



Editorial

National Process and HRE

The United Nations (UN) World Programme for Human Rights Education provides a "collective framework for action based on human rights education principles agreed upon by the international community." The expectation is that Member-States will continue implementing or developing human rights education programs at the national level, this time under a new international program.

The first phase plan of the World Programme (2005-2007), which focuses on the formal education system, identifies the Ministry of Education as the main implementing agency at the national level. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UNESCO have called on the Ministers of Education of the Member-States to indicate to them which department or unit within their Ministries would coordinate activities related to the implementation of the first phase plan.

The core task under the first phase plan of the World Programme is the four-stage national process - analysis of the situation, planning, implementation and evaluation of national implementation strategy. It is expected that by the year 2007, initial steps would have been taken under the national implementation strategy.

National process constitutes the key element of effective implementation of any international program. It is to the best interest of the Member-States that their national players (governmental and non-governmental institutions) are fully involved, as they should be being stakeholders.

FOCUS Asia-Pacific is designed to highlight significant issues and activities relating to human rights in the Asia-Pacific. Relevant information and articles can be sent to HURIGHTS OSAKA for inclusion in the next editions of the newsletter.

FOCUS Asia-Pacific is edited by Osamu Shiraishi, Director of HURIGHTS OSAKA.

World Programme for Human Rights Education and Asia

The UNESCO Charter reminds us that the foundations for peace must be constructed in the human mind. This is a major challenge facing Asia and the Pacific, where a culture of equality, participation, and justice remains fragile in large parts of the region. At the same time, tremendous progress being made in the field of education is creating opportunities for new generations to become conscious of societal prejudices, to be empowered through knowledge about human rights, and to experience participation and inclusiveness.

During the Decade on Human Rights Education (1995-2004), the international community placed human rights education high on the international agenda. The Decade created an occasion for the collection of valuable information on how countries around the world implement this important component of their education systems, including information on human rights curriculums, teaching methods, and teacher training. On 10 December 2004, in its resolution A/RES/59/113, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed a World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE) which focuses in its first phase (2005-2007) on the primary and secondary school systems.

The World Programme supports countries in the implementation of international commitments contained in Universal Declaration of Human Rights (article 26), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (article 13), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (article 29), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (article 10), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (article 7) and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (Part I, paras. 33-34 and Part II, paras. 78-82), as well as the Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001 (Declaration, paras. 95-97 and Programme of Action, paras. 129-139). It builds upon a number of initiatives of States in this area, including the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights (1988-ongoing), the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) and its Plan of Action, and the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

Drawing on the principles set by those instruments and frameworks, the plan of action (A/59/525/Rev.1) of the first phase (2005-2007) of the WPHRE supports the development of human rights education in the school system as a complex process which entails various courses of action, equally important and mutually reinforcing:

1. Developing and adopting coherent **educational policies, legislation and strategies** that reflect human rights principles, as well as of appropriate organizational measures to implement those policies, with the involvement of all stakeholders;
2. Ensuring that all **teaching and learning processes and tools** - including for instance the content and objectives of the curriculum, teaching practices and methodologies as well as materials, including textbooks - are based on and incorporate human rights principles;
3. Promoting **learning environments** in which human rights are respected and upheld. All school actors (students, teachers, staff and administrators and parents) should practice human rights and solidarity through real-life examples and activities, and children should be able to participate fully in school life;
4. Providing the **teaching profession and school leadership**, through pre-service and in-service training, with the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and competencies to facilitate the learning and practice of human rights in schools, as well as with appropriate working conditions and status.

The plan of action of the WPHRE proposes a national implementation strategy to address those areas, in four stages:

- Analysis of the current situation of human rights education in the school system;
- Setting priorities and developing a national implementation strategy;
- Implementing and monitoring;
- Evaluating.

The plan of action also provides that an "objective of international cooperation and support will be the strengthening of national and local capacities for human rights education in the primary and secondary school systems".

Asia-Pacific context

In Asia and the Pacific, Governments agreed on strengthening human rights education as a pillar of human rights protection in 1998, when they identified it as one of the four pillars of the Framework for Regional Cooperation for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. Its importance reaffirmed on numerous occasions, human rights education has been an area of vibrant activity but this dynamism has not been consistent across the region. While innovative approaches are taken by some countries, communities, schools and organizations, elsewhere the lessons are not being examined or applied. In few countries there has been a systematic review of the extent, quality and access to human rights education and of the national support system for its development. Very few Asian countries have developed a comprehensive national plan of action for human rights education. Regional support for human rights education in the schools has been largely localized, disparate, or intermittent. Thus, the opportunities for cross-fertilization of good practices and ideas, although growing, remain limited.

Considering this context, UNESCO and OHCHR jointly developed a project that supports WPHRE in Asia.

The project aims at helping countries to systematically address three key aspects of human rights education. *First*, the content of human rights education will be critically examined in the light of national and international human rights norms and standards. As stated by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its General Comment No. 1, "the education to which each child has a right is one designed to provide the child with life skills, to strengthen the child's capacity to enjoy the full range of human rights and to promote a culture which is infused by appropriate human rights values" (para. 2). The extent to which these aims of education are reflected in school curriculums and materials will be assessed.

Second, the message of human rights can be undermined if not supported by pedagogical methodology. The use of corporal punishment, punishment by humiliation, reinforcement of societal prejudices against certain minority groups or against one gender, often girls, must be eliminated in the schools if a culture peace, tolerance and respect for human rights is to be transmitted through the schools. The project will therefore examine, along with the curriculums of

participating countries, the methodologies used to deliver them. The proposal will thus support the implementation of the Dakar Framework for Action, adopted at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal in 2000, which specifically calls upon countries to improve on the quality of education, so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved. These would include outcomes on the well-being of the learners, the relevance of the contents and outcomes, the quality of the teaching/learning processes and the suitability of learning environments.

Third, critical aspect of human rights education is the question of access. Non-discriminatory access to free and compulsory primary education is not only required for the delivery of human rights education, it is a basic human right provided for in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international human rights treaties. The Dakar Framework sets a goal of ensuring that by 2015, all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, can access and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality. Despite international commitments, however, many countries in the region have not introduced national legislation to guarantee free and compulsory education. Where it is provided for in a legal framework, the laws are often not consistently enforced. The imposition of formal or informal fees makes primary education for children of poor and marginalized families virtually inaccessible. In a number of Asian countries, problems of access are linked to direct or indirect discrimination. Such obstacles to education and their devastating impact on the most marginalized sectors of society are amply proven in the literature.¹

The project aims to take stock of the progress made to date in the region and to contribute to the systematization of human rights education in the school system, with priority given to countries in South and Southeast Asia. In accordance with the WPHRE, the proposal is dedicated to primary and secondary school education. The project proposes a range of activities to be undertaken over three years, but aims at initiating a professional exchange of experience, lessons, and practical information that, it is hoped, will endure long beyond its own lifespan.

Overall goal and specific objectives

The overall goal of this project is contribute to the

implementation of the plan of action of Phase I of the WPHRE in Asia:

- (a) To promote the inclusion and practice of human rights in the primary and secondary school systems;
- (b) To support the development, adoption and implementation of comprehensive, effective and sustainable national human rights education strategies in school systems, and/or the review and improvement of existing initiatives;
- (c) To provide guidelines on key components of human rights education in the school system;
- (d) To facilitate the provision of support to Member States by international, regional, national and local organizations;
- (e) To support networking and cooperation among local, national, regional and international institutions.²

The project aims at achieving these goals in Asia through three specific objectives:

1. To identify and analyze achievements, weaknesses, and areas for improvement on human rights education in schools for each participating country, including by identifying and analyzing elements in the education system that would support human rights education, and across the region;
2. To widely disseminate information and experiences about existing programmes, projects and other initiatives on human rights education in schools in Asian countries;

Implementation Scheme

The project will involve a high level of consultation among the stakeholders through a highly participatory process. The consultations will be led by a working-level national team on human rights education (NTHRE), composed of members of key institutions in each country, including professional organizations, civil society organizations, national human rights institutions and Ministries of education.

The NTHRE of each country will be expected to undertake the following:

1. Coordinate country-level activities under this proposal especially data and material gathering;
2. Network with other institutions involved in human rights education such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), higher education institutions

(teacher colleges and universities), media, international agencies (including those of the UN) on the documentation of human rights education in school system initiatives, and analysis of their current state;

3. Together with members of the regional project team³, prepare the national report on the state of human rights education in school system initiatives.

The selection of countries to be covered under this project will be made by an Advisory Panel, the functions of which are set out below, based on, inter alia: (a) formal expression of interest of the concerned Government, (b) willingness to establish a NTHRE that would undertake the functions set out in this proposal, and (c) interest of the UN Country Team in the concerned country to support the country-level activities of the project.

The sub-regional and regional consultations will be held involving educators (school teachers and NGO educators); education officials (including school administrators) and researchers; teacher educators; members of academia (especially those involved in university-based human rights centers); representatives of the human rights organizations, national human rights institutions, sub-regional and regional inter-governmental institutions related to education, and international organisations and United Nations agencies and offices (country by country).

Endnotes

1. See, for example, Tomasevski, Katarina, *School Fees as Hindrance to Universalising Primary Education: Background Study for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2003/4*, UNESCO, 2003.
2. WPHRE, para. 21.
3. The regional project team is being coordinated by HURIGHTS OSAKA.

National Human Rights Commission Capacity- building

Human rights education is not only for educators. By incorporating human rights education into the different functions of a national human rights institution, every activity of the institution would support the goal of promoting human rights. Staff members doing tasks such as investigation of human rights violations complaints or review of laws based on human rights standards are therefore enabled to contribute to the human rights education function of their institution.

This is the gist of the recent training workshop for the staff of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of Nepal. Equitas¹ and the NHRC launched a three-year capacity-building project for the NHRC staff in 2003. While the first part of this program focused on capacity building in the area of economic, social and cultural rights, the project began its focus on human rights education capacity-building in 2005. They held the first workshop under this part of the project in March of that year to help increase the capacity of senior NHRC staff to conduct effective human rights education activities. In May 2006, they held the second workshop. The project was developed in the context of the NHRC's human rights education priorities as set out in its Strategic Plan (2004-2008).

NHRC Strategic Plan

The NHRC adopted in December 2003 the Strategic Plan (2004-2008) to guide the implementation of its mandated functions. As the NHRC Chairperson puts it, the Strategic Plan (2004-2008) is

a powerful instrument to guide the NHRC in executing its duties and responsibilities in accordance with the aspirations of its statute and the stakeholders. Hence, the multiyear and annual work plan of the NHRC in the future will be prepared on the basis of this document and their implementation will be jointly reviewed by the Members and the staff.

The Strategic Plan provides mission and vision statements as well as six core values that should guide the operations of the NHRC.

The mission of the NHRC is stated as follows:

Our mission is to develop a culture of human rights in the country by taking a leading role as an independent

and impartial national institution for the protection and promotion of human rights in accordance with universally recognized human rights principles.

The six core values are equality, impartiality, accessibility, accountability, transparency, and independence and autonomy. To ensure that these values are properly applied, the Strategic Plan provides that

A five-member-committee comprising of one of the members and four staff members representing different ethnic background[s] will review the progress on implementation of the above values every six months. They will report to the Commission with specific recommendations in the areas needing improvements, if any. An external audit of the values will be conducted annually to examine the level of implementation of the values by the Commission and to suggest ways and means of institutionalising the values.

The Strategic Plan includes an analysis of the major human rights issues in Nepal and the response of the NHRC to the situation through eight strategic objectives (complete with key priority areas and expected results).²

Under Strategic Objective 7 on human rights education, the key priorities are the:

- Inclusion of human rights education in school curriculum and in non-formal education packages
- Inclusion of human rights education as core subject in the staff-training program of the Ministry of General Administration, or of the appropriate ministry in-charge of staff training
- Facilitating the proper preparation of government officers with quasi-judicial responsibilities to enable them to undertake their tasks in accordance with the international human rights standards
- Education and awareness-raising of activities for key policymakers, Regional Administrators and Chief District Officers
- Dissemination of human rights information to public officials and professional groups
- Facilitating the proper training of security and army personnel before deployment to active duty, and follow-up training to reinforce the knowledge and behavioral changes
- Application of international human rights standards in handling cases
- Undertaking high impact promotional work on selected cases and on emerging human rights

issues.³

In addition, other Strategic Objectives of the Strategic Plan contain human rights education and training activities.

To be able to effectively implement the human rights education components of the Strategic Plan, training would be needed. Thus the Equitas-NHRC project has an important role to play. The project is complementary to other capacity-building projects implemented with other partner institutions.⁴

Training of Trainers II Workshop

The Training of Trainers II Workshop was held on 17-21 May 2006 in Nepal. The workshop aimed to build the capacity of the NHRC staff to undertake effectively and with confidence the human rights education activities under the Strategic Plan. The workshop focused on skills that "are not only necessary for staff of the Commission's Promotions Division and the NHRC Training Coordinator, but also for key persons in other divisions of the NHRC who will be involved in human rights education activities and workshop development where the topic of the workshop relates to his/her area of work."⁵

Workshop objectives⁶

The workshop activities placed emphasis on designing and implementing practical human rights education activities and programs within the context of the NHRC's mandate, Strategic Plan, and divisional workplans. It was expected that by the end of this workshop, participants should be able to:

1. **Identify** the components of effective human rights education programs and activities and how to incorporate them in their work
2. **Plan and design** effective human rights education activities for specific target groups
3. **Facilitate human rights education programs** more effectively by drawing on methods, techniques, skills and attitudes developed and practiced during the workshop
4. **Apply effective techniques** for reflecting on their practice as human rights educators
5. **Use a variety of methods** for evaluating human rights education programs.

A specific outcome of the workshop was the development of human rights education activities by the participants for specific target groups.

Another outcome of the workshop was the creation of

an inter-divisional core group of NHRC staff with the capacity to plan, design and conduct human rights education activities within a collaborative environment.

Workshop Outline

Several senior NHRC staff who were in the March 2005 Training of Trainers Workshop on human rights education attended the May 2006 workshop along with many other NHRC staff who regularly work with them. Most of the participants thus had an understanding of the steps for designing effective human rights education. The workshop activities, therefore, served as a "refresher" for some participants and yet offered something new for everyone. Participants from the March 2005 workshop were actively engaged as co-facilitators to reinforce their skills as human rights educators.

Resource persons were also brought in to provide views and information at different segments of the workshop.⁷ They provided comments to the presentations of the participants, as well as offered insight in regard to relevant human rights education programs and activities undertaken by other organizations and institutions in the region.

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Endnotes

1. Equitas is the new name of the Canadian Human Rights Foundation. Its full name is Equitas - International Centre for Human Rights Education.
2. See full text of the Strategic Plan (2004-2008) in www.nhrcnepal.org
3. Based on Strategic Plan (2004-2008), page 28.
4. See for example the capacity development project for the 2002-2007 period with the support of the United Nations Development Programme and several countries as partners. See webpage www.nhrcnepal.org/project1.php?ProjNo=1 for further information.
5. *Human Rights Education and Promotion - Training of Trainers II - Workshop Manual*, Equitas and National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of Nepal, 2006.
6. *Ibid.*, page 4.
7. There were 2 resource persons - Jefferson R. Plantilla of HURIGHTS OSAKA, and Felicia Yeban of the Philippine Normal University.

Conference on Human Rights Education in Asia

*Jefferson R. Plantilla**

The 1948 exhortation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that "every individual and every organ of society ... shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedom..." finds support in the "International Conference on Human Rights Education in a Diverse and Changing Asia" held in Soochow University, Taipei, Taiwan on 22-24 May 2006.

Presentations in the conference confirm the broad realm of human rights education, and thus support the participation of educators from various fields in the task. Education initiatives ranging from Graduation Pledge (for university students), creation of human rights cities, peace education, citizenship education, Dowa education,¹ and gender education provide avenues for human rights learning.

Graduation Pledge, for example, helps create consciousness among graduating students about the need to apply human rights principles (among other principles) in their respective future fields of work. Citizenship/civic education may provide a broader definition of citizenship by considering the human rights of minorities who should be properly considered as active members of society. The establishment of human rights cities provides the opportunity for the incorporation of human rights in local government policies and programs, and thus facilitate local level education activities.

The conference likewise reviewed some experiences at the national and regional levels. The socio-political contexts and human rights education experiences in Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, India, Afghanistan and the Philippines were discussed. The regional experiences of HURIGHTS OSAKA and the Asia-Pacific Regional Resource Center for Human Rights Education (ARRC) were presented.

On the panel discussion on China, one panellist pointed out the problem of North Korean refugees. The worsening economic situation in North Korea provides a major reason for North Koreans to flee to China, particularly in areas where Chinese of Korean descent live. It was noted that when famine hit China in the early 1960s, Korean-Chinese sought refuge in North Korea. Now it is the other way around. This sit-

uation puts China in a dilemma. Any response could give rise to the ire of either North Korea or the international community. It is noted however that China should allow full operation of international humanitarian programs (mainly through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) to help alleviate the plight of North Korean refugees.

The presentations on the activities of Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) and the Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor (HKHRM) discussed concrete problems in implementing human rights education programs. Aside from the lack of institutionalized human rights education program for the police in India, training the majority of the members of the police force is not an easy task considering their situation. Many of them, as constabulary and other subordinate officers, are underpaid and have bad working conditions. Getting non-governmental organization (NGO) programs into Hong Kong schools faces the challenge of overcoming negative views among teachers and parents about human rights and NGOs. Both CHRI and HKHRM however are fully aware of these problems. They are determined to maintain their programs despite the difficulties.

Other presentations stressed the need for networking at national and regional levels. A new network among Indian educators to promote human rights education was started recently in India by the Mumbai -based Peace and Justice Commission. HURIGHTS OSAKA, on the other hand, relies on its network of institutions to be able to implement its regional program.

Conference context

Professor Mab Huang, in his opening remarks, noted the absence of a regional human rights mechanism in Asia-Pacific. In view of this situation, cooperation between the academic community and non-governmental organizations in the region becomes more important and compensates for the lack of regional mechanism.

The keynote speech of Professor James Seymour², on

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the other hand, took issue with the international human rights system and its failure to address many problems. He asserted that

State sovereignty precluded (or at least made difficult) the ascendancy of transnational values and institutions that might have protected human rights. Eventually, inter-governmental organizations were created to deal with the problem, but so far these have proven inadequate.

He also lamented the inadequate teaching of human rights in schools, while in "too many countries, children were taught values of nationalism and political discipline, rather than genuine citizenship and human rights." He observed that some

people were led to believe that "human rights" were part of a conspiracy to undermine Asian values. Thus, at least with regard to Asia, there was the myth abroad that the East did not care.

But he also noted positive developments such as the weakening of absolute sovereign states that facilitated the establishment of regional mechanisms such as the European Union and the Council of Europe, the more democratic world compared to a generation ago, the growing rejection among Christians and Muslims of religious extremism, the new Human Rights Council of the United Nations (UN), and the increased human rights consciousness among people resulting from efforts under the UN Decade for Human Rights Education.

Regional meeting

Alongside the international conference was a regional meeting to discuss the program of the International Human Rights Education Consortium (IHREC). The meeting introduced IHREC to the Asian human rights education community. Professor Theodore Orlin of Utica College in New York State, and current President of IHREC, explained its history and activities. He emphasized that the IHREC is a loose network of institutions and individuals that are involved in human rights education. He presented the activities held in North America and Europe since its establishment in 2002.

The mission statement of IHREC states that it "promotes education, collaboration, and research on

human rights at the national, regional, and global levels." It has two Vice-presidents from Asia (Allwyn D'Silva of India and Mab Huang of Taiwan). IHREC intends to develop a regional network for Asia and thus invites the participating institutions to join the network.

The participants agreed on the need for human rights educators in the region to meet in order to exchange experiences and ideas, and to closely collaborate on particular activities. Thus they agreed to hold a regional conference in Asia in 2008. The specific issues to be discussed in the conference are still to be agreed upon, while the Philippines has been identified as a possible venue. Prof. Huang's remark about the need for more cooperation between the academic community and NGOs in Asia in view of the absence of regional human rights mechanism provides another rationale for the planned conference.

IHREC, with its strong link with people in the academe as well as colleges and universities, points to the role that the academe in general should play in human rights education (both formal and non-formal forms). These roles can be research and documentation, training, development of teaching and learning materials, and provision of resource persons. Human rights education programs of schools and NGOs will benefit much from the support that the academe can provide.

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Endnotes

1. This is an anti-discrimination education started in Japan in late 1960s to address the discrimination suffered by a section of Japanese society called Burakumin.
2. He is a professor in Columbia University (New York) and Chinese University of Hong Kong.

UNESCO Expert Meeting on ESD: Reorienting Education to Address Sustainability

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is a vision of education that seeks to empower people to assume responsibility for creating a sustainable future. In recognition of the importance of ESD, the United Nations (UN) has declared 2005-2014 as the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). UNESCO was requested to lead the Decade. The goals of DESD are to: (i) facilitate networking linkages, exchanges and interaction among stakeholders in ESD; (ii) foster an increased quality of teaching and learning in ESD; (iii) help countries make progress towards and attain the Millennium Development Goals through ESD efforts; and (iv) provide countries with new opportunities to incorporate ESD into education reform efforts.

Two of the major tasks to begin the work of ESD are to improve basic education and to reorient existing education to address sustainable development. However, the concept of ESD is very complex and may mean different things to different groups of people. It is recognized that understandings of and visions for sustainability will be different for different individuals. Therefore, it is essential to deconstruct and analyze this complex concept from different perspectives before it can be operationalized in different cultural contexts. As mentioned earlier, there are many different stakeholders in sustainable development, and each group has a different vision for and role in sustainable development. Some are interested in environmental preservation and protection, others are interested in promoting intercultural and international understanding and yet another group may be more interested in pursuing economic development. All these groups will have to work together to negotiate the process of achieving sustainability.

Although ESD carries with it the inherent idea of implementing programs that are locally relevant and culturally appropriate, it is imperative that the complex concept of ESD be fully understood before effective implementation can take place. In reorienting education to address sustainability, it should be noted that many topics inherent in ESD are already part of the formal education curriculum. However, these top-

ics or content areas need to be identified or seen to contribute to the larger concept of sustainability.

Expert meeting

On 1-3 May 2006, the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education, Bangkok held in Kanchanaburi, Thailand an Expert Meeting on ESD.

The main purpose of this expert meeting was to identify and recognize the key components of ESD so that educators from different disciplines can examine the curriculum and school activities for existing contributions to ESD. In addition, educators can identify potential areas of the existing school curriculum in which to insert examples that illustrate sustainability and additional knowledge, issues, perspectives, skills and values related to sustainability.

The meeting also aimed to discuss the relationship of ESD with other education initiatives such as Environmental Education (EE), Education for International Understanding (EIU), Education for All (EFA), UN Literacy Decade (UNLD), and Millennium Development Goals (MDG); recommend guidelines for reorienting existing education to address sustainable development; and plan the organization of the workshop on "Reorienting Teacher Education to Address Sustainability" in 22-25 August 2006.¹

Experts working on environmental education, peace education, values education, education for social justice, indigenous culture education and human rights education attended the meeting. There were also representatives from the UNESCO ESD partners in the region, namely, Institute for Advanced Studies of the United Nations University, the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU), and the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU).

The participants presented and discussed what would be the appropriate contents of ESD in terms of issues on the environment, social justice, peace and human rights. There were also presentations on existing ESD

projects such as the IAS-UNU regional centers of expertise project, and ACCU's project to fund education programs and institutions that will work on ESD.

Discussion highlights

From the point of view of human rights education, the meeting is significant for the following issues:

a. Networking among institutions (including universities) that have programs related to ESD. The networking experience presented in the meeting (International Network of Institutions of Teacher Education) provides a good example of sustainable effort of information and experience sharing among concerned institutions. As experienced in human rights education, there is a need for educators to link up in order to maximize existing resources (expertise, materials, programs) which support the development of ESD.

b. Teacher education as a primary focus for promoting ESD. It has been observed that education programs introduced into the school curriculum have less prospect of success if the teachers are not properly trained to undertake them considering their already heavy teaching duties. Aside from training those already in service, teacher-students should be given proper understanding of ESD, and training on how it can best be implemented. Thus teacher education institutions should be properly engaged in ESD, reorienting its curriculum if necessary. This perspective applies to human rights education.

c. Link among international programs on education. ESD aims to promote Education for All (EFA), UN Literacy Decade (UNLD), and Millennium Development Goals (MDG). But it should also support equally important initiatives such as the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010) and the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE). It has been observed that existing UN literature on ESD do not include these initiatives which form a constituent part of the concept of ESD.

d. Conceptual linkages and confusion. ESD has been misunderstood as equivalent to environment education, and has not been clearly promoted as conceptually linked to education for international

understanding, human rights education, peace education, values education and other "educations." Human rights principles, for example, have been defined in relation to development, environment, peace, culture and social justice concerns. But these principles have not yet been given much attention in ESD literature, as they should be.

e. Reorienting education toward ESD. This is an important effort that can help mainstream ESD into the education systems (by improving on existing programs on international understanding, human rights education, peace education, values education and other "educations."). The task of reorienting education towards ESD is not without problems in view of the difficulty in changing education policies and curriculums.

The meeting provided the opportunity for these issues to be discussed, or at least noted, for future ESD activities of UNESCO and national institutions.

The first phase plan of the WPHRE, which focuses on the formal education system, provides for the creation of "synergies with the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), coupling efforts to address issues of common concern." The synergies between WPHRE and DESD will not be difficult to obtain in light of existing collaboration among networks and institutions in the Asia-Pacific on human rights, development and environmental concerns.

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You may also visit

www.unesco-bkk.org/index.php?id=4223 (Expert Meeting webpage) and

www.unesco-bkk.org/index.php?id=71 (UNESCO ESD website).

Endnote

1. This workshop is being organized jointly by the Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID) and APCEIU.

Protecting Children Against Trafficking: Southeast Asian Guidelines

*Nobuki Fujimoto**

Combating the trafficking of children within Southeast Asia requires a systematic inter-country approach. Governments and their partners (non-governmental organizations and international institutions) in this subregion have to maintain a common framework of action that draws both from international human rights instruments and national anti-trafficking experiences. The development of such framework provides an opportunity for government and non-governmental institutions to mutually learn from their respective experiences.

Southeast Asian context

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) adopted in November 2004 in Vientiane the *ASEAN Declaration Against Trafficking in Persons Particularly Women and Children*.¹ The Declaration recognizes "the urgent need for a comprehensive regional approach to prevent and to combat trafficking in persons, particularly women and children." It also recognizes that "a successful campaign against the scourge of trafficking in persons, particularly women and children, requires continuing dialogue, exchange of information and cooperation among ASEAN." The Declaration therefore declared to undertake the following measures:

1. To establish a regional focal network to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, particularly women and children, in the ASEAN region;
2. To adopt measures to protect the integrity of their respective passports, official travel documents, identity and other official travel documents from fraud;
3. To undertake regular exchange of views, information sharing on relevant migratory flows, trends and pattern, strengthening of border controls and monitoring mechanisms, and the enactment of applicable and necessary legislations;

4. To intensify cooperation among our respective immigration and other law enforcement authorities;
5. To distinguish victims of trafficking in persons from the perpetrators, and identify the countries of origin and nationalities of such victims and thereafter ensure that such victims are treated humanely and provided with such essential medical and other forms of assistance deemed appropriate by the respective receiving/recipient country, including prompt repatriation to their respective countries of origin;
6. To undertake actions to respect and safeguard the dignity and human rights of genuine victims of trafficking in persons;
7. To undertake coercive actions/measures against individual and/or syndicate engaged in trafficking in persons and shall offer one another the widest possible assistance to punish such activities; and
8. To take measures to strengthen regional and international cooperation to prevent and combat trafficking in persons.

To be able to undertake these measures, however, the governments in Southeast Asia need practical guidelines.

NGO Initiative

Asia ACTs against Child Trafficking (Asia ACTs),² a regional campaign network to fight child trafficking in Southeast Asia, facilitated the drafting of *Proposed Guidelines for the Protection of the Rights of Trafficked Children*, also known as the Bohol Document in a workshop in 2004.³

Asia ACTs followed this up with the Regional Seminar-Workshop on the Southeast Asian Guidelines for the Protection of the Rights of Children Victims of Trafficking in Bangkok on 20-24 March 2006.

*Nobuki Fujimoto is a staff of HURIGHTS OSAKA.

Fifty-five NGO (mostly Asia ACTs members) and government representatives from Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Burma/Myanmar attended the seminar-workshop. There were also observers from Bangladesh, Nepal, Japan, and the Netherlands.

They reviewed a number of relevant international human rights documents including the United Nations (UN) Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), and the Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Trafficking (2000) of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. They also reviewed 'The Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action',⁴ adopted during the First World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in 1996 and The Yokohama Global Commitment 2001,⁵ adopted during the Second World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in 2001.⁶

The review extended to ASEAN documents such as *The ASEAN Declaration Against Trafficking in Persons Particularly Women and Children*.⁷

NGO representatives presented country experiences on combating the trafficking of children. The participants from the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia also explained the process of developing country-level guidelines.

Developing common guidelines

The participants referred to UNICEF's guidelines for Southeastern Europe (May 2003) and the Bohol Declaration in developing guidelines. This resulted in 'The Proposed Guidelines for the Protection of the Rights of Trafficked Children in Southeast Asia' (Proposed Guidelines).

The Proposed Guidelines comprehensively provide the steps that states, in particular, should take to solve the problems of trafficked children, in addition to the role of NGO service providers.

The Proposed Guidelines defines child trafficking as follows:

recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation, within or outside a country, which shall include but not be limited to child prostitution, child pornography and other forms of sexual exploitation, child labour, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, removal and sale of organs, use in illicit/illegal activities and participation in armed conflict. For the purposes of these guidelines, the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child by means of adoption or marriage for the purpose of exploitation shall be likewise considered child trafficking.

The Proposed Guidelines also stress that the consent of the child or the person exercising custody over the child to trafficking or any of its elements is irrelevant and does not exempt the offender from, or lessen his/her, liability for committing acts that constitute or promote child trafficking.

The general principles, which should be considered at all stages of care and protection of trafficked children, include the rights of the child against discrimination based on status, nationality, race, color, sex, language, faith, religion, ethnic or social origin, disability, etc, and to information and confidentiality; the best interest of the child; respect for the views of the child; and state responsibility.

The Proposed Guidelines provide concrete measures on detection and identification of child-victims, initial contact with them, system of referral, coordination and cooperation, interim care and protection, social case management of trafficked children, access to jus-

tice, care and protection for social welfare service providers, and capacity building of communities and persons working with trafficked children.

The Proposed Guidelines also provide that the State should give "legal protection and/or free legal assistance" to a "social welfare service provider for an act done in good faith as part of his/her function to provide assistance to a trafficked child" in case the former is sued by a trafficker. Such legal support may include legal counselling, preparation of legal documents, filing of action in courts, and legal representation in criminal, civil and administrative proceedings. This measure is meant to protect service providers from being harassed by traffickers.

In the system of referral, coordination and cooperation, there is a regional mechanism component to be based on a regional agreement that defines a system of referral and specific areas for coordination and cooperation, including designating their own liaison officer/office who shall be responsible for cross-border linkage and referral to the appropriate office for immediate response to cases of cross-border trafficking. It also mentions that as a component of national mechanism, states should develop a national arrangement that will define the roles and functions of each government agency in relation to child trafficking and a system of referral and areas for coordination and cooperation.

Challenge to address

While the Proposed Guidelines contain many important elements in protecting the rights of trafficked children in Southeast Asia, they still need further development. The main issue should be on their implementation at the national and regional levels once adopted by governments.

Part of the process of developing the Proposed Guidelines should be the dissemination of information

and lobby of state actors by ASIA ACTs and member-NGOs. They may collaborate with the Working Group for the ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism in this regard. The latter has also started working on human rights education with the holding of the Roundtable Discussion on "Engaging ASEAN Governments on Human Rights Education" on 23-25 March 2006 in Bangkok, in coordination with the Asia-Pacific Regional Resource Center for Human Rights Education (ARRC). This meeting was held in response to the request by ASEAN senior officials for help in implementing the human rights education component of the Vientiane Action Program.⁸

For further information, please contact: Ms. Ma. Amihan V. Abueva, Asia Acts Against Child Trafficking (Asia ACTs), Rm. 322 Philippine Social Science Center, Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines; ph (632) 929-0822; fax (632) 929-0820; e-mail: asiaacts@trisis.com www.stopchildtrafficking.info

Endnotes

1. See www.aseansec.org/16794.htm
2. See www.stopchildtrafficking.info/
3. The workshop was held in Bohol, Philippines in August 2004.
4. See www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat_inter/projects/monitoring/agenda_for_action.pdf
5. See www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat_inter/projects/
6. Ms. Anjanette Saguisag, Project Officer, UNICEF Philippines introduced the documents.
7. Mr. Robert Larga, Senior State Counsel, Department of Justice, Philippines presented the documents.
8. For more details, visit www.aseanmech.org and also *FOCUS Asia-Pacific Newsletter*, No. 43 (March 2006) at www.hurights.or.g.jp/asia-pacific/043/08.html

HURIGHTS OSAKA Award 2006

The Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center (HURIGHTS OSAKA) is now accepting entries for the "HURIGHTS OSAKA Award 2006" from the Asia-Pacific region. The deadline for submission of entries is 31 August 2006.

Three outstanding entries will be selected for the Award. Each awardee will receive an award certificate and 200,000 Japanese Yen in a ceremony in Osaka in September 2006.

Entries

Entries must be original and creative materials and programs for teaching and learning international human rights standards. They may deal with rights of children, women, people with disabilities, minorities, etc.; right to development, sustainable development, or human security. There is no specification on type of materials and programs or their form. They may be training manuals, lesson plans, workbooks, etc. They may be in the form of printed (or published) material, CD, powerpoint, calendars, other audio-visuals, etc.

In selecting the awardees for the Awards 2004 and 2005, importance was placed on the level of teaching/learning function of the entries. Activity reports and translations of United Nations and other documents may be valuable material in themselves, but will have lower priority for the purpose of this Award. The teaching/learning materials can be for school education (primary, secondary or tertiary) as well as for adult, home or community education. Another important factor will be the integration of two aspects; raising the children's and adults' sensitivity regarding human rights, and understanding human rights issues in the contemporary world.

The material may also be in any language. However, for materials or programs in languages other than Japanese or English please attach a description/commentary in English (200 words).

The materials/programs must have been produced from January 2003, regardless of whether they have been published or marketed. Materials/programs received for the Awards 2004 and 2005 cannot be resubmitted for Award 2006.

For information about the previous awardees, please visit the following webpages:

1. Award 2004:

www.hurights.or.jp/asia-pacific/no_37/07.htm

www.hurights.or.jp/asia-pacific/no_37/06.htm

2. Award 2005:

www.hurights.or.jp/asia-pacific/041/07.htm

Applicants

Any individual, group or organization from the Asia-Pacific region (including Japan) may apply till 31 August 2006.

To submit entries, please send the materials/programs with completed application form. The application form is available in HURIGHTS OSAKA website (www.hurights.or.jp/event/award_form_e.html).

Please send entries to:

HURIGHTS OSAKA Award 2006 for Human Rights Education

Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center

1-2-1-1500 Bentencho, Minato-ku, Osaka 552-0007 Japan

Postage and other costs of sending materials are borne by the applicants. Materials received for the award will not be returned.

Selection of awardees

The winning entries will be selected by a jury.

The award winners will be announced in September 2006. Award winners will be directly notified.

For more information contact:

Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center

ph (81-6) 6577-3578

fax (81-6) 6577-3583

e-mail: webmail@hurights.or.jp

Message from the new Director

Osamu Shiraishi
Director
Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center
(HURIGHTS OSAKA)



While upholding the universality of human rights, it is important that human rights become a reality in local communities with diverse backgrounds. Human rights after all should be enjoyed by all members of the community, that is, every person and group within it. How is it possible to address two seemingly contradictory demands, namely, upholding the universality of human rights and addressing the diverse needs of communities?

HURIGHTS OSAKA takes this challenge in pursuit of its goals. Its mission statement provides that HURIGHTS OSAKA aims to promote human rights in the Asia-Pacific region and to convey Asia-Pacific perspectives on human rights to the international community.

Having worked for 24 years in the United Nations secretariat in the area of human rights and having been raised in Japan, I understand and share this challenge. And anyone who has been involved in human rights activities in the Asia-Pacific region would see that this is not an easy challenge to face.

In order to enrich the universal nature of human rights the contribution of the Asia-Pacific region is essential. Such contribution can come from the process of firmly rooting human rights within local communities with diverse social, cultural and religious backgrounds. The universality of human rights stands on the basic concept that each person is equal in dignity with everyone else, regardless of who and where he/she may be.

I would be pleased if I could make even a small contribution to the work of HURIGHTS OSAKA in the years to come. I look forward to working together with all the partners and collaborators of HURIGHTS OSAKA and would appreciate their closer cooperation and unchanging support.

HURIGHTS OSAKA ACTIVITIES



PRINTED MATTER

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May be opened for inspection by the postal service.

HURIGHTS OSAKA, inspired by the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, formally opened in December 1994. It has the following goals: 1) to promote human rights in the Asia-Pacific region; 2) to convey Asia-Pacific perspectives on human rights to the international community; 3) to ensure inclusion of human rights principles in Japanese international cooperative activities; and 4) to raise human rights awareness among the people in Japan in meeting its growing internationalization. In order to achieve these goals, HURIGHTS OSAKA has activities such as Information Handling, Research and Study, Education and Training, Publications, and Consultancy Services.



HURIGHTS OSAKA

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