



20 March 13:00-15:00 CET



*“Today, education is in deep crisis: a crisis of equity, quality, and relevance. Hundreds of millions of the most vulnerable children, young people, and adults remain excluded from education. **Millions more are in school but not learning.**” — (Report on the 2022 UN Transforming Education Summit)*

## Background

**Our systems are stressed and stretched thin.** In 2023, the global community faces the realities of a post COVID-19 world – a world facing climate degradation, tensions, conflicts, energy and economic crises, and the fear of more pandemics to come. Moreover, progress towards universal quality education suffered many blows due to school closures and disruptions to learning pathways. The pandemic put a spotlight on many pre-existing yet untreated issues in education, such as illiteracy, early school leaving, growing inequalities, relevance of learning, risks to mental health and well-being, and the question of digital transformation.

**Our schools face a dual crisis in learning and well-being.** At the Transforming Education Summit (TES), nearly 50% of countries shared their concern about lost learning while almost two-thirds of the countries said they are worried about well-being of their teachers and students. For schools to be **vectors for quality education**, they need to be happy environments where students are stimulated to enjoy learning. To prepare learners for success in a crisis-ridden world, what could transformative schools of the future look like?

*“The schools of the future, whether formal or informal, physical, or virtual, must evolve to become more inclusive, safe, healthy, and stimulating learning places.” — (Report on the 2022 UN Transforming Education Summit)*

As a key follow-up to the Transforming Education Summit, UNESCO is promoting the concept of [Happy Schools](#) to achieve these schools of the future. Happy Schools offers a framework for **transforming schools into stimulating places to learn, to be, and to live together** in an increasingly divided, digitized, disaster-prone world. UNESCO identified the key criteria — organized into four clusters of **people, processes, place, and**

**principles** — that governments and school communities should address to promote happiness in and for learning.

This webinar will share experience of school systems that are practicing Happy Schools and inspire others to start their own Happy Schools programmes to make schools more stimulating places where all enjoy and appreciate school, not only in the moment, but as lifelong teachers and learners.

## Objectives

On World Happiness Day, **20 March 2023**, UNESCO, in collaboration with UNESCO-MGIEP, will bring together experts, policy-makers, school leaders, students and parents in a 2-hour webinar to:

- Position happiness as a key lever for quality education by discussing the link between happiness, learning, and well-being
- Discuss the relevance of ongoing international and national efforts to promote and ensure happy teaching and learning environments for improved learning
- Increase political commitment to happiness as the foundation of quality learning and encourage the Member States (central and local governments as well as schools) to join Happy Schools in partnership with UNESCO

## Participants

Policy-makers, development partners, researchers, school leaders, teachers, and young people and their guardians.

## Format & session logistics

The webinar will take place on Zoom in English. No translation will be provided.

**Registration link:** [https://unesco-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_PH2sYO6nRLW0xCUW3aHYfA](https://unesco-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_PH2sYO6nRLW0xCUW3aHYfA)

## Key messages

- A happy, healthy learner and a happy, healthy teacher will keep teaching and learning – it's a clear **pathway to enjoy and continue learning**.
- UNESCO's Happy Schools Framework supports education stakeholders to position learner and teacher happiness **not as a trade-off** with academic learning, but rather as an **integral lever** for better and wider learning experiences and outcomes.
- In addition to cognitive development, learners' happiness and heightened social and emotional competencies are **crucial outcomes** of school, **not luxuries** only applicable in resource-rich contexts
- The Happy Schools initiative seeks a **systematic approach** to ensuring happy teaching and learning processes and spaces
- All school stakeholders should embody principles of **positivity, inclusivity and community** to combat the culture of competition that can cause anxiety and stunt learning, both academic and social-emotional.

## Draft agenda

Time	Programme
13:00 – 13:10	<b>Welcome and opening remarks:</b> Ms Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO
13:10 – 13:15	<b>Introduction to webinar:</b> Mr Borhene Chakroun, Director for Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems, UNESCO Overview of webinar agenda, vision, and objectives. Brief background on Happy Schools project goals.
13:15 – 13:30	<b>Keynote:</b> What is the link between happiness and better learning? <b>Professor Grégoire Borst</b> , Professeur de psychologie du développement et de neurosciences cognitives de l'éducation (Université de Paris), Directeur du Laboratoire de Psychologie du Développement et de l'éducation de l'enfant (LaPsyDÉ - CNRS)
13:30 – 14:05	<b>Panel 1: What do 'happy schools' look like in your context and why do we need them?</b> Impressions and relevant examples from countries and international organizations. <b>Moderator:</b> Gwang-Chol Chang, Chief, Section of Education Policy, UNESCO <b>Panellists:</b> To be confirmed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European Union</li> <li>• OECD</li> <li>• UNESCO-MGIEP</li> <li>• SECMOL</li> <li>• Kuwait</li> <li>• Project Everyone</li> </ul>
14:05 – 14:15	<b>Youth intervention and dialogue</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Ammaarah Martinus, UNESCO-MGIEP Francis Odhiambo, Kenya, SDG4 Youth Network
14:15-14:20	<b>Brief introduction to Happy Schools:</b> Satoko Yano, Programme Specialist, UNESCO What is UNESCO's Happy Schools framework? How has it evolved since 2014? How can we translate it into policy?
14:20 – 14:50	<b>Panel 2: What do UNESCO 'happy schools' look like and why do we need them?</b> Impressions from Happy Schools project implementors. <b>Moderator:</b> Juliette Norrmén-Smith, Section of Education Policy, UNESCO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portugal (7 minutes)</li> <li>• Viet Nam (7 minutes)</li> <li>• Yemen (7 minutes)</li> </ul> <b>Q&amp;A with speakers for remaining time.</b>
14:50 – 15:00	<b>Closing and key takeaways</b> Satoko Yano, Section of Education Policy, UNESCO