



Geneva
Liaison Office



NGO WORKING GROUP
ON HUMAN RIGHTS
EDUCATION AND LEARNING

REPORT

Seminar on Human Rights Education

How can Human Rights Education and Training be promoted through the Education 2030 Agenda, especially Target 4.7?

30 May 2017

Palais des Nations, Geneva

Organized by

The NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning (NGO WG on HREL)

Co-sponsored by

The States Platform on Human Rights Education and Training in the Human Rights Council
(Brazil, Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia and Thailand)
and **UNESCO Geneva Liaison Office**



The NGO WG on HREL is a working group of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO), Geneva.

This seminar took place before the 35th session of the Human Rights Council, in connection with the publication of OHCHR's report on the high-level panel discussion for the 5th Anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. As a contribution to the panel discussion, the NGO WG on HREL had made specific recommendations, including on the need for stronger synergies among initiatives of UN agencies, other intergovernmental entities and governments in the field of human rights education.

Around 80 participants including governments, UN agencies, NGOs and academic institutions attended the seminar, whose objectives were:

- 1. TO REVIEW DIFFERENT INITIATIVES RELATED TO HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION CARRIED OUT AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL, TO EXAMINE THEIR CONTENT AND COMPLEMENTARITY;**
- 2. TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE VARIOUS PROGRAMS IN 2017;**
- 3. TO FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION WITHIN THESE INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS.**

OPENING REMARKS

H.E. Mr Mauricio Enrico SERRA, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Italy
Mr Abdulaziz ALMUZAINI, Director, UNESCO Geneva Liaison Office

PANELISTS

Lydia RUPRECHT, *Team Leader*, Education for Global Citizenship, UNESCO
Gilberto DUARTE SANTOS, *Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice Officer*, Education for Justice, UNODC
Elena IPPOLITI, *Human Rights Officer*, Methodology Education & Training Section, OHCHR
Giorgia MAGNI, *Junior Researcher*, International Bureau of Education, IBE-UNESCO

MODERATOR

Claire de LAVERNETTE, *Chair of the NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning*



Moderator Claire de Lavernette, co-Chair of the NGO WG on HREL, welcomed the participants by saying that the international community has increasingly expressed consensus on the fundamental contribution of human rights education in building inclusive societies and a sustainable future, including by preventing violence in all its forms. In 2015, the world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to serve as the overall framework to guide global and national development action for the next 15 years. The Agenda covers a broad set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 167 targets; in particular, Goal 4 refers to inclusive and equitable quality education, and its target 4.7 specifically to human rights education¹.

Claire de Lavernette stated that various initiatives to promote human rights education and related fields had been promoted by Member States in various intergovernmental contexts. The NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Training believed it useful to bring together these initiatives to give an opportunity to all stakeholders to learn about their progress and to address their complementarity and coordination.

¹ Sustainable Development Goal Target 4.7: “By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development”.

Claire de Lavernette then gave the floor to the seminar’s co-sponsors to deliver opening remarks before the seminar.

His Excellency Ambassador Maurizio Enrico Serra, Permanent Representative of Italy, also representing the States Platform on Human Rights Education and Training, welcomed the initiative to hold a seminar on human rights education and emphasized the importance of international and cross-regional cooperation in education as the basis for building peace.

He reminded the participants about the work of the States Platform on Human Rights Education and Training which is an informal cross-regional group of States, chaired currently by Italy and Brazil, aiming at promoting human rights education and training at the Human Rights Council.

This seminar, which was gathering together international organizations, States and civil society organizations, offered the States Platform an occasion to collect inputs, views, comments and ideas on how the Platform could act to further advance human rights education and training in the work of the Council.

He mentioned that the development of human rights knowledge and skills was of overall importance. The World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE)², which Italy supported, as well as the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training³, provided good starting points.

The Ambassador concluded by highlighting the contribution of human rights education to the prevention of atrocities and social imbalances.

²<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Pages/Programme.aspx>

³ General Assembly resolution 66/137 of 19 December 2011

Mr Abdulaziz Almuzaini, Director, UNESCO Liaison Office in Geneva welcomed the discussion as “an occasion to highlight new synergies, to encourage complementarity action, and to explore fresh perspectives for shared initiatives”. He then said that the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training affirmed “the fundamental importance of human rights education and training in contributing to the promotion, protection and effective realization of all human rights”.

Quality education grounded in human rights should equip all learners with the necessary skills and values to deal with the challenges of the 21st century. This will provide the strongest possible foundations for attaining the objectives of the 2030 Agenda.

SDG 4 - and in particular Target 4.7 - stood as an unparalleled recognition of the importance of education in achieving sustainable development that is just, peaceful and inclusive. It also offered fresh impetus to global action in Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education⁴, including through education on human rights, gender equality, peace and non-violence, culture and diversity.

As the United Nations’ specialized agency for education, UNESCO had been entrusted to lead and coordinate the implementation of the Education 2030 Agenda through the Education 2030 Framework for Action⁵, working with Member States, civil society and a broad range of partners around the world.

As an integral part of this Agenda, UNESCO promoted human rights education and training within the framework of its programme on Global Citizenship Education.

The seminar was timely, because realizing the full potential of human rights education required the cooperation and mobilization of actors and partners across all sectors, and at all levels, and the seminar was an opportunity to gather some of those.



⁴ <http://en.unesco.org/gced>

⁵ <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002456/245656E.pdf>

Ms Lydia Ruprecht, Team Leader, Education for Global Citizenship, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris

Global Citizenship Education (GCED) aims to empower learners to assume active roles to face and resolve global challenges and to become proactive contributors to a more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure world. GCED equips learners to understand the local, national and global contexts and to think critically, developing a sense of shared humanity, responsibility, compassion and solidarity.

Global Citizenship Education is central to SDG Goal 4. It contributes to the definition of the relevance and the quality of education. UNESCO, as the leading UN agency on Global Citizenship Education, considers these areas of education, including peace and human rights education, as central to its mandate.

UNESCO considers that education for human rights and the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence enhance quality education. UNESCO's foundation for work in human rights education is framed by the **1974 Recommendation**.⁶

UNESCO supports the integration of Human Rights and peace in national education systems.

Its activities in human rights education include:

- Monitoring of the 1974 Recommendation;
- Promotion of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (3rd Phase);
- Participation in the International Contact Group on Citizenship and Human Rights Education (ICG) convened by the Council of Europe;
- Programme implementation – at country level through its Field Offices;
- Support to UNODC “Education for Justice” (E4J);
- Support Member States in their efforts to prevent violent extremism through education, in line with the UN Secretary General’s Action Plan on PVE.

UNESCO is also fully engaged in the monitoring of SDG Target 4.7 and GCED is in its monitoring and assessment. SDG Target 4.7 is a complex target to monitor and assess. In addition, there is no universal definition of GCED or agreement as to how it is conceived and implemented or how education systems can be tailored to promote it.

In UNESCO's monitoring of SDG 4.7.1⁷, the UNESCO 1974 Recommendation reporting mechanism was revised and adapted as a basis to collect data. This provided a large amount of information with which to monitor progression towards target 4.7. The 6th consultation was launched in 2016⁸ and to date 83 countries have submitted a national report.

⁶ [“Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms”](#) of November 1974.

⁷ <https://en.unesco.org/gced/sdg47progress>.

⁸ <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002451/245155E.pdf>

Mr Gilberto Duarte Santos, Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice Officer, Education for Justice, UNODC, delivered his remarks next.

Mr Duarte Santos emphasized that the Doha Declaration⁹ highlighted the importance of education as a tool for preventing crime and corruption.

The brand-new **Education for Justice (E4J)** initiative is an outcome of the Doha Declaration and focuses on primary, secondary, tertiary and university education to work with specific values within the Crime Prevention framework and to support their teaching.

The rationale behind E4J is very much linked to human rights education. One cannot talk about crime prevention, criminal justice and rule-of-law without addressing human rights. The Doha Declaration makes several references to human rights and reinforces the connection between human rights and rule of law. The first step to ensuring rights is to know what those rights are, i.e. through human rights education and training.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, under article 26, states that “Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.” Maintaining international standards and human rights instruments inherently requires people to be aware of their rights. Therefore, a rights-based approach is key to the entire spectrum of UN activities.

⁹ Adopted in 2015 at the 13th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. <https://www.unodc.org/dohadeclaration/>

Regarding the Education 2030 Agenda, E4J speaks directly to SDG Target 4.7 and, within that, seeks to promote education on certain rights related to the rule of law and some of our most fundamental freedoms. At the same time, it also seeks to create a link to SDG 16, which is related to peace, justice and institutions.

One of the first tasks E4J undertook was to look at what our partner institutions have been doing, to avoid replication and ensure complementarity. There is a relationship between education and incidence of crime and conflict.

We don't want E4J to be lost in a crowded education sector rather we want to build on the ongoing work of UNESCO and OHCHR.

Ms Elena Ippoliti, Human Rights Officer, Methodology Education and Training Section, OHCHR, provided an overview of two initiatives of the Human Rights Council: i) the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing) and ii) the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (2011). The role of OHCHR is to support these two initiatives of the Human Rights Council.

The World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE) is a common collective framework for national action by all countries, and OHCHR has a coordination role.

The WPHRE is based on human rights standards agreed by Member States at the international level, and provides guidance on human rights education and training content and process. It is organized in consecutive phases, to focus efforts on specific sectors or areas.

She highlighted the three phases:

1. **(2005-2009)** Human rights education in primary and secondary school systems
2. **(2010-2014)** Human rights education in higher education and human rights training for civil servants, law enforcement officials and the military
3. **(2015-2019)** Human rights training for media professionals and journalists, and strengthening of first and second phases

Each phase has a Plan of Action which provides specific methodological guidance and setting of responsibilities, including:

- Detailed strategies for each sector;
- Actors to be involved;
- Step-by-step guidance on the national implementation process;

Step 1: analyzing the current situation, and assessing needs

Step 2: setting priorities

Step 3: implementing, monitoring and evaluating

The World Programme provides a practical framework to advance national implementation and foster international cooperation. Through the mid-term and final reporting for each phase, it allows to periodically monitor progress related to human rights education. The mid-term report of the Third Phase will

be presented in September 2017 at the 36th session of the Human Rights Council.

The UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (UN Declaration) is the first United Nations General Assembly document entirely devoted to human rights education, representing a policy statement expressing governments' commitment to human rights education and training. It does not have follow-up or monitoring mechanisms such as the UNESCO 1974 Recommendation.

The UN Declaration and the World Programme can be considered as two complementary initiatives of the Human Rights Council.

At this stage, and before turning to the last speaker, a question was raised by Brazil: Brazil was interested in assessing the relationship between SDG Target 4.7 and the Human Rights Council agenda on human rights education. What are the next steps to take in the Human Rights Council to help achieve our goals for Target 4.7?

OHCHR answer to Brazil: This seminar was one step to bring together at the Human Rights Council various international programs related to human rights education; these synergetic efforts should be promoted at the Council. Also, tools developed in the context of those programs, such as the *Self-Assessment Guide for Governments on Human Rights Education in the Primary and Secondary Schools Systems*, published by OHCHR and UNESCO in the context of the WPHRE, could assist implementation and monitoring of SDG 4.7, and the Council could further disseminate them.

OHCHR also said that governments had an important role in ensuring that their delegations to different inter-governmental organizations (such as UNESCO/Paris, UNOG/Geneva, UNOV/Vienna, as well as in regional organizations such as the Council of Europe/Strasbourg) were in contact and aware of efforts related to human rights education taking place in the respective organizations and promote similar approaches and synergies.

Ms Giorgia Magni, Junior Fellow, UNESCO International Bureau of Education, an institute of UNESCO specialized in curriculum. IBE-UNESCO works towards achieving SDG Target 4.7 using curriculum as the main tool.

The curriculum is a political, policy and technical agreement around the “for what”, the “what” and the “how” to teach and learn. Curriculum embeds the vision of society that we aspire to shape, as well as the knowledge, skills and values needed to live in that world. It should be seen as a vital element for improving quality and the relevance of education towards SDG 4 and consequently Target 4.7.

Education for peace and sustainable development is one of the overarching education goals of UNESCO and empowering global citizens is a key objective within this goal. To this extent, Human Rights and Global Citizenship Education (GCED) have been specifically mentioned in the Sustainable Development Goals and the Education 2030 Framework for Action, particularly in SDG Target 4.7.

The main challenge related to SDG Target 4.7 is that it is complicated to monitor and assess. In addition, the implementation of

GCED objectives, contents and approaches including Human Rights is not uniform; it is carried out in multiple ways, to various degrees, and under different lens, both in and out of school.

To work towards the fulfillment of SDG 4.7, the IBE-UNESCO advocates for a transversal approach to address GCED, which also encompasses Human Rights as a key and cross-cutting component.

Among the main activities carried out are:

- Development of coding schemes based on UNESCO’s recommendations on GCED to establish some standards to facilitate the monitoring of GCED content in education policies, plans and curricula;
- Technical assistance in collaboration with UNESCO Asia-Pacific Center of Education for International Understanding to implement GCED in Cambodia, Colombia, Mongolia, Uganda;
- Development of tools and guidelines to assist Member States in the implementation of GCED in their national education systems.

A study commissioned by the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) team and carried out by IBE-UNESCO, is the first comprehensive analysis in monitoring SDG 4.7. The main findings of the report provide a clear picture of the prevalence of SDG 4.7 content and themes in formal education as well as content that can be strengthened. For instance, the study found that 92% of countries surveyed referenced Human Rights,

while only 22% of countries included the term Human Rights Education.

Only 18% of countries included the term Peace Education. All key terms pertaining to Peace, Non-violence and Human Security were found in countries and regions that are politically unstable, currently or recently exposed to conflict or violence (e.g. Iraq, Mexico, South Sudan, Pakistan).

Some 92% of the countries refer to national identity/citizenship in their curricula, whilst only 42% refer to global identity/citizenship. Australia, Bhutan, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Nepal, Serbia, Canada/Ontario, and the USA/New York, being the most “global-looking” countries.

A comparative analysis of the curriculum guidelines of ten countries found that all ten countries had content on human rights, nation and intercultural empathy, and dialogue. While the fundamental basis for identity continues to be the nation, all the curricula analyzed referred to human rights as the shared moral core of humanity. Further, in spite of the socio-economic and cultural differences among the countries, there was a consensual appreciation of intercultural empathy, dialogue, and respect that transcend national boundaries.

Among the main lessons learnt from IBE-UNESCO’s work on GCED is that in order to mainstream it into the education system, there is the need for a systemic approach (not piecemeal interventions) that addresses national policies, curricula, teachers’ role and professional development, pedagogical approaches, and assessment.

Additionally, we need to focus on the synergies and tensions between educating about universal values while at the same time recognizing the interdependence of nations as well as respecting local values, identities and cultures. We need to decide whether to understand it as a stand-alone subject, as an integrated subject or as a crosscutting theme to curricula and pedagogy, the latest being the position recommended by UNESCO.

In closing, IBE-UNESCO said that changes did not happen by creating new subjects, they happened instead by reflecting about how you mainstreamed those subjects at the core of the education system.

OPEN FLOOR

Moderator Claire de Lavernette opened the floor to questions and comments.

- **Kennedy Center for International Studies:** How will the actors involved in human rights education measure how effective and how much knowledge the children will actually be able to use? How do we know what they actually learned and transferred into behavior? What share of childhood population is exposed to HRE or GCED and how they were changed?

UNESCO: It is easier to develop and use input indicators, such as “how many teachers trained”, “curricula integrating GCED principles”. It is harder to measure learning outcomes. The technical teams working on indicators are currently looking into outcome indicators but it is a challenging process. Some advocates in GCED have argued that outcome assessments might not be helpful: measuring outcomes may distort the learning process, i.e. teaching to the test. There are good examples of classroom level practices to assess learning out, but not at the global level.

OHCHR: The objective of human rights education is to promote behavioral changes, and there are studies and other material available on the impact of effective human rights education on learners. The methodology used on those educational activities is fundamental; it must be learner-centered and participatory. Evaluations can be carried out for specific programs in specific communities, and their

results can feed the overall discourse on the impact of human rights education.

- **Soroptimist International:** 1. With the theme of CSW61 focusing on rural women: What is being done to ensure human rights education reaches those who are based in rural areas, particularly women and girls? How can civil society assist rural women to contribute to the dissemination of human rights education and act as agents of change?
2. Refugee camps host a larger proportion of women, and are also a breeding ground for sexual exploitation. How can UN agencies collaborate with civil society to ensure that all those in refugee camps receive human rights education and assistance?

OHCHR: There are plenty of civil society organizations which reach out to the most marginalized and people in situations of vulnerability. Many local NGOs work within communities, such as the Indian human rights education program documented in the movie co-produced by OHCHR “A Path to Dignity: The Power of Human Rights Education”, which reaches out to Dalit children in rural areas. There are also many UN educational programs, for example by UN Women and UN-FPA, focusing on the girl child. Human rights education is not only a task for the UN and governments, civil society and community organizations are key actors and should make use of international frameworks at the local level.

- **Soka Gakkai International:** 1. How useful do you consider non-formal

education tools in promoting human rights education? Which elements you think are necessary for a successful non-formal education tool for human rights education promotion?

2. What do you think are the most effective ways to measure the impact of non-formal education tools?

UNODC: E4J relies on the formal education setting to teach rule of law. The impact assessment on non-formal education tools is very expensive if done thoroughly. However, if you rely on second sources, it could be a useful way for Member States and civil society organizations to assess how a human rights education program affects people who receive this training.

UNESCO: The non-formal and informal education is possibly overlooked and undervalued, which is unfortunate given the number of out of school children and learners. A thorough impact assessment has yet to be done, but the anecdotal evidence is definitely there. Our work on preventing violent extremism (PVE) through education is leading us to explore in greater detail this question of impact. We will be conducting a study on existing research and studies documenting the impact of different pedagogies that supports PVE.

IBE-UNESCO: Measuring impact is challenging and measuring it in the non-formal and adult education sectors is even more challenging. In the analysis carried out in the 4 countries we have noticed that many education initiatives are delivered in non-formal and adult education settings, for instance by NGOs, such as in the case of Human Rights Education in Cambodia. Since different

methodologies can be used in a non-formal environment compared to a formal one, there is the need to promote more collaborative approaches among the different education stakeholders to bridge the gap between formal and non-formal education systems.

OHCHR: There are similar challenges in non-formal and formal impact assessment. Evaluation does not take place at the end of a program but it is a continuous process and starts with the very design of the educational activity, with a through needs assessment exercise. Evaluation is easier if it is seen as a continuous process; just doing evaluation at the end of a training program is too late. OHCHR produced a very practical handbook¹⁰ with *Equitas* on evaluation of human rights education training programs in formal and non-formal settings.

- **ONG HOPE International:** A great effort must be made in all countries for a critical examination of textbooks and the human rights training of textbook authors and editors. They are a rampart against human rights violations, notably in the role given to different people in the texts submitted to students. Will the indicators under construction take this into account in order to encourage States to take measures in this direction?

IBE-UNESCO: Indeed, many studies from UNESCO have shown that in textbooks there can be unintended biases regarding culture or gender, for example. In our experiences with countries, we actually realized that we needed to create also a space for the im-

¹⁰ [Evaluating Human Rights Training Activities. A Handbook for Human Rights Educators](#)

provement of pedagogical practices and of learning materials, as part of the curriculum reform. This is what we refer to with “systemic approach” and this is what we do in our work. We try to offer Member States guidance, through the development of evaluation tools, on how to examine and re-adapt their learning materials, such as textbooks.

UNESCO: Textbooks are very much decided nationally. UNESCO published Guidelines recently on how to ensure that textbooks do not reproduce stereotypes on gender, culture and religion.

- **LDS Charities:** Do we have statistical data available on what have been achieved? What percentage of learners is able to more aptly avoid violence, such as sexual violence and trafficking?

UNODC: It is difficult to discuss this question because data is lacking specifically for crime and violence. What we have showed is a link between the level of education and the incidence of violence. However there is no data to support causality. No data supports that educating people in high areas of violence reduces crime rates. Evidence points to avoidance of violence but not to education as a solution. Some States have invested heavily in education as violence prevention.

UNESCO: Education cannot prevent individuals from committing a violent act. If there is a preventative role for education, it is to nurture the defenses of the individual against violent extremism, to strengthen their resilience in the face of adversity and conflict and to set a moral standard and ensure that the

climate in society is not conducive to violence. Education is no substitute for security forces.

- **Instituto Int. Maria Ausiliatrice Don Bosco:** Transformation goes beyond the intellectual aspect. What are panelists’ thoughts about social media to promote education? Have you thought of using social media to convey messages and education? How can we meet people where they are?

OHCHR: The international community agrees with you because the Human Rights Council decided that the Third Phase of the WPHRE was to focus on the training of media professionals and journalists. With social media there are more and more vehicles to advance human rights education; OHCHR has been making increasing efforts to use them.

- **Graduate Women International:** The mandate for the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education is due for renewal in June. The SDG target 4.7 specifically mentions training in human rights through education. What is achievable through the renewal of the mandate of the SR on Education and what are the opportunities and challenges?

Brazil: The next report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education will be on non-formal education and it deals with issues of human rights education. She has a team here that we can include in the next activities of the States Platform and the Human Rights Council.

- **Centre for Architecture and Human Rights** (via email): A 2007 report¹¹ estimated that development projects account for more forced displacements than conflict, persecution or disaster. Architects, planners and engineers are responsible for the implementation of most development projects. Yet they are woefully unaware of the relationship between their work and human rights. It is important to stress a rights-based core curriculum in architecture, engineering and planning schools in order to meet the goals of the Education 2030 Agenda.

OHCHR said that it was an interesting reflection and the moderator added that this target sector could be a good focus for a future phase of the WPHRE.

The moderator thanked the panelists for their rich presentations and the participants for their attention and active participation through their questions.



¹¹ [Human tide: the real migration crisis](#), Christian Aid, 2007, Page 5