

Education for the Exercise of Citizenship

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The current focus on global citizenship gives new relevance to citizen education, which is as old as school, and appears as a fundamental component of 21st Century Education. This document addresses citizenship education as one of the areas to be emphasized in education, once the 2015 EFA agenda is completed, within the context of Latin America and the Caribbean.

I. A New Agenda Begins to Emerge

“There is a clear opportunity to include reference to global citizenship education in the post 2015 development agenda. As part of the knowledge, skills and competencies that learners require in the 21st Century and beyond” (UNESCO 2013).

Education for the exercise of global citizenship has been identified by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, as one of the three priorities of Global Education First Initiative (GEFI), launched in September, 2012, to accelerate progress in meeting the Education for All goals. Its aim is to install the need to bring quality and relevant education to the center of the social, political and development agendas, and to ensure the allocation of enabling resources. The aim of this initiative is to set forth the “foundation for a bold vision of education beyond 2015,” focused on three priorities: Learning for all children, improving the quality of learning

and foster and raise their awareness of global citizenship. Regarding the third objective, it specifies that “education must be transformative and bring shared values to life. It must cultivate an active care for the world and for those with whom we share it” (UN Secretary General 2012)

The focus of GEFI citizenship education is linked to 21st century skills and contextualizes the requirements in a globalized world. But the truth is that proposing citizenship education for students is not new: It is a constitutive dimension of education and has been a central concern for school systems throughout their history. Since the formation of Nation States, universal school coverage has been driven by assumptions on an objective that, more than educational, it is typically that of a Republic, ranging from the need to govern in a free citizen regime, to enabling

for the exercise of popular sovereignty (Bellei 2010). Thus, citizenship education constitutes a link between the State, society and school.

There are elements that specify the requirements of citizenship education, acquired in schools of the first decades of the 21st century, in Latin America and the Caribbean. On one hand, the global context and current requirements of the working world, conceptualized in education around the notion of 21st century skills. On the other hand, characteristic regional elements complicate the relationship between society and democracy, such as the presence of indigenous identities that model and specify the contours of national identities and political processes of re-democratization that has taken place in the last decades.

Also, how citizenship education is conceived to be linked to how education systems in the regions are defending their objectives to meet quality goals, as well as their measures for implementing educational equity. The training students receive in this area are not the same in education systems articulated around performance improvement in standardized, local or national exams, as in those seeking to strengthen pertinence of education programs within the national reality, work market or skills demanded by the globalized society, or those who prioritize improving pedagogical processes. Regarding equity, citizenship education is modeled, for example, through initiatives directed toward inter-culturally and inclusion and integration of different ethnic and social groups.

II. The Notion of Citizenship in Education for the Global Scenario

The global scenario of the first decades of the 21st century extends the paths of citizenship beyond national frontiers. This section revises how, in two educational proposals have contents aimed toward preparing students to function and take responsibility for the contemporary world (the 21st century skills focuses and the recently conceptualized education for global citizenship) define the notion of citizenship.

21st Century Skills, between Individual Development and Global Citizenship

“Education must fully assume its central role in helping people to forge more just, peaceful, tolerant and inclusive societies. It must give the understanding, skills and values they need to cooperate in resolving the interconnected challenges of the 21st century” (GEFI 2012).

The Global *Education First* Initiative makes proposals concerning raising awareness of being world citizens, with multiple references to a set of initiatives under development in recent years around the notion of 21st century skills (cf. DeSeCo 2005, Hilton and Pellegrino 2012, Pacific Policy Research Center 2010, Partnership for 21st Century Skills 2009). These references include the question of how to raise people who are capable of working in a globally interdependent world. The proposals and conceptual frameworks aim toward training for an interconnected world, to achieve worldwide student learning that is equivalent and also to build capacity in the students for them to deal comprehensively in changing scenarios.

The proposals related to developing 21st century skills make the focus on knowledge acquisition and cognitive development, which characterized 20th century learning, and still is present today, more complex. Stakes are placed on education to promote creative or divergent thinking and entrepreneurship, and, through developing intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, that space is created for individual development.

Although it is not omnipresent, the word citizenship frequently appears in the conceptual frameworks of 21st century skills. It is defined from requirements such as the need to educate active and informed citizens or to train them for the exercise of digital citizenship, and is driven toward developing it both globally and locally (*Assessment and Teaching of the 21st Century*). Sometimes it is referred to as a 21st century skill (Hillton & Pellegrino 2012, Binkley 2010); others - when it is emphasized- as a specific element that, together with these skills, it satisfies the education requirements of the new century (Europe-wide Global Education Congress, 2002; Mansilla & Jackson, 2011). In general, in the mentioned frameworks, in the outline of 21st century skills, the notion of citizenship is seen as strongly linked to the ethical dimension of individual development, which is also associated to performance in the world of work.

However, none of these conceptual frameworks offer a definition of citizenship that education seeks to promote. It is only possible to draft definitions reviewing how these texts classify 21st century skills. Thus, in ATC21S, global and local citizenship is categorized, along with 'professional life and career' and 'social and personal

responsibility,' as a skill to 'live in the world.' In Hilton & Pellegrino, citizenship is an intrapersonal skill that is par to the category 'work ethic and conscientiousness.' In Kamehama Schools, citizenships is a literacy in which individuals must be competent: Civic literacy would enables students to understand and be able to comprehend and affect decision making. Finally, in the OECD DeSeCo project, citizenship is not mentioned as an element to be acquired, because the initiative is dedicated to systematizing the demands posed on citizens by modern society.

Operational Approach to the Notion of Global Citizenship

Focused as individual readiness that is closely linked to the framework of 21st century skills, the GEFI awareness of world citizenship moves away from traditional notions of citizenship education, that were aimed toward promoting political participation through national government structures and to instill knowledge on political systems.

UNESCO has been a major player in extending the notion of citizenship education aimed toward living together. In 1997, the organization elaborated a teaching kit called *The Practice of Citizenship*, integrating peace, tolerance, international understanding, inter-cultural dialogue, respect for human rights and democratic practices to this area of education. In the same line, in 2005, it defined citizenship education as "learning to live together, respecting each other," specifying that "the concept underlying education for citizenship is that education should contribute to the development of individuals so that they attain

the means to interact with society and to take an active part in decisions regarding social, cultural and economic policies.”

“Citizenship is much more than politics. It involves thinking every day about what we buy, which mode of transport we use, and how we behave with our fellow citizens” (UNESCO 2005).

During this decade, UNESCO had already begun to aim toward education for world citizenship. In the GEFI documents, the notion appears as a required individual transformation in the realm of the relationship with others and the environment. It is stated that “these interconnected global challenges call for far-reaching changes in how we think and act for the dignity of fellow human beings” (GEFI 2012). The results of a technical consultation performed by UNESCO in 2013 confirmed this conception of world citizenship as individual readiness: “a sense of belonging to a global political community and humanity as a whole,” “an ethic metaphor” or a “psycho social framework for collectiveness” (UNESCO 2013).

The technical consultation progresses in operative specification for learning, by defining its objective as: “global citizenship education aims to empower learners to engage and assume active roles, both locally and globally, to face and resolve global challenges and ultimately become proactive contributors to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable world.” Its approach is also defined: It is built on a lifelong learning perspective, where the formal and informal education may come together. It also specifies the skills it contributes to acquire. These skills are:

(1) knowledge and understanding of specific global issues and trends, and knowledge of and respect for key universal values (peace and human rights, diversity, justice, democracy, caring, non-discrimination and tolerance);

(2) cognitive skills for critical, creative and innovative thinking, problem-solving and decision-making;

(3) non-cognitive skill such as empathy, openness to experiences and other perspectives, interpersonal/communicative skills and aptitude for networking and interacting with people of different backgrounds and origins; and

(4) behavioral capacities to launch and engage in proactive actions (UNESCO 2014).

However, the emphasis on readiness and skills has not been accompanied by an operative definition of citizenship or education for world citizenship. The technical paper points out some dimensions of education for citizenship that has not been defined and others that are identified as areas of tension. The former include how they are taught: As contents in a subject that is already taught or as a specific subject; and if it is taught from the early years or in more advanced courses. The areas of tension, in turn, refer to more conceptual issues: How to promote universality while respecting particularity; emphasis on contributing on the international level, in contrast to the contribution toward enabling the acquisition of 21st century skills for each learner; and promoting global solidarity and at the same time, national competitiveness (UNESCO 2013).

Tension between particularity and collectiveness, which is common to the above mentioned dilemmas, links education for world citizenship to other proposals for citizenship education. Some of them include education for peace, human rights, sustainable development, or for international and inter-cultural understanding. Likewise, this double dimension is linked to several other issues specified by the trends of citizenship education in Latin America and the Caribbean.

III. Strengthening Democracy and Particular Identities. Education for Democratic Citizenship in Latin America and the Caribbean

After disastrous experiences of dictatorships and civil wars over the past 25 years, the countries of the region have embarked on democratization processes. From these processes, one of the major trends in Latin America and the Caribbean in the area of citizenship education has been the substitution of the subject of civic education for the focus on citizenship education, outlined by Kerr (200) as the transition from a traditional to a maximalist approach. This transition does not only concern content, which becomes more heterogeneous, but has also involved cross-cutting dissemination of citizenship education throughout the curriculum and extending the grade levels in which it is taught (Cox 2010, Cox et al. 2014).

Reimers and Villegas Reimers (2006) identify several modalities used to teach citizenship education in the region. In Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa

Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador and Guatemala education for citizenship is a purpose in the subjects of social studies, while the curricula of Argentina, Ecuador, Guatemala, México and Uruguay provide a specific civic or citizenship education subject. There are also differences in emphasis: In Belize, Colombia, El Salvador and Mexico, education for democracy is one of the cross-cutting axes in the curriculum, while in Chile, it is citizenship education (Cox et al. 2005).

There is also great diversity at a regional level regarding the implementation of this area of education (Cox et al. 2005, Cox 2010). For example, in the number of intended instruction hours ranges between two hours a week and almost one hour a day (Reimers and Villegas Reimers 2006). There are also variations of the teaching strategies used to integrate their contents across the curriculum: From lectures and developing research projects, to group activities with exercise in dialogue, decision making and problem solving, to visiting the Parliament.

However, the experience of dictatorship and political violence has left youth with scarce knowledge about democracy, its exercise and factors that violate it. Thus, in 1999, students of Latin American countries included in the study on citizenship and education carried out by IEA (Chile and Colombia) scored the lowest among 28 countries represented in the research CIVED 2001). The results reported the difficulty for youth of the region to identify with democracy and recognize elements that put it at risk. Disconnection between their theoretical and practical knowledge was also reported. Youth seemed to perform

better in the field of theoretical definitions than in identifying everyday expressions of democracy in political rights, citizenship responsibility or the role of the media and economic institution for its protection. From these results, Torney-Purta and Amadeo (2004) posited the presence of dissonance within schools between knowledge and experiences lived by their students.

Ten years later, IEA reassessed citizenship knowledge of young people (ICCS 2009) where again regional performance was low. This time, six Latin American countries participated in the study (Mexico, Guatemala, Dominican Republic and Paraguay, in addition to those mentioned above). One of the main conclusions of the study was the contrast between the prescribed curriculum and the actual learning of the students. Here, emphasis in building and strengthening more democratic, inclusive and peaceful societies contrasts with the fact that in five of the six Latin American countries participating in the study, over half of the youth were at the lowest level of knowledge: They did not know the concepts of participative democracy as a public system and lack key knowledge of civic institutions, systems or concepts (Schulz, 2009). Some of the important findings of the research were that young people justified authoritarianism under certain conditions and their distrust of political institutions. The findings, that evidenced a correlation between the socioeconomic status and family resources and civic knowledge also indicated that the youth of the region expressed positive attitudes toward their nation and a high sense of regional identity; also, empathy toward people in difficult situations or who

belong to minority groups; and concern for the need to build more just, inclusive and democratic societies (Schulz, 2009 in Bellei 2013).

From the analysis of the curriculum content in the six countries evaluated in 2009, Cox et al (2014) conclude that there is a tendency to favor transmission of knowledge and values directed toward regulating local and interpersonal coexistence over those related to politics in the more institutional sense, or democratic political processes. Thus, participation is encouraged at the local level (school, local organizations) but not at the institutional level – with the exception of Mexico - the right or duty to vote is absent from the curriculum in five of the six countries analyzed. Similarly, diversity is presented as an ethno-cultural issue and not as the plurality of ideas and values that must be coordinated to build the common good.

A response to the asymmetry between contents and actual experience in school is the focus of education for democracy that, based on the idea that democracy is founded on the exercise of individual freedom and institutional duty, seeks to form citizens who are aware of their relevance, generating everyday experience that support it (Torney-Purta and Amadeo, 2014). Education for democracy favors generating consensus and providing room for dissent within the classroom, approaching its reality with its problems and promoting critical thinking. To contribute to forming opinions based on respect of diversity of beliefs and values without losing sight of the common good, this focus posits that contents should make reference to facts and data.

Reimers and Villegas Reimers (2006) have pointed out that, although “school resents the state of democracy,” it may also become its promoter. The authors promote citizen education for democracy in concordant spaces, and therefore, democratizing schools as organizations, because in adolescent education it is important to have “good alignment between school purposes and curriculum at different organization levels in the educational institution” (2006: 8). This requirement arises from a process that has occurred parallel to democratization in the region: Progress in coverage of secondary education (Bellei 2013) and in the emphasis on citizenship education in this stage of the education cycle. Today, “school plays a role in delivering sources of identity, answers, and referents that, otherwise youth would seek elsewhere” (Reimers and Villegas Reimers 2006: 8).

Disseminating and consolidating ways for students to organize and participate, especially in secondary education establishments, is central for tuning between content transmission and school practices. Student organizations have played an important role in promoting educational and social changes in the region. This is confirmed by recent student movements in several countries that show the huge civic potential of these processes. Schools and the school systems should aim toward not only “processing demands” of the students as a pressure group, but also to take advantage of their organization as an opportunity for strengthening education for citizenship.

The agenda and practice of citizenship is not only defined within the school space.

Levinson and Berumen (2007) have explored the ways in which education for democratic citizenship is promoted in Latin America, in supranational and governmental organisms, identifying among entities that promote citizenship education in the region, and influence decision making at a national level, the Organization of American States (OAS), through the Strategies program and other programs that promote democratic culture through education, Civitas. Also, UNESCO, that has generated information and informative documents; and the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI) that in 2005 created the Central-American Network for Value Education for Citizenship and Democracy (RED-CAE). The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), meanwhile, helped create the Regional Observatory on Citizen Competences, stemmed from the Regional System for Evaluating and Developing Citizen Competencies (SREDECC) that promotes a “scenario for Latin American cooperation that seeks to encourage educational policies, programs and practices for citizenship and democracy in Latin America” (<http://www.sredecc.com/que-es-padcceal>). At a local level, these initiatives generate commitment with international models, agreements and programs.

Both authors also identify programs that are relevant in promoting democratic citizenship at a national level. In general, a tendency toward increasing collaboration between ministries of education and other government sectors and civil society non-governmental organizations has been observed. The researchers conclude that these programs differ in the values they promote and the competencies they seek to develop.

They state that, while some emphasize deliberation on the concept of democracy, others emphasize the rule of law, and others, participative democracy. Although the notion of “participation” appears in countless opportunities, its definition and practice is nurtured by different meanings.

Some of these programs converge in the focus of education in fundamental values, such as respect for diversity and solidarity, as is the case of Values and Citizenship Education in Guatemala; and Education for Democracy in Bolivia. Another focus aims toward peaceful conflict resolution. These types of programs are found in Colombia, with the program Citizenship Skills; Trinidad and Tobago, with the Discipline Initiative in School; and Argentina, with the School Mediation program.

Within these initiatives, there are several coexisting notions of democracy: One that aims toward recovering lost values, another which seeks to educate critical citizens, and a third focus on public institution accountability for citizens. This occurs with the citizenship education program in Mexico, where “individual liberty and responsibility are balanced with emphasis on justice, solidarity and participation in solving local problems” (Levinson and Berumen, 2007:27).

Reimers and Villegas Reimers (2006) identify Colombia and Mexico as countries in the region that have made clear effort in introducing subjects that are specifically devoted to education for democracy. In Colombia, a cross-cutting program of citizenship skills has been implemented in all areas of the curriculum, receiving special

attention in the subject of Social Studies, and has implied defining standards of citizenship education. In Mexico, there is a compulsory subject on Civic and Ethic Education, and at the same time, in states affected by corruption, delinquency or organized crime, an additional optional program called Citizenship Education toward a Culture of Lawfulness has been implemented.

IV. The school factor: Classrooms, teachers and teaching material to model citizens

Research on factors affecting civic knowledge and students’ perception of fundamental questions on the exercise of democracy highlight the relevance of classroom climate and everyday school life (Torney-Purta and Amadeo 2004, Reimers and Villegas Reimers 2006). Torney-Purta and Amadeo (2004) have concluded that opening the dialogue to classrooms is associated with improvement in civic knowledge and opening to school and after school experiences, where students exercise their condition as citizens with rights that are expanding, contributes to bridging the gap between formal and practical knowledge. They argue that life paths associated with public issues and participation in social and community movements, in addition to developing values such as tolerance, are reinforced in classrooms where feel comfortable expressing their opinions, their participation is valued and they learn how to solve problems in local communities.

These findings affirm the core role of teachers in citizenship education for youth. This aspect has been approached both as models of conduct and from the training

perspective. The Global Education First Initiative indicates that “change is possible when educators adopt a vision of ethical global citizenship,” that is expressed in how contents are addressed and in how to inspire, jointly with the school as a whole, the skills that are wished to instill in the students, and in “good environmental practices, participatory decision making, and the control and prevention of violence through reporting policies and clear codes of conduct.” UNESCO also points at teachers as examples of the desired outcome. Within the context of the celebration of World Teachers’ Day 2013, UNESCO highlighted their role in education for world citizenship, indicating that:

“For teachers to actively participate in global citizenship education, they must be global citizens themselves, life-long learners and researchers, and classroom facilitators, collaborators, program organizers and trainers rather than knowledge transmitters. Teachers need to be members of the school community to implement whole-school approaches.”

Teacher training has been addressed in citizenship skills that they are expected to promote among their students (OECD 2012, GEFI). Based on the idea that “practice with students enables teachers to develop skills and dispositions that are easily transferred to the political sphere,” Reimers and Villegas Reimers (2006) pointed out the possibility of developing teacher skills for democracy education, perfecting, for example, “the capacity of communicating ideas to groups and negotiating various interests.” Torney-Purta and Amadeo stress the importance of preparing teachers so they may favor classroom discussions and the importance

in developing civic knowledge both during their training and during their professional practice. Teachers need to be aware of the gaps between curriculum contents and the everyday life of the young people.

In the region, Mexico and Uruguay have degrees in initial training in civics and ethics, in culture and law, and in citizenship education and rights, respectively (Reimers and Villegas Reimers 2006); the regional outlook is characterized by the existence of training for teachers in service. Torney-Purta and Amadeo indicate that in Chile almost half of the surveyed teachers that who taught courses in citizenship education needed more knowledge, which is consistent with the fact that only 10% of them had some kind of certification in the subject. In Argentina, Levinson and Berumen (2007) identified the professional development program for teacher training in ethics and citizenship, responsible for training teachers in Ethics and Education for Citizenship, as an example of the experience of professional development that is included in training in specific needs of students and teachers in several contexts. The program offers assistance, consulting and support, and encourages teachers to focus on realities of the Argentine society.

Along with the classroom environment and the skills of teachers, teaching materials have important implications in citizenship education. It has been found that household resources of the students, expressed as available literature or expectations of higher education, have great impact on their citizenship knowledge. Similarly, students that keep up to date, for example, by reading newspapers, are more willing to exercise

participation (Torney-Purta and Amadeo 2004). On the other side of the coin, Latin American students, who denoted lower valuation of democracy in CIVED 1999, were also those who had less contact with information media. Reimers and Villegas Reimers state that teaching materials used to support teaching democracy education include, in most countries, textbooks, study guides and other documents such as biographies or materials obtained from internet. Considering the strong impact of the resources available in students' homes, their conception and appreciation of collective life, it is pivotal for schools to make additional up to date resources available that are linked to students' everyday experiences, adding newspaper and other information media to the literature.

Education for citizenship also concerns the contents and processes of elaborating study plans and textbooks, as well as tests. Reimers and Villegas Reimers (2006) state that contents that do not reinforce stereotypes or social divisions, nor promote fear and resentment toward other social or national groups are required. To this end, they must be elaborated considering collaborative processes that embrace excluded and marginalized groups. They must also set goals and objectives, and perform periodic assessments to measure progress.

Information on initiatives that are currently implemented, especially at the school level, are still scarce. Identifying curriculum implementation at the practice level - an initiative developed by the Ministry of National Education of Colombia - is still a pending aspect.

V. Indigenous Peoples in Citizenship Education

From the creation of public education systems in Latin America and the Caribbean, the presence of indigenous peoples and the articulation with national identity has defined a great portion of the dimension that schools take upon themselves in forming citizens for the Republic. Although the "civilizing" ideal of primary education, compared to the "barbarism" that represented indigenous people and peasants according to Sarmiento is being overcome, it still is true that school has constituted and instrument for linguistic unification, dissemination of the narrative of national history, of the admiration for patriotic heroes and of respect for national identity symbols (Bellei and Perez 2009), undermining particular identities.

As mentioned above, the processes of democratization in recent decades have been concurrent with what in the region has been called indigenous emergence (Bengoa 2000), where collective mobilization has resulted in indigenous people, communities and organizations gaining representation and participation space in local and regional governments. These sociopolitical transformations have also been molded by phenomena such as the urbanization of indigenous reality, country-city and transnational migration processes, visibility of the particularities of afro descendant people, as well as the consideration for indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing that translate into demands that affect the society as a whole: Plurinationality, linguistic rights, sovereignty and self-determination, multiculturalism (Lopez 2012).

Some schools in the region have echoed these processes of recognizing collective rights through multicultural education experiences or developing intercultural skills in all students, however, this issue should be addressed systematically at the national education levels. It is a completely different issue from the installation of bilingual intercultural education programs that focus on primary education that have been carried out in a large number of the countries of the continent, and must be taken up in secondary education and as an area of citizenship education. It is an issue that challenges the heart of citizenship itself, because in a scenario that is built on individual equality before the law, adopted since the beginning of the Republic, it forces establishing the existence of collective identities and rights and questions the celebration of national identity, national symbols, that have until recently been the base of a large part of citizenship education in school. These dynamics also reflect contemporary governance processes such as decentralization, development with differentiated identity and participation. Thus, a new repertoire of contents is demanded for citizenship education (Peña 2004).

VI. An Agenda of Continuity and Changes

One of the national initiatives highlighted by Levinson and Berumen (2007) due to its impact in education for democracy was the Punkikinata Kichasa, Peru program, where due to the low level of academic success among students of Chanka, especially among girls, the Ministry of Education sought to balance citizenship education with the objective of improving the quality of learning, democratizing the school process and encouraging participation and incidence of communities in schools. The objective was to “empower communities to appropriate their own educational processes and especially make them aware of the importance of gender equality.” The example illustrates the large number of concurring factors in citizenship education in Latin America and the Caribbean, including issues of cultural identity and collective rights, equity, educational quality, institutional dynamics, school and community relations and democratization of educational organizations.

In these notes we have explored several of these factors, revising them under the wing of global tendencies that coexist in the field of citizenship education, such as constituting 21st century skills, developing and enhancing individual capacities beyond the merely cognitive skills and preparing for the world of work in a globalized environment.

Citizenship education today is tackled as a cross-cutting objective. From being a subject, it has become a general content that is approached at different levels and challenges the school as an organization. Today, citizenship education is practice rather than contents: It is preparation for real life

and must be aware of the values it promotes. Therefore, the pivotal role of teachers cannot be relativized: To become the role models they are expected to be, teachers require support and preparation both during their formative process and in service. Citizenship education of students cannot end in formal education either. It must be supported by non-formal and informal systems, through flexible and variable teaching approaches.

Turning citizenship education into an everyday practice must also encompass encouraging youth organization and participation and defining life paths with their involvement in societies and communities. Therefore it is crucial to aim toward improving citizenship knowledge as soon as teaching materials used in the classroom are chosen. This may be done, for example, by providing students with real life materials (such as internet and newspapers).

Beyond these coordinates, it is necessary to work on the definition of the concepts that contribute to contemporary trends in citizenship education. We have seen that citizenship is still a vague concept, as is the notion of democracy for its exercise. Also, along with emphasizing and valuing cultural diversity, it seems relevant for curricula to bring back more institutional aspects of building community life that are linked to formal political participation and its regulations.

World Citizenship in the Post 2015 Agenda

2015 will be an emblematic year for the world agenda. Countries will report their progress in Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and also regarding goals for Education for All (EFA). United Nation agencies are contributing in the organization of world debate for a joint agenda to guide action toward human development. Fighting inequality in all its dimensions is becoming the center of global efforts in all areas of development.

As a leader in the global agenda of commitments toward Education for All, UNESCO has followed the goals systematically. Thus, in a recent meeting held in Muscat, Oman, in May, 2014, objectives that should be pursued to guarantee the right to education post 2015 for all countries were defined.

Ministers, heads of delegations, senior officials of multilateral and bilateral organizations and high level representatives of the civil society and the private sector declared in Oman that the future development priorities for education development must reflect the important socioeconomic and demographic transformations that have occurred since the approval of the EFA and MDG goals, as well as the changing needs in the type and level of knowledge, skills and competencies for knowledge-based economies. They also reaffirmed that education is a fundamental human right for every person. Education is an essential condition for human fulfillment, peace, sustainable development, economic growth, decent work, gender equality and responsible global citizenship. Also,

education contributes to reduce inequalities and to eradicate poverty, because it offers the conditions and generates possibilities for the existence of fair, inclusive and sustainable societies.

For its part, the intergovernmental Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) created by the UN in January, 2013, adopted by acclamation a proposal of 17 objectives and 169 goals that was presented to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in September, 2014, after which an inter-governmental consultation process would begin, constituting a crucial contribution to the post-2015 development agenda.

In the framework of what will become the “Sustainable Development Goals” that countries will approve in 2015 at the United Nations General Assembly, as well as the educational goals that UNESCO will pursue to support this global objective, Higher Education is a central concern.

Global Education for All Meeting 2014 Final Statement: The Muscat Agreement

Overarching goal: Ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030.

Goal 5: By 2030, all learners acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to contribute

Proposal by the Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

4.7 by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development



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