



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Dignity and justice for all of us

**FROM UNIVERSAL DECLARATION TO WORLD PROGRAMME  
1948-2008: 60 years of Human Rights Education**

**REPORT**

**The Round Table:  
Putting Human Rights into Practice – The Role of Education**

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 10-11 December 2008

Section for the Promotion of Rights and Values in Education  
Division for the Promotion of Basic Education  
Education Sector  
**UNESCO**

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## **GENERAL INTRODUCTION: The United Nations, UNESCO and Human Rights Education**

Human rights education (HRE) refers to education, training, and information for the purpose of building a universal culture of human rights. A comprehensive education in human rights consists of two components: knowledge and information on human rights and the mechanisms that protect these inalienable rights. It is important that HRE also impart the skills needed to promote, defend, and apply human rights in daily life.

HRE is distinct from other types of values education. For example, citizenship education or education for democratic citizenship (EDC) is a set of practices and activities aimed at making young people and adults better equipped to participate actively in democratic life by assuming and exercising their rights and responsibilities in society. Education for mutual respect and understanding (EMRU) is concerned with self-respect, respect for others, and the improvement of relationships between individuals and communities of different cultural traditions. In EMRU, students learn to respect and value themselves and others; appreciate the human interactions within society; recognize and understand the commonalities as well as the differences between many cultural traditions; and learn how to manage conflict in a non-violent way. Ultimately, EMRU fosters an environment of tolerance and mutual understanding which enables people to live together peacefully. It is clear that HRE, EDC and EMRU share many common features despite their distinctions. Each of these disciplines contain essential elements that should be included in educational systems all over the world in order to prepare youth to be active, responsible and caring national and global citizens.

The importance of human rights education in promoting a global culture of human rights is becoming more widely recognized. Supporting human rights for all - regardless of ethnicity, language, religious beliefs or other differences - and the role of human rights education in this process, is now deemed essential to the security and welfare of all peoples.

As a follow-up to the UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004), the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE) on 10 December, 2004 to further the implementation of human rights education programmes in all sectors (Resolution 59/113A). Building on the achievements of the UN Decade, the World Programme seeks to promote a common understanding of the basic principles and methodologies of human rights education; provide a concrete framework for action; and strengthen partnerships and cooperation from international to grassroots levels. The World Programme is structured around an ongoing series of phases, the first of which covers the period 2005-2009 and focuses on primary and secondary school systems. The programme's Plan of Action was developed by a group of education experts and human rights practitioners from different regions of the world. This approach assured a truly global document based on the ideas and experiences of countries from around the world. The first phase of the [Plan of Action](#) outlines concrete strategies and practical recommendations for nation-wide human rights education implementation.

As adopted by the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference in November 2007, a series of activities have been undertaken by UNESCO throughout the year of 2008 to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which was celebrated on Human Rights Day, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

UNESCO's Education Sector participated in the commemoration of the UDHR by organizing a series of three events based on the theme: "60 years of Human Rights Education" at UNESCO headquarters in Paris from the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2008 till the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2009:

- "Learn about Human Rights Education", an exhibit of human rights-related learning materials from over fifty UNESCO Member States and reflecting a wide-range of creative approaches and cultural perspectives from regions around the globe.
- "UNESCO Works for Human Rights: A poster exhibition on the street", leveraging UNESCO's campaigning strengths through art work, with posters from around the world displayed outside UNESCO Headquarters late in 2008.
- "Putting human rights into practice: the role of education", a Round Table – held 10-11 December 2008 – providing an international forum for the discussion of research, policy, curriculum and partnerships in human rights education across formal and informal contexts.

This publication highlights some of the key ideas and features of these events. In addition to substantial opening and closing sessions, the Round Table consisted of four panels, the reporting of each consists of Summary, Introduction, Case Studies, Discussion and Recommendations.

This publication can be read on a number of levels: as a retrospective commemoration of human rights education; as a celebration of current good practice; and, through its discussion and recommendations, as a source of guidance for future directions in human right education.

***Five Pillars of the Plan of Action of the first phase of the  
World Programme for Human Rights Education:***

- **Policies and curricula**

Educational policies, such as legislation, national plans of action, policy statements, curricula and training policies, should explicitly promote a rights-based approach to education.

- **The learning environment**

Learning environment should be one in which human rights are practised and lived in the daily life of the whole school community (e.g., whole school approaches, school governance).

- **Teaching and learning practices and tools**

Teaching and learning practices and tools should reflect human rights values. For example, materials and textbooks should be consistent with principles of human rights education, and teaching methodologies should be democratic and participatory (e.g., methodologies, resources).

- **Professional development of teachers and other educational personnel**

Professional development of teachers and other educational personnel should be targeted to enable educators and school staff to demonstrate and transmit human rights values (e.g., methodologies, training policies, modules)

- **Evaluation and assessment approaches and tools**

The policies as well as educational activities aiming at integrating human rights education should be subject to impact evaluation and analysis (e.g., indicators of evaluation, methodologies).

*For more information on UNESCO's Plan of Action for Human Rights Education, please consult the website: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001478/147853e.pdf>*

### ***UNESCO Framework***

The Constitution of UNESCO states that the Organization's principal purpose is to "*contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language and religion*". In 2003, *UNESCO and Human Rights Education* was developed and integrated into the overall UNESCO Strategy on Human Rights that was then adopted by the General Conference during its 32nd Session. The Organization assists Member States in formulating policies, strategies, action plans, and programmes, which will promote education for human rights and facilitate dialogue and cooperation among diverse actors. Its commitment to human rights education is further enhanced by its key role in the Education for All (EFA) movement and education-related Millennium Development goals, both of which are concerned with content and processes in, as well as access to, education with a universal nature and pledge to quality.

## **THE ROUND TABLE**

### **Putting human rights into practice: the role of education**

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 10-11 December 2008

The Round Table “Putting human Rights into Practice: The Role of Education” was organized by the UNESCO Education Sector on 10-11 December 2008 as a follow-up to the on-going first phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-2009). The Round Table served to provide a forum for UNESCO Member States to share their experiences on the integration of human rights principles into national educational policies and practices.

Participants included representatives from Ministries of Education, National Commissions and Permanent Delegations to UNESCO, NGOs, research institutions, universities and educators. Over two days, the wide variety of participants’ knowledge and experience, together with their national and institutional backgrounds gave rise to rich and productive discussion.

The Round Table had the following objectives:

- To exchange good practices and innovative policies on human rights education;
- To identify priority areas for action to develop and improve human rights education;
- To promote partnerships at national, regional and international levels.

The four panels addressed priority areas for the improved integration of human rights principles into educational frameworks:

#### **PANEL 1**

##### **HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION: POLICY AND RESEARCH**

##### **Towards the strengthened linkages between research and national policies**

The link between research and policy development in the area of human rights education (HRE) is a key issue. The development of effective educational policies requires knowledge and understanding of current research on key human rights issues. This panel explored good practices for the incorporation of existing research into the formulation and implementation of human rights educational policies. It examined how to strengthen the relationship between research institutes and policy-making bodies. A strong partnership between the two is needed for the sustainability of human rights education through appropriate programmes and monitoring mechanisms.

#### **PANEL 2**

##### **PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION: CURRICULA CONSIDERATIONS: HRE as a specific issue or as a cross-cutting issue**

While it is important to learn about specific human rights principles, it is equally important to introduce these principles into the overall learning process so that educational practices, curricular development, teacher training, teaching methodologies, learning resources and the



school environment all reflect the human rights principles taught. This panel evaluated the advantages and disadvantages of teaching human rights as a single subject or as a cross-cutting issue throughout the curriculum.

### **PANEL 3**

#### **PARTNERSHIP IN HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION: CURRENT PRACTICE AND FUTURE INNOVATION:**

##### **Putting partnerships in place**

Strong institutional partnerships are required between Ministries of Education, national human rights institutions, NGOs, schools and colleges, teacher unions, teacher training institutions, research institutions and universities, to ensure the effective implementation of human rights education. The UNESCO National Commissions have the potential to mobilize these stakeholders for the building of institutional partnerships critical to fostering cooperation, and achieving sustainable outcomes.

### **PANEL 4**

#### **HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION BEYOND SCHOOLING:**

##### **Strengthening linkages between research and national policies**

If human rights education is to effect positive changes within society, it is essential that concern for human rights be extended beyond the immediate school environment to the community-at-large. To this end, several countries have begun to examine the possibility of mainstreaming human rights education in both formal and non-formal educational settings and linking the two in a complementary manner.

## **OPENING SESSION**

### **UNESCO AND HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION**

Nicholas Burnett, Assistant Director-General for Education at UNESCO

### **HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION:**

#### **CURRENT STATUS AND FUTURE CHALLENGES**

François Audigier, University of Geneva

### **CASE STUDY: LEBANON**

H.E. Mrs Sylvie Fadlallah, Ambassador of Lebanon to UNESCO

## UNESCO AND HUMAN RIGHTS

**Nicholas Burnett**

**Assistant Director-General for Education at UNESCO**

Since its founding in the aftermath of World War II, UNESCO has leveraged its fields of competence “to construct the defences of peace in the minds of men” as stated by its visionary founders. UNESCO remains committed to this important aim and recognizes that education is a powerful tool to foster inclusive societies within a broader culture of peace based on respect for human rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights assigns two basic functions to education. Firstly, it stipulates that, “*Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality*” and secondly, that, “*it shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.*”

Member States have adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) along with other more recent human rights instruments, but it is the UDHR that notably establishes the right to education. This fundamental right is the basis of human development and personal fulfilment. It serves as an essential means for reducing poverty, promoting better health, livelihoods and social cohesion. However, this right is still denied to some 75 million children of primary school age, 55% of whom are girls<sup>1</sup>. Despite progress towards gender parity, girls are still subject to discrimination and violence. Linguistic and ethnic minorities, as well as other vulnerable groups, are all too often excluded from education. Additionally, in many societies, universal values such as tolerance, respect, mutual understanding, and non-discrimination are not yet guiding principles in teaching and learning processes. Government ratification of normative human rights instruments is crucial, but equally important is the successful implementation of these instruments in order to address all forms of discrimination.

UNESCO’s work in the area of human rights education (HRE) is set within the broader context of assisting Member States to develop and implement inclusive educational policies – in short – to achieve quality education for all. A human rights-based education imparts the skills needed to promote, defend and apply human rights in daily life. It promotes respect for human dignity and equality, fundamental to human development, and serves to further inclusive-based societies and participation in democratic decision-making.

UNESCO provides a platform for cooperation and partnership among actors committed to this process. In close coordination with other UN agencies, the Organization plays a major role in the implementation of the World Programme for Human Rights Education that was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2004.

One of the key objectives of the World Programme for Human Rights Education is to encourage Member States to adopt a holistic approach in their efforts to mainstream human rights education. In this regard, UNESCO has recently supported a programme in Albania, with the financial support of Italy, to implement human rights education into curriculum development, in-service teacher training, school policies and the wider school community.

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<sup>1</sup> Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009

Such a comprehensive approach is necessary if human rights values and democratic practices are to be successfully integrated into the educational system as a whole.

Human rights education is also about historical remembrance and transmission. During UNESCO's 34<sup>th</sup> General Conference in October 2007, Member States adopted General Resolution 61, which requests UNESCO to explore the role it can play in promoting Holocaust remembrance through education and in combating all forms of Holocaust denial. It requests UNESCO to place education at the centre of its work for Holocaust remembrance. UNESCO works with major stakeholders and Member States to promote learning materials and educational resources which use the lessons of the Holocaust to foster human rights values throughout the world.

UNESCO has also been actively involved in efforts related to the memory of the Slave Trade. Freedom from slavery and servitude is a fundamental human right recognized in Article 4 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Through its ambitious Slave Route Project, UNESCO has created greater understanding of the slave trade and its consequences for modern societies. It has addressed racial prejudice and attempts to conceal the scale and impact of this tragedy. The "Breaking the Silence" project carried out through UNESCO's Associated Schools, is another example of the work to deepen understanding of the slave trade and to promote a world free of stereotypes, injustice, discrimination and prejudice.

The ultimate aim of both these projects is to contribute to the establishment of a culture of tolerance, peaceful coexistence and respect for human rights. Our task is to help teachers sensitize students to the reality of genocides and human rights crimes and enable them to resist all forms of prejudice and hate. This is made possible through our Associated Schools network, our UNESCO Chairs at the university level, our International Bureau of Education and civil society partners.

Today, we are here to discuss what progress has been made in the area of the implementation of HRE, what challenges have yet to be overcome, and how to best overcome them. Human rights education is based on the universal values and concerns found in our everyday lives. I hope that by the end of this round table, we will have developed a clear roadmap indicating the next steps to successfully mainstream human rights education in all learning contexts, as well as in our societies at large.

**HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION:  
CURRENT STATUS AND FUTURE CHALLENGES**  
**Professor François Audigier**  
**University of Geneva**

Goals expressed in any national, international or multilateral declaration concerning human rights education (HRE) possess a certain nobility, proclaiming as they do the ideals of dignity, equality and equal access to education for all. However, a simple look at the current state of affairs demonstrates that these goals and objectives are often not actually realized.

HRE itself can be a rather ambiguous term, and for the purposes of this Round Table, it is important to explain exactly what is meant by it. In the context of our discussions, *education* will refer to academic education. In order to further clarify this, two statements can be made. First, education is a human right in itself and inherent in this idea is the notion that education must aim to teach students about human rights ideals and principles. Second, the exercise of powers and responsibilities in schools must uphold the very principles they are aiming to instruct. Otherwise, the discrepancy between what is being taught and what is being demonstrated will encourage a distorted understanding of the idea of respect for human rights.

Another important feature in the idea of human rights education is that the learning which occurs outside the school setting is equally as important as the learning which occurs inside the school setting. Non-formal education takes place in the family and in the community through the day-to-day interactions between people. The family in particular plays an important role. Thus, the harmonization of values taught in school with those observed in the family, is a crucial factor for success.

The current exploration of HRE is in two parts: first, an overview of the current status of HRE by specifically examining theoretical and practical components, and second, some of the challenges that the international community is currently facing in the mainstreaming of human rights education at the national level.

#### The Current Status of HRE: An Overview

National governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations around the world have been active in the area of developing and implementing human rights education programmes. In order to be effective, human rights education must be context specific: programmes must draw on national experiences and existing social, economic and cultural conditions. This process of contextualization is essential in order to make this knowledge relevant for the people of a particular country.

There are two important facets to a successful HRE programme: the conceptual and the practical. The conceptual facet is fairly self-explanatory; it requires a solid understanding of human rights principles and ideas as well as an understanding of the mechanisms and instruments that exist in order to protect them. In order to be able to defend one's rights, it is necessary to first understand what these rights are.

The practical facet uses real-life situations to build on the knowledge that students have acquired and takes into account the needs, interests and priorities of all actors. Active participation and support for human rights principles will stem from the knowledge that one possesses. While teaching children about ideas such as justice, equality, freedom and liberty are important, what is more important is that these notions be grounded in the students' daily realities. Teaching children the skills that accompany these rights: non-violent communication, active listening, mediation, etc. will foster the development of an informed, educated, and socially conscious population.

### Ambiguities and Challenges

HRE poses numerous challenges for educators, policy-makers and community leaders. A first set of challenges relates to the different kinds of learning that can take place: HRE programmes must be target-based to address the specific age group and desired learning outcome. Therefore, teaching methods and pedagogical materials must be similarly adapted. For example, a lesson on the concept of liberty would be conducted much differently in a group of five-year olds than in a group of high school students.

A different set of challenges concerns the possibility for various interpretations of human rights. Although one of the underlying features of human rights principles is the idea of universality, the notion of selective interpretation negates this. Political communities, States, and institutions can interpret the idea of human rights to suit their particular aims or needs. While it is necessary to achieve a harmony between the different groups of rights, that is, between political and civil rights and social and economic rights, this is often not the case. Depending upon the conditions of a particular country, it can be very easy to deny one group of rights in favour of another group of rights in order to achieve certain political goals or garner support among certain segments of the population. But the links between these groups of rights are clear. Civil and political rights ensure that the marginalized and disadvantaged segments of the population have access to what are considered basic human needs (food, shelter, fresh water, etc.). These same rights also ensure that social and economic rights are guaranteed for all. If this harmony becomes unbalanced and some rights are denied in favour of others, it could have a devastating impact on society as a whole.

Human rights principles support the notion that our inherent rights and social order cannot be contradictory to the values and ideals upheld by these principles and must be reaffirmed through the actions of governments. These principles must be applied equally among all segments of the population with no discrimination of gender, religion, wealth, etc. This is a challenge that States need to address if they want to ensure the successful implementation and sustainable impact of HRE programmes. Responsibilities, both personal and professional, are a duty of every human being. However in order for respect for human rights to exist throughout society, it is important that all, including those in a position of power, exercise respect for human rights principles.

**CASE STUDY: LEBANON**  
**Her Excellency Ms. Sylvie Fadlallah**  
**Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of the Lebanese Republic**

Historically, Lebanon has played a key role in the elaboration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) with Charles Malik, a Lebanese national, acting as Rapporteur of the drafting committee. Lebanon has demonstrated a continued commitment to upholding the basic values of UNESCO in support of the defence and respect for human rights, particularly through its attempts to mainstream human rights education (HRE) at national and international levels. For example, following the 1998 educational reforms, new citizenship textbooks encouraged the educational development of a proactive Lebanese citizenry by integrating human rights values such as freedom, democracy and justice into education, undergirded by human rights principles. Attempting to forge an open, tolerant and democratic society, these educational reforms have encouraged young citizens to aspire to take a full participative role in Lebanese life – social and cultural, civil and political.

As a member of the Arab League, Lebanon has striven to embody the principles of the UN Charter and the UDHR through its legal framework, aspiring to uphold the ideals of a democratic, parliamentary republic founded on respect for public liberty, freedom of expression and belief as well as social justice and equality among all citizens. Active social and political participation on the part of the Lebanese citizen is viewed as a right and responsibility, the groundwork for which is established through education.

If primary and secondary schooling are crucial here, Lebanon furthers the notion that human rights education must take place both inside and outside the classroom in both formal and non-formal educational settings. The involvement of civil society groups and NGOs is therefore crucial in the creation of a culture of human rights through education.

Neither the formal nor the informal contexts of HRE are static but the basic principles of human dignity, of social justice, of equality should pervade the lives citizens. If new social and political conditions, especially times of crisis, present challenges to the realization of these principles such times of crisis also present opportunities for their reaffirmation. The use of the term “education” in human rights education is therefore not arbitrary. It reflects the basic *notion* of education: the diffusion and evaluation of ideas and concepts, the creation and dissemination of new knowledge, reflection on and preservation of culture and tradition, and the development of attitudes and aptitudes.

Development and implementation of HRE is thus an on-going process. Key challenges are:

- to produce enriching national educational policies in the area of human rights education;
- to improve existing curricula; to diversify pedagogical methods;
- to improve teacher training;
- to strengthen non-formal education.

Despite the work accomplished nationally and internationally, these challenges are those shared by Lebanon and the world community.

**PANEL 1**  
**HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION: POLICY AND RESEARCH**  
**Strengthening the linkages between research and national policies**

**SUMMARY**

The link between research and policy development in the area of human rights education (HRE) is a key issue. The development of effective educational policies requires knowledge and understanding of current research on key human rights issues. This panel explored good practices for the incorporation of existing research into the formulation and implementation of human rights educational policies. It examined how to strengthen the relationship between research institutes and policy-making bodies. A strong partnership between the two is needed for the sustainability of human rights education through appropriate programmes and monitoring mechanisms.

**INTRODUCTION**

Moderator: Daniela Benjamin

**CASE STUDY: EL SALVADOR**

Florentin Menendez

**CASE STUDY: UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND**

Avril Hall Callaghan

**ROUND TABLE REFLECTIONS AND PRIORITIES FOR ACTION**

General Rapporteur : Liam Gearon



## **KEY QUESTION**

How should research be linked to policy formulation and implementation of human rights education?

## **INTRODUCTION**

In order to ensure that human rights values are understood and respected by all, human rights education (HRE) needs to be incorporated not only into the school system, but also throughout society in general. This will also help to ensure sustainability. In order for this widespread integration of principles to be successful, what are the major problems related to human rights? Who should be targeted? What methods are being applied?

**Moderator: Daniela Benjamin**  
**First Secretary, Permanent Delegation of Brazil to UNESCO**

Education is essential for the promotion of human rights. As Daniela Benjamin suggested, education is not only a right in itself, but also a tool which can be used to guarantee the protection and promotion of other rights. Given the interdependence and mutually reinforcing nature of human rights principles, knowledge and understanding of these principles are essential in order for people to be aware of their rights and the responsibilities that accompany them.

Human rights education (HRE) provides knowledge about both human rights values and the mechanisms that protect these values. In addition, it provides the tools for people to apply human rights in their daily lives to combat discrimination, intolerance and other human rights violations. HRE also improves the quality of learning achievements and assures the full development of the individual's personality by fostering understanding, tolerance and peace.

In order to cultivate a universal culture of human rights, a global understanding and implementation of HRE is essential. However, this is proving to be quite challenging as each country has its own set of human rights issues to address and its own set of obstacles to overcome in implementing HRE. While a common understanding and implementation of HRE is beneficial, HRE programmes must reflect the particularities of a given country or geographic location. Consequently, HRE programmes must draw from national experience and identity and be nuanced to reflect the particularities of a given country or geographic location.

Here, arguably, States have not made use of the knowledge acquired through research when designing and implementing policy in the area of HRE to be effective. Policy-makers need then to be aware of current research findings in this field in order to develop sustainable and effective programmes.

Crucially, the international community could here consolidate the links between research institutes, universities and governmental authorities charged with educational development in HRE. This is an issue calls for further examination.

## **CASE STUDY: EL SALVADOR**

**Dr Florentin Melendez**

**Former President, Inter-American Commission for Human Rights,  
El Salvador**

Dr. Florentin Melendez shared the El Salvadorian experience in terms of the development and implementation of a national programme of human rights education (HRE). Thus, following years of civil war, violence, political unrest and military dictatorships, El Salvador initiated a peace process in the 1990s. The El Salvadorian case was distinctive in that HRE was an integral and concurrent part of this peace process, in conjunction with a wider series of educational reforms. Led by the Ministry of Education (MOE), a national plan was established which received overwhelming levels of public support. The reforms actively promoted the inclusion of human rights values in across curricula of schools and colleges. This process, which emphasized positive changes in the mindsets, attitudes and behaviors of youth through the promotion of economic, social and cultural rights, fostered the development of new knowledge and skills in many schools. While the reforms have been successful, certain areas deserve closer attention. For example, the reforms lack a commitment in the area of improving teacher training.

National experience and identity were seen as playing a critical role in the development of HRE programmes. In El Salvador, themes of particular relevance include: discrimination, intolerance, violence against women, violence against segregated pregnant girls in schools, juvenile delinquency, and the use of force in schools (where it is often legalized). Also relevant are levels of democratic freedoms (such as decision-making) in schools, as well as in homes and wider society.

Despite the fact that HRE programmes have to respond to the specific needs of a country or a community, regional initiatives can also play an important role. The Inter-American Committee on Human Rights was upheld as a good example of such collaboration. Of particular challenge for El Salvador, and across Latin America, was the requirement to synthesize research with educational policy as an important component for HRE's success.

In addition to those areas of concern specific to El Salvador and the region, several generic research questions were thus identified:

- Has an impact assessment been developed so that all actors, including those at the political level, have an accurate idea of the importance of HRE?
- What are some of the legal aspects of HRE? For example, have national laws been harmonized with international human rights instruments?
- Are countries preparing textbooks integrating human rights values for all grade levels?
- What is the current state of research in universities, research centres and international or non-governmental think tanks?
- Does this research have an impact on policy development?

**CASE STUDY: NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND**  
**Avril Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary, Ulster Teachers' Union**

Avril Hall-Callaghan presented a human rights education (HRE) initiative to address issues between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This project was developed during the early 1990s in the last years of the Troubles. Two teachers unions cooperated, the Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU) and the Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO), and Education International (EI), an important all-Ireland educational initiative, opening new channels of communication and cooperation.

The vision for a project was to teach about human rights. By developing young people's skills in articulating their rights to others, the project hoped to have a wider societal impact. The programme consisted of a research-based approach combined with a strong monitoring and evaluation system to ensure the continued confidence of key partners. Also important was the programme's reliance on the input of teachers, support services and the education inspectorate. Materials were developed by teachers from the North and South who produced lesson plans in their own time. The fact that teachers were the ones developing the material meant that it could be directly implemented in classrooms. The experience of having educational professionals from both sides of the border was instrumental in fostering cooperation and communication. The project relied on a "whole school approach" which created an atmosphere of accessibility, respect, tolerance and integration in all school activities.

The Lift Off programme was based on a series of pilot projects, implemented in three phases:  
Phase 1 (2001-2002) targeting 8-10 year olds:  
Through a scenario involving a friendly alien coming to Earth, children were encouraged to examine problems that exist on Earth as well as their individual and collective human rights and responsibilities.  
Phase 2 (2003-2004) targeting 10-12 year olds:  
This phase attempted to widen the scope of understanding and address issues on a global basis.  
Phase 3 (2005-2006) targeting under-8 year olds:  
This phase concentrated on building the necessary skills and attitudes that would lead to later learning. Although the term human rights was not specifically used, lessons were built around ideas of empathy, cooperation, respect and conflict resolution.

The pilot project was implemented initially in a small number of schools on both sides of the border. By 2005 however, the project had quickly grown to 90 schools. Subsequently, an additional 25 new schools were recruited.

The project has successfully generated unprecedented levels of cooperation between the North and the South, including an important spill over from the educational realm into the political, not least cooperation between the Ministers of Education of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

In additions to teachers' forums and conferences, involved too were the Human Rights Commissions both from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The two Ministers also shared the stage in Northern Ireland as another example of cross-border cooperation and communication.

The current phase (2007–2010) focuses on mainstreaming human rights education. In February 2008, materials were launched in both English and Irish in an additional 900 schools in Northern Ireland and 3000 schools in the Republic of Ireland. Given the widespread reach of the programme, it is clear that the focus has moved from the research phase into the implementation phase. There are three main goals for the future of the project: to develop a body of teachers with the knowledge and skills to integrate human rights education into their own practice; to establish a mechanism for promoting and monitoring a “whole school approach” for HRE; and to develop a consistent, coherent and sustainable strategy for HRE within primary schools in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Key generic research questions which emerged from this case study were:

- What are the key elements of success in HRE programmes?
- How can evidence-based evaluation of HRE be used to enhance effectiveness?
- How can wider societal impact of HRE be measured?
- What might be the indicators of this success?
- How can research contribute to the conceptual understanding of HRE?
- What is distinctive of HRE in post-conflict educational contexts?
- What role can historical research in HRE play in developing understanding of the educational challenges of the present?

## DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### General Rapporteur : Liam Gearon

#### DISCUSSION

In the debate that followed, a number of important policy and research issues were raised including: the efficacy of HRE; the contextualization of HRE in developing versus developed countries; the assessment of best practices; and the historical evolution of human rights in educational contexts. A number of troubled issues were raised in regard to the varying levels of difficulty with which HRE can be implemented, often being dependent upon a nation-State's respect for human rights. Thus some participants highlighted the fact that in certain States a lack of respect for basic human rights makes it difficult to implement an HRE programme.

As a result of this considerable diversity in experience of HRE on the ground, participants identified a pressing research focus to be the *impact* of HRE. Many participants highlighted the importance of raising public support and awareness for HRE to ensure funding and wide-scale implementation. Yet there was presented here an issue of considerable epistemological, methodological and theoretical difficulty: what measurable objectives and practical indicators might be used to assess of the successful implementation of HRE within States and internationally? Although participants agreed that assessing impact is crucial, many felt that it is too early to do so as several States are still in initial phases.

Key research questions for HRE were:

- How are human rights conceptualised in different States?
- How can educators better understand and analyze how HRE in order to develop learning outcomes and subsequent teaching and learning methods best suited to their country?
- Are there differences in conceptualisation between developing and developed countries?
- What is the impact on the conceptualisation of human rights and HRE as a result of historical colonial experience?
- As countries emerge from long histories of colonial oppression, years of one-party, dictatorial rule, or violence and civil war, education in human rights issues becomes increasingly important: what are the distinctive features of HRE in such countries?
- What scope is there for comparative international research?
- In times of war, conflict or deprivation, how is it possible to teach children and young people about human rights when they are non-existent in people's daily lives?
- How can the right to education become an integral part of HRE?
- How can this be clarified so that policy makers and educators can propose relevant solutions in the absence of basic human rights?
- How is good HRE practice in general to be identified? And since HRE must affect society as a whole, how can HRE be seen to impact at all different levels of society – from formal education to those in positions of authority such as the police, judiciary and prison service.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to enhance political commitment to HRE, national and international networks/projects should be established to create a stronger a policy-research interface for HRE, including the consolidation of existing and creation of new strategic partnerships between universities, international organisation such as UNESCO and the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights.

Further research should be undertaken into the following aspects of HRE and policy:

1. Conceptual, contextual and philosophical research should be undertaken into the disparate understandings of human rights and HRE within, across and between nation-states. This should include historical research to investigate specific geo-political factors which have affected and continue to effect the implementation of HRE policy on the ground, especially in present-day conflict zones and post-conflict situations.
2. Research should be undertaken into evaluation and monitoring tools for HRE, including legal frameworks, to assist and support policy implementation.
3. Research should be undertaken into the most effective means of curriculum development, including the development of appropriate HRE materials and methods, in schools but also in teacher training.
4. Research should be undertaken into the means of fostering of active student leadership essential to creating a culture of human rights in schools, colleges and wider community.

**PANEL 2**  
**PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION: CURRICULA**  
**CONSIDERATIONS:**  
**HRE as a specific issue or as a cross-cutting issue**

**SUMMARY**

While it is important to learn about specific human rights principles, it is equally important to introduce these principles into the overall learning process so that educational practices, curricular development, teacher training, teaching methodologies, learning resources and the school environment all reflect the human rights principles taught. This panel evaluated the advantages and disadvantages of teaching human rights as a single subject or as a cross-cutting issue throughout the curriculum.

**INTRODUCTION**

Moderator: K. Peter Fritzsche

**CASE STUDY: ARGENTINA**

Mara Brawer

**CASE STUDY: JORDAN**

Abeer Amouri

**CASE STUDY: BURUNDI**

Victoire Nahimana

**DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

General Rapporteur : Liam Gearon

## KEY QUESTIONS

How can human rights education be integrated into, for example, school programmes and textbooks as well as teacher training?

Should HRE as be taught a specific issue or as a cross-cutting issue?

## INTRODUCTION

The successful integration of a national programme of human rights education (HRE) requires partnerships between different sectors of society. While many countries have initiated projects at the regional, local and national levels, what is lacking is a coordinating body to ensure the development of a cohesive strategy. Who should take on this role and how can cooperation be achieved between the various partners?

**Moderator: Professor Dr. K. Peter Fritzsche**

**UNESCO Chair in Human Rights Education, University of Magdeburg, Germany**

Several countries have made the integration of a national programme of human rights education (HRE) a priority. But what challenges must be overcome so that HRE becomes a priority for all States? A number of experts and practitioners highlight a lack of conceptual clarity in defining HRE. In addition, an incomplete and unclear understanding of the differences between HRE, Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC), Education for Mutual Respect and Understanding (EMRU), as well as peace education also add to this lack of clarity surrounding the definition and therefore effective implementation of HRE. The question to ask here is, how can States best ensure the development of a holistic approach for HRE in this context?

The sharing of national experiences is important as it allows States to explore commonalities, and differences in the development and implementation of HRE. An examination of issues around the implementation of HRE leads to four main questions:

- What progress has been made?
- What are the remaining challenges?
- How can we ensure that the process is sustainable?
- Who are the major actors?

Further analysis of HRE raises other questions:

- How can we integrate children's rights into HRE, for instance in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child?
- What *standards* should be expected for HRE?
- Considering the lack of a strong conceptual framework, how can we ensure that HRE is being implemented and not something similar such as EDC or EMRU?
- Do we have the right or obligation to educate about those rights which are most often violated?

It is clear, then, in short, that HRE attempts to foster a climate of change, but it is important to be clear on the kind of change that is desired.



### **CASE STUDY: ARGENTINA**

**Mara Brewer**

**Secretariat for Human Rights, Section for Education, Ministry of Education, Argentina**

Argentina is a federal state where education is part of the mandate of the provincial governments but where collaboration exists at national level. In this context, Mara Brewer explored recent curricular reform in Argentina, including debate on how to teach human rights to children. In terms of broad curricular revision, consensus was established that the curriculum be organized into two parts:

- Curricular spaces: consisting of subjects that would be taught with a disciplined logic
- Transversal content: consisting of cross-cutting content that can be taught by incorporating the material into more than one discipline.

The question remained as to where can human rights content be incorporated into such a curricula framework. To answer this question it was considered necessary to examine what is meant by human rights education (HRE) and how HRE should be taught.

At a fundamental level, HRE implies an education in values which, though often contested, have been agreed by the consensus of an international community, and taken as basic and universal. It was agreed though that HRE cannot be confined to or solely equated with an education in values. HRE, for example, also implies an understanding of governance. In order to understand the mechanisms that protect human rights, it is necessary to understand the idea of a supra-national judicial body and the idea that human rights can limit the power of States over individuals. State support is therefore critical since through its legislative and related power, the State can either strengthen or curb these rights.

The historical and political background of Argentina illustrates this balance. HRE can be therefore also said to be closely linked with education in democratic citizenship. In teaching HRE it is thus important to understand the historical context behind the struggle for human rights, nationally and internationally. Understanding this historical context should therefore form a significant element of any HRE curriculum. An example of this can be found in a school in a barrio of Buenos Aires. During the military dictatorships, a secret detention centre was established within the school. There is currently a project underway which aims to help the barrio recover its memory. Through interviews and the collection of oral histories, students are attempting to understand what life was like during the decades of military dictatorships with the aim of eventually turning the centre into a memorial. Given the community involvement, it is hoped that this project will have a wide impact.

As well as instilling a sense of democratic heritage, history can be the gateway to understanding how rights might be defended in the present. In Argentina, teaching materials have been developed to transmit the memory of the struggle for human rights during the years of military dictatorship.

Thus, with the support of audio-visual material, children can hear stories from Argentinean grandmothers about past generations and learn about the struggles that people underwent

during the years of military rule in order to draw attention to the grave human rights violations that were being committed on a massive scale. This material is conceived in a way that allows children to relate it to the realities of life through their Argentinean heritage. Additionally, the sharing of living histories of the Abuelas de la Plaza de Mayo, with related activities to recover still missing children, is a perfect illustration both of proactive citizenship and a reminder of the constant fight for human rights.

In the Argentinean experience, then, educators and policy-makers have agreed that for HRE to become an integral part of school curricula, it is necessary to integrate it as a stand-alone topic *and* as a cross-cutting one, for example, through history, democratic citizenship education, supported in both models through school-community cooperative projects.

### **CASE STUDY: JORDAN**

**Abeer Ammouri**

**Coordinator for Human Rights Education, Ministry of Education, Jordan**

Abeer Ammouri explored the Jordanian experience of HRE stating that in order to protect human rights individuals must play a greater role in political and social activities. The Kingdom of Jordan is committed to the reinforcement of human rights principles which seek to maintain public freedom and democracy for all. Jordan is also committed to the principles of Islam – tolerance, justice, equality, neutrality and moderation – all of which provide Jordan with a unique sense of national unity and stability.

To reinforce HRE, the government has taken the following steps towards enhancing the quality and quantity of education in Jordan:

- implementing a national plan for pre-school education to increase enrollment;
- upgrading basic education and promoting the concept of free education for all in order to limit drop-out rates in poor and rural areas;
- promoting the equality education for all as well as the principle of life-long learning;
- tailoring educational programs in order to comply with labor market needs for certain skills and abilities;
- improving the quality of national learning standards and the organizational climate in school and classrooms;
- establishing partnerships in the public and private sectors to support the process of decision making in educational policy making;
- increasing the quantity and quality of services for special needs students;
- developing curricula and text books to reflect the needs of different communities;
- creating programs that aim to eliminate gender discrimination; and
- working to empower women through education.

The government of Jordan thus realizes that education has a broader socio-economic and cultural-political significance that extends beyond the school setting and encompasses families, communities and the full range of institutions that exist in a given society. Education is here essential for the construction of a national code of conduct based on a general knowledge of human rights principles and values.

It is also considered necessary in order to understand one's duties to both oneself and one's fellow citizens. Awareness and understanding of human rights must enjoy a particular and special significance if these principals are to be respected. The Ministry of Education is therefore aiming to transform education in Jordan into an ongoing process of learning and skills acquisition. This will ensure that the people of Jordan have every opportunity to develop their full potential and enable stronger relationships between people, societies and nations to be built.

The education process must teach students to think carefully and critically. It should also be used to convey the values of dignity and democracy to students. It should encourage self-development and allow students, regardless of gender, to play an active role in the

development of their society. The Ministry of Education believes that HRE should form part of citizenship education. A citizen, who cannot understand his or her rights, cannot practice them with others, and so the teaching of HRE is closely related to values, including religious values, as well as the realities of citizenship and the ideals of democracy.

Currently, human rights principles are included as one of the major components of the general framework and outcomes of the social studies curricula. These outcomes are then translated into units, lesson plans and activities by building a conceptual map of human rights concepts adapted to the age of the students. Human rights are also incorporated into other subjects that have undergone the process of educational legislation.

Another vehicle for the communication of human rights issues is the publication of a bulletin called *Letters to our Students*. This publication explores issues such as belonging, independence, dignity, and respect for self and for others, etc. It also contains the mission of the Ministry and core values.

In terms of the implementation of a Jordan-wide plan for HRE, a national committee for HRE has been formed, drawing on the contributions and experiences of the following ministries and government organizations: the Ministry of Education as the lead agency, the Ministry of Scientific Research and Higher Education, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Holy Affairs, the Ministry of Political Development, and the National Centre for Human Rights. The task of this committee is to approve the national action plan for HRE, to follow the process of its implementation and conduct periodic evaluations. Achievements to date include the creation and approval of the national action plan for HRE (this plan has been approved by the national committee for human rights). As well, the first phase of the plan, an analysis of the current state of HRE in all Ministry of Education programmes, has been implemented.

Future goals for the prompt implementation of the national action plan include:

- Updating the matrix of human rights concepts
- Organizing workshops for curriculum specialists and text book writers
- Identification and inclusion of human rights concepts in the curricula and text books
- Creating learning activities based on human rights principles and values
- Holding workshops for administrators, supervisors, teachers and students
- Organizing extracurricular activities related to HRE

This will naturally require a significant financial commitment, and there is a need for international donor organizations, UN agencies and donor partners to contribute in the provision of financial, technical and consultative support, as well as expert trainers and researchers.

**CASE STUDY: BURUNDI**  
**Victoire Nahimana**  
**Director General, Pedagogical Bureau, Ministry of Education, Burundi**

Victoire Nahimana stated that each society shapes human rights education (HRE) according to its own experiences and attitudes. Her presentation examined the implementation of a national plan for HRE in Burundi initiated in 2003. That year, while conducting a revision of the national education system, it was decided that there was a need for to promote peace along with moral and civic values and particular emphasis was given to HRE.

Yet despite widespread levels of support for HRE, there has been a significant lack of political will. Years of violence and civil war in Burundi had severely eroded respect for human rights values. It was not until 2005, that any real political drive to protect and promote human rights began to materialize. At that time, the President of Burundi announced that primary education would be free for all and efforts were made to introduce human rights values into both primary and secondary education.

Critical to these efforts, was the elaboration of a national plan including a national vision for HRE objectives. The objectives for formal HRE were simple: teach children human rights principles and values to improve their decision-making skills and bring about positive change in society. In order for the plan to have a serious impact though, a reform of the educational process was necessary including: teacher training; development of textbooks; classroom management; and creation of extra-curricular activities.

During this process, policy-makers and educators debated the merits of teaching HRE as a specific topic or as a cross-cutting one. There were multiple advantages to using a cross-cutting approach. Fundamentally, it meant that human rights principles and values could be integrated into existing subject areas without the addition of a new subject or class. Secondly, by introducing human rights concepts into various subjects, children could see how these principles and values related to the different aspects of life (history, science, social studies, etc.) This would enable the children to develop the necessary skills to confront life's challenges in a positive and constructive manner acting as agents of change to further sustainable development and a culture of peace.

However, there were certain disadvantages to the instruction of HRE in this manner. It necessitated the complete modification of existing modalities to incorporate the new material which in turn, required significant financial investment. For a developing country, this might not be feasible.

The other option was to incorporate HRE as a separate subject. This would clearly necessitate the creation of a new class making the existing educational programme heavier. It would also mean that new teachers would have to be hired and specialists would be needed to develop course content and train teachers in the new subject matter. For these reasons, it was decided to take on HRE as a cross-cutting issue.

Policy makers also began to question the best ways to teach these values to children. It was important in the elaboration of the national plan to ensure that human rights learning take

place not only in schools, but also throughout the entire community in order to be effective. The objective was to make the school the centre of influence for HRE while also involving other important stakeholders in the educational process such as parents' committees, religious groups, administrative bodies and community associations. It was decided to engage in the topic through existing textbooks in subjects where text concerning human rights concepts and principles could be easily included. An effort was also made to diffuse HRE through audio visual materials. However, not all of the population had access to these materials. To overcome this challenge, an existing educational radio station was used to transmit messages furthering HRE objectives.

The following key themes have been identified by educators and policy-makers: knowledge of self and others; human values; human rights; international human rights law; sexual health and reproduction; peace education; environmental education and power and democracy. In line with the cross-cutting method used in HRE, these principles have now been fully incorporated into fundamental courses in civic, social and human sciences. What remains to be implemented is the sensitization and training of trainers in the principles of HRE and the establishment of permanent training sessions for teachers. There is also the question of resource mobilization in order to respond to these demands.

Another way that human rights principles were introduced was through oral traditions such as stories, fables, customs, proverbs, games and songs. This takes us back to the idea that HRE stems from the individual experiences of each country. The use of oral traditions reinforced instruction by drawing upon traditional African methods of education centring on family and community and served to preserve this important element of African culture in an age of globalization and modernization. Also, because illiteracy rates remain high, traditional methods of education are sometimes the only way to reach certain sectors of the population. This is concrete proof that while it is important to undertake pedagogical innovation in terms of teaching tools and teaching methods, it is crucial not to disregard older processes. Even in the development of new materials and pedagogical tools, it is important that experts draw from these age-old methods which reach into the very hearts of the children. The use of oral traditions has proven to be very successful.

Often, though, the most effective means of inculcating human rights and values in education is through good relationships and personal example. In classrooms, teachers are encouraged to respect human rights values at all times even in conflict situations. This is referred to as the "teach by example method." It is hoped that students will adopt the methods they see teachers using in their own lives, specifically in the area of conflict resolution. Indeed, the President of Burundi is himself also very involved in the promotion of HRE. He often visits primary and secondary schools as well as universities to discuss human rights. This has a significant impact, as you have the first citizen of the country, the President, telling children about the importance of respect for human rights values and principles.

From the experience of Burundi, it is clear that HRE can be tackled either as a specific subject or as a cross-cutting theme depending upon the needs and experiences of the particular country. Given the increasing level of violence in many developing countries, it is clear that some sort of HRE is necessary to reinforce positive concepts and values.

## **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **General Rapporteur: Liam Gearon**

#### **DISCUSSION**

The debate concerning the merits and challenges of HRE as a single subject or cross-cutting theme was reiterated during the discussion. It was agreed, that the specific curricular balance within schools and classrooms may depend much on the needs of the community and the national experience of the country. The case studies from a number of continents richly illustrated this with historical and contemporary context. A clear consensus from this panel, therefore, was that HRE should not be examined in the dichotomy of one approach versus another (cross-cutting vs. specific) as these approaches are not mutually exclusive.

Human rights can clearly be examined through different disciplines in order to provide students with an overview and deepen their understanding, from the arts, humanities and languages to the sciences. It was felt however that there was always more scope for imaginative curriculum development.

The idea of learning by example can be formally incorporated into the school setting through school organization and classroom management and can serve as either a positive or negative example in the exercise of human rights. There was thus agreement that students' voices should be heard through class council and students should be part of decision-making processes. This allows them to take an active role in the promotion of democratic values and the respect for human rights. Educationalists should also ask themselves the question, then, how do our educational establishments – from pre-school to university – reflect the values we espouse?

Some aspects of human rights do however seem to lend themselves to be taught as and learnt through separate subject areas. For example, the examination and analysis of relevant human rights laws, mechanisms and principles in classes on citizenship or civics education. But even here creative teaching can find alternative means to illustrate even technical points of law through case study and links with the wider community.

These wider cultural, political and social contexts therefore remain important contexts for HRE. It is critical for children and young people to see these values being respected in public life. Any person with political or public authority – teacher, police officer, civil servant, and so on – has a special responsibility when it comes to respecting human rights. Due to its ubiquitous power, therefore, the State has a particular and joint responsibility not only to defend human rights but to facilitate supportive contexts for HRE.

Significant debate surrounded the relationship between human rights and human values. While human rights add to the fostering of values within a society, the distinction is that human rights are enshrined in international legal frameworks and therefore extend beyond notions of individual or cultural values. This of course, it cannot be denied, has often been a source of national and international tension.

This panel came up with many creative pedagogical approaches for the delivery of HRE:

- through story-telling, oral tradition;
- through written works of philosophy and literature;
- through drama and role-playing;
- through art work, drawing, even cartoons;
- through public speaking;
- through sports; and
- through health education and science in the service of human rights.

An important model of human rights education was presented which outlined how participative learning (a “hands-on” learning), active learning (whereby the student seeks to learn) and experimental learning (the process of making meaning from direct experience) can all play a part in HRE. This model was shown to break down perceived barriers between schools and their communities, and on a larger scale, between nations with histories of suffering. The panel also touched upon the importance of religious and cultural traditions which have informed notions of dignity, law and human rights. This is a worthy reminder that the concept of human dignity was invented in 1948, or that the idea of human rights or principles of equality were of an entirely secular origin.

Each member of the panel stressed the critical importance of training, innovation and continual revitalization so that statements such as the UDHR do not become *simply* declarations or lofty aspirations, but sources of societal transformation. There was some consensus here that broader community, including families, remain an often neglected factor in the development and implementation of HRE.

In short, educational and pedagogical innovations in HRE depend not only on teachers, their communities but also on real political will within States, thus constituting a profound responsibility for those vested with political power.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Through addressing a specific question related to HRE in the curriculum, this panel demonstrated the considerable richness of provision for HRE within, across and beyond the formal curriculum. The following recommendations might be drawn:

1. Further national, regional and international opportunities for sharing the formal and informal good practice in HRE, through virtual interactions, meetings and publications.
2. In view of the wealth of good quality material in HRE, it might be useful for a teacher-friendly data-base of such good practice to be developed.
3. Close attention should be paid in particular to the development of cross-cutting or cross-curricular materials and methodologies, policies and pedagogies which develop and drive forward our thinking about how to deliver HRE across a range of academic subjects.
4. Close attention too should be paid to the development and sharing of materials and methodologies, policies and pedagogies which develop and drive forward our thinking about how to deliver HRE beyond formal school contexts, especially in links with organs of the state such as police and judiciary but also through civil society and non-governmental organisations.



**PANEL 3**  
**PARTNERSHIP IN HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION:**  
**CURRENT PRACTICE AND FUTURE INNOVATION**  
**Putting Partnerships in Place**

SUMMARY

Strong institutional partnerships are required between Ministries of Education, national human rights institutions, NGOs, educational institutions, teacher unions, teacher training institutions and research institutions to ensure the effective implementation of human rights education. The UNESCO National Commissions have the potential to mobilize these stakeholders for the building of institutional partnerships critical to fostering cooperation, and achieving sustainable outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

Moderator: Jacqueline Costa-Lascoux

CASE STUDY: UGANDA

Augustine Omare-Okurut

CASE STUDY: ALBANIA

Zana Tabaku

CASE STUDY: MOROCCO

Albert Sasson

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General Rapporteur: Liam Gearon

### **KEY QUESTION**

How can HRE become a reality through an efficient institutional partnership with concerned Ministries, NGOs, educators, teacher training institutions, research institutions, and so forth?

### **INTRODUCTION**

Several countries have made the integration of a national programme of human rights education a priority. But what challenges must be overcome so that HRE becomes a priority for all States? A number of experts and practitioners highlight a lack of conceptual clarity in defining HRE. In addition, an incomplete and unclear understanding of the differences between HRE, Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC), Education for Mutual Respect and Understanding (EMRU), as well as education related to other values such as peace and tolerance, also add to this lack of clarity surrounding HRE and represent a main obstacle to overcome. How can States best ensure the development of a holistic approach for HRE in this context?

**Moderator: Jacqueline Costa-Lascoux**  
**Researcher, French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS)**

The successful integration of a national programme of human rights education (HRE) requires partnerships between different sectors of society. While many countries have initiated projects at the regional, local and national levels, what is lacking is a coordinating body to ensure the development of a cohesive strategy. Who should take on this role and how can cooperation be achieved between the various partners?

It is only through cooperation among all stakeholders that human rights principles and values can be implemented and enforced. This requires political will and drive on the part of national institutions. It also requires institutional vigilance and commitment from civil society. The 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) has engendered hope for the creation of partnerships to advance these ideals. However, in order to be effective, there must be coherence between all stakeholders on issues of human rights.

This raises some important questions. First, how can HRE be used to encourage positive change and evolution in people's attitudes and mindsets? In order to ensure that results are sustainable and spread throughout all levels of society, successful programmes require more than the simple creation of new textbooks but call for concerted action to ensure that human rights principles become a way of life.

HRE seeks to advance human dignity and justice at all levels. Human rights violations cannot be justified through local customs and practices. Indeed, it is necessary to continuously fight against discrimination, xenophobia and racism in honour of those who have given and continue to give their lives in the battle for the achievement of universal human rights.

The idea of partnerships also means establishing solidarity among those who are currently fighting against human rights violations, sometimes in extremely difficult conditions. Human rights belong to all human beings underlining the principle of universality.

It is necessary to make this principle operational by giving due importance to the role of civil society and all those who fight for the full respect of everyone's rights.

Round tables such as this one allow national borders to be transcended through the sharing of our common experiences to overcome human rights violations and further human rights values and principles. This gives new meaning to the idea of universality as walls are broken down and cooperation is fostered in an attempt to achieve common values and goals.

**CASE STUDY: UGANDA**  
**Augustine Omare-Okurut**  
**Secretary General, Ugandan National Commission for UNESCO**

Augustine Omare-Okurut opened with a critical historical analysis of the state of human rights in Uganda. In the context of ethnic and tribal diversity, he outlined the significant socio-political upheaval, conflict and war in the country's recent history.

He then presented the work of the Ugandan National Commission for UNESCO in the area of human rights education (HRE) and its role as coordinator at the national level. In order directly to influence policy development in the area of education, the Commission has started participating in all policy sector review meetings. Presently, a representative of the Commission sits on the top management committee which brings together all the Ministries in charge of education as well as the Permanent Secretaries. The Commission has also made efforts to engage with the curriculum development sector and has cooperated with local NGOs and the Ugandan Catholic secretariat to develop educational materials.

He noted that the Commission had aimed to entrench HRE into the country's strategic plan and lead the development of HRE centred initiatives by engaging partners on issues of peace and human rights generally but that there was little coordination of efforts between parties concerned. While a significant number of initiatives were undertaken, they were all ad hoc and very few partnerships or concrete linkages were established. There was no national public framework and no point of reference created; this is problematic for sustainability. Schools are only involved in HRE to the extent that they are asked to do so, and there is a perceived unwillingness to engage further.

In 2005, an initiative from the Ugandan Human Rights Commission led to the creation of a plan of action for HRE. Although the Ministry of Education was charged with all matters related to HRE, initial actions remained fragmented and very few concrete measures were accomplished.

Clearly, it was necessary to enhance cooperation among stakeholders, but the question was with whom did we engage and how? Following a call by the Ugandan National Commission for UNESCO, a meeting was convened to bring together all partners in the area of education to discuss the state of HRE in Uganda. During the course of this meeting, it was noted that there was an urgent need to coordinate activities of diverse actors in the field of HRE. It was decided that the Ministry of Education would take on this role by leading the UN World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE) and linking it with existing activities. This said there is no national strategy in place for the implementation of the WPHRE.

In 2008, an Education Act was passed to accord the Ministry of Education the power to ensure implementation of all national policies and measures enshrined in the Constitution.

Presently, a number of concrete measures are taking place to mainstream human rights education in Uganda. The Human Rights Commission of Uganda has been charged with sensitizing primary and secondary school children to human rights issues. It has also been charged with establishing human rights desks to facilitate development of human rights readers for basic education, particularly in primary schools. These desks are to cooperate with the national curriculum development centre to integrate human rights principles into existing curricula and support sensitization on issues of sexual and gender based violence, specifically in internally-displaced persons (IDP) camps. The Ministry of Education and Sport is also a key partner in the mainstreaming of HRE while UNICEF acts to support initiatives to increase school attendance among female children and the use of non-violent disciplinary measures in schools.

There are a number of challenges facing Uganda in terms of its HRE project. These include: fragile leadership; inadequate resources, especially in terms of *human* resources; fears concerning curricular and teacher overload; and a very uncertain funding situation for future HRE initiatives. In addition, there is a near absence of involvement of teacher training colleges and no mention has been made of any sort of review of teacher training curricula. A situational analysis is necessary before it will be possible to move forward and engagement of not only formal schools but also within informal educational settings.

Despite the many challenges and problems that Uganda is currently facing in terms of its HRE implementation, as of the beginning of December 2008, an agreement was reached introducing HRE content in schools on the condition that it is incorporated into the existing curriculum. This is a positive step forward in terms of advancements in the promotion and protection of human rights nationally.

## **CASE STUDY: ALBANIA**

**Zana Tabaku**

**Director of Curriculum Department, Ministry of Education and Science, Albania**

Suzana Tabaku presented a project *Human Rights and Democracy Education*, implemented in Albania in cooperation with the national Ministry of Education and Science, the Albanian National Commission for UNESCO and UNESCO HQ with financial support from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The first phase of the project was launched in 2001, the second phase ended in 2008.

The project was a result of the current political and social situation in Albania. In recent years, Albania has been undergoing a transition to democracy. In order to support this, education was seen as one of the best ways to foster the democratization process in the country. The project focused on the promotion of a climate of respect for human rights and the practice of democracy within Albanian schools. Under the project, human rights content was officially included in the curricula of pilot schools in 37 regions of the country. These schools were provided with pedagogical materials, and teachers underwent training in HRE.

The project functioned on two levels from a top-down to bottom-up approach. Top-down initiatives included the creation and publication of HRE manuals, the establishment of HRE trainers' networks and the subsequent creation of training sessions. Bottom-up initiatives included the establishment of an "Effective School" model.

Major outcomes of the project include numerous publications on HRE written in Albanian, including textbooks for national trainings and HRE manuals for teachers. A network of 50 national trainers and 70 local trainers was also established. Through a "cascade" training system, they were able to reach nearly 3,400 teachers all over the country.

In terms of pedagogical materials produced, three manuals have been printed. The first is targeted at primary level students and is intended for third-grade teachers. The second is for elementary level students (grades 6-9) and is divided into three parts. The first part integrates human rights concepts into lessons, the second part develops extracurricular activities building on these principles, and the third part explores key human rights instruments and texts. The third publication is intended for high school students (grades 10-12) and was compiled by experts in human rights and international law.

The goals of this programme include fostering participation among students; developing cooperative learning and the ability to "learn by doing"; encouraging students to take initiative and responsibility for the learning process and to allow them to engage in critical thinking. Subjects include the respect for one's rights and those of others; cultural, ethnic and religious diversity; environmental protection; equity; and an exploration of human values.

Another important result was the development of an "Effective Schools" model for the promotion of human rights and a democratic climate in the school setting. Within this framework, questionnaires were distributed to students, teachers and parents.

Based on the results of this consultation, follow-up activities were organized for students and teachers including parenting classes, student government models and sport and cultural activities. “Effective Schools” emphasized the process of democratic decision-making by encouraging the participation of students, teachers and surrounding communities.

In order to ensure continued success, it is necessary to bring certain elements forward to the follow-up phase. First, continuous trainings are essential and school-based trainings should be promoted. As well, HRE principles should inform the selection of textbooks and other pedagogic tools. Strategic partnerships are also important as the Ministry of Education and Science is playing a major role in the institutionalization of HRE in the national curriculum. It is clear that without the support and the political will of the government, large-scale HRE implementation would be impossible.

As the schools of today mirror the societies of tomorrow, it is clear that the area of HRE deserves continuous attention. The focus on human rights principles in Albania is informing all national educational reform and it is hoped that this will create young people who are more aware of their rights and those of others and who will work towards combating violations of these rights and injustices.

## **CASE STUDY: MOROCCO**

**Albert Sasson**

**Member of Consultative Council of Human Rights, Morocco,  
Former Assistant Director General of UNESCO**

Albert Sasson explored the Moroccan experience in the implementation of a national programme of human rights education (HRE). Specifically, he gave an overview of the partnerships that exist in the Moroccan context. He stated that already the general idea of HRE has been put into practice but what is lacking is reinforcement or strengthening of the concept.

The Moroccan experience in terms of HRE dates back to 1990 when King Hassan II created the Advisory Committee on Human Rights. The Committee consists of representatives from various NGOs. Their main task is to act as an advisory body and give advice on matters relating to human rights issues. For example, they suggested that Morocco engage in the implementation of a national HRE programme. This was approved in 1991.

At the pragmatic level, in terms of experience in the promotion and protection of human rights, especially in developing countries, a strong Ministry of Justice is the most important feature. That said this does not discount the importance of independent human rights bodies and an active civil society.

In terms of HRE in Morocco, it was decided to introduce the concepts as a cross-cutting theme with human rights values and principles integrated into subjects such as history, geography, civics, as well as languages (English, French and Arabic). This instruction begins in the last three years of primary education and continues into the first three years of secondary education.

Key partners include the Ministry of Education, the Advisory Council and civil society actors including religious groups. The participation of religious groups is important as Moroccan society believes that all begins with Islam. There is also a conviction that HRE must be constantly evolving; instruction must reflect the current situation both on a national and a global scale.

In implementing a programme of HRE, policy-makers and educators were careful not to treat the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) as a constitution. This document, while very important, does not have the means to be forced into action but instead relies on the willingness of States and individuals. The same way it is necessary to continuously update methods of HRE, it is also necessary to revisit the articles and principles found in the UDHR.

The successful implementation of an HRE programme should enable people to re-evaluate the obligations demanded by the Declaration and suggest emerging rights. This will only enrich the process.

In Morocco, substantial achievements have been made to date in the area of HRE:

- the creation of 122 manuals incorporating human rights principles;



- the creation of an integrated curriculum;
- the development of pedagogical tools; and
- the implementation of a generalized system of HRE throughout the country.

The Moroccan experience should not be considered as a model to be followed by other countries but rather a process guided by pragmatism and informed by the particular political evolution that occurred at the time. The implementation of a HRE system depends to a large extent on national political leadership. Morocco was fortunate to benefit from the political will and the desire to move forward.

A separate initiative involves the countries of the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)* which in cooperation with other agencies, has initiated the creation of a HRE manual to be available in May of 2009. This is an interesting example of a partnership between national governments and civil society.

**DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**  
**General Rapporteur : Liam Gearon**

**DISCUSSION**

This panel explored HRE partnerships. The debate that followed stressed the need to educate those in positions of key civil and political power, including civil servants working at all levels across local and national administrations such as municipalities, Ministries, and so forth. It also addressed the need to ensure that concepts and principles move from the formal school environment to the wider arena of society.

Participants recognized the importance of national social, political, and cultural contexts, but questioned how to incorporate certain cultural elements in HRE particularly when they are religious in nature. Indeed, this leads to a wider aspect of the debate which we have only barely touched upon: what is the historical and contemporary relationship between notions of human rights and religious traditions? This relationship does not have to be antagonistic as it so often portrayed.

This panel also explored the issue of partnerships in the implementation of HRE programmes, and debate reflected the diversity of practice in this area. Highlighted partnership models for HRE were between:

- schools and teacher training institutes
- schools research institutions.

Given the fact that HRE aims to foster change, there was agreement as to the importance of remembering that changing people's mindsets, principles and attitudes begins at home. Greater efforts be made in order to involve families in the HRE process were thought desirable and for great partnership or involvement between parents' associations and schools HRE programmes.

In the debate that followed this panel, there were many reminders that education occurs in a number of contexts today and not simply in the more traditional settings (schools, colleges and universities). Often, the wider civil society (including NGOs) plays a major role in both producing pedagogical materials for schools and universities and informing government policy. Civil society also contributes to transmitting human rights values and principles to learners.

The discussion raised some other important issues. Notably, participants examined the sustainability of the HRE process and the need continuously to enhance existing partnerships and seek out innovative and creative alliances. Also touched on was the issue of moving beyond teaching normative standard-setting texts. Highlighted too was the importance of ensuring that HRE conveys the universality and linkages between all human rights instruments.

A recognised priority was to implement projects on the ground, and for policy makers constantly to remember this. There must therefore be enhanced efforts at the institutional

level, for States to breathe life into coordination of HRE and by ensuring limited duplication of efforts and that wasted resources are minimized. In addition, there needs to be more effective cooperation with teachers; while they are agents of change, they still need to be involved in the administrative and development process. Teachers remain essential to strengthening these HRE partnerships.

Significant overall was the impressive and highly distinctive manner in which participants outlined their particular HRE contexts against the backdrop of varied political histories, national identities and cultural diversities. All of which provides models for mutual international development and implementation within the field.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

With recognition of the immense possibilities for the promotion of effective HRE through partnership across a range of civil and political contexts, the following recommendations might be made.

1. Further opportunities might be made to share good methodological and policy practice in developing partnership across civil and political society through virtual interactions and or publications.
2. Research might be undertaken to explore more systematically the partnership models currently available for HRE.
3. HRE educators should be cognisant how partnership models can enhance the student experience.
4. Since limited attention was paid to the inherent potential for HRE in cooperating with religious organisations, models for such partnerships might be explored.

**PANEL 4**  
**HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION BEYOND SCHOOLING**  
**Links between formal and non-formal education**

SUMMERY

If human rights education is to affect positive changes within society, it is essential that concern for human rights be extended beyond the immediate school environment to the community at-large. To this end, several countries have begun to examine the possibility of mainstreaming human rights education in both formal and non-formal educational settings and linking the two in a complementary manner.

INTRODUCTION

Moderator: Huguette Redegeld

CASE STUDY: CANADA

Cassie Palamar

CASE STUDY: SOUTH KOREA

Younghee Na

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General Rapporteur : Liam Gearon

## **KEY QUESTIONS**

What are the linkages between formal and non-formal education? And how can they benefit each other?

## **INTRODUCTION**

In order to ensure that human rights values are understood and respected by all, human rights education (HRE) needs to be incorporated not only into the school system, but also throughout society in general. This will also help to ensure sustainability. In order for this widespread integration of principles to be successful, what are the major problems related to human rights? Who should be targeted? What methods are being applied?

**Moderator: Huguette Redegeld**  
**Vice President, ADT Quart Monde**

In order to ensure that human rights values are understood and respected by all, human rights education (HRE) needs to be incorporated not only into the school system, but also throughout society in general. This will also help to ensure sustainability. In order for this widespread integration of principles to be successful, what are the major problems related to human rights? Who should be targeted? What methods are being applied?

This panel examined the important question of the links between formal and non-formal education: specifically, what are these links and how can they be complementary?

In the previous sessions, participants explored a broad range of educational experiences (adults, youth, and children). This is particularly important in the context of non-formal education as the promotion of a culture of human rights requires that all age groups be targeted inside and outside of formal educational settings.

When HRE is considered in the context of formal or non-formal education, it is important to remember that one of its most important features is its ability to create a level playing field necessary for affecting positive change in society. Therefore, it is important to include HRE in both formal and non-formal educational settings in order as fully as possible to widen access to HRE across society.

## **CASE STUDY: CANADA**

**Cassie Palamar**

**Director of Education and Community Services, Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission, Member of Canadian Commission for UNESCO**

Cassie Palamar argued that feelings of exclusion, marginalization or discrimination and racism prevent some people from fully contributing to the political, economic, social or cultural life in their community. Increasing diversity has seen a parallel increase in systematic discrimination. Though the issue of discrimination in Canada is long standing in relation to the country's aboriginal communities, current discrimination now extends to new and growing minority populations, resulting in complex human rights issues.

Resolving and settling human rights complaints are an important part of the work of all human rights commissions established at the provincial level in Canada, including the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission. What is more important however, is the preventative and promotional work that takes place through education, and the recognition of need of community involvement in education to address human rights issues.

Given its service to the entire community as well as its non-formal educational structure, educational work carried out by the Commission is typically non-formal. At the community level, human rights education (HRE) work involves all sectors including the not for profit and profit sectors ,through educational development projects which engage people to achieve goals of social change as a community. These educational projects are crucial for the protection of human rights values and the creation of a culture of human rights. In order to have a sustainable impact throughout society, HRE must be accessible, relevant and responsive to the needs of both individuals and communities. This will enhance both family and individual well-being and encourage social cohesion. This wide-scale approach is also an effective way of addressing systemic inequities.

Another important area to be targeted in dealing with HRE in non-formal settings is the private sector. In addition to the community development perspective, our work in the field of HRE is guided by a research-based model called "Pathways to Change".<sup>2</sup> In this model, public education and awareness-raising are key strategies applied in the area of employment. The workplace generates a high volume of human rights related complaints, including discrimination. A large part of the Commission's work aims to reduce discrimination in the workplace area. This is done through a curriculum-based educational programme that teaches employers to build respectful office environments. The programme is customized to meet the needs of specific organizations, and as it is funded directly by the organization in question, it is a self-sustaining initiative.

The ability to target all sectors of the community is an important feature of HRE. The Alberta Commission has developed an initiative that targets adults who have been historically difficult to reach, including non-English speakers. Through the creation of a newspaper-type

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<sup>2</sup> For more information : <http://culture.alberta.ca/educationfund/priorities/docs/PathwaysToChange.pdf>

publication entitled, “Human Rights in Alberta”<sup>3</sup>, human rights concepts as well as existing protective mechanisms are explained to the public. This publication features plain language and art in order to reach people at all literacy levels. This is the first publication of its kind, and to date, it has been very successful. The publication is also available in audio form so that people can listen while reading the words. An accompanying educational guide for teachers and tutors was also created. This project has been so successful; it is currently being used in formal educational settings even though this was not its intended purpose.

Racism and discrimination are major concerns in most Canadian communities. The Commission works closely with local governments and other partners to realize a UNESCO initiative: the Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination<sup>4</sup>. This coalition is intended to act as a network of solidarity and exchange among municipal authorities world wide. Under the framework of this project, education is considered a key area for local authorities and stakeholders to make a positive impact on the public. This is clearly an important initiative. However there have been some setbacks. While municipalities may wish to make commitments to affect positive change and address problems of racism and discrimination in their communities, they may not have the necessary capacities to take this action. The gap between their intention and their ability to do so must be closed.

Other concerns stem from the fact that many people continue to encounter discrimination and racism in their day-to-day interactions with people on the street: an “us vs. them” mentality persists in many communities. This raises the question of how to motivate people to change these attitudes and behaviours. One way that has proven successful in Calgary, is the use of media partnerships. Through a series of public service announcements, people are encouraged to make positive changes to improve inter-cultural relations and communication. These advertisements have proven very successful, due in large part, to the wide reach of the campaign. In addition, teacher materials were created to accompany the ads. These materials can be used in either a workplace or a school setting. Feedback indicates that the ads have been very meaningful to many different groups in society. This initiative could serve as a model for other communities.

In terms of outreach to youth, educators in HRE across Canada have designed an interactive web-based resource to engage youth in learning and dialogue on issues relating to human rights<sup>5</sup>. This initiative was developed in commemoration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and explores contemporary human rights issues such as the work of the Provincial Human Rights Commissions, various legislative frameworks and practical ideas for the promotion and protection of human rights.

Funding and financial support are very important in the success of any organization. The Alberta Commission is supported by the Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Educational Fund<sup>6</sup>. This fund receives an annual allocation from the [Alberta Lottery Fund](#) to foster equality, promote fairness and encourage inclusion in the community which serves to reduce discrimination and barriers to full participation in society for all Albertans. This is very unique method of funding for human rights organizations but has proven quite successful. It could perhaps be implemented in other communities.

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<sup>3</sup>For more information : [http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/publications/bulletins\\_sheets\\_booklets/1316.asp](http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/publications/bulletins_sheets_booklets/1316.asp)

<sup>4</sup>For more information : <http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/cmard.asp>

<sup>5</sup><http://www.tigweb.org/themes/udhr60/>

<sup>6</sup><http://culture.alberta.ca/educationfund/default.aspx>

Protecting human rights is clearly a challenging and complex task. In order that these efforts have a sustainable impact, work must be undertaken across many dimensions, from formal to non-formal and involving all community stakeholders. Continuous learning for both students and educators is also a key condition for success. We must encourage organizations to be proactive versus becoming involved only when human rights issues arise. We must also move beyond consultation to a full measured engagement.



### **CASE STUDY: SOUTH KOREA**

**Younghee Na**

**Director General, Human Rights and Education Department, National Human Rights  
Commission for the Republic of Korea**

Younghee Na explored the Korean experience in terms of implementing a programme of human rights education (HRE). Specifically, she examined the links between the formal and non-formal education sectors. In the Republic of Korea, work is undertaken mainly by the National Human Rights Commission which was established in November of 2001 as an independent government body. The Commission is made up of a number of departments including: human rights education, human rights policy development, human rights violations and discrimination investigation. In terms of HRE, there are three teams: the school education team, the public education team and the civic education team. The HRE sector has a very widespread mandate as it is in charge of undertaking policy development, HRE curriculum development and the institutionalization of HRE.

One important area where HRE has been implemented is in the army and the Ministry of Defence. Under the framework of this initiative, the army created several HRE programmes directed at both commanding officers and soldiers. There has also been engagement to introduce HRE into the police force with particular emphasis placed on the training of police and army personnel involved in the peaceful control of demonstrations.

The recognition of poor human rights conditions in military camps, led to the establishment of a training programme for military staff. In cooperation with the military, the Human Rights Commission developed a programme which aimed to offer training in human rights to all branches of the army. HRE training is also being offered in national police academies and textbooks have been developed for use in these courses.

The Human Rights Commission has also been active in making available HRE trainings to civil servants in the Republic of Korea. The Commission has also been focused on the issue of human rights legislation to make HRE mandatory.

Another effort that would link formal and non-formal education is currently underway at the higher education level. In many universities in Korea, the Commission has been developing and implementing courses in human rights. It is hoped that by introducing human rights classes into the curricula of various university programmes, students will become human rights practitioners in their respective fields. This increased awareness and knowledge will enable them to develop a stronger appreciation and understanding of the current state of human rights issues, both in the Republic of Korea and abroad. Education courses for civil servants in the area of gender discrimination and/or sexual discrimination are also offered. In the field of social work, there is also a growing emphasis on HRE with a focus on the treatment of the elderly as well as individuals with mental and physical disabilities. Textbooks have also been developed that correspond with these classes.

The integration of HRE in the field of civic education is also underway. For example, the Commission conducts trainings for employers who commonly hire migrant workers. These

trainings are specifically tailored and allow participants to focus on the issues that they would face in their daily work.

There has also been an effort to incorporate HRE into life-long education. Courses are being tailored for different target groups within society to address a variety of specific issues. To date, however, there has been little interest from the general population. Activists for HRE are currently working closely with individuals from marginalised socio-economic groups to raise awareness of human rights issues. One way these groups are being targeted is through the production and distribution of animated films which highlight certain key human rights issues that they might face.

While concrete links are still needed between formal and non-formal HRE initiatives, it is important that HRE be incorporated into each educational system. This is the only approach that will guarantee sustainability and a wide-reaching impact within our society.

## **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **General Rapporteur: Liam Gearon**

#### **DISCUSSION**

Many countries face difficulties in building a human rights education (HRE) system when their own recent national past is very violent and large sectors of the population have suffered grave human rights violations. The issue of how to teach children about human rights when they have never experienced such principles and values in their lives, remains an important challenge. However there was consensus between panellists and in the debate that followed that education is a key starting point: education is essential to instil in young people respect for tolerance and peace. The school can play a catalytic role in creating both sociological and political transformation. Schools are also a valuable place to explain the rights of children. It is hoped that if these concepts are conveyed at a young age, children will carry them forward throughout their lives.

In order for HRE to have a sustainable impact, it is necessary that the beneficiaries of HRE be actively involved in developing materials and methodology. Thus it was suggested that it might be beneficial if parents and guardians played a role and become actively involved in both the formal and non-formal processes of HRE.

In terms of funding for HRE development and implementation, what was stressed throughout the discussion, even above political will and resources, was the need for creativity when exploring sources of funding. It was suggested that States look for new donors such as major corporations or businesses; this is in line with the suggestions of the UN Secretary General to explore links between the private sector and human rights. Potential partnerships with the private sector can be developed in areas such as human resources which has the potential to be a valuable market for new talent. Governments can also earmark funds for human rights activities from taxes collected on oil consumption or gas emissions. In addition to government funds, it was also suggested that States approach charities and aid organizations.

This final discussion, in many ways, reiterated the connections made by all three previous panels. The examples cited came from organizations whose underpinning mission is to foster equality and reduce discrimination. But in societies where human rights are not practiced or respected and learners are suffering from discrimination, exclusion and violence, how is it possible to institute a practice of HRE when this goes against common and acceptable social norms? How do we teach parents and families about these human rights concerns? This issue it was agreed requires further development through non-formal education components with a stronger link to formal education.

There was some consensus on the potential impact that non-formal education can have on affecting attitudes and skill sets through civil society. The creation of a nation-wide model whereby the State takes direct responsibility for the inculcation of a culture of human rights through the training and education of public servants, particularly those in positions of power such as the police and army, provides a good example.

It was hoped that by engaging in both formal and non-formal HRE, we can reach those in the top echelons of power as well as the children and youth to achieve a lasting change in attitudes, mindsets, and behaviours.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Against the backdrop of an emergent model for the development and implementation of HRE, the following recommendations might be made in relation to developing links between formal and informal education.

1. Research should be undertaken into the diverse models of HRE beyond schooling.
2. Particular areas for exploring new models of HRE beyond schooling might include the private sector, especially business.
3. Opportunities for further exploration of models of HRE beyond schooling should be shared in contexts of civil and political power including within prisons, police and judiciary.
4. The World Programme for Human Rights Education might take note that HRE beyond schooling is a neglected or under-explored area to which more attention might be made.

## **CLOSING SESSION**

**Chair: Dr Linda King**  
**Chief of Section for the Promotion of Rights and Values in Education**  
**Acting Director of the Division for the Promotion of Basic Education**  
**UNESCO**

### **THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE REDRAFTING OF THE DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION**

**Emmanuel Decaux**  
**Member of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee,**  
**Rapporteur of the drafting group for the proposed Declaration on Human Rights**  
**Education and Training, United Nations**

It is important, argued Emmanuel Decaux, that human rights education (HRE) is highlighted in the commemorative ceremonies of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. HRE is an important part of the sensitization process and helps to encourage vigilance in terms of respect for the promotion and protection of human rights values. It also encourages the process of life long learning.

In terms of the role of the Advisory Committee, specially created within the framework of Human Rights Council for elaborating the proposed “Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training”, its main responsibility consists essentially of standard setting as stipulated in Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/6/10, adopted in September 2007. One of its main tasks is to collect information on normative instruments and key initiatives that relate to HRE, most of which came out of the recent Decade for Human Right Education (1995-2004). The Committee is also taking into account other existing initiatives such as the Plan of Action of the first phase for the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE).

The future work of the Committee must build on the existing strengths in the field of human rights education on both international and pedagogical plans. As the aim is to produce a political document, the viewpoints of all countries are equally important.

Part of the Committee’s mandate is to seek input from all relevant stakeholders. To this end, a questionnaire has been created for all partners in order to target specific actions and objectives. All interested parties, including teachers or researchers, are invited to participate in this consultation process. The goal is essentially to identify best practices and undertake comparisons among the various experiences.

In order to create a declaration that is precise and concise, the Committee will proceed in a two-step process. First, a framework document with basic principles will be created followed by a specialized, technical series of documents that will deal with specific issues. Second, a solid legal foundation will be established as the right to HRE necessitates the creation of a common vision and an integrated approach.

Education is a permanent process that should continue throughout one's lifetime and HRE must be incorporated in all stages; it cannot be treated as an additional subject but must be integrated into the pedagogical process in its entirety.

This clearly presents some challenges for the international community. First, there are organizational challenges as it is proving difficult to develop a clear and coherent vision that takes into account the diverse views and experiences of the many different countries.

There are also pedagogical challenges stemming from the fact that countries are at different stages in terms of training, development of methodologies and implementation of practices. A series of technical parameters must be developed to address particular aspects of HRE, for example, the notion of public versus private, training, specific content of HRE (such as the narrow versus the wide definition of human rights, the issue of where human rights end, etc.) and means for allowing the use of new technologies such as the internet.

The field of HRE is vast and its objectives ambitious. The next steps should include sharing experiences of good and bad practices and providing suggestions and criticism for improving the quality of a HRE. The Committee has only just embarked on what will be a long, challenging process.

**General Rapporteur: Professor Liam Gearon**  
**Faculty of Education, University of Plymouth**

This Round Table marked the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Throughout the Round Table this commemoration was much to the fore. So too were the histories behind the founding of the United Nations itself and UNESCO, a histories of dictatorship and totalitarianism, world war and genocide.

Indeed, the Opening Session provided an apt reminder that the United Nations and UNESCO were created in order to help prevent the recurrence of such histories. The Round Table also provided many other reminders, however, that war and other such ills have plagued every subsequent decade of the sixty years since the UDHR. Thus, while the *successes* of the UN, UNESCO and the UDHR were celebrated, the Round Table was also the forum for recognition of the *failures* in implementation of those original ideals of dignity, equality and universal human rights.

In the context of these harsh, historical and contemporary realities, there was nevertheless considerable and heartening consensus at the Round Table that education remains critical to bridging the gap between the ideals of universal human rights and their realization.

This same recognition was also prominent at the time of the UDHR. The International Decade of Human Rights Education and the ongoing World Programme for Human Rights Education are signs of the *continuing* recognition of this importance of education in making universal human rights a reality.

Human rights education (HRE) may not always be as effective as hoped for by its intentions but without it socio-political realities might be worse. Despite persistent difficulties in implementation of HRE across States, then, the Round Table was pervaded with a certain determination and a clear optimism.

Yet such determination and optimism was not naive. As so many delegates passionately remarked, if the basic right to education itself is denied to so many millions, this too can make the reality of effective HRE problematic. Again, we heard powerful testimony about the impoverished educational realities of so many children and young people.

Indeed, here delegates remarked on the potential disaffection of young people being taught HRE when these same young people are living in near absolute poverty, or in other circumstances of deprivation and extreme distress.

Amongst not only the young, this potential disaffection with the failed realities of HRE ideals can easily transform itself into a wider rejection of democratic political process, and even violence. This is an issue for all countries. Such disaffection is often a breeding ground not only for apathy but also for extremism.

So throughout the meeting, the Round Table reflected on the integral connection between politics and education in the promotion of human rights, as did the United Nations in making the 1948 UDHR when declaring ‘a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration

constantly in mind, *shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance* (emphasis added).

The importance of understanding the relationship between politics and education, between politics and pedagogy, remains critical then, and it was a theme that ran powerfully through the Round Table. In particular, the Round Table examined in detail strategies that will continue to effect political change through education, engaging in debates about the most effective means of realizing the ideals of universal human rights through HRE.

There was thus robust debate, but also a remarkable degree of consensus on some essential frameworks for future progress. In policy and research (Panel 1), for example, strengthening the research-policy nexus was seen as critical to revitalizing HRE.

In curriculum terms (Panel 2) – and across the richness of country experiences shared over the course of the Round Table – there was consensus that HRE has no pre-conceived curriculum models: it can be treated as a specific or a cross-cutting issue or both. And these two approaches can be complementary. At national level, it is clearly necessary to develop tangible and concrete actions to address the implementation of HRE projects such as: the development of training for teachers; the creation of appropriate and innovative HRE curricula and related training materials; the cultivation of strategic partnerships; and the proper use of research for the effective implementation of HRE.

There was also agreement that HRE takes place in many areas, in wide social contexts, not just in the classroom (Panel 3). Therefore, the role of partnerships remains a crucial one. Beyond institutional partnerships, it is necessary to focus on building partnerships with civil society, NGOs, teacher training institutes, research institutes and universities, the private sector, parents' associations, and so on. These partnerships will greatly enhance the links between formal and non-formal education (Panel 4), and HRE beyond schooling.

In short, the Round Table demonstrated that education is critical in order to bridge the gap between the ideals of human rights principles and socio-political realities.

The Round Table set out with the following objectives:

- To exchange good practices and innovative policies on human rights education;
- To identify priority areas for action to develop and improve human rights education;
- To promote partnerships at national, regional and international levels.

Given the foregoing, the Round Table might be said to have achieved these objectives.

Yet it is important to remember that the promotion of HRE is an ongoing and continuous process. Commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UDHR, the Round Table was an important forum for evaluating how the international community might take forward into diverse educational contexts the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.