Join in Online!

You can join in the conversation on Twitter with the hashtags #SGSedu and #NewEducationStory and see all your fellow Fellows on Twitter.

If you’re interested in writing either an op-ed style article for our website or the program report, or a personal reflection blog post while you’re here this week, please email your submission to Salzburg Global’s Communications Specialist, Aurore Heugas: aheugas@salzburgglobal.org.

Whether writing articles or Tweeting, please make sure to observe the Chatham House Rule (information on which is in your Welcome Pack).

We’ll be updating our website with summaries from the panels and interviews with our Fellows, all of which you can find on the session page: SalzburgGlobal.org/go/762-01.

We’re updating our Facebook page facebook.com/SalzburgGlobal and our Flickr stream flickr.com/SalzburgGlobal with photos from the session during this week and also after the program.

We will also be posting photos to Instagram instagram.com/SalzburgGlobal.

Use the hashtag #SGSedu and #NewEducationStory on either Twitter or Instagram and we might feature your photos in the newsletter!

@cmmillett: Thanks @louise_hallman for the #leopoldskron tour for @SalzburgGlobal fellows

Education Futures: Education Leaders Meet in Salzburg

Salzburg, Austria - Over 50 Salzburg Global Seminar Fellows representing six continents convene at Schloss Leopoldskron. These education leaders have only met twice online, but are now going to spend four days getting to know each other and coming up with ways to improve and reimagine education systems around the world.

The highly interactive program is structured around thought-provoking presentations, curated conversations, informal interactions, knowledge exchange, and practical group work. The process seeks to combine theory, policy, and practice across sectoral silos, opening up new perspectives and learning opportunities. Participants will also work intensively in focus groups, allowing for in-depth group work on key issues.

The program aims to produce a Statement or Manifesto for the future of education in this decade. This will build on the global research A New Education Story: Three drivers to transform education systems and could include pathways, commitments to action, and additional case studies.

Dominic Regester, Program Director, is hopeful about the outcome: “This program is really exciting for many reasons, not least because so many of the participants also lead education networks or are organizing other events that will or might connect with an Education Transformation agenda – I am really optimistic about the potential to develop a stronger sense of common purpose as we advance this work and the messages we can deliver to people who hold power and influence. This needs to be done without individual or institutional ego, so it is the message and the ideas which take center stage.”
Good afternoon! Welcome to Salzburg Global Seminar and to “Education Futures: Shaping a New Education Story.” My name is Catherine Millett, and I am a Senior Research Scientist and Strategic Advisor in the Policy Evaluation and Research Center at Educational Testing Service (ETS) of Princeton, New Jersey, in the U.S.A.

Shaping a new education story is an immensely important subject, and I’m excited to be here to explore it with some of the best minds in education.

But as important as that is, let me first say how wonderful it is to be back here, in person, at SGS, after a forced two-year hiatus.

ETS and SGS have worked closely over the past 12 years. In the beginning ETS was the sole funder of education programs. Our collaboration helped launch what is now called the education and work program strand, through which we have developed invaluable partnerships and friendships. We are delighted to have such partners as Qatar Foundation International, Wise and Porticus Foundation here with us. We are also thrilled to have new partners with us today — Big Change and The LEGO Foundation. And, we are excited to welcome back returning SGS fellows — and to welcome new SGS Fellows.

And congratulations to SGS on celebrating its 75th anniversary and on the appointment of Ambassador Martin Weiss as its next President... As it happens, ETS is ALSO celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, and will soon have a new leader.

I cannot wait to begin working with you on ways to address one of the signal challenges facing humankind: transforming education systems throughout the world so that they are organized and equipped to prepare every young person for THEIR futures — and for our COLLECTIVE future.

But no pressure.

Seizing the Opportunity of a Crisis

In the darkest days of the pandemic, many of us pointed out that for education, the flip side of the Covid crisis was the opportunity for TRUE transformation — for change beyond the incremental reforms of adjusting curriculums, test content, and professional development.

Will we lose that momentum and urgency now that the pressure has eased, and revert to norm? Has that already happened? Here’s how the authors of the Big Change report “A New Education Story” put it:

The drive to restore and reinstate what was there before the pandemic is understandable ... However, undeniable inequalities that existed in learning were also massively accelerated by the pandemic. In many places, gaps widened; progress was halted or reversed; and the impact of poverty amplified, adversely affecting millions of children — was laid bare for everyone to see.

Two of the authors — Caireen Goddard and Eva Keiffenheim — are here today. As they and their co-authors pointed out:

Education systems around the world are at a crossroads; a moment of huge challenge and opportunity when, perhaps more than at any other time in living memory, decisions made now about what happens next for learning, will have deep and lasting effects for the future.

Elements of a Functioning System

My organization, ETS, exists to create opportunity through research, assessment and the development of products and services to improve teaching and learning. That mission is what brought us together with SGS to develop the “Education for Tomorrow’s World” series.

The series has brought together researchers, scholars, educators, practitioners, policymakers and thought leaders from around the world to exchange ideas, learn from one another, and bring insights and ideas back home. What we have brought back to ETS has been invaluable, especially in such areas as:

- the use of test data to accelerate creativity in learning and societies
- the cultural and educational role of language learning
- education and workforce opportunities for refugees, migrants and displaced populations
- the impact of climate change on education
- and the fundamental importance of social and emotional learning

Those are among the hallmarks of a high-functioning education system aligned with the needs of the 21st Century.
At the same time, advances in the learning sciences and development of new technologies are opening vistas into how learners learn and think, and giving us opportunities to design assessments that support learner-centered learning; that are meaningful teaching and learning tools in and of themselves; and that empower learners with ownership of their lifetime learning journeys. Digital credentialing and comprehensive learner records are just two examples, and I hope we get a chance to talk about them.

But technology can also be a destructive thing, especially for young people still in the process of developing their sense of self and where they fit in relation to peers and the world at large. The human brain develops more slowly than advances in technology. The lag time is fraught.

In the United States, we are experiencing a sharp rise in teenage mental illness and suicide, a trend that predates the pandemic. It would be wrong to blame it on Snapchat, Tiktok, Instagram and iPhones. But there’s no doubt that social media and screen time are interfering with learners’ social development and emotional wherewithal, and creating emotional pain.

As our colleague Alex Beard puts it, “[I]n this age of AI, we’ve to turn our attention away from our devices and instead invest everything we have in developing ourselves.”

Transforming Assessment

If we are going to transform education, then we are going to transform assessment. For assessment to serve personalized learning, it needs to recognize that learners learn and express their knowledge and skills differently and in their own time.

At ETS, we are moving beyond high-stakes, summative tests, and focusing instead on supporting learner-centered, competency-based, and culturally and socially relevant teaching, learning and assessment. Personalized Systems of Instruction consisting of formative, diagnostic and instructionally embedded assessments have shown to be far more suited to the academic and workplace demands of the 21st Century than the traditional, hidebound systems of the past — more likely to strengthen equity, and more likely to promote learner success.

At ETS’s Policy Evaluation and Research Center where Michael and I work, we are developing several projects in this area:

- We are working with Vitae, a public charity in the UK, to introduce and promote use of its Researcher Development Framework in the U.S. It will aid prospective and current graduate learners in understanding the skills they will need to develop; document their command of those skills; and present their skills and knowledge to tertiary education audiences, employers and other important stakeholders.
- In the U.S., we are working with the Mastery Transcript Consortium to learn more about a rising movement to turn away from reliance on transcripts as we largely know them — dry, sterile documents listing course names and grades — and toward a more multi-dimensional, holistic reflection of learners as unique individuals, and the goals they set out for their learning — all in a format and medium that best conveys what they know and can do.
- In formative assessment, we are working with AREA9 Lyceum in Denmark to develop a new tool we call Abubble. It uses formative assessment questions and data points on engagement and metacognition to continuously assess both the learner’s knowledge and confidence; help determine what content the learner should meet next; what activity to deliver to the learner; and how best to help the learner when help is required.
- And finally, in higher education, we are collaborating with numerous institutions and stakeholders on improving admissions in the U.S. through such approaches as holistic assessment of applicants.

A Shift in Perspective

The starting point for student-centered learning, however, is not on an external tool or test. It is within ourselves: To transform assessment and education, we need to shift our traditional frame of reference — ranking and sorting students — to a learner-focused perspective and an understanding of the importance of learning how to learn.

Dr. Edmund Gordon, our frequent collaborator, put it this way in the 2013 report “A Vision for the Future of Assessment,” commissioned by ETS to help reconceptualize the entire assessment enterprise:

The pedagogical challenge will be less concerned with imparting factual knowledge and more concerned with turning learners on to learning and the use of their mental abilities to solve ordinary and novel problems.

Time for Change

In the United States as elsewhere, we have devoted enormous resources over at least half a century in the effort to achieve equity in education for ALL learners, regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, culture, family income or geographic location. And yet demographically based gaps in performance and opportunity — in school, work and life — persist, at great cost to individuals, families, communities and countries.

It seems that the current system of education has reached its limit in the ability to produce equity across population groups. That being the case, if and when the Covid-19 virus fully recedes, I hope that education and assessment aren’t among the things that return to normal. (…)
The dynamic opening discussion for Education Futures: Shaping a New Education Story saw panellists focusing on the case for transformation. The structure of the session and the questions the panellists addressed had come out of the online preparatory sessions two weeks ago. The discussion was framed as a big picture opening discussion focused on the moral, structural and human development case for education transformation.

Caireen Goodard, director of impact at Big Change, celebrated poet and spoken-word artist George Mpanga (George the Poet), and UNESCO senior project officer Noah Sobe spoke on a panel moderated by Salzburg Global’s Dominic Regester, dissecting questions related to the discussion topic: the case for transformation.

A broad topic, all the speakers considered different facets of how there is an increasing urgency around the need for education transformation.

Caireen highlighted the ways in which transformation remains a ‘human endeavour’, emphasizing that thinking about transformation requires a long-term vision. She spoke to examples of other participants’ work in this space, particularly Dream a Dream’s collaboration with the government of Delhi in India around the Happiness Curriculum run by, a program now integrated into the syllabus that emphasizes students’ mental health and holistic well-being.

This moved the conversation into a discussion about political economy and the kinds of cross sectoral partnerships that are needed. Noah said that “Education is deeply cultural, social, and economic’ – there will be a political economy component involved in education transformation and those advocating for it need to understand this. Thinking more broadly will equip stakeholders in education to come up with ways that work better overall. “To change how we do school and education, we need to change why we do school and education,” he said. Instead of discarding things that may not be working, look at ways to reimagine them. “We are not flipping the dinosaur, but changing the shape of it.”

George drew on his own experiences to highlight that school needs to reflect the multiple identities and histories of the population. “If you can’t get to the crux of what is not making sense, then it feels like school is distracting you from the real questions,” he said. George suggested that a blend of structured and unstructured learning, which invites students to engage with all parts of their identities and provide feedback based on that, will lead to more engaged students who are able to reconcile all parts of themselves at school, without having to separate who they are from what they do.
The Ingredients of Successful Education Transformation

Aurore Heugas

On Sunday evening, Andreas Schleicher, Director for the Directorate of Education and Skills at the OECD in Paris, joined a discussion via zoom, moderated by Anthony Macay, CEO of the National Center on Education and the Economy.

In the session titled What Works and Why? Ingredients of Successful System Transformation, Andreas outlined the importance of reimagining existing education systems to make them more holistic. As he explained, “we can achieve new goals within existing structures.” Following Andreas’ presentation there were case studies from Peru shared by Franco Mosso and from Thailand shared by Thantida Wongprasong.

The Áncash Effect

The Áncash Effect is a Coalition between public, private, and civil sectors with a shared vision and action to pursue sustainable educational system change. Huari, a small town in the Áncash region, scored as the highest quintile in delays in school attendance, while 6 out of 10 primary school students do not understand what they read and 9 out of 10 secondary school students do not master basic age-level competencies in math.

To address these issues, The Ancash Effect was created in 2017 and started out with trust-building, approaching students and families in 15% of the system’s classrooms, and implementing a pilot program on teacher professional development to identify local educational leaders.

After a year, students in intervened classrooms had already grown in their learning and socio-emotional skills indicators. Communities also started to have a new understanding of quality education. As their involvement grew, so did the initiative, and a new regional measurement system called the Regional Unit for Measurement of Quality Learning (URMECEA).

Since 2019, more than 50 student-led community projects have been created, which is the primary goal of the Ancash Effect. “Running programs won’t transform systems; developing relationships will,” explained the session panelist. The project values partnerships for adaptation and long-term results as opposed to forced rigid reforms, adapting to the specific region and the needs of its communities, rather than adopting projects that worked anywhere else.

The Learning Coin project

Another panelist presented the “Learning Coin” initiative, a UNESCO Bangkok project in collaboration with the Foundation for Rural Youth to support vulnerable youth in Thailand to pursue their studies.

In Thailand, there are 670,000 out-of-school children, many of them choosing to work to support their families financially.

The Learning Coin project created an app called LearnBig, allowing children to read over 1000 books and textbooks in multiple languages on tablets provided through the initiative. “Their daily reading efforts, including the number of reading hours spent, reading consistency and answers submitted via the application, are all logged and analyzed with the specific algorithms of the LearnBig system,” explained the panel participants.

These children’s activities are calculated with the aim of providing scholarships for their parents. Through reading and learning, students can earn up to 800-1200 baht (26-40 USD) each month, accounting for 10% of their family’s income. There is even a bonus available for high-performing learners, awarding them with a “growth bonus score.”

What started as a UNESCO pilot project expanded to an initiative in several Thai provinces in partnership with the Equitable Education Fund (EEF), along with more than 800 teachers, learners, volunteers and parents participating in the program.

So far, the main outcomes of the projects include improved examination scores from students who joined the program, 454 students were supported to read, and earned scholarships, although due to challenges increased by the pandemic, more than 50% of them are still not considered active students. What was noticed however, is the effectiveness of the financial incentive. The more frequent scholarships are awarded, the more motivated students are to read.

Although, according to the panelist, “for many students, a non-financial incentive such as encouragement, recognition of achievement and support from teachers are equally essential to the monthly scholarship.” So far, none of the 454 learners have dropped out of the project, according to the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. They continue to participate in non-formal education and are on track to receive a completion certificate from the Thai Ministry of Education, which can be used to enroll in formal education or apply for jobs.
Hot Topic: “What is the most pressing issue for the future of education?”

Mako Muzenda

“Since I work in the area of climate, I would say the most pressing issue is the conjunction of three crises: social, economic and environmental crises. I think that the climate crisis is going to shape our world if we don’t just act already, and that it’s going to have an impact on education. I would say those three crises.”

Lucia Vazquez, CEO, Educación y sostenibilidad, Spain

“The most pressing issue for the future of education is the future of independent thought. We are so reliable now on technology and digitalization that we completely forgot independent thinking. Another big threat to the future of education is the current state of mind of the entire world. Instead of us coming together, we’re finding more and more ways to divide ourselves. This is basically what we’re teaching our children.”

Aida Ridanovic, Director of Communications and External Affairs, Qatar Foundation International, Croatia

“I think the most pressing issue is that we need to redefine what foundational learning is. Currently it’s so focused on basic numeracy and literacy, and education cannot stay relevant if it stays like that. It needs to transcend that, it needs to include skills like Social and Emotional Learning, psycho-social support, arts and curiosity. It needs to be delivered in a more meaningful, responsive way.”

Gerhard Pulfer, Portfolio Manager for Education in Displacement, Porticus, Austria

“For me the biggest issue is teacher burnout. The ability for education to have the social benefit that is implicit in the activities of schools and educational systems is completely undermined as teachers lack the capacity, tools and resources to address the external challenges that they face, such as teacher compensation, agency and a lack of purpose. Burnout occurs on a psychological and emotional basis. This wave of burnout is creating a significant crisis that erodes the relationship between teachers and students.”

Ryder Delaloye, Associate Director for Social, Emotional and Ethical (SEE) Learning, SEE Learning, United States of America

#FacesOfLeadership

“The most important part for me is that education be for everyone. I’m really convinced that everybody deserves this chance, and everybody should have equal access to education. I come from Germany and access to education is quite easy, but what’s not taken into consideration is that people come from completely different backgrounds.

It doesn’t automatically mean that everyone can use that education in the same way. So my personal goal is that everyone is able to use education for themselves, that education is accessible for everyone, and that they understand how to use it and what to make of it.”

Jorina Sendel, Board Member, Lern-Fair, Germany

Read more profiles in our series of #FacesOfLeadership online:
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Scan this QR code and guess the word of the day! If you need a clue, that word is included several times in the newsletter...
COVID-19 Precautions

The health and safety of our program participants, hotel guest, and staff is of utmost importance to us, and we are taking a series of measures and precautions to protect you and all of us.

Thank you for helping to keep yourselves and others safe by testing. You are also welcome to wear a mask in group settings if that makes you feel more comfortable. For those who would prefer to participate virtually, a calendar invitation with a zoom link was sent to you via email.

In case you do test positive, please inform Dominic Regester (+43 664 7515 7246) or Corinna Nawatzky (+49 157 3013 7644) and call Reception. We will inform the local health authorities and will explain further procedures.

Education Futures: Salzburg Global Fellows Reflect on Power and Practice

Salzburg, Austria - On Monday, participants of Education Futures: Shaping A New Education Story looked at power and practice.

In the first session, Power: Nothing About Us Without Us, a panel of four participants reflected on the connections between power, agency, privilege and transformation through the sharing of personal experiences. Some of the big questions that emerged were: How do we change our relationship to power and agency? How do we learn to claim them, and how do we teach children that they have power and agency in their lives as well as in the classroom?

During the second session, participants turned their focus to how the concepts behind transformation education translate into educational work in Practice: What needs to change and how to change it? The session, led by a new panel of Fellows, involved activities from participants, including deep breathing exercises, Fist to Five, and a poem writing exercise. All of these with one goal in mind: practicing new ways of communicating and thinking.

After discussing power and practice (see inside pages), Fellows moved on to seeking solutions at the Solutions Café. During their last two days at Schloss Leopoldskron, Fellows will discuss the barriers to transformation and move forward with their collective action.

Join in Online!

You can join in the conversation on Twitter with the hashtags #SGSedu and #NewEducationStory and see all your fellow Fellows on Twitter.

@asmaalfadala: Day 3: of Education Futures: Shaping a new Education Story. What are the barriers to transformation @SalzburgGlobal #SGSEdu
5 Questions with Louka Parry

While attending Education Futures: Shaping a New Education Story, Louka Parry hopes to hear from his fellow Fellows on his podcast The Learning Future

Aurore Heugas

Louka Parry is the Executive Committee Member of Katanga: The Global Alliance for SEL and Life, and CEO and Founder of The Learning Future, an organization that supports schools, systems and companies to thrive in tomorrow’s world. He also hosts a podcast of the same name and hopes to hear from other Salzburg Global Fellows this week.

1 What is The Learning Future podcast?

The Learning Future explores what might be the emerging states of being, doing and knowing in our learning systems. And so we speak with the people creating it. They may be researchers, they might be practitioners, they might be entrepreneurs, innovators.

But really, what I’m most interested in is, you know, how do we pay attention to the promise and the possibility of transformation of actually, you know, shifting the way that we do things, letting go of the inherited models that no longer serve us. And so this idea of if the future is anything, it’s going to be one filled with learning. Yeah, right. So what kind of learning? Lifelong life-wide, powerful. Transformational. 

2 How did you come up with the idea?

I spent six years in public education in South Australia as a teacher and a school principal. Okay. And then I spent four years in a consulting company, a start-up, and then when I left, I thought, well, what now? What am I most interested in? And it was this. It was the idea of coupling futures with wellbeing and futures with innovation. You know, how do we tap into our real humanness? And I mean, so the work that we do at the Learning Future and the podcast is one of the things is that we work with school leaders, often school leaders and educators really to help support them, to continue that journey of learning to shift their own mindset in the school setting, because an evolving world calls for an evolving skill-set and evolving educator as well.

3 What were you like as a student?

Very creative, but also desperate to please. And so because of that, I found I did fairly well at school, I was just involved in everything, I was enthusiastic, and kind of the jack of all trades, king of none, and hopefully have evolved into jack of all trades, king of some. As a student, I kind of knew the game, I could see it and I played it, but I was still slightly confused why it didn’t work for some people and for some of my siblings in particular, it didn’t work very well at all.

Now as an educator, I can reflect back on that experience and see that traditional schooling forces us to cleave off some parts of ourselves. So we can’t show up as fully human. And I really hope, through my contribution, small or big, that we can return to being fully human in the way that we design our schools and our social systems.

4 Who are you hoping to hear from?

I want to hear from everybody. This is the great thing about being here in Salzburg, the diversity of thought, and the diversity from where people come, their own journeys and the roles they play. In my introduction, I said I’m interested in understanding transformation, but also allowing myself to be transformed. And so that’s really happened through being deeply present. There’s been some wonderful conversations that I’ve been a part of, and it’s like, what do you let go of? Your always hear ‘learn more things’, and I’m for that, I’m an educator. But it’s also about, what am I letting go of? What mental model doesn’t serve me anymore? What did I use to think, but now I think.

5 What have you let go of?

I really think at a personal level, it’s kind of my attachment to outcome, it’s almost like this very Daoist idea, we’re committed to our work and then we need to let it go. How do I do my best work and then let it go? And the idea of self-forgiveness. The idea of power and agency. It’s not just me having a good time, but I need to take responsibility for whatever communities it is that I serve and my own journey to be part of that change.
**Power, Agency, and the Future of Education**

A discussion on how to transform education puts people and experiences at the heart of change

Mako Muzenda

What does it mean to have power? And what does humanity’s relationship with power translate into transforming education systems and ways of thinking? A four-person panel discussion convened on the second day of the Education Futures program to critically reflect on the connections between power, agency, privilege, and transformation. Moderated by Vishal Talreja, co-founder of Dream a Dream, the morning session took participants through a space of learning personal experiences and analyses from Hugo Paul, Mavie Ungco, Romana Shaikh and Chris Purifoy.

Romana Talreja opened the panel discussion with a question: “What has been your own personal experience of encountering systemic values in your life?” For Shaikh, being a Muslim woman in India has undeniably influenced her relationship with power, agency, and change. “When we talk about systemic injustices, it’s not just something that happens to kids. It’s (systemic injustice) left an impact on me, I’m left dysregulated.

While we talk about the systems outside, I’d like for us to explore the impact it’s had on us on the inside,” she explained. After all, people make up education systems and processes, from policymakers and educators to students, parents, and guardians. Each person brings their own experiences into educational spaces, and these spaces in turn impart experiences to these participants. What would it look like for education to prioritize and value these experiences? What would need to change for every person in the system to have positive experiences, to feel safe, recognized, and appreciated?

For Mavie Ungco, the change all comes down to power and agency. Far from being rigid, the two are fluid, changing with different contexts and settings. Although she grew up poor, she had a home environment that believed in her abilities. This encouraged her sense of agency, but as she moved from secondary school to university, Ungco quickly realized that in order to negotiate being a university student in the Philippines from a poor background, she had to make a few changes.

As she puts it: “I figured out that there was a social capital that I could leverage. I had to speak a certain way. I had to act a certain way. I had to play the game first.” But even then, there was the question of why. Why couldn’t she exist in that space as she was? Why were people of similar backgrounds at a disadvantage in institutions of higher learning? Most importantly, how could she change that?

Using personal experiences to transform the system was a recurring theme for the panelists. It’s certainly the case for Chris Purifoy. Growing up in the American South, he had fewer barriers to access than other panelists, but his family upbringing and education influenced his desire for transformation. “My father tried very hard to pull himself up from his bootstraps. He’s my hero, he worked harder than anyone I know. But he never got ahead,” says Purifoy.

Hard work alone isn’t enough to overcome economic, social, and cultural hurdles: the future of education requires that everyone is on a level playing field and has the same access to resources and opportunities. It’s also vital that different strengths and areas of interest are treated equally. Purifoy was a creative

Continues on back page
child and creative student who didn’t exactly fit into the traditional professions that his parents wanted him to pursue: “I always followed a non-traditional path. It was only later that I realized it was my superpower.”

As one of the Youth Voices participating in the program, Hugo Paul was the last panelist to present his experiences. It was not an easy or comfortable process for him, but he’s grateful that he was able to reflect how he’s faced fewer systemic barriers and more opportunities. As he explained to the room: “Sometimes in a room, we have more or less power than others. If we want to collaborate effectively with a lot of continents, we have to process our own power and agency. The most important is to make that visible to others.” Changing power dynamics and encouraging agency in education have two sides. What will it take for those with power to relinquish it to those who don’t?

How do we change our relationship to power and agency? How do we learn to claim them, and how do we teach children that they have power and agency in their lives and in the classroom? The conversation between the audience of Salzburg Fellows and the panelists didn’t aim to find concrete answers to these big questions. Rather, the panel presentations and the ensuing Q&A were meant to get all the participants to stop, think and be open to change. That openness is an integral first step in transforming education into a more holistic and nurturing system that values the people and relationships at its core. From understanding the needs of different contexts to encouraging students to pursue different fields and making classrooms safe spaces for people of different backgrounds, the session can form the beginning of a shift in perspectives and focus – a shift of which the effects will be felt long after the program ends.
Putting Transformation Theory in Practice

How can educators put concepts into action? All it takes is some creative activity!

Mako Muzenda

Transformation is both theoretical and practical. After an insightful discussion about power and agency in the education system, the focus turned to how the concepts behind transformation education translate into educational work. It was time for another four-person panel, but it would be a little different.

After each panelist introduced themselves and their work, it was time for some activities. It started with Ryder Delaloye talking through an exercise on mindfulness and compassion, an approach that he works on as the Associate Director for Social, Emotional and Ethical (SEE) Learning at Emory University. Mindfulness is all about an “opportunity to cultivate emotional hygiene.” He wants the Fellows to take away the importance of training and developing a systems-thinking mindset centered on compassion towards others and the self. Defining compassion as alleviating the suffering of another person, centering a compassionate approach when working with others is important for co-regulation and advocating for a transformative agenda. Delaloye took participants through a deep breathing exercise, where he encouraged them to be aware of their surroundings, the people around them and themselves.

Next, it was Lisa Hanna’s turn. Her education journey could be summed up in one word: boxes. From being a student in a rigid schooling system in Northern Ireland to working as a teacher in Scotland for 20 years and now as Deputy Director for Scotland’s National Centre for Languages in the United Kingdom, Hanna strongly feels the need to ‘unbox’ education and explore what are more open, free-thinking ways of teaching and learning could look like. Her teaching background is languages. “Language is so central to your identity. I think we can all agree that we feel the need for that (educational transformation),” says Hanna. Her activity required some movement: the room was split into two, with participants who agreed or disagreed with Hanna’s questions moving to the left (agree) or right (disagree). Some chose to stay in the middle, which became an unofficial neutral response. Her questions were simple: were participants currently using their first language during the program? Did they use the same language in the office as at home? And are language and cultural knowledge inseparable? The activity’s goal? To get people to think about how much language works in and shapes different contexts.

Emma Green’s activity was Fist to Five. It’s an activity she does with her children, and with the students she works with. Her work as a Trauma Response Coordinator for the New Mexico Public Education Department in the United States focuses on advocating for the physical, emotional and mental well-being of students. She had difficulties getting through high school because of a system that failed to recognize her needs beyond textbooks and good grades. As she puts it, “I feel like I was distracted by questions that didn’t matter to me. How can we all start asking the questions?” Fist to Five asks students the important questions: from a fist symbolizing zero to an open palm being a five, how were the Fellows feeling that day? What headspace were they in? Each person had an imaginary talking stick, and everyone else would listen. The latter was just as important as talking. Giving people the space to express themselves shows them that they are valued and that it is a welcoming space for them.

The last panelist to present was Jigyasa Labroo, the cofounder and CEO of Slam Out Loud in Dharamshala, India. It was time for the Fellows to pick up pen and paper to write a three-sentence poem. Creativity is part of her life and her work. “Passion is a problem when children come from families where they can’t afford to be passionate. One of the best gifts I received growing up was the gift of art. My work is about creating safe spaces for children and them to tell their own stories,” says Labroo. She guided Fellows through the poem writing exercise, with the first sentence starting with an emotion of their choosing. Labroo chose love, starting hers off with ‘Love is...’. Then it was time to pick a color that best described them, and then a sound. For Labroo, this activity gives students the time to stop and really think about how they are feeling, and to express themselves in a creative way.

For all of the four panelists, the message was clear: putting transformation into practice requires new ways of communicating and thinking and giving students the space and freedom to express themselves and what they’ve learned. Small changes like a 10-minute activity can have a big impact on a child’s relationship with their peers, themselves, and their teachers. As the Practice session showed, change doesn’t have to be a chore.
“It may be useful to listen more to, and systematically collect, the voices of direct stakeholders, like the students. The children, the youth, who are the main beneficiaries of many of the interventions that we are working on. In my experience in designing projects or trying to advise policymakers, I feel like we could do a lot more about collecting the information from students about their experiences, their constraints, the underlying challenges that prevent them from learning well, and their general well-being.”

Koji Miyamoto,
Senior Economist, World Bank, France

“I definitely want to hear more of the teacher’s voices in education. I think a lot of the time we either go top-down with the policymakers, or we come from the parents and the students, but the teachers are the ones who are responsible for implementing the change.

And so a lot of the time we hear things and think, ‘that’s not going to work’, but we’re forced to implement it and we don’t have the teacher buy-in so that’s not successful, and then the blame falls on the teachers. But if they would listen to our voices more, then perhaps we could have better options.”

Janine Jackson,
Doctoral Student - Psychometrics, Morgan State University, USA

I’d really like to start hearing more teacher voices. I think we’ve had periods of time where we’ve been really concerned with student voices, and parents and carers, and policymakers we listen to all the time, and I think we are at a point in the cycle now to listen to teachers. It was interesting listening to Andreas [] saying that unless we get buy-in from the people who want to affect the change, and unless they feel ownership and that they are part of the planning process, it is always going to flounder and never going to happen.

Lisa Hanna,
Deputy Director, Scotland’s National Centre for Languages, United Kingdom

“So while education may not land us being the top story on the front page of newspapers, or the first thing they speak about, perhaps it should be, and transformation in education in education is really key to social change and to economic progress around the world.”

Michael Nettles,
Senior Vice-President and Edmund W. Gordon Chair of Policy Evaluation and Research, ETS, USA

“I think redesigning systems where the voices of girls, youth and women, are at the front and centre. Systems where we see the values, the culture, of these young people, reflected through their learning and educational experiences. For education, especially on the African continent, to be transformed, we need to continue with the process of decolonizing our educational system to one that mirrors the values of our young people, because we have adopted so many models from so many different places, and Africa has contributed to the world of education.

We need to build on that rich knowledge and cultural heritage that we have as a people, and continue to take it further to make it applicable to 21st century ideologies. So, we need to create a system where young people and girls in particular have the voice to tell their stories their way; one that mirrors their values and ideals, where they can excel at all levels of society.”

Patrice Juah,
Founder and Executive Director, Martha Juah Educational Foundation; Executive Committee Member, Karanga, Liberia

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Scan this QR code and guess the word of the day! If you need a clue, that word is included several times in the newsletter...
You can join in the conversation on Twitter with the hashtags #SGSedu and #NewEducationStory and see all your fellow Fellows on Twitter.

If you’re interested in writing either an op-ed style article for our website or the program report, or a personal reflection blog post while you’re here this week, please email your submission to Salzburg Global’s Communications Specialist, Aurore Heugas: aheugas@salzburgglobal.org.

Whether writing articles or Tweeting, please make sure to observe the Chatham House Rule (information on which is in your Welcome Pack).

We’ll be updating our website with summaries from the panels and interviews with our Fellows, all of which you can find on the session page: SalzburgGlobal.org/go/762-01.

We’re updating our Facebook page facebook.com/SalzburgGlobal and our Flickr stream flickr.com/SalzburgGlobal with photos from the session during this week and also after the program.

We will also be posting photos to Instagram instagram.com/SalzburgGlobal.

Use the hashtag #SGSedu and #NewEducationStory on either Twitter or Instagram and we might feature your photos in the newsletter!

@ryangawn: Duck-building, skills and playful learning! @rajdeep_rc has some fun @SalzburgGlobal #sgsedu #transformedingedu

@Corinna Nawatzky, Program

Salzburg, Austria - Wednesday marked the last day of Education Futures: Shaping A New Education Story. The last two days were spent first discussing all the barriers that prevent education transformation.

The last day of the program was partly spent with Fellows divided throughout Schloss Leopoldsbrunn into six working groups. The aim was to work through everything they had discussed during the week to develop ideas and frameworks to effect change beyond the program. During the afternoon, all the working groups convened one last time to present their findings and discuss the next steps as a group.

It is this approach of working together across all demographics, areas of expertise, and levels of experience that is crucial to change education in a way that creates the kinds of societies we need to survive and thrive in this century.
You've been a poet for several years. How did you get involved with Salzburg Global Seminar?

It was through one of my Ph.D. supervisors, Dr. Karen Edge. She's been a friend of mine for years, and she's constantly teased out my ideas about education and tried to find opportunities to plug me with a broader education network. So that's how I ended up here.

What is your Ph.D. about?

My Ph.D. is on all the unrecognized value that goes on in our day-to-day lives, taking black music as a starting point. So black music, like other elements of black culture, is born out of histories and language linguistic practices and geographies and migration. Everything we go through leads to this music. I've been fascinated by it because although a lot of agency has been taken away from black people in so many ways, no matter where we end up in the world and no matter why we end up there, we come up with these musical forms that take over the world time and time again, generation after generation.

When you look at it, what you realize is that music is our way of responding to society and to the world. And this is probably a superpower that we've inherited from our ancestors. In my life, I've seen music achieve things that no government has been able to do for us. I've seen it heal whole communities. I've seen it join communities that were otherwise antagonistic, and most importantly, I've seen it educate. I've seen it educate the world about the black experience. In my own life, it's educated me with the skill set to be able to create a career for myself, a career in which I'm able to educate in a creative way. I'm really interested in looking at all the value that comes out of this cultural practice and what that might indicate about unrecognized value in day-to-day life in general.

Apart from your Ph.D. and your research, how do you connect the work that you do as a poet and your background in music with education?

I use my poetry to try and model different forms of education. In the most practical sense, I impart knowledge from my podcast and poetry in general. I always use poetry as a vehicle to communicate the most pressing ideas I have on my mind. This really became clear to me about nine years ago when I did a poem for Formula One. I had to download a lot of information and turn the poem around in about 24 hours. At the same time, I was in the middle of my final exams at university for my undergrad. The process of taking in that information and turning it into poetic form was complemented by revision, even though they were different subject matters. That's when I realized that I could teach myself how to do this with anything and teach others how to do that as well. So there's the practical side of imparting information, but there's also this other thing. Haven't you always found it easier to learn the lyrics to your favorite song? Any text that you been presented with a course?

Yes, definitely!

We've all experienced that. What does that mean? What is it about this creativity that opens our minds that allows us to feel and retain better than other forms? Through my poetry, I try and show how my mind works and possibly how your mind works. I try to show a range of disciplines. I try to show that this is not just a niche part of the study of the English language. I have used my poetry to explain neuroscience, to explain probability mathematical problems, politics, and history. Those are the main ways it connects.

You were part of a panel discussion on "The Case for Transformation." As a Ph.D. student, a poet, and as a human being, what was it like for you being in that space and participating in that discussion?

Wow. It was a really validating experience because of who was here and because we were also sitting next to a roomful of experts, practitioners, real people, parents as well. I don't feel as established as many of these guys, but the mandate I gave myself was just to be my truth and try to help others with my truth. I felt like that experience was just that. It's something that I really wish for all learners.
I hope that through this educational journey, through that engagement, this space of education, they get a chance to make sense of their experiences, and they get a chance to invite others to connect with their experiences. That was one of the first things that we did at the discussion. I heard such forward-thinking contributions from my fellow panelists. And great listeners make great facilitators. It was such a great listening audience. I felt so highly validated, highly motivated, very hopeful and optimistic.

**What do you want to take with you from the program, and what do you hope you left behind for other participants?**

I want to take with me the awareness of all the good work that people around the world are doing because we were lucky to have an international staff gathering here. I want to retain that awareness and I want to see these conversations that we’ve had, these presentations, the seeds that were planted. I want to nurture those seeds and follow the thread. I want to see the combination of all this work. There are a few things I’ve tried to communicate. The first is the idea of the educator’s journey being premised on the lived experience. As with my Ph.D., I’m all about recognizing the value of the lived experience.

If we can establish synergy between our lived experience and analytical tradition, if we can do that effectively, we’ll be able to connect our lives with the lives of those around us. We’ll be able to think about our communities and our societies as a joined-up experience as opposed to, "my life is just my secret."

The role of creativity in education, I hope I’ve advocated for that. I really want us to do both tonight to really drive the point.

Decolonized education. Growing up, I always felt like that was just one of those unfair processes that have been left for black people to figure out. It’s actually everyone’s problem. One of the earliest points I made (at the panel) is that any system – but especially an education system – is undermined by these contradictions. If this is supposed to be about inquiry, how can we continue to ignore the legacy of colonialism? Imperialism is slavery. Everyone is implicated, especially in the West. I really hope I’ve represented these points. I’m optimistic because there were good people around the room today and the past couple of days.
Barriers to Transformation

Aaisha Dadi Patel

A panel of education leaders explore the potential barriers that prevent change in education.

Tuesday morning kicked off with a panel examining some of the issues creating hurdles in education reform. Speakers pointed to examples they have encountered in their journeys and work to uncover elements that have worked and elements that haven’t in different education systems around the world.

Featuring Alex Beard, Head of the Global Learning Lab at UK-based Teach For All, Sucheta Bhat, CEO of Dream a Dream in India, Gillian McFarland, Deputy Director of Education Recovery in England’s department of education, and World Bank Senior Economist Koji Miyamoto (based in France), the panel was moderated by Aida Ridanovic, the Director of Communication and External Affairs at Qatar Foundation International.

Systemic issues, attitudes towards change, and cultural idiosyncrasies were highlighted as some of the factors that can affect the successful implementation of strategies that aim to change parts of existing systems. Panelists spoke from their own experiences, talking about the failures they have seen along the way and the ways in which they have learned from them, in order to recalibrate the solutions to suit the contexts they are in.

Resource constraints, particularly in developing nations, present a number of hurdles when it comes to putting into place some of the potential changes that could adapt systems and benefit students. When it comes to evaluating the stakeholders in education systems, changing their roles and degree of inclusion, particularly at decision-making level, has the potential to build lasting change. By including parents and teachers in certain processes, and thereby giving them purpose in the broader system as opposed to viewing them as passive, participants may accelerate a lasting way forward.

An understanding of the purpose of change, and mindfulness of the context in which these changes are operating may unlock a more sustainable implementation of reforms, benefitting students in the long-run. While the cost of inaction is very high, the results of participation in an ecosystem will yield positive and lasting change.
Youth Participants Look to the Future

Aaisha Dadi Patel

Presenting the young leaders already shaping education today

Education Futures: Shaping a New Education Story saw a number of stakeholders from across the board come together to engage in discussions about how to look at and revitalize education, as we envision transforming education systems.

Key to these engagements were the voices of the young people present in the program, who offered critical feedback and shared their hopes and aspirations, speaking on how the work they currently do is leading them in the direction they envisage for the future of education.

In 2020, Jorina Sendel, 21, founded a non-profit organization in Germany, Lern-Fair, which provides free tutoring for students all over the country. This initiative ties in with her goals to see a more accessible education system, where education can be given to all people equally as a tool to help them progress in their lives. “Hopefully people can consider that people have really different backgrounds. And the way we transport this tool towards them must be different, due to their different backgrounds,” she said. While her work is changing lives, she wants to see it evolve so that instead of it dealing with problems in the education system, it treats “the origins of the problem.”

23-year-old Hugo Paul has a similar goal: accessibility. “It’s great to have more and more innovation, but it needs to become more available in a public way,” he said. A member of the Youth Council of the Learning Planet Institute in France, Hugo emphasizes youth consultation and involvement in decision-making at an organizational level across the board to highlight youth voices. Beginning September 2022, he will set out on a one-year journey to study and draw from learning communities worldwide, in places as far as Greenland and Nepal.

Jigyasa Labroo, 30, CEO and Co-Founder of Slam Out Loud, encourages children across India to use creative visual and performance arts to build their confidence. In her own words, Jigyasa’s work is “re-imagining what artistic education that enables children to find their own voice can look like.” Her hopes for the future? A world “where education that considers the voice and spirit of a child is no longer perceived as radical, where learning and joy come before knowledge and certifications.”

Across Austria, Switzerland, and Germany, Eva Keiffenhein, 29, supports first-generation students through her NGO, Speed Up, Buddy. Eva, who is based in Vienna, co-authored Big Change’s A New Education Story, and dreams of a future where children maintain their “innate love for learning.” For Eva, acknowledging schools as “learning ecosystems” will better foster children into living their true potential. “I envision schools that don’t separate children by age, that acknowledge different kinds of knowing and knowledge beyond our rational thinking,” she said.
Presenting the Future of Education

On the last day of the program, working groups share with and learn from each other

Mako Muzenda

After days of intense conversations, deep thinking, and fun activities, it was time to close the program with a presentation. Six groups, working both in-person and virtually, came together to share what they have learned, and how they have used the information and knowledge exchange from discussions and panels to come up with ideas and frameworks. Six groups presented the result of their research, conversations and planning.

3 Horizons: the three-person presentation started with an outline of the future, “The future I want for education.” The group aimed to “boldly go where no education system has gone before” by using the 3 Horizons model. The current state of education and the vision of the future represent the first and third horizons, with the second horizon being the transition phase. This horizon is the most important and is where most of the participants in the program currently work. The question they left for the room to reflect on is how to find alternative voices, marginalized people and different experiences in the transitional work to ensure that future vision.

Teachers: the group started their work by drawing on three resources: Children’s Health Scotland’s SHANARRI, the United Nations Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals. For them, the future of education must include the health and wellbeing of teachers, as well as making it an attractive profession. Positioning educators alongside students is essential for education transformation. Creating a statement focused on how teachers can feel appreciated and valued, the group emphasized that healthy, happy teachers are integral for healthy, happy students.

Youth: the group started their presentation with a question: why do we need youth in the process of transformation? Inviting participants to add their answers onto Mentimeter, an interactive presentation software. The main answers? Youths are the future, they bring in different perspectives, and represent the hope for a transformed education system. The next question: how do we include them in that process of transformation? The group established a set of seven principles to guide policymakers and educators in including young people in important conversations and strategic planning. Suggestions included inviting more students to programs such as Education Futures, as well as giving them room to lead in spaces for transformation. They ended their presentation with a challenge for the participants: to sign a pledge to include more youths in their education work and meetings.

Public engagement: what would public demand for a transformed education system look like? The group has some ideas. First off, a hub that would collect resources, strategies, and tools to build demand for education. There is a need for a collective demand and unified urgency by for example getting different stakeholders and groups to come together creates a unified front or tapping into the networks and experiences of organizations such as Big Change.

Our Shared Purpose and Call to Action: guided by the fourth Sustainable Development Goal and guided by the effects of COVID-19, a looming global economic crisis, and climate change, the group has decided a different way to move forward. Co-creation will be at the heart of their work, and they invited participants to contribute their research and perspectives to a shared document. The ultimate goal is to produce a call to action to be published widely, calling on political, social and economic actors to invest in transforming the education sector.
Hot Topic:
“What are the biggest barriers to education transformation?”

Mako Muzenda

“The biggest barrier would be ensuring that we implement and succeed in existing policies and learning outcomes. As much as we see the need to transform, we are stifled by the need to implement so that learners are able to pass and exit examinations. It’s still a system of assessment, and as long as we don’t change that, it’s difficult to transform. You want to change but you also need to ensure that learners perform. It’s the same at all levels, simply because we’re chasing to get things done and we don’t take the time to reflect on how to transform.”

Glynis Schreuder, Acting Director for Curriculum FET, Western Cape Education Department, South Africa

“I think the biggest barrier is the mindset that we cannot transform completely. It’s generally how we’re used to thinking inside the box and we are just not able to go out of it because of our experiences and work limitations.

We are to used to just thinking inside a box and we just do not realize the boundaries of that box, we are not able to break them. If we are able to see those boundaries, then I think we will break that and transform our education system.”

Vaibhav Jindal, Senior Consultant, Ministry of Education, India

“I believe the biggest barrier is the way we have defined success today. The success of the education system is defined by very narrow parameters that work for very few kids and doesn’t include and encompass the breadth and depth of the challenges that our young people are facing and the potential they have across the world.

If we were to only reimagine the purpose of education to thriving which includes all children, we could remove the barriers of what stops education systems transforming.”

Suchetha Bhat, CEO, Dream a Dream, India

#FacesOfLeadership

“What I believe the most is that we have to give room for dialogue. So often at the HundrED we are working with different education systems around the world. There are many similarities, there are far more similarities than there are differences.

They often don’t recognize that others are working with the same issues and there would be so much they could be learning from other policymakers and other systems when they have more time and space for dialogue.

We want to protect our education system from quick, ad hoc changes that are coming through the politicians and political parties. We should be seeing the bigger picture of what the purpose of education is. That should be the starting point for creating policies to take them away from the political space.”

Lasse Leponiemi, Executive Director, HundrED, Finland

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The LEGO Foundation has been an instrumental partner to Salzburg Global’s education programs, bringing the world of play to education leaders.

In 2020, the foundation came out with a report to answer: "Why does creativity matter?" The report explores different aspects of creativity and its importance for learning, from defining creativity itself to thinking creatively about assessment and ways to collaborate with international organizations for support, to name a few.

"All around the world, policymakers are looking at how to make learning more creative and transform education systems. So we spoke to five of them: from Australia, Japan, Scotland, Thailand, and Wales. In this report, we find out how they reshaped their systems to put creative play at the heart of the school curriculum."

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