



Concept Note

International Webinar

Rural Education in East Asia

Perspectives of small rural schools

October 30, 2021, 14:00-16:00 (Japan Standard Time);

13:00-15:00 (Beijing Time)

**Graduate School of Education, Tohoku University, Japan
International Research and Training Centre for Rural Education, UNESCO**

Background

East Asian countries have made remarkable progress and good performance in achieving an inclusive, equitable and quality education in the past decades. Nevertheless, education in rural areas of East Asia are still facing unprecedented educational challenges caused by many social issues, such as migration, unemployment, low birth rate, and efficiency-driven education policies. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic brought more difficulties and uncertainties for resilient, inclusive, and quality rural education in East Asia. With unprecedented social changes and uncertainties towards 2030 agenda for sustainable development, it is a good timing to share among the countries in East Asia what we have done to improve rural education and discuss and assess innovative strategies and policies to enhance the quality of rural education towards a shared future. The UN 2030 agenda is built on key pillars such as people, prosperity, planet, and strategic partnership to ensure that no-one is left behind. The SDG4 pillars are access, equity, inclusion, quality and lifelong learning must be aligned with the theme of the seminar to reflect on the small schools in rural areas. This webinar provides three country case studies of policies and practices of small rural schools in China, Korea, and Japan.

Small size schools are inevitable result of urbanization and migration in these three countries. However, it is also a common situation in poor areas in most countries, including Africa. What are the appropriate institutional settings, policy and strategic framework needed for small schools? What are the lessons learnt? What is the role of local community, municipalities, provincial governments in the management of the small schools in rural areas, what is the



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infrastructure, what is the capacity of teachers in small schools in rural areas, the governance, management and funding of these rural schools, is there huge potential in leveraging the power of ICT in small schools in rural areas? All these issues need to be addressed in the context of sustainability of small schools in rural contexts of East Asia.

Objectives

- Enhance understanding of progress and challenges for small rural schools in East Asia.
- Share experiences of efforts paid for building inclusive and quality education in small rural schools of East Asia
- Share good practices in the management of small rural schools
- Alignment of small rural schools with the global education 2030 agenda and SDGs
- Discuss the future and possibilities of constructing inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all through small rural schools in the rural context of East Asian society by 2030.

Expected outputs

- Establish the solid platform and mechanism for exchange of information and knowledge sharing of best practices among the East Asian countries.
- Enhance and scale-up partnership between the East Asian countries.
- Scholars from China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea share their countries' experiences.
- Scholars and participants discuss new opportunities and approach to collaborate for building small rural schools for a sustainable society.