

Philippine Commission on Human Rights: More than Two Decades of Promoting Human Rights in Schools

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After the fall of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986, the succeeding government established the Presidential Committee on Human Rights whose “primary task [was] to assist the President in the discharge of her duty to respect and foster human rights.”² But the work of the Committee was cut short in 1987 with the ratification of the new Philippine Constitution that provided for the establishment of the Commission on Human Rights. The Commission on Human Rights absorbed the powers and functions of the Committee.³

Original Blueprint for Action

The 1987 Constitution provides the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines (CHRP) with the power to establish “a continuing program of research, education, and information to enhance respect for the primacy of human rights” and to recommend to the legislative body “effective measures to promote human rights.”⁴

The 1987 Philippine Constitution also requires all educational institutions to instill respect for human rights (Article 14, Section 3).

The CHRP adopted in 1988 the Short-Term Human Rights Education Program Plan (Plan) to carry out its constitutional mandate, based on the author’s 1987 blueprint for action document.

The Plan defined the CHRP philosophy, vision, mission, goal and objectives in the promotion of human rights; the program concept;

the content of the human rights education program; and its financing scheme. It provides that

[T]he promotion of human rights is not limited to the civil and political rights but also covers the economic, social and cultural rights. Thus, the term “human rights” refers to the whole body of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights enshrined in the Constitution of the Philippines and in the international instruments which are binding [on] the Philippines.⁵

CHRP envisions “a Philippine society that deeply values the dignity of every person and fully respects human rights.” The Plan, therefore, envisions to lay the groundwork for the continuous improvement of the human rights situation in the country and in raising the Philippine human rights standards by promoting the people’s rights through a continuing program of education, training and research.”⁶

To achieve this objective, CHRP has to

awaken in individuals, groups, peoples and governments:

- an awareness of the meaning, content, and value of human rights; how human rights are violated; how violations may be prevented or redressed; and how human rights might be enhanced; and,
- the will to respect and vindicate human rights.

Human rights education shall never make violations appear acceptable.⁷

For the initial years of Plan implementation, CHRP's human rights education program aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To inculcate respect for human rights by implementing a continuing program of education and training for all the sectors of Philippines society;
2. To establish a continuing program of development and prototyping of human rights education curricula, sectoral education programs/modules, instructional materials, methods and techniques of human rights teaching, and structured learning exercises on human rights;
3. To undertake a continuing program of development and production of multi-mediated education materials on human rights;
4. To undertake a continuing program of systematic collection and storage of information relevant to the protection and promotion of human rights in the Philippines and make them accessible to the public.⁸

Various strategies and plans were identified for each objective. The plans for Objectives 1 and 2, for example, were intended to reach the following target audiences:

- The employees of CHRP
- The members of the police, military, and para-military, and other law enforcers
- Academic circles
- Governmental authorities
- Contract workers and their employers
- Socio-civic and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

- Professional circles
- The mass media and other cultural gate-keepers
- The general public.⁹

The First Commission¹⁰ resolved to concentrate its work on members of the police and the military, the public servants, and the academic circles as the first three priority target audiences of CHRP. In short, CHRP's human rights education initiatives focused on the potential violators of human rights.

Figure 1 (opposite page) shows the diagram of the operations framework of CHRP in reaching out to its target audiences.

Human Rights Education and Training Program

CHRP subsequently adopted the Human Rights Education and Training Program (HRETP) in 1988. To implement the HRETP, the CHRP redefined its target audiences into two major categories – the potential violators and the potential victims; and identified the stakeholders in terms of relationships between the violators and the victims, their respective supporters and sympathizers, the do-gooders who were generally organized to provide human rights protection and promotion of human rights, and the general public.

The United Nations Decade

Acting on the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and the call for support for human rights education by the first United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, CHRP submitted in August 1994 to the High Commissioner its Recommended Plan of Action of the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines for the United Nations Decade of Human Rights Education.

Figure 1: Conceptgram of the CHRP HRE Operations Framework

CHANNEL OF PROMOTION EFFORTS	TARGET AUDIENCE	TARGET RESULTS
Print and broadcast Media	General Public	Human rights upheld, respected, promoted, defended, fulfilled
Non-government, civic and religious Organizations		
Department of Education, Culture and Sports		
Civil Service Commission	P2 Teachers, in-school youth and students	
Government organizations	P3 Civil servants, government employees, local government units	
Departments of Labor and Employment, Foreign Affairs, and Trade and Industry; Securities and Exchange Commission	Laborers, contract workers, employees, foreign government	
Professional Regulatory Commission	Professionals	
Department of Justice, Supreme Court, Philippine Judicial Academy	P1A Judges, prosecutors, investigators	
Philippine National Police, Armed Forces, Departments of National Defense and Interior and Local Governance, Police and military academies	P1B Police, paramilitary, military, law enforcers	
Peace Panel, Non-Government Organizations	Others	

Note: P refers to priority number

CHRP’s Decade Plan had the following objectives:

1. To achieve a 100% human rights literacy rate throughout the Philippines. Human rights literacy is defined as that level of knowledge where a person knows his/her basic civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental rights as well as the redress system for these rights.
2. To instill the values of human rights in the heart and mind of every Filipino citizen, particularly the youth.
3. To educate key sectors of the Philippine society on their sectoral rights.
4. To educate all law enforcers, prosecutors, judges, jail officers and the military on the rights of those who may be affected by their official actions.¹¹

Since this Decade Plan was not the national plan, CHRP in cooperation with the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and Amnesty International Pilipinas (AI) held consultative planning workshops during the last quarter of 1996 and drew out decade-long sectoral human rights education plans at the regional and national levels.

Representatives of government, NGOs, and the academe attended the consultative planning workshops held in all regions of the country. As the culminating activity, a national workshop of all regional delegates, human rights practitioners and advocates from both the private, non-government and government sectors was held at the Philippine Normal University in Manila on 3-5 February 1997 and produced twenty Sectoral Philippine Human Rights Education

Decade Plans. The sectors involved were: educators at the tertiary and basic education levels, children, youth, women, elderly, prisoners, detainees, refugees, indigenous peoples, Muslim population, peasants, laborers, overseas contract workers, urban poor, persons with disabilities (visually impaired persons, hearing impaired persons, mobility impaired persons, neurologically impaired persons, multiple impaired persons), members of the media, professionals, members of the police, law enforcers and the members of the military.

Each sectoral plan had its own statement of vision, mission, and objectives on human rights education, complementing the national statement of vision, mission and objectives.

At the end of the national workshop, the Human Rights Educators Association of the Philippines (HREAP) was organized to implement the new Decade Plan.

Presidential Proclamation 1139 (10 December 1997) adopted the Decade Plan as the Philippine Human Rights Education Decade Plan for 1998-2007 and created an inter-agency committee to ensure its implementation. The Presidential Proclamation also proclaimed 1998 as the Human Rights Year in the Philippines in celebration of the fiftieth year of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.¹²

The Philippine Human Rights Education Decade Plan for 1998-2007 has the following statements of vision, mission, and objectives:

VISION

We envision a Philippines in which every Filipino possesses and demonstrates human rights knowledge, values, attitudes, and skills which impel him/her to create and maintain a society governed and guided by the principles of social justice, democracy and participation, gender equality, sustainable development, spirituality, peace, and universality of human dignity.

MISSION

To evolve a human rights culture through the institutionalization of a continuing multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary human rights education program in the formal, non-formal and community-based sectors.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the Decade, the following objectives shall have been attained.

General Objective:

An organized, functional, effective and relevant Human Rights Education Program in formal, non-formal, and community-based sectors has been established.

Specific Objectives:

1. Enabling laws and other issuances to institutionalize HRE in the sectors identified;
2. Communication plan disseminating information about the HRE Decade Plan;
3. Regional and Municipal Human Rights Education Centers which will provide the needs of sectors on training, curriculum, research, instructional materials, pedagogy, evaluation and monitoring;
4. Integration of HRE plan with the regional and municipal development plans;
5. Databank and human rights information centers to service the information and documentation needs of the different sectors;
6. Adequate funds to ensure implementation of HRE Plan through government, non-government, local and international sources;
7. HRE as required component of national plans, programs implemented by government agencies and local government units;
8. A strong network of human rights education practitioners and agencies engaged in HRE to facilitate exchange of experiences, expertise, and resources;

- 9. A monitoring and evaluation system to assess projects implemented.

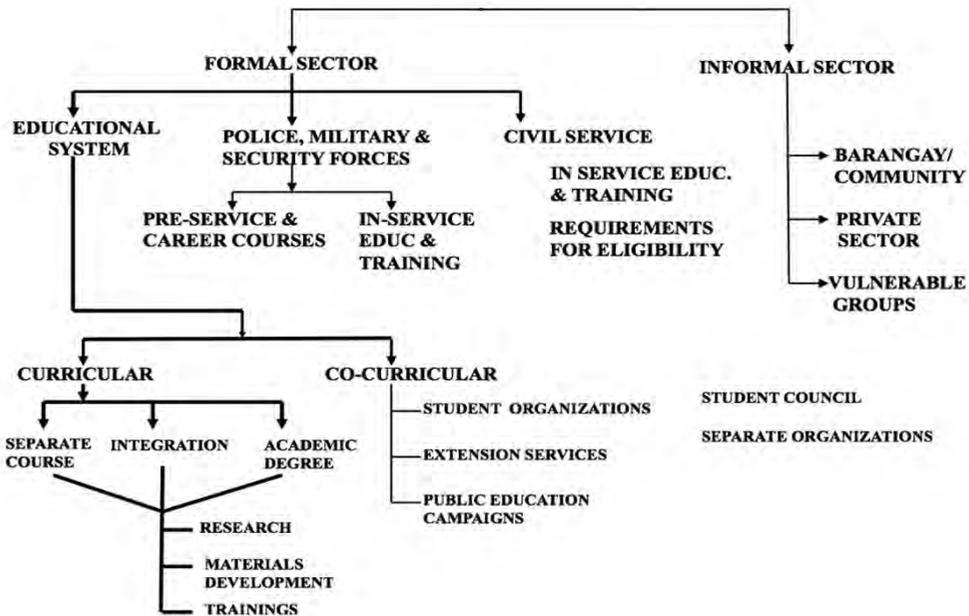
In the subsequent years, the government issued a number of presidential issuances relevant to human rights education:

- 1988 - Presidential Proclamation No. 177 - Declaring December 3-10 every year as the celebration of Human Rights Week.
- 1997 - Presidential Proclamation No. 1139 - Declaring 1998 as “Human Rights Year in the Philippines” and Years 1998-2007 as “Human Rights Education Decade in the Philippines.” It also established a National Inter-Agency Multi-Sectoral Committee composed of representatives of the public and private sectors with the task of formulating, establishing and implementing programs for human rights education throughout the country in close coordination with the Commission on Human Rights.
- 1998 - Four Unnumbered Presidential Memorandum Orders - issued in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary

Celebration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10 December 1998), directing all Department Secretaries, Heads of Agencies and Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations to integrate peace and human rights concepts in their training and education programs to help the people internalize these virtues and serve as deterrent to possible abuses and exploitation. It further directed the government offices to encourage the private sector to undertake similar training and education activities.

Figure 2 illustrates the extent of implementation of the Philippine Human Rights Education Decade Plan for 1998-2007. Human rights education is already institutionalized in the Philippine educational system, in the “pillars of justice” consisting of, among others, the police/law enforcers and military/security forces, and in the civil service as well as at the grassroots or barangays (villages), in the private sector, and among vulnerable groups.

Figure 2. Human Rights Education in the Philippines



Development of Human Rights Education in the School System

Mindful of the fact that many teachers have hierarchical way of thinking and have to decide on what and how to include human rights as a new subject in an old curriculum, an enabling policy environment to address the issue has to be in place.

Based on this author's recommendations, the 1986 Presidential Human Rights Committee adopted the definition of the minimum mandatory content of human rights education in schools as well as in the in-service education and training of the military, police and other arresting and investigating personnel; drafted twin executive orders on human rights education for the President's approval and issuance; lobbied the Constitutional Commission for a constitutional provision on mandatory human rights education; and, met the Ministry of Education high officials to request for the inclusion of human rights into the curriculums of all school levels.

The government adopted the Committee recommendations through Executive Order No. 27 entitled *Education to Maximize Respect for Human Rights* (4 July 1986) that

- Required the then Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports to include the study and understanding of human rights in the curriculums of all levels of education and training in all schools in the country, adapting the scope and treatment of the subjects or courses on human rights to the respective educational levels, and maintaining regular programs and special projects to provide venues for information and discussion of human rights including the utilization of informal education and other means to stress the importance of respect for human rights; and,
- Ordered the Civil Service Commission to include human rights as content of the qualifying examinations for government service.

The Ministry of Education (later renamed Department of Education, Culture and Sports or DECS) issued a series of administrative orders supporting human rights education:

- 1987 - DECS Memorandum Order No. 61 - Inclusion of the Study of Human Rights and Accompanying Responsibilities in the School Curricula. The memorandum ordered all schools at all levels, including non-formal education, technical and vocational education programs, to include in their curriculums the study of human rights as well as the responsibilities that accompany them.
- 1990 - DECS Memorandum Order No. 180 - Informing the Undersecretaries of Education, Bureau Directors, Regional Directors and Presidents of State Universities on the launching of prototype materials for the integration of human rights concepts in teacher education courses. It also instructed these institutions to convene all the deans/heads of colleges of education for orientation on the use of the said prototype materials on human rights education.

The Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED) also issued in 1996 Memorandum Order No. 31 directing all higher education institutions to initiate human rights education and training projects including the integration of human rights concepts in all their curricular offerings.

Inter-agency Cooperation

CHRP monitors the Philippine government's compliance with all international treaty obligations on human rights education in the spirit of partnership, co-operation, and dialogue. It has a policy of supporting government institutions in establishing a continuing program of research, education and information

dissemination on human rights. It provides advisory service and technical assistance to enable and mobilize the government institutions into carrying out their human rights education programs.

CHRP signed memorandums of agreement with the educational agencies of the government that were subsequently translated into the following programs, projects and activities:

- 1992 - Joint Declaration of Undertaking between the Commission on Human Rights and the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) signed on 10 December 1992. This declaration formalized the partnership between CHRP and DECS that had been going on since 1987. Under this declaration, the two agencies committed to jointly implement the following:
 1. Curriculum Development - continuous integration of human rights and responsibilities across the three levels of formal education (primary, secondary, tertiary) and also in non-formal education.
 2. Training and Capability Building - seminar-workshops for various school levels to identify problems/solutions in undertaking human rights education; regular refresher courses for teachers, regional and national conferences on teaching human rights.
 3. Monitoring, Research and Evaluation – regular update, research and development of the human rights instructional materials; information campaign through sensitivity trainings and consciousness-raising activities directed at the education community.
- 1996 - Memorandum of Agreement between the Commission on Human Rights, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Commission on Higher Education and the Amnesty International Pilipinas signed on 8 May

1996 in response to the United Nation's Decade of Human Rights Education. This agreement led to the preparation of a national action plan on human rights education (discussed earlier) that was formally declared as the *Philippine Human Rights Education Decade Plan for 1998-2007*.

Development of Human Rights Teaching Exemplars

The Academic Sector's Plan in the Philippine Human Rights Education Decade Plan for 1998-2007 restated the provisions of the 1992 Joint Declaration of Undertaking between CHRP and DECS. One major provision was curriculum development on human rights.

Although started in 1987 as part of the DECS Values Education Program, a more serious and intensified curriculum development on human rights was undertaken during the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education period (1995-2004) by producing prototype lesson plans for each subject and for each grade or year level of the basic school education. The first edition of the *Teaching Exemplars on Human Rights Education* was developed from 1997 to 1998.

One hundred one human rights teaching exemplars were developed with appropriate entry points and opportunities in all subjects within the prescribed curriculum. Mindful of the classroom teachers who only teach those prescribed in the curriculum and those teaching requirements on which they are evaluated, the exemplars were crafted in complete harmony with the schools' desired learning competencies. Thus, the teaching of human rights was integrated in all subjects either as content-based instructions (CBIs) or as stand-alone sessions on human rights.

The teaching exemplars principally used the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Philippine Constitution as bases of human rights concepts and messages (or content for teaching).

The preparation of the first edition of the teaching exemplars involved the following process:

- March to April 1997 Writing Workshop to develop human rights teaching exemplars with writers coming from the CHRP, DECS, public and private schools, non-governmental organizations, and the media. A total of two hundred fifty teaching exemplars were written with an average of twelve teaching exemplars per grade/year level.
- June to September 1997 - field-testing of the two hundred fifty teaching exemplars in fifty-four participating try-out schools nationwide. The teaching exemplars were revised based on the results of the field tests. A final set of one hundred one teaching exemplars being published as *HRE Teaching Exemplars for Elementary and High School Education* in 1998 as the first trial edition.
- 1998 - copies of the *HRE Teaching Exemplars for Elementary and High School Education* were distributed in the different regions of the country for pilot-testing. This was accompanied by a series of orientation workshops for primary and secondary school principals held jointly by CHRP and DECS.
- 1999 onward – the teaching exemplars started to be used in schools in different parts of the country. An initial evaluation on the use of the teaching exemplars was held after this period.

As soon as the revised basic education curriculum was issued in 2001, CHRP and the Department of Education (also known as DepEd)¹³ organized workshops aimed at reconciling the teaching exemplars with the new curriculum. This led to the development of the

second edition of the teaching exemplars.

The teaching exemplars underwent major revisions and refinements by committed professionals from various institutions to suit the changing needs of formal education. As the teachers' guide in teaching of human rights, the revised teaching exemplars provided varied techniques and contents appropriate to the level of understanding of students. They provided learning opportunities for students to relate human rights concepts, values and principles to daily life activities at the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels.

During the 2001-2003 period, CHRP and DepEd held the following activities:

- Review of the Basic Education Curriculum
- Review of the *HRE Teaching Exemplars for Elementary and High School Education* (1st edition)
- Writing workshops on additional/new lesson plans for basic education
- Revision of the 1st edition of the teaching exemplars
- Pilot-testing in all regions of the country of all revised and additional lesson plans
- Rewriting/finalization workshops, and
- Preparation of all manuscripts for the second edition of the teaching exemplars.

By 2003 the CHRP and DepEd have produced three books -- the *Teaching Exemplars for Elementary Education on Human Rights*, *Teaching Exemplars for Elementary for High School Education on Human Rights*, and the *Facilitator's Manual on Human Rights Education*.

Teacher training

The results of the 1999 joint survey of the CHRP and the then Ministry of Education supported the need for the training of school-

teachers on human rights education. The survey showed low human rights awareness among the schoolteachers.

The development of the Facilitator’s Manual on Human Rights Education in 2003 boosted the teacher-training program of CHRP and the DepEd. The writers of the Facilitator’s Manual on Human Rights Education trained the national and regional facilitators/trainers of teachers on how to run a human rights training program using the manual. These teacher-facilitators/trainers in turn trained teachers in their respective areas on what and how to teach human rights at the classroom level using the manual.

Nationwide Implementation from School-Year 2004-2005

During the 2003 – 2004 period, CHRP and DepEd held a series of regional book launchings of the three publications along with a series of regional training of DepEd trainers. Principals and master teachers attended the book launches. During the 2004 – 2005 period, the graduates of the trainers training workshops held their school-wide in-service education and training (INSET) on human rights education, and the use of the revised teaching exemplars inside the classrooms commenced.

Table 1: Timeline on the Institutionalization of the Use of the Teaching Exemplars on Human Rights Education in Primary and Secondary Schools

2003	Launch of HR Exemplars		Training of Trainers	Participants (a)	INSET (b)
		Regions	Regions		
September	Printing		Printing		
October	2	Cluster Regions (Luzon, Visayas)	Region III	79	
November	1	Cluster Regions (Mindanao)	Region V	69	
December	+ Special National Launch cum Funders’ Forum				
2004					
January	1	Cluster Regions (Luzon)	Region VII	64	
February			Regions I & IV-B	88	
March			Region II & CAR	73	
April			Region IV-A	64	
May			Region VIII	49	
			Regions XIII & XI	88	
June			NCR	74	
			Region IX & ARMM	83	
July			Regions IX & X	93	
			Region VI	89	

Other Activities

In addition to the development of teaching materials and the training of teachers and school officials, CHRP also engaged the education agency on a number of activities that promote human rights since 1989. They organized a series of regional human rights forums called Children, Parents, and Educators Empowerment Program or CPEEP. It was held in all regions of the country during the 1998-1999 period with the participation of school supervisors and teachers, parents and Parents-Teachers Community Association (PTCA) officers, and leaders of student organizations. The participants pledged to spearhead human rights education and to practice human rights in the schools.

With UNICEF and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), CHRP and DepEd held a National Youth Forum on Peace and Human Rights in 2000 as a follow-through program to CPEEP. In this forum, peace education and advocacy component (in consonance with the celebration of

the International Year for the Culture of Peace) was also part of the agenda. The forum was a two-day annual gathering of student leaders, PTCA Presidents/Federation officers, school administrators/educators with the aim of getting reports on the extent of implementation of Human Rights Education Regional Action Plans of CPEEP graduates. This was implemented in three batches – in the three major parts of the country (Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao).

Another youth forum, the National Youth Forum on the Prevention of Child Abuse and Exploitation, was organized by CHRP and DepEd to a) discuss the issues relative to exploitation and abuses of children and youth, and generate commitment in the promotion of their rights and vigilance through action plans, vision for peace, and strategies/resolutions to prevent child abuse; b) instill awareness and appreciation of the comprehensive meaning of peace and human and child rights; and c) identify national and school-based program for the welfare of school children. CHRP and DepEd also held a series of youth forums all over the country

Table 2: CHRP-DepEd Activities (1989-1996)

Activity	Date
National Seminar-Workshop on Human Rights Education	29 July – 3 August 1989
DECS-CHR Consultation Workshop on the 1992 Joint Declaration of Undertaking (JDU) Implementation	2 March 1993
National Educators' Conference on Human Rights	17-21 May 1993
Seminar-Workshop on Children's Rights for DECS Supervisors and Principals	13-15 December 1993
Joint CHR-DECS Human Rights Week Celebration	1993
Nationwide On-the-Spot Painting/Drawing Contest in Elementary, Secondary and Tertiary Levels on Child's Rights	1994
Essay Writing Competition on Human Rights	1994
Human Rights Education: A Consultative Workshop	24-25 November 1994
Regional DECS Supervisors and Principals Trainers' Training Courses on Human Rights (3 batches)	July-October 1996

during the 1999-2002 period. Each forum had one hundred participants consisting of student leaders, principals and classroom teachers of Social Studies or Values Education.

Other CHRP and DepEd activities starting in 1989 are in the following table (Table 2).

The CHRP and DepEd are jointly developing a tool on evaluating textbooks prescribed in all public schools based on international human rights standards.

Impact of the CHRP's Human Rights Education Program

The general Philippine experience on human rights education has received recognition from the international community. In 1994, CHRP was awarded the 1994 UNESCO PRIZE for the Teaching of Human Rights. The citation noted CHRP's human rights education program for the police and the military establishment during the 1987-1994 period.

CHRP and DepEd jointly held with HURIGHTS OSAKA two workshops for Southeast Asian educators. The first workshop held in 2001 used the experience of CHRP and DepEd in holding writing workshops (writeshops) to develop human rights lesson plans for primary and secondary school levels. Educators from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines Vietnam, and Thailand participated in the seven-day writeshop. They produced lesson plans that were later on compiled as a Southeast Asian human rights education material.¹⁴ In 2005, a follow-up workshop was held for educators from the same countries plus Lao PDR and Timor Leste. The Southeast Asian human rights lesson plans have by then been translated into four Southeast Asian languages (Bahasa Indonesia, Bahasa Melayu, Khmer and Vietnamese).

Richard Claude, a visiting professor from University of Maryland, documented the Philippine human rights education experience and suggested to "export" such experience to other countries.¹⁵

CHRP's "human rights education model" has been one of the subjects dealt with by interns from various countries and in the information exchange program with various institutions abroad (including United Nations agencies).

Implementation Challenges¹⁶

The existence of human rights education policies and programs for the school system will hopefully lead to the creation of the human rights culture in the country. But there are still many challenges to face.

Misconceptions or wrong notions about human rights education still plague the minds of some school authorities. According to these myths, human rights education

1. Is anti-government
2. Makes teachers and students become "radical"
3. Is pro-communist
4. Undermines responsibility
5. Promotes pessimism or negativity
6. Is applicable only to adults
7. Is a form of cultural imperialism
8. Threatens good Filipino values
9. Makes one angry and sad
10. Promotes individualism.

These attitudinal problems and misconceptions on human rights education are further compounded by a general culture of hierarchy and seniority in the academe. Generally, teachers do not teach any "new" subject, topic or course if there is no directive, or if the school management appears to be unsupportive of the subject, or if tiresome bureaucratic procedures have to be followed in getting permission to teach human rights.

In implementing human rights education in the school system, teachers raise many issues and problems. Lack of logistical support for human rights education also discourages teachers to teach or to do research on human rights.

They ask: Do you think the curriculum can still manage to accommodate human rights? The very characteristics of the present curriculum being rigid and crowded with subjects appear to constitute a major problem, too.

School authorities and teachers alike perceive human rights to be the stuff of lawyers, and not within their teaching competence. And thus the question: Can non-lawyers teach human rights?

Some other issues on human rights education still remain:

1. Lack, if not absence, of human rights teachers in the classrooms
2. No government fund for training all teachers in the country on human rights
3. Unclear policy on whether human rights should simply be integrated in the current human rights-related subjects or be offered as a separate subject in the primary and secondary schools
4. Unclear policy on whether human rights should be offered as a major subject in social science courses, or as a three-unit elective at the tertiary level.

Conclusion

In mobilizing and helping DepEd and CHED to comply with all the legal mandates and international obligations on human rights education, and in ensuring genuine integration or infusion of human rights concepts in all school curriculums, the CHRP initiated a host of programs and projects with these state education agencies and later together with an NGO, the Amnesty International-Pilipinas in the school years 1998-1999 and 2004-2005.

It is possible that the human rights teaching exemplars that resulted from these programs and projects are actually not being used in

some schools for several reasons. It is very likely that the myths on human rights education still pervade the minds of some sectors in the school system. To erase these wrong notions on human rights education, a deep and wide awareness campaign within the academic community has to be undertaken. Another possible reason is that most schools are not able to get copies of the human rights teaching exemplars. Only around 5,000 copies of the human rights teaching exemplars were printed due to financial limitations and yet there were more than 500,000 public primary and secondary schools in the country.

On the other hand, the Philippine Human Rights Education Decade Plan for 1998-2007, a response to the United Nations Decade of Human Rights Education (1995-2004), still awaits assessment.

From these programs and projects, the CHRP, DepEd and CHED have to do more to fully realize the action plan for human rights education in the school system.

The main product of these programs and projects (primary and secondary school teaching exemplars and facilitators' manual) should be reprinted to provide a set for each of the more than 42,000 barangay primary schools. Each primary and secondary school should have a trained "champion of human rights education." Likewise, the central and regional offices of DepEd and CHED, together with their counterpart at the CHRP, must assign focal offices and/or persons who shall be trained to become "champion of human rights education" in schools.

In relation to the 2005-2009 first phase plan of action on the United Nations World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE), there is a need for the education agencies and CHRP to:

1. Create a working committee to design and work on specific actions for the WPHRE

2. Develop monitoring and evaluation scheme for the human rights education program for the academe by DepEd and CHR especially the In-Service Training for Teachers (INSET)
3. Develop human rights education advocacy plans to reach private primary and secondary schools
4. Explore possible collaboration on development/improvement of human rights indicators on the right to education
5. Develop an awareness survey and human rights education situation assessment
6. Undertake an impact study on the use of the human rights teaching exemplars
7. Tie-up with the Barangay Human Rights Action Center (BHRAC) program on the use of the exemplars
8. Adopt-a-school program to provide the schools with copies of exemplars
9. Appoint focal persons to have easier access/coordination among the partners
10. Reconstitute the inter-agency technical working group stipulated in the 1992 Joint Declaration of Undertaking of CHRP and DepEd
11. Reconstitute the National Multi-Sectoral Committee for Human Rights Education provided for in Presidential Proclamation 1139 to, among others, assess the extent of implementation of the Philippine Human Rights Education Decade Plan for 1998-2007.

Endnotes

¹ Director Ana Elzy E. Ofreño has been in charge of the human rights education program of the Philippines since the creation of the Commission on Human Rights in 1987.

² Executive Order Number 8 created the Presidential Committee on Human Rights on 16

March 1986, nineteen days after the establishment of the “revolutionary government” of Corazon C. Aquino.

³ Article 13, Section 17, paragraph 3 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution.

⁴ 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article XIII, Section 18 (5).

⁵ The Short-Term Human Rights Education Program Plan of the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines, 1988 (revised in 1990), p. 1.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., pages 2-3.

⁹ Ibid., pages 6-18.

¹⁰ The Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines is a collegial body of one Chairperson and four Commissioners. They are appointed for a term of seven years with no reappointment (1987 Philippine Constitution, Article 17, Section 3; and, Executive Order No. 163, as amended by Executive Order No. 163-A). The First Commission served for the period of 1987-1994, the Second Commission in 1994-2001, and the Third Commission in 2001-2008. The present Fourth Commission has the 2008-2015 term.

¹¹ Plan of Action of the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1993, page 1

¹² Presidential Proclamation Number 1139, issued on 10 December 1997 by President Fidel V. Ramos.

¹³ The name of the Department was changed from Department of Education, Cultures and Sports (DECS) to Department of Education under a new law on education Republic Act 9155 (August 2001) entitled Governance of Basic Education Act.

¹⁴ The lesson plans were later on edited by a group of educators from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Thailand and published in 2003 in Bangkok as one book entitled *Human Rights Lesson Plans for Southeast Asian Schools*.

¹⁵ See Claude, Richard Pierre. 1996. *Educating for Human Rights: the Philippines and Beyond* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press).

¹⁶ Ana Elzy E. Ofreño, “Human Rights in the School Curriculum: Issues and Trends in the Third Millennium,” *The Human Rights Journal*, vol. 2, no. 2/vol. 3, no. 1, July – December 1996 & January – June 1997, pages 108-112.

ANNEX A**SUMMARY OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS TEACHING EXEMPLARS – PRIMARY LEVEL****GRADE 1**

TITLE	SUBJECT	ENTRY POINT	TIME ALLOTMENT	CONCEPT
1. Child, you should grow up	Civics and Culture	Able to recognize the rights of Filipino children	One session	Every child should enjoy her/his human rights
2. This is Mine!	Civics and Culture	Able to explain why human rights are important	One session	Every child has a right to own property
3. Song, Letter, Number and Others	Civics and Culture	Able to explain why human rights are important	One session	Every child has the right to education
4. Good Manners, Teach Me!	Civics and Culture	Able to recognize the rights of Filipino children	One session	Every child has the right to be educated on good manners
5. Its So Nice to Live!	Civics and Culture	Able to discuss how the Filipino children can enjoy their rights	One session	Every child has the right to sufficient and nutritious food, clothing, healthy body, tidy and happy home
6. Listen to Me!	Civics and Culture	Able to discuss how the Filipino children can enjoy their right	One session	Every child has a right to be heard and to express her/his opinion
7. I am Mario, a Filipino!	Civics and Culture	Able to say that he/she is a Filipino	One session	Every child has a right to a name and nationality
8. Be Clean to Become Healthy	Civics and Culture	Able to explain why human rights are important	One session	Keeping oneself clean is a way to a healthy body. It is the right of the child to have a healthy body
9. Food on the Table, Let Us Eat	Civics and Culture	Able to recognize the rights of the Filipino child	One session	All children have a right to food
10. My Health, My Right	Civics and Culture	Able to recognize the rights of the Filipino child	One session	Every child has a right to be healthy

GRADE 2

TITLE	SUBJECT	ENTRY POINT	TIME ALLOTMENT	CONCEPT
1. I will respect the rights of others	Civics and Culture	(BEC III.A.3) Able to explain that every right has a corresponding obligation	One session	The rights of the child should be valued
2. A B C D... Child	Filipino	(BEC Pakikinig) Able to answer the questions regarding the details of the story	One session	Every child has a right to quality education

3. I have the right to be loved by you	Civics and Culture	(Pambansang Karapatan BEC III.1) Able to recognize the right of the child to have other needs	One session	Loving and caring for children is an obligation of the parents
4. Father, Mother, Please Love Me	Filipino	(BEC Pagsasalita) Able to use respectful words in greeting others	One session	It is the right of every child to be loved and cared for by their parents
5. Right to Worship Freely	Civics and Culture	Able to describe religious celebrations	One session	Respect the religious belief of other people
6. You have a Partner	Civics and Culture	(BEC III.A.3) Able to explain that every right has a corresponding obligation	One session	Every right has a corresponding obligation
7. I Can Do It, We Can Do It!	Civics and Culture	Able to describe the one's competence or the task that one can do	One session	Valuing one's capabilities helps strengthen one's dignity as a person
8. I Am Proud of Your Work!	Civics and Culture	(BEC C.10) Able to explain the importance of the human resource of a country	One session	The rights of the workers should be valued
9. Listen...Please!	English	(BEC 9) Able to write sentences based on a picture stimulus	One session	The child has the right to express her/himself
10. I Made This!	Sining	(BEC II. A.1) Able to express one's thoughts, feelings and imagination through drawing or painting	One sessions	The freedom to express one's thinking is a right that a child should enjoy
11. Let's Watch!	Civics and Culture	(BEC III.A.1) Able to recognize the rights of a child to satisfy other needs	Two sessions	An intelligent way of choosing what to see for entertainment enhances the child's right to recreation and to obtain the right information
12. Even Us Have Rights	Civics and Culture	(BEC III B.1) Able to explain that every child, even with disabilities, has distinct capabilities	One session	The society has the duty to take care of persons with disabilities
13. Tree of Life!	Civics and Culture	(BEC 1 B9.9A) Able to discuss the ways of preserving the nation's wealth.	One Session	It is the duty of every citizen to take care of the environment

GRADE 3

TITLE	SUBJECT	ENTRY POINT	TIME ALLOTMENT	CONCEPT
1. One, Two, Three Steps for Rights	Civics and Culture	(BEC III.A.5) Able to value the services received from the government	One Session	The right to receive the services of the government should be supported

2. Right to proper information	Civics and Culture	(BEC II.A.4) Able to discuss the opportunities in the country that support the development of one's talent	One Session	It is the right of a child to obtain accurate information from different sources
3. Service of the government to its citizens	Civics and Culture	(BEC III. A.1) Able to recognize the services being received from the government	One Session	Right to receive the services of the government
4. Save the Planet Earth Please...	Science and Health	(BEC 1V. Earth 2.3) Able to describe ways of conserving the natural resources	One Session	We all have the right to a clean and safe environment
5. Rain, Rain, Go Away!	Science and Health	(BEC VI. 6.1) Able to describe the weather for the day	One Session	Every child has the right to correct information
6. Our Duty	Civics and Culture	Able to show through drawing and painting ways of preserving the environment	One Session	We have the right to live in a clean and orderly environment
7. I Feel so Special	English	(BEC Speaking. 2.1) Able to recite a poem with gesture	One Session	While children have special rights, they have duties and responsibilities to observe
8. Home Sweet Home	EKAWP	(BEC II A.1.1) Able to express the desire of the Filipinos to meet their basic needs	One Session	Every child has a right to a home
9. Helper Only?!	Filipino	(BEC Pagbasa) Able to answer the questions of who, where, which and when	One Session	Respect for a person will strengthen her/his dignity

GRADE 4

TITLE	SUBJECT	ENTRY POINT	TIME ALLOTMENT	CONCEPT
1. Advocacy for the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples	HEKASI	(BEC IV.2 Pambansang Karapatan) Able to discuss the rights of the citizens in the preservation and development of their culture	Two Sessions	The rights of the Indigenous Peoples should be respected
2. Respect for the Culture	HEKASI	(BEC IV A-3) Able to discuss the obligations and the responsibilities of the citizen in preserving their own culture	One Session	The children of the Indigenous Peoples have the right to enjoy their culture and tradition
3. Nationality, My Right	HEKASI	(BEC II A.3) Able to describe the geographic traits of every region	One Session	Let us be proud of our nation and our nationality
4. 3,2,1,0... Where have all their rights gone!	Mathematics	(BEC V A-1) Able to read and interpret data in a bar graph	One Session	Protection of children should be our great concern

5. Health is Wealth	English Reading	(BEC Reading 4.1) Able to find the answers that are explicitly stated in the text (e.g., Editorial) on the who, how and why questions	One Session	Every child has the right to the best possible health and medical care
6. Child, do you need to earn?	EPP	(BEC B.1) Able to discuss the importance of responding to the needs of the family	One Session	The children who are forced to work are deprived of their opportunities in life
7. Filipino Culture	HEKASI	(BEC IV A.2) Able to discuss the rights of the citizens to preserve and develop their own culture	One Session	Participate in activities which will develop their culture and preserve their identity
8. Freedom of Religion	HEKASI	(BEC IV A.3) Able to discuss the obligation of the community in preserving its own culture	One Session	Every child has the right to express her/his religious belief
9. Change of Heart	Science	(BEC IV 4.4.4) Able to identify ways of preventing land, air and water pollution	One Session	Everyone has the right to a clean and green environment
10. Go On, Say it! But...	English, Reading, Language	(BEC Speaking #9) Able to use words that describe persons, animals, ideas and events	One Session	Responsibility goes with the right to freedom of opinion and expression

GRADE 5

TITLE	SUBJECT	ENTRY POINT	TIME ALLOTMENT	CONCEPT
1. Polo y Servicio	HEKASI	(BEC ii A.3) Able to describe forced labor.	One Session	Children have the right to be protected against "child exploitation"
2. I have the right to be loved by you!	EPP	(BEC A.2.2.1.2) Able to discuss the obligations of the parents toward their children	One Session	Every child has the right to be cared for by parents
3. Education: Towards a Meaningful Life	HEKASI	(BEC 5.1-5.4) Able to examine the educational system introduced by the Americans	One Session	A child is prepared even more to face her/his future life if she/he is able to enjoy her/his right to education
4. Live and Let others Live Too!	Science and Health	(BEC, Animals #3.1) Able to describe how animals adapt to a particular environment for protection and survival	One Session	Every child has a right to a decent standard of living.

GRADE 6

TITLE	SUBJECT	ENTRY POINT	TIME ALLOTMENT	CONCEPT
1. Right to Engage in Business	EPP	(BEC 13.4) Able to sell very well	One Session	Putting up of own business and livelihood is a right to make a living
2. I Will Study!	HEKASI	(BEC, Pagbasa) Able to give relevant information whether explicitly or implicitly mentioned in the text	One Session	The right to education should be valued by parents and children
3. Rights, Responsibilities of the Government	HEKASI	(BEC III A.5) Able to identify the agencies of the government that can respond to the needs of the citizens and the role each agency plays	One Session	It is the duty of the government to provide services to the people in order for them to enjoy their rights
4. Child, Child, What happened to You?	HEKASI	(BEC III D.4) Able to discuss the circumstances that hinder the enjoyment of rights	One Session	Violating the rights of the child is inhuman
5. Right Against Abuses	Filipino	(BEC Pagbasa) Able to choose the details that explain or develop the main ideas	One Session	Every person, child or adult, man or woman has dignity and rights that should be respected
6. Positive Attitude of a Child	HEKASI	(BEC III D.3) Able to examine some ways that help protect rights	One Session	It is the right of the child to be protected from practices that are harmful to her/his health, education and development
7. I Think Its Mine	HEKASI	Able to discuss the importance of rights in one's own writing or correspondence	One Session	The right of the child to own something should be respected
8. Truthful Linkages	HEKASI	(BEC III A.8) Able to discuss in detail the means by which the government protect the welfare and safety of the people	One Session	The rights of the people should be realized
9. The Child Named Momot	HEKASI	(BEC V C.9) Able to identify some of the country's problems like drug abuse and child abuse that hinder its development	One Session	The parents and the government should advocate the rights of the child
10. Report It	HEKASI	Able to discuss the factors that hinder the enjoyment of rights	One Session	It is the right of the child to be protected against any kind of abuse
11. A Child is Human Being Who Gets Hurt	HEKASI	(BEC III.D.4) Able to discuss the factors that hinder the enjoyment of rights	One Session	Every child has a right to be protected against abuse and violence by anyone

12. To be Free	HEKASI	(BEC III.D.2) Able to express the basic rights and freedoms enjoyed by Filipino citizenry under the Constitution.	One Session	Every citizen has a right to be free
13. To Whom It May Concern	English	(BEC VI.Writing 311) Able to respond in writing based on stimuli and triggers - editorials	One Session	Everyone has the right to freedom of expression
14. To get Married is not a Joke	EPP	(BEC A.1) Able to fully take care of oneself.	One Session	Getting married is the right of a person who is of legal age and is prepared for it
15. Different But the Same	English (Reading)	(BEC Reading 4.2) Able to state the explicit or implicit main ideas of a paragraph	One Session	Human beings regardless of race, color and ethnicity have equal rights and dignity worthy of respect and protection
16. Being a Filipino, My Right	HEKASI	(BEC III.D.1) Able to discuss who are the Filipino citizens according to the Constitution	One Session	Every person has the right to choose and have a nationality
17. Clean Community for my Own Safety	HEKASI	(BEC III.A.8) Able cite each way by which the government protects the welfare and safety of the people	One Session	It is the right of the child to have a clean community/environment
18. Participation in Developing the Country	HEKASI	(BEC V.C.1) Able to cite the importance of the role of an honest citizen in the development of the country	One Session	Participating in efforts to develop the country

Notes:

EPP - Edukasyong Pantahanan at Pangkabuhayan (Home Economics and Livelihood)

HEKASI - Heograpiya, Kasaysayan at Sibika (Geography, History and Civics)

EKAWP - Edukasyon sa Kagandahang Asal at Wastong Pag-uugali (Good Manners and Right Conduct)

Annex B**SUMMARY OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS TEACHING EXEMPLARS – SECONDARY LEVEL****FIRST YEAR**

TITLE	SUBJECT	ENTRY POINT	TIME ALLOTMENT	CONCEPT
1. To the Best of My Abilities	Social Studies	(BEC VII. 1.10) Able to explain the various forms of participation of the citizens in the political processes	One Session	The right to participation should be learned and experienced starting from childhood
2. My Country, I Love	Pilipino	(Reading, Third Grade 4.4.1) Able to share one's opinions on the characteristics of the text based on their relevance to society, truthfulness, credibility, and appeal	One Session	A nation has the right to be free
3. Child Exploitation	English	(BEC, Speaking 42) Able to agree/disagree with statements, observations and responses made when discussing issues affecting children in particular and the community in general	One Session	*Children have the right against economic exploitation *Children have the right to play and leisure
4. Me...My Fellow Human Being...We Have Power	Social Studies	(BEC VII 1.1.8) Able to analyze the rights and obligations of a citizen	One Session	There are no human rights violations when there is equitable distribution of power
5. The Twins	Social Studies	(BEC VII. 1.9) Able to analyze the rights and obligations of a citizen	One Session	Every right of the child has a corresponding obligation
6. Environment-friendly Technology	Science and Technology I	(IV. 4.4.1) Able to explain the conservation of soil, forest, wildlife, water and air	One Session	Every child has a right to a clean and safe environment
7. Emotions...Opinions... Ideas	Social Studies	(BEC VI.1.16) Able to give the meaning of the word democracy	One Session	The right to express one's emotions, opinion and ideas is part of democratic life
8. You, Me, Them...All Have Human Rights	Social Studies	(BEC VI.1.1.9) Able to value the rights of the children, women and laborers	One Session	There are international laws on human rights
9. The Greatest Love All	English	(BEC, Reading 5.5.5) Able to make predictions and anticipate outcomes	One Session	Every child has the right to dignity

SECOND YEAR				
TITLE	SUBJECT	ENTRY POINT	TIME ALLOTMENT	CONCEPT
1. How Literate are We?	Communication English	(BEC Reading 4.4.1) Able to interpret and compare orally or in writing information presented in tables, charts, graphs, etc.	One Session	Every child has the right to education
2. The Best Things in Life: Am I Getting Them?	English	(BEC LC 4.1) Able to interpret and compare orally or in writing information presented in tables, charts, graphs, etc.	One Session	Health is wealth, a basic right
3. Women Have Rights, Too!	English	(BEC Reading 2.2.1) Able to use different reading styles to suit the text and one's purpose for reading	One Session	Women have rights that should be respected
4. Respecting One's Views	English	(BEC Literature 5.5.3) Show the relationship between the main and significant details	One Session	Children have the right to participation
5. In the Claws of the Beast!	Social Studies	(BEC IV-1.6) Able to explain the primary issues and sacrifices faced by the Philippines due to the current political and socio-economic changes in Asia	One Session	It is the right of children to be protected against various types of abuse
6. The Two Sides of the Coin	Science and Technology II	(BEC IV.2.2.1) Able to evaluate the potential economic importance of organisms	One Session	Every child has a right to a clean and safe environment
7. Escape School	English	(BEC II Speaking 2.2.3) Able to give information obtained from the mass media: newspapers, radio, television	One Session	Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person
8. I Want to Decide	Education on Values	(BEC I 1.1.6) Able to analyze the value of effective communication in relationships among people	One Session	Children should receive correct information for them to make correct decisions
9. Mission I: Protect Our Forests	Science and Technology II	(BEC II – 2.2) Able to suggest ways of minimizing or preventing ecological problems	One Session	Every child has a right to a clean and safe environment

10. From Womb to Cradle	Science and Technology II	(BEC: Unit VIII 3.3.2) Able to describe the stages of development of the fertilized embryo and fetus	One Session	Everybody including the unborn has the right to life
11. The Sound of Music	Music, Art, Physical Education and Health (MAPEH)	(BEC-1) Able to learn by listening to the native tunes with socio-cultural values like serenades and songs for various occasions in the different regions in the country.	One Session	Love of country can be expressed in many ways
12. Unless You Be Like Children	English	(BEC II. Literature 5.5.1) Able to choose appropriate details from a selection (i.e., contrasts, illustrations, etc.) used by an essayist to attain her/his objective (to persuade, to inform, to call attention, etc.)	One Session	Children have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse

THIRD YEAR

TITLE	SUBJECT	ENTRY POINT	TIME ALLOTMENT	CONCEPT
1. The World in My Hand	Education on Values	(Sustainable Development BEC II.2.2.6) Able to explain the meaning of natural capacity for development	One Session	The right to live in a clean environment
2. The Gates of Respect for Human Rights	English	(BEC II. B) Able to paraphrase, analyze and synthesize the ideas and information explicitly stated in the reading material	One Session	Every individual has rights that should be respected and appreciated by others
3. Your Right is My Right Too	Social Studies	(BEC IV.1) Able to demonstrate a critical study of issues and current events	One Session	Human rights cover civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights
4. Mining, Mining, Who Will Inherit?	Social Studies	(Sustainable Use, BEC, I-1-10) Able to distinguish the right values of the Filipinos in tapping natural resources by respecting laws on conservation, sustainable use and environment	One Session	The citizens have the right and priority to enjoy the fruits of the natural resources of their own country
5. Nightmare!	Social Studies	(BEC III-1.24) Able to analyze the effects of World War II in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Colonies	One Session	It is our right to live in a safe and peaceful environment

6. Sometimes...It's Hard to Breathe	Social Studies	(BEC IV.1.1.1) Able to present the ideologies being observed by the different countries	One Session	Respect the human rights of others
7. Golden Clock	Education and Values	(BEC Third Quarter III.3.3.7) Able to value the proper way of using time	One Session	The child has the right to recreation, to play and to participate in creative and artistic activities
8. Water is Life	Science and Technology	(BEC II 2.2.1) Able to cite elements and compounds which are basic to our daily existence	One Session	People have the right to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature
9. How True?	Pilipino	(BEC IV:1.1.3) Able to recognize meaningful and meaningless paragraphs	One Session	It is the duty of the citizenry to analyze well whether or not the messages being exposed by the various media are just and truthful
10. Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven	English	(BEC #2.5) Able to analyze and explain how the environment influences a person's character	One Session	Children have the right to special protection against abuse and exploitation.

FOURTH YEAR

TITLE	SUBJECT	ENTRY POINT	TIME ALLOTMENT	CONCEPT
1. Child, Child, Are You a Worker?	Social Studies	Able to explain the condition of children in India under the caste system	One Session	An established societal system that violates the human rights of children should be opposed or changed
2. Save the Children	Music, Art, Physical Education and Health (MAPEH)	(BEC Third Quarter 1.1.2) Able to perform the duties of each member of the family in solving health problems	One Session	Every child has the right to receive the highest standard of health service
3. Say No...Say Yes... Say Something	Values Education	(BEC VI.1.1.6) Able to express agreement to just acts and to protest against undesirable, unjust and enslaving systems and practices	One Session	Exercising our freedom of expression safeguards our right to protection against exploitation and tyranny
4. Ours to Enjoy, Ours to Respect	English	(BEC 5.6) Able to react to assertions and statements in a text and how they are presented	One Session	Human rights are inherent to people and universal to all men and women, and are exercised with corresponding obligations
5. Being a Parent	MAPEH-Health	(BEC 1.1.3) Able to point out the duties of the parents to their children and the children to the family	One Session	It is the duty and responsibility of the father and the mother to rear their children and it is the duty of the government to support the welfare of all children who have no family