

POLICY & PRACTICE

A Development Education Review

COVID-19 and Development Education

ISSN:1748-135X



The Centre for Global Education recently circulated a call for short articles exploring the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on development education practice and how we can respond to the pandemic as practitioners. The following articles have been received offering a range of perspectives that will hopefully inform your practice and provoke debate.

We extend our thanks to all of the contributors for their reflections.



www.centreforglobaleducation.com
www.developmenteducationreview.com



Contents

Eilish Dillon (Poetry and Development Education)	3
Anne Dolan (Covid 19: Lessons for Climate Change)	4
Vicky Donnelly (Now is the Time to Carve out a Space for Public Dialogue)	5
Áine Ferris (COVID-19: Developments in Development Education)	6
Navniit Gandhi (A Turning Point ...)	7
Su-ming Khoo (The COVID-19 Pandemic and Lessons from Global Citizenship and Development Education)	8
Gabriela Martínez Sainz and Daniel Capistrano (Creating Virtual Spaces for Meaningful Development Education in Higher Education)	9
Gerard McCann (COVID-19, Global Inequality and Learning)	11
Stephen McCloskey (Finding the <i>Root Cause</i> of COVID-19)	12
Peta Myers (The Covid-19 Pandemic, Protests and a Pedagogy of Care)	13
Okuntade Japhet Omolere and Ebimomi Oluwafemi Ebiseni (Facing the Reality of Change Beyond COVID-19)	14
Johannes Schrön (The pandemic sheds light on what's wrong with our economy and how global learning could help: An example from Germany)	15



Poetry and Development Education

Eilish Dillon

Throughout this pandemic people around the world have been singing and TikToking, trying to make sense, to understand, to connect and to be in solidarity with one another. Since the start of COVID-19, like many others, I've turned to poetry. While I have found it very helpful at a personal level, I've also been reflecting on the many ways in which poetry can enhance development education (DE).

At times like this, it seems to me that poetry can help us to deal with difficult and challenging realities while giving us hope. Early in March 2020, the Irish President, Michael D. Higgins, tweeted a poem he wrote in 1993 called 'Take Care'. It includes the following lines:

"In the misery of the I,
in rage,
it is easy to cry out...
...for our shared humanity
Hold firm.
Take care.
Come home
Together".

Similarly, as the lockdown was announced in Ireland, the evening news on RTE ended with Derek Mahon's poem, 'Everything is going to be alright'. It's stark statements about death sit beside words of reassurance and hope:

"There will be dying, there will be dying,
but there's no need to go into that.
... the sun rises in spite of everything
... everything is going to be alright".

In both of these cases, we are invited to reflect on the 'misery' or 'dying', not to deny or ignore them. In facing them, there is also hope. Through reflecting on poems like these in DE, we can expand our range of experience, reflecting on our own while entering other worlds and

imagining alternative futures. We can apply them to the pandemic or climate change, violence or oppression.

Take, for example, the following phrase, 'when all this is over'. This is the title of one of Jane Clarke's insightful poems, written as part of a sequence in response to a first world war family archive. She describes it as capturing both longing and hope over 100 years ago and again now. It is also the first line of Eiléan Ní Cuilleánáin's poem 'Swineherd', a remarkable poem which opens us into a world of quirky possibility:

"where it gets dark early in summer
And the apple-blossom is allowed to wither on
the bough".

Reflecting on this phrase in DE opens us to not only imagining better futures - what we'll do or be or want after 'this' is all over (if it ever can be) - but it also raises questions about how we are living and relating now. What is the 'this' that we are experiencing? Is it grappling with poor Internet connection while facilitating online learning from the kitchen? Caution about going to the supermarket? Concern to be living in a Direct Provision centre or a refugee camp or about those who do? And who are 'we' in this pandemic? Are we 'in this together'? Are our loved ones residents in nursing homes or at greater risk of infection? Have we been living through plague and drought along-side COVID or through lonely funerals? Are we among those 'Black Lives' that matter?

Lines like this and poems like these raise critical questions and help us to imagine but they rarely provide easy answers. Maybe that's what we need now, more than ever, in development education.

Eilish Dillon lectures in the Department of International Development, Maynooth University.



Covid 19: Lessons for Climate Change

Anne Dolan

While Covid-19 crept upon us like a silent fog, we have had years of warning about climate change. Scientists have long recognized that carbon dioxide emissions and their resulting effects have been increasing exponentially. From a climate change point of view, there is much to learn from the global response to Covid-19. Globally we have emitted more industrial carbon since 1988 than in all of prior human history, utterly failing to flatten the Keeling curve—a graph that shows the ongoing change in the concentration of carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere. The results, which are now largely undisputed, are catastrophic. Rising sea levels, declining arctic sea ice, changes in precipitation patterns creating extreme flooding, droughts and more extreme weather events, such as heat waves, cyclones and tropical storms, are just some of the effects of changes to the global climate. Other impacts include increased acidification and warming of the oceans, decreased snow cover, glacial retreats and shrinking ice sheets. Each of these changes generate serious knock on effects such as increased poverty, homelessness, species extinction, conflict and migration. By ignoring the scientific evidence on climate change we are literally sleep walking into a global mine field.

There are a number of important lessons we can learn from Covid-19. States were able to mobilise an extraordinary amount of physical, economic, political and social resources to deal with Covid-19. A similar impetus in the long term resource mobilisation towards combatting climate change is needed. There will be many benefits from such investment including a greener, safer, more sustainable and humane society. A multi-billion global investment in green energy will not only save lives, but will be economically cost efficient in the long term.

The Covid-19 pandemic vividly illustrates the importance of the indivisibility and interdependence of all human

rights. To date, the poorer and most vulnerable in our society have been most acutely affected by climate change, but Covid-19 affects rich and poor, powerful and powerless. The burden of both pandemics must be shared across society in a fair and equitable manner. Both Covid-19 and climate change do not recognise geographical borders. The movement to a carbon free society must become an overriding political priority of national and international leaders. At the Paris climate conference (COP21) in December 2015, 195 countries adopted the first-ever universal, global climate deal. An agreement to maintain global warming below 2 degrees Centigrade was the official outcome. This commitment marks an unprecedented international consensus on the need to transition from fossil fuels within the next few decades.

The importance of international organisations such as the World Health Organisation was illustrated during Covid-19. It is now time to respect the advice of international bodies such as the UN and The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and international treaties such as the Paris Climate Agreement. Climate change deniers and polluters, such as the powerful fossil fuel industry, must be economically and politically challenged.

Anne Dolan lectures in Primary Geography, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.



Now is the Time to Carve Out a Space for Public Dialogue

Vicky Donnelly

When the economic crash of 2008 and the subsequent debt crisis broke over our bows, the development education community had something to offer. While the dominant narrative at the time was centred on victim-blaming, we-all-partied, and bitter medicine metaphors, groups from the global South and North with long records of campaigning for debt justice were in a position to shed light on the structural roots of our collective turmoil, and to sound the alarm about the inevitable impact of piling vast private financial losses onto the public shoulders. What about now? Is there a need for a public dialogue about how the pandemic has been handled, and what comes next? And does the development education community have something to offer to that end?

Without for a moment dismissing the suffering endured by many families, or the front line workers who continue to carry us through the crisis, these months opened a sense of possibility, and glimpses of new priorities, centred around public wellbeing, that simply did not exist before. Before this, it was easier, as many have noted, to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism. And then, in the space of a few weeks, things that we were told were simply impossible prior to coronavirus - even measures required for the continuation of human life on our planet - suddenly became a reality.

Conversations are now happening in private, with neighbours, colleagues, and amongst community groups, about how we hang on to what many recognise as the immense positives of this period? Should we be in a rush to return to 'normal', when normal was killing us? As the government roadmap lays out a path for reopening businesses, what kind of space is there for citizens and communities to collectively imagine and discuss the kind of 'normal' that would nurture us, and what plans exist to

determine how we might get there together? This space to create our own maps will not be made for us, but it is there to be claimed.

While many acknowledge that we will need to fight to retain these positives, and to push for progressive change 'after this is all over', others recognise that the moment to fight is now. The unique urgency of this moment is hard to overstate. The competing and incompatible priorities of business and finance on one side, and society and the environment on the other have been laid utterly bare. Many have been politicised by the realisation that workers - not entrepreneurs, not billionaires, not celebrities - and public services are central our lives and our survival. Conversations and consultations are happening at a local level, but the need for a society-wide discussion has yet to be met.

A broad alliance of groups from within the development education community, in collaboration with other community, social and environmental justice groups, trade union activists and other civil society groups would be ideally placed to open that space for a broad-based dialogue to make sense of this moment and to address these questions of how we want to live together on (and with) this planet. This sector has valuable experience and analysis of structural inequalities, gathered from around world, that could help build an understanding of the issues we face, and to critique the solutions being proposed. It could help us to decide if those solutions serve our collective interests, or if we need to propose our own alternatives. The alternative is to be spoken for, to be silenced, and to be told that a return to the injustices, inequalities, and ecocide of 'normal' is for our own good.

Vicky Donnelly is the Education Co-ordinator of the Galway One World Centre.



COVID-19: Developments in Development Education

Áine Ferris

It has been eleven weeks since our team at Global Action Plan (GAP), like many others across Ireland, packed up what we needed to work from home, for what was thought to be a two-week lockdown. With our mitigation plans for the weeks to come, we did not envision the reality that COVID-19 would soon bring to Ireland. As practitioners of development education, we harnessed the current crisis to continue to work as normally as possible, while continuing to reach out to and support the groups we serve. We used this unusual opportunity to step outside of our comfort zones and adjust how we deliver our educational workshops, in order to maintain continuity.

Our 'Action on Global Citizenship' programme engages secondary school teachers and leaders with global citizenship education (GCE) through an environmental lens. In adapting to school closures, we swiftly reviewed and converted how we normally deliver our teacher training programme to an online format. Utilising resources like Google Slides, Slido, Zoom and Breakout Rooms, while benefiting from resources that the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) shared with their members, we delivered participant focused, interactive sessions in which participants were guided through the 'head, heart and hand' methodology of transformational learning. We have delivered five online webinars for teachers of GCE with 67 participants from all around the country attending. Feedback from these sessions noted an appreciation in having access to trainings like these, which are often only available in certain areas of Ireland and normally incur additional costs to schools (e.g. travel, time). We have learned how to better work and engage with these groups, but also those who we have not yet engaged with - an important

learning as we work towards the sustainable development goals (SDGs) together to not leave anyone behind.

As an environmental education charity, our GLAS Community Garden in Ballymun serves as an outdoor learning centre and safe social space in which to learn. We serve groups with varying abilities, skills, ages and backgrounds who are eager to continue their work in the garden. While the garden closed, it has not stopped GAP from making an impact. We are in the process of delivering gardening packs to nearly 200 homes in North Dublin. Support to these homes will be provided either via video calls or YouTube tutorials. Our focus is on supporting elderly members of the community and families with young children for whom these packs will bring the joys of growing to their door with the support they need to get the most out of it. These live tutorials demonstrated to community members that no matter what space or resources you have, you can still grow your own from your home. We are thankful for our funders who enabled us to send out gardening packs to these participants in order for us to continue to provide continuity, education and an activity that supports positive mental health.

The past few months have taught us the importance of pausing, reflecting and listening. In response to our adapted programmes, we understand the need to continually plan adaptability and inclusivity into creating educational resources and workshops so that we continue to serve the needs of our groups. We have received positive feedback that additional online resources and pre-recorded videos would be useful long-term which is something we now plan to continue to work towards.

Áine Ferris is Programme Officer with Global Action Plan.



A Turning Point ...

Navniit Gandhi

There comes a point of time in the life of an idea, an institution, a person, a field or even an experiment – when almost everything about it changes. Be it the reach or the face or the dimensions or the impact – much undergoes a tumultuous and paradigm shift. And so has this Covid-19 triggered turning points and redefined geo-political balance, economies, personal and professional relationships and even the truth of our lives.

As an academic in particular and a keen observer in general, my experiences during the pandemic have been vivid and far from uniform. First, the initial responses to the spread of the pandemic even as the educational institutions shut down, were filled with bewilderment as far as the recipients were concerned. Anxiety in terms of what the future holds and whether the course/ curriculum shall be completed, and exams conducted or not, prevailed. A tinge of euphoria as this long unplanned break (from going to schools/colleges) commenced, was visible too!

Second, even as alternate arrangements were made and online platforms erected and learning resumed, the initial responses were guarded and largely positive. Students felt that sitting inside the comfortable precincts of home, learning was less distracted. Notwithstanding the pressure of sitting for specific hours, there were no ‘disturbances’ and focus was better, the learners said.

As days passed by, education and learning assumed broader garbs. The horizons spread in terms of reach and wider opportunities to a wide number of people to ‘learn’ and ‘seek knowledge’. While working from home, a large number of adults including professionals found time to ‘learn’. One could easily choose and register for a plethora of online courses and pursue passions which were hitherto pushed away for lack of time and opportunity.

Webinars and online learning opportunities surfaced big time.

Thus, while ‘learning’ has continued unabated and with fewer distractions, a large number of new learners have emerged who are either seeking formal knowledge in specific areas or are registering for courses directed at self-empowerment, such as how to befriend one’s fears or how to manage one’s finances better.

But on a closer look, one finds an amoeba-shaped lacuna which is increasing in size. Something is certainly amiss. Even as a learner sits all alone in isolation on a chair and stares at a screen, and information is being imparted, there are no warm smiles on either end of the cold screens; and there are no unsaid-and-yet-understood glances and emotions between the learner and the teacher. The fun, the fights, the debates, the satisfaction of beaming and looking down at wide-eyed classmates when you are the only one who could answer...and many other joyous moments are missing. A sportsman may play in an enclosed stadium without spectators, but will it be the same? Similarly, the thrill and the fulfilment elude the online learning process...What shall the future entail? Will the human touch be restored and the warm halo that must pervade the learning process re-appear or will the technological touch rule the roost and we shall keep reaching out to large number of learners with a larger number of options?

Navniit Gandhi lectures in Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Kuwait and also at Gurukul, a skill-development centre in Kuwait.



The COVID-19 Pandemic and Lessons from Global Citizenship and Development Education

Su-ming Khoo

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone, but unequally - a point of reflection for development education in theory and practice. In times of national and global emergency, development education risks being side-lined as a non-essential 'luxury', but there are good reasons for arguing that it is absolutely essential. We must become explicit about what we mean when we talk about 'development education', 'global citizenship education' and 'global learning'. We should not allow impressions of vagueness to linger.

Development education engages with complex global issues, providing a model for thinking through the current complex issues arising from the global pandemic. The pandemic has brought to the fore troublesome and difficult questions about development, education, citizenship, sustainability and justice. While there is nothing new about these critical questions, they tend to float about in a watery soup of well-meaning(less)ness, rather than being explicitly articulated and discussed.

The SDG 'Dev Ed' Target 4.7 defines 'quality' education as education that provides learners with knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development and global citizenship, while reaching out to other forms of values-based education. The pandemic presents a horribly [confusing](#) reality that is genuinely hard to understand, but it also focuses attention on the necessity of human solidarity and fundamental values such as life, health, well-being, and dignity. These point towards common goals to prevent as much illness and death as possible, and the need to counter false and potentially [harmful information](#), even if this means citizens openly challenging leaders and governments.

Global citizenship education aims 'to support learners to

revisit assumptions, world views and power relations in mainstream discourses and consider people/groups that are systematically underrepresented/marginalized' ([Pashby and Sund 2018](#)). Government responses to the pandemic around the world have differed and the UK is under severe scrutiny for having [one of the highest levels of COVID-19 deaths](#) in Europe. The horrifying and heart-breaking reports of illness and deaths show us how helpful global citizenship education priorities would have been, if they had been taken seriously in pandemic response and preparedness. Governments and people could have done a better job if the assumptions, world views and power relations embedded in their scientific and policy models were critically questioned. A focus on marginalised and underrepresented groups would have shone a light on those who are more vulnerable, and unjustly so, including [black and minority ethnic](#) people, people facing [gender-based violence](#), [migrant workers](#), [indigenous peoples](#) and [low-paid workers](#).

Finally, the pandemic highlights the importance of thinking differently about sustainability and development, leaving behind development models based on '[unaimed](#)' economic growth, environmental pillage and social injustice. In its place, development education must advance a vision of sustainability based on just economic reforms, environmental restoration and investment in critical public services like health and education. Development education can better help transitions to a different future by being intentional and explicit about the world we want. Conversely, the pandemic has highlighted the relative neglect of fundamental health and wellbeing in development education. It is now time to make health central to development education's vision of justice and solidarity.

Su-ming Khoo lectures in the School of Political Science and Sociology at NUI Galway.



Creating Virtual Spaces for Meaningful Development Education in Higher Education

Gabriela Martínez Sainz and Daniel Capistrano

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, our graduate programmes moved towards an at-distance model of teaching and learning in Spring 2020. This change was an emergency response for what was called insistently but rightfully ‘unprecedented circumstances’. For lecturers on development education like us, the decisions made during the transition from face-to-face to at-distance teaching responded primarily to guidelines on safeguarding public health while caring about the mental health of our students and attempting to cover as much as possible the content established for our modules. The pedagogical principles of that transition overall reflected more a response to the panic a global pandemic caused ([Kamenetx, 2020](#)) rather than an intentional move towards online education.

As virtual classrooms are becoming central in the experience of higher education, we need to identify the key challenges for development education and re-think how we purposefully adapt to make the most out of the digital resources and possibilities. Our aim is to provide quality learning experiences for knowledge and skills development in the online environment while counteracting the preconceptions about online education as a less rigorous or meaningful alternative. Beyond logistical or technological difficulties, the main challenges we have identified are directly related to the pedagogical principles and aims of development education. First, our concern is to enable group activities and discussions that effectively build a community of practice ([Wenger, 1998](#)) with the capacity to transform institutions, communities and programmes through collective actions. To do so, we must create safe spaces for reflection and critical analysis of different contexts, including their own, that aim to

construct hope ([Webb, 2010](#)), challenge structures and influence decision-making. This second challenge we are facing is particularly relevant as we want students to have spaces in which they feel it is not only possible but even desirable to question their own professional practices and the practices of their own institutions. Third, we need to build a learning environment that encourages participation from all, despite the widening socio-economic gaps resulting from the pandemic ([Major and Machin, 2020](#)), so development education not only fosters collective actions among students but helps them to increase their political and civic agency.

To address these challenges, we are making changes to the processes, pedagogies and practices of our module in development education. We are placing intentionality of technology at the core of our decisions ([Newport, 2019](#)) acknowledging that the digital space is already a learning space. As such, we have to explore the possibilities and limitations of technologies and think of ways in which we can design different learning experiences for our students. Virtual field trips to different regions of the world, dialogues with international experts and development organisations or design and implementation of social media campaigns on development issues are just examples of how technology can help us and help our students to gain the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed. We are thinking of how we can apply the pedagogical principles underlying development education in a digital environment, for instance, focusing on lived-experiences and favouring a participatory approach means that we can use teachers’ and students’ pandemic experience as an actual context for exploring other social and economic crises.

Gabriela Martínez Sainz and Daniel Capistrano lecture in the School of Education, University College Dublin.



Creating Virtual Spaces for Meaningful Development Education in Higher Education

Gabriela Martínez Sainz and Daniel Capistrano

Finally, we intend to make extensive use of the new tools available in online learning platforms, such as surveys, forum discussions, or chats, to be aware of the challenges our students are facing on a weekly basis. By doing so, we are not only creating spaces in which their voices have a central place but also building upon their needs and concerns when we think about changes and adaptations using technology. We will work with them to implement alternatives that allow participation regardless of contextual difficulties, for instance, through quizzes,

polls, peer-review activities and online tutorials and student hours. The idea is to ensure that the alternatives we propose are inclusive, equitable but also interesting and relevant for our students. These are unprecedented times and, as such, we are embracing uncertainty and adopting a pragmatist approach to our module design. We are accepting that we will learn to design, implement and assess online development education in a global pandemic by doing it. Hopefully, we will have the support and input of our students to lead the way.

Gabriela Martínez Sainz and Daniel Capistrano lecture in the School of Education, University College Dublin.



COVID-19, Global Inequality and Learning

Gerard McCann

The pathogen, COVID-19, has exhausted its first phase in the richest and most advanced economies on earth with devastating effect. It has pushed the highly resourced health services of the global North to the point of collapse and has altered the life experiences of a generation. For educators, we are only just getting our minds around the scale of this pandemic and how it will affect society globally. Every society will change in its wake and people's lives around the world will not be the same as we adapt to what the politicians have labelled 'the new normal'.

As educators, we will simply not know the scale of the problem for years to come; we can only work from life experiences as narratives of how we lived through this time. But one thing we can be sure of is that, around the world, the most vulnerable people are moving into another humanitarian crisis – on top of that other global crisis – climate change. Some parts of the global South have had time to garner defence strategies having engaged with contagions of this type before, such as SARS, MERS, Swine Flu, ZIKA and, particularly, Ebola. We have a lot to learn from the life experiences of people in the global South, their coping mechanisms and the global interconnectedness that has evolved in the past months while dealing with the pandemic.

There is also the whole question of resource deficits and how that has impacted on health and social care, with some countries not having the basic medical or social support systems to combat such a virulent and complex virus. How do we act in solidarity with others facing what our region has recently went through? One pattern we can see emerging from the pandemic is that some regions have dealt with it better than others. Regions with aggressive economic models that rely on the private sector for health and social care, seem to be more adversely affected than those that have a prominent social economy. Regions where governments have had a focus

on a healthy society prior to the pandemic coped better than regions where the governments have retreated from public service provision.

In the current pandemic, a moral vacuum has arisen where global inequality and crippling poverty ('pandemic poverty') has been used as a business opportunity by many. For example, the number of billionaires worldwide increased during the first two months of the virus, with 2,000 of the world's richest people increasing their fortunes by up to 48 per cent. In the US, the growth in assets for the richest averaged out at 15 per cent through March and April 2020, which paradoxically mirrored the 15 per cent of people losing their jobs, the highest number unemployed since the Great Depression.

For those in education at all levels we have a moral imperative to confront the false truths, belligerence and dehumanization that has scarred our world. Education is about providing an understanding of the world through the lens of social justice, scientific truth and hope, and can only be properly framed when globally applicable. Development education can safely hold provenance in such learning and offers a model of education that can provide meaning to a world in turmoil.

Gerard McCann is Senior Lecturer in International Studies and Head of International Programmes at St Mary's University College, A College of Queens University Belfast.



Finding the *Root Cause* of COVID-19

Stephen McCloskey

Development education is [defined](#) by IDEA as ‘an educational process which enables people to understand the world around them and to act to transform it. It works to tackle the *root causes* of injustice and inequality, globally and locally to create a more just and sustainable future for everyone’. The emphasis is mine as I feel what has been missing from the response of our sector to the COVID crisis to date is any kind of analysis of why it has happened. There has been a similar studied omission with regard to the climate emergency despite [suggestions](#) that both crises – COVID and climate - are ‘inevitable outcroppings of the prevailing global economic growth model’.

Perhaps the most uplifting example of global citizenship in recent years has been the climate strike movement inspired by Swedish activist Greta Thunberg. The reason why she resonates so strongly is because of her unvarnished and passionate communication skills, and because she speaks truth to power. In a remarkable [speech](#) at the UN she said:

“People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!”

The phrase ‘fairy tales of eternal economic growth’, as O’Sullivan [noted](#), was a condemnation of ‘the neoliberal obsession with growth and profit’. In an instant, Thunberg identified the *root cause* of climate change and preceded to rebuke world leaders for their policy failings to mitigate global warming.

The DE sector has consistently failed to address this question – the connection between the neoliberal growth model and global poverty and climate change – despite problem-posing education that probes the *root causes*

of issues being our stock in trade. One of the reasons, I believe, that our sector shrinks from explicitly addressing this question is the extent to which it is invested both in policy and practice terms in the Sustainable Development Goals. Jason Hickel has identified a [contradiction](#) at the heart of the Goals between those that call for ‘harmony with nature’ and those that call for continued ‘global economic growth’. As a result of this contradiction there is a hard fact for our sector to accept. The Goals will not deliver on their agenda because they are seeking accommodation with the same tried and failed neoliberal growth model that is creating the problems that the Goals themselves are trying to address. Because the Goals are not addressing the *root cause* of these problems – neoliberalism – they can’t succeed.

But, hey, don’t take my word for it. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, [says](#) the SDGs are ‘seriously off-track’. Despite this fact, there is scarcely a murmur of criticism concerning the Goals’ efficacy in the international NGO or development education sectors even though they are so heavily invested in their delivery. And so the development sector stands at a crossroads. It can either continue to pursue the failing SDG agenda to 2030 which is almost certain to leave us in a similar or, perhaps post-COVID, worse position than we are in now. Or, we decide, without delay, to begin the long, challenging but overdue task of moving society away from neoliberalism toward a just transition to de-growth and a people and planet-centred plan for development. The choice, dear reader, is yours.

Stephen McCloskey is Editor of *Policy and Practice*.



The Covid-19 Pandemic, Protests and a Pedagogy of Care

Peta Myers

As lecturers move into new and unfamiliar teaching spaces, there is a need to move beyond it being ‘business as usual’, both for our students and for ourselves. There are obvious changes: lectures presented using different technologies; engaging with technology to a far greater degree; potentially not having a group of students signalling whether or not they understand what is being taught. However, this ‘different’ pedagogical space provides an ideal opportunity for us to rethink, at a deep level, the teaching and learning activities (TLAs) which we use when engaging with our students.

Student feedback has long been solicited to provide input to academics on how their TLAs are experienced. Feedback also provides students with a voice, an opportunity to express their thoughts, experiences and concerns. This is particularly useful for students who may not otherwise feel that they have agency within a collective. Academics engage with student feedback at very different levels. For some, this is a ‘ticking-the-box’ exercise, an administrative requirement and no more. For others, it provides an opportunity to contemplate how students experience their teaching, how to improve interactions and how to help students engage more effectively with the discipline; with the goal being improved student learning.

Taking full advantage of student feedback requires a certain degree of humility from a teacher. It means acknowledging that the TLAs we had planned were not perfect and, therefore, that as practitioners, we are not perfect. We are also acknowledging that there are, perhaps, many opportunities for improving our TLAs. In obtaining feedback, we invite our students to collaborate in the planning of future teaching and learning activities. However, obtaining one-off feedback from students,

whether half-way through the semester or at the end of the semester, means that changes are only likely to be implemented with the next group of students.

My challenge to my fellow academics, therefore, is to:

- Open up for debate the existing ways of engaging with students in their construction of knowledge;
- Use this opportunity to create new ways of being in our lecture theatres;
- Obtain feedback timeously, to benefit the existing cohort of students;
- Empower students with a voice which they know will be heard.

A successful transition to more collaborative teaching and learning spaces will require a pedagogy of care. It will necessitate discussions with students about how to make their feedback useful. It will require confidence on the part of students that their feedback will be received without prejudice. It will require humility and contemplation on the part of academics when receiving frequent input from students, always seeking out the pedagogical nuggets. It will require prompt interventions to implement useful suggestions which benefit our current students.

Finally, we should always remember to ‘close the loop’ by acknowledging our students’ voices; their contributions to the construction of knowledge.

Peta Myers lectures in the University of Exeter Business School. Email: L.P.Myers@exeter.ac.uk



Facing the Reality of Change Beyond COVID-19

Okuntade Japhet Omolere and Ebimomi Oluwafemi Ebiseni

COVID-19 came as a traveling light and has since kept the whole world on its feet with gross confusion across all sectors. The pandemic has exposed the level of unpreparedness by governments across the world for such a development. No one would have imagined that in a sophisticated age of the technology-driven 21st century, a pandemic would have forced the whole world into a compulsory holiday. Since the outbreak, this mobile and fast advancing planet has been brought to a standstill, halting work and creating great suffering from its adverse effects.

However, the uncertainty caused by the pandemic in the teaching and learning sector are fast becoming a global concern just like all in other sectors. Education all over the world has been seriously stalled as students now depend more than ever on the learning content given to them rather than benefiting from the guidance of, and physical interaction, with the teacher. This unexpected challenge has gradually shifted the social-psychological functions of the classroom teacher and made teaching and learning a personalised affair. During this period, the social activity of teaching has been breached. The ethical caring has been undermined while the empathy position of the teachers has been supplanted by a technology-based strategy for teaching.

In Nigeria's public-school system and that of neighbouring countries, school children are now under compulsion to learn from home despite having no stable power supply, learning devices, strong internet connection, sufficient data and adequate knowledge of technology. Where some private educational institutions are already using this period to organise online-based classes for their students, in order to make up for the rebarbative disruptions caused by the lockdown, this is not possible

in many public schools. Technology has played a vital role in achieving this. At present, schools are now connecting to their students via various social media platforms that support teaching and learning. Assignments are given to them to serve as a means of evaluation. This process, however, may lack the more nuanced feedback received in conventional classroom scenarios, where we, the teachers, receive instant feedback from learners with the opportunity to read the student's non-verbal reactions.

This development has caused mixed emotions and experiences in Nigeria. Technology-based teaching will be of tremendous benefit to both the learners and the teachers if we can develop the innovative technology needed to enhance the learning pace during this lockdown and classroom setting (after the pandemic). Therefore, researchers all over the world should endeavour to be more proactive in imagining a way forward in which teachers and learners alike can maximise online learning. COVID-19 will leave an unforgettable mark on the world map affecting the structure and calendar of teaching and learning process for generations to come.

Okuntade Japhet Omolere and Ebimomi Oluwafemi Ebiseni lecture in the School of Education, Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Oto/Ijanikin Lagos, Nigeria.



The pandemic sheds light on what's wrong with our economy and how global learning could help: An example from Germany

Johannes Schrön

At the end of January, the new coronavirus reached Germany for the first time and, since then, Covid-19 has spread in Europe and all over the world. Looking at the exemplary case of German car manufacturing during the Covid-19 pandemic teaches a valuable lesson about how global learning can help spark change in how our global economy is organised.

When many Chinese provinces imposed curfews and shut down non-essential businesses, it wasn't long until the impact was felt on the other side of the globe. German car manufacturers were hit hard by the decrease in demand for cars. In 2018, Volkswagen, the biggest car manufacturer in Germany, sold 40 per cent of their cars to Chinese customers, generating about € 1.7bn in profits in that market alone. When China ground to a halt, so did the German car industry. In February, production slumped by 10 per cent compared to 2019, and in March, it dropped by nearly 40 per cent.

In addition, German manufacturers importing car parts from China valued at € 2.1bn in 2019, soon ran out of parts and were forced to furlough workers even before lockdown measures were put in place in Germany. All of that was thanks to supply chains that are heavily globalised and rely on a crisis-sensitive, just-in-time delivery system.

This is an example of how people and markets are globally connected. Because of the way we have decided to organise our economy, problems like the coronavirus, but also climate change and economic inequality, can't be treated as regional issues. Due to our globalised system, they concern everyone and require a coordinated effort from us all. We can't pick and choose trade benefits alone

and ignore the negative effects of globalisation, like the rapid spread of this disease. One falling domino is enough to take down the whole row, as the German car industry shows. That is why it's high time that, consumers and companies alike, refocus on local markets and products - even if this means smaller profit margins for some. Production should be kept regional and consumers should pay more attention to where their products are from. This would reduce shipping emissions, stop exploitation of workers in developing countries, and make our economies more robust to crises like the current one.

Unlike Trump's ideas of protectionism, it should be a voluntary movement originating not from government authority and tariffs, but from common sense and foresight in each and every one. Enter global learning. It's imperative that the public is informed about how interconnected our world is, and that we acknowledge the vastly negative health, climate and equality implications of our globalised economy. Hopefully, mainstream economists and politicians will see the role that global education can play in informing the public of those devastating side-effects of our economic system, so that we may start consuming and producing goods in a more sustainable and regional manner - for the sake of economic stability, the climate, and global equality.

Johannes Schrön is an undergraduate student of economics at the University of Konstanz, Germany.
Email contact: johannes.schroen@uni-konstanz.de



The Centre for Global Education (CGE) is a development non-governmental organisation that provides education services to increase awareness of international development issues. Its central remit is to promote education that challenges the underlying causes of poverty and inequality in the developing world and effects action toward social and economic justice.

The Centre equips individuals and organisations to understand the cultural, economic, social and political influences on our lives that result from our growing interdependence with other countries and societies. It also provides learners with the skills, values, knowledge and understanding necessary to facilitate action that will contribute to poverty eradication both locally and globally.

Centre for Global Education

9 University Street
Belfast
BT7 1FY

Tel: (0044) 2890 241 879

E-mail: info@centreforglobaleducation.com

Web Site: www.centreforglobaleducation.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/centreforglobaleducation

Twitter: @CGEbelfast

E-Bulletin: www.centreforglobaleducation.com/ebulletin

Policy and Practice is funded by Irish Aid.



Please note that the ideas expressed in this document do not represent the views of Irish Aid.