



المركز الإقليمي للجودة والتميز في التعليم



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Ministry of Education



King Abdul Aziz Center for
National Dialogue
مركز الملك عبد العزيز
للحوار الوطني



Beirut Office

Riyadh Declaration

of

The Regional Meeting on Citizenship Education and Common Human Values: From Theory to Practice

22 - 23 January 2020

Under the patronage of the Minister of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Dr. Hamad bin Mohammed Al Al-Sheikh, and in collaboration between the UNESCO Beirut Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States, the Regional Centre for Quality and Excellence in Education (RCQE), the Arab Bureau of Education For Gulf States (ABEGS), the King Abdulaziz Center for National Dialogue (KACND), the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) and the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU), the *Regional Meeting on Citizenship Education and Common Human Values: From Theory to Practice* was held in Riyadh on 22-23 January 2020. Around 200 participants representing Arab States, regional and international organizations, universities and competent institutions from all over the world attended the Meeting.

Participants are pleased to express their gratitude and thanks to the sincere efforts exerted by the Government of Saudi Arabia, for they appreciate the continuous support of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and the Crown Prince to the efforts aiming to disseminate culture of tolerance and promote common human values, which include hosting the Regional Meeting on Global Citizenship Education and Common Human Values.

Participants also extend their thanks and gratitude to the Minister of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Dr. Hamad bin Mohammed Al Al-Sheikh, for sponsoring this Meeting and for ensuring the success thereof.

Participants examined key documents presented in the Meeting and discussed the interventions delivered by regional and international experts from Saudi Arabia, among other Arab States, and from UNESCO, Asia-Pacific and Africa. Participants are well aware that since 2015, the International Community has taken a new path for Sustainable Development, one that focuses not only on the importance of instilling the values of solidarity and coexistence, but also on inculcating the values and practices of tolerance and raising awareness about the importance of adopting common human values through dialogue and respect for diversity.

Education is a main Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), for it is the transformative power that builds capacities, fosters awareness and guides us towards a common future. Education has a crucial role in promoting knowledge and values and building skills we need to strengthen local and global responsible citizenship in a rapidly-changing world. This falls under SDG 4.7 which calls for promoting teaching Twenty-first century skills and enabling learners to work towards a more peaceful, just,

inclusive and sustainable world.

The positive feeling among people in connection to common humanity, is an indicator of global citizenship and common human values and underlines that challenges we all face are interrelated. This leads to the significance of political, economic, social and cultural interconnectedness.

The current perspectives about local citizenship varies from country to another, which is a reflection to differences in the political and historical contexts, among other factors. Accordingly, various perspectives are to be considered upon implementation. The goal of global citizenship education is to create a solid set of knowledge, skills, values and behaviors that learners need to acquire in order to work towards a more peaceful, just, inclusive and sustainable world reaching to the international understanding. In addition, Global citizenship education and human common values have a key role in contributing to the achievement of gender equality. Given the challenges caused by local and citizenship in the field of education, it is essential to figure out a way to integrate this new concept in school curricula, teaching and learning practices and teaching content in classrooms. With that in mind, the Meeting focused on the following items:

1. Developing the necessary education policies to inculcate the values and practices of global citizenship education and common human values.
2. Define the necessary steps for promoting citizenship and common human values in school curricula.
3. Identify the appropriate teaching and learning methods and practices for citizenship education and common human values.

For the above items to be effective and lead to tangible results, they should be reviewed to ensure the quality of implementation thereof in favor of the global citizenship education and common human values. In addition, competent entities should undertake continues and sustainable follow-up and measurement processes ensuring the achievement of the goals of the above three items and the quality of outcomes. Accordingly, participants have agreed on the following:

1. Education Policies

In the field of citizenship education, education policies are essential to bring about the needed change, for they are a statement of intent accompanied by a strategic

plan to integrate global citizenship education and common human values in school curricula and in teaching and learning practices.

Therefore, it is recommended to:

- Examine existing citizenship education policies, plans and curricula, including defining the concept and how to be adapted according to cultural and religious contexts;
- Define the available opportunities and existing gaps, including curricular and extracurricular activities;
- Identify the stakeholders involved in policy development as well as the beneficiaries (students, teachers, faculty staff, educators, parents, the civil society, education institutions and the media) in order to consult and participate in the development of policies;
- Set measurable goals and specific implementation/action plans; and
- Obtain the necessary approvals to adopt the policies and do what is needed to the promotion and implementation thereof.
- Accurately define and share human common principles of global citizenship to be integrated in school curricula.
- Monitor and analyze principals that violate human common principles of global citizenship and develop conclusive solutions to reasons thereof, in accordance with the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech issued on 18 June 2019.

2. School Curricula

School curricula and learning contents are the primary method that sets the knowledge, skills and values one has to acquire and learn and that organizes teaching and learning.

Therefore, it is recommended to:

- Review and examine existing national curricula, and identify available opportunities and existing gaps;
- Integrate global citizenship and common human values in curricula – formal, non-formal as well as teacher training – in line with the context and laws of each country;

- Adopt a participatory approach to integrate citizenship and common human values in school curricula, ensuring the participation of all stakeholders in charge of developing education policies and school curricula, in addition to teachers, faculty staff, practitioners in the field of education, and other relevant parties and organizations;
- Follow a holistic approach based on respect and peace and on integrating global citizenship and common human values in all school subjects and in teaching and learning resources for all types and levels of education in the various educational institutions, with emphasis on integrating global citizenship and common human values in all directly relevant school subjects and on enabling learners to acquire the knowledge, understanding and critical thinking leading to better understand world complications;
- Thoroughly read and benefit from UNESCO's publication titled "Global Citizenship Education: Topics and Learning Objectives", for it is a benchmark in integrating global citizenship and common human values in curricula.
- Increase Arabic content in the field of global citizenship and common human values which includes encouraging research and translating the best global practices.
- Present and introduce new concepts of global citizenship through topics that take into account age and cultural differences of learners.
- Introduce concepts of global citizenship through innovative and interactive methods suit each age group, such as electronic and online means, or through any other method or tool that education providers consider most appropriate in their own context.

3. Teaching and Learning Methods and Practices

Education on citizenship and common human values requires adopting unconventional and interactive teaching methods and a transformative pedagogy, stimulating critical thinking and strengthening participation and society-based initiatives. This in turn requires national and regional programmes to build the capacities of teachers, educators, practitioners and all those in charge of teaching and learning processes to promote teaching and learning practices that favour citizenship education and common human values.

Therefore, it is recommended to:

- Raise awareness among teachers, faculty staff and practitioners in the field of education on citizenship and common human values, in order to generate an educated, knowledgeable student able to communicate socially with others showing the spirit of responsibility and moral commitment.
- Provide various opportunities of participation in formal and non-formal professional development and training programmes and promote active collaboration and integration between various education contexts and between school subjects;
- Promote the principles of global citizenship and common human values education by using interactive teaching methods based on transformative education and integrating critical thinking and problem-solving approaches;
- Promote school-based and society-based initiatives that involve students and teachers in activities that promote citizenship education and common human values; and
- Develop electronic/online platforms to develop the capacities of teachers and faculty staff and to generate and share knowledge.

Roadmap

The Role of UNESCO and its Partners

To achieve the recommendations and aspirations put forth in this Regional Meeting, it is expected from UNESCO and from regional and international organizations to undertake the below initiatives:

- Providing regional and national advocacy and assistance to garner more support for disseminating the notions of global citizenship and common human values and promoting its impact on learning outcomes.
- Reviewing and sharing field experiences and lessons learned on the regional and national levels;
- Developing policies, guidelines and research that would promote citizenship education and common human values;

- Carrying out professional development programs and building the capacities of teachers, faculty members and education practitioners nationally and regionally in the field of global citizenship education and common human values;
- Developing online learning contents on global citizenship education and common human values;
- Expanding the Arab Regional Global Citizenship Education Network;
- Contributing to finding spaces that promote the exchange of experiences and information and linking international events to regional and national events and vice versa (i.e. develop regional networks and educational platform); and
- Finding common ground on the notions of citizenship education and common human values to constitute a reference to be taken into consideration when developing education policies, school curricula and teaching and learning practices.