

Beyond polarization: ideas for the ‘Draft plan of action for the Fifth Phase (2025-2029) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education’

[1] **New Humanity** appreciates the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) call for input to contribute to the next Fifth Phase (2025-2029) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education’. We would suggest linking the works of the OHCHR Methodology, Education and Training Section with the last Report of Special Rapporteur on the Right to education on AI and the right to education which will be presented in the General Assembly in October. Will be an opportunity to work together on the impact on the digital and IA for human right education.

[2] We would suggest insisting and reiterating along the Draft (specifically in content, skill and attitudes parts) for **including the dialogue as pedagogy and theory to addressing currently polarization**¹. The dialogue in education is a basic from the beginning in Western Philosophy tradition (e. i. Socrates)². The hyper Connect environment need also connect with human dialogue in face-to-face situation, and also according to S. Turkle is necessary to recuperate the value of the conversation³.

[3] Other important **pedagogy for human right education is service learning**. We also suggest that methodology to develop this new phase for the world programme for human rights education. UNESCO describe the service-learning methodology as a pedagogy of cooperation and solidarity⁴:

‘pedagogical approaches must be selected that also cultivate the values and principles of interdependence and solidarity. **Service learning and community engagement soften the walls between classroom and community, challenge students’ assumptions, and connect them with broader systems, processes, and experiences beyond their own experiences**. It is vital that students approach service with a spirit of humility, free of paternalism, especially in connection with those who may face different material challenges. Service learning must not be a pursuit limited to the most privileged; all learners can contribute to a dialogical process of advancing well-being within their communities. Service learning has the potential to enlist solidarity as a central principle to problem-solving pedagogies, rather than favouring the solutions which are simply the most expedient or self-interested (p. 52)’.

[4] For the next period of the World Programme for Human Rights Education we think that **will be better focusing in only one field as digital technologies or climate change according to CRC last General Comments**⁵. In addition, there is no international consensus on some topics on gender equality (as are written in the draft) which could be contrary to the family rights’ established in the Universal Declaration

¹ O. Erstad, B. E. Hagtvet, & J. V. Wertsch (Eds.), *Education and Dialogue in Polarized Societies: Dialogic perspectives in times of change*, 2024, Oxford University Press.

² N. Burbules, *Dialogue in Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 1993, Teachers College

³ S. Turkle, *Reclaiming conversation. The power of talk in a digital age*, 2016, Penguin Publishing Group

⁴ UNESCO, *Reimagining our futures together. A new social contract for education*, 2021, available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379707>

⁵ CRC/C/GC/26: General comment No. 26 (2023) on children’s rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change and General comment No. 25 (2021) on children’s rights in relation to the digital environment.

of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and also contrary to the best interest of the child according to the principle of the evolving capacities⁶. In this way, **will be appreciated to describe more specifically the content, skill and attitudes in all those fields for age.**

[5] It's clear that digital technologies matter for children and young people but we are not naïf. **All program on digital (included the human right education program) must starting point the well-being and the children and young mental health crisis⁷.** We are not back to these reality around the world of minor people who are exposed so many hours to the screens causing anxiety, depression, self-harm and addictions⁸ (see annex I).

[6] One important topic, in the field of digital technologies (as priority sector for the next Programme) is **'neurorights' for child and young people.** The Neurorights Foundation identify five Neurorights which are definite to protect the human rights of all people from the potential misuse or abuse of neurotechnology⁹:

- The Right to Personal Identity: Boundaries must be developed to prohibit technology from disrupting the sense of self. When Neurotechnology connects individuals with digital networks, it could blur the line between a person's consciousness and external technological inputs.
- The Right to Free-Will: Individuals should have ultimate control over their own decision making, without unknown manipulation from external neurotechnologies.
- The Right to Mental Privacy: Any data obtained from measuring neural activity ("NeuroData") should be kept private. Moreover, the sale, commercial transfer, and use of neural data should be strictly regulated.
- The Right to Equal Access to Mental Augmentation: There should be established guidelines at both international and national levels regulating the development and applications of mental-enhancement neurotechnologies. These guidelines should be based on the principle of justice and guarantee equality of access to all citizens.
- The Right to Protection from Algorithmic Bias: Countermeasures to combat bias should be the norm for machine learning. Algorithm design should include input from user groups to foundationally address bias.

Juan García Gutiérrez

New Humanity, NGO &
Facultad de Educación, UNED

Visiting Fellow:

Chair in AI and Democracy
School for Transnational Government, EUI &
Institute of Ethics of AI, University of Oxford

⁶ See Ph. Alton, *The Best Interest of the Child: reconciling culture and human rights*, 1994, Oxford University Press.

⁷ See: Seattle School District n° 1, US District Court Western District of Washington at Seattle (6/1/2023). THE CITY OF NEW YORK; THE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK; AND NEW YORK CITY HEALTH AND HOSPITALS CORPORATION, V. META PLATFORMS, INC.; FACEBOOK HOLDINGS, LLC; FACEBOOK OPERATIONS, LLC; META PAYMENTS INC.; SICULUS, INC.; INSTAGRAM, LLC; SNAP INC.; TIKTOK INC.; BYTEDANCE INC.; TIKTOK PTE. LTD.; BYTEDANCE LTD.; GOOGLE LLC; and YOUTUBE, LLC. Superior Court of California, Los Angeles (2/14/2024).

⁸ J. Haidt, *The anxious generation. How the great rewiring of childhood is causing an epidemic of mental illness*, 2024, Allen lane,

⁹ *The Five NeuroRights*. Available at: https://neurorights-initiative.site.drupaldisttest.cc.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/The%20Five%20Ethical%20NeuroRights%20updated%20pdf_0.pdf

ANNEX I

Text in the Draft:	NH proposal to change:
<p>C. Objectives of the World Programme for Human Rights Education 9. The objectives of the World Programme are: (...) (a) To promote the development of a culture of human rights;</p>	<p>C. Objectives of the World Programme for Human Rights Education 9. The objectives of the World Programme are: (...) (a) To promote the development of a culture of human rights in a spirit of brotherhood;</p>
<p>D. Principles for human rights education activities 10. Educational and training activities within the World Programme shall: (...) (h) Make use of participatory methodologies that include knowledge, critical analysis and skills for individual and collective action furthering human rights and that take into consideration the age, cultural specificities and contexts of the learners;</p>	<p>D. Principles for human rights education activities 10. Educational and training activities within the World Programme shall: (...) (h) Make use of participatory methodologies as service-learning and others that include knowledge, critical analysis and skills for individual and collective action furthering human rights and that take into consideration the age, cultural specificities and contexts of the learners;</p>
<p>II. Children and youth empowerment through human rights education: plan of action for the fifth phase (2025–2029) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education A. Scope (...) 17. UN bodies and documents as well as international fora, as detailed in the section below, have recognized that children and youth are rights holders and agents of change, key actors in realizing human rights, achieving sustainable development, securing peace and preventing violence and conflict. The inclusive participation of children and young people in shaping, implementing and monitoring policies that affect them, or will in the future, is essential. Human rights education – including education concerning human rights and digital technologies, environment and climate change and gender equality – empowers children and youth to take action and uphold their human rights and those of others, and to participate accordingly in public affairs and democratic decision-making processes. Human rights education is key to children and young people’s empowerment, development and engagement towards a peaceful, just and sustainable world.</p>	<p>II. Children and youth empowerment through human rights education: plan of action for the fifth phase (2025–2029) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education A. Scope (...) 17. UN bodies and documents as well as international fora, as detailed in the section below, have recognized that children and youth are rights holders and agents of change, key actors in realizing human rights, achieving sustainable development, securing peace and preventing violence and conflict. The inclusive participation of children and young people in shaping, implementing and monitoring policies that affect them, or will in the future, is essential. Human rights education – including education concerning human rights and digital technologies, environment and climate change and gender equality – empowers children and youth to take action and uphold their human rights and those of others, and to participate accordingly in public affairs and democratic decision-making processes. Human rights education is key to children and young people’s empowerment, development and engagement towards a peaceful, just and sustainable world. Nothing in the present Plan of action for the fifth phase (2025–2029) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education shall be construed as being contrary to the family rights established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p>
<p>23. With regard to education concerning digital technologies and human rights, the UN Secretary-General stated the importance of making human rights the foundation of an open, safe and secure digital future (...) Around 2.2 billion – or two thirds of –</p>	<p>23. With regard to education concerning digital technologies and human rights, the UN Secretary-General stated the importance of making human rights the foundation of an open, safe and secure digital future (...) Around 2.2 billion – or two thirds of –</p>

<p>_children and young people worldwide, especially girls and adolescent girls, who are disproportionately impacted, do not have Internet access at home;23 as the Secretary-General stated, reimagining education means investing in digital literacy and digital infrastructure among others.</p>	<p>_children and young people worldwide, especially girls and adolescent girls, who are disproportionately impacted, do not have Internet access at home;23 as the Secretary-General stated, reimagining education means investing in digital literacy and digital infrastructure among others. The starting point for that will be the well-being and the worldwide children and young mental health crisis.</p>
	<p>(new) 24. With regard to education concerning digital technologies and human rights it's also important to speak young people on the so call 'neurorights'.</p>
<p>1. Policies and related implementation measures 29. The development, adoption, implementation and monitoring of policies fostering human rights education for children and youth include the following actions: (...)</p>	<p>1. Policies and related implementation measures 29. The development, adoption, implementation and monitoring of policies fostering human rights education for children and youth include the following actions: (...) (new) (xix) Adopting and development active and critical methodologies and pedagogies coherent with human rights as service-learning.</p>
<p>31. With regard to content, (...) (a) With regard to education concerning human rights and digital technologies: (i) Knowledge: children and young people are aware of and understand: • (...)</p>	<p>31. With regard to content, (...) (a) With regard to education concerning human rights and digital technologies: (i) Knowledge: children and young people are aware of and understand: (...) • The possible adverse consequences of exposure to risks relating to the 'young mental crisis' as identify the US suit law case.</p>
<p>(ii) Skills: children and young people are able to:</p>	<p>(ii) Skills: children and young people are able to: (...) • Learning on the right to disconnect to drive a healthy well-being in digital environments and balance the time online and offline</p>
<p>(iii) Attitudes: children and young people demonstrate:</p>	<p>(iii) Attitudes: children and young people demonstrate: • Developing virtues for disconnect to the screens and to prevent the digital addictions.</p>