

## GNLC Webinar: Can open distance learning help ensure the continuity of lifelong learning?

UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

Date and Time: 6 May 2020, 13:00 to 14:00, *Central European Time*

Place: [Zoom Meeting Online https://zoom.us/j/94172987853](https://zoom.us/j/94172987853), Meeting ID: 941 7298 7853

The Covid-19 has been with us for more than four months now. What it has done to the world in this short period is beyond our imagination – [a third of the world population](#) has been under a form of lockdown, [91% of school students](#) experienced their schools closed, and as many as [25 million people are projected to lose their jobs](#). Indeed, education is one of the most disrupted sectors by the pandemic, especially school (formal) education. Governments, education authorities, and development agencies have put their best effort together to ensure the continuity of formal education during and after the pandemic. However, such dynamic reprogramming and reallocation of the education budget to respond to the educational emergency seldom extends to non-formal education and adult learning.

On the contrary, it became apparent in the past few months that the demands for new knowledge to deal with the unprecedented situation are higher than ever. From health education, digital skills, financial management, parenting skills, and to the ability to perform tasks under high pressure with limited resources, the current crisis not only demands that citizens have a unique set of skills and adaptability, but also places the burden of sustaining existing skills and building new skills in a post-pandemic society on the citizens.

Indeed, the brief periods of confinement have shown that adult education is a fundamental but mostly neglected component of modern societies. Widening inequality in skills and learning outcomes, especially among the marginalized, such as women, adult with low literacy, refugees, migrants and school leavers, will be inevitable if we keep deprioritizing this sub-sector.

Fortunately, there have been positive trends in using technologies to reach out to youth and adults in needs. With increased affordability and penetration of the Internet and smartphones, governments, NGO, educational institutions and even adults themselves use formal, non-formal and informal platforms to promote learning, unlearning and relearning of youth and adults. Low tech like radio and TV are also used to maximize the outreach of the programmes in resource-scarce environments.

This webinar will provide the opportunity to share promising cases from around the world and among the GNLC cities where models of innovative, open and online learning are being used to ensure learning continuity of youth and adults, with special focus on the marginalized groups. It will feature three brief presentations on promising practices from Asia, Europe and Africa, followed by interactive Q&A session (please refer to the programme on page 2).

## Programme

Time	Item
<b>13:00-13:05</b>	<i>Moderator introduction</i> Marie Macauley, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL)
<b>13:05-13:10</b>	<i>Welcome remark</i> Jonghwi Park, Programme Specialist in ICT for Lifelong Learning, UIL
<b>13:10-13:20</b>	Case 1: Open and online learning for marginalized youth and adults in Thailand Presenter: Ms Kamolrat Intaratat, Director & Founder, CCDKM, Thailand
<b>13:20- 13:30</b>	Case 2: GNLC 1 –Zomba City, Malawi Presenter: Mr Benson Bulla, Mayor of Zomba City
<b>13:30-13:40</b>	Case 3: GNLC 2 – Limerick, Ireland Presenter: Ms. Eimear Brophy, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, Chairperson of the Learning Limerick Steering Group
<b>13:40 – 14:00</b>	<i>Questions and answers followed by closing remarks</i>