

Comments of the National Human Rights Commission of Korea

The National Human Rights Commission of Korea (hereafter the NHRCK) regards the Draft Plan of Action for the Third Phase (2015-2019) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education as timely since it highlights strengthening of efforts to advance the implementation of the plans of action for the first and second phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education and identifies journalists and media professionals as a specific focus group for human rights education in a society where the media's role has been increasingly important.

Therefore, regarding the Draft Plan of Action for the Third Phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (hereafter referred to as the Draft), the NHRCK presents the following opinions to strengthen its implementation effectiveness, in accordance with Article 19 of the National Human Rights Commission Act.

1. Concerning National Human Rights Institutions

Clarification of National Human Rights Institution's responsibility and role

Article 61 of the Draft

- At the national level, government should identify a relevant department as a focal point for coordinating the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the national strategy, working closely with the relevant ministries and all other national actors (the rest omitted).

- The Draft highlights the government as a responsible actor in promoting human rights education and grants to it the responsibility for and role of coordinating and evaluating human rights education during the third phase of the World Programme (Article 61).

- Moreover, the Draft identifies different actors in specific key objectives of human rights education.

※ Actors during the third phase

- Advancing the implementation of the first and second phase (Article 32 and 33): Ministries of Education, higher education institutions, and Ministries responsible for the civil service, law enforcement officials and the military, etc.

- For journalists and media professionals (Article 51): various actors and stakeholders, including national human rights institutions (hereafter the NHRIs)

- National coordination and evaluation (Article 61): the government

- The NHRIs play important roles in each country, such as implementing their own human rights education programmes, monitoring human rights education, and coordinating and facilitating engagement among different human rights education actors. In this regard, Article 9 of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training recognizes that the NHRIs can play an important role, including, where necessary, a coordinating role, in promoting human rights education and training by, inter alia, raising awareness and mobilizing relevant public and private actors.

- Therefore, the NHRCK believes that the Plan of Action should set forth further clarification of responsibility and role of the NHRIs, given their responsibility, which is to submit their opinions, recommendations and suggestions to the government for its implementation of protecting and promoting human rights.

2. Concerning Journalists and Media Professionals

Suggesting training processes and tools to encourage their participation in human rights education

The Draft presents various methodological strategies, from a teaching-and-learning perspective, to ensure the effectiveness of human rights training for journalist and media professionals (Article 45 ~48).

- In addition to teaching-and-learning methods and strategies already presented in the Draft, further training processes and tools need to be identified to enhance voluntary participation of journalists and media professionals in human rights education, considering that they operate in the private sector.

Highlighting the development of human rights-sensitive reporting guidelines

The Draft proposes that human rights education curricula for journalists and media professionals include human rights 'in the context of journalistic practice' in a specific way (Article 44).

- As the Draft says, human rights education for journalists and media professionals should present specific directions, thereby realizing human rights value in the context of journalistic practice.

- Therefore, in order to prevent human rights violations by journalists and media professionals when reporting social minority issues such as persons with disabilities, women and elderly people, it is desirable to **first develop guidelines on human rights-sensitive reporting** for human rights-friendly reporting, taking subjects and circumstances into consideration **and subsequently introduce the guideline to the curricula.**

※ For your reference, the NHRCK presents its experience in relation with the press as follows.

- established 「Guidelines on Human Rights-sensitive Reporting」 with the Journalists Association of Korea (hereafter the JAK) (Sept., 2011).

- developed and distributed 'Handbook on the disability rights for journalists' (Dec., 2011).

- created a human rights course in curricula for training journalists, including the one for newcomers at the Korea Press Foundation (2003-2011) and has operated a human rights course for social affairs journalists nationwide in cooperation with the JAK (from 2010 to present).

3. Concerning the institutionalization of education

Laying the foundation for legal institutionalization such as a Human Rights Education Act

As a strategy for advancing and consolidating current efforts during the first and second phase, the Draft presents 'new or revised laws and policies (Article 18 (a))'.

- The strategy of 'new or revised laws and policies' presented in the Draft is somewhat superficial. Therefore to boost motivation in actors and targets of human rights education, while highlighting the necessity to lay the foundation for legal institutionalization on human rights education, the NHRCK believes that the Draft needs to articulate the enactment of relevant human rights education laws to make such education mandatory and to secure sufficient support in terms of manpower and finance.

Setting up an exclusive body such as a human rights education (HRE) centre

1) To institutionalize human rights education, 'encouraging the creation of human rights centres in schools of journalism' (Article 43(e)(i)).
2) The Draft presents, as a national process of carrying out the third plan of action, three-step strategy of 'analysis of the current implementation of the first and second phase, developing a national strategy, and implementing, monitoring and evaluating it' (Article 58 ~60).

- The Draft encourages the establishment of human rights centres in schools of journalism in order to institutionalize human rights education for journalists and media professionals, while pointing out that the phased strategy needs to collect baseline data, including the analysis of the current implementation.

- While setting up human rights centres on campus is a crucial tool to mainstream human rights education for journalists and media professionals, an exclusive body is required to be established in order to pave the way for implementing human rights education at a national level.
- Therefore, the Draft needs to encourage the creation of a body such as a HRE centre, to provide professional human rights education service, which is difficult for individual institution to offer, including human rights education research, educational materials development and dissemination, human rights education programmes development, and training of trainers on human rights.

4. Concerning future human rights education

- 1) Focuses in the first phase: the integration and systematization of human rights education in the primary and secondary schemes.*
- 2) Focuses in the second phase: human rights education in higher education such as universities and human rights training for teachers and educators, civil servants, law enforcement officials and military personnel at all levels*
- 3) Focuses in the third phase: journalists and media professionals as well as the targets of the previous two phases*

Need to emphasize human rights education for businesses

- As the plans of action of World Programme for Human Rights Education, from the first phase to the third one, have expanded focus groups for human rights education, it is important for the future plan of action to put more focus on human rights education for businesses.
- Globalization has led businesses, along with state, to bear an important role of and responsibility for individual human rights protection and promotion, so the NHRCK requests a further call for attention in human rights education for businesses in order to prevent their human rights violation and to create a corporate environment respectful of human rights.

Need to highlight human rights education for social welfare organizations

- Given that caring has been increasingly emphasized as a social responsibility, human rights education for social minorities (persons with disabilities, women, elderly people, and children) as well as social welfare workers in organizations providing relevant services for social minorities needs to be focused in a future plan of action.