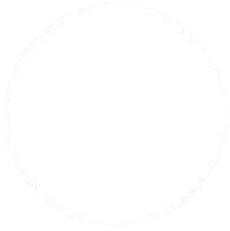


Written submission - Soroptimist International

Call for input:

“Recommendations for the Fifth Phase of the World Program for Human Rights Education”

12th of June 2024



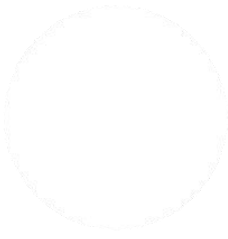
We are pleased to provide recommendations to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) for the fifth phase (2025-2029) of the World Program for Human Rights Education (WPHRE), following the resolution 54/7 of the United Nations Human Rights Council. The focus of this phase aligns with the vision that Soroptimist International must empower, educate and enable all women and girls. Therefore, analyzing the next face is an inspiring and fascinating endeavor to ensure children and young adults receive the right education, with a special emphasis on digital technologies, gender equality, the environment and climate change. This aligns with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 4.7.

Building upon the achievements of the previous phases, the fifth phase should aim to further integrate human rights education into all levels of formal and non-formal education. Soroptimist International urges all stakeholders to actively participate in the development and implementation of comprehensive national strategies for human rights education, ensuring the meaningful participation of all women and girls.

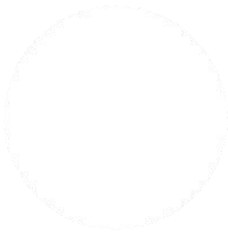
Soroptimist International likes to point out that during the last decades, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) predicted the need for lifelong learning for all women and girls in anticipation of future job and skill needs to minimize the adverse impacts of digitization and automation. After intensive research into agreed commitments of world leaders, the United Nations (UN) and civil society dating 1995, the predictions then emphasized adapting educational and vocational curricula, and reskilling, upskilling and lifelong learning programs. Such initiatives would facilitate the transition of women, independent of age, to new occupations and jobs, particularly in fields related to technologies, especially those at risk of being replaced by automation. Therefore, focus is needed on three key topics: qualitative and continuance education, teachers' education, and education relevant to the digital age.

Recommendations:

1. **Develop comprehensive national strategies:** States are encouraged to develop, adopt, and implement comprehensive national strategies for human rights education that are inclusive of all women and girls, without any kind of discrimination. These strategies should be aligned with the 2030 Agenda and incorporate the thematic areas of digital technologies, the environment and climate change, and gender equality.

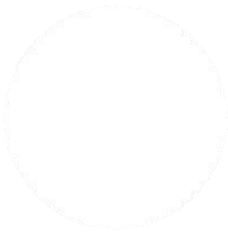


- These strategies should be developed to include comprehensive and detailed objectives, actions, timelines, and indicators to measure progress. Sufficient resources should be allocated for quality implementation and monitoring.¹
 - In developing these strategies, States should consider the diverse needs and experiences of all women and girls, including those in vulnerable situations. States should also ensure the meaningful participation of all women and girls in the design, implementation, and monitoring of human rights education programs.²
2. **Priorities inclusion and participation:** Special attention should be given to all women and girls in vulnerable situations, ensuring their access to quality and continuous education. The meaningful participation of all women and girls in AI, the design, implementation, and monitoring of human rights education programs is crucial.
- This includes all women and girls with disabilities, indigenous children, children from minority groups, children living in poverty, and children affected by conflict of displacement.^{3,4,5}
 - Meaningful participation means that all women and girls are not just consulted but are actively involved in decision-making processes. Their views and experiences should be considered in the design and implementation of human rights education programs.^{6,7}
3. **Integrate quality and continuous education in all sectors, including digital literacy:** Quality education should be integrated into all levels and its forms from primary, secondary, tertiary, and vocational education, as well as non-formal settings.⁸ This includes curricula, teaching materials, and teacher training programs, including digital literacy to be able to address the digital divide.⁹
- Integration should be systematic and comprehensive, ensuring that digital skills are embedded in all aspects of education. This includes not only the content of education but also the teaching methods and the overall learning environment.¹⁰
 - Teacher training is essential to ensure that teachers and educators have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to effectively deliver long-



life and quality education. Training should be ongoing and should cover both the theoretical foundations and the practical skills of teaching and applying the knowledge according to the different levels of education and context.¹¹

4. **Address emerging challenges:** The fifth phase should address the specific challenges and opportunities presented by (emerging) digital technologies, the environment and climate change, and gender equality. Including developing educational content and methodologies that empower all women and girls to navigate the digital world safely, understand and address environmental issues, and promote gender equality.¹²
 - The digital world presents both opportunities and challenges for human rights education. On the one hand, digital technologies can be used to reach a wider audience and to provide more interactive and engaging learning experiences. On the other hand, digital technologies can also be used to spread misinformation and disinformation, and to violate privacy rights. Human rights education should equip all women and girls with the critical thinking skills necessary to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly.^{13,14}
 - Environmental and climate change education should empower all women and girls to understand the causes and consequences of these issues, and to take action to protect the environment. Education should also promote sustainable lifestyles and consumption patterns.¹⁵
 - Gender equality education should challenge gender stereotypes and any form of discrimination and promote equal rights and opportunities for all.¹⁶ Education should also empower all women and girls to participate fully in all aspects of life,¹⁷ including STEM fields.^{18,19}
5. **Strengthen international cooperation:** Enhanced international cooperation is essential to support national efforts, including sharing best practices, providing technical assistance, and mobilizing resources to support the implementation of human rights education programs globally.
 - International cooperation can take many forms, including bilateral and multilateral partnerships, regional initiatives, and global campaigns.



Cooperation should be based on the principles of mutual respect, shared responsibility, and solidarity.^{20,21}

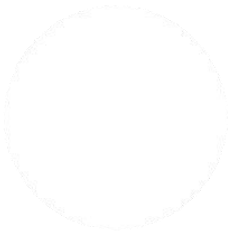
- Technical assistance can be provided in a variety of areas, including curriculum development, teacher training, and monitoring and evaluation. Assistance should be tailored to the specific needs and contexts of each country.^{22,23}
- Resource mobilization is essential to ensure that quality and continuous education programs are adequately funded. Resources can be mobilized from a variety of sources, including governments, international organizations, foundations, and the private sector.

In addition, Soroptimist International likes to point out that the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) listed as one of its strategic objectives regarding education that States should promote lifelong, flexible education, training and retraining for all girls and women. Individuals should be enabled to benefit from an ongoing acquisition of knowledge and skills beyond those acquired during youth. This recommendation was included throughout the years after 1995 and reaffirmed by Sustainable Development Goal 4.

CSW in 2023 recognized that negative social norms, as well as gender stereotypes and systemic and structural barriers were still among the root causes of persistent gaps in women and girls' lifelong learning opportunities.

Meanwhile technologies were changing the structure of labor markets which, although they provided new and different employment opportunities, they also required lifelong learning of new skills ranging from basic digital fluency to advanced technical skills, STEAM and the need of ethical and critical thinking to approach emerging technologies.²⁴ These advancements would boost the employability of women and young people and foster the social inclusion of older persons in societies.²⁵

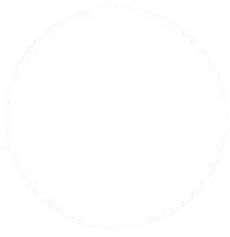
In 2024, the Commission, of the Status of Women reaffirmed this commitment including the increased investments in inclusive, affordable and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities to ensure women and girls acquire the knowledge and skills to attain high-quality jobs and participate in the sustainable economy.



There was further commitment and consensus among member states for early childhood education, youth and adult literacy programs and initiatives, digital education, cultural education, education for sustainable development, digital technologies, skills enhancement, affordable higher education and vocational training. States must consider these goals urgent and essential to help women and girls overcome poverty, exclusion, and vulnerability to reach their potential as valued members of society.

Civil society organizations like Soroptimist International stand ready to support States and stakeholders in implementing these recommendations and advancing human rights education for all women and girls, for children and youth. We encourage you to bring all stakeholders together to foster a global community of practice in quality and continuous education.

We look forward to an active engagement and participation in the fifth phase of the World Program for Human Rights Education.



¹ Plan of action for the fifth phase (2025–2029) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. Draft. Para II.A.12

² Plan of action for the fifth phase (2025–2029) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. Draft. Para II.B.24

³ Plan of action for the fifth phase (2025–2029) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. Draft. Para II.A.16, II.B.24, II.D.2.31.b(ii)

⁴ CSW 68 Agreed Conclusions Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective Unedited version March 2024 Para 37

<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/csw-68-agreed-conclusions-advance-unedited-version-2024-03-22-en.pdf>

⁵ CSW 68 Agreed Conclusions Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective Unedited version March 2024 Para 54 (j) & (vvv)

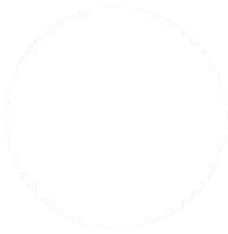
<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/csw-68-agreed-conclusions-advance-unedited-version-2024-03-22-en.pdf>

⁶ Plan of action for the fifth phase (2025–2029) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. Draft. Para II.D.1.29. (xi)

⁷ ECE/AC.28/2019/3 Regional review of progress: regional synthesis August 2019 Para 122

⁸ World Economic Forum. 2023. “Global Gender Gap Report 2023”. Insight Report, June 2023. 2.5 Gender gaps in the skills of the future Page 47.

https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2023.pdf



⁹ ITU Handbook on mainstreaming gender in digital policies. 2023

https://www.equalsintech.org/files/ugd/04bfff_41721870b4b24ada95de550ba9deafc5.pdf

¹⁰ E/CN.6/2023/L.3 Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls CSW 67 2023 Para 86(hh)

<https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/ltd/n23/081/71/pdf/n2308171.pdf?token=kjwSrBAL5vaL2jskwy&fe=tr>

¹¹ ITU Handbook on mainstreaming gender in digital policies.2023 Pag 51

https://www.equalsintech.org/files/ugd/04bfff_41721870b4b24ada95de550ba9deafc5.pdf

¹² OECD AI and the Future of Skills, Volume 1. Educationally relevant skills and how to scale the capabilities of artificial intelligence? Some recommendations. 2021

<https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/68191ce9-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/68191ce9-en#section-d1e18017>

¹³ UNESCO. Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence. 2021

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381137>

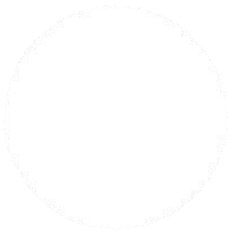
¹⁴ CSW 68 Agreed Conclusions Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective Unedited version March 2024 Para 54(ss)

<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/csw-68-agreed-conclusions-advance-unedited-version-2024-03-22-en.pdf>

¹⁵ CSW 68 Agreed Conclusions Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective Unedited version March 2024 Para 54 (j) & (vvv)

<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/csw-68-agreed-conclusions-advance-unedited-version-2024-03-22-en.pdf>

¹⁶ UN Women and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division. Gender snapshot 2023. Gains in education falter for girls at higher levels; women lose opportunities to build skills. Page 11-12



¹⁷ CSW 68 Agreed Conclusions Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective Unedited version March 2024
Para 27

<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/csw-68-agreed-conclusions-advance-unedited-version-2024-03-22-en.pdf>

¹⁸ ECE/AC.28/2019/3 Regional review of progress: regional synthesis August 2019
Para 47

¹⁹ UN Women. Why data matters on gender equality. March 2024

<https://data.unwomen.org/features/why-data-matters-progress-gender-equality>
<https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/68191ce9-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/68191ce9-en#section-d1e18017>

²⁰ Plan of action for the fifth phase (2025–2029) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. Draft. Para II.C.26. (g)

²¹ UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP. Are We Getting There? A synthesis of UN system evaluations of SDG 5

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2024/03/are-we-getting-there-a-synthesis-of-un-system-evaluations-of-sdg-5>

²² EQUALS - GSMA- ITU Her Digital Skills: Towards A Gender Transformative Approach. 23 Feb 2024

Annex 1. A Comparison of Digital Competence Frameworks and Curricula. Part II.6.
pag 53

<https://www.gsma.com/betterfuture/resources/towards-a-gender-transformative-approach>

²³ ECE/AC.28/2019/3 Regional review of progress: regional synthesis August 2019
Para 34, 48

²⁴ **E/CN.6/2023/L.3** Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls
March 20, 2023, Para 72,86(hh),86(kk)

²⁵ **E/CN.6/2023/L.3** Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls
March 20, 2023, Para 61