and
- an increase in capacity building through teacher mentoring.

Difficulties described by representatives included:

- ethical and adaptive use of technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI);
- lack of assessment literacy across all levels of a system;
- limited consideration of reporting systems that prioritise meaningful feedback rather than scores;
- lack of use of large-scale assessment for actionable recommendations to teachers; and
- balancing concerns about standardisation with the valuing of differences.

Representatives also described issues that are particularly vexatious and stand in the way of progress, such as:

- limited understandings of the nature and implications of competency-based education;
- confusion about the meaning and use of formative assessment; and
- resistance to changing indicators of success, such as examinations that focus on learners' ability to recall knowledge, as distinct from focus on understanding and application of that knowledge.

Beyond these examples, difficulties and issues that have particular relevance for transformative education are the ubiquitous constraints of resourcing and teacher workloads.

4. Aligning Learning Goals and Assessment

This section highlights the need to align assessment, pedagogy, and curriculum with the goals of transformative education. Unlike traditional models focused on memorisation, transformative education emphasises critical thinking, agency, collaboration, and cross-disciplinary learning to address complex global challenges. This shift requires teachers to move from content transmission to understanding and application of content, supported by formative assessment strategies. UNESCO 2023 Recommendation reinforces the call for education systems to nurture a broad set of competencies—cognitive, social, emotional, behavioural, and ethical—requiring fundamental changes in teaching, resources, and assessment practices.

The goals of learning typically identify how that learning will be assessed. In the current case, it is essential to understand the nature of transformative education in order to decide whether assessment is required and its purpose, the exact target learning areas to assess, and how to go about it.

The notion of transformative education is relatively recent in common parlance, although use of the term 'transformative learning' dates back to the 1970s (Mezirow, 1994) within the context of adult learning. This highlighted learning as a process in which the individual reviews interpretations of experiences and makes new meanings, hence stimulating the questioning of what has been taken for granted. Associated with this view was the perception of the teacher as a facilitator rather than an instructor. Both of these elements are true of today's understanding of transformative education. The concept now, however, is characterised less by focus on the individual's process of development, and more by the capacity of the individual to engage constructively with the world to address 'wicked problems' (Dörner & Funke, 2017). To nurture such capacities in learners is significantly different from transmitting to them facts, figures, and interpretations of these. Accordingly, the methods of education need to adapt, consistent with the anticipated changed outcomes.

The perspective that teaching methods and assessment strategies should be aligned with the nature of learning goals is not new. However, it is an increasingly pivotal issue as education changes more radically in terms of its goals, its methods, and its expected outcomes. To date, most of the information that we collect from learners and from which we infer their learning and abilities is derived from written output. As transformative education shifts the scope from interest in learners' ability to memorise and reproduce content towards re-imagining and action, so the methods of guiding learners and capturing their competencies also shift. We need to see convergence between how something is nurtured, how it is manipulated and re-construed, and how it is produced. To achieve this, assessment must change. Acknowledgement of this inter-dependence between curriculum, assessment, and pedagogy is now well-established (Wyse et al., 2016), but policy and practice that reflects this acknowledgement lags behind.

In the current case there are two phenomena that require acknowledgement and subsequent practice shifts. The first is the increasing focus on competency-based education, and the second is its partner, transformative education. Introduction of new curricula with new stated learning outcomes will achieve nothing without congruent changes in pedagogical methods and assessment strategies (Care et al., 2018). The increasing focus on formative assessment as a teaching strategy strengthens both the notional and practical alignment between teaching and assessment. As education systems begin to value learners' critical thinking and knowledge-building competencies that are founded in their curricular studies, those systems face challenges to produce teachers who can nurture more dynamic learning outcomes, and to promote assessment methods that can capture these outcomes. Teachers who are educated themselves in traditional subject-based systems, and are trained in those same systems, need support to change practice and to understand that those changes will not threaten them. The shift requires diminution of the importance of memorisation and prioritisation of dynamic learning and thinking processes. How to capture these in order to identify zones of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) for further teaching is the assessment literacy that is needed.

UNESCO 2023 Recommendation makes explicit shift from knowledge accumulation through separate disciplines, to a transformative education identity that looks to cross-disciplinary teaching and learning in order to enable development of *knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and behaviours* such as:

- *analytical and critical thinking*
- *anticipatory skills*
- *respect for diversity*
- *self-awareness*
- *sense of connectedness and belonging*
- *empowerment, agency and resilience*
- *decision-making skills*
- *collaborative skills*
- *adaptive and creative skills*
- *citizenship skills*
- *peaceful conflict resolution and transformation skills*
- *media and information literacy, communication and digital skills*

(UNESCO, 2024a, pp. 6–7)

This emphasis on changed learning outcomes requires consequent alignment in teaching, in resourcing, and in assessment (Care, 2023). Global Citizenship Education (GCED), as an emerging priority for many countries, provides an illustration of the implications of the principles described. GCED is construed across three domains of learning, and paralleled by key learning outcomes, key learner attributes, and study topics. The *cognitive domain* essentially refers to the knowledge area, while the *socio-emotional* and *behavioural domains* are concerned with skills, competencies, and action. Assessment of key learning outcomes across the three domains spans the full gamut of the capacity of data capture. Education assessment can capture content knowledge through learners' memorisation of facts and identification of correct versus incorrect responses. Simple application of skills, such as seen in early arithmetic competencies, can be assessed in the same way. Assessment of generic or transferable skills confronts the challenge of attribution of behaviours to any given targeted construct, since human functioning is a complex compound of multiple functions. Notwithstanding, there is no doubt that generic skills, such as problem solving or critical thinking, can be captured (e.g., Csapó & Funke, 2017).

Beyond research studies, there are several large-scale assessment programmes carried out by the OECD and IEA that have captured aspects of problem solving, creative thinking, information literacy, and global citizenship. Similarly, there are national education systems which have assessed aspects of generic skills performance of their students. Typically, such studies have not been able to capture real-life applications of skills, simply because standardisation of stimuli and context would not be possible. Thus, when it comes to assessment of the behavioural dimension—the third domain of GCED—there are insurmountable obstacles to assessment at large scale of 'global citizenship behaviours' within the formal education context. In a sense, this reflects the very nature of GCED itself. GCED is designed to nurture individuals' capacity to respond to constantly changing situations in the real world. This is not something that educational assessment can or reasonably should be expected to accommodate. It is possible to assess some of the precursors or contributors to this behaviour domain, but assessment of behaviour itself is a matter that falls outside of the school gates.

GCED, due to its multi-dimensional conceptualisation, provides a useful case against which to test not only the capacity of our current technical expertise in assessment, but also our motivation in so doing. GCED is a concept that explicitly emphasises the transfer of learning and development into action in mainstream life and work. As a transformative education strategy, it provides us with an opportunity to reflect on what we wish to assess and for what purpose.

5. Summary of Themes

This section highlights the themes emerging from the Expert Meeting. The participants engaged in exercises designed to draw out individual and common themes. These are summarised as Exercise A and Exercise B.

Reflecting the perspective that assessment does not stand alone, and is not segregated by technical expertise from other contributing elements of the education system, the Expert Meeting drew its participants from a variety of technical backgrounds, jurisdictions, and areas of professional practice⁴⁾. The commonality of interests was the centrality of the learner rather than any one focus on measurement, pedagogy, curriculum, resourcing or policy. This centre-piece is what grounds the variety of technical contributions and contributors to an education system.

Exercise A

The participants engaged in an exercise focused on four questions, applying them to their individual jurisdictions and fields of practice.

- What are the key practices in education systems that support assessment for transformative education?
- What are the recurring success factors or solutions that are evident?
- What are the factors that enable or constrain implementation of assessment practices?
- What are the strategies or issues that could be explored in furthering adaptation of assessment to transformative education?

Resulting discussion and analysis highlighted strong coherence in identification of themes across all four questions. The themes were: assessment literacy, formative assessment, educational orientation, system coherence, learner agency, and resources. Note that all of these themes emerged as relevant in both their presence and absence.

Assessment literacy and formative assessment practice are the two dominant themes. Here, assessment literacy refers to individuals' understanding of and knowledge about the theory and practice of assessment, and is seen as pivotal for teachers and as instrumental for educators at all levels of an education system. One specific aspect of assessment literacy is the understanding of the pedagogical strategy of formative assessment, how it can be used, and what differentiates it from summative assessment. Confusion surrounding the definition and use of the strategy was highlighted as problematic.

The primacy of assessment literacy and formative assessment themes was underpinned by the stated need for system coherence with the philosophy of education that has prompted the democratisation of assessment. The notion of transformative education and its underpinning by competency-based education provides the framework which prompts the need for more dynamic approaches to assessment in the classroom. Key elements in system coherence that were identified include need for capacity building across all levels, illustrated by appreciation of university-level research designed to initiate and experiment with building of assessment literacy and the development of assessment tools and technologies. Associated with system coherence was determination of the need to develop agency at all levels, from policy to the classroom teacher and the learner. The intentionality and political will for change by system leaders was identified as a key enabler for system change. The final theme concerned assessment resources that would support the transformative education classroom, and use of technologies both for development and implementation of assessments.

4) For more details on the participating experts, see Annex 2.

Discussion across these questions and themes made some issues clear:

- While there are general calls for improvement of teacher assessment literacy and use of formative assessment, these are countered by concerns about teacher workload.
- While theory and policy point to formative assessment, this is countered by widespread use of summative assessment due to system monitoring needs, community familiarity with the traditional approach, and top-down pressure from the higher education sector to determine access.
- While there are calls for teachers to be supported by school leadership in the use of teaching and assessment strategies aligned with transformative and competency-based education, and trained through programmes to become increasingly agentic, these moves are countered by a lack of understanding of the jargon used in the field, and inadequate assessment literacy among education policymakers and leaders.
- While transformative education calls for the valuing of a diverse set of competencies which will equip learners to address issues in their lives and communities constructively, these competencies are less visible in current curricula and there are few pedagogical or assessment resources to support teachers. Technical expertise in development of such resources is sparse.

Key tensions and lack of progress in shifting definitively toward transformative education can be attributed to:

- A lack of understanding of many of the terms introduced into the theory and practice of education and assessment. The use of the terminology in policy documents often does not translate into classroom practice. Examples include 'formative assessment,' 'student-centred teaching,' 'foundational skills,' 'whole-school approach,' and 'transformative education' itself.
- A lack of resolution in how schools in under-resourced jurisdictions (characterised by lack of physical infrastructure and resources, large class sizes, and under-equipped teachers) can implement notions of 'differentiated instruction' or 'formative assessment' in order to recognise and address individual differences in learning.
- Cultural norms, which have traditionally regulated the roles and relationships of teachers and learners, militate against ceding control of the learning process from the teacher to learner, hence diminishing opportunities for learner agency.

Exercise B

Participants engaged in a review exercise of UNESCO's previously developed Agreed Actions (UNESCO, 2024c). The "Regional Policy Dialogue and Launch of the Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development in Asia-Pacific" in June 2024 was reported on through agreed sets of priorities and actions as a Road Map (UNESCO, 2024c) to guide education at the country level and throughout the Asia-Pacific region. The Road Map was structured across eight areas, among which included: curriculum and pedagogy, assessment and evaluation, learning and teaching materials and resources, learning environments, and development of teachers and education personnel. Additional areas were: laws, policies, and strategies; governance, accountability, and partnerships; and regional collaboration. That all these arms of education systems were identified as salient is testament to the far-reaching implications of transformative education.

Within the Action Area of assessment and evaluation, three priorities were set:

- prioritising unbiased, constructive assessment, evaluation and evidence-based methods that strengthen collaboration, mutual understanding, holistic development and well-being;
- developing differentiated, context-specific approaches to assessment and evaluation which is adaptive to all learners; and
- ensuring reliable, credible, transparent and trustworthy performance assessment which covers cognitive, social and emotional, behavioural and psycho-motor competencies, as well as systemic and interdisciplinary knowledge (UNESCO, 2024c, pp. 8–9).

Associated with these priorities was a list of UNESCO's Agreed Actions (UNESCO, 2024c). The Expert Meeting considered this list in the light of concerns specific to each jurisdiction that was presented at the Meeting. Review of the Agreed Actions therefore provided a check on their relevance, while also providing an opportunity for participants to review their jurisdictional concerns against a wider canvas. The Expert Meeting ranked the Agreed Actions according to the participants' perceptions of importance.

1. Establish assessment and evaluation systems that prioritise the holistic development and well-being of students
2. Develop assessment frameworks that encompass cognitive, social and emotional, behavioural, and psycho-motor competencies in line with the curricula
3. Prioritise the use of formative assessments that provide ongoing performance feedback and support for teaching and learning
4. Allocate resources and support to schools and educators to develop and implement context-specific assessment strategies
5. Support teachers' capacity to contextualise assessments
6. Develop differentiated assessment strategies that cater to the diverse needs and abilities of all learners, ensuring inclusiveness and gender responsiveness
7. Upskill teachers for assessing competencies in digital technologies and social and emotional learning in transformative curricula
8. Include summative assessment for the purpose of progressing learners to the next level and as evaluation of the system
9. Implement classroom and school-based assessments that focus on gender equality, and which include learning on comprehensive sexuality education, violence prevention, and social inclusiveness
10. Create a balanced portfolio of assessments, including projects, presentations, practical tasks, and written exams to evaluate various competencies

The two highest priorities reflect the substance of transformative education and, in particular, its focus on holistic development of the individual. Its specification of areas of functioning beyond cognitive reflects the emerging acknowledgement that these lie within the province of educational systems, and hence the accountability of these systems to resource their nurturing and evaluation.

The following three priorities reflect recognition of the role of the teacher and their need to be supported through professional development and resourcing. The prioritisation of formative assessment speaks to the perception of this particular pedagogical strategy as requiring technical expertise in assessment. Associated with the recognition of need for teacher assessment expertise is the implication that the resourcing and tools for this are lacking. The statements that assessment frameworks need to be developed, and that context-specific assessment strategies require development support, are testament to the inadequacy of teacher training that is responsive to global shifts in education. Although varying by locality, the majority of pre-service teacher training courses include a unit on educational assessment, which typically includes principles of assessment (validity and reliability), the functions of assessment (formative, summative, and diagnostic), and some design of assessments. The majority of such units are concerned with traditional content about standardisation, tests, and examinations. Very little training at this level reflects the use of assessment as a learning strategy in and of itself, although there is a growing emphasis on formative assessment. The inclusion of assessment literacy in teacher standards in some jurisdictions is indicative of the increasing focus on this key aspect of the teacher's role.

6. Key Insights and Strategic Directions

This section provides key insights from the Expert Meeting, followed by the identification of key questions as we look to the future.

Key insights associated with the functionality of assessment in transformative education are:

- **Learner agency:** the shift from passive to active role is a core component of transformative education. This can be modelled in the classroom both pedagogically and in assessment. In the same way that variants of the flipped classroom strategy showcase how learners can direct their own learning by allowing them the freedom to identify what they need to know, so self- and peer-assessment can enable learners to identify where consolidation is needed as well as their next steps in learning. The development of competencies that lead to strengthening agency is an essential component of transformative education.
- **Assessment literacy:** knowing how to evaluate learning, how to gather information, and how to interpret that information in order to decide on next steps in the learning process is strongly related to agency, both for teacher and student. Assessment literacy requires understanding of daily classroom measurement as well as understanding of school or national level assessments. If the latter are well aligned with learning goals and classroom practice, the process becomes demystified and functional. For teachers to function in accordance with this literacy requires informed support from school leaders and departmental officers.
- **The dynamic nature of transformative education:** learning is a process of constant change. This process is marked by continual assessment of current status in the context of origin and destination, with that destination unknown. This dynamic focus requires an assessment approach that reflects it, not a process that is static and absolute. The technical rigour of educational assessment has historically been based on absolutes or statics in terms of what is being measured, and variability in terms of how individuals function on those statics. Where we assume a state of dynamism as well as individual variance, assessment shifts into a new world.

Drawing from these insights and the perspectives shared at the Expert Meeting, three strategic directions for action are recommended. Each is complemented by a brief rationale.

Direction 1

Develop a transformative education framework in order to identify and describe the contributing competencies to emergence of the agentic learner or global citizen.

Direction 2

In acknowledgement that 'assessment never stands alone,' ensure that all stakeholders across policy, pedagogy, and curriculum, understand their roles in assessment.

Direction 3

Build assessment literacy across the system, with a strong focus on the functionality of formative assessment and the forms it can take.

Direction 1

Develop a transformative education framework in order to identify and describe the contributing competencies to emergence of the agentic learner or global citizen.

The scientific methods that underlie development of assessment tools, and the frameworks that guide curriculum development, are essential for the establishment of the character and meaning of transformative education. In the absence of such a framework, the tendency of jurisdictions may be to target lowest hanging fruit or aspects of transformative education that are culturally more appealing and less challenging, rather than take into consideration the need for coherence.

Direction 2

In acknowledgement that 'assessment never stands alone,' ensure that assessment is treated as an intrinsic part of the planning process, and the teaching and learning process, rather than as an afterthought.

The historic structure of education systems that separate the functions of policy, curriculum development and management, teacher training and pedagogical methods, assessment, and monitoring and evaluation, has been established within a relatively stable education ethos and character over past decades. That stability has meant that functions have been able to remain reasonably synchronised, and may have obscured the need to remain in a constant state of adaptation to each other. As the education ethos shifts, the need for each functional area to adapt to each other becomes critical (Nieveen & Plomp, 2018). The blurring of assessment and pedagogy in the form of formative assessment is testament to this reality, and points to the imperative that technical expertise be shared more deliberately across the functional areas with education systems. Government ministries of education should recognise the technical contributions that assessment can make to planning, as well as to teaching and learning, as distinct from a sole accountability function.

Direction 3

Build assessment literacy across the system.

Educational assessment fulfils several functions. At a broad level, these include:

- an indicator of proficiency of an individual in a given competence or knowledge area;
- an indicator of system functioning; and
- a facilitator of teaching and learning.

In order to drive these functions, technical knowledge is required. According to the particular function, there are specialisations in technical knowledge. Each function draws on common elements, but each also draws on elements that are specialised to function. The degree of 'assessment literacy' required for educators with different responsibilities needs to be recognised within ministries of education. Currently assessment expertise is assumed of the units or departments responsible for examinations or assessment, and some degree of assessment literacy is expected of teachers. This latter 'degree' has expanded considerably since the introduction and acknowledgement of formative assessment, but remains to be improved considerably in order to support new paradigms of teaching and learning.

Final Remarks

These strategic direction recommendations will be subject to further consultation across the stakeholder community and with jurisdictions that are impacted by very different conditions and concerns. Issues that vary in nature across the technical, educational, cultural, and political will influence how and to what degree the directions will be seen as functional, practicable, and likely to provide support for learners' successful experiences within transformative education contexts.

The directions provide optimism about the future, given their outcomes-based nature. Principles of course lead change, but it is practical and practicable steps that provide a clear pathway for us. The practicality will also guide reflection and confrontation of some of the big issues that confront not only assessment, but education more generally. These include the need to consider how the downward pressure of competition for places in further education and society can be managed in the face of a transformative education agenda in basic education. It also provides us with the opportunity to revisit how technical advances in assessment that will be associated with the wider learning goals of transformative education can enable the valuing of heterogeneity in learner achievements and perspectives, while maintaining and elevating standards in education.

Assessment means many things to many people. Its role as a facilitator of learning has paled in comparison with its evaluation, certification, and monitoring roles. Transformative education provides us with a changing education context which can enable assessment to take its rightful place as a pedagogical strategy, as an indicator of learning pathways, and as a set of learning experiences.

PART II.

Session Summaries



PART II. Session Summaries

1 Opening Session



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The “Expert Meeting on Evaluation and Assessment for Transformative Education: Towards and Beyond 2030” (hereinafter “Expert Meeting”) was opened with welcoming remarks from the Director of the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding under the auspices of UNESCO (APCEIU), Hyun Mook Lim. In his remarks, Director Lim gave background on the APCEIU, focusing on its promotion of Education for International Understanding (EIU) and Global Citizenship Education (GCED) through policy recommendation, curriculum development, capacity building, networking, and information sharing. Director Lim highlighted evaluation and assessment as a key missing aspect of the conversation regarding transformative education. He then stressed how important the Expert Meeting is, and all the knowledge each expert is bringing to the conversation.

Sunmi Ji, Head of the Office of Research and Development at APCEIU, further emphasised the importance of the Expert Meeting by identifying the current challenges of our time, including climate change, rising inequality, and social fragmentation, all of which requires transformative education. Transformative education seeks reimagined curriculum and pedagogy along with integrated assessment and evaluation. The Expert Meeting was intended to serve as a catalyst for the continued development of assessment and evaluation through networking, innovative practices, and strategic directions, leading to the creation of a synthesis report that brings together the key insights and discussions.

Then, Yujin Jo, Programme Specialist at the Office of Research and Development at APCEIU, introduced the objectives and expected outcomes of the Expert Meeting. She provided an overview of the programme, outlining the key sessions and themes, and briefly introduced the participants representing diverse institutions and regions.

The Expert Meeting was made up of 14 participants representing 12 countries: Australia, Chile, Ghana, Hong Kong, Kazakhstan, Kenya, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa, the United States of America, and Vietnam. The participants included researchers, experts in assessment and transformative education, and policymakers from academic institutions and government agencies responsible for curriculum and evaluation. The diversity of the group provided for rich discussion, strengthened by a myriad of perspectives.

2 Session 1 - Rethinking the Role of Assessment in Transformative Education



In the first session, Esther Care presented on the topic "Context: Assessment Never Stands Alone" and provided the conceptual foundation for the Expert Meeting, focusing on *why* we need to rethink assessment in transformative education. Dr Care reminded all experts that this Expert Meeting is intended for discussion, for everyone to learn from each other's perspectives, and to together tackle the difficult questions surrounding assessment.

This session began with two questions surrounding evaluation and assessment for transformative education: 1) How soon can we take action that will have an impact on our students' lives? and 2) How quickly can we deal with the challenges that exist globally? To address these questions, the session first established a common understanding of assessment as addressed in the Expert Meeting, as well as the overall goal of proposing strategic directions that support and promote transformative education.

Next, Dr Care posed the question, "What is the function of assessment in this world?" and framed her presentation around three main ideas. First, an education stance that transformative

education shifts stated goals as informed by peer-reviewed and UNESCO publications. Second, transformative education consists of an emphasis on competencies or competence-based education that was developed through an application of knowledge and transferable skills. Third, the role of assessments in transformative education, and how we can capture these moving targets.

These shifts in stated goals moving toward transformative education are holistic, action-oriented, focused on global citizenship, and inclusive, in order to empower learners to become active, informed, and responsible citizens who can contribute to a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world. The whole person is brought into consideration, recognising the interconnectedness of social, emotional, and environmental well-being, as well as fostering the understanding of interconnectedness and responsibility for a more sustainable and peaceful world.

Dr Care recommended a deeper consideration of the role of assessment in transformative education by looking at the recommended Road Map that was presented at the UNESCO and APCEIU-hosted “Regional Policy Dialogue and Launch of the Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development in Asia-Pacific,” held in Bangkok in 2024 (UNESCO, 2024c). She encouraged the participants to reflect more deeply on what is missing from the recommended Road Map when it comes to transformative education, because there is a great shift between the traditional education model and the education model inspired by the UNESCO’s “Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development” (hereinafter “UNESCO 2023 Recommendation”).

The session concluded with Dr Care’s opening dialogue on two consequential topics with the group. The first asked, “In the era of transformative education, are we interested in assessment in terms of: its role in supporting the individual learner, or its role in judging the individual learner, or its role in evaluating a system and its goals?” The discussion then moved to the second topic, which raised the following points: 1) Transformative education requires a cultural shift that rejects the normalisation of competition in education; 2) It is not possible to value heterogeneity in perspectives and responses of learners while maintaining standards; and 3) Must we measure it? These topics were not intended to be answered wholly, but to ignite thinking for the remaining two days.

3 Session 2 - Mapping Emerging Landscapes in Assessment for Transformative Education

Session moderated by Anil Kanjee, Professor at Tshwane University of Technology

Yujin Jo from APCEIU began by introducing the structure of this session, which explored the evolving theoretical and research landscape around assessment for transformative education. Four presenters shared emerging scholarship and global discourses around formative assessment, assessment for and as learning, and alternative models that capture progress, emphasising growth, engagement, and learner agency, followed by a Q&A discussion.

3.1 Assessment for Transformative Education



Zi Yan began the presentation by stressing student agency in education. Yet, when it comes to assessment, students often play a very passive role. Showing a picture of an overcrowded classroom, Professor Yan argued that teacher assessment without student agency is insufficient for achieving assessment reform goals. Offering a solution to the problem, Professor Yan introduced a Chinese proverb that translates to "It is better to teach people to fish, rather than to give them a fish."

Professor Yan suggested that effective and sustainable assessment ecology needs to be developed, synergising teacher-directed formative assessment (assessment for learning) and student-initiated formative assessment (assessment as learning). When designed well, these two do not just work in parallel. They actually reinforce each other, which helps to get the most out of formative assessment. In order to do this, the understanding of roles among students, teachers, parents, and even policymakers needs to be reshaped, and the assessment literacy of all stakeholders needs to be enhanced.

Professor Yan acknowledges this is a challenging task. He and his team have done work to develop research that enhances the effectiveness of the two assessment branches. In addition, they have made efforts to translate this theory into practice by creating several platforms aimed at supporting classroom implementation. These include:

- 1) FAITH (Formative Assessment Innovative Teaching Hub): A professional development network focused on formative assessment, offering a resource bank with videos and materials for teachers and practitioners.
- 2) EASE (Efficient Adaptive System for Education): An online adaptive learning platform that integrates formative assessment principles with AI technologies.
- 3) ARTIST (Assessment Research To Improve Student Learning and Teaching): A research platform dedicated to advancing theories and practices of formative assessment.

Together, these platforms form a comprehensive ecosystem that connects and empowers assessment research, professional development, and classroom practice.

Looking forward to the AI era, he argued that the transformative education sector must take the lead in educational research, rather than being led by the industry sector, to develop AI-powered student-centred assessments. Professor Yan concluded by asserting the need to address these theoretical and empirical challenges at the same time.

3.2 The Bumpy Road Toward Large-Scale Assessment for Supporting Teaching and Learning



Presented by
María José Ramírez,
Owner and CEO of EduMetrica



María José Ramírez, who attended virtually, framed the presentation around two notable questions:

- 1) To what extent are these large-scale assessments really supporting teaching and learning? and
- 2) What innovations have been introduced to better support teaching and learning? The aim of her presentation was to highlight the trends and tensions she saw in pushing for reforms from large-scale assessments for monitoring and accountability to assessments to support teaching and learning in implementing large-scale assessments in low-income countries.

The first thing Dr Ramírez highlighted was the push for large-scale assessments to measure foundational skills on the lower end of the learning trajectory that had not been measured before, instead of only measuring the curricular expectations at the more advanced levels. She explained that some may ask whether this means we are lowering our standards, especially in the context of lower-income countries. Dr Ramírez pointed out that an assessment that better supports teaching and learning does not just tell teachers what a student does not know, or how far away they are from the curricular objectives, but it gives a clear diagnosis of where the students are in the learning trajectory.

Showing examples from Pakistan, Dr Ramírez highlighted another trend of adding new benchmarks for more granularities, which showed what students know and can do at incremental achievement levels. While this is helpful for teachers, it also has a cost—as more categories are added, the number of classification levels increases, creating a need to balance the number of categories and the issue of precision of classifications.

Lastly, Dr Ramírez highlighted that for assessments to be transformative for the student, they also need to be transformative for teachers, and for that to happen, teachers need to be empowered to use assessment to improve pedagogy. She reminded attendees that assessment transformations need to be disruptive but within the margin of acceptable, and that any grandiose statement of assessment transformation is likely to fail if it is not at least partially engrained in the current practices of teachers.

3.3 Partnership with Teachers to Develop Methods to Assess Complex Competencies with Impact



Toshiko Kamei shared the work she and her team have done in assessing complex competencies in Australia, with the hope that some of it can be transferable across different contexts. The questions asked were: How can we go beyond standardised testing and collect information about the learning and development of all students that targets what is being measured and recognises all modes of expression? How do we make this assessment result useful for people to use?

Going back to the initial question of what complex competencies should be assessed, Ms Kamei started by looking at what students are doing in the classroom, and what that tells us about their learning and development, particularly students with additional needs. This used observational evidence which heavily relied on teacher judgement, trusting that an authentic way to capture human skills is through human judgement. This meant that collaboration is the key for these programmes to work, involving collaboration with hundreds of teachers and the co-design of competency frameworks that are empirically validated with large-scale assessment data. The part of this that teachers like the most is that these assessment results are linked to practical strategies they can use. Also, technology was an integral part of assessing complex competencies. There is a team of programmers who work with the researchers and teachers in order to develop an online platform that teachers can use to assess and then use the reporting that is generated to inform their programme planning.

Lastly, learning progressions are at the core of this work. An early years assessment and learning tool, other programmes that look at assessing complex competencies in secondary students, and partnerships with tertiary admissions centres across Australia, as well as credentialing authorities, are working to transform the recognition of complex competencies to support learning pathways such as the transition of all learners into tertiary education.

3.4 Six Key Trends and Tensions, and Next Steps



Anil Kanjee began with guiding statements from UNESCO's "Reimagining Our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education" (UNESCO, 2021), which emphasise the need to rethink established ways of understanding education, knowledge, and learning in order to explore new ways forward toward the futures we aspire to. Building on this idea, he highlighted the importance of focusing on what can be done now with the resources available in the current context, regardless of the challenges that exist.

In regard to context, prevailing systems of assessment in South Africa still tend to emanate from a colonial, apartheid past. Moreover, assessment-focused policies remain heavily measurement-driven, emphasising test scores rather than learning, while multiple overlapping accountability systems divert attention from pedagogy to performance. There is also an overemphasis on assessments in mathematics and languages at the expense of other subjects and non-cognitive domains of learning.

At the same time, the impact of different actors who challenge performativity regimes, or systems that reduce policies and practices to numbers, and the importance of assessment-for-learning pedagogical strategies need to be considered. On the positive side, student movements have been calling for the decolonisation of education in South Africa, and teacher unions and NGOs have been playing a critical role. The ministry has also taken new initiatives, with the COVID-19 pandemic playing a part in this process.

In regard to what action should be taken now, Professor Kanjee highlighted six principles:

- 1) Education is not a lottery. You need to plan well in advance and before.
- 2) We need a common understanding and purpose.
- 3) Education must be evidence-based.
- 4) Cause for collaboration and support.
- 5) Jump into the pool. You cannot learn to swim by googling swimming.
- 6) Reporting as a recipe for action.

Professor Kanjee highlighted several next steps:

- 1) A professional development model that meets teachers where they are was introduced. This requires participation and collaboration in professional learning communities and with a cyclical process, so that learning occurs to meet the specific needs of schools across all contexts.
- 2) An assessment literacy programme for ministry officials.
- 3) A new reporting format that has no percentage scores, only progression levels on knowledge and skills.

Lastly, Professor Kanjee and his team have started looking at the impact of AI. His biggest concerns were the issue of cognitive atrophy and the issue of reducing diversity and digital poverty.

In conclusion, Professor Kanjee highlighted the need for developing national assessment frameworks that act as guiding principles, assessment literacy programmes for all policymakers, and assessment for learning professional development programmes.

Q1: Referring to the image of the crowded classroom, how can a teacher manage such a large group of learners while still striving to develop transformative education?

A1: (Yan) One effective approach is to involve students in the assessment process through self-[assessments] and peer-assessments. It is also important to enhance teachers' assessment literacy through professional development so that they know how to engage students in assessment. In addition, providing technology-enabled, ready-to-use tools can support teachers. For example, AI can offer a basic level of feedback, saving time for teachers so they can focus on giving higher-level feedback to students. This can be one possible way to enable formative assessment even in large classroom settings.

Q2: What are some of the challenges or issues concerning large-scale assessments of soft skills, such as attitudes or civic education?

A2: (Ramírez) There is a positive trend toward focusing more on these dimensions. However, one of the main constraints is that most large-scale assessments still rely on paper-and-pencil questionnaires. A transition toward computer-based instruments is needed to better capture such competencies.

Q3: Could you elaborate on the complex competencies that you are measuring and what kinds of assessments are being used?

A3: (Kamei) We have developed a competency framework with rubrics, as well as an online tool that teachers use to record their judgement. The core evidence we rely on is teacher judgement rather than specific tasks or activities, as our focus is not on what students can write or demonstrate cognitively, but on how they apply that knowledge in action.

Q4: Could you share more about the professional learning communities (PLCs) implemented in South Africa and how are they implemented?

A4: (Kanjee) In South Africa, there is a policy that all schools must have PLCs. So, within our professional development programmes, teachers are trained on how to initiate and sustain a PLC, with an emphasis on recognising teacher agency.

Q5: Do other countries have AI competency frameworks for teachers?

A5: (Kanjee) We do not have a national framework, but we draw on UNESCO's existing frameworks for teachers, students, and researchers. In addition, we refer to AI-related frameworks and guidelines developed by our universities, which are more localised, and these have been integrated into our professional development programmes.

Professor Kanjee concluded the session by emphasising that the issue of AI calls for teachers to learn from their learners. He noted that regardless of geographic location or socioeconomic background, most learners today have access to mobile phones and are already using AI. While ongoing efforts aim to make technology more accessible for all students, equal attention must be given to equipping both teachers and learners with the capacity for responsible AI use and awareness of its potential risks.

4 Session 3 – From Practice to Insight: Reflecting on Implementation of Assessment for Transformative Education

Session moderated by Genevieve Mensah, Principal Curriculum Development Officer at the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA)

In this session, the group's focus shifts from theory to real-world application by hearing presentations on cases of how assessment approaches aligned with transformative education are being implemented across different national and institutional contexts. Six experts shared how these assessment approaches are being carried out in their context, followed by a Q&A, and finally a brief wrap-up activity to draw out the key takeaways from the session.

4.1 Rethinking Assessment in the Age of AI: A Kazakhstani Perspective





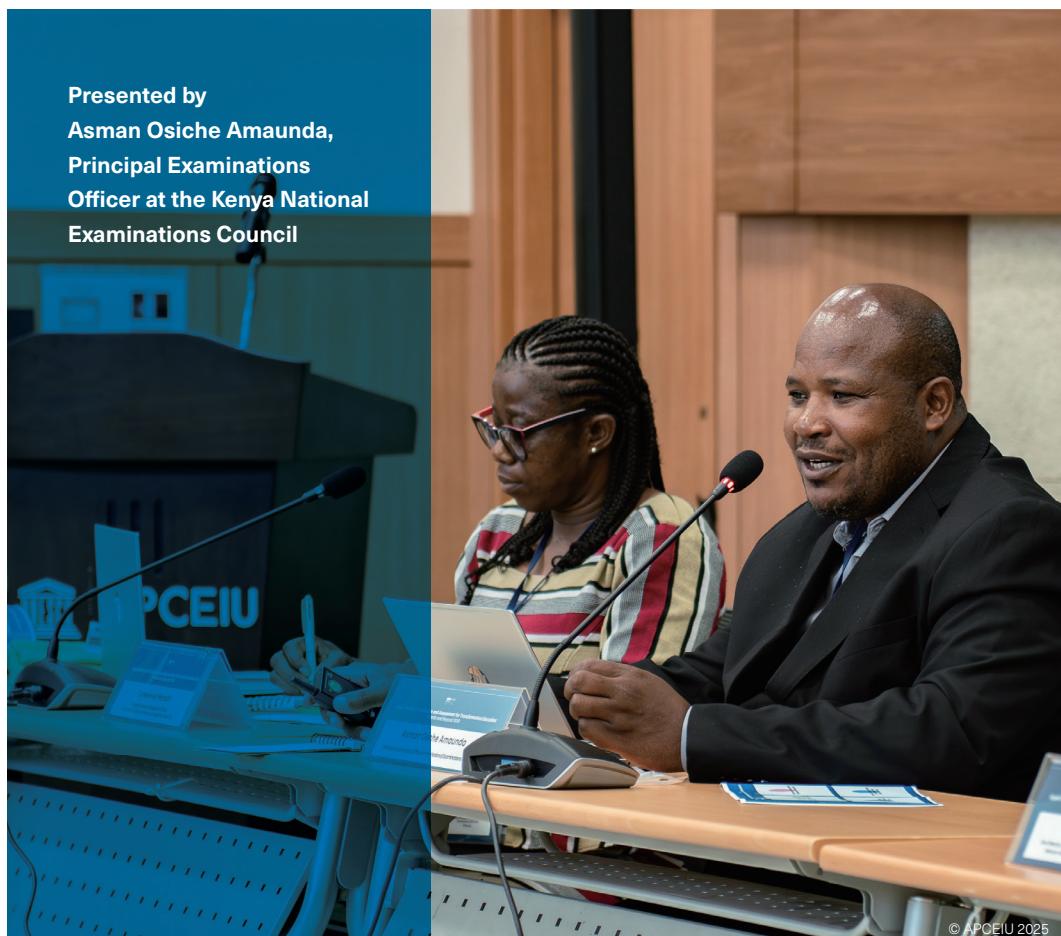
Aida Kuandykovna Abilyakimova, Chief Expert at the Center for Strategy and Analysis at the National Academy of Education named after Y. Altynsarin, began the presentation by explaining to the group why they had to rethink assessment in Kazakhstan. There was a heavy reliance on AI that led to a risk of “cognitive offloading” as well as key issues found in assessment practices: overreliance on automation, loss of learner agency, bias and inequality, and devaluation of formative assessment.

Through research and pilot projects, schools were able to develop awareness in teachers and students that resulted in higher-order thinking, socio-emotional intelligence, creative and innovative thinking, and AI literacy. In rural schools, students were encouraged to learn different ways to use AI for innovation, creativity, and inquiry, rather than for “cheating.”

Enablers of these changes included aligning national AI principles with those of UNESCO and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) frameworks, emphasising ethics and human-centred learning as core principles of AI use, gaining support from local school foundations, and teachers’ willingness to engage with and explore AI technologies.

Constraints, on the other hand, included low AI literacy among educators, emotional resistance because of fear of being replaced or having a diminished role, and lack of clear rubrics for assessing creative or AI-created work. Lastly, they are continuing efforts to establish clear and contextually relevant guidelines for assessing transformative education.

4.2 Developing Transformative Competencies in Learners: Assessment Innovations in Kenya's Competency-Based Education



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Asman Osiche Amaunda, Principal Examinations Officer at the Kenya National Examinations Council, began his presentation by explaining that in 2017, a new curriculum was introduced in Kenya aimed at nurturing holistic learners in character and skill to create engaged, empowered, and ethical citizens (Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development [KICD], 2017).

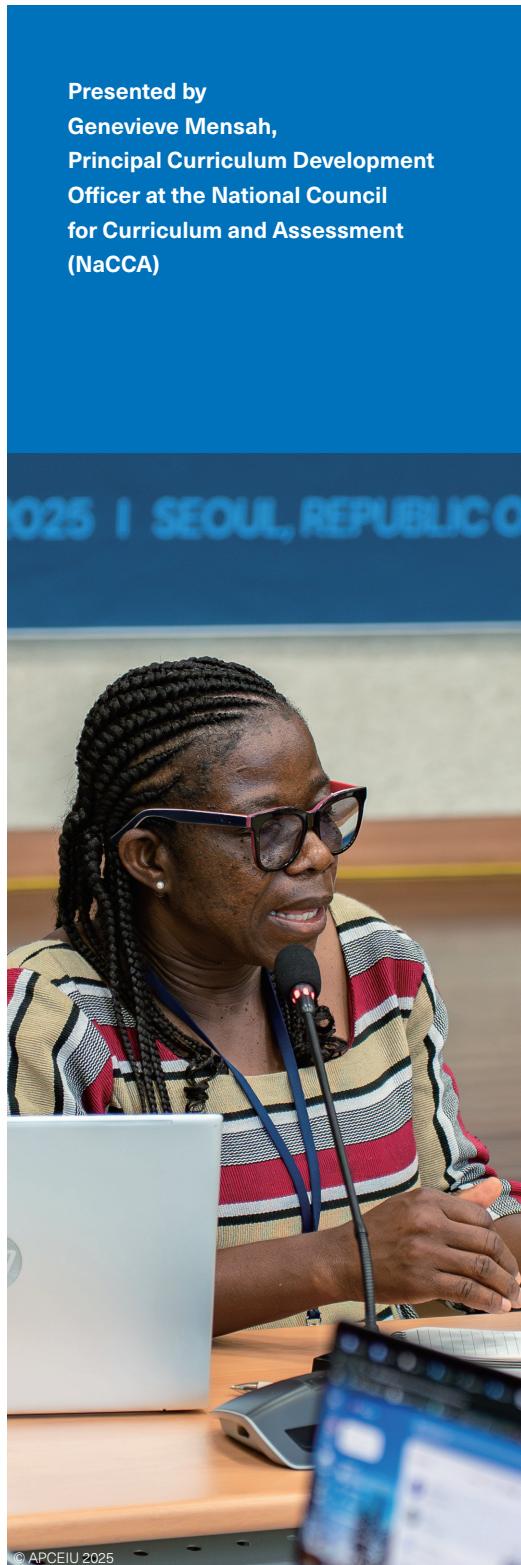
The new curriculum is rooted in competency-based education with five strategic focuses: knowledge and skills of the subject or learning area, 21st-century skills, values, pertinent and contemporary issues (PCIs), and community service learning (CSL). Competency-based curriculum design includes essential statements, general learning outcomes, strands, sub-strands, specific learning outcomes, and suggested learning experiences. Transformative education is integrated in the final two levels:

specific learning outcomes and the suggested learning experiences. To embrace and implement transformative education, Kenya's Basic Education Curriculum Framework (BECF) specifies seven core competencies (21st-century skills) and eight values. The core competencies include communication and collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and imagination, citizenship, learning to learn, digital literacy, and self-efficacy. The values include peace, patriotism, love, integrity, social justice, respect, responsibility, and unity (KICD, 2017). These competencies and values are embedded in lessons and assessment tasks that carry experiences compatible with the specified core competencies and/or values.

The enablers of the new curriculum structure included policy and government commitment, teacher professional development, learner-centred pedagogy, community and parental involvement, integration of ICT and digital tools, and curriculum and design flexibility. Specifically, through teacher professional development, efforts have been made to strengthen the capacity to integrate the foundations of competency-based education and assessment which is both formative and summative. Formative assessment is emphasised to facilitate and enhance the development of these competencies in learners.

Despite these enablers, constraints still exist in the way of inadequate resources, teacher preparedness, resistance to change, and monitoring and evaluation gaps. The experience from implementing the new curriculum identified how important authentic assessment, collaboration, and peer learning on best practices are crucial in steering transformative education and assessment that embraces every learner's needs.

4.3 The Journey Towards Transformative Assessment: Lessons from Ghana



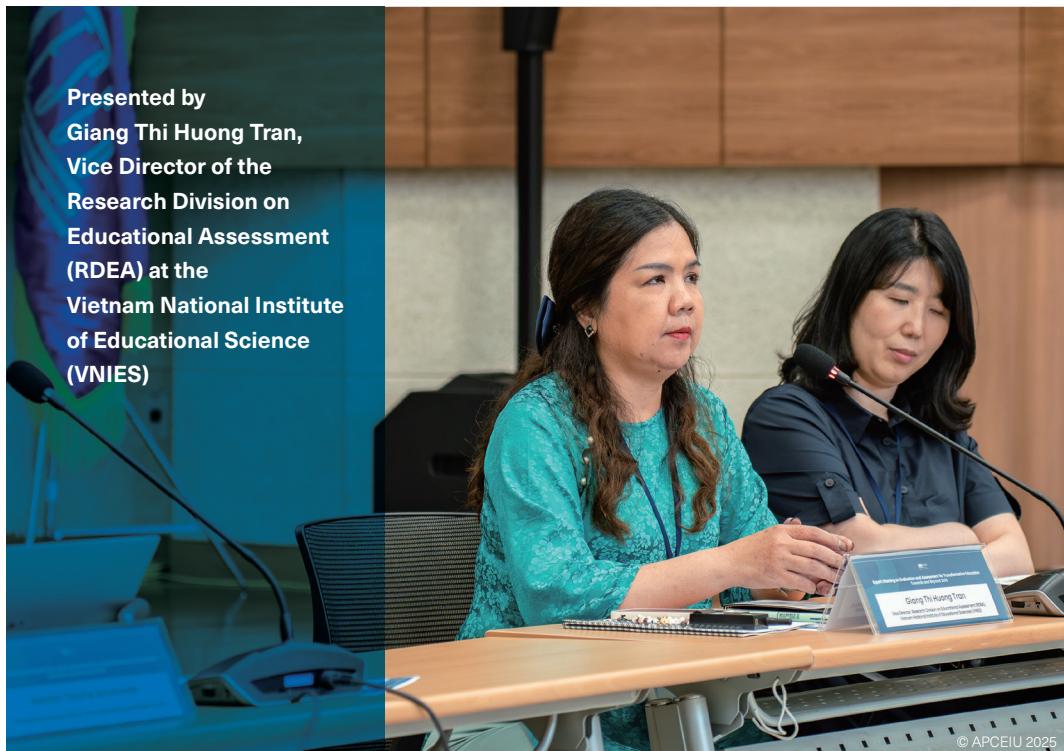
Presented by
Genevieve Mensah,
Principal Curriculum Development
Officer at the National Council
for Curriculum and Assessment
(NaCCA)

Genevieve Mensah, Principal Curriculum Development Officer at the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA), began her presentation by explaining that a structured school-based assessment system consisting of written assessments and projects had been in place in Ghana since 2011 (Ministry of Education, 2011a, 2011b). However, in 2018, there was an education reform aimed at achieving SDGs and Education 2030, which included a shift away from traditional assessment and toward formative assessment. This was implemented through strategies including policy and curriculum frameworks (NaCCA, 2018, 2020), nationwide teacher trainings, assessment rubrics and guides, a transcript system, and the integration and assessment of GCED.

The integration of formative assessment is having transformative impacts on the students' learning in the way of application of knowledge, critical thinking, creativity, innovation, collaboration, teamwork, communication, confidence, and environmental solutions.

Enablers of this change include system support (policy and curriculum), teacher capacity, teacher acceptance, learner enthusiasm, stakeholder support, and monitoring and support visits (Kudjordji, 2021). Constraints were identified at both the system and school levels, including standardised tests, the high cost of formative assessment, limited political will, insufficient training, heavy work demands on teachers, the requirement of assessment results for placement, and a lack of resources (Kudjordji & Narh-Kert, 2024). There is an opportunity to move forward in this direction of transformative action due to the outcry for a shift to this value education, the ability to cater towards the needs of high school competencies with the new transcript system, and innovation in teacher professional development.

4.4 Integrating Global Citizenship Teaching and Assessment into the Curriculum in Vietnam



Giang Thi Huong Tran, Vice Director of the Research Division on Educational Assessment (RDEA) at the Vietnam National Institute of Educational Science (VNIES), explained to the group that Vietnam introduced a new curriculum in 2018, and they have just completed the first full cycle of high school graduates using the new curriculum.

The new curriculum integrated both GCED and transformative education through a transition from rote learning to interactive and student-centred activities, the national foreign language project, and rising expectations to develop students' competences and values.

In order to integrate GCED into the curriculum, Vietnam focused on five key qualities and five key competencies for students. The key qualities include patriotism, caring, diligence, honesty, and responsibility, while the key competencies encompass autonomy, self-learning, communication, problem solving, and creativity. These competencies have been incorporated into most subjects, including the Vietnamese language, science, civics, history, foreign languages, and mathematics. To realise this transformed approach to education, teaching methods were enhanced through problem posing, collaborative learning, and practical experience. Assessment processes were also improved by combining qualitative comments and scores, assessing student progress, and promoting the development of the five key qualities and five key competencies.

In Vietnam, the constraints were similar to those of Kenya and Ghana, including limited resources, score-focus on exams, lack of training, and lack of coordination between the system and schools.

4.5 Educational Assessment in the Age of AI in the Republic of Korea



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Hyewon Chung, Professor in the College of Education at Chungnam National University, introduced the Republic of Korea's efforts to meet the growing demand for 21st-century competency education, noting that the Ministry of Education in the Republic of Korea introduced four key educational innovations: plans for digital-driven educational innovation, EdTech innovation, empowering digital education innovation, and improving K-12 digital infrastructure—with AI being the main focus (Ministry of Education, 2023a, 2023b, 2024a, 2024b). AI has been applied in the development of the curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Ministry of Education, 2024c). For example, a government-led AI-based learning resource, initially piloted as a digital textbook, has been introduced to support classroom design, instruction, and assessment.

The benefits of AI learning include that it allows for more personalised learning, one-on-one tutoring, and may bridge the gap between ideal personalisation and classroom reality. Opportunities resulting from the integration of AI in education include moving more toward digital assessment, processing data, and automated scoring. But there are limitations of AI that need to be understood, including its limitations in explaining the reason behind its outputs and being wary of the accuracy of the results generated. It was therefore concluded that AI should be used as a supportive tool, not as a replacement for human judgement or decision-making.

4.6 Assessment of Citizenship and Character Education in Singapore



Presented by
Kah Loong Chue,
Senior Lecturer in the
National Institute of
Education at Nanyang
Technological University

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Kah Loong Chue, Senior Lecturer in the National Institute of Education at Nanyang Technological University, began his presentation by positing that “every teacher is a Citizenship and Character Education (CCE) teacher.” He elaborated on this through the CCE framework, highlighting how its core values and purpose form the central focus (Ministry of Education, 2021).

Initially when introduced in 2021, the CCE framework intentionally included only a small discussion around assessment because the main idea of the framework was focused on development rather than assessment. The simple mention of assessment included three key processes: co-construction of collective and individual goals, making sense of learning progress through dialogues and reflection, and building students’ capacity for self-assessment and peer-assessment.

Enablers of CCE in Singapore include school leadership, school autonomy, coherent curriculum, collaborative culture, and professional development of teachers. Constraints include balancing resource allocation related to academic vs. holistic, a lack of time, and the issue of teacher capacity and belief.

From the development of CCE and assessment in Singapore, they have learned that its integration is more likely to be effective when in tandem with other assessment policies. However, there is difficulty in assessment of CCE because standardised assessment design needs to be consistent and that is not the case in Singapore because of constructs and standards.

Q&A

Q1: In implementing transformative assessment, how do teacher, parent, and stakeholder acceptance enable or constrain the process?

A1-1: (Kamei) Teacher acceptance can act as both an enabler and a constraint in transformative assessment. I was also interested in how parents and other stakeholders can influence this process in different country contexts.

A1-2: (Mensah) In Ghana, teachers initially accepted formative assessment after the initial training. However, once they returned to their schools and faced the workload required for classroom integration, their interest declined. Parent acceptance has also been challenging, as many parents still want traditional letter grades, and entry into top higher education institutions depends on “good grades.” More effort is needed to help and sensitise parents understand the benefits of formative assessment.

A1-3: (Amaunda) In Kenya, teachers’ unions hold significant influence. At first, unions were reluctant to adopt the new curriculum, making it difficult to gain teachers’ acceptance. We found that building acceptance required working more directly and closely with individual schools and individual teachers to foster ownership and support.

Q2: How can assessment and evaluation be integrated into education systems rather than being treated as an additional burden that is “added on”?

A2: (Amaunda) Many teachers tend to view the integration of 21st-century skills and values as an extra burden. Therefore, intentional teacher training is needed to help them design curricula that meet required benchmarks while naturally incorporating these competencies.

Q3: What forms has the assessment of socio-emotional and behavioural skills in GCED taken in the Ghanaian context, and how has this helped your system think more concretely about shifts in assessment approaches?

A3: (Mensah) In Ghana, we have trained their teachers to use both observational assessment skills with checklists and peer-review skills, which we are also adapting for learners to use. This shift had already begun at the kindergarten level, where assessment rubrics are used to evaluate learners, replacing assignment of grades with “gold,” “silver,” and “bronze” levels to indicate competency of these skills.

Q4: What are the greatest challenges in promoting formative assessment in classrooms?

A4: (Amaunda) The most difficult challenge in Kenya is teacher professional development. Even with limited resources, teachers still need training and skills to integrate formative assessment in alignment with the spirit of the new competency-based curriculum.

4.7 Wrap-Up Activity

The final wrap-up activity consisted of four questions posed to the expert participants based on what they learned and reflected on during the session.

- 1) From the presentations you have heard, identify at least three key practices in the classroom/schools and education systems that support assessment for transformative education.
- 2) What are recurring success factors or innovative solutions mentioned across the presentations/countries?
- 3) What factors enabled or constrained the implementation of these practices?
- 4) What strategies or questions do you want to explore further or adapt for your context?

Additionally, Genevieve Mensah asked each of the experts to write down one step or action that they will take from this session to support the implementation of transformative assessment in their country.

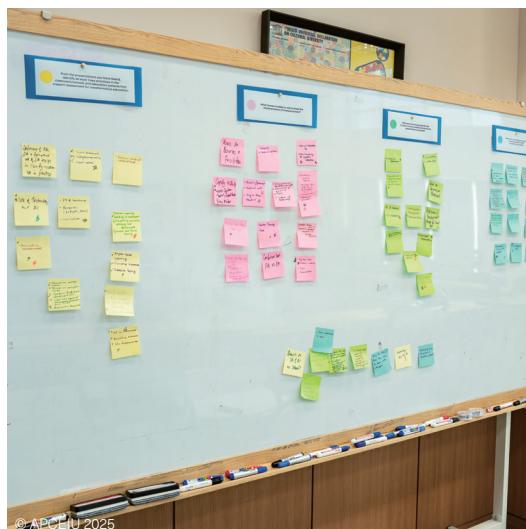


Table: Responses from participants during the wrap-up activity

<p>1. From the presentations you have heard, identify at least three key practices in the classroom/schools and education systems that support assessment for transformative education.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definitions of formative assessment, summative assessment, and formative use of summative assessment help to clarify assessment use in practice• Teacher development• Integration of technology• Student-centred• Learner-centred assessments and pedagogy• Use of technology and AI• Professional development of teachers• Resources (budget, time, etc.)• Curriculum• Teacher capacity building in assessment• Integrating curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment• Teacher and learner agency• Formative assessments• Project-based learning• Adaptive testing• Focus on competencies• Authentic assessment• AI use in the classroom and assessment• GCED integration• Community service• School autonomy• Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) assessment tool
<p>2. What are recurring success factors or clever solutions mentioned across the presentations/countries?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• University research• Cooperation and integration across all levels of education systems• Professional development of teachers• Training of teachers• School leadership• Demonstration of competencies• New curriculum• Experiential activities• Use of technology• Teacher capacity building• Focus on formative assessment• Professional development model for local use• Multimodal assessments• Coherent policies• Policy support• Teacher capacity

3. What factors enabled or constrained the implementation of these practices?

Enabled

- Access to resources and facilities
- Intentionality of system leaders
- Capacity and skills, professional development
- Support from teachers, school leaders, policymakers
- Frameworks and guidelines
- Teacher agency
- Teacher expertise in formative assessment

Constrained

- Assessment culture
- Lack of teacher professional development
- Politics/Government
- Limited flexibility
- Lack of resources
- Lack of clear rubrics
- Confusion between formative assessment and summative assessment
- Lack of assessment integration into curriculum and teacher practice
- Large class size
- Expensive tools

4. What strategies or questions do you want to explore further or adapt for your context?

- Understanding of Competency-Based Education (CBE) in terms of assessment reporting
- Effective use of AI in the classroom and assessment
- Good strategies for teacher training
- Design assessment tools for teachers (software)
- Testing bank to assess students' competence and values
- All countries acknowledging the need for assessment toward transformative education

- Assessment literacy programme
- Building students' capacity for self-assessment
- Improving initial teacher programmes
- How to strengthen validity and reliability of teacher observational assessment
- Keeping a SEL inventory
- Scaling up professional development programmes
- Assessment literacy of students
- Use of AI as a supportive tool

5. One step/action to take from this session to support the implementation of transformative assessment in your country.

- Research on the use of AI in schools
- Share experiences and ideas
- Convince my institution to adopt a SEL inventory strategy
- Explore the use of AI to score formative assessment
- Strengthen transformative assessment practices to mitigate AI reliance
- Do/Start collaborative research toward creating tools for assessment in transformative education

- Bring the ideas from here back to share with colleagues
- Working with teachers to develop competency frameworks
- Harnessing AI for education
- Developing policy frameworks on formative assessment

5 Session 4 – Exploring System-Level Enablers and Constraints

Session moderated by Maricris Bandiola Acido-Muega, Professor at the University of the Philippines Diliman

The second day of the Expert Meeting began with a shift in focus to the structural and institutional dimensions of assessment. Yujin Jo from APCEIU introduced this session's aims to deepen understanding of system-level enablers and constraints and to inspire forward-thinking ideas through collaboration that can support transformative change.

This session proceeded in two parts. The first part consisted of three thematic presentations, followed by a Q&A. The second part consisted of group collaboration and learning. This session focused on three major areas that shape the system-level context of transformative assessment: 1) Policy, curriculum, and learning environment; 2) Pedagogy, teaching, learning, and assessment; and 3) Teacher education and capacity building.

5.1 Understanding Student Assessment in the Republic of Korea



Soojin Kim, Research Fellow at the Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE), began by sharing statistics that described the changing society in the Republic of Korea, showing that the skills students need to cultivate are also changing. Skills like collaboration and problem solving are becoming more important, both for students and teachers.

Dr Kim described process-oriented assessment as having three key areas of focus: expanding the assessment paradigm, contrasting with product-oriented assessment, and connecting assessment with curriculum and teaching and learning. According to Dr Kim, each step in the procedure of conducting process-oriented assessment is important. First, in regard to planning the assessment, it is important that teachers are closely analysing the national standards that their teaching and assessments need to be based upon. Second, developing a variety of assessment tools for measuring students' characteristics, such as using projects or portfolios in addition to a written exam, is important. With regard to conducting the assessment, it should be done both during and after the teaching, so that while the student's performance is shown, realising the student's educational goals and how they go about achieving that performance is also important. Lastly, giving students feedback is an important part of this process that has changed in the past 10-15 years in Republic of Korea. In the past, students would receive a piece of paper with their exam scores on the last day of school. Now, teachers give feedback during classes while they are teaching, which has become more popular after COVID-19 with the use of online learning and supportive technology.

In closing, Dr Kim briefly mentioned the standard-based achievement assessment for middle and high schools, where schools are given a criteria reference assessment system that measures what students know and what they can do based on a national standard. She also highlighted the high school credit-based system, which is scheduled for full implementation in Republic of Korea by 2025. The system allows students to choose and complete courses according to their interests and future career paths, rather than following a fixed, standardised curriculum. It represents a transformative shift from teacher-centred to student-centred and personalised learning, empowering students with greater autonomy in course selection. The approach also encourages self-directed learning and active participation, while supporting diverse career exploration and individual growth.

5.2 Efficient, Coherent, and Fair: Why Teaching to the Test Can Be Good Pedagogy



David Rutkowski, a professor at Indiana University who joined the session virtually, began his presentation by introducing his central thesis: Teachers should be teaching to the test. While acknowledging that this statement could be considered controversial, particularly in contexts such as the United States of America or Europe, two places where he has worked, Dr Rutkowski explained that his intent was to reframe how testing is perceived. He argued that teaching to the test could, in fact, be appropriate if the test is designed to measure what is genuinely taught and learned in schools. In that sense, he suggested that the key question that should be asked is not whether or not teachers should teach to the test, but whether the tests themselves are worth teaching to.



Before diving into this question, he reminded the audience that teachers work within education systems that face multiple constraints, including fiscal, political, and time-related limitations. With this in mind, he began by outlining the various purposes of assessments at the national, school, classroom, and student levels. He then pointed out that while the reasons for having assessments are generally clear, aligning them with curriculum standards is a complex and challenging process. He raised a series of reflective questions: Can all of the standards in the curriculum be assessed? Probably not, he answers. But should they? And if not everything, what parts of the curriculum are assessed and what parts are left out, and who determines these decisions?

A common problem is that the curriculum is overloaded and there are often too many standards. Dr Rutkowski addressed these questions by giving an example from the state of Indiana in the United States of America. One of the changes introduced was the replacement of a single end-of-year assessment with multiple checkpoints administered three times a year. In this process, the state also recognised the need to streamline the curriculum and reduce the number of standards, targeting approximately 25% for adjustment.

By reframing the idea of teaching to the test, Dr Rutkowski argued that when good standards exist in the curriculum, as well as good tests that are aligned with these standards, then the conditions are set to teach to the test. However, in order for this to work, teachers need to be assessment literate. Without this, teaching to the test becomes problematic. *Assessment literate* means that teachers have the knowledge and skills to develop, interpret, and use assessment information to support student learning. Assessment literacy also means being able to make informed mid-course directions, and communicating meaningful progress to students and families.

In conclusion, when tests are well designed and aligned with curriculum and instructional goals, teaching to the test is not a pedagogical failure, but a rational, even ideal instructional strategy.

5.3 Teacher Education and Capacity Building: Pre- and In-Service Teacher Training, Teacher Autonomy, and Mentoring



Presented by
Maricris Bandiola
Acido-Muega,
Professor at the
University of the
Philippines Dilman

Maricris Bandiola Acido-Muega, a professor at the University of the Philippines Dilman, began by recognising that education systems unfold differently across diverse societies. In the Philippines, the shift from a K-10 to a K-12 curriculum was accompanied by extensive teacher training and capacity building initiatives to help educators reframe what students are expected to learn.

To further explore how teachers can be enabled to teach toward transformative education and become more assessment literate, Dr Acido-Muega highlighted a few ways to achieve this: peer mentoring among teachers and education leaders, collaboration between teacher education programmes and institutions, partnership with local government and teacher education institutions, and scholarship programmes to help with both in-service and pre-service training. One example she gives in the Philippines was an 18-course certification programme with a special focus on education for special needs. They also offer certificate programmes in values education, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, non-formal education, literacy education, and general education. Capacity building programmes for teacher training on transformative education assessment are needed as core courses in pre-service teacher training.

Dr Acido-Muega explains that the University of the Philippines Diliman has also been working on ways to include elements such as the socio-emotional, attitudinal disposition of teachers to train them for dialogic inquiry to facilitate and build communities of inquiry as part of their training. In conclusion, Dr Acido-Muega pointed to the UNESCO report on teacher training (UNESCO Office Beirut and Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States, 2024) that states teacher training institutions have a duty as an incubator to train and qualify teachers to deliver transformative education, highlighting the responsibility that we have to revisit how teacher education programmes are structured.

Q&A

Q1: Is too much responsibility being placed on teachers to become assessment literate, and how can assessment literacy be built at the school and system levels?

A1-1: (Rutkowski) It is difficult to avoid placing responsibility on teachers because they occupy a crucial position as intermediaries between students and parents.

A1-2: (Kamei) While it was pointed out that different stakeholders pursue different goals in education, greater clarity is still needed on how these goals are aligned with standards.

A1-3: (Rutkowski) In response, it is important to distinguish which goals can and cannot be assessed, and which standards are and are not being measured.

A1-4: (Kamei) Since different stakeholders have differing goals, such constraints can create challenges for cultivating holistic learners who are able to thrive in diverse contexts.

Q2: What strategy was used to establish the assessment checkpoints?

A2: (Rutkowski) The state of Indiana came up with an internal assessment system that would happen three times a year, which raised the alarm that there were too many standards that were impossible to cover in that kind of time frame. With that, the state and teacher unions collaborated to cut down the standards by 25%.

Q3: Is it possible to set standards for citizenship, and can learning outcomes related to citizenship be assessed?

A3: (Rutkowski) Yes, there are meaningful aspects of citizenship that can be assessed, although they may vary by country. What matters most is ensuring that the curriculum aligns with the broader goal of what it means to be a citizen.

5.4 Group Discussion

Building on previous engagements, participants proceeded to group discussions, where they were divided into three groups as outlined below.

#	Themes	Areas of discussion
1	Policy, Curriculum, and Learning Environment	Education policy, curriculum standards, textbooks, system-level support, resources
2	Pedagogy, Teaching, Learning, and Assessment	Teaching practices, learning approaches, assessment tools, classroom interaction
3	Teacher Education and Capacity Building	Pre- and in-service training, teacher autonomy, mentoring

Each group discussed their topic, and then mixed with other groups to further deepen the conversation. The groups then came back at the end to present a summary of their ideas.

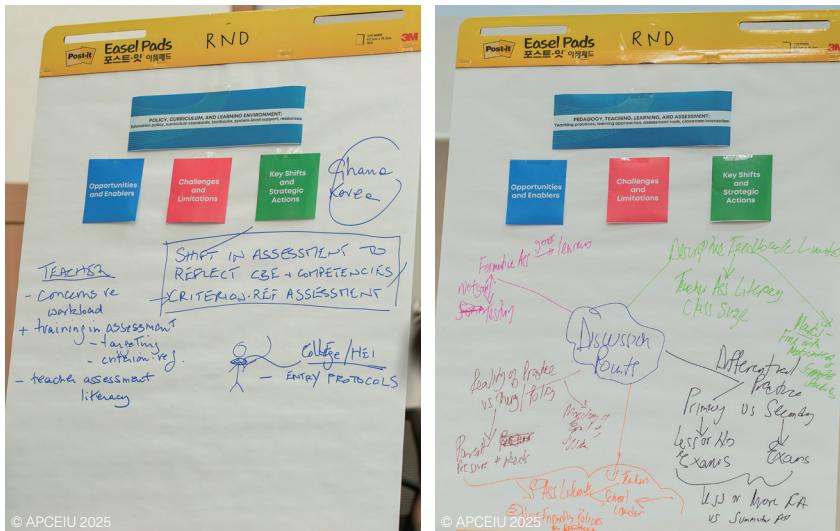
The Policy, Curriculum, and Learning Environment group, comprised of Esther Care, Genevieve Mensah, and Soojin Kim, addressed several challenges that need to be addressed, such as teacher assessment literacy, the issue of teacher workload and the perception that formative assessment means extra work, and entry protocols such as the transcript system in Ghana.

The Pedagogy, Teaching, Learning, and Assessment group, which was made up of Hyun Mook Lim, Anil Kanjee, Zi Yan, Kah Loong Chue, and Giang Thi Huong Tran, primarily shared how assessment is conducted in their home countries. There was a common understanding that formative assessment is good for learning but not good for testing, and the dominant need seems to be testing. Class size makes descriptive feedback difficult, and assessment practices have clear differences between primary and secondary school levels. While theory and policy are focused on formative assessment, in practice, the focus is all on tests, exams, and marks because of the push from parents and due to the need to monitor the system. The group concluded that eventually we need assessment literate teachers, assessment literate school leaders, and assessment-friendly policies and practices.

The Teacher Education and Capacity Building group, whose group members were Toshiko Kamei, Asman Osiche Amaunda, and Maricris Bandiola Acido-Muega, mainly discussed teacher education and capacity building in pre- and in-service training, teacher autonomy, and mentoring. There was a consensus that transformative education needs to be anchored in policy so that transformative education is integrated in learning rather than being added on as extra work. As a policy, teachers

need to be supported by school leaders, and trained through professional development and peer mentorship programmes that give teachers agency and autonomy. The group agreed that both teacher buy-in and stakeholder buy-in are a challenge. Finally, leveraging technology to help support teachers was also discussed.

In the large group share-out, a spokesperson from each group shared a summary of their discussion using the poster boards, and Dr Acido-Muega concluded the session with a brief summary of the session that highlighted the need for good policies, the shift from rigid standards to criteria-based assessments, the need for self-assessments and assessment literate teachers, and support from school leadership and policymakers to impact teacher capacity building and training for transformative assessment.



6 Session 5 – Framing Strategic Directions for the Future of Assessment and Closing

The fifth and final session served as a closing session to reflect on the insights the group has gained over the past two days and consider how this can be carried into their own prospective work and contexts.



Director Lim shared that over the past two days, the discussions reaffirmed the complexity and importance of assessment, especially in the context of transformative education. He expressed confidence that meaningful work is already being carried out at the local level to advance transformative education and formative assessment. Previously, when teachers were asked "How do you assess student learning outcomes or achievements for GCED?" many responded "I just know" without any systematic or formal knowledge. This example further emphasised the need for teacher support and training in assessment for transformative education, as well as meetings like this one to find innovative and effective ways forward.



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Dr Care shared that the work that *needs* to be done in this area *can* be done. The big question is *when* it can be done despite the constraints that exist. She suggested that we should not be looking at facilitators and blockers as two separate pieces of information, as there are elements or factors of each that need to be taken into consideration. Dr Care revisited the key ideas discussed in Session 1 that describes traditional instruction and what has been, compared to where we want to be, or where transformative education might lead us. The following questions were then posed again to identify what needs to be done to make this shift: 1) What do we need? 2) What can we do? 3) What are we willing to do? and 4) What is worthwhile doing?

When looking at assessments at the classroom, national, regional, and global levels, the approach becomes more complex. When these large-scale assessments are conducted, what do these competencies and their corresponding scores actually mean? At the national level, Dr Care showed that skills can be captured within the curriculum very well, but reporting is where the problems lie. When given an abstract number, it is hard to find meaning. In an example at the regional level, an assessment can capture proficiencies and values, and if they are reported in such a way that focuses on competencies, the results will have more meaning to a broader audience. Dr Care emphasised when talking about competencies and competence-based education, the important thing is to report on them in meaningful ways. In this manner, findings can even be reported at the international level in a meaningful way.

In 2024, the “Road Map to Implement UNESCO’s ‘Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development’ in Asia-Pacific” was introduced at a meeting in Bangkok, Thailand (UNESCO, 2024c). Included are 10 agreed actions to promote assessment and evaluation to achieve the UNESCO 2023

Recommendation. Prior to this session, Dr Care distributed a worksheet to the group asking each expert to rank the importance of the 10 action items. The action item that ranked the highest was “Establish assessment and evaluation systems that prioritise the holistic development and well-being of students,” which falls heavily in line with the group’s focus on transformative education. The second-highest ranked action was “Develop assessment frameworks that encompass cognitive, social and emotional, behavioural, and psycho-motor competencies in line with the curricula,” which falls in line with GCED. And the third was “Prioritise the use of formative assessments that provide ongoing performance feedback and support for teaching and learning.” These three actions are clearly in alignment with the focus of this Expert Meeting.

Dr Care’s presentation concluded in a reflection activity posing four questions related to which aspects of a transformative education system do we: 1) need formative assessment information? 2) want to use the formative assessment information summatively? 3) need summative information? and 4) need large-scale assessment data? This was done by revisiting the questions posed at the start of the Expert Meeting, which were restated at the beginning of the session on making the shift from traditional instruction to transformative education.

After Dr Care’s presentation, Director Lim invited experts to share their reflections from the two-day Expert Meeting. Toshiko Kamei shared how much she learned as someone who is earlier in their understanding of transformative education. The multiple perspectives and opportunities that were shared with one another were most impactful. And despite these different perspectives and contexts, almost everyone shares a common goal related to the world that is being left to future children and students. Anil Kanjee, felt an important takeaway from the sessions was identifying one of the key challenges that we have of translating both equality and equity into practice, not just one or the other. This challenge can be both highly complex but also very simple at the same time across different contexts. Genevieve Mensah shared how much she appreciated the focus on assessment literacy of students. So often, assessment literacy is focused on teachers, yet there is a necessity to involve students, parents, and other various stakeholders to help achieve the goal of assessment and evaluation in transformative education.

Director Lim shared closing remarks, reminding the group of the need to move from content-based education to competency-based education, as well as the urgent need to move away from an exam-driven culture toward transformative education. Sunmi Ji closed out the session by expressing her deep gratitude and noting that while transformative assessment is an emerging and important agenda, it is still underexplored in the field of assessment, making the contributions and participation in this Expert Meeting so valuable. This Expert Meeting is just the beginning of continued collaboration to advance assessment and evaluation toward transformative education.

Photos





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Annexes

Annex 1 – Programme Details

Expert Meeting on Evaluation and Assessment for Transformative Education: Towards and Beyond 2030

Background

In response to the complex challenges of today's world, education needs to evolve to prepare learners not only with knowledge but also with the values, attitudes, and behaviours that are essential to fostering just, inclusive, and sustainable societies. The 2021 UNESCO global report "Reimagining Our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education" underscores the need for education to be intentionally transformative, rebuilding our relationships with one another, with the planet, and with technology to achieve peaceful, just, and sustainable futures (UNESCO, 2021). Building upon this vision, UNESCO's "Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development" (UNESCO 2023 Recommendation) highlights the centrality of education's transformative potential, calling for learning that fosters critical thinking, empathy, cooperation, and action-oriented engagement among learners (UNESCO, 2023). A notable and widely implemented example of this approach is Global Citizenship Education (GCED), which promotes values-based, participatory, and action-oriented approaches to learning. As a priority area for the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding under the auspices of UNESCO (APCEIU), GCED demonstrates how transformative education principles can be reflected in curriculum, pedagogy, and classroom practice. Its focus on developing learners' ability to reflect critically, engage empathetically, and act responsibly also raises critical questions about how such outcomes can be meaningfully assessed across diverse educational systems and contexts.

In alignment with this transformative vision, assessment must also be reimagined, not only in terms of what we assess, but how and why we assess. Traditional models of evaluation that are typically designed to measure learning outcomes through summative assessments and standardised testing have primarily served to certify achievement and ensure accountability. While these models continue to play an important role, they are often less equipped to capture the continuous processes of learner development, critical thinking, and socio-emotional growth. In response to these gaps, more recent approaches try to be formative and integrate assessment into the learning process itself, which allows learners to reflect and take greater ownership of their learning. Moving beyond viewing assessment as merely an endpoint measurement, these perspectives underline its role in guiding, deepening, and sustaining transformative learning throughout its whole process. This broader view on assessment stresses its potential to expand engagement, nurture holistic competencies, and ultimately strengthen the broader goals of transformative education.

While these formative approaches offer promising pathways, there are significant challenges at the same time. Capturing complex, non-cognitive outcomes, such as empathy, civic responsibility, and collaboration, requires context-sensitive and innovative frameworks that go beyond conventional methods. Designing assessments that are inclusive, sensitive to different contexts, and aligned with transformative education's goals necessitates a deeper examination of the meaning, purposes, and methods of assessment, as well as careful adaptation to local environments. Integrating these assessment approaches systemically remains an ongoing endeavour, calling for greater recognition of their role in fostering transformative education.

In response to these imperatives, this Expert Meeting was convened to critically explore emerging ideas, reflect on ongoing challenges, and chart future directions for evaluation in transformative education. By bringing together diverse experts, researchers, and practitioners from around the world, the Meeting aimed to facilitate the meaningful exchange of ideas and propose strategic directions for advancing assessment practices that better support the visions of transformative education. Through this dialogue, the Meeting also sought to shape discussions and new ideas around the post-2030 education agenda, reinforcing the role of assessment as a catalyst for deeper engagement and sustainable learning transformation.

Objectives

- To reaffirm the role of assessment as a catalyst for advancing transformative education, particularly in supporting holistic learner development
- To reflect on and examine diverse approaches to assessment, including formative and integrative practices, and their alignment with the aims of transformative education
- To facilitate dialogue and knowledge exchange among experts, researchers, and practitioners on innovative practices and challenges in assessing transformative education
- To propose strategic directions for strengthening evaluation and assessment practices that can better capture and support transformative learning outcomes across diverse contexts

Date and Venue

- Dates: 2–3 July 2025
- Venue: APCEIU (Seoul, Republic of Korea)

Organiser

- Organiser: APCEIU

Participants

- 14 international participants from 12 countries, including researchers, experts in assessment and transformative education, and policymakers from academic institutions and government agencies responsible for curriculum and evaluation

Programme Schedule

Day 1 (2 July)	
9:30–10:00	Registration
10:00–10:30	Opening Session - Welcome and Opening Remarks - Presentation of the agenda
10:30–11:00	Session 1: Rethinking the Role of Assessment in Transformative Education
13:00–14:30	Session 2: Mapping Emerging Landscapes in Assessment for Transformative Education
15:00–17:00	Session 3: From Practice to Insight: Reflecting on Implementation of Assessment for Transformative Education
17:00–17:20	Reflections on Day 1
Day 2 (3 July)	
9:30–12:00	Session 4: Exploring System-Level Enablers and Constraints
13:30–14:30	Session 5: Framing Strategic Directions for the Future of Assessment
14:30–15:00	Closing Session

Annex 2 – List of Participating Experts

#	Name	Position	Organisation
1	Aida Kuandykovna Abilyakimova	Chief Expert	Center for Strategy and Analytics – National Academy of Education named after Y. Altynsarin, Kazakhstan
2	Anil Kanjee	Professor	Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa
3	Asman Osiche Amaunda	Principal Examinations Officer	Kenya National Examinations Council, Kenya
4	David Rutkowski	Professor	Indiana University, United States of America
5	Esther Care	Professorial Fellow	The University of Melbourne, Australia
6	Genevieve Mensah	Principal Curriculum Development Officer	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA), Ghana
7	Giang Thi Huong Tran	Vice Director	Research Division on Educational Assessment (RDEA) – Vietnam National Institute of Educational Science (VNIES), Vietnam
8	Hyewon Chung	Professor	Chungnam National University, Republic of Korea
9	Kah Loong Chue	Senior Lecturer	National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
10	María José Ramírez	Owner and CEO	EduMetrica, United States of America
11	Maricris Bandiola Acido-Muega	Professor	Philosophy of Education and Values Education, College of Education, University of the Philippines Diliman, The Philippines
12	Soojin Kim	Research Fellow	Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE), Republic of Korea
13	Toshiko Kamei	Senior Research Fellow	The University of Melbourne, Australia
14	Zi Yan	Head, Department of Curriculum and Instruction	The Education University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

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