HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION: THEORY AND PRACTICES

BEMIS

Empowering Scotland's Ethnic and
Cultural Minority Communities

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Cultural Minority Communities**

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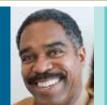# Human Rights Education: Theory And Practices

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The World Conference on Human Rights considers Human Rights Education, training and public information essential for the promotion and achievement of stable and harmonious relations among communities and for fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and peace.

(VIENNA DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION, part II. D, par 78)

Introduction

We are currently in the second phase of the UN World Programme for Human Rights Education. The draft plan of action for this was prepared and subsequently finalised by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OUNHCHR) in July 2010.

The second phase action plan calls for Member States to focus on human rights education and training for staff involved in higher education, for teachers and educators, civil servants, law enforcement officials and military personnel. Governments are asked to report their progress on this action plan and the Scottish Government's initial response to this was given in April 2010.

It was clear from the Scottish Government's response to the OUNHCHR that some progress has been made in Scotland with regards to Human Rights Education; however there is still much work to be done with regard to raising awareness of HRE and in making HRE more explicit both in policy and in practice.

The key objective of this paper prepared by BEMIS is to provide the analysis and background information of the key concepts and themes around Human Rights Education (HRE). By doing this, we would like to invite the broader civic society and stakeholders to consider HRE and its links to social justice, equality, and inclusiveness. As such, this is a call for civic society, for Scottish Government, public and third sector to reconsider understandings of HRE and to embrace its values. HRE is a process and we wish to engage with it in a long-term perspective.

1. Defining Human Rights Education and Democratic Citizenship

A notion brought about in the early nineties, and which found firmer grounds through a potent promotion by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) at the start of the twenty first century, Human Rights Education represents the ultimate goal - and at once - the first step of a society toward social justice.

Human Rights aims to provide a transformational response to local struggles against oppression. However, after about 60 years since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General Assembly, human rights violations continue to affect millions across the world:

> *"With the destructive forces of the two world wars behind us, complemented by the demise (legally speaking) of the evils of slavery about 120 years earlier, and the new winds of decolonization sweeping many parts of the globe, all societies should presumably have been more informed about the need for a stable and just world."*[1]

Shultz addresses the urgency to act while millions of people are still being persecuted, tortured and killed, and whose fundamental citizens' rights have been taken away.

> *"These sites of struggle (...) lead us to understand the need for a universal approach to human rights. Where some people argue that human rights are particular, necessarily differing according to group and context, we take as a key position that, at many sites, efforts to universalize rights have been the outcome of oppression and the struggle for liberation. ... The potential for human rights as a common vision of human dignity to be the catalyst for change is significant."*[2]

To achieve significant change in expanding social inclusion, fighting discrimination, and acting upon injustice, human rights values have to be implemented in the minds, cultures and actions of people. Education plays a crucial role in this, and it should not be underestimated as it represents a milestone toward a common vision of human dignity. While education is in itself a human right, Human Rights Education is about the provision and development of awareness about fundamental rights, freedoms and responsibilities.[3]

1. Shultz, L. Educating for Human Rights and Global Citizenship (2008, p.1).
2. Ibid. p. 3.
3. Gearon, L. The Human Rights Handbook a global perspective for education (2003, p. 157).

The preamble to the UDHR states that *"every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms."*

United Nation, Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has a longstanding commitment to promoting Human Rights Education (HRE) and broadly defines it as learning and practice of human rights.[4] The United Nation Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) defines HRE as:

> *"A long-term and lifelong process by which all people at all levels of development and in all strata of society learn respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring that respect in all societies (...) it significantly contributes to promoting equality and sustainable development, preventing conflict and human rights violations and enhancing participation and democratic processes, with a view to developing societies in which all human rights are valued and respected."* [5]

As such, the UNCHR highlights the crucial relation between Human Rights Education and equality, sustainable development and prevention of conflict. In results, the key role played by education in the development of societies is here coupled with core human rights values and global citizenship ethic. This understanding of HRE is further developed by Amnesty International's definition of HRE not only as a mechanism for *"the development of respect for human rights",* but also as a tool which aims to *"empower students to defend and claim their rights, which has more of an activist element to it."[6]* This brings to the fore even more evidently the element of active citizenship and its connection to HRE:

> *Human rights education is a deliberate, participatory practice aimed at empowering individuals, groups and communities ... Its goal is to build a culture of respect for and action in the defense and promotion of human rights for all (...) Human rights education can also play a vital role in building social structures that support participatory democracies and the resolution of conflict, and can provide a common understanding of how to address political and social differences equitably and celebrate cultural diversity.[7]*

Further, the Encyclopaedia of Peace Education (2008) also offers a clear explanation of the concept of HRE as *"an international movement to promote awareness about the rights accorded by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and related human rights conventions, and the procedures that exist for the redress of violations of these rights."[8]* This definition calls upon horizontal ties (responsibilities among individuals) as well as governmental and supranational responsibilities. As such, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights states that HRE entails training, dissemination and information efforts aimed at the building of a universal culture of human rights through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the moulding of attitudes directed to: the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms to:

1. The strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;

2. The full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity;

3. The promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups;

4. The enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free and democratic society governed by the rule of law;

5. The building and maintenance of peace.

6. The promotion of people-centred sustainable development and social justice. [9]

Further, HRE encompasses:

(a) Knowledge and skills: learning about human rights and mechanisms for their protection, as well as acquiring skills to apply them in daily life;
(b) Values, attitudes and behaviour: developing values and reinforcing attitudes and behaviour which uphold human rights:
(c) Action: taking action to defend and promote human rights.[10]

4. UNESCO, Human Right Education, Available at: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/human-rights-education/
5. UNCHR, Resolution 2004/71.
6. Gerber, P. From Convention to Classroom: The Long Road to Human Rights Education, Measuring States' Compliance with International Law Obligations Mandating Human Rights Education (2008, p. 107).
7. Amnesty International, Human Right Education, Available at: http://www.amnesty.org/en/human-rights-education

8. Bajaj, M. Encyclopaedia of Peace Education (2008, p. 99).
9 United Nations General Assembly, Proposed Plan of Action for the First Phase (2005 - 2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, A/59/525, para. 3
10 United Nations General Assembly, Proposed Plan of Action for the First Phase (2005 - 2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, A/59/525, para. 4

Therefore HRE should be understood as a lifelong learning process by which all people at all levels of development and in all strata of society learn respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring that respect in all societies.[11] In results, it becomes apparent from these definitions, that HRE, whilst aimed at fostering a universal culture of human rights, is also aimed at the enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free society, thus emphasising the principle of active citizenship.

Since the early nineties, both nation states and international organizations (among which UNESCO, the Council of Europe, etc) have demonstrated a considerable interest in Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) and its link with HRE without clearly distinguishing the differences between these two. It seems to be a general assumption that they both cover similar grounds in providing children and learners with a human rights background knowledge, but this is often a limited and superficial understanding. Democratic active citizenship is theorized as a vehicle for teaching and learning HRE.[12] This view proposes an alternative vision of global citizenship where its content and practice are underpinned by human rights principles and social justice.[13] Hence, whilst HRE provides a larger framework which brings attention to the responsibilities of nation states towards individuals under their jurisdiction, Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) focuses on horizontal ties (responsibilities among individuals) and calls upon an ethical understanding amongst civic society. EDC - also defined as global, cosmopolitan and active - is embedded in social justice, human rights, responsibility as well as action. Following from that, an **active and global citizen is someone who is aware of the wider world, who respects the values of diversity, is outraged by social injustice, is willing the make the world a more equitable and sustainable place, and who participates at local, national and global levels.**

In addition, Osler and Starkey (2010) highlighted that programmes of EDC and HRE may differ considerably in the ways in which they characterize the relationship between the individual and the nation-state:[14]

"One key difference between HRE programmes and citizenship education is that effective human rights education necessarily requires learners to be made aware of the need to hold government to account. Governments are responsible for securing our human rights."[15]

It is important to strike a balance of responsibilities: in fact, while stressing emphasis on the responsibilities that individuals owe to each other, it is vital to acknowledge the obligations that governments have towards their citizens. Both HRE and EDC are necessary and complement each other in fostering a culture of human rights and developing a language of human rights among societies. As human life experiences perpetual global social inequalities and injustice and diminished citizenship, EDC and HRE are vital tenets to be upheld.

2. A History of Human Rights Education

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 introduced Human Rights Education for the first time indicating that:

"Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and social groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace."[16]

Whilst making a more implicit reference to HRE, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 represents a seed corn in the field of International conventions, obligations, resolutions, treaties, commitments and reports promulgated by the UNHRC, Human Rights Council, the UNESCO, the Council of Europe, among others.[17] Therefore, the concept of HRE is increasingly being promoted by world organisations and professional associations, and is being advanced on a global scale. As UNESCO indicates it, HRE:

"Allows people to participate in their communities and society in a constructive and respectful way for themselves and others. It aims to deliver outcomes such as personal and social growth, the respectful conduct of citizens toward each other and the provision of opportunities for learners to develop critical thinking and life skills."[18]

11 UN Commission on Human Rights, Resolution 2004/71
12 Osler and Starkey, Teachers and Human Rights Education (2010).
13 "Human rights principles tend to be explicit in the EDC programmes of newly democratised states … However, not all countries make explicit the values base underpinning EDC. Britain, for example, does not acknowledge human rights as the values base for citizenship education within the National Curriculum for England", Ibid., p. 123.
14 Ibid., p. 107.
15 Idib., p. 126.
16 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, (Article 26(2)).
17 For a thorough account of International Obligations and Commitments to Promote and Implement Human Rights Education, see: http://www.unescobkk.org/education/appeal/programme-themes/education-and-human-rights/human-rights-education/human-rights-education-in-international-instruments/
18 UNESCO, Education and Human Rights, Promotion of Human Right Education available at: http://www.unescobkk.org/education/education-and-human-rights/human-rights-education/

This is to say that HRE has a longstanding history and a legitimate place in the sphere of international instruments. For example, the Vienna Declaration and Programme Action, (paragraph 32 of its summary declaration), affirmed the importance of *"incorporating the subject of human rights education programmes and calls upon States to do so."* Paragraph 81 recommends that *"Member States develop specific programmes and strategies for ensuring the widest human rights education."*[19] In addition, the sixth EFA goal of the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) aims at *"improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills."*[20] To date, the latest international instrument for HRE derives from the Human Rights Council (HRC) with a resolution calling for the Promotion of Human Rights Education and Learning. In this most recent resolution, the Council recalled:

> General Assembly resolutions 43/128 of 8 December 1988, by which the Assembly launched the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights,
> 59/113 A of 10 December 2004, 59/113 B of 14 July 2005 and 60/251 of 15 March 2006 in which the Assembly decided, inter alia, that the Council should promote human rights education and learning,
> Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/61 of 20 April 2005 and Subcommission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights resolution 2006/19 of 24 August 2006, on the World Programme for Human Rights Education, structured in consecutive phases

By doing this, the HRC reaffirms that States are duty-bound, to ensure that education is aimed at strengthening the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms.[21]

"The modern shift toward more global conceptions of human society and away from nationally-centred ones has led to an important shift in conceptions of the individual and of individual rights."[22] There is in fact a growing emphasis on the individual as a member of a global society rather than as a national citizen; thus the current weight of Human Rights Education seems to be a resulting consequence of this shift:

"Human rights education, (...) reflects both this developing emphasis on world citizenship and the strong assumption of personal commitment required for global citizenship."[23] The rise and expansion of HRE is a result of several factors:

> (1) Globalisation and the actualities and perceptions of global, cultural, political and economic interdependence;
> (2) The expansion of organisation and discourse devoted to human rights, over and above standards of citizenship; and
> (3) The worldwide expansion of education at all levels. [24]

3. Human Rights Education and Human Rights Learning

On 20 March 2008 the General Assembly 62/171 welcomed the resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council on 28 September 2007:

> *resolution 9/8 entitled* **"Development of public information activities in the field of human rights, including the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights"**
> *resolution 6/10 entitled* **"United Nations declaration on human rights education and training"**
> *resolution 6/24 entitled* **"World Programme for Human Rights Education"**

These resolutions ensure that the human rights learning contribute to the fulfilment of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as a quality and way of life of global society.

Following from that, the Human Rights Council decided that the year commencing on 10 December 2008 shall be proclaimed the International Year of Human Rights Learning.

This day shall be devoted to activities undertaken to broaden and deepen human rights learning and to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms. In addition, the Human Rights Council called upon Member States (regardless of the political, economic and cultural system) to intensify their efforts, throughout the Year and beyond, to promote human rights learning and education at the local, national and international levels, and encourages cooperation at all levels and with all relevant stakeholders. [25]

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19 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, 25 June 1993).
20 The Dakar Framework for Action.
21 General Assembly, A/HRC/RES/12/4, 4 December 2009 12/4; World Programme for Human Rights Education
22 Ramirez et al., 'The Worldwide Rise of Human Rights Education' (2007, p. 37).

23 Ibid., p. 36.
24 Ibid., p. 40.
25 General Assembly, A/RES/62/171, 20 March 2008, International Year of Human Rights Learning

These resolutions mark an important phase in the development of HRE as it sanctifies Human Rights Learning as a crucial instrument to take forward by the Assembly's previous resolutions. Since then, the terms Human Rights Education and Human Rights Learning go hand in hand and are often used interchangeably. Both concepts have been extensively analysed and presented by Betty A. Readon during a public speech on 15 April 2009 delivered for the UNESCO Chair for Peace Education Master Conference. Readon's lecture focused on a distinct definition of these two terms and highlighted that Human Rights Learning, at its core, is the cultivation of ethical reflection and assessment for the exercise of social responsibility:[26]

"While education is too often the ingestion of lifeless subject matter through narrowly prescribed procedures, true learning is an organic, vibrant process through which we develop our human identities and social capacities. It cannot be bestowed. It must be generated. Human rights learning is a generative process. Education may plant seeds, but it is learning that cultivates the fruit of human and social potential. Learning is as essential to becoming fully human as breathing is to being alive. It is as essential as clean water and adequate food to a healthy society." [27]

This view bestows HRE with a holistic dimension: it identifies the ways in which HRE can cultivate transformative thinking. This highlights the important role that the learning process plays for HRE. Thus, Human Rights Learning by focusing on new approaches of teaching and learning methods goes beyond HRE and it's focus on the curricula. As such, Human Rights Learning can be seen as a process by which progressive awakening of individuals' awareness of their rights can be achieved. The goal of Human Rights Learning:

"The conscientization of the privileged to their implication in and responsibility for this systemic and structural violence, advocated above as the pedagogy of the privileged. The complement to that goal is the awakening of the vulnerable, not only to awareness of the structural foundations of their oppression but, also and especially, to consciousness of themselves as the subjects of rights they may claim on the basis of universal human dignity, the core principle and foundation of all realms of human rights." [28]

This extract represents a prime example of how education - and the actual process of learning in this case - can contribute to social justice. By rising awareness about the crucial relation between the privileges of some and the oppression of others, human rights learning cultivate ethical reflection and foster the exercise of social responsibility. Political action and awareness of civic responsibility are required to overcome structural vulnerability and violence. Thus, the transformative politics and thinking inherent in HRE are to be achieved through - what has been defined as - Human Rights Learning and Democratic Active Citizenship. By saying this, HRE can instil a vision of a just world, of ethical relations among individuals and communities, essential to overcome violence and balance the power structures. It builds a culture of respect for diversity and equality and is vital in the transmission of core values of social justice and human dignity.

4. Implementing Human Rights Education

The plethora of international resolutions and recommendations promulgated by the UNHRC and Council of Europe, provide instructions on methods by which the international community should implement HRE at national level. As such, the Encyclopaedia of Peace Education (2008) states:

"In 2005, with the conclusion of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights launched an ongoing and more focused Plan of Action World Program for Human Rights Education which promises to elicit improved cooperation from governments, as well as cross-cutting support from UN bodies." [29]

The World Programme for Human Rights Education established on 1 January 2005 aims to ensure human rights education remains a priority in the international community and provides a framework for promoting and implementing HRE beyond the decade. The World Programme began on 1 January 2005 and is structured in consecutive phases.[30] In addition, a collaborative project between the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education and UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional

26 Readon, B. 'Human Rights Learning: Pedagogies and Politics of Peace' (2009, p.13).
27 Ibid., p.23.
28 Ibid., p.20.
29 Bajaj, M. Encyclopaedia of Peace Education (2008, p. 101).

30 UNESCO, General Principles of implementing HRE, Available at: http://www.unescobkk.org/index.php?id=3419&type=98

Bureau for Education prepared an accessible toolkit for governments called *'Manual on Rights-Based Education: Global Human Rights Requirements Made Simple'.* The author of the manual, Katarina Tomasevski, indicated that governmental legal obligations under the various international treaties on human rights *"can be summarized according to the following four-fold schema: to make education available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable.*[31] The four (A) show how rights-based education can be put into operation and can be further explicated as follows:

1. *"**Availability:** That primary education is to be free and compulsory (...).The core principle underpinning this assertion is that there is a close correlation between low levels of education and poverty, both individual and societal."*

2. *"**Accessibility:** In terms of access to education, the Dakar Framework for Action emphasizes the elimination of all forms of discrimination, and prioritizes the excluded, vulnerable, marginalized and/or disadvantaged children."*

3. *"**Acceptability:** The obligation for developing indicators of quality and enforcing standards falls on the governments, with assistance available from regional and international bodies and NGOs. Acceptable standards of education are essential for achieving equality of access and elimination of discrimination in schools."*

4. *"**Adaptability:** Another result of infusing education with a human rights perspective is that school systems must necessarily adapt to the various needs of individual students (...). International human rights treaties very carefully lay out the means by which states can develop strategies to work towards these ends."*[32]

As a result, HRE not only can be integrated to existing school curricula (as part of civic education), but it can also be found in arts programmes, non-formal clubs and special events occurring in school settings. However, more can be said about the incorporation of HRE in both formal and non-formal educational frameworks. Indeed HRE can be integrated within a wide range of educational settings, such as training programmes for public bodies, policy departments and other service providers or among the civic society in general. In addition, it can be integrated as part of community developments programmes and in raising public awareness campaigns. Thus, it can be inferred that HRE does not only imply adding a subject on school curricula, but it entails a larger and more significant change in formal and non-formal education practices and approaches.

"The United Nations systems as well as other multilateral organisations are urged to increase considerably the resources allocated to programmes aiming at the establishment and strengthening of national legislation, national institutions and related infrastructures which uphold the rule of law and democracy, electoral assistance, human rights awareness through training, teaching and education, popular participation and civil society". [33]

States are called upon to increase attention to HRE for the constructive role it plays in the promotion and protection of human rights. As the Economic and Social Council affirms in the 25 May 2005 General Assembly:

"Through human rights learning communities can better equip themselves to evolve strategies for development which are sensitive to human rights. It is the deficit in human rights learning that creates a gap between what is professed and what is practiced." [34]

States' duties to implement HRE (and learning) and the striving toward a more inclusive society can be summarized as follows:

"When human rights-based work is framed as efforts to universalize respect for human dignity, it provides an alternative way to link local, national, and global efforts but also takes human rights into areas formerly involving only state actors. (...) A human rights framework provides a tool to make this shift inclusive of those who are marginalised and excluded from the social, political, and economic rewards of participating in society. Human rights, then, becomes a means to extend individual and social agency." [35]

There are structures available to support Member States in the implementation of HRE. For example, the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights and the UNESCO have devised a World Programme for Human Rights

31 Tomasevski, K. Manual on Rights-Based Education: Global Human Rights Requirements Made Simple (2004, p iii.).
32 Ibid., p iii-vii.
33 Gearon, L. The Human Rights Handbook a global perspective for education (2003, p. 158).
34 (E/2005/NGO/21).
35 Shultz, L. Educating for Human Rights and Global Citizenship (2008, p. 134).

Education (First Phase) by putting together a Plan of Action (2006) (57 pages booklet) which highlight the significance of HRE, defines its values and provides the list of stages for its implementation. Whilst not being the sole instrument available to Member states for the implementation of HRE, the Plan of Action can be defined as an approachable and easy to use source. It envisages HRE as promoting a holistic, rights-based approach; it also identifies five key components for success:

1. Educational policies - understood as statements of commitment on the part of a Government, which should explicitly promote a rights-based approach to education.

2. Policy implementation - the effective policies need a consistent implementation strategy. Such a strategy should take into account the multiplicity of stakeholders at both the national level (e.g., ministry of education, teacher training institutions, research bodies, non-governmental organizations) and the local level.

3. The learning environment. - Human Rights education strives towards an environment where human rights are practiced and lived in the daily life

4. Teaching and learning - introducing or improving human rights education requires a holistic approach to teaching and learning that reflects human rights values.

5. Education and professional development of school personnel - this must foster educators' knowledge about, commitment to and motivation for human rights [36]

The Plan of Action encourages Member States to undertake the minimum action during the first phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme. These include the following:

(a) An analysis of the current situation of human rights education in the school system (stage 1);
(b) Setting of priorities and the development of the national implementation strategy (stage 2);
(c) The initial implementation of planned activities.[37]

In addition, the United Nations ensured a significant support to Member States in the national implementation strategies which go beyond formal educational settings, to reach the broader civic life. Therefore, the existing support mechanism established by international cooperation between the United Nations system and other international and regional intergovernmental organizations, organizations of ministers

of education, non-governmental organizations and financial institutions, provide the support by collaborative work ranges from assistance in the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of the implementation strategy, the facilitation of information-sharing at all levels and the dissemination of good practice; to encouraging the development of human rights education networks and, finally, by supporting training and research. The close collaboration of these parties is crucial to maximize resources and maintain coherence.

5. Human Rights Education: the Role of NGOs

The UNESCO and UNHRC's directions for implementation are quite clear about *'Who should be involved?'* in the process of implementing HRE. The main actors identified by UNESCO and UNHRC besides educational policy units, are:

teacher training institutions,
national human rights institutions,
teachers' associations,
non-governmental organizations,
parents' and students' associations.[38]

This legitimizes the involvement of other actors and fosters a more participatory role of the community and the broader civic society in implementing and adopting HRE. Whilst encouraging a bottom-up approach it also allows for other bodies to monitor the policy development initiated by ministries of education.

5.1 NGOs and HRE

The role of non-governmental organizations is crucial for the development of HRE; in fact more forcefully than the direction prescribed by the Plan of Action, the UN General Assembly 62/171 (20 March 2008) acknowledges that:

"Non-governmental organizations play an important role at the national, regional and international levels in the promotion and protection of human rights through education and learning."[39]

Along the same lines, the UN General Assembly A/RES/63/173 (20 March 2009) acknowledges that:

Civil society, academia, the private sector, where appropriate,

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36 Plan of Action (2006, p. 3-4).
37 Plan of Action for the first phase (2005-2009) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (A/59/525/Rev.1) point 27

38 Ibid., p. 25.
39 (GA 62/171).

and parliamentarians can play an important role at the national, regional and international levels in the promotion and protection of human rights, including in the development of ways and means to promote and implement learning about human rights as a way of life at the community level.[40]

The above can be considered as recommendations for governments and civic society to approach, foster and develop a rights-based culture. These international resolutions are not isolated, but figure among a plethora of similar instruments. That is to say that the development of HRE is not simply a series of policies to be implemented, but a significant change in the way (formal and non formal) education, teaching and learning are to be approached.

Based on directives from the Plan of Action Amnesty International has launched a series of initiatives to foster the development of HRE at supranational level and to provide guidance and support in its most immediate implementation. Among its activities, we can single out the following:

1. The Rights Education Action Programme (REAP), a 10 year-long international human rights education initiative led by Amnesty International Norway[41]

2. Human Rights Education Network, a global human rights education network comprised of over 120 members carrying out human rights education in over 70 countries;

3. Schools Project called 'Human Rights Friendly Project' aims to promote a culture of human rights in schools through supporting school communities to integrate human rights values and principles into key areas of school life, and to demonstrate the global impact of a human rights friendly schools approach.[42]

6. The case of Scotland

6.1 Scottish Government, Education Department

Based on the General Assembly's resolution 59/113 (10 December 2004), the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing) to advance the implementation of human rights education programmes in all sectors. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) provides global

coordination of the assessment on the progress towards the implementation of the World Programme in several countries. A most recent enquiry carried out in several Member States by the OHCR offers specific and useful insights into the Scottish situation. Whilst an official reply by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is not yet available, based on the Scottish Government's completed questionnaire prepared by OHCHR, it becomes apparent that the HRE agenda has still a way to go here in Scotland.

According to Scottish Government's completed questionnaire,[43] Scotland has no national strategy that implements human rights education policy objectives. However, the strategy is currently developed by the Scottish Human Rights Commission. The Scottish Government indicated that *"Human Rights Education is part of citizen education which is identified as an important cross- curricular theme within Curriculum for Excellence, the new curriculum in Scotland".* This seems a promising position, however, given the abundance of guidelines and timelines provided internationally to implement HRE, this status quo appears far behind the scheduled plan. According to the questionnaire, question 33, which more explicitly aims at investigating actual progress and compliance of governments to the World Programme, asks to *"indicate any actions undertaken by your country to ensure that the World Programme is known amongst (1) education official, (2) teachers (3) young people."* By answering this question, the Scottish Government plainly states that: *"in implementing the new curriculum and highlighting the importance of responsible citizenship there has not been an explicit focus on the World Programme".* On a similar note, the Scottish Government does not produce any guidelines for writing or rewriting textbooks that reflects human right principles.[44] Though it might highlight a mere lack of information in this respect, it might also be a symptom of a broader deficiency in addressing HRE as per international regulations.

The policy measures proposed by the 2006 Plan of Action are clear about the fact that national curriculum should be designed "specifically for human rights education, setting out concepts and goals, teaching and learning objectives and

40 (A/RES/63/173).
41 Amnesty International, Rights Education Action Programme (REAP), Available at: http://www. amnesty.org/en/human-rights-education/projects-initiatives/reap
42 Amnesty International, Human Rights Friendly School Project, Available at: http://www.amnesty. org/en/human-rights-education/projects-initiatives/rfsp
43 Question 12 of the questionnaire
44 Questions 14 and 15 of the questionnaire

approaches'; and that *"the status of human rights education [should be defined] within the curriculum, according to the school level, and possibly as obligatory or optional, subject-based and/or cross-curricular (whereby human rights are included in all curriculum subjects)".*[45] There is more work to be done before HRE can fully acquire a status on national curricula, despite the fact that a number of recommendations and policies seem to be aiming at the development of HRE in formal educational settings within the Scottish context. Further, the holistic approach - so much invoked by international recommendations and scholarly literature - entails far more than the provisions initiated to date.

6.2 Formal Education

In March 2010, the Cabinet Secretary for Education, Mr Mike Russell, made the following statement:

> *In order for Scotland and its people to succeed and flourish in the globalised 21st century in which we live, we must all become and live as global citizens.*[46]

The concept of global citizenship is firmly embedded across the Curriculum for Excellence, which is the national curriculum for Scottish Schools for learners from age 3 to 18. As such, the concept of global citizenship aims to bring together education for citizenship, international education and sustainable development education. One of the key principles of developing global citizenship education within the Curriculum is to develop learners' understanding of equality and human rights issues and make links to rights and responsibilities locally, nationally and globally.[47]

Human Rights Education in Scotland is vigorously heralded and supported by Amnesty International. Amnesty produces a range of human rights education resources, linked to the Curriculum for Excellence, to help teachers in Scotland bring human rights into the classroom. For instance, Amnesty's new Human Rights and Curriculum For Excellence leaflet provides details of all Primary and Secondary classroom resources that have been tailored to the new Curriculum for Excellence in Scotland. These resources are suitable for teaching under Health & Wellbeing, Expressive Arts, Religious & Moral Education and Social Sciences, and focus on a range of issues, including

China, child soldiers, modern slavery and poverty. Many are also suitable for teaching across subjects. Amnesty has also provided a free cross-curricular training day on teaching human rights; and, in collaboration with the Scottish Human Rights Commission and others, is planning to host new human rights training events for Scottish teachers, to better equip them to teach human rights issues in the classroom, a key requirement of the Curriculum for Excellence.[48]

Still in the sphere of formal education, Education Scotland, formally Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS), also promotes a rights-based approach and provides significant support to educational units for teaching human rights and active citizenship. Drawing from the valuable resource and tool-kit centre of the UN, Education Scotland offers a wide range of downloadable material to teach human rights topic in schools.

25% of schools in Scotland are now actively involved in working towards UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA)[49] which promotes an active understanding of the UNCRC, and Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People (SCCYP) has recently completed a major consultation with children and young people regarding the UNCRC.[50]

The other organisation committed to Global Citizenship is Oxfam. The 'Oxfam in Scotland Manifesto' (2007) states that Education for Global Citizenship *"gives children and young people the opportunity to develop critical thinking about complex global issues in schools. The aim is to help children make informed choices as to how they exercise their own rights and their responsibilities to others".*[51] As a result, Oxfam Scotland and 'Roars not Whispers' organised an Active Global Citizenship conference for young people to learn more about global poverty and the human impacts of climate change through peer education.

Finally, the UN Association of the UK (UNA-UK) is the UK's leading source of independent information and analysis on the United Nations, and a UK-wide grassroots movement. UNA-UK has played a leading role in strengthening the citizenship curriculum; in 2008, the year the Universal Declaration of Human Rights turned 60, UNA-UK sent every secondary school in the UK its 'UDHR60' human rights teaching handbook.

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45 Plan of Action (2006, p. 38).
46 Mike Russell, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Parliamentary Debate March 2010
47 Learning and Teaching Scotland (2011), Developing global citizens within Curriculum for Excellence, Available at: http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/Images/DevelopingGlobalCitizens_tcm4-628187.pdf

48 Amnesty International, Teaching Resources for Scotland, Available at: http://www.amnesty.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=10420
49 http://www.sccyp.org.uk/news/commisonersarticle
50 Amnesty International, Teaching Resources for Scotland, Available at: http://www.amnesty.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=10420
51 Oxfam, Oxfam Education, available at: www.oxfam.org.uk/education/policy/scotland/

This year, UNA-UK works in collaboration with the UK National Commission for UNESCO to develop a teaching pack on the UN.[52]

6.3 Non-Formal Education

Even though schooling have a consensual role in promoting human rights it should be underlined that students learning does not only occur in formal education and it involves experiences that take place in many other social contexts and institutions. Therefore, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can play significant roles in providing HRE through non-formal and informal education that complement schools' provision. Therefore, the potential of NGOs lays in their capacity *"to act as bridges, facilitators, brokers and translators, linking together the institutions, interventions, capacities and levels of actions that are required to lever broader structural changes."*[53]

Concerning non-formal educational settings, the International Development Education Association of Scotland (IDEAS) is to be included in the picture. IDEAS is a network of organisations and individuals involved in Development Education and Education for Global Citizenship across Scotland, at both school and community levels. This is done by: *"raising awareness of global concerns and illustrating the potential for change, the IDEAS network aims to influence those in all sectors of formal and informal education and life long learning including teachers, policy makers, youth and adult education workers and a range of voluntary and statutory organisations".*[54] IDEAS works in local community settings delivering and supporting education for global citizenship. It offers a range of services, such as: projects and workshops with community groups, community led courses and initiatives, workshops for youth groups, training for community educators, youth workers, students and voluntary sector staff. Members of the IDEAS network also provide training for teachers and student teachers.

In addition, the Scottish Human Rights Commission promotes and protects the human rights of everyone in Scotland by raising awareness and understanding of human rights among public, private and voluntary groups. The SHRC is currently working to increase awareness, recognition and respect for human rights, and make them more relevant and easier to apply in everyday life. Indeed, the Commission is developing training tools to support public, private and voluntary bodies who want to integrate human rights into their work.[55]

6.4 Addressing the Gaps

Whilst the above aimed at presenting the case of Scotland in relation to Human Rights Education and Learning, it offered a brief overview of activities and actors present in Scotland. However, it cannot be considered as an exhaustive outline of statutory and non-statutory agencies involved with HRE, rather a starting point to take HRE further.

It is apparent that there exists a reasonable range of actors involved with HRE and EDC in formal learning. The Scottish Government, Learning Directorate, while addressing HRE and EDC at policy level may now wish to consider the international arena. In addition, Education Scotland and Oxfam Scotland, though providing an excellent support to schools and other educational establishments, focus mainly on formal education and address more significantly the aspect of citizenship education, rather than the broader and more inclusive HRE. Amnesty's important work aimed at formal education has achieved tremendous targets. However, there is anecdotal evidence from some teachers that they are discouraged from using Amnesty teaching materials by their Head teachers.

Amnesty International has accomplished significant results in terms of HRE in non-formal educational settings at international level, and developed valuable materials for good practice[56]; however, such programmes have not occurred or involved Scotland.

While UNESCO and UNA-UK provide a valid support for schools to both teachers and pupils, once more, they mainly address education in formal contexts. IDEAS' commitment to providing training to both the community and education settings is to be acknowledged as a main actor; however, it must be noted, that its focus is principally global citizenship. SHRC's plans to develop training seem to address Human Rights more broadly. Indeed the human rights based approach which the

52 United Nation, Association for the UK, Available at: www.una.org.uk/education/index.html
53 Edwards M., Fowler A., NGO Management, Earthscan, 2002, pp 8-9.
54 The International Development Education Association of Scotland (IDEAS), Available at: http://www.ideas-forum.org.uk/sector/schools/news/1295
55 Scottish Human Right Commission, Education, Available at: http://www.scottishhumanrights.com/ourresources/education

56 Amnesty International, Human Right Education in Non-formal setting. Lesson learned from the Right Education Action Programme, Available: www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/POL32/001/2010/en

Commission invokes should emphasise the importance of the empowerment and participation of people affected by decisions to claim their rights, and the accountability of those responsible for human rights.[57]

As a result, it can be observed that HRE in non formal settings is significantly overlooked: there is no statutory or non-statutory agency, or NGO which is committed to fostering and promoting HRE in non-formal educational settings. There exist no provisions which at present offer training programmes for professionals, community developments programmes, training practices for public bodies, policy departments and service providers. Further, there is a significant lack in nurturing HRE and EDC among the wider civic society.

According to the recent consultation process commissioned by BEMIS[58] it was evident that high numbers of participants misunderstood or could not define the concept of human rights and democratic active citizenship. As a result, many participants were not able to engage with discussion about the place of human rights in Scottish context. This shows that still, there is a limited engagement with areas of human rights and citizenship and there is a need to raise awareness of human right issue and citizenship.

7. BEMIS: Finding Ways Forward

The brief mapping of the Scottish context provides clear indications that more work can be done in relation to Human Rights Education. Scotland finds itself in an excellent position to foster Human Rights Education forward. A small country characterized by cultural and ethnic diversity, with a thriving third sector, and extremely positive achievements in terms of equality is well equipped for this innovative approach. The Equality Act 2010 marks a new era for equality and diversity, now more than ever, a holistic approach to human rights is needed. The equality act has laid the foundations for a cultural shift in conceiving equality and diversity. Thus, this is an opportunity to be seized. Further, the recent Scottish elections represent yet another turning point for Scotland. The new parliament could embrace the concept of Human Rights Education and embed it in its approach to governance. A Human Rights based approach constitutes the essence of social inclusion, participation and equality.

BEMIS has recognized the crucial importance of Human Rights Education and has embedded it in its approach to equality, in its activities at both community and strategic levels. BEMIS is part of the European network DARE, (Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe) - among others - and is key within DARE as a member of its Board. Thanks to its involvement at European level, BEMIS is aware of the ways in which HRE is being approached and fostered internationally. BEMIS is dedicated to promoting HRE at multiple levels. It has initiated dialogues with UNESCO (at Scottish level as well as at Headquarters) in order to take further - on Scottish grounds - UNESCO's commitment to support and advance Human Rights Education internationally. Further, BEMIS seeks to engage with educational units, policy departments, statutory governmental bodies and other NGOs to foster HRE in Scotland.

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57 See Footnote n. 44.
58 Report prepared for BEMIS by Kamenou, N. (2010), Final report from feasibility study: Is there a need for a 'Scottish Institute of Race Equality and Human Rights Education? Finding from the consultations in Scotland

In addition, to date Bemis has already initiated, realized and promoted a number of activities concerning HRE across Scotland. BEMIS's close links with Glasgow University's interdisciplinary network GRAMnet (Glasgow Refugee, Asylum and Migration Network), have allowed a number of collaborative research activities and projects. Among these, is an initiative vis-à-vis Human Rights Education: BEMIS and GRAMNet have joined forces to launch a series of films within 2010-11 pertaining to social justice and equality. Each film marks an important international observance and is introduced to the audience by an expert scholar in the field. From local to global productions, the film series brings to the heart of Glasgow a space where the community can engage with significant issues pertaining to human rights. This initiative seeks to develop a language of equality in Scotland by adopting the visual arts as a means to engage with the community and as a way to nurture core values of dignity and respect for diversity. This film series has had incredible success throughout the season and attracted a diverse audience. The series 2011-2012 is already under way with an even more exciting programme and a closer focus on localism.

In recognizing the importance of collaboration and a multi-agency approach, BEMIS has taken a lead in organizing a national conference on Human Rights Education in partnership with Education Scotland, IDEAS and Amnesty International and with the support of key national and international stakeholders such as SCCYP and UNESCO. This conference, which will be held on 27th of October 2011 in Glasgow City Chambers, represents an opportunity to officially inaugurate Human Rights Education in Scotland. Open to members of the third and public sector, civic societies, educators, this event seeks to offer a broad presentation of Human Rights Education and its multifarious applicability in diverse contexts: formal and informal education, public services, etc. The joining of forces that BEMIS has

initiated is a clear sign of the necessity and urgency to properly address Human Rights Education. The EU strategy 2020 clearly sets out the aim of deploying a Human Rights based approach, and this is a good time for Scotland to contribute to European developments.

BEMIS is thoroughly committed to developing, promoting and progressing a culture of diversity, and to fostering an inclusive society in a multicultural Scotland. BEMIS acknowledges the tremendous significance that HRE plays in building a more equal society and in instilling core values of diversity and human dignity. The Scottish scene features a number of actors involved in promoting and fostering HRE and EDC, however, there exists a lack of cohesion and coherence in the approach. Further, there are gaps in the ways HRE and EDC are being addressed; aspects of HRE are not being fostered in the civil society in an effective and inclusive manner.

BEMIS wishes to outline the following recommendations:

The Scottish Government focuses mainly on formal Education in relation to HRE. BEMIS, along with other NGOs, can support and pair the government's efforts toward a more holistic approach to HRE and EDC, such as promoting non-formal education.

A more coordinated approach to HRE and EDC in Scotland is required

Rationalize and allocate areas of intervention within the Scottish context, to optimize the promotion of HRE at all levels and in all settings.

Engage more significantly with European actors in relation to HRE to ensure that Scotland plays a key role in the promotion of a Human Rights culture.

All the above require a commitment to HRE and a striving toward a more inclusive, more equal, multicultural Scotland. The economic crisis is a human rights crisis involving large-scale structural violence against the

vulnerable, a consequence of the ethical failures of the powerful and the privileged who support them. As the ethical failures of societies impact the current crisis - whereby the economic downfall is simply a symptom of a greater collapse of our human rights ethos - Human Rights Education can pave the way toward global justice. Scotland can accomplish a more Inclusive Growth, as the EU Strategy 2020 invokes, by reinvigorating a human rights ethos. Human Rights Education - if vigorously fostered - brings about a cultural shift in approaching equality and social justice, and restores a much needed culture of ethics.

BEMIS has the capacity to support Scotland in its progress toward an inclusive society by pairing the government's efforts with training and raising awareness activities on the significance, values and potentials of HRE. Member States are indeed demanded to "Recognize, accredit and support NGOs and other sectors of civil society carrying out training activities in human rights education". BEMIS believes that only a significant and robust cooperation between Scottish NGOs, civil society and other statutory governmental agencies can allow for a successful implementation and promotion of HRE in Scotland.

This is a call for civic society, for Scottish government, public and third sector to reconsider understandings of HRE and to embrace its values. Thus, we elicit comments, responses, criticisms and views on this concept and its applications.

If you want to know more about this, if you wish to be involved more actively with HRE in Scotland, if you want to share your thoughts, please write to us and/or check out our Facebook page under 'Human Rights Education and Active Citizenship in Scotland'. We look forward to hearing from you!

8. Recommendation:

- ☐ **Human Rights Education should be explicit within Curriculum for Excellence and extended beyond formal education so that it can be rooted and linked to people's real lives, for example empowerment in the workplace, community education, family and peer learning. Human Rights Education should be seen as a Lifelong Learning process that creates a human rights culture in society in Scotland.**

- ☐ **Citizenship skills are a basic need of any democratic, cohesive and economically strong society. Thus it is imperative that the focus of policy measures be on people and their opportunities to participate in life long learning and across all aspects of social, cultural and economic life. We believed that NGO's can play a role of facilitator, enabling partnership work between grassroots communities, educators and policy makers.**

- ☐ **There is a need for further training programmes, training practices that engage with human right issue. NGO's can provide a platform, beyond education in school, for human rights and democratic active citizenship debate.**

- ☐ **Students learning process does not only occur in formal education and it involves experiences that take place in many other social contexts and institutions. Therefore, there is a need for greater engagement and development of non formal education. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can play significant roles in providing HRE through non-formal and informal education that complement schools' provision.**

- ☐ **Non formal education needs to come from the bottom up as opposed to the top down, therefore there is a need for collaborative working and partnership with a range of professional educators, policy makers, service provides as well as NGO's. This should include joint training and resource development.**

If you would like more information on Human Rights Education please contact BEMIS.

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HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION: THEORY AND PRACTICES

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