Enabling education continuity through online teaching

In Guinea, such as in most countries around the world, the COVID-19 outbreak has slowed down or even halted essential national activities, both economic and social... and even schooling. However, thanks to technology, innovative ways are seeing light in the country and across the world, especially when it comes to teaching, in order to make sure that students can keep on learning while in quarantine or out of school. Ousmane Bangoura, UN Volunteer Community Manager for the YouthConnekt project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provides tele-teaching in the COVID-19 extraordinary situation.

Due to the global COVID-19 outbreak, 91 per cent of the worldwide student population have not been attending their schools and other academic training locations, which have closed their doors in order to mitigate the pandemic’s direct impact.

This measure took effect in Guinea on 24 March 2020, after a joint statement of the
Ministers in charge of National Education and Training, and affects more than six million pupils and students all over the country.

To allow children in the country to keep up with the national classroom curriculum, Ousmane Bangoura started providing online classes shared on YouTube.

In his view, although not all students are able to access these online classes, lots of them appreciate the initiative and attend. In a country where 42.66 per cent of the population has access to the internet, online classes are one way to continue teaching, despite closed schools.

“Online teaching is a great alternative to provide minimum service to students who are currently quarantined due to COVID-19. Even if it does not affect all pupils due to their geographical location, I remain convinced that many others appreciate the initiative and attend classes simultaneously. --Ousmane Banoura, UN Volunteer Community Manager with UNDP

Ousmane has been receiving strong support after the first online class he has provided. He sees online classes as a bridge between different African education systems, as well as a means to fight illiteracy on the continent.

With an academic degree as an Image Reporter Journalist, Ousmane has, for over five years now, been using his skills in the audio-visual field to create and manage a Facebook online training group named “French Grammar for all”. The group has a 300,000-member community, bringing together people from Senegal, Chad, Mali and Cote d’Ivoire, who follow his activities through social media.

“I am specialized in audio-visual tools, which allows me to be useful to my community through video production concerning community initiatives that I support to provide them more visibility. --Ousmane Bangoura

Ousmane is also committed to his community and produces videos showcasing community initiatives. For example, on 29 March 2020, he broadcasted how a group of young volunteers was giving sanitary kits to women in the markets of Conakry, the capital city.
Alongside with his volunteering activities, Ousmane advocates for more media involvement in fighting stigma around COVID-19 by spreading official information concerning the pandemics. All these activities are testimony to his conviction that education and research are key elements to fight the Coronavirus in Africa.

• UNDP • COVID-19 • Coronavirus • education

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG 3: Good health and well-being, SDG 4: Quality education, SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals