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Global Review of UNESCO's Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet)

Centre for International Education and Research
University of Birmingham, UK

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Main Elements of the
Report of the
GLOBAL REVIEW OF THE
UNESCO ASSOCIATED SCHOOLS PROJECT NETWORK
Results, Recommendations and Conclusions



Review conducted by the
Centre for International Education and Research
University of Birmingham, UK

Executive Summary

1. This review was commissioned to examine the working and impact of the network of UNESCO Associated Schools after 50 years of their operation. Ten different research instruments (including questionnaires, interviews, observations, country and school studies and document analysis) were developed and analysed by an independent team from the University of Birmingham, UK.
2. The review collected information on the nature of ASPnet schools, finding huge variety in type, age level and community context as well as different levels of funding from very poor to very well resourced.
3. The report was able to catalogue a great range of projects and activities related to UNESCO goals. Twinning and other forms of exchange between schools were highly popular. National and regional events were also reported. Levels of activity varied, but levels of student participation were reported to be high.
4. The management of such a network is highly complex, with organisational structures at headquarters, regional, national, local and school level. National Coordinators are found to be key individuals within this management framework, and generally do an excellent job, but some lack time and resources to give the schools the full support needed. The attitude and knowledge of headteachers is also important. Transparency and equity in management processes were identified as issues .
5. Resources were examined, with those materials received from UNESCO greatly appreciated - albeit with an inevitable high demand for more. Many schools were inventive in raising their own funds. Schools also produced a wealth of materials around ASPnet projects. Nearly half the schools did not have access to computers or Internet, which has implications for communications and for student research.
6. At the *school* level, strengths were that ASPnet provided added value with gains in innovatory teaching methods, the climate of the school, intercultural understanding and language learning opportunities. Participation and exchanges meant an opening of horizons and an internationalisation of the school. Students knew something of UNESCO and even more on human rights and peace. Classroom work was generally described as participatory and stimulating. Schools understood the ASPnet concept of 'quality' and were engaged in activities linked to UNESCO goals. Of great importance to schools was the legitimisation which a UNESCO badge gives to the work in peace, rights, sustainable development and heritage. There is evidence of impact on the local community and many schools have UNESCO clubs. There was a multiplier effect, with surrounding schools being stimulated to emulate activity or join the network. Shortcomings were that not all schools listed in the network were active; not all submitted annual reports; principals and other teachers were not always knowledgeable and supportive. Materials provided by UNESCO were in limited language versions, and some schools do not receive them in their preferred language. Some schools misinterpret values and goals and therefore reinforce inappropriate ones. Principals and teachers often seem unfamiliar with the 'four pillars of learning' as advocated by the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century.

7. At the *national* level, ASPnet complements many national governments' efforts in promoting human rights, democracy, intercultural learning and protection of the environment. There was evidence of dissemination of many activities and teaching philosophies across a country. Horizontal exchanges across schools work well. Impact on national education policy is rarely directly evident, but there was some media interest and opportunities to promote the vision of the schools. Shortcomings are that the network is not widely recognised beyond its members, for example by the academic community. ASPnet may be trying to do too much along too many themes and therefore work might become unfocused; while schools can choose from among many topics, they can also avoid areas where they need the most development.
8. At the *international* level, strengths are that ASPnet provides a focus for activities around general UNESCO themes, raises the profile of UNESCO and has potential to serve as a laboratory for wider UNESCO projects. ASPnet projects a clear vision of quality in education, related to a distinct philosophy. It shows evidence of a spirit of voluntarism and committed hard work by stakeholders at all levels who accomplish this on a minimal budget. ASPnet represents a broad network across many countries and involving different types of schools. For poorer or more remote parts of the world, ASPnet decreases isolation and provides very useful materials and ideas. International exchanges and twinning work as well as could be expected given lack of funds and ICT. Shortcomings are that there is some lack of transparency or equity in terms of entitlements for schools, including materials, support, awards systems, participation in flagship projects and attendance at international events. Some information coming from UNESCO Headquarters Paris does not reach schools on time. Rapid growth in the network has not been matched by human resource allocation for the ASPnet international coordination team in Paris, leading to overwork. There is a misperception by some that ASPnet is elitist. There is little data and ongoing evaluation of ASPnet activities based on actual observation.
9. From the strengths and shortcomings, fourteen recommendations were made regarding the administration of ASPnet. These were that schools should re-apply to stay in the network every three years; there should be a clear list of entitlements for those schools that join the net; an information package should be produced for school principals; there should be an increase in staffing if the network increases; the skills and appropriate selection of National Coordinator should be emphasised; training in fundraising, working with the media and monitoring should be provided for National Coordinators; ASPnet schools should be promoted as being a good role model for innovation, in order to influence national policy indirectly; publicity on ASPnet should stress that it is not elitist, and much can be done with little funds; democratic processes for the selection of representative teachers and students for attendance at events should be undertaken; clear and focused language should be used that schools can translate into action, with less emphasis on the four pillars; up-to-date data bases of ASPnet schools should be maintained; links with teacher education and the academic community should be strengthened; and a continuous process of critical self-evaluation should be established in order to assess long-term impact.
10. For the future focus of ASPnet, schools agreed that the four main ASPnet themes remain relevant, prioritising them as protection of the environment, human rights and democracy, intercultural learning and world concerns and the UN system. Future

themes or priorities were for education for sustainable development, preventive education (HIV/AIDS, drug abuse) and education for youth leadership. This was followed by elimination of racism and poverty alleviation. From the University studies were added the importance of attention to special educational needs and to conflict resolution. Overall, peace education and intercultural education remained top priorities. This is also the view of the evaluation team.

11. At the specific request of UNESCO, a further and final section of the report outlines the review team's independent analysis of key issues and directions for the future. Seven key directions are pinpointed: advocacy of a particular emphasis in 'quality' in education; much more active dissemination of ASPnet philosophies and achievements in the national and international academic and policy arena; developing the research capacity of the network for outside transferability, for enhanced critical self-reflection and for impact evaluation; upgrading the role of the National Coordinator into a full-time, remunerated position with a more active management role, research role, lobbying role and policy role; developing project guidelines and materials for ASPnet schools to ensure they all tackle controversial issues; developing a kit for teachers on Democratic Teacher Professionalism; and supporting the ASPnet office in Paris with appropriate levels of funding and staffing to enable implementation of the above initiatives.
12. While the two sets of recommendations constitute a long list, they have been made in order to enhance the work of ASPnet and build on its already enormous achievements. The report commends its work and strongly supports its continuation and its strengthening. The network is unparalleled in the world in its current activity, in its focus on what is important in education and in its potential to drive new thinking. The report confirms that ASPnet is in a unique position to effect improvement in educational quality as defined by the areas such as peace, democracy, rights, sustainable development and the quality of life.

In the Annex you will find « ASPnet Country Profiles », summarizing the situation of the ASP network in 85 countries (out of a total of 172 ASPnet member countries), based on questionnaires received by the evaluators.

Strengths, Weaknesses and Recommendations

The review team has been very impressed with what has been achieved through ASPnet. The importance of the goals, and the variety and strength of impact, are to be highly commended, especially given the limitations of overall programme budgets and staffing, and the contexts of stringency in which the schools operate. A spirit of voluntarism pervades the network at all levels. Staff members in the Paris office are professional and dedicated, and the overall organisation framework is essentially effective. The following summary list of strengths and weaknesses, and the ensuing recommendations, should be read in the light of this overall judgment.

1 Strengths

1. Reinforces ethos and legitimises focus of activity in schools already supportive of UNESCO ideals
2. Provides a focus for activities around UNESCO themes in schools
3. Evidence of significant impact on most schools in the network
4. Encourages new and innovative teaching methods, and these can spread to Ministry of Education as well as other schools
5. Encourages the development of student leaders (where schools have taken this approach)
6. Complements many national governments efforts in human rights, democracy, intercultural and ecological education.
7. Provides language learning opportunities for students
8. Evidence of considerable impact in the schools' communities
9. Raises profile of UNESCO
10. Potential as a laboratory for wider UNESCO projects
11. Dissemination of relevant and well-produced teaching and display materials, which are well received
12. Flagship projects link world regions and provide welcome materials and ideas
13. Facilitates networking between schools for cross-national and intranational understanding
14. Clear vision of quality in education, related to a distinct philosophy
15. Breadth of network across countries and across types of schools
16. For poorer and more remote parts of the world, a decrease in isolation, and very useful materials and ideas
17. Able to accommodate a range of capabilities in terms of human and financial resources in schools (e.g. not purely web based – almost half do not have access)
18. Evidence of a spirit of voluntarism and committed hard work by regional, national and school co-ordinators
19. Accomplishes all this on a minimal budget, due to commitment by individuals and teams

2 Weaknesses

1. Impact on national education policy rarely evident. Variance in how far National Coordinators or other ASPnet personnel would routinely be consulted by government on educational policy
2. Network itself not widely recognised beyond its participants – e.g. by the academic community
3. Communication of ideas – especially around the 4 pillars – is sometimes imprecise and poorly understood by participants.
4. Limited languages of choice (insurmountable), but schools do not always receive materials in their preferred language
5. May be trying to do too much along too many themes, and therefore becoming unfocused. It is true that schools can then choose from among the themes and topics, but they can also avoid areas where they most need development
6. Some lack of transparency in terms of school entitlements, including materials, support, awards systems, participation in flagship projects, and attendance at international events
7. Some lack of transparency in terms of national co-ordinator selection and inclusion in international events and committees
8. Processes of selection and training of national co-ordinators have lead to inconsistency in time available, commitment and skills
9. Some schools misinterpret values and goals, and therefore reinforce inappropriate ones
10. Inactive schools drain resources and weaken the network
11. Rapid growth in the network has not been matched by human resource allocation in Paris, leading to overwork
12. Misperception by some as elitist
13. Little data and ongoing evaluation based on actual observation
14. Not all schools submit annual reports
15. School headteachers not always knowledgeable or supportive
16. Inconsistency in feedback to schools regarding their annual reports, and in terms of recognition of effort
17. Information not always received on time by schools
18. Research hampered by lack of up-to-date information on member schools and their contact details
19. Media dissemination and interest can be patchy

3 Recommendations

From the lists of strengths and weaknesses, we make the following recommendations. These are referenced by number to the lists above (S = strength and W = weakness) and to the levels of the network to act on each of the recommendations is indicated (I = international i.e. Paris; R = regional; N = national; S = school). Not all the weaknesses have necessarily led to recommendations, as this was not always appropriate. While there are numbers attached to these recommendations, these do not imply priorities for action, as this review feels all are important. The numbers are for reference only. The listing also does not imply any timescale, as some could be achieved relatively swiftly, while others are long-term actions. The view of the review team is that the prioritising of this list would be a task for the New Zealand conference and for future discussions at UNESCO. These recommendations are mainly about the administration, management, monitoring and dissemination of ASPnet,

rather than the substantive content focus of their activity; comments are made about that in the final conclusion and reflections for future directions.

Recommendation	Reference	Action Level
1. Schools should re-apply to stay in the network every three years to demonstrate continued commitment, activity, and congruence with UNESCO goals and philosophy. This will ensure a vigorous network which will probably be self-limiting in scale.	W10, W11, W9, S1	I, N, S
2. Create a clear list of entitlements for schools joining the net, and relevant examples of what they will NOT receive. Where not all schools receive an entitlement (for example in the case of some flagship project materials) make clear how schools are chosen.	W6	I
3. Produce a package for headteachers, providing information on the network and their role in it. The head should then make a supporting statement as part of the school's application process.	W15	I
4. If there is further significant expansion of the network, into new geographical areas for example, there must be a proportionate increase in staffing to ensure efficient management of tasks and reasonable workload levels.	W11, W17	I
5. Given the importance of the role of the national co-ordinator, make clear to the national commission the gravity of their choice, provide as much information as possible to ensure that they choose someone with the right skills, and that they allocate sufficient time and resources. Encourage the use of democratic processes.	W8	I, N
6. Provide training of national co-ordinators in fundraising and working with the media, as well as other aspects of their roles such as monitoring of schools' activities. Encourage lobbying to be on government consultative mechanisms.	W1, W8, W2, W12, W9	I
7. National co-ordinators give feedback to schools on their annual reports, including action taken. A form to be designed for this purpose.	W14, W16	I, N
8. Emphasise the effects of ASPnet schools being a good role model for innovation, rather than expect to feed into policy. The degree of influence on national policy will depend on context and circumstances, including the prescriptiveness of the national curriculum, the scale of the national network and the country, and the relationship with the ministry of education.	S6, S3, W1	I, N

9. Encourage democratic processes for the selection of representative teachers and students to attend national, regional and international events. Nomination and election should be on the basis of willingness to take further action on return.	W6	I, R, N, S
10. Literature and media publicity on the network should highlight that the network is not elitist, and that much is done with few resources and much commitment.	S17, W12	I, N, S
11. Use clear and focused language in materials, that schools can translate into action. Less emphasis on the four pillars of learning, as these are particularly problematic	W3	I, N
12. Ensure up-to-date details of ASPnet schools, for communication and research purposes. Keep the database on preferred languages updated, and ensure that the appropriate materials are sent. Allocate funds to facilitate schools and national networks to translate materials.	W4, 18, S7	I
13. Strengthen links with teacher education and academic institutions in each country.	W1, W2	I, N
14. Develop a process of critical self-evaluation of the whole network, including periodic systematic observational research by independent outsiders, to gain a realistic appreciation of what goes on in schools and long-term impact on the furtherance of UNESCO goals at the national level.	W13, W9	I, R, N, S

Conclusions and Reflections on Key Issues and Directions

The Outcomes of the Review

In order to conclude this review, we return firstly to the four expected outcomes of the review as identified by UNESCO, before presenting final reflections and key issues.

1 *Reinforce the role of ASPnet in meeting 6th goal of Dakar Framework of Action*

This goal is ‘improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills’. The view of UNESCO is that literacy and numeracy remain essential but that UNESCO also focusses on a number of areas where there is not sufficient attention: peace, human rights and democracy; education for sustainable development and poverty reduction; and improved quality of life. This review wholly supports this position and has found ample evidence of a unique contribution to these areas. Schools understood the ASPnet concept of quality and were engaged in activities which had impact in all three areas. Of great importance was the legitimation which a big intergovernmental agency gave to these activities, that is, that the schools felt they had the sanction to spend time and effort on them. The scale and scope of ASPnet shows that such areas can be tackled almost regardless of context.

There was agreement from the schools, the university studies and the regional report that important areas for continued focus were peace, rights, democracy, sustainable development and intercultural learning. Linked to these are current concerns about special needs/inclusion and HIV/AIDS. Heritage continues to be a popular area, with the materials greatly appreciated; the review supports this continuation, for it is sometimes less threatening and can provide an avenue into the more contentious areas for some schools. Yet this review feels that much support should be given to the fundamentally political areas around peace and human and children’s rights, *especially* in countries where this is difficult or likely to be interpreted by schools in problematic or counterproductive ways.

2. *Enhance role of ASPnet schools as centres of innovation, beacons of UNESCO ideals and bridges between schools in connection to the four pillars of learning*

There was clear evidence that the schools did act as centres of innovation – through teaching activities, community outreach, extra-curricular activities, the development of new teaching and learning materials, and demonstrating different ways of working with young people. This varied between countries, and innovation would be less apparent in already fast-changing societies; yet there was evidence that ASPnet provided ‘added value’ to nearly all schools. Student and teacher encounters did foster intercultural understanding, with ASPnet projects and philosophies providing a common framework for activity. Other schools did look at ASPnet institutions and emulate them; some wanted to join the net, others simply wanted to learn from them and share in their activities. The spread of innovation would be helped by mechanisms for the sharing of good practice – either through teacher education or through the media. This review has questioned whether the four pillars are overall a helpful concept for practice or for dissemination; while the statistical data imply high impact, written responses revealed some lack of understanding, and schools could not really relate to three out of the four. This review feels the success of innovation has come from the concrete and clear teaching practices

and actions which stem both from UNESCO materials and from ASPnet schools' own stimulating ideas.

While national educational policy in the broad sense was not always directly influenced, innovation was certainly felt and disseminated in teaching methods, in classroom relationships and the evidence of student activity. The emphasis on innovation should therefore be continued, with translation of materials into different languages enhanced (using the sub-regional model perhaps) and dissemination of good practice to other schools through newsletters and eventually the internet. It would be good to work towards National Coordinators or other ASPnet personnel routinely being consulted by government in formulating educational policy or practice.

3. *Strengthen ASPnet vertical and horizontal structure, mechanisms and tools*

The review found that horizontal relations worked well at the level of school to school and coordinator to coordinator. Exchanges and twinning worked as well as could be expected given lack of IT in half the schools and shortages of resources. Coordinators came together for meetings at regional and sometimes international level, as well as some providing opportunities for school coordinators to meet. The example of Jordan shows how regional cooperation can be built up, whereby materials and activities appropriate to the language and culture of the region can be developed. Vertical structures and linkages are working adequately, but there needs to be more attention to feedback loops (particularly to schools), to the timing of information and to the appropriate language of communication.

4. *Improve coordinating and programming structure, mechanisms and tools*

The review found that the mechanisms for application to join ASPnet were very suitable, but that reapplication after a period was to be recommended to ensure that inactive schools were 'weeded out'. Schools very much appreciated UNESCO materials, but there appeared to be some inconsistencies in the mechanisms of resource allocation and distribution. Programming through the annual calendar worked well, although information about events such as competitions did not always reach schools on time, and perhaps needs similar forward planning. The Review team has reservations about the network being driven by competitions, but many schools appreciate them and find them motivating. It would argue however for greater democracy in the selection of students and staff who attend events and in the selection of coordinators for various committees.

Reflections on Key Issues and Directions

1. *Introduction: The Promotion of Quality*

In the findings of this report, we have presented an extensive analysis of the opinions expressed by stakeholders in the ASPnetwork, and, based on this, made a number of recommendations for the continued running of ASPnet. Most of these initial recommendations do not have major financial implications, and all of them stem from specific findings in the data. In this final section, as requested, we go further in using our expertise and independent judgement to reflect on substantial issues and future directions for ASP. Some of these further recommendations carry significant resource implications, but we consider them worthy of consideration and further discussion by ASPnet, UNESCO and potential donors.

The Sixth Goal of the Dakar Framework for Action demands the improvement of aspects of quality in education. As already noted, ASPnet promotes quality not so much in terms of literacy and numeracy outcomes, which are well addressed in efforts by other agencies, but in what the Framework describes as 'essential life skills'. The Framework document also emphasises the importance of democratic processes in building a foundation for education for all, the key role that education has to play in preventing conflict and building sustainable peace, and the importance of active and relevant learning. Peace, democracy and human rights are the basis of ASPnet's definition of quality in education. ASPnet can and does facilitate the provision of these aspects of quality education and quality of life in its own schools, but has the potential to do more, and to act as a lobbying force to encourage such developments and essential emphases beyond the network itself. However, in order to fulfil this potential, a number of developments need to take place, as outlined below.

2. Dissemination

Much attention needs to be paid to dissemination and opportunities for wider dialogue. A network on this scale, which has so many commendable achievements, should be much more widely known, both within the academic world and in the policymaking arena. From the interviews with personnel in national ministries, there is considerable evidence that, in most countries, ASP is not sufficiently understood and is rarely influential at that level. It was clear that in many incidences the respondent had scarcely, if ever, heard of the network. In our opinion, national co-ordinators (and appropriate others) should be active in lobbying to participate in government decision-making through whatever mechanisms the national system allows; there is little point in waiting to be consulted. In terms of the academic world, if ASP wishes to be taken seriously in Educational Studies circles, it needs to put itself forward in, for example, academic conferences and academic journals. Delegates, including national co-ordinators, should expect to have their attendance at relevant conferences sponsored by UNESCO. Links need to be strengthened with universities and teacher training colleges at the national level, and we recommend that each country network should include at least one teacher training college and one university (a regional one if necessary). At the international level there is a need for active association with centres for international and comparative education, and institutions specialising in relevant areas such as intercultural learning, to ensure that ASP activities are part of the global critical debate and the academic canon. Internal meetings and conferences cannot accomplish this. We were disappointed in the process of this review that, with a few notable exceptions, there was a distinct lack of critical self-analysis among the respondents. Self-congratulation is good for morale but does not foster development, and it becomes very easy to fall into this trap when much of the networking currently accomplished is insular.

3. Research Capacity

The network also has wonderful, but underused, potential as a research population. Opening itself to the wider research community would facilitate the kinds of networking suggested above, and could lead to involvement in influential studies, and opportunities for exposure to truly cutting-edge innovations in education. ASPnet schools are already used this way by UNESCO departments, but the benefits should be extended to other relevant bodies (with due attention, of course, to the ethical implications of any such studies). The network would also benefit enormously from developing its own research capacity, again, to encourage critical self-reflection and

improvement. At the national level, all co-ordinators should take a more active role in monitoring the needs and capacities of their own networks, and how these interface with national education priorities. In order to know whether any impact has been sustainable, longitudinal studies are necessary; again, outside researchers could become involved in this. However, national co-ordinators should also provide mechanisms for alumni of ASPnet schools to stay in touch with the network, both to facilitate longitudinal research and to encourage continued involvement. We recommend newsletters and email networks at the national level, overseen by the national co-ordinator, with a view to both sustaining and measuring the long-term impact of involvement in the network.

At the school level, teachers and students should get involved in researching the impact of their own ASP activities. Instead of periodic competitions between schools, we would prefer to see awards for schools and individuals who can prove, through research and evaluation, that they have made a difference locally or nationally in terms of promoting and fulfilling the goals of ASP. We feel that the ethos of competitions is to some extent at odds with the spirit of the network; many respondents indicated that they enjoyed these but these responses tended to come from the winners, while many other schools were disadvantaged in these contests because of poor communications. A better way forward would be a continuous process whereby schools, individuals or even national networks could apply for a 'Making a Difference' award, which would place emphasis on impact (not just activity) and would develop research capacity among the young people in the network.

4. The Role of the National Co-ordinator

Emerging from these observations and recommendations is a role for the national co-ordinator which is increasing in scale and sophistication. We have already highlighted how the data from this review pointed to the current importance of the co-ordinating role. There was also evidence of widely differing working conditions and selection processes, and very different levels of satisfaction internationally in terms of the effectiveness of various national co-ordinators. The current situation, and future priorities as recommended here, demand a substantial rethinking on the recruitment, training and funding of national co-ordinators. We are advocating a more active management role, a research role, a lobbying role, and a policy role. These require very high degrees of professionalism, good connections within policy and academic communities, time, and resources. We would recommend that each country have a national co-ordinator or co-ordinators (depending on the scale of the national network) who is full-time and paid at a rate commensurate with their experience and the demands of the job, by UNESCO central or other sources if the national commission is not willing or able to provide this. We also recommend that each initial or replacement appointment be part of an open competition for an advertised post. Once in post, a menu of professional training should be made available to the co-ordinator, in areas such as using the media to promote the network. Distance education packages will need to be developed (or purchased) to complement training available locally or at network conferences.

5. Substantive Content and Focus

In terms of the substantive themes of the network, and the setting of future priorities, all of the themes and topics are clearly of importance. However, it was disappointing to see schools in countries wracked by civil war preoccupied with cleaning beaches, or

schools in regions marked by intercultural hatred concentrating on the preservation of national monuments. The menu of options allows many schools to avoid more pressing, challenging and controversial issues. This could be remedied by putting into place more specific criteria for a potential ASPnet school's pilot project and subsequent criteria for staying in the net; each project or reapplication must include efforts in the areas of human rights and democracy and/or intercultural learning.

To reinforce this emphasis, ASPnet should develop further materials in this area. All the current flagship projects are to be commended for their innovative approach and useful, stimulating materials. We would like to see a further flagship project, to include all countries, on Conflict Resolution. This should take an integrative approach to all the current themes and topics, using case studies at all levels from around the world. It should also constitute a resource for the professional development of teachers in the teaching of controversial issues. As a resource that not only provides teaching and learning materials, but also gives advice on teaching methods, it would need to acknowledge the cultural and political realities in which many teachers work, such as those who work under dictatorial regimes, and therefore provide a range of appropriate and developmental activities that involve varying degrees of openness and risk. This would help teachers working in difficult circumstances to build on the legitimization that involvement with UNESCO brings to their efforts. Ideally this highly sensitive and important material should be made available in all major local languages; this would be another role for the national co-ordinator, or the sub-regional office, working with UNESCO Paris.

6. *Teacher Professionalism*

Also commendable are efforts at various levels of the ASPnetwork in the area of teacher professional development. From the questionnaires from schools, there was a high demand for more training for teachers (and headteachers/principals) on how pedagogy should be developed and organised to match UNESCO ideals. For teachers, a further training kit on Democratic Teacher Professionalism would enhance their capacities in all aspects of their work, including their ASP-related activities. Such a kit should be developed as part of ASPnet's commitment to teacher education. Training seminars should be offered at the national level to support these materials, linked with teacher training colleges. At a minimum, these resources should be available to school co-ordinators.

7. *ASPnet Office Infrastructure*

All of the above recommendations entail extra work for the staff of ASPnet in Paris, and, as suggested in the previous recommendations, any additional volume of work and responsibility needs to be supported with the appropriate levels of funding and staffing.

8. *ASPnet Input into EFA.*

With regard specifically to Education For All, we confirm that the role of ASPnet concerns mainly the sixth goal of the Dakar Framework for Action, that of improving quality. The first five goals primarily concern access to education. Some ASPnet schools have been involved in working with younger and disadvantaged children (goal (i)) and with adult literacy (goal (iv)) as part of their outreach work, and this could certainly be suggested as a useful community activity; however, it would be important that this was not seen as a substitute for solid government policies in these areas. The

main role would be as a model for ‘quality’ education – that is, the focus on process rather than access. The ASPnet definitions of ‘quality’ and of ‘essential life skills’ need to be held up as a constant benchmark, that is, those skills focussing on learning to live together (locally, nationally and internationally); the knowledge and practice of rights; and dispositions towards sustainable development. Action would be in two places: within UNESCO headquarters to provide the ‘quality’ examples and research population for future projects and materials; and at the national government level, where UNESCO representatives (e.g. the National Coordinator) should be routinely involved in the National EFA Forums and in drawing up the national action plan for EFA, stressing the importance of such global citizenship as an essential part of the curriculum. For example, the third pledge of the World Education Forum, the participation of civil society in educational development, is directly linked to this: ASPnet graduates should be more likely to participate in civil society and work towards poverty alleviation. Involvement in national policy forums would enable the ASPnet representative to advise on at least five other of the areas mentioned in the FfA: how ASPnet schools work in education systems affected by conflict and promote mutual understanding; how they seem to achieve gender equity in ASPnet work; how they work around HIV/AIDS; the way they create safe, healthy, inclusive learning environments; and how they enhance the professionalism of teachers. It can be stressed that ASPnet schools do not receive a great amount of extra resources, but are able to achieve significant impact through the networking and the central support. Advice could also be given on the mid-term performance indicators of a national plan, that is how areas such as peace, democracy, rights, citizenship and sustainable development can be evaluated at a practical level in schools.

Finally, it is hoped that this Review can be used to continue the unique work of ASPnet schools, and that the further recommendations here will enhance the impact of the network inside schools and at community, national and international levels. The review has been able to provide a current snapshot of practice and of impact as reported by respondents, complemented here by our own reflections and ideas for future directions. However, further longitudinal and observation-based research would help to build a more comprehensive picture on which to base judgements on the directions of the network, while developing ASPnetwork’s own capacities for critical engagement with its goals and activities. We feel that this will create the best conditions for the network to meet the demands of quality education in the 21st century – and hopefully beyond.

Finally, it is hoped that this Review can be used to continue the unique work of ASPnet schools, and that the further recommendations here will enhance the impact of the network inside schools and at community, national and international levels. The review has been able to provide a current snapshot of practice and of impact as reported by respondents, complemented here by our own reflections and ideas for future directions. However, further longitudinal and observation-based research would help to build a more comprehensive picture on which to base judgements on the directions of the network, while developing ASPnetwork’s own capacities for critical engagement with its goals and activities. We feel that this will create the best conditions for the network to meet the demands of quality education in the 21st century – and hopefully beyond.

Review Team

**Professor Lynn Davies, Professor Clive Harber, Dr Michele Schweisfurth
Centre for International Education and Research
School of Education
University of Birmingham
Birmingham B15 2TT, UK
L.Davies@bham.ac.uk**

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UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet)
Division for the Promotion of Quality Education
UNESCO
7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP, France
e-mail : aspnet@unesco.org
www.unesco.org/education/asp

Africa

Botswana

Four school/college questionnaires were received from Botswana, from three secondary schools and one vocational school. Three schools were state schools and one was private. All the schools had joined in 2002 and it seems that ASPnet is relatively new and underdeveloped in the country. The previous national coordinator had resigned and the current one was felt to be overworked. Participation rates of staff and students in ASPnet activities seemed relatively high and students seemed involved in planning the activities. Schools had taken part in the observation of UNESCO international days, though less so in flagship projects and none was involved in twinning. There was a strong feeling that being an ASPnet school enabled it to do things that would not otherwise have happened and that ASPnet schools were different from other schools. There was correspondingly strong support for ASPnet themes and topics.

Cameroon

There are 52 ASPnet schools in Cameroon; the network is gradually becoming established. It is not yet well known among government officials, as evidenced from comments by the co-ordinator and two national inspectors who were interviewed. However, there is resonance between national needs and UNESCO goals. One example is that with over 200 ethnic groups in the country, education for tolerance and peace has very high importance; another is the importance of environmental protection against deforestation and desertification. There is a great deal of scope for regional co-operation in these goals. Schools would like to develop networks of communication nationally, regionally and internationally, through twinning and other forms of co-operation.

Central African Republic

There are a small number of ASPnet schools – 27 – and the National Coordinator would actually prefer that there were five. He describes a typical ASPnet school by taking a case study of a catholic urban primary of 1200 pupils and 14 teachers, that is a ratio of 85:1. Lack of political will constitutes a serious handicap to ASPnet in the country, as does general non-payment of teachers' salaries and teachers' strikes. Nonetheless some schools in

the net have managed to do good work around celebration of the international day of tolerance, and one school won a Peace Pillar Award. Most schools see the National Coordinator as helpful, although many say that they have difficulties getting responses and support from UNESCO, and seven out of eight said they had received no or very few materials.

Chad

There are 100 ASP schools of all kinds in Chad; there is attention paid to distribution of these schools across the country, and regional offices are in touch with schools as centres of innovation. A recent highlight of network is involvement in the Lake Chad project, along with Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria, and Central African Republic. According to the co-ordinator, UNESCO goals align very well with national priorities, and 'the network plays an integral role' in contributing to education nationally. Schools note that activities that fit well include those in environmental education, human rights and tolerance, through lessons such as agriculture, history and geography, and much is also done extra-curricularly. Protection of the environment for a sustainable future was rated as 'very relevant' by all respondents from schools. Students are actively involved in planning and conducting activities, and there are inter-school competitions in, for example, sports, drama and art. Twinning and other links are very popular both with schools within the country and with schools in neighbouring countries and Europe.

Congo-Brazzaville

There are 35 schools in the network in the Congo Republic (Congo-Brazzaville). In this post-conflict society, UNESCO has an important role to play in the areas of human rights, democracy, and intercultural learning. However, conflict has also made concentration on these aims problematic, and some schools considered ASP activities a welcome distraction rather than a contribution to problem-solving. Most of the schools in the network here are privately-established schools of modest means and size. Schools celebrate UNESCO days, and organise cultural events, some of which are spontaneous. Schools are keen to establish links with other schools both in and outside the country, although the ongoing crisis and lack of funds and information technology are challenges.

Côte d'Ivoire

In this West African country, there are 14 schools in the network, mainly in urban areas and the south of the country. The political conflicts in the country have interrupted plans for expansion. In this context of instability, and danger to young people, schools felt that the network had a positive role to play in encouraging non-violence, peaceful co-existence, and conflict management. ASP schools are seen as centres of innovation and excellence by all respondents, including a ministry official, and schools felt that they had an important impact on the community. Schools indicted their belief in the relevance of all ASPnet themes and topics, and they felt that they complemented the national programme well. The co-ordinator is keen to establish links with other countries. As with many other countries in the region, resources and communications are constraining factors but enthusiasm helps to sustain the network.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

In the DR Congo (formerly Zaire), there are 124 schools in the network. The national co-ordinator distinguishes these schools as 'open to the world and to its own society, that practices active and participatory pedagogy'; they have these in common, but they are from all phases and receive a mixture of state and private funding. Many of them are located in the capital, Kinshasa, although there are rural schools as well and there are hopes for greater expansion in this direction. At the national level, there are poetry contests and cultural activities. UNESCO days are celebrated actively by schools, and there are links between many of the ASP schools in the country, who come together for exchanges, conferences and debates. While there is little mention in the reports of the inter-ethnic strife and political conflict that the country has endured in recent years, schools do emphasise the importance of human rights education, peace education, and the promotion of mutual respect. These efforts are appreciated by the local community. Schools rate most highly as priorities the themes of protection of the environment and education to alleviate poverty.

Ethiopia

There are 72 ASPnet schools in Ethiopia. These cover private and state schools, urban and rural and include primary, secondary schools and teacher training colleges. The national coordinator is the Deputy Secretary General of the Ethiopian National Agency of UNESCO. All three responding schools were government state schools. Student and staff participation in ASPnet activities in the schools tended to be under 50% but there were signs of student involvement in the planning of ASPnet activities. Schools had not really taken part in flagship projects or twinning but had observed UNESCO international days. ICT was not used by the schools for ASPnet activities. Some examples were provided of how being in ASPnet enabled the school to do things it would not otherwise have done and how being an ASPnet school made the schools different from other schools, though two out of three schools thought that being in ASPnet hadn't enabled them to take more active roles in the community, to have an impact on the physical environment of the school nor have an effect on other schools locally. ASPnet activities were thought to fit well with the national curriculum.

Ghana

There are 130 ASPnet schools in Ghana. These schools span all categories of school in Ghana but there is a special emphasis on stronger and better resourced schools helping those which are less fortunate. The national coordinator does the job on a part-time basis and is also a Ministry official. The six responding schools were active in ASPnet flagship projects, twinning and in the observance of UNESCO international days. Participation of staff and students in ASPnet activities varied from under 25% to 76-100%. Respondents provided many examples of ways in which ASPnet schools were different from other schools in relation to UNESCO principles and values and there was strong support for the relevance and importance of ASPnet themes and topics. There seems to be high levels of student participation in the initiation and planning of ASPnet activities in the schools. Schools are hampered in terms of national and international communication through their lack of access to email and the web. Enthusiasm and the level of activity seems to be high despite technological and financial problems. Special attention has been paid to fostering close relationships with prominent local chiefs and politicians in order to gain support from ASPnet. Use of English/French was seen as a barrier to

Annex PROFILES

ASPnet COUNTRY

greater horizontal networking between ASPnet schools in Ghana and the rest of West Africa.

Guinea

Guinea has 32 schools in the net. Not all are active, as they are suffering from movement of teachers, and some feel the net itself is not 'dynamic'. Some have large classes of up to 70 pupils. However, some have utilised the kits on world heritage in the hands of the young, and on desertification. All schools and the two colleges mentioned that they were distinctive through their emphasis on peace and non-violence, and one said that girls' achievement had increased because of membership of the net.

Kenya

There are 14 ASPnet schools in Kenya and these are spread across different types of school. The national coordinator does the job on a full-time basis, seconded from the Ministry of Education. Three schools/colleges questionnaires were received, all government schools. The schools seemed active in UNESCO international days and in flagship projects and all were involved in twinning, though this was solely with other schools in Kenya. Students seemed to be particularly active in planning and organising ASPnet activities. None of the schools had access to Information Communication Technology. The schools were clear that being an ASPnet school enabled the school to do things that they wouldn't otherwise do and that ASPnet schools were different from non-ASPnet schools. There was general support for ASPnet themes and topics. However, the national coordinator felt that distances, language barriers and poor communications were hampering ASPnet activities inside the country and in terms of relation with schools outside. The Ministry of Education official who was interviewed had no prior knowledge of the ASPnet before the interview but in the light of his detailed comments it provided him with an opportunity to learn and he expressed optimism about the goals and activities of ASPnet, particularly in relation to literacy, environmental education and education for democracy and human rights.

Madagascar

There are 38 schools in the network in Madagascar; it is currently in a phase of

experimentation and expansion. These schools cover all phases of education, are a mixture of public and private, and are found in both urban and rural areas. Students participate enthusiastically in activities in schools, as evidenced both from the national co-ordinator's comments and the school reports. There are extra-curricular activities such as cultural events and sports competitions, UNESCO days are celebrated, and materials are integrated into Citizenship Education lessons. While communication with like-minded people abroad is not easy, due to limited internet access, schools are very enthusiastic about all opportunities to exchange experiences and especially to meet with people from other cultures. The unique environment of Madagascar has benefited from ASP environmental protection schemes, which include the community in school activities. A major national event for the network was the celebration of the International Day of Tolerance on 16th November, which received particularly extensive media coverage.

Mauritania

There are about 15 ASPnet schools in Mauritania; most of these schools joined in order to promote peace, cultural awareness, and mutual respect. It is considered a mark of prestige to be an ASP school. World and national heritage are key themes governing their work, and examples of activities include collecting traditional objects of art, and creating a museum. There has been media coverage of activities on TV and radio, including debates. These activities are well-integrated with the national curriculum, particularly within the study of history, languages and science. The national co-ordinator is keen to establish communications with other national networks in the region and internationally, but communications are not always easy. Similarly, resource constraints are a factor at the school and national level, but even so, much has been accomplished in promoting UNESCO quality ideals.

Namibia

There are 15 ASPnet schools in Namibia. Ten of these are secondary schools. Educational officials tend to nominate high achieving schools to become members of the ASPnet because of the innovative nature of the network. All the schools that responded had joined ASPnet in the late

1990's, as Namibia only joined in 1997. Teacher participation rates in the schools vary between under 25% to 75%, though four of the school reported student participation rates of 76-100%. Only a small minority of the schools had taken part in flagship projects but the figures were reversed for UNESCO international days where schools had participated in a great variety of events. Twinning had only occurred in two schools but the majority of schools that responded do not have ICT facilities. The schools felt strongly that being an ASPnet school enabled them to do things that they would not otherwise be able to do and that they were different from non-ASPnet schools in their values and practices. Students were involved in the planning and organising of activities through student representative councils and through clubs. ASPnet activities were felt to fit well with the national curriculum and the goals with the four main national priorities in education – access, equity, quality and democracy. In particular the Ministry official noted that ASPnet activities fit well with democratic participation and care for the environment. The theme of the culture of peace was important in Namibia which had a policy of national reconciliation. One principal remarked that being an ASPnet school was like being part of a big family as you can communicate with other ASPnet schools.

Niger

Niger has 55 schools in the net, across a diverse range – urban and rural state primary schools, private kindergartens, lycees and teacher training colleges. Two Ministry interviews shared the view that ASPnet schools were able to reinforce a culture of peace and tolerance, and were influential. The National coordinator felt that not all schools were active, and wanted to have future conditions that they would be coeducational schools and be active in relevant projects. The Desertification Kit had been very valuable, as had the materials on 'Nourish the spirit, combat the hunger', as these were relevant to the students' environment. However, the four questionnaire responses from schools did not mention these, and commented more on the problems of extreme poverty – broken walls, animals eating the garden, illiterate parents who could not lend support. They wanted far more support and communication from UNESCO.

Rwanda

Human rights, AIDS awareness and the environment are key UNESCO themes in Rwandan network schools. Student clubs plan and conduct activities around these themes, often employing creative arts such as dance and drama. These clubs from different schools sometimes meet for festivals and competitions. Given Rwanda's violent recent past, there are many national issues which relate extremely well to UNESCO ideals. Several schools consider themselves to be 'agents of peace' and promote peaceful co-existence not only among students, through lessons and extra-curricular activities, but within the community as well: 'a remarkable change towards reconciliation' was noted. There is optimism about the impact of these efforts, and, not surprisingly, all the correspondents indicated that elimination of racism and discrimination was 'very important'. The Education Secretary of State acknowledged ASPnet's contribution in this regard. Many children are orphans as a result of recent conflicts, and many children who have witnessed violence are helped to be more optimistic about the future through ASPnet activities. All these fit in well with the national curriculum, as these goals are shared with the ministry.

Senegal

Senegal has 95 associated schools, ranging from large established schools in the capital city to small rural schools, and the co-ordinator feels there is potential for further growth. There is evidence both from the schools and from the comments of the national co-ordinator that there is a lot of student enthusiasm for the ideals of UNESCO and the ASPnet activities. These ideals and activities also fit in well with national priorities and the curriculum, aided by a strong partnership with the national ministry of education. Very few schools have access to IT facilities, but some use internet cafes to facilitate research and communications, especially those schools which are linked to schools abroad, as far away as Haiti and Switzerland. There has been media coverage of activities, including a youth forum. Schools are active in World Heritage and the Transatlantic Slave Trade projects, and in sustaining and beautifying the environment around them. There is evidence of innovative learner-centred teaching, reported by a local consultant. Tolerance, co-operation, modernisation and dynamism were key words that

schools used to describe the ethos that has emerged through their involvement in the network.

South Africa

There are 36 ASPnet schools in South Africa, though not all are officially registered, as principals have not signed and returned the forms. These are mainly schools in disadvantaged black urban communities and in racially mixed schools membership is reported to be predominantly black. They are organised into clusters for mutual support. The national coordinator is part-time and is also responsible for a range of other functions of the national secretariat. Participation rates for staff and students in the schools was under 50% but students were actively involved in the planning of ASPnet activities. There had been some involvement in the Transatlantic Slave Trade Project and most schools reported being involved in observing UNESCO days and twinning. There were many comments supporting the idea that being in ASPnet enabled the school to do things it would not otherwise do and that this made it different from other, non-ASPnet schools. There was also majority support for the suggestion that being an ASPnet school enabled a more active role in the community, had an impact on the physical environment of the school and affected other schools locally. The national coordinator reported one learner as saying that being an ASPnet school 'Makes you more peaceful' and added that ASPnet schools have fewer discipline problems and the culture of learning improves. It was generally felt that ASPnet activities fit well with the national curriculum and there was general support for the importance of ASPnet themes and topics. There is a feeling that ASPnet is still not sufficiently recognised and supported by the Ministry of Education.

Togo

Togo's network consists of 97 schools, mainly well-established large schools in urban areas. Most joined to promote UNESCO's philosophy of peace and tolerance. Co-ordination of the network is delegated partly to six regional co-ordinators, who are able to monitor activities in their geographical area. The national network is also

actively affiliated with the West African regional group. According to the co-ordinator, girl child education is a national priority and there are also concerns about contemporary forms of slavery, and the network has potential to contribute to these. The ministry official also noted the parallels between the UNESCO activities and ideals and Civics Education. At the school level, students are very active in projects, both planning and participating. Schools mention the fight against AIDS, environmental protection and human rights as further areas of importance, and there are community sensitisation projects as well as those focused on the schools themselves. Schools generally do not have access to information technology, but much is accomplished through more traditional modes of communication, and there has been national media coverage of activities.

Zambia

There are 34 ASPnet schools in Zambia; however the national coordinator estimates only about 10% of these to be active. The national coordinator is part-time. Six schools/colleges questionnaires were received, all from state schools. The rate of participation of students and staff in ASPnet activities according to the respondents was typically under 50%, though students are actively involved in planning activities. The majority of schools had not taken part in flagship projects, observing UNESCO international days or twinning, though two of the schools had done all three. It was felt by the majority of respondents that being an ASPnet school did make them different from other schools in terms of espousing UNESCO values and being more internationally oriented and there was strong support for UNESCO themes and topics. Email and the web were not available in any of the six schools. The schools had been encouraged to improve their environments by planting trees and flowers, though one school had a problem with elephants eating them. Restructuring by the Ministry of Education and teacher deaths have caused frequent teacher movement which has hampered ASPnet activities, as has a general shortage of resources. According to the interview with the Ministry of Education official, the main priority in Zambia is access to education, particularly for girls, so this, plus the other problems referred to, have meant that the impact of ASPnet is not particularly visible.

Arab States

Egypt

Key participants in Egypt, including university lecturers, the national co-ordinator, Ministry of Education official and UNESCO staff participated in a round table to discuss the 'main challenges facing formal education in Egypt and the role of ASPnet in meeting them'. The discussion highlighted a large number of issues, including the growing importance of information technology, concern for quality and equity, and the democratisation of schooling at all levels. The ASPnet priorities are seen to support improvement in these areas. Egypt was one of the earliest member nations to join ASPnet in 1958, and since then the net has grown from 4 to 84 schools. These schools participate in many different activities, including international meetings and projects on peace, world heritage and the environment. Protection of the rich cultural heritage of Egypt and its ancient sites, and promoting respect for the environment, are seen as important priorities. The schools that responded to the questionnaire noted that looking beyond Egypt to world culture was a motivating factor in joining the net. UNESCO days are celebrated, and national meetings, competitions and debates are popular activities. One respondent described student participants as 'spiritual volunteers'. Future priorities for those organising ASP in Egypt include raising public awareness of the net, establishing associated schools in all stages and all regions of the country in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, and researching the contribution and activities of the network.

Jordan

According to the National Coordinator, there are 83 ASPnet schools, across all strata and levels. The coordinator would like to see many more schools in the net, if not all schools, but makes the interesting comment that most of them hesitate to join because the human ideas of UNESCO are 'treated as slogans in other nations'. One interviewee thought the number should be greatly reduced. Both the coordinator and the school sample agree that very few manage to send regular reports, and media interest is low. One school that completed the questionnaire said that as a private school licensed by the Ministry, they were not even aware that they were a member of ASPnet. No schools in the sample participated in

national events, but four out of ten did observe international days, years or decades, and most felt they benefited from membership. Twinning or other links were not much in evidence, and there appeared to be a problem of communication about opportunities. None used ICT. The Ministry official knew the concerns of UNESCO with regard to democracy, rights and sustainable development, but thought that the actual ASPnet schools were not significantly different from other schools, nor had any influence on them. While ASPnet had had some impact in areas of culture, peace and democracy, one official identified some controversy over the concepts of human rights and population rights. Nonetheless, projects and young people coming together for dialogue had some impact, as did the work on environment. The two 'Profile' schools certainly felt they were pioneer schools with enriched quality.

Kuwait

There are 27 schools in ASPnet, with large urban schools being the most typical. The National Coordinator believes in generating strong relationships with local authorities and universities to get support. While it is not felt that ASPnet helps shape education policy in the country, UNESCO goals are seen to fit well with national curriculum and Islamic values. Recent achievements have been a Peace Pillar Award for a girls' secondary school on human rights and democracy, and much voluntary work in the community. This is together with the continuation of national and international participation (in a World Heritage meeting in Oman, International Youth Parliament etc). The Coordinator sees thus sub-regional, regional and international exchange and networking as important. Press coverage is good, as is other recognition (e.g. from the Government, because it is a small country). Peace is seen as the most important topic in a world of violence. The school sample confirms the high level of activity in national and local events and in campaigning for peace and rights, and also the impact (for most schools) of ASPnet membership on school values and on teaching methods.

Lebanon

There are 42 associated schools in Lebanon; according to the national co-ordinator, these do not fit any particular profile apart from their desire to participate in UNESCO activities. In this volatile part of the world, peace and international understanding between cultures and religions are

important but problematic themes. World Heritage is also a very popular theme among participants, and they participate in associated projects at the local, national, regional and international level. According to a ministry official, this is what sets associated schools apart from other schools. Projects in schools depend a great deal on co-ordination within the schools, and the nature and extent of projects vary considerably. Many of these projects are based on the creative arts and cultural heritage. Students who put a great deal of effort into the school projects would like feedback. UNESCO days are also celebrated widely in schools. The national network has published a booklet produced by students on Human Rights. There is also a national network website.

Morocco

There is a large network of about 80 associated schools in Morocco; there appears to be a spread in terms of type of schools. The network is larger than the co-ordinator considers ideal, especially given budgetary constraints, but meetings are regular. World Heritage and environmental education are priorities of schools, and there is evidence that ASPnet schools encourage their students to be more open to the outside world, with greater respect and tolerance for other cultures. Students are active in planning ASPnet activities in schools. Involvement in the network has also encouraged critical thinking and creativity through innovative teaching methods and extra-curricular activities.

Palestinian Authority

Obviously all ASPnet activity has to be seen within the context of Israeli occupation and the context of violence. At present there are 37 ASPnet schools, all public schools up to 10th grade under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. The Ministry hopes to expand the net to include kindergartens and teacher training centres. In spite of the obstacles from occupation, the National Coordinator feels that the ASPnet schools do get information, and schools confirmed this, while recognizing problems. Students and teachers have sometimes been able to visit other countries, and engage in twinning, although there has been some hindrance to movement (or even complete blockage) from Israeli authorities and from the occupation. It is difficult to stress a culture of peace in the midst of military conflict: it is significant that, unlike other countries, the

things that were cited as making ASPnet schools special were not tolerance, respect for diversity etc, although one school did talk of 'solving problems peacefully'. The activities of schools include voluntary work, participation in International Days and field visits to sites and to other schools, but not flagship projects. There seems to be very good support from the Ministry, which seeks to emphasise the dissemination of the principles and practices of democracy, through discussion and sharing opinion, as well as protecting heritage. The Ministry contributes to funding workshops for ASPnet schools, for example puppet shows on local heritage. Drama activities, music and drawing are important in the process of healing of trauma and psychological problems in ASPnet schools in affected areas. There is a view that teacher training, dissemination of values, promoting dialogue and student leadership are very effective, reducing the importance of celebrations or festivals. No schools in the sample had internet, which would have been especially useful for communication. Students had difficulty staying on after school for UNESCO activities, because of the situation. Nonetheless there is evidence of much useful activity and support for UNESCO ideals.

Qatar

Two school/college questionnaires were received. Both of the schools were secondary schools and both state schools. Participation rates for staff and students were under 50% in both schools. There was some evidence of how being an ASPnet school helped in the school do things it would not otherwise do but not of how ASPnet schools were different from other schools. Communications to the schools about ASPnet activities seemed a bit top-down ('commands and instructions'). However, two school profiles were also received and these provide evidence of considerable enthusiasm and activity in terms of twinning and innovative methods.

Syrian Arab Republic

The total number of schools in ASPnet in Syria is not clear, though there would appear to be about 30. They cover both primary and secondary and urban and rural, tending also be large and high achieving schools. The national coordinator is also the Assistant Secretary-General of the National Commission.. Of the ten schools who replied, eight had joined in either 2001 or 2002. Participation rates of staff and students were

generally under 25% and students' participation in planning ASPnet activities was low. There was no reported involvement in flagship projects, UNESCO international events or twinning. Use of ICT was low. There was little reported difference between ASPnet schools and other schools in terms of carrying out UNESCO ideals and little reported impact on the local community, on local schools or on the physical environment of the school. There was general support for the ASPnet themes and topics but also a general feeling of insufficient support and lack of information and low levels of activity in regard to the themes and topics. This seems to be a relatively new network that needs to develop over time.

United Arab Emirates

There are 43 schools in the UAE network. The seven schools that responded to the survey were enthusiastic about having international and in-country contacts and preserving the national heritage. There is also a commitment to the environment, and the promotion and protection of the Arabic language. Both of these interests are strongly endorsed by the ministry of education. Some of the schools in the national network are 'model schools'. Many of the respondents noted that financial difficulties and lack of ICT facilities create limitations on their participation. Community links and affiliations with organisations such as the Red Crescent are important dimensions of ASPnet in UAE.

Asia & the Pacific

Cook Islands

In the Cook Islands there are 14 member schools, most of which are urban, high achieving schools. A priority for the net is to improve use of information technology in schools, and all network schools where possible have been given access to a computer and the internet. This means of participating in ASP activities helps to overcome the isolation that some remote island schools may otherwise experience from the rest of the world, and promotes intercultural understanding. Communications between co-ordinators in the Pacific region are also facilitated, and a number of schools have regional links. The co-ordinator (a ministry of education official and college lecturer) feels that all the member schools are 'very active'. He also noted that 'most of the themes that are promoted by ASPnet are being

integrated into the national curriculum framework'. Most of the schools who responded to the questionnaire are primary schools, and there was clearly a lot of planning of school activities around UNESCO days and projects. As an island nation, there is a special interest in water and the environment; many schools participate in projects like 'adopt a beach'. Peace, and local, regional and world culture are also priorities, and peace gardens and cultural festivals are popular activities.

Kazakhstan

There are 21 ASPnet schools in Kazakhstan. These are primarily urban, with an average of 700-1000 students. According to the part-time national coordinator, these are usually high achieving schools with a multi-ethnic staff and students. It is well known that UNESCO does not finance ASPnet schools which is why it attracts schools with highly motivated staff. Staff and student participation in the schools varied between 26-100%. Students seemed very involved in planning and organising ASPnet activities through various forms of existing self-government structures such as school councils and student 'ministries'. The schools reported that they were active in flagship projects and observing UNESCO international days but twinning only happened in one of the schools. There was a clear feeling that membership of ASPnet had enabled the schools to do things that they would not have otherwise done and that ASPnet schools were different from other schools in the country. There was strong support for ASPnet themes and topics. Three of the four schools reported using ICT for ASPnet activities but in general the national coordinator reports that most schools cannot afford the internet and some not even mailing or telephone links. There was some feeling that ASPnet activities did not fit particularly well with the national curriculum and one school felt it was only possible because they were a private school.

Kyrgyzstan

There are 14 ASPnet schools in Kyrgyzstan. These are largely successful schools located in the capital and regional centres. The national coordinator does the job on a part-time basis. The school sample covered a range of institutions, with two vocational schools and one run by an NGO. The level of staff and student activity in the schools varied from under 25% to 76-100% but

those students who do participate seem to take an active part in planning and organising ASPnet activities. The majority of schools take part in the observance of UNESCO international days and twinning with other schools, though only four out of five said they had been involved in flagship projects. The schools were also evenly divided about having access to the internet and email. ASPnet has only recently become established in Kyrgyzstan but the schools said that they were enabled to do things that would not have happened if they had not been in ASPnet and strong comparisons were made with what was possible in the former Soviet period. They also felt that they were different from non-ASPnet schools. There was a strong feeling among the schools that ASPnet activities fit well with the post-soviet curriculum, though the national coordinator felt that ASPnet type activities were needed to strengthen life skills in relation to civic competence among students and teachers.

Indonesia

From Indonesia we received only the national co-ordinator's questionnaire. There are 43 schools in the network, but the co-ordinator would like to see between 400 and 600 in this vast and highly-populated country. Most of the current network consists of urban secondary schools. In the future, the co-ordinator would like to see a strong partnership developed with government ministries, and co-operation between co-ordinators in the region.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

There are 34 schools of all types in the Laos network; many joined in order to share their experiences with other schools, and this is reflected in the activities of the network, and in the rewards that have been gained from the experience. At the national level, activities include cultural workshops, festivals, and boat races. Individual schools celebrate UNESCO days, and are active in twinning, mainly with other schools in the country. Innovative teaching methods include using more experiential learning, and incorporating UNESCO materials and ideals into lessons; this fits in with the direction of educational reform in the country. Limited English language capacity has proved a challenge for teachers and students who are involved, as materials are not yet available in local languages; however, the 'World Heritage in Young Hands' kit has been translated at the national level. This

kit is seen as especially useful and relevant to needs in the country and the development of children's skills and understanding. The ministry official, a curriculum developer, indicated a desire to incorporate more UNESCO materials and innovations into the promotion of quality in education nationally, although the influence so far has been indirect.

Nepal

From Nepal we received the national co-ordinator's report and a report on an interview with a ministry of education official. There are 9 schools registered as part of the network, but there are many non-registered schools who participate in activities, use the new UNESCO resource centre, and support UNESCO goals. As in many other countries, typical ASP schools are large urban schools with high achieving students. They are also 'financially sound' schools: one of the problems facing the network in this country is a lack of resources, which may hinder participation. The ministry of education officer noted that Education for All and Quality Education are national priorities, and he feels that ASPnet's work in the fields of cultural heritage and environmental education can support these.

Pakistan

There are 300 ASPnet schools in Pakistan. Unusually Pakistan has two national coordinators, both working for the Ministry of Education. One national coordinator describes the 'typical' ASPnet school in Pakistan as urban, high school and in the private sector. It was noted that organising national ASPnet events was a daunting and challenging task due to the geography of the country and the varied seasons and programmes, as each province has a different schedule for examinations and vacations. The schools, both state and private, seemed actively involved in observing UNESCO international days and twinning, though slightly less so in relation to participation in flagship projects. Teacher and student involvement seemed to be evenly distributed across the entire range at the schools from under 25% to 76-100%. The schools were very clear on how they differed from non-ASPnet schools, with a noticeable emphasis on education for peace. One school had even hired a teacher

specifically for peace education. The importance of education for peace and human rights was also mentioned by the Ministry of Education official who saw ASPnet schools making a significant contribution in this area, particularly in relation to international understanding. Schools were also very specific about how they contributed to the local community and this was again supported by the Ministry official. ASPnet themes and topics were seen as relevant and important.

Philippines

The National Coordinator claims there are 480 schools active in ASPnet projects (although presumably not all of these are actually 'ASPnet schools'). A UNESCO funded project in 1999-2000 evaluated the UNESCO materials on Peace, Human Rights and Democracy in secondary schools, and found them effective, particularly for students with less information about the topic; but much depended on the effectiveness and creativity of the teaching. A study of one school found the persistence of highly negative stereotypes of Muslims. It is clear that the National Coordinator is very active as well as keen on research, and not afraid to be critical. In a context of violence and events inimical to peace, typical activities are on peace education, with leadership training for the young. The 'Children and Peace Philippines' project won a UNESCO 'Peace Pillar award' in 2002. The National Coordinator lists a number of projects across different regions of the country – family literacy project, five projects from the Philippines National University (e.g. a book on education for democracy and non-violent resolution of conflict), the commitment by one college to being a 'Zone of Peace', a project on the rights of indigenous peoples, training in conflict resolution and partnership skills between Christians and Muslims, and projects on environmental education. This activity in peace and rights is reflected in the reasons why schools and colleges in the sample say they joined the net. Many schools have a UNESCO club and all say they take part in flagship projects and observance of international days. All are twinned and there seems high participation in national conferences and meetings – which given the geography of the Philippines is commendable. The schools are obviously highly visible, with peace rallies or protest vigils and environmental campaigns.

Republic of Korea

In Korea there are 80 schools, of which 63 are 'on the UNESCO list'. They are typically in major cities, and among the high schools, foreign language schools have a great deal of interest. A National Association of ASP net teachers has been formed. The founding of the Asia Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding in cooperation with UNESCO and the Ministry of Education has also been significant. There is an overseas exchange programme of ASP teachers and students with Vietnam and Thailand, and participation in the nation-wide campaign 'World Book and Copyright Day'. Schools joined ASPnet mainly for education for international understanding. There had been a significant impact for some schools on teaching methodology – experiential learning and concern for the rights of students - but no schools reported having any impact on the local community, and only two on other schools. The National Coordinator wanted to establish partnerships with socio-cultural organisations, to make ASP-museums, ASP-musicians and ASP-environment.

Samoa

There are 75 ASPnet schools in Samoa, which are both urban and rural. The national coordinator does the job on a part-time basis and is also an official in the Ministry of Education.. Rates of participation in ASPnet activities varied in the six schools who replied from under 25% to 100% for both staff and students. Student involvement in planning ASPnet activities seemed to vary from school to school. Most schools had not participated in an ASPnet flagship project, though three said that they had observed UNESCO international days, years and decades. Both the schools and the national coordinator noted that an important priority for the ASPnet schools in Samoa is the greater spread of ICT. This may contribute to the comment that materials and information are received late. Despite this the schools felt that being in ASPnet made them different from other schools, enabled them to do things that they would not otherwise be able to do and allowed the introduction of some innovations in teaching methods. There was general agreement as to the importance of UNESCO themes and topics. There seemed to be no clash between the goals of ASPnet and those of the national curriculum.

Thailand

There are 149 ASPnet schools in Thailand. Initially these were large, urban schools but increasingly they are also from areas of the country with World Heritage sites. Three of the schools that responded had joined ASPnet in 1963 as part of a Ministry of Education pilot. The schools seem very actively involved in observing UNESCO international days, participating in flagship projects and twinning with schools, both in Thailand and overseas. Respondents were clear on how being an ASPnet school made them different from other schools in positively implementing UNESCO ideals. The majority of school respondents rated the four main ASPnet themes as 'very relevant' and the ASPnet topics as 'very important'. The Ministry of Education official felt that the learner-centred approach of ASPnet schools was in line with the attempt to reform the Thai education system. Over 50% of teachers and pupils are reported to be actively involved in the majority of the schools, with between a quarter and a half in the rest, though the national coordinator does not think this is true in all ASPnet schools in the country as there is often insufficient support from the principal. Students at the schools are involved in planning ASPnet activities but the initiatives for such activities often seem to originate in the school administration.

Uzbekistan

31 schools form ASPnet in Uzbekistan, with a tendency to be large secondary rural schools. Although there are a smallish number of schools, the coordinator feels that they do influence national policy, as decision-makers take part in the meetings organised by the net. There is a lot of connection with other agencies, such as UNICEF on 'children's life improvement', Soros Foundation on critical thinking and Children's Fund on the Children's Parliament. The Ministry gives support to the schools in the provision of equipment and repairing school buildings. 'Republican Education Centres' have been established based on UNESCO schools for the creation of textbooks and learning materials for secondary schools and providing workshops. Hence the main impact seems to be in terms of innovative teaching/learning methods and new materials. Achievements are also seen in terms of the inclusion of refugee children from Afghanistan, environmental campaigns and the introduction of human rights, democracy and

citizenship into the curricular programme. The academic lyceum has created 'Youthland', a simulated country where students learn to operate markets, politics, labour exchange, taxation, arbitration court etc. The World Heritage kit was translated into Uzbek language and now can be used in other schools. Materials provided by a number of schools demonstrate the range of activity and enthusiasm; the net was awarded a Peace Pillar prize.

Europe & North America

Albania

There are 21 ASP schools in Albania, most of which are considered very good schools; the coordinator tries to have the best schools in the region in the network. These schools then become catalysts for good practice in the schools in their area. Albania's current educational priorities, according to a ministry official, include decentralisation and democratisation of education; these fit in well with ASPnet goals. Among the nine schools which responded to the survey, the overriding concern is with environmental issues, and there is a network of ASP schools which have a special interest in ecology and who are piloting new approaches to this subject: a priority for the Albanian government as well. Human rights and democracy were also recognised as very relevant. Interestingly, the elimination of racism and discrimination seems to be considered less important, although intercultural learning was given some priority. Links between schools within Albania were well-developed; less so with schools internationally, perhaps because there is little use of information technology.

Austria

There are 44 ASPnet schools in Austria. No information was provided on what a 'typical' Austrian ASPnet school looks like. The national coordinator is a full-time teacher in secondary education but felt that the post really needed to be a fulltime one. Staff and student participation in ASPnet activities ranged from under 25% to 100% in the mostly secondary schools in the sample, and students seemed involved in planning ASPnet activities. Only two schools had been involved in flagship projects but more had been

involved in observing international days and in twinning. Many examples of how ASPnet schools were different from non-ASPnet schools were provided and of things that the schools did that they would not otherwise have done if they weren't ASPnet schools. These seemed very much to accord with UNESCO ideals. The schools also reported using a range of innovatory teaching methods as a result of being ASPnet schools. Indeed, the Ministry official described ASPnet schools as 'pioneers'. Some impact on the local, community, the physical environment of the school and on other schools was reported but in all cases the majority responded 'no'. There was strong support for UNESCO's main themes and topics and agreement that ASPnet activities fit well with the national curriculum; the Ministry of Education official mentioned that a loosening of the national curriculum is now taking place which will enable more students to take topics such as human rights education, environmental education and intercultural education.

Azerbaijan

There are 18 network schools in Azerbaijan, co-ordinated from within the Ministry of Education. Generally these are high-achieving urban schools. The national co-ordinator and the head of pre- and secondary schooling would like to see this expand, although lack of access to ICT is seen as an inhibiting factor. The ongoing conflict with Armenia also isolates some schools. Many participating schools are active in an on-line environmental network, and protection of the environment and national resources are given high importance. Additionally, there is clearly attention within the country to the development of 'multiple intelligences' (such as emotional and interpersonal skills), as many respondents mentioned this and the potential that ASPnet has in fostering these. All schools regularly celebrate UNESCO days, years and decades, with special attention to those focused on peace and human rights. Debates are popular activities, and the schools in-country come together for these and other joint events. Through involvement in the net, one teacher noted that students come to 'realise their responsibility for the future and understand that the main asset of the world is human beings'. Schools are active in their local communities, contributing to charities and initiating environmental projects. Both the ministry and schools acknowledged the resonance between UNESCO goals and the post-Soviet curricular priorities nationally.

Belarus

There are eleven ASPnet schools in Belarus. Typically these are secondary schools with high achieving students with a good knowledge of foreign languages. The national coordinator does the job on a part-time basis and is also the leading inspector in the Ministry of Education. The schools covered the full range of possible staff and student participation from under 25% to 76-100%. Student councils seem to be very involved in planning and organising ASPnet activities in the school. All eleven schools reported participating in flagship projects and twinning, though only a minority reported observing UNESCO international days. Nine out of eleven reported having access to the internet, though the national coordinator put the figure at only 25-30%. The schools clearly felt that being an ASPnet school enabled them to do things they wouldn't otherwise be able to do and that ASPnet differed from other schools in the country because of their values and activities. However, ASPnet values seem to fit well with the national curriculum and the key values espoused by the Ministry of Education. ASPnet and UNESCO are seen as particularly important in a country that regards itself as having been in isolation for a long time. The Ministry Official expressed the view that ASPnet materials could be mainstreamed into other schools. There was support for ASPnet themes and topics from the schools except in relation for the elimination of racism and discrimination, where a majority thought this only somewhat important or not important.

Bulgaria

There are 56 schools in Bulgaria's ASPnetwork. Most but not all of these are urban, but otherwise it is difficult to talk about a 'typical' Bulgarian associated school, although the national co-ordinator noted that they all have a positive climate, '*absolument*', thanks to their involvement in ASPnet. The deputy minister of education also praised their pioneering approach to high quality teaching and learning. The schools emphasise the importance of networking for intercultural learning and shared ideals, along with creative problem solving. Some schools have a UNESCO committee which includes representatives from among students and staff to co-ordinate activities. The location of Bulgaria encourages involvement in the Blue Danube and South East Mediterranean

projects. UNESCO days and years are celebrated in great number, the most popular being the European year of languages. Second language learning and use is seen as an important aspect of involvement in ASPnet, through improved teaching, communications, UNESCO materials, and links and exchanges. Most schools have multiple links with other countries in Europe. In country, many associated schools are deeply involved in charity work in their own communities, and many are themselves supported through grants from EU programmes such as Socrates and Comenius. ASPnet activities are considered a very good fit with the national curriculum in this country, both by the ministry and by schools. Human rights and democracy are considered especially relevant themes.

Cyprus

There are fifteen ASPnet schools in Cyprus. These are mostly urban, large and high achieving. The national coordinator does the job on a part-time basis and is also a Ministry official. The responding schools do not seem to be actively involved in flagship projects or twinning and only a minority report observance of UNESCO international days. Under 25% of teachers and pupils in the schools were reported as being actively involved in ASPnet activities. However, respondents were clear and positive on how being an ASPnet school made them different from other schools and the new teaching methods that had been introduced. Many examples were provided. The majority of respondents saw key ASPnet themes and topics as relevant and important. Students are reported as sometimes being involved in planning but the impression is that staff play more a role in initiating activities. The Ministry of Education official does not think that ASPnet schools are contributing to Cypriot educational priorities and that their influence has been limited. However, these are largely access priorities, whereas ASPnet priorities are with what happens in schools and the type of students produced. Nevertheless, as the national coordinator pointed out in an interview, UNESCO values are not well integrated into the curriculum and therefore of necessity something of an 'add on'.

Czech Republic

There are 50 ASPnet schools in the Czech Republic, and several more have indicated that they are interested in joining. Although there are

all kinds of schools in the network, the largest number are urban secondary schools, and schools situated near World Heritage sites are also interested in the net. Looking after these and other sites of cultural, natural and historical importance is a priority of some schools. The national co-ordinator is situated within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and seeking to develop closer ties with the Ministry of Education. Many of the schools are linked with each other, and these contacts and friendships, and the team problem-solving they facilitate, are strong motivating factors. These are facilitated through use of the internet and email, which the majority of schools can access. Several of the respondents indicated that being an associated school carries with it prestige and helps in building a good reputation. There are regular national meetings which are well-attended. ASPnet schools are actively involved in environmental projects, and international understanding and communication skills (including language development) are promoted through other ASPnet activities. Generally all of these activities and priorities fit in well with the national curriculum, and there is a growing awareness within the curriculum of UNESCO-type goals.

Denmark

There are 26 ASPnet schools in Denmark and these cover a wide range of types of school – primary/secondary, rural/urban. However, primary and lower secondary tend to be more creative and experimental as upper secondary are more subject oriented. The national coordinator is part-time and also works for the European Programme for Adult and Lifelong Learning. The network is supported financially by the Ministry of Education. Only one school questionnaire was received as well as the national coordinator's questionnaire. The school was actively engaged in the Baltic Sea project, international days and twinning and provided examples of how it was different from non-ASPnet schools.

France

Of the 130 schools in the net, there is no typical one, although the national coordinator identified a strong demand from professional training institutions and from modest rural schools. Obviously contacts with UNESCO HQ are very easy, with the offices very close, although interestingly the coordinator reported extremely poor levels of support from national or Field

Office sources. Across the net not all schools were active, and only about 30% sent annual reports. Half the sample were not able to identify any added value from being in ASPnet, nor what made their schools different from other schools. However, a number mentioned that the accent on diversity and the big themes of tolerance and anti-racism had impacted on the quality of their schools. National achievements were workshops on projects such as heritage and international meetings of students and teachers, for example on peace. Local media reported activities, but never national media. The net was seen as a potentially formidable means to promote UNESCO ideals, but needed the political will to lend financial and administrative support.

Georgia

There are 26 ASPnet schools in Georgia and most of these are primary schools. The national coordinator does the job on a full-time basis. The rate of student and staff participation in ASPnet activities varied between under 25% and up to 75%, though students do seem to be involved in the planning of ASPnet activities. In the main schools have not been involved in flagship projects but half reported having been involved in observing UNESCO international days. All schools were involved in twinning. There was a definite feeling that being an ASPnet school enabled you to do things that would not otherwise have happened and that ASPnet schools were different from other schools in the country. ICT was used for ASPnet activities in the majority of responding schools, though the national coordinator pointed out that the majority of the remaining schools do not have ICT facilities and that this was an urgent priority. There was general support for ASPnet themes and for a number of ASPnet topics, though elimination of racism and discrimination was noticeably regarded as less or not important by a majority of respondents.

Germany

Because of the federal nature of Germany, each of the 16 states has a person responsible for ASPnet, who may have other aspects to their job or be school inspectors. It is highly decentralised. Schools were very satisfied with their support from regional coordinators. There are 145 schools in the net, 110 with full membership and 35 with national membership. (135 out of the 145 had delivered their annual reports that year, showing good communication and interest). All types of

school are represented in ASPnet, including elementary, special needs and Steiner schools as well as comprehensive, grammar schools and vocational schools. The National Coordinator reported that there were on average 7 teachers per school in charge of UNESCO, and UNESCO teams were quite common. Schools are linked nationally by their national homepage, serviced professionally by a teacher-webmaster, which includes address lists for all ASPnet members and documentation of activities throughout the network. A national magazine forum is produced for teachers in ASPnet schools, giving news, activities, resource materials etc. The most important channels of cooperation for coordinators and teachers are however the regional and national meetings, which are systematic and frequent. For 1999/2000, 121 ASPnet schools carried out 1271 UNESCO-related activities. In order of frequency, these were intercultural learning/encounters, environment/ sustainable development, human rights, peace, world heritage, tolerance/anti-racism and democracy/participation. The number of projects dealing with peace and human rights is expected to rise during 2002/3 because of the global situation. There are about 1000 press cuttings each year, but media are not always interested, being more concerned with negative and sensational news. In interviews, students were very much aware of a 'special atmosphere' in their school, although identification and knowledge of UNESCO-related goals varied considerably. Regional Ministry officials know about UNESCO, provide some funds and fund the National Coordinator on a rotating basis. Contributions of ASPnet schools are especially appreciated by the Ministries in the fields of human rights education and multicultural learning, and are also seen to have high teaching standards.

Greece

Most of the 9 schools from Greece who responded to the questionnaire emphasised the importance of developing an international perspective and supporting UNESCO ideals as major motivators in being part of ASPnet: 'being part of a dialogue on a better world'. There was quite a strong feeling that it was not easy to meet the demands of the network – including the pilot projects, reporting on activities, and incorporating UNESCO ideals within the teaching programme – due to a heavy workload and a demanding curriculum. Most activities are extra-curricular, and are largely managed by UNESCO clubs and

teams of teachers and students. There are links of various kinds with schools in Cyprus, and between Greek schools. Many reports indicate that involvement in ASPnet has a positive effect on approaches to teaching and learning: there is a stronger emphasis on group work and research, and teaching has become more creative and less didactic. It is generally seen as a modernising influence. The Greek network operates without a national co-ordinator, which does mean that communications and co-ordination are not always easy.

Israel

There are 25 schools in the network. These tend to be junior high and high schools, with students who are mature enough to communicate with other countries. There are some 'dormant' schools though. Only three questionnaires were returned from schools. The administration is improving as the national coordinator has been provided with a budget to facilitate projects, a student helper and an office for activities and meetings. However, more support from the Ministry of Education would be helpful. A future priority would be developing curriculum for peace education. The 15 year old Ben Zvi/Tira existence project (nominated for the UNESCO peace prize), The Global Village project and the model UN are important projects for them. They are setting up a UNESCO Chair for PE in a Multicultural society which will have implications for ASPnet schools.

Italy

Officially, there are 180 schools in the net, but two years ago the MoE regraded the schools, so that there are about two-thirds of these now. They tend to be small rural schools or small town schools, where teachers and parents have more time to spend. One Ministry official thought there should be better coordination and cooperation between Ministry and the National Commission, to give benefit to ASPnet. Another thought that ASPnet schools themselves need better coordination, in order to contribute to national policy making. But all the schools in the sample felt that membership had impacted positively on them - a more humanistic approach, creativity, motivation, pupil responsibility and team teaching. There were some interesting examples of schools organising 'Peace Waves' and 'Sport and Art for Peace' to involve the local

community, and others were producing CD Roms and multi-media poetry.

Latvia

There are 27 ASPnet schools in Latvia. The majority of these are urban and secondary. They are an equal mix of high achieving and low achieving schools. The national coordinator is full-time. In most of the schools student and staff participation rates were under 50%, though students seemed very involved in planning ASPnet activities, often through student self-government. Only two of the schools had been involved in a flagship project but eight had celebrated UNESCO international days. Similarly eight schools were involved in twinning, both with schools inside Latvia and in other countries. Nine out of ten of the schools had access to ICT for ASPnet activities. There was a definite feeling that being an ASPnet school enabled you to do things that would not otherwise have happened and that ASPnet schools were different from other schools. There was majority support for ASPnet themes and topics, except in regard to the elimination of racism and discrimination which a majority regarded as 'somewhat important' or 'not important', which contradicts the Ministry of Education official who stressed the importance of multicultural education. The majority of the teachers felt that ASPnet activities fit well with the national curriculum, though the Ministry of Education official described the two main educational priorities of Latvia as bilingual education and ICT with ASPnet only contributing partly to the former. The official also argued that it is schools that are already active that tend to want to join ASPnet, as it provides them with opportunities for new projects.

Lithuania

There are 21 ASPnet schools in Lithuania. There is no typical school as they are geographically widespread and simply have to be interested and active in ASPnet priorities. The national coordinator is part-time and also works for the Ministry of education. Levels of student and teacher participation in the ASPnet schools are reported to be high and the schools are reported as participating in UNESCO events. The Ministry of Education is of the opinion that ASPnet schools are introducing innovative methods of teaching and learning. Twinning is considered important in the light of the relative isolation of the country

until recently. There is a need to raise the profile of ASPnet in relation with educational authorities but ASPnet values and priorities seem to fit well with Ministry of Education values and priorities.

Luxemburg

There are three ASPnet schools in this small country. There are many active links with other European schools, although these are not necessarily as a result of network affiliation. These schools are considered different from other schools because of their focus on moral values: promotion of peace, tolerance and mutual respect are top priorities. Schools have used websites to promote their UNESCO activities, including writing a charter on community values, and a circuit of Luxemburg city taking in World Heritage. A national website is also being developed. The national co-ordinator feels that the aims of the network are very relevant to national needs and objectives.

Netherlands

Only three schools/colleges questionnaires were received from the Netherlands. No other instruments were received. All three were secondary schools, two being private and one state. Low (under 25%) levels of student and staff participation in ASPnet activities were reported in the schools, though there had been some participation in flagship projects and the observation of UNESCO international days. All three schools were involved in twinning. There was a feeling that being an ASPnet school enabled them to do things that would not otherwise have happened but no feeling that ASPnet schools in the Netherlands were different from ASPnet schools. The general impression gained was of low levels of ASPnet activity in the country and no strongly felt need for there to be so.

Norway

Ten schools/colleges questionnaires and two school profiles were received but no national coordinator's questionnaire. Levels of staff and student participation varied from under 25% to 100% and students were often involved in planning ASPnet activities. Three of the school had taken part in flagship projects and the majority had taken part in observing UNESCO international days and in twinning. All schools had access to ICT and used it for ASPnet

activities. Great detail was supplied in answer to the questions of how being in ASPnet enabled the school to do things that it would not otherwise have done and how being in ASPnet made the school different from other schools. Similarly many examples of innovatory teaching methods being introduced as a result of ASPnet membership were provided. However, the schools were evenly divided as to whether being an ASPnet school enabled more active roles in the community, had an impact on the physical environment of the school and affected other schools in the locality. The majority of schools thought that ASPnet activities fit well with the national curriculum. While there was strong support for the importance of the four main ASPnet themes, support for the importance of some of the topics (HIV/AIDS, poverty alleviation, youth leadership and the ethical dimensions of sports) was less strong. One of the two school profiles provides almost a model of an 'ideal type' of ASPnet school.

Poland

The network in Poland consists of 105 schools. The typical Polish ASP school is a large, state secondary school in an urban area. Most of them are high-achieving schools with ambitious staff and students. The nine schools who responded indicated that developing an international perspective and opportunities to network with people from other countries were strong motivators. Many had links with schools in Eastern and Western Europe. Students are active in planning school projects, through the student council and the UNESCO club. There are national conferences and meetings, and several schools participate in the flagship Baltic Sea project. UN days are celebrated enthusiastically. Summer camps are a popular activity; they focus on language learning, and invite participants from other countries. Language learning and the opportunity to use second languages in real communication are clearly priorities for many of the schools. The national co-ordinator highlighted problems with resourcing of activities, but it seems that the network is thriving, with a strong volunteer spirit. She noted that UNESCO programmes 'enrich the school curriculum', and the schools were aware of a good fit between national education priorities and ASPnet. There seems to be a lot of co-operation between the network and NGOs and charities; this is also seen as a priority area for future development.

Portugal

There are 43 ASPnet schools in Portugal. These are typically secondary and already part of European Union or Council of Europe programmes/projects. The national coordinator does the job on a part-time basis and is also the Secretary-General of the Portuguese Commission for UNESCO. The four schools that responded were state secondary schools. Under 50% of teachers in the schools were reported as being active in ASPnet activities and levels of student activity varied from under 25% to 51-75%. Students, however, are reported to be actively involved in planning ASPnet activities within the schools. Only one of the schools seemed to be involved in flagship projects, though schools reported taking part in UNESCO international days, years and decades. The schools were clear that being an ASPnet school enabled them to do things that would not otherwise have happened and that this made them different from non-ASPnet schools. The majority of respondents saw ASPnet themes and topics as very relevant and important.

Romania

There were responses from four Romanian schools. Generally, they believed that 'UNESCO ideals are global ideals', and they were keen to promote these principles by being part of the network. Students and teachers work together to plan activities, which include celebrating UNESCO days, joining national projects, excursions, exhibits and participating in exchanges and international meetings. Parents provide financial and organisational support for these, and it seems that network schools are especially active in their local communities. Schools have active links with other Eastern European countries, and these are seen as key advantages of being part of the network. Citizenship, human rights and environmental education all benefit from the experience of being part of the network. All of these, especially environmental education, fit in well with the country's national curriculum. Through them, students are seen to develop learning skills as well as a sense of social responsibility, and equity, and a strong self-concept.

Russian Federation

There are about 150 ASPnet schools in Russia, most of which are large, urban, comprehensive

state schools. 10 of these responded to questionnaires. Their responses suggest that there is a close relationship between the aims of ASPnet and the national educational goals; in fact, the ministry official suggested that ASP schools are 'catalysts for transformation'. One school described itself as a 'centre for innovation and excellence', and there was a sense that there is prestige in being an ASPnet school. The same official noted that the Russian Federation is a multicultural and multilingual nation, with many refugees from conflict within its borders: these make the ideals of UNESCO especially relevant. The schools that responded were active in celebrating UN days and years, and most of them have official and unofficial links with other ASPnet schools. It is clear that student participation in planning and implementing projects and events are an important aspect of the schools' involvement, and ASPnet materials and ideals are integrated into formal teaching as well as extra-curricular activities. The traditional Russian emphasis on *vospitanie* (upbringing) fits in well with these aims. Language learning and intercultural communication are also important parts of the process. Research skills are developed through the ASPnet activities. The national co-ordinator helps to co-ordinate a number of national events, and is keen to see the network expand in number and influence.

Slovakia

There are 21 network schools in Slovakia, half of whom were surveyed. The national co-ordinator is happy with this level of participation: 'quality is important, not quantity'. Typical ASPnet schools are fairly large, urban secondary schools, with key people on staff motivated to keep UNESCO activities going. A ministry official noted that the education reforms in Slovakia mirror the priorities of ASPnet. Activities in schools include national and international projects, related lessons and extra-curricular activities. Language development is seen as a priority for many schools, along with environmental protection and appreciation of national and international cultural heritage. There are links with schools in countries all over the world, and these are seen to lead to international understanding and a global perspective, but also to improved quality of education through comparing systems and ways to teaching and learning. Schools would like to see more opportunities for these exchanges. The development of active and independent learning is

a common goal. There is support for all of the themes and topics of ASPnet, but human rights and democracy are unanimously considered to be very relevant by schools, and the co-ordinator feels that network schools are 'definitely' more aware of these issues.

Slovenia

Slovenia is a highly active net, with a coordinator who is a school principal and an ASPnet 'volunteer' managing to coordinate 37 schools. The UNESCO National Commission is very supportive. Extra criteria for joining and reaching '4th status' or remaining have been applied (and were attached to the return). This means that all schools are actively involved in projects. While the number of ASPnet schools is relatively small, some national projects are made available to all schools, and a sizeable number of schools organize an open day called UNESCO 12 Day, with performances that all schools can join in. High achieving primary schools, both urban and rural, are the prime candidates for membership. A Peace Pillar award was made to the entire Slovenian network for their work in human rights, intercultural learning, solidarity and identity. An ASPnet website details this as well as many other activities. While the Ministry does not allocate funds directly to the net on a permanent basis, it tries to stimulate the work of schools and teachers through the promotion system, and has given a budget to ASPnet this year for innovatory activities. It feels that ASPnet has contributed to the vast reform happening in Slovenia from content-oriented to goal-oriented curriculum, particularly in the example of ASPnet schools in school development planning to integrate UNESCO goals into the school curriculum. They are seen as pioneering in international cooperation and openness, the culture of peace and heritage education. They address mayors of the local communities in order to get them involved in heritage and peace activities, and these mayors then have a page on the website to publish addresses to children or the wider public. The schools questionnaires and the profile questionnaires confirmed the high level of interesting activity, with a mass of photographic and video evidence as well as examples of high quality materials. Valuable work is happening in links with Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Spain

The National Coordinator did not give the actual number of schools in his report, but saw the maximum number as 150. 28 schools completed the questionnaire in the end, virtually all saying that they received good support from the coordinator. They are clearly very committed. The typical school adheres to the guideline of commitment to peace, human rights, the environment and interculturality, and Spain has schools across all levels and social classes to this end. Issues of regionality sometimes emerged, particularly when talking of the joining conditions and the varied contexts in Spain. One school made the interesting comment that membership 'legitimated' their projects on peace; another said that they joined because of 'inquietud' between teachers and activities/attitudes which was resolved by ASPnet membership and ideals. The Slave Route project and Linguapax have been very well received and used.

Sweden

There are approximately 30 schools in ASPnet in Sweden. The national coordinator is part-time. Schools are more typically rural as schools in big cities have numerous options for international work.. Only a minority of the schools were involved in ASPnet flagship projects and the observance of UNESCO international days, though twinning seemed quite common. Low levels of staff and student participation in ASPnet activities in schools were reported both by the schools and the national coordinator. There was some response in relation to how being an ASPnet school enabled the school to do things it would not otherwise have been able to do but less so in relation to how being an ASPnet school made the school different from other schools. The responses of the National Coordinator to certain questions helps to explain this in terms of the values of UNESCO being fully integrated into the Swedish education system anyway, so being an ASPnet school brings little extra value. Also, wide-ranging international contacts already exist in schools. However, both the national coordinator and the schools mentioned the value of World Heritage education, which seems to be the main focus of ASPnet activity in the country. Also valued were specific projects such as the Baltic Sea Project and the Slave Routes Project.

Ukraine

Many different kinds of schools are part of ASPnet in the Ukraine; there are 38 in all. The

co-ordinator praised the positive contribution that the network makes to school climate: 'it brings children and teachers together and enhances the educational potential of schools'. The officer from the Ministry of Education also noted that the quality of teaching and learning is generally high in ASP schools, as well as being centres which promote UNESCO ideals. The tragedy of Chernobyl in this country has heightened awareness of the importance of the environment, and ecological education is a focus. Language learning, cultural heritage and human rights and democracy studies also featured strongly. Within the schools, ASP activities are integrated into the whole school's planning, and students are actively involved through the student councils and UNESCO clubs. There are regular national conferences, meetings and competitions, and a lot of networking and exchanges between schools within the country and with other European ASP schools. Schools celebrate many of the UN days and years with displays, creative work, excursions, debates and competitions. There is a strong feeling that the country's national curriculum and goals for education are a good fit with UNESCO, and that this can contribute to peace and international understanding.

United States of America

ASPnet USA is in an unusual situation as the US has not been a member of UNESCO since 1984. Nonetheless, the Dept of State and UNESCO HQ have been very supportive. This has enabled two international workshops in 2001 and 2002, and participation in the Human Rights Conference 2002. There are 27 members of ASPnet, with 4 in the process of joining – a 'small drop in the US bucket'. A typical school is private and small/medium; this is seen to be because public schools are preoccupied by issues of standards and assessment requirements. ASPnet schools feel they can translate UNESCO ideals into the curriculum without antagonising the structure, and that they can broaden the perspective on human rights, which is often not dealt with in depth in the regular school curriculum. Environment is a concern: one school for example managed to push for washable dishes in the cafeteria.

Latin America & the Caribbean

Argentina

The Argentinian ASPnet benefits from having a more-or-less full time national coordinator of nine years standing. There are 123 schools, representing the diverse geographical, cultural and socio-economic conditions in the country – inevitably, perhaps, some schools commented on problems of communication and lack of information because of distances. The most significant achievements relate to the links with the community, managing to restrain the growing social problems; also the participation in the world movement for a culture of peace and non-violence through the diffusion of Manifesto 2002 and the growing awareness among young people round the conservation of heritage. The kit had more than fulfilled its objectives. One school won the Peace Pillar award. Principals of ASPnet schools were consulted as specialists and as participants in the designing of the basic common contents of curriculum in schools. ASPnet schools were seen as particularly exemplary in terms of the 'transversal' approach to education. They contributed to raising a new vision for the school, different from the discredited traditional approach, transcending the basic literacy mission and presenting a major commitment to the community. One of the Profile institutions was the first in the country for socio-environmental education across all levels, and had produced a CD as part of their many projects; the other had a strong focus on human rights, peace and non-violence, with good media coverage.

Brazil

This is a relatively large network, with 221 schools – although seen as small in relation to the size of the country (it would have to be much bigger to make an impact on policy). The part-time coordinator is also a University Chancellor. All are seen as active in projects, although to varying degrees. Most are urban schools, primary, with good results, and with a tradition of being open to the themes of UNESCO. The two 'profile' schools sent a mass of vivid additional material – albums, illustrated annual reports, videos and CDs, showing how the students had responded to activities and themes. The state school was situated in one of the poorest areas of the city, catering from pre-school through to secondary and vocational courses. Pedagogy is based on the notion of students being protagonists in their own history and being critical subjects; they were highly active in campaigns and in the media. The other Profile school interestingly described its characteristics as being a 'road'

rather than a 'place', that is, in constant process of construction for both students and teachers. It had instigated a Nucleus for Education for Human Rights, affiliated to the Interamerican Institute for Human Rights, and was similarly affiliated to Amnesty International. All schools in the sample participated in International Days, Years etc, particularly in peace and environment. The major achievements of ASPnet schools were a diminution of violence and interchange with schools in other countries.

Chile

There are more than 50 ASPnet schools in Chile, although the National Coordinator has been firm in eliminating those who do not respond to invitations for projects, with a high priority on linking those schools who are active. The conditions for membership are that the majority of teachers and students in each school participate in activities, and this was borne out by the schools questionnaires. Typical schools are state primary schools of a medium socio-economic level, with a well-defined educational project and strong leadership. An annual seminar of all school coordinators fosters commitment to links and to the particular Days and the Year. Being an ASPnet school is not necessarily high status in Chile, but one school thought they had a 'better presence' before the Ministry authorities and another commented that an advantage was 'doing things right the first time'. There were long-term gains, with alumni forming environmentalist groups. There were also honest comments about difficulties in practising what the principles preach in terms of being a peaceful school committed to non-violence. Ministry interviews revealed not much knowledge of ASPnet nor whether it made any contribution to education policy or to education quality, but all respondents felt schools had an impact on the community.

Colombia

Colombian ASPnet schools felt themselves to have a clear educational vision, being more dynamic and having a real commitment to democracy and peace. They were making good strides with conflict resolution. However, they experienced problems with communication with their coordinator, especially more recently, and felt the system needed restructuring. Resources were scarce or not spread evenly. Economic difficulties in the country had also hindered communications, for example in the use of

telephone. Nonetheless, the Ministry interviewee felt that ASPnet schools made a contribution to education priorities and policy, and were noted for research.

Costa Rica

A full-time coordinator looks after 162 schools, and states that all are actively involved in projects. They range across rural, urban, indigenous, 'urban marginal' and one-teacher schools, and from kindergarten to university, public and private. The largest number however are primary schools. They are distinguished by a UNESCO committee, outreach with the community and by offering a more active education aimed at leadership formation. Achievements include the formation of a Youth Committee from ASPnet school graduates which projects the ideals of UNESCO into other national groups. Schools in the sample were highly active, with 9 out of 10 twinned and all saying that they had an influence on the community – through campaigns, parades, festivals and workshops for parents. All were happy about the support from their coordinator and none identified any problems in seeking support from UNESCO. The Ministry interview confirmed the contribution of ASPnet schools in increasing awareness of democracy, peace and intercultural understanding. One interesting feature was the termly rotation of a box of books (travelling boxes) between different ASPnet schools, with guides for teaching. Schools not in the net were actually participating in the various projects and festivals on their own initiative, which was a good sign. The evaluation was enthusiastic about ASPnet schools, with teachers and pupils finding them positive places to be in; there were the usual problems of an overloaded curriculum, lack of interest from some administrators or other teachers or turnover in officials who did not understand ASPnet and were suspicious of activities which did not emanate from them. However, impressive materials sent from the schools demonstrated the range and huge creativity in responding to ASPnet themes and ideals.

Cuba

There are 69 schools in the net with a full-time coordinator who is retired and does the work voluntarily; she is highly commended by the schools. There is a policy that all schools receive the same support. The Ministry of Education is

also very supportive. Almost all schools are active in projects, except for the very small rural schools who may simply incorporate the themes. The schools cut across all levels and types, although all have to have good results and experience in projects. 10 schools won the Peace Pillar award. They have managed to introduce the project on world heritage in young hands in schools that are not ASPnet schools. A full evaluation report found that about 70% of ASPnet schools were involved in major projects on Caribbean Sea, Culture of Peace, World Heritage in Young Hands and Intercultural education, and 7% in the Slave Route. The coordinator and schools concur that the majority of teachers and of students in schools are active in ASPnet activities. There are a lot of international exchanges and the twinning programmes. Schools are seen by the Ministry to contribute to national priorities through values education and the use of ICT, as well as transversal curriculum in environment and heritage. The schools help in the current debates on learning and on the rights of the child. They contribute to quality education in running regional seminars and developing materials, particularly in rural areas. ASPnet schools fit within an existing system of 'Reference Centres' (sort of beacon schools). The evaluation report was very positive about achievements and about the systematic way in which the net was organised and its results diffused. Pupils and teachers were very enthusiastic, orally and in writing, and it was evident that it had major effects on learning and attitudes.

Ecuador

There are 42 schools in the net, and the coordinator is also the coordinator of the permanent national commission of education for human rights, in the Ministry of Education – which appears to tie in well (the net has benefited from a cooperation agreement with the Consumer Tribunal, with teaching materials on consumer rights). The main interest in the net is in primary and secondary urban schools wanting a high quality education for their clients, although those with high performing teachers with larger salaries and/or modern establishments are also members, as are rural schools. All but one of the sample thought the country should add its own conditions to joining, to ensure quality and to take into account the cultural and geographical identity of the country, as well as its poverty. Schools found the national coordinator very helpful, well informed and with material arriving on time. In

her view, one of the key achievements of the net was that its teachers have a clear idea of what it means to be in the net - its advantages and its national and regional projects - and so have achieved the aim of students developing their own projects and every school in the net having an annual institutional project. Student involvement in decision-making was indeed evident from the questionnaire returns; there was also evidence of a significant impact on the community, with student activism and influence on local councils. The Galapagos islands are of course a key area of activity and concern. The Profile schools had also developed related projects such as 'I have the power' (in order to increase self-esteem), or had introduced versions of mind mapping to increase conceptual organisation – which they saw directly linked to UNESCO ideals.

Haiti

There are 13 ASPnet schools in this French-speaking Caribbean country, most of which are successful urban secondary schools. The coordinator feels that this number could grow. The trans-Atlantic slave trade project is of special interest to participants, since Haitian history is so closely linked to this trade (Haiti's independence was gained through a revolt by slaves in early colonial days). Sensitising students to their origins in this trade is a valuable part of the association, and visits to historical sites are popular activities. A whole week of activities linked to the project was organised and conducted, and covered by the media. There is also particular attention to environmental issues, along with democracy and international tolerance. As with many developing countries, there are budgetary constraints on ASPnet activities, and few resources are available. The school and national co-ordinators and a ministry official acknowledged the importance of UNESCO ideals for Haitian educational development, and there is some degree of coherence with the social science curriculum. However, impact of ASPnet on policymakers and the curriculum has not been achieved, although the ideals are compatible with national aims.

Honduras

The Honduras returns consisted of nine National Coordinator forms and five other questionnaires completed by District Education officials (but none directly from schools). From these it would seem that there are between 29 and 32 schools in

the network, coordinated at regional or departmental level by elected people who work in schools or the church. Major activities are around UNESCO forests (treasure of the future) and around micro-enterprise, as well as education for the third age. A much-mentioned project is 'Conociéndonos aprendemos'.

Mexico

A wealth of information was received from Mexico, showing great commitment to ASPnet and to the review. It is a big network, with 218 institutions, typically large urban primary and secondary schools. It is clear from all the photographs and accounts that there are highly visible activities with extensive involvement of parents, good impact on the community and well reported in the media. Three profiles were received, one from a 'social participation' school, one from a secondary school and one from a teacher training college for pre-school children. The 'social participation' school was a primary level one for children with socio-economic problems, open from 7am-5pm. The photographs demonstrated the range of activity in the community, in competitions and meetings and in exchanges, as well as supporting the claim to provide a dignified environment for children within the school. The secondary school showed a whole range of activities from service to the community to student elections and international exchange. The college had produced cassettes of infant music for diffusion to different countries, as well as participating in all the UNESCO projects and activities. The school questionnaires and the coordinator report however revealed that this breadth, enthusiasm and notable achievement was not confined to showcase schools, and permeated all the net.

Peru

A full evaluation accompanied the questionnaires and interview schedules, based on interviews with principals, teachers, coordinators and students as well as other actors chosen as a cross-cutting sample from the 43 schools in the net. The conclusions were that the pedagogical, student-centred model centred round the UNESCO 4 pillars and based on group project work meant a successful involvement of more than 50%. A CD had been made of the activities undertaken in the net. There was much enthusiasm and motivation. However, there was a weakness in the

coordination between schools and in the knowledge of concepts and terms. Students had a partial understanding of UNESCO, with some thinking it was a North American organisation; yet they had very precise understanding of human rights. There was no such thing as a typical ASPnet school, as they cut across all types and were found in very different geographical regions. The Ministry gives financial and human support, mostly in the area of teacher training. They thought that ASPnet schools did have a catalysing role in the community, and, from the schools questionnaires, parents did seem to be very involved. There were good examples of work in the themes of environment, heritage and citizenship, culminating in a youth forum on world heritage in Latin America on tourism and sustainable development.

Saint Lucia

There are three ASPnet schools in Saint Lucia. These are from a variety of different backgrounds, so there is no 'typical' school. The national coordinator is part-time and also the secretary general. Only the questionnaire from the national coordinator was received. The three schools are reported as active and to be making a contribution to a positive climate in schools but there seems to be a need to raise the profile and status of ASPnet in the country.

Trinidad and Tobago

There are about 40 ASP schools in Trinidad and Tobago. The national co-ordinator reports that it is a very mixed group, containing rural and urban, single sex and co-ed, and primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. In schools, students are heavily involved in the planning and conducting of ASPnet activities. These include the flagship Transatlantic Slave Trade project, and celebrating UNESCO days. The TST project materials are used extensively in lessons, as this is a theme in the Caribbean history syllabus, and the visual aids and texts help to enrich student learning. Some schools are involved in twinning and exchanges, including a nationally-organised one with Norway. In addition to the benefits that Trinidadian students receive from these exchanges, such as learning to appreciate different cultures, overseas visiting students have the opportunity to visit local sites of the slave trade. One school co-ordinator noted that such experiences help students to 'look at history from perspectives other than those found in their

textbooks', and another pointed out the critical perspective that this helped to develop in students. Many of the schools are quite active in raising funds through sales and performances, and in initiating local community activities.

Uruguay

There are 42 schools in the net, of all types. The full evaluation report stresses that ASPnet schools are not originally different or privileged, but form part of the national education system. Many are in disadvantaged areas, and/or operate in contexts with problems of drugs, alcohol or of integration between different ethnic groups. Some are integrated schools for all abilities. One is a Waldorf school. Major themes for the schools are the culture of peace, environment and heritage, and there has been a wealth of creative ideas around these, with the award of peace pillars for four schools. Classroom observations showed classes distinguished by the absence of silence or passivity, with much cooperation and teamwork; in interview, pupils knew about and were committed to ASPnet themes. As well as inspiring examples of children's work and photographs of activities in the community, examples of videos were sent which had been made by the schools on themes ranging from inclusion to bulimia and anorexia, ASPnet works closely with an NGO 'S.O.S. Naturel' associated with the Planet Society of UNESCO, which also provides materials and activities on peace, tolerance and the rights of the child.

Venezuela

There are 130 certificated ASPnet schools and 70 'friends'. Financial and support problems were identified by the National Coordinator, although she would like to see up to 300 schools in the net. The Ministry official felt the ASPnet schools had contributed to the country's priorities with regard to education for rural and indigenous peoples and inclusion of the disadvantaged, particularly with regard to literacy. The ASPnet school programme had not contributed to education policy, but the schools were seen as distinctive or innovative because of their value base and the emphasis on research. They had introduced themes not previously covered. ASPnet schools were active in the areas of literacy, culture of peace, integration, environment, world heritage, human rights and democracy. Regional coordinators played an important part, but schools wanted more support and communication nationally as well.

The school sample said they had taken part in flagship projects and in International Days; all were twinned locally and/or internationally, and benefited in terms of donations of equipment from the German twinning. Parents were involved a great deal, and schools were able to raise funds from the community. Schools were enthusiastic about the benefits to their school, not just local and international exchange, but academic achievement and discipline.