



## **NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning Proposal**

**31 May 2023**

The NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning (NGO WG on HREL) thanks the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for the opportunity to contribute to the upcoming report seeking the views of different stakeholders on target sectors, focus areas or thematic human rights issues for the fifth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, which will be presented during the 54th session of the Human Rights Council in September 2023.

### **Background**

The NGO WG on HREL is a Working Group of the NGO Committee on Human Rights in Geneva,<sup>1</sup> Switzerland with the aim to ensure civil society representation and participation in the processes of global policy making on Human Rights Education. The Working Group is comprised of organizations working and focusing on and with a range of themes and target groups with a common focus on human rights education.

This submission, made in response to the consultation on the fifth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE), is itself the result of a consultative process aiming to share and amplify the views and priorities that have been identified by this Working Group.

### **Discussion**

Some of the ideas expressed include:

- i) to continue the fifth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education with a focus on youth but adding a specific theme, such for instance, youth and environment, youth and gender equality and focusing on young people from the most marginalized background including but not limited to migrants, IDPs and refugees, LGBTIQ+, those living with a disability, in extreme poverty, LGBTIQ+, indigenous and so on.
- ii) to focus on parents and caregivers as a target group.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ngowghrel.wordpress.com/>

iii) to target duty bearers as they are responsible to meet the needs of the rights holders at every level.

## **Proposal**

In light of the ongoing objectives of the WPHRE, the

- **Long-term prevention** of human rights abuses and violent conflicts,
- Promotion of equality and **sustainable development**, and
- Enhancement of people's **participation in decision-making** processes within a democratic system,

and to build on and consolidate the achievements of the Fourth Phase of the WPHRE given the impediments posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, this Working Group recommends that,

**youth and their duty bearers be the target groups in the Fifth Phase.**

Duty bearers would not only include those people in the formal education sector such as - education ministries, educators in schools and institutions of higher and professional learning, but also those in non-formal education such as families, parents/guardians, care givers, religious leaders, community leaders, community educators, trainers, employers, mentors and so on.

We recommended **the use of the following approaches:**

- an **intergenerational approach** to human rights education with continuation of and a strong interconnection with formal and non-formal education in the framework of lifelong learning ensured, to prevent human rights abuses and to support youth and their full participation in decision-making processes,
- a **holistic approach** to human rights education that supports youth as rights holders, and the responsibility of the diverse duty bearers within society and in communities to create an environment that respects the three dimensions of human rights education: *for*, *about* and *through* human rights. For example, in their role as duty bearers, formal education authorities, teachers and community and religious educators and leaders offer routes to all youth and especially to those who are most marginalized that help to build, realize and preserve a rights-based approach while reinforcing a consistency of behavior essential to protect their rights,
- a **values-based approach** to human rights education which is needed to positively reinforce learning,
- an **engaged approach** strengthening the role of societal and community duty bearers, to be actively engaged in activities that increase an understanding of young peoples' rights, as well as encourage participation in activities with youth to tackle the emotional disconnection and gap between young people and caregivers, and
- a **context appropriate approach** to human rights education, which is contextualized to different settings. In order to achieve this, a joint effort of collaboration between different

stakeholders at the international, regional, national and local level is key. The arts, such as music, can also be used and promoted when implementing HRE, as an impactful methodology that speaks directly to people's emotions. Sports should also be utilized more and the link between NGOs and sports reinforced to promote HRE for youth and establish a culture of human rights since it creates a space for inclusivity.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, States and their ministries are asked to facilitate all necessary measures and resources to build a culture of human rights at different levels of duty bearers within society and in communities, taking an intersectional approach to respond to the needs of young people and those of future generations.